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# Model Railroad News

The All-Scale News Monthly

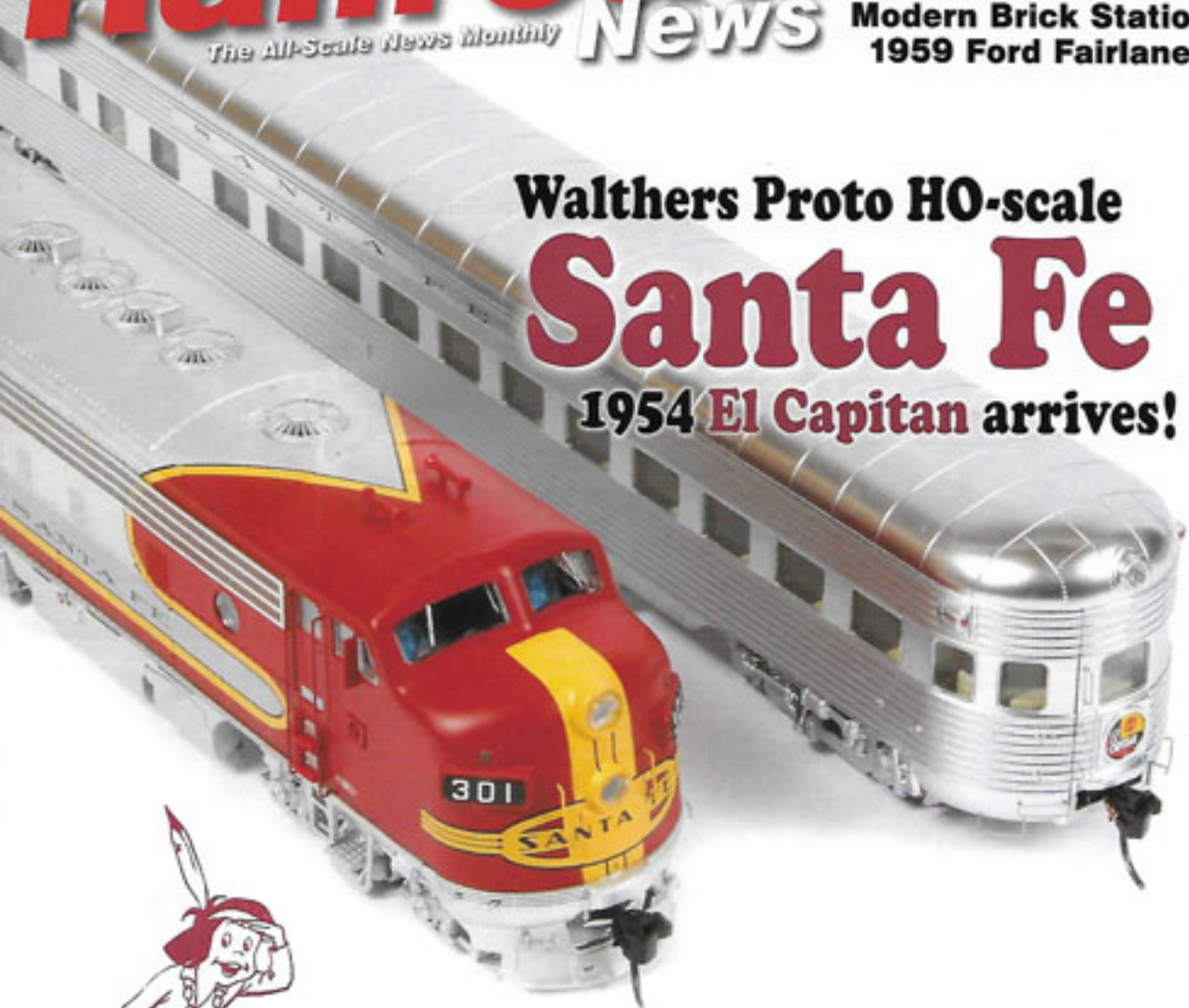
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# Santa Fe

1954 El Capitan arrives!



Welcome aboard  
**El Capitan**

Volume 24, Issue 7 • July 2018

\$6.99US \$7.99CAN



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## Review HO Scale

### Santa Fe's Modern Brick Depot

Review and Photos by  
Dennis H. Murphy

Walthers Cornerstone HO-scale  
Modern Brick Santa Fe Station kit  
#933-4064, MSRP: \$59.98

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[www.walthers.com](http://www.walthers.com)

I WAS over at a modeler friend's house recently, and we started talking about his new proposed layout expansion. He wants, um, something "different." So what's a guy to do? Well, go "surfing," of course! We promptly went to the Walthers webpage, and with no particular direction, we ended up looking at the new HO-scale Modern Brick Santa Fe Station kit.

