

Proto Power West/A-Line HOBBY-TOTE SYSTEM

The PPW/A-Line *HOBBY-TOTE* System consists of a combination of versatile storage containers and a durable carrying case to provide the modeler with the capability to store and transport their model roster and/or supplies with safety and ease.

Because of many years spent in model railroad clubs and being involved with the club operating standards, we saw a tremendous need for some way to safely store and transport equipment and eliminate damage. What we saw was that equipment was getting damaged not while it was on the layout or in storage but while it was being transported back and forth. There was the need for organized storage and transportation capabilities whether it be from home, to a friend's or club layout, a model railroad meet or convention. Over the years we saw and evaluated many types of systems that were used to store and transport models, from simple kit boxes to elaborate wooden cases. None of them seemed to offer adequate protection, or they were too bulky, or too heavy, or too expensive; in general they were inconvenient and not at all versatile.

What we have done is combine the best of all worlds in the *HOBBY-TOTE* System. You get organized and economical storage along with safe and lightweight transportation capabilities if needed. This system allows the hobbyist the complete flexibility to custom tailor the system to their particular needs. The storage container dimensions have been designed to maximize the inside storage area for HO and N scale equipment while minimizing the outside dimensions to allow for storage of many containers in a small area, this is critical due to the limited amount of storage space we as modelers have available. Minimizing the outside dimension also makes moving the storage containers around while accessing your equipment a breeze. The main storage tray can be placed inside the lid to facilitate access to your equipment with minimal interference. I. D. labels can be purchased from most office supply stores, making it easy to find equipment at a glance.

STORAGE & TRANSPORT IDEAS:

- If there is no roof detail on your rolling stock (*i.e. brake wheels, vents etc.*) turn cars "upside down" in the storage containers. This provides for less end-to-end movement, and since the cars are handled from the bottom, less possible harm to paint jobs. Storing equipment upright instead of on its side eliminated damage.
- Make a "CRADLE" to lift equipment in and out of the storage containers. Use strong lightweight "Foam Liner" material (*available from PPW/A-Line*) This material provides for even less handling of models, extra protection from damage to painted finish and details, and no more bent locomotive handrails. Foam Liner material is virtually crushproof, lint free, non abrasive, and chemically inert. *PPW/A-Line Part #19301 \$5.95 (2'W x 10'L x 3/32" thick - 20 sq ft. of material)*
- Use *A-Line Foam Spacers (#19300)* between models. These precision cut foam spacers are made specifically for the storage containers and prevent damage to the ends and end detail (*grab irons, couplers, hoses, plows, etc.*) of models due to end-to-end movement.
- If storing or transporting double-stack cars, you can leave both of the containers in the well of the car. You can effectively "double" storage by placing another empty stack car upside down on top of the top container (*depending on the length of container and well of car being placed on top*).
- If storing or transporting intermodal containers only, use a separator (*cardboard, FOAM LINER MATERIAL, etc.*) to make two levels of storage in one storage container.
- The flexible chipboard row dividers can be easily modified to your special needs by simply using scissors to cut as needed. Chipboard dividers don't catch on detail parts and allow fast loading and unloading of equipment without damage, due to their ability to be spread apart easily.
- Use the brown shipping box and cut out a U-shaped liner to fit the length of the carrying case. When the storage containers are removed, the case will hold its shape to facilitate easier return of the storage containers to the bag.