



1 Georgia & Florida No. 801, an Electro-Motive Division F7, and Southern Railway EMD F3 No. 4142 haul pulpwood to the paper mill in Vidalia, Ga., on Charles Trevey's HO scale G&F layout. The compact around-the-walls layout packs a lot of operation in a 12 x 13-foot spare room.

SERVING THE SOUTH in a spare room

Pulpwood and a paper mill keep this compact HO scale railroad busy

By Charles Trevey

Photos by the author

My journey in model railroading began many years ago with a kind Christmas gift of a train set from my grandma.

When I returned to model railroading about 20 years ago, I was surprised at the increased level of quality in the hobby.

I wanted to model a Southeastern carrier, preferably one that was small and interesting. I decided on the Georgia & Florida Railroad, which could also host locomotives from the Southern Railway and rolling stock from other Southeastern railroads.

Since basements are not commonplace in Florida, I was limited to a spare room. I remembered reading an article by Paul Dolkos, called "Tight Yankee or Compact Dixie," in the February 1996

issue of *Model Railroader*. That track plan and operating scheme looked like it would work well for what I had in mind, and it forms the basis of my G&F.

Some of the main features of that track plan that were attractive to me were uncluttered scenery, a secondary main line, a large paper mill serving a wide variety of cars, and a lift-out viaduct across the entry.

Construction begins

I began by constructing wall brackets of 1 x 3 and 2 x 2 dimensional lumber. These are spaced 4 feet apart and support sections of open-grid framing. The open-grid sections support risers for the sub-roadbed. The fascia is also attached to these sections. The wall brackets have a



② Having finished switching at Vidalia, Ga., the local picks up its caboose for the return home. The brick freight house represents a prototype that still stands. The caboose is by Wright Track Models.

long vertical leg to hold up the backdrop and the track lighting.

The backdrop is 1/8" tempered hardboard. When I needed a smaller radius than the hardboard would bend, I used fiberglass-reinforced plastic.

Cork roadbed is attached with white glue to the 1/2" plywood subroadbed. Power is carried by a 14 gauge bus with feeders each 3 feet.

Late summer scenery

The basic terrain is supported on a web of cardboard strips attached to the subroadbed and fascia. In cities and yards, sheet cork is glued to a flat plywood base. The cardboard forms are covered with plaster gauze strips and finished with Sculptamold. Various textures of ground foam, along with real Piedmont soil, finish the ground cover.

Trees are from Woodland Scenics and Scenic Express SuperTrees. Cobb Creek and the Alapaha River are modeled with Woodland Scenics Deep Pour water.

The backdrop has coved corners to create an uninterrupted surface without hard edges. To this was attached to a custom continuous photographic backdrop made by Backdrop Junction. Several of the backdrop photographs splice together seamlessly to produce a continuous scene.

Prototype-inspired structures

The structures and buildings that appear on my layout reflect similar features seen during my trips through



③ Charles installed under his benchwork a pull-out drawer intended to hold a computer keyboard and repurposed it as a locomotive wheel-cleaning station.

Locomotive wheel cleaning station

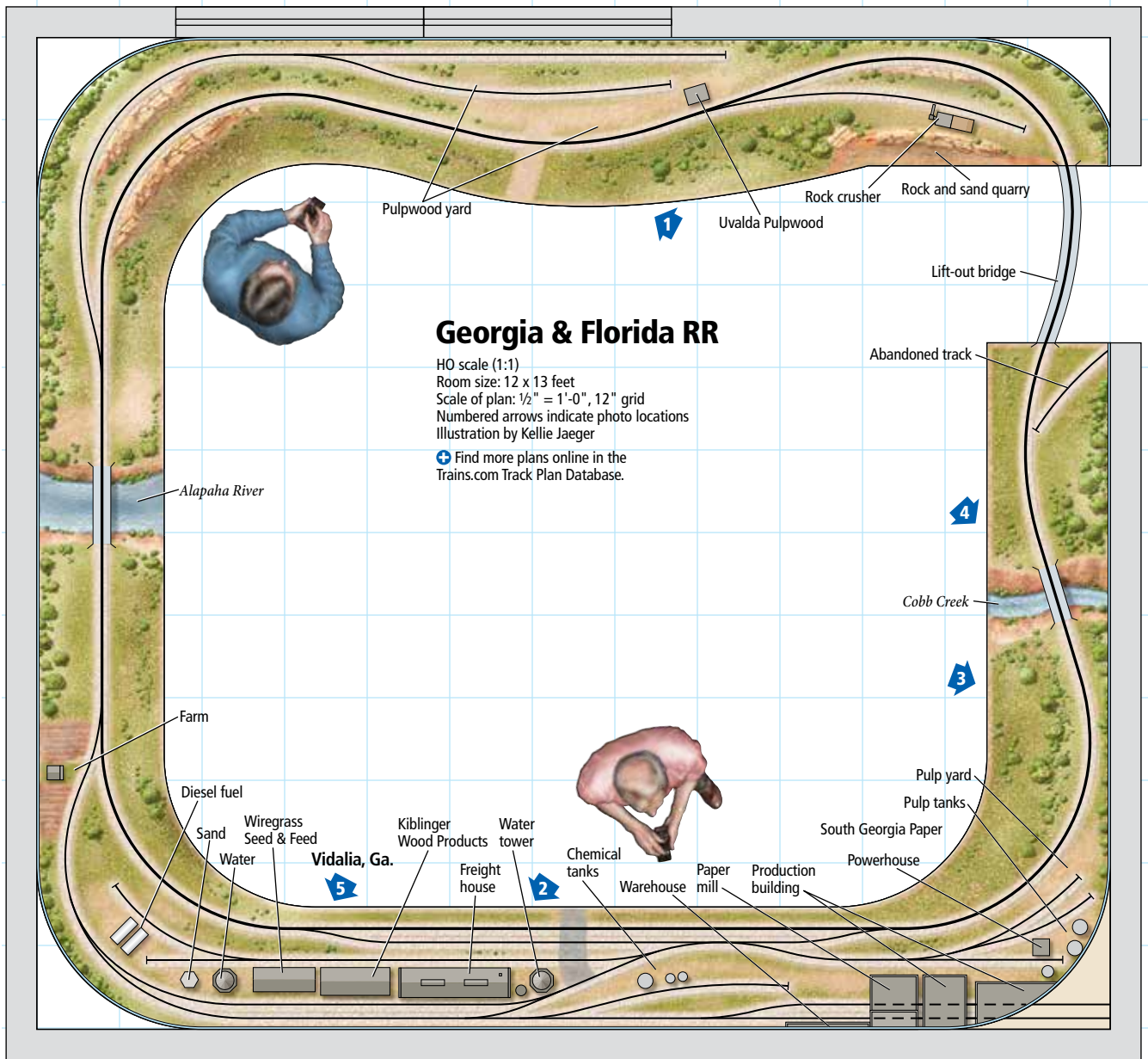
I wanted a track that was dedicated to wheel cleaning. I purchased a pull-out tray for computer keyboards complete with mounting hardware. I attached it to the underside of the open-grid framing with 1 x 2s so it pulls out from below the fascia and locks in place. Inside the drawer I installed a length of track on top of sheet cork and 1/4" subroadbed. The track has feeders from the bus wire for power. Shallow storage compartments hold cloth wipes and other small wheel- and track-cleaning supplies. — Charles Trevey