We cut out a section of cardboard the correct footprint of the finished structure (21-13/16 x 8-1/16 inches) to see how well this building would fit on his layout expansion. Examining the area, we decided that with



Above: The finished HO-scale Walthers Cornerstone Modern Brick Santa Fe Station kit provides a great-looking addition that will fit eras from the post-war years into contemporary times.

some minor moving of few items and changing the current roadway a little would mean he had just the spot for this interesting new model kit. And then the big question came: If he bought this kit, would I build it for him? Sure, why not? So, we promptly ordered one.

When this very large kit showed up, I found that its parts come molded in three different colors, plus you receive clear glazing for the windows (should you call that four colors?) This kit looks to be an interesting project.

In typical Walthers fashion, the directions are simple and to the point. These directions are definitely a "put this part on that part" type of affair, which is just my kind of project!

My favorite part of these directions is the expanded construction drawings — you can almost build this kit without actually reading the directions. (Did I say that?)

If you are a modeler who plans to extend your layout, you will do well by looking into this kit. It's BIG! Be sure to consider the footprint dimensions and see where it might fit on your railroad. You might do as I did and make a cardboard cutout of the shape and start test-fitting it in different places to see where it might go.

As with all the kits I build, I start out carefully inspecting all the parts for missing or damaged bits. This example was perfect — parts were extremely well molded with



Above: The station's platform measures a bit more than 8 inches wide and runs nearly 22 inches in length to line up a passenger train along its side for passengers. The building follows a mid-1950s Santa Fe design.



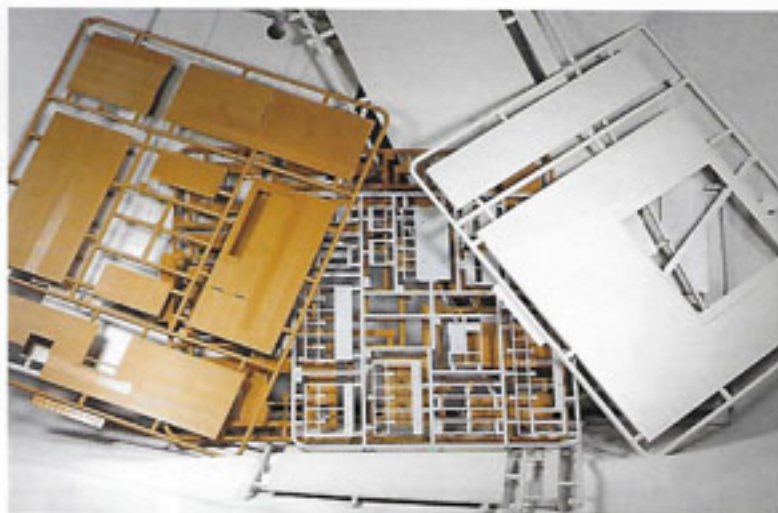


tons of detail worked into them. I did find this kit a bit intimidating due to the sheer volume and size of the parts. This large kit comes in a large box!

Possibly the most important thing I'll discuss in this review is the idea that you never, ever, break the plastic parts off the sprue! Doing so will damage the integrity of the part, and will likely also deform the part's shape. If you want your plastic models to come out looking their best, then you have to invest in a good set of flush-cut nippers. Of course, take the time to "tidy up" all these nip points with a bit of sandpaper or a fingernail file after the pieces are snapped from the sprues. This minor sanding helps the parts fit together as the manufacturer designed them to.

One of the fun aspects of this kit is all the detail they can mold into plastic. To make the brick mortar lines more pronounced, I like to use a product called Roberts Brick Mortar Formula. Make sure to stir this product well before applying, and then set the parts aside until completely dry.

It might be time for a word about adhesives. Glue is a personal choice, of course, and



Above: This big kit has many parts. This view shows the various-color molded sections as they appear directly from the Walther's Cornerstone packaging. Instructions are clear and easy to follow and aid in making this kit an enjoyable building experience.

different modelers use different products. However, never use budget adhesive products. From my experience, there really is a difference in glue quality, and it will impact your finished model's outcome. In this build, I used Testors Liquid Cement in the dispenser with the long, thin tip. Remember that less is always more when talking adhesives. If you get glue on the windows, or anywhere you don't want it to be, you can see the spot forever. Keep in mind that this cement actually melts the plastic, so keep the glue as much as possible on the inside surfaces rather than the outside.

