



Burlington Northern Railroad

Prototype Information

Train Type: Coal Train Unit Freight

Engines: six EMD SD60M's

Origination: Gillette, Wyoming

Era: 1985

Destination: Memphis, TN

Route: Omaha, Kansas City, Springfield, West Memphis

Consist: Coal gondolas w/ double rotary gondola mid-train

Train Information

Motive Power: Analog DCC Sound

Six powered Atlas engines w/ Digitrax decoders installed

Number of cars: 108 Caboose FRED

Length: 38.1 ft = 6094 scale ft = 1.15 scale miles

Speed: 50 mph (approximately)

Conductor: **Steve (Razor) Gillett**

In the '70s, 11 open pit, low sulfur coal mines were developed near Gillette, Wyoming. Unit coal trains of 100+ cars picked up coal from the mines and delivered it to power plants across the Southwestern, Western and Midwestern United States. These trains never stopped. The coal was loaded on the fly and the coal gondolas were dumped on the fly.

Each coal gondola has a rotary coupler on one end (the end with the white stripe) so the cars can be locked into the rotary dumper, spun upside down along the coupler axis, and then re-righted. All cars in the front half of the train have the rotary coupler on the front end and all cars on the back half of the train have the rotary coupler on the back end. The center hopper is a "Double Rotor" car. With this arrangement, the engines and caboose never have to be uncoupled and the train can move at a constant speed through the dumper, then head back to Gillette to be re-loaded on the fly as the train passes under the tipple.