



Incomparable

EMPIRE BUILDER

Vista-Dome

NORTH COAST LIMITED

BRASS CAR SIDES

Passenger Car Parts for the Streamliners

Budd Dome Coaches [Part No. 173-520]



The Budd dome cars probably contributed more to the aesthetics of postwar rail travel in North America than did any other innovation. Already popular trains of the "Hill Roads" were immeasurably enhanced for nearly a generation with the addition of these distinctive cars.

In mid-1954, the Northern Pacific Railway added two 46-seat dome coaches to each of the five consists of its *North Coast Limited*. The Great Northern followed suit a year later by replacing three 48-seat leg-rest coaches with three distinctively furnished dome coaches in each of its five *Empire Builder* consists, plus a 16th car as a spare. An additional dome coach (#549) was received by the NP in 1957. During the off-season, the *Empire Builder* operated over at least part of its route with only two dome coaches, and the *Western Star* received a dome coach between St. Paul and Seattle. Amtrak purchased all of these cars and operated them at one time or another on a number of its trains outside the Northeast Corridor. Car numbers and ownership for the NP, GN, CB&Q and SP&S were:

North Coast Limited: NP 549-556, CB&Q 557-558, SP&S 559

Empire Builder: GN 1320-1331, SP&S 1332, CB&Q 1333-1335

BRASS CAR SIDES has produced HO sides for these illustrious prototypes for many years and was pleased to add N-scale versions in the summer of 2008. These sides are designed to be applied as an overlay on the Con-Cor corrugated Budd dome coach that is patterned after the *California Zephyr* cars. (The discontinued Con-Cor scribed-side Budd dome coach was patterned after the GN and NP dome coaches our sides represent, but it is a different length from the more recent Con-Cor Budd dome coach.)

REFERENCES

- The Passenger Car Library Vo. 3 Western Roads by W. David Randall (RPC, 2000)
- Passenger Cars Vol. 2 Streamline Cars by Hal Carstens pp. 158-9 (Carstens, 2002)
- GN Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment by David Hickcox (Morning Sun, 1995)
- NP Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment by Todd Sullivan (Morning Sun, 1995)
- Great Northern Pictorial Vols. 3 & 5, by John F. Strauss, Jr. (Four Ways West, 1993 & 1998)
- Northern Pacific Pictorial Vol. 5 by John F. Strauss, Jr. (Four Ways West, 2001)
- The Vista-Dome North Coast Limited by, William R. Kuebler, Jr. (Oso Pub., 2004)
- Streamliner Cars Vol. 2 The Budd Company by David Randall (RPC Publications, 1981, O.P.)
- Domeliners: Yesterday's Trains of Tomorrow by Karl Zimmermann (Kalmbach, 1998)
- Car Names, Numbers and Consists by Robert Wayner (Wayner, 1972, O.P.)
- Some Classic Trains by Arthur Dubin (Kalmbach, later Interurban Press)

RECOMMENDED CONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUES

The current Con-Cor Budd dome coach consists of a body shell with removable glazing pieces and dome floor/seats, and the floor assembly with interior detail. The overlay construction method leaves the plastic shell basically intact, but modified so as to accept the thin brass sides as attachments to the exterior. In this method, the corrugations are filed and sanded smooth and then the areas of the plastic that do not match the window layout of the brass sides are removed with drills and cutters. The snap-in side window glazing pieces may be left in place for stiffening during the sanding, since any scratching they suffer will be irrelevant since they will be replaced by new glazing material behind the brass sides. (See next paragraph.) The side replacement method involves more major surgery but it avoids the need to smooth off the corrugations and enlarge the existing plastic window openings. Modelers considering this approach should plan on reinforcing the brass sides with backing strips or angles of plastic or brass, and will need to restore the locking ridges that keep the floor and body together. Some modelers may be tempted to cut away all of the plastic sides below the top corrugations

The sides come coated with Krylon clear acrylic. This coating may be left in place on both faces, but at the risk that some paints, particularly those that are water-based, may not adhere as well. The acrylic coating is most easily removed with a paste-type paint remover, but acetone, or similar solvent will also work. The sides will begin to oxidize as soon as they are stripped, but this is a cosmetic effect and of no concern as long as the surfaces are well degreased before painting. We recommend the use of Walthers GOO, applied as a tacky-dry contact cement to attach the sides to the smoothed down and opened-up sides. Before that is done, a decision should be made on the glazing material to be applied behind the brass sides. Microscope slide cover glass makes a realistic window material, but clear styrene or acetate sheet stock are also good, and easier to work with. Of course, final attachment will have to wait the painting and finishing steps. Grabiron starter holes have been etched through the brass sides to permit more easy drilling for those wishing to add wire grabirons.

The 2" snap strips of the prototype (located immediately above and below the windows) have been simulated by two sets of fine parallel etch lines. On the orange and green GN cars these strips are painted yellow. On the NP cars the lower one is painted white.

DECALS AND PAINTS

<u>Paints</u>	<u>Scalecoat</u>	<u>Floquil</u>	<u>Modelflex</u>	<u>Polly Scale</u>	<u>Accupaint</u>
Orange & Green	10452, -462		1664,1665	224, 227	
Big Sky Blue		56, 11	1663,1602	113, 203	
NP Loewy	10602, -612		1677,1678	17, 77	78, 79
<u>Decals</u>	<u>Microscale</u>				
Orange & Green	60153				
Big Sky Blue					
NP Loewy	60208				

To receive 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 dchenry@gac.edu. See our webpage at www.brasscarsides.com.
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