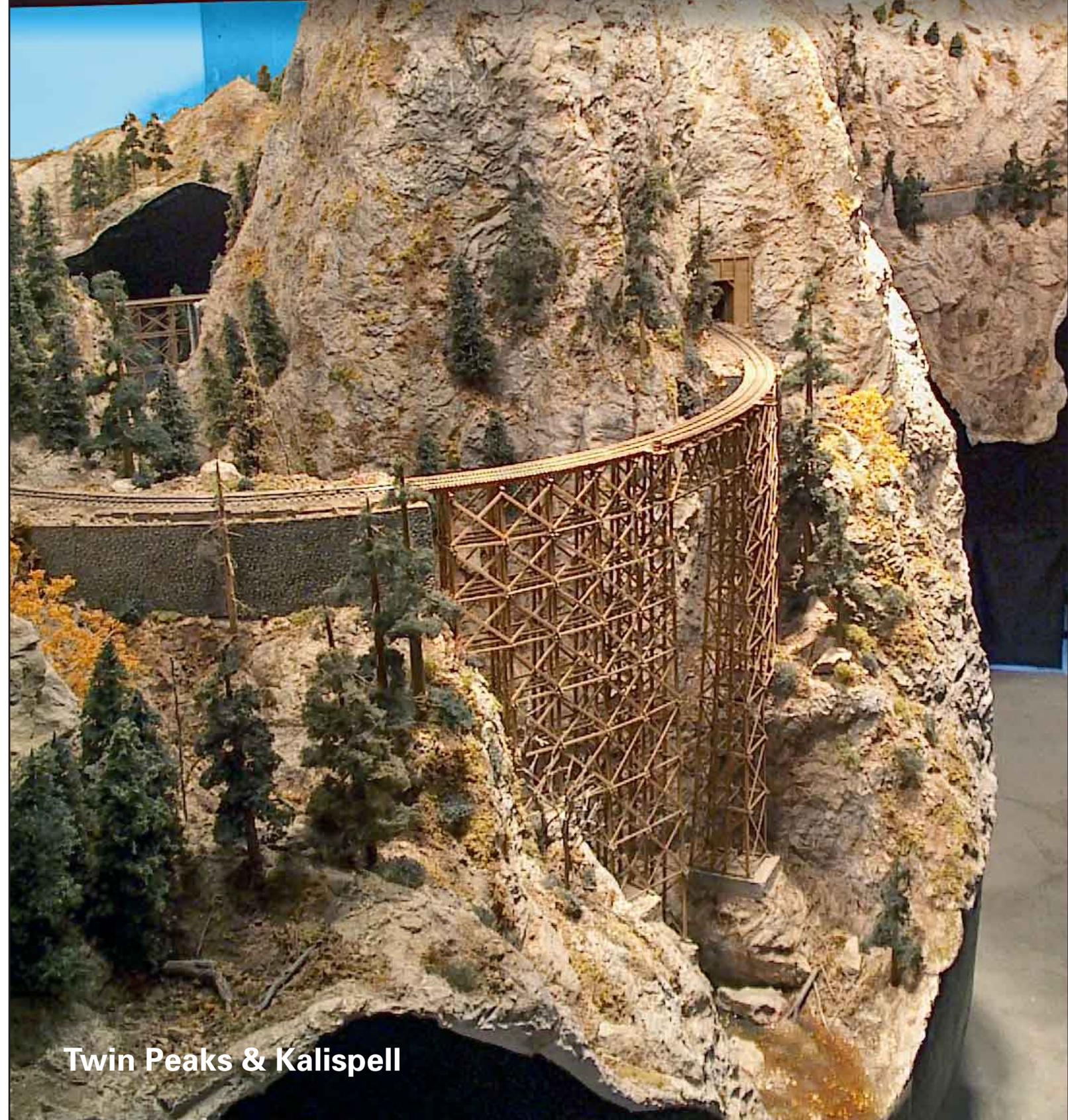


Northern Colorado Model Railroaders

# ***DISPATCH***

December 2000

Volume XXI Number 12



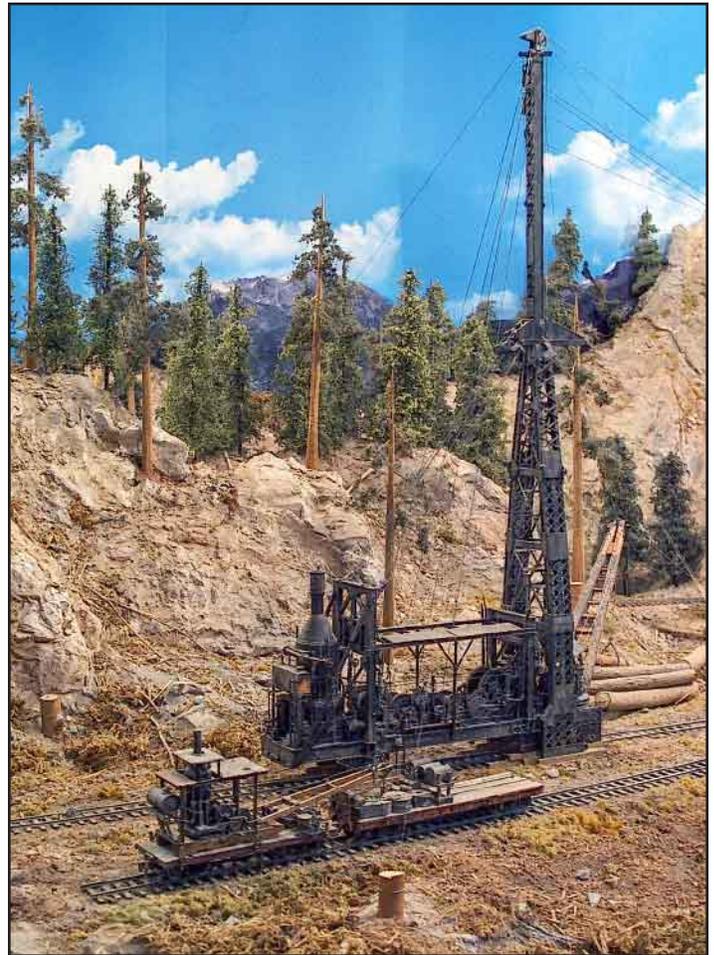
**Twin Peaks & Kalispell**

# TWIN PEAKS & KALISPELL

**A** visit to Randy Ditton's HO<sub>n3</sub> Twin Peaks & Kalispell is always a treat. Last September Randy opened the layout for a tour. Here is a small sampling of photos from that visit.

This month's cover shows a visitor's spectacular first view of the layout, shot from the bottom of the basement steps. Rumor has it that there are over 400 pounds of Hydrocal plaster in the mountain alone!

The tower skidder (photo right) has to be the layout's signature piece. Randy scratch built it over an 8 year period from O-scale drawings that he scaled down. The detail is just amazing, and really must be seen in person.

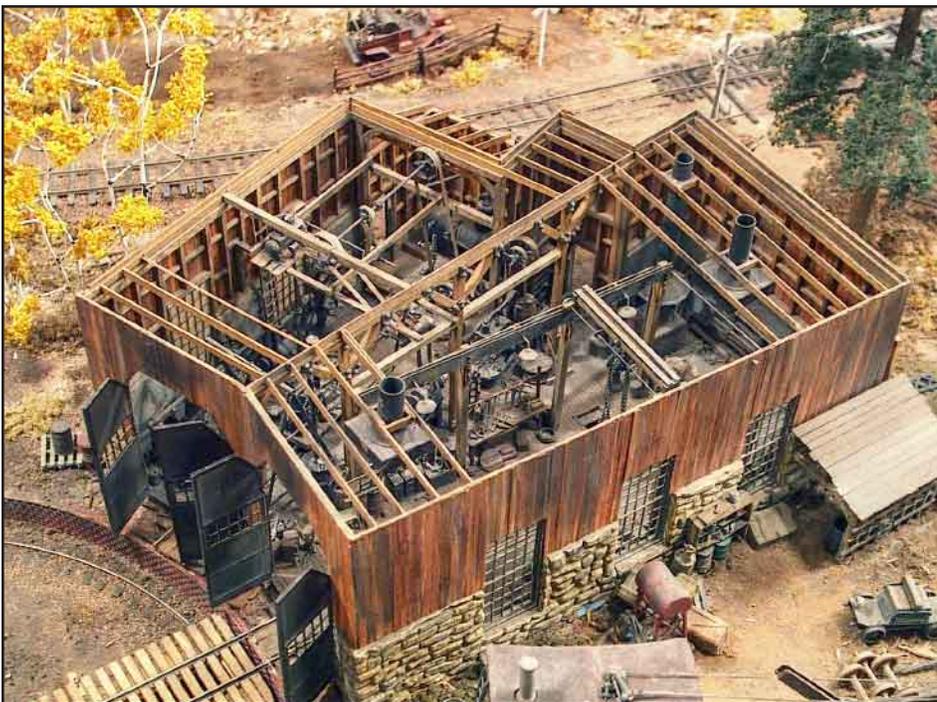


Above we see one of Pete Porter's beautifully detailed brass Rio Grande locomotives hugging a narrow ledge along a rock cut. Although Randy mixed the rock color washes himself (getting the color right is critical), he left much of the application to his kids because "they don't over analyze everything..."

Another of Pete's locomotives just pulled into the station (photo right.) The building and track are situated at an angle to the front of the layout, and a carefully placed tree frames the scene.

The station's bay window, just visible to the right of the locomotive smoke-box, is lighted and features a detailed interior with the station master at his desk.





Above we see 2 examples of Randy's great scene design and composition. A beautifully detailed foreground tree separates these two scenes. Many of the small shrubs and other details are planted in modelling clay. This makes planting them a lot easier, and minimizes damage when something gets inadvertently bumped.



The engine house (center left) is amazing. I could spend hours studying the castings and other details, each of which is precisely detailed again with paint. Hopefully an enlargement of the workbench (center right) better shows some the finer details, but my digital camera just could not do the model the justice it deserves.

The sawmill (left, under construction) shows visual design synergy between the scenery and the track. A critter (the small locomotive to the right) is about to follow a curved path across the bridge, which leads the eye through the scene and makes for a much stronger composition.

How did all this visual design happen? Well, Randy admits that he attended a few college art classes and worked hard to apply principles he learned to the layout. **I**