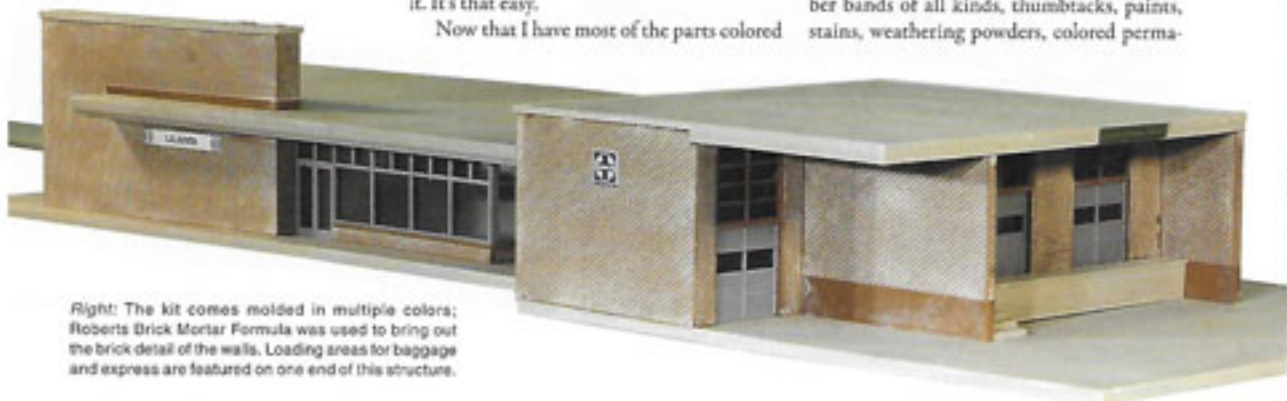
All right, the Roberts Brick Mortar is dry, and it's time to clean up the wall sections. I find the clean-up works better if you use a very lightly dampened washcloth rather than a paper towel. If you want your mortar lines larger, remove less of the product. If you want the lines to be smaller, then remove more of it. It's that easy.

Now that I have most of the parts colored

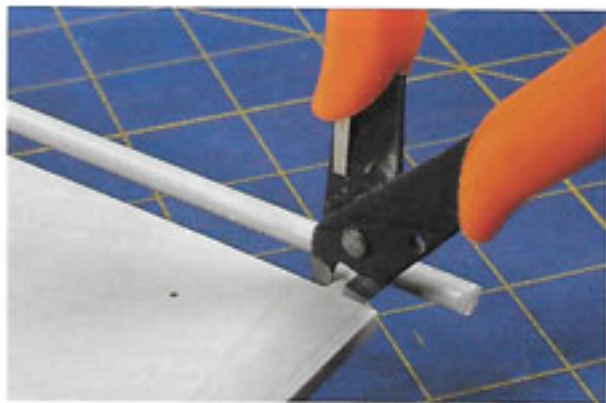
to my desire, it's time to start potting things together. You begin by installing the window frames into the wall sections. Walther's used tab-and-pin arrangement for this and other plastic models, so it's almost mistake-proof. Of course, always test-fit everything before you start adding the glue to make sure you have the correct part in the proper place.

I would suggest that you only remove the parts that you want to use at any given time, and leave the rest on the sprue until needed. During assembly, you might need to check and confirm the number as you assemble, and that number is featured on the sprue near the part.

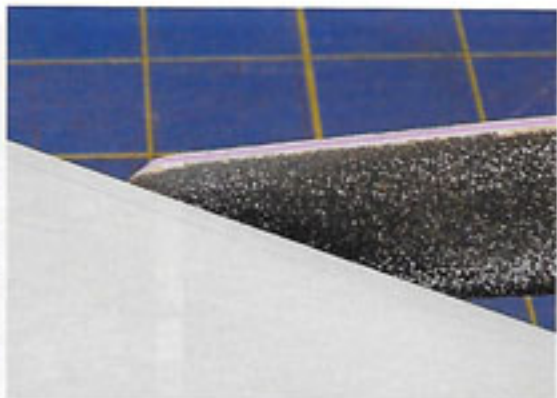
It's time to have a word about what I like to call my "handy helpers." First off, you can never have too many of them when working with any modeling project. I always have an ample supply of weights of varying sizes, rubber bands of all kinds, thumbtacks, paints, stains, weathering powders, colored perma-



Right: The kit comes molded in multiple colors; Roberts Brick Mortar Formula was used to bring out the brick detail of the walls. Loading areas for baggage and express are featured on one end of this structure.



