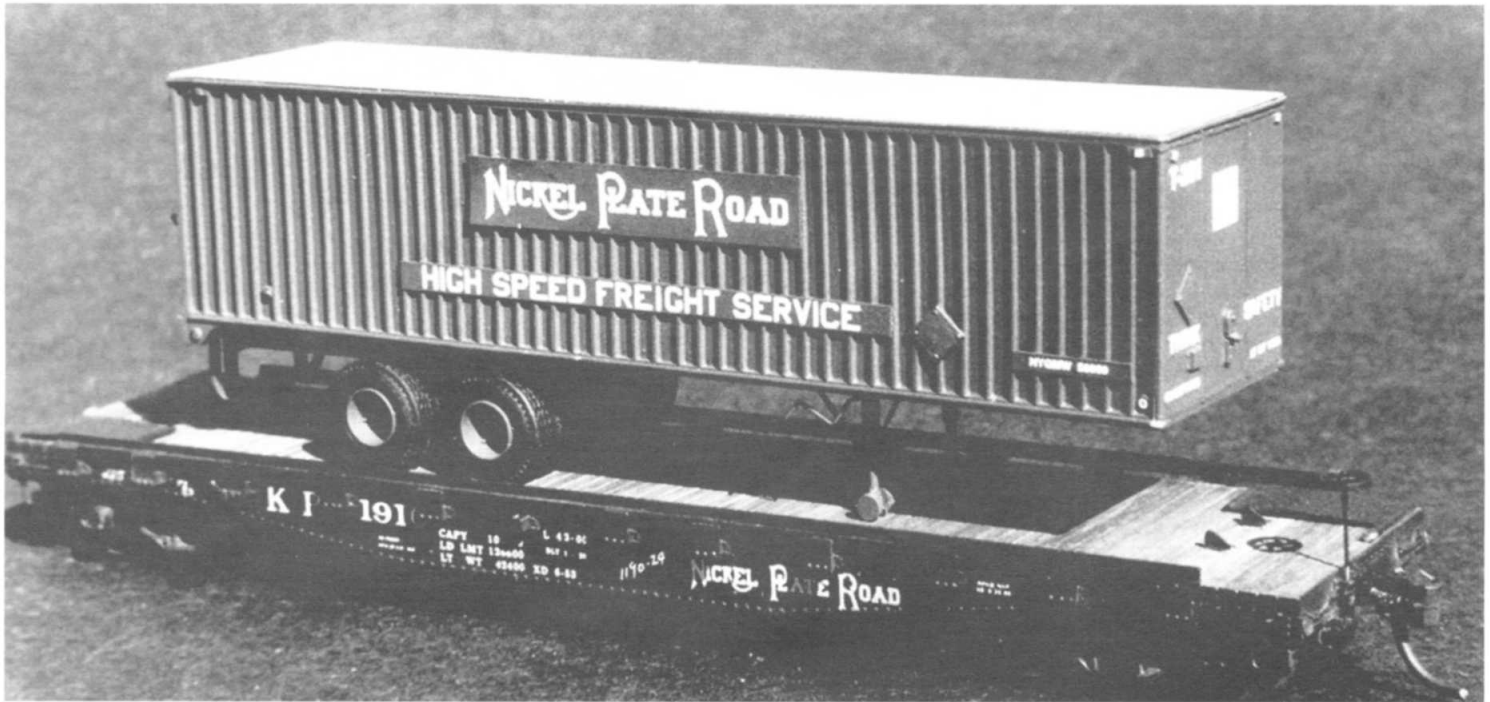




# Fruehauf Piggyback Trailers



In mid-1954, U.S. railroads began their first comprehensive efforts to operate piggyback trailers. The Nickel Plate, Western Maryland, Reading, and Pittsburgh and West Virginia (often referred to as the alphabet route) created a pool service from the Mid-Atlantic states to Chicago and St. Louis and intermediate cities along their route. Simultaneously, the NKP and Wabash joined with the Lehigh Valley and Delaware, Lackawanna and Western for a similar linkage to these two major Midwestern cities from the East. At the same time, the Pennsy initiated its own service from the East Coast to St. Louis and Chicago.

These railroads found the new operations profitable because they were allowed to charge the same rate as over-the-road haulers when using railroad owned trailers. This rate exceeded that which the railroads could charge for freight car loads. Since piggyback service offered the potential of stemming the steady inroads of trucking companies, the railroads were well motivated by competitive interests.

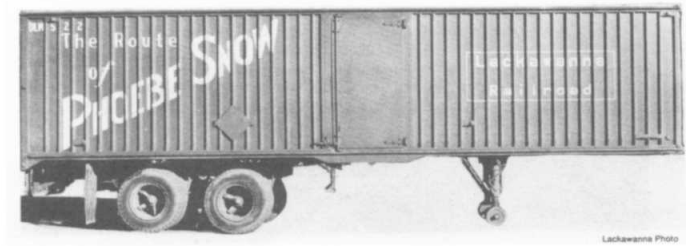
At inception the railroads needed to select a style of trailer and manufacturer. Management was concerned that commonly available over-the-road trailers would not withstand the movement in freight trains. Fruehauf Trailer offered a vertical side-post trailer that seemed sturdy enough for use on flatcars. The pool service roads of NKP, Wabash, LV, DL&W, WM and P&WV, as well as the Pennsy, settled on this design of trailer for early piggy-back operations.



