



Rio Grande, Alaska, C of Ga, T&P 40' Fixed End Gondolas



The 40' fixed end steel gondola was the railroads' pick-up truck. Its broad utility made it the jack of all trades: hauling coal, ore, steel ingots, rolls, bars and shapes, limestone, sand, gravel, logs, scrap, cable and a variety of other products too numerous to mention. Due to this wide usage, these gons were bought in the thousands.

In 1940, the AAR designed a 40' steel gon which it recommended to the railroads. The major achievement of the AAR design of a 40' fixed end gondola was the transfer of structural strength from the underframe to the car sides. This design of a lighter underframe reflected the AAR work on standard steel boxcar designs of the Thirties and exploited

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- ___ Kit #67.14 Rio Grande 10 post, 40' fixed end steel gon, Pressed Steel Car Co. corrugated end, 1943-49 lettering decals, \$30
 - ___ Kit #67.15 Alaska 10 post, 40' fixed end steel gon, Pressed Steel Car Co. corrugated end, 1946-60s lettering decals, \$30
 - ___ Kit #67.16 T&P 10 post, 40' fixed end steel gondola, Murphy ends w/end sills, modernized in 1945-60s lettering decals, \$30
 - ___ Kit #67.17 T&P 10 post, 40' fixed end steel gondola, Dreadnaught ends w/end sills, modernized in 1945-60s ltrng decals, \$30
 - ___ Kit #67.18 C of Ga 10 post, 40' fixed end steel gondola, Dreadnaught ends, 1940s-50s lettering decals, \$30
 - ___ Kit #F.5 Baled (Compressed) Scrap Load for 40' and 50' gondolas, \$15
 - ___ Kit #G.7 Railroad Yard Scrap Load (base plate with multiple independent parts for variable loads) for 40' gondolas, \$12
 - ___ Kit #G.8 Off-road Tire Load for 40' gondolas with paper and banding, \$12
 - ___ Kit #G.9 Ingot Iron Load for gons, 14 ingots of high grade iron ore for engine block plants from Birmingham AL, \$9
 - ___ Kit #G.10 Aluminum ingots for 40' gons, 12 large square, hat shaped ingots of aluminum, \$7
 - ___ Kit #G.11 Steel sheet for 40' gons, 7 nested sheets of steel draped over three pieces of 4 x 4 wood, \$7
 - ___ Trucks #TP 40 Black plastic ARA cast side frame, non-sprung trucks with non-magnetic metal wheelsets, \$5

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Add \$4.00 for shipping per five kits in U.S. (MO residents add 6.6%), Canada \$15.88 for six kits
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improved steel. The cars could be built with either wood or steel floors.

In the midst of WW II, the Denver and Rio Grande Western received 450 AAR steel 40' gons, manufactured by Pressed Steel Car Co., on lease from the Defense Plant Corp. Since the road served an area rich in strategically important minerals, including uranium, chromium and molybdenum, the loan was understandable.

These gons became the 50000-499 series. They differed from AAR standards in use of an end of four simple corrugations without intermediate darts, similar in appearance to the Pullman PS-1 ends. They rode on ARA trucks and used an Ajax power hand brake. They were unusual on the D&RGW for having solid bottoms. They had steel floors.

The cars were entirely black with white lettering, including the large speed "Rio Grande" and 12" reporting marks.

Following WW II, the government offered to sell the equipment, including locomotives, it had loaned the D&RGW as a block. The D&RGW wanted the cars but not the locomotives, so the government reclaimed all the equipment. It took several years to get the cars back; six gons remained in D&RGW lettering in Oct. 1948, but all were gone by 1950.

These former D&RGW cars were sent to the Alaska Railroad, as its 13500-13649 series, where they served at least into the 1960s. These cars were also black with white lettering.

The AAR gon design had a precedent in the Twenties. Steel sided, 8 or 10 post, straight center sill cars were built at least as early as 1926.

In 1926, the T&P purchased 750 40' gons with 10 posts, steel floors and Murphy ends, the 17000-17749 series. In 1928, another 500 cars arrived with Dreadnaught ends, the 17750-18249 series. These were 50 ton, 1840 cubic feet cars. This early design had an end sill. These two blocks differed in the application of grab irons to the first series and ladders on the second, but both had a crank hand brake and KC brake system. The cars had steel floors, cast side frame trucks and interior foldable stake holders. They were painted black with white lettering.

Like most gons, they had a long life. After WW II, the cars required some attention. This refurbishing altered their appearance modestly. AB brakes were applied, though the hand brake remained. The stake pockets were not maintained. The rebuilding came during a period when red paint began to be applied to T&P gons. By the early Fifties at least, the T&P herald was being applied to new gons built in the company shop. There is no known precise date of the new paint and lettering standard and it is likely that both black and red cars existed side by side. In 1953, there were 1173 cars on the roster.

The Central of Georgia had predecessor cars, also. The 18001-18500 had 10 posts. The design reflected the forthcoming AAR design, except the four centermost posts extended below the car sides and tied to the cross bearers for additional strength. An Ajax power hand brake and ARA cast side frame trucks were applied.

The Central of Georgia 18001 series was built in 1929-30. The floor was steel and Dreadnaught ends were used. These were 1848 cubic feet cars with 4' 8" IH. The cars had Dalman single level trucks and a lateral brake reservoir.

The C of Ga cars were painted red with white lettering. During the Forties, the lettering was a sans-serif with curved form. There was a box herald on the right side. Beginning in the early Fifties, a block style lettering was substituted. In 1957, "The Right Way" slogan was added.

Having a steel floor, photo evidence indicates the CG gons were assigned to lumber and log loading. There were 489 of the original cars on the roster in 1953. The 18001 series was reliable and performed well into the Sixties.

The 40' gons are cast in the "Quick-Kit" format with the sides and ends cast as one piece.

The Sunshine kits are vacuum cast in gray urethane. Kits include all detailing parts (except trucks and couplers) and proprietary decals. A Prototype Data Sheet and complete instructions are included.

Also available are cast resin load kits designed for the dimensions of these gondolas and the appropriate trucks.

