

Walthers Heavyweight Coach

By Steve Sandifer

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In the Spring of 2006, Walthers introduced their ATSF prototype heavyweight chair car. This car was the project of several top Santa Fe modelers and has been well produced.

The definitive reference for these cars is the *Coach Book* produced by Dr. John McCall and published by the Society. The prototype for the model is the 10-car series 3060-3069 built by Pullman in 1929. These are discussed in the Society book, page 134. These have the same window pattern as 3050-3059, but the underbody of the 3050 is arranged differently. The 3060-series had a pressurized water tank between the battery boxes, while the 3050-series had overhead water tanks and thus no underbody tank, with the battery boxes side-by-side in the middle. On page 173 of the society *Coach book* are two photos. The photo of 3051 has a different underbody arrangement to the Walthers model while the photo of 3060 matches it exactly. The 3100-3109 chair-smokers shared the same window pattern but with differing a/c roof hatch location, underbody, and of course interior. The model is of the air-conditioned version which would date from around 1935. It is the first plastic cars to feature the steam ejector air conditioning equipment.

Walthers released the car in three paint schemes.

Andy Sperandio wrote that "Walthers' green cars with black roofs are correct for my 1947 period, and of course they're good for many years earlier than that and into the 60s. I don't know what color guidance Walthers is using for the coach green." (It is a slightly lighter and more olive green than they used on their Pullman cars, and the trucks are a different green from the body simulating "truck brown." SF painting guides called for the vestibule steps to be body color. Later, everything below the top of the channel sill got painted "truck brown.")

The two-tone gray scheme is the 1947-and-later scheme for modernized heavyweights without the silver-gray pinstripes. The Society Painting and Lettering guide (Appendix 1, page 3) shows

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that 3064 was painted 2-tone gray on 4-30-1951, and 3065 was painted 2-tone gray on 10-9-1952. Charlie Slater reports having "pictures of both 3064 and 3065 taken in the early 1960's and they both are painted coach green with a black roof." Their TTG lives must have been limited.

Sperandeo also said, "The green carbody with the silver roof is really only correct for chair cars with package air-conditioning renumbered to the 1101 series. This was done about 1953. The Walthers model will only have steam ejector A/C as far as I know, and people at Walthers know the silver roof isn't correct for that but they think it will attract its share of buyers." That being said, there is a photo of a coach with a silver roof being converted to a Horse Express car on page 135 of the Coach book. The photo explanation calls it 3052, although there is nothing in the photo itself to confirm that identification.

Heavyweight coaches and chair cars definitely appeared in the solid gray (not produced by Walthers), however, and there are photos of examples in the McCall book. We await proof that the 3060 cars were ever painted that way.

The 3050 series operated as chair cars into the 60s except for 3059 which was converted to chair diner 1518 in 1950. The others became MOW cars, Horse Express cars, or were sold. The 3050, 3053, 3055, and 3057 served as chair cars until 1970-71.

The 3060 cars all operated as Chair Cars until the late 60s except for 3068 and 3069 which were converted to Chair-Diners 1519 and 1520 in 1950.

Andy Sperandeo: "Heavyweight chair cars and smokers were used on the *California Limited* in my period. *The Scout* at that time had a heavyweight chair car from a connecting train, and of course the San Bernardino locals had a heavyweight chair car. The *California Limited* also used a coach-dormitory car that I hope can be kitbashed from the Walthers model. I'm modeling a summer 1947 *Grand Canyon* consist that has all lightweight chair cars, but heavyweight chair cars were used on these trains both earlier and later. As Bill Messecar has pointed out, chair cars or coaches were used as rider cars on trains 7 & 8 when the rider combines were being reconditioned, I think in the late '50s or early '60s. And of course, chair cars are useful for all kinds of specials and extra sections."

Dr. John McCall reviewed the Walthers cars. "Green with black roof, truck brown trucks and black underbody. Quite good and accurate. The battery boxes could have been set outboard a little bit - about a scale foot - and painted that truck brown, as should have been the steps (which were carbody green). Trucks are the right pattern and the roof looks good for the a/c version. The interior is right for the chair car series 3050-3069."

The trucks on these cars are a new casting. If your layout has tight curves, there may be insufficient swing to these trucks requiring modification. The most common problem is with the frame mounted generator.

Walthers includes decals in their kit so the modeler can number the car as he wishes. The wire grabs by the doors are installed, but the roof grabs and a myriad of handles for the steam ejector hatches are in a bag for the modeler to decide if he wants to install. The air conditioning hatch

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handles make this a sizable job. The underbody has key visible elements, but it is lacking in fine detail.

As to kitbashing options, Dr. McCall added, "With minor window modification and change in the interior detail - the series 799-808 Partition Chair/Coach/ later used as rider cars on #3-4 could be made quite nicely in both green and single gray versions."

"Topeka's converted three of the 3050-3069 series to Chair Diners in 1950. Such cars were always green with black roof. Of course, the interior would have to be modified. These Chair Diners - 1518-1520 (from 3059, 3068, and 2069) - were alike except that 1518 had a slightly different window arrangement. Again, with minor window closure, etc., such a conversion of the basic Walther's model is possible by reference to Coach book floor plans."

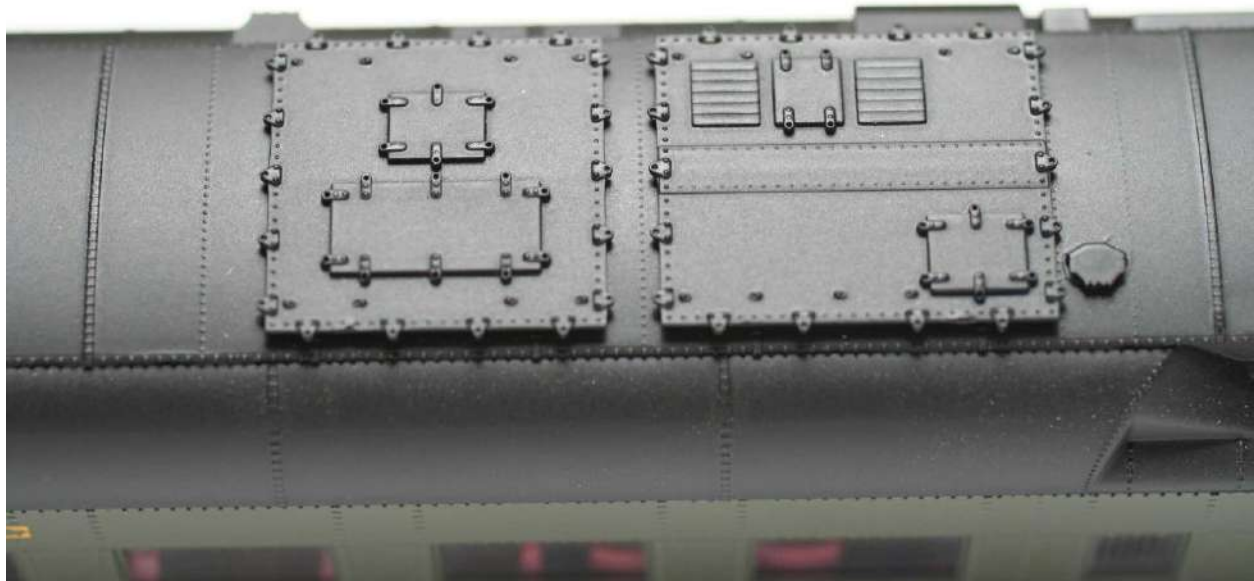