An additional consideration was side doors: trailers with or without a side door (the side door being on the right or curb side of the trailer when viewed from the rear). Most roads purchased a combination. The LV and DL&W largely chose side door trailers. The Pennsy opted for side doors, as well. The NKP, WM and P&WV—perhaps in consideration of their pooling of equipment—chose trailers without side doors. Length was another variation. The most common was 32'5" or 32', but the Pennsy selected 30' trailers, as well as 32 footers.

Another characteristic of the early purchases was a flat front without ribs. In short order this design changed to ribs on the front face and a rounded front with ribs. The original

trailers were durable and the flat, non-ribbed front version remained around for a long period, however.



The railroads simultaneously modified flat cars for trailer loading. Each road picked available equipment for a simple adaptation. Off ramps at alternate corners and railing along both sides of the car for tie-down were the standard.

Visually the most obvious modification was the device to which the trailers were chained. Some roads placed old rail on risers from the flatcar stake pockets, mounted the entire length of the car. The rail head provided a convenient shape for clamps and the full length provided limitless locations.

The selected flats varied widely. The NKP modified a group of former W&LE 42' flats built in 1929. At the same time the Lehigh Valley selected 70 ton cast frame flats—based on the PRR F-30A design—from 1950. The Pennsy adapted their F-30D to become the F-30G.



Early mounting techniques were simple. The dolly was lowered and a screw jack or wood blocking was mounted in the front. The prolific use of chain was common initially, far more than would prove necessary over time.

The painting of trailers came during the period when railroads were advancing their own advertising slogans on freight cars. Thus it was not unexpected that management would place some importance on attractive colors. The NKP

Painted its trailers a medium blue, WM and LV oxide red, DL&W medium green and P&WV light tan.

The Pennsy initiated a competing piggyback service at the same time as the alphabet roads and the LV and DL&W. The PRR, of course, could handle the trailers from the East Coast to Chicago and St. Louis without transfer to other roads.



As with the competing roads, the Pennsy purchased 150 Fruehauf ribbed trailers, but of a 30 ft. length. These had a side door. The road identified the trailer length by the first two digits of the trailer number. Single trailers were placed on F-30D flatcars adapted for piggyback service.

A small lot of 32 footers, with and without tops, was quickly added, though they were largely overshadowed by the mass of 30 footers. To this mix the Pennsy also added a block of LCL trailers that had been in over the road service. These were 30 footers also, but had a corrugated sheet at the bottom of the trailer and a diagonal placard for the road name.

The Pennsy made a concerted effort to draw attention to the new service by making the trailers bright and colorful. The trailers were painted in bright red. Lettering was placed directly on the trailer sides (rather than the diagonal placard used on the LCL and some other trailers) despite the difficulty of the painters' job. The lettering was dark red with white outline. The trailers were given a herald of dark red, white and gold, one centered on the front and one on each rear door. The Pennsy also gave Fruehauf recognition with the winged symbol on the front and its name on the rear.

The advent of the Midwestern pool or cooperative service immediately mixed the trailers and flats of cooperating smaller railroads. In short order, the trailers of the various roads began to appear on other roads and their flat cars. Soon the Pennsy's and smaller road's trailers were also intermingled. In addition, loads beyond St. Louis and Chicago moved on the Western railroads. Thus a snapshot in 1954-55 of piggyback operations was a potpourri of divergent equipment.

Sunshine kits are vacuum cast in gray urethane. Kits include all detailing parts, including the tie-down detail, such as chain, spring packages, chain ratchets, two types of trailer supports, off ramps, and chocks. Full instructions and a Prototype Data Sheet are provided.

- \_\_\_ Kit#82.11 NKP Fruehauf Ribbed 32' Trailer without side door, blue body with white decals (1954-60s), \$36
- \_\_\_ Kit#82.12 WM Fruehauf Ribbed 32' Trailer without side door, oxide red body with white decals (1954-60s), \$36
- \_\_\_ Kit#82.13 P&WV Fruehauf Ribbed 32' Trailer without side door, tan body with orange decals (1954-60s), \$36
- \_\_\_ Kit#82.15 LV Fruehauf Ribbed 32' Trailer with side door, oxide red body with white decals (1954-60s), \$36
- \_\_\_ Kit#82.16 DL&W Fruehauf Ribbed 32' Trailer with side door, green body with white decals (1954-60s), \$36
- \_\_\_ Kit#82.17 PRR Fruehauf Ribbed 30' Trailer with side door, bright red body with Tuscan Red, gold and white decals (1954-60s), \$36
- M3** \_\_\_ NKP Mini-Kit for converting Red Caboose flat to trailer flat, white decals (1954-60s), \$12
- M4** \_\_\_ LV Mini-Kit for converting Bowser PRR F-30A to LV trailer flat, black and white decals (1954-60s), \$12

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Street \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Add \$4.00 for shipping per five kits in U.S. ( MO residents add 7.6% ). Canada \$15.88 for six kits  
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