Georgia. A brick warehouse building in Vidalia and the Cobb Creek trestle bridge still stand, replicas of which are featured on my layout.

My layout features kitbashed, scratch-built, and kit-built models manufactured by CC Crow, Frenchie Gratts, Wm. K.

Walters, Campbell Scale Models, BTS, Micro Engineering, PM, Rix Products, City Classics, and Auhagen.

The many brick buildings are painted various red and brown colors, and then Roberts Brick Mortar is applied to highlight the masonry detail. I pre-tint the



Georgia & Florida RR

HO scale (1:1)
 Room size: 12 x 13 feet
 Scale of plan: 1/2" = 1'-0", 12" grid
 Numbered arrows indicate photo locations
 Illustration by Kellie Jaeger
 Find more plans online in the
 Trains.com Track Plan Database.

The layout at a glance

Name: Georgia & Florida RR
Scale: HO (1:87.1)
Size: 12 x 13 feet
Prototype: Georgia & Florida
Locale: Central and South Georgia
Era: late summer, 1966-1972
Style: around the walls

Mainline run: 55 feet
Minimum radius: 24"
Minimum turnout: No. 4
Minimum grade: none
Benchwork: open grid
Height: 40"
Roadbed: cork
Track: Atlas code 83 flextrack
Scenery: cardboard strips

covered with plaster gauze and Sculptamold
Backdrop: 1/8" tempered hardboard and fiberglass-reinforced plastic
Control: MRC Control Master 20 with walkaround throttles (direct current)



Meet Charles Trevey

Charles is retired from the construction industry as an estimator and from the city of Jacksonville, Fla., as a building plans examiner. He lives in Jacksonville and is a member of the NMRA. He enjoys sportscar racing and computer flight simulators.



4 A pair of G&F GP7s cross Cobb Creek with pulpwood loads from Uvalda Pulpwood. With the railroad's major industry being the South Georgia Paper plant, pulpwood traffic is very important to the G&F.

mortar mix with a few drops of black or tan acrylic paint in order to tone down the mortar's unrealistically bright white color. All structures are weathered to some degree and are built from various materials such as plastic, plaster, or wood. They all have unique attributes, and I enjoyed building them.

Locomotives and rolling stock

I wanted to re-create some of the motive power that the prototype Georgia & Florida owned, so painting, decaling, detailing, and other alterations to stock locomotives were required.

The Electro-Motive Division GP7s and F7 are made by Athearn Genesis. The SW1 is a modified Walther'sProto model. I also decorated the Bachmann GE 70-ton locomotive that serves the paper plant for South Georgia Railroad.

The 50-foot Pullman-Standard boxcars are from Kadee, the bay-window caboose is from Wright Track Models, and one G&F pulpwood car is scratch-built. Other Southeastern locomotives and rolling stock appear on the layout at various times.



5 An empty boxcar is spotted for loading at Kiblinger Wood Products in Vidalia. Georgia & Florida No. 70, an EMD SW1, is a customized Walther'sProto model.

Paints and other coatings are from Scalecoat-2 and Testors clear finishes. The decals are from Microscale and Highball Graphics. Details West and Detail Associates provided most of the custom parts.

Operation and goals achieved

The paper mill in Vidalia serves as the centerpiece of operations. The layout also has a pulpwood yard, sand and aggregate quarry, and an interchange

track that serves various industries.

During a typical operating session, a through freight would drop and pick up cars from the interchange. While the paper mill switcher shifts cars destined for the interchange, the through freight would pick up and set out cars for the paper plant. A local freight originating from Vidalia switches the other non-paper mill industries.

This room-sized railroad with a paper mill centerpiece has proven to be very satisfying to build and operate. [MR](#)