Above: Never bend or attempt to break parts from the sprue. Use nippers to make clean and even cuts on the parts. Only snip off the parts needed for the section currently under construction. Doing so protects you from having to guess later what part number you have before you.



Above: After cutting parts from their sprue, use sandpaper or a fingernail file and smooth the surface over, ensuring that sections fit together snugly with no issues. The end result will be an excellent-looking structure with more realistic seams and join lines between sections.



Photos above: I found the molded color was appealing for the walls. I employed Roberts Brick Mortar Formula to enhance the appearance of the brick design and provide realistic white mortar surrounding those bricks. I describe its use briefly in this review. Check my complete review that appeared in the June 2018 *Railroad Model Craftsman* for more on this excellent product.



Photos above: For this kit build, I used Testors Liquid Cement. As this image shows, the product comes in a plastic container that resists being knocked over and spilled. The long metal spout makes for controllable application of the product. I did much of the building with pieces still on the sprue, which provides a steady and flat surface for affixing parts, such as these gray doors on the wall section. Clear window material comes with this kit, as does color printed signage.





ment markers, and a bunch of other odds and ends that I have acquired over the years. Oh yes, and don't forget the array of small hobby tools that are always needed along the construction process. You will be surprised that there is just nothing like the right tool for the right job. Now I sound like my Dad.

It always amazes me that you can play around with the parts for a bit and before long you have a whole pile of sub-assemblies ready to go together. And with this kit, the pile was substantial! It's almost time to start gluing the station together. First, I needed to add a bit of coloring here and a bit of weathering there. I like to do as much of this as possible before I start final gluing. I find working "flat" is easier (at least for me, anyway) than working with the completed unit.

With this project, I wanted a hint of weathering, but not all worn out and beat up. I know some modelers like that old and tired look, but in my "train world," these buildings are still in regular use, and my "little people" take pride in their workplace and community.

An interesting challenge to this project was where to start attaching the rather complex wall sections. I just chose a corner and worked my way outward. Make sure to hold the parts in place until the glue is securing them well. If you mess up at the starting point, you risk that the remaining walls will not be square and straight.

My handy helpers to the rescue! How can you possibly keep everything "true and plumb," when the glue is drying without some kind of help? I found the wall sections together well with only minor adjustments. Well, actually there was one small part that was a bit disagreeable. After a bit of "aggressive persuasion," all eventually worked out fine.

After I glued the wall sections in place, then it's time for the roof sections. Another interesting aspect of this kit is how the larger section of roof goes together. You sandwich two large plastic parts together leaving the middle hollow. I've never seen that design before.

This project came out so good that I felt it deserved something more. Finally, I decided what was needed was a nice display stand to complement the fine workmanship of this kit. I can always take it off the stand when my friend (finally) is ready to place it on his layout. So it was off to the garage to see if I had any rigid foam insulation that would work for this display base.

I figured out what would be a good size for the base, and then I got to work. After cutting and sanding the foam insulation block, I



Above: Here are the various wall sections ready for erecting into this HO-scale reproduction of a Santa Fe modern brick station structure.



Above: The round puck-like disks are weights that I used to hold the plastic walls in place to allow the glue to dry. These weights are among the handy helpers I keep around for building hobby projects such as this railroad station kit.

painted the top Flat Black and the sides a nice neutral earth brown hue. Next, I needed to think about what I wanted on display beside the model.

It was now time to fill in the details. I worked on making the scene look as real as I could. And I added all kinds of details like people figures, stuff lying about, and for good measure, I even added some trash cans. Basically, I added anything I had on hand that fit into a city scene.

Now it was time to dull down the base scene. Once again, I got out my weathering powders and went to work. A bit of black here,

and a dash of brown there, and before long, the scene was looking much better. Next, I took some up-close photos to make sure everything really did look correct.

This kit and display module allotted me about three fun hours of planning and building. If I were to rate this kit, I would place it at the high end of beginner level. It's easy enough for most all modelers, but also challenging enough that the more seasoned modeler will have some fun with it. Have a look at the great lineup of first-class models available at the world leader in model railroad marketing: Walther's. [MMN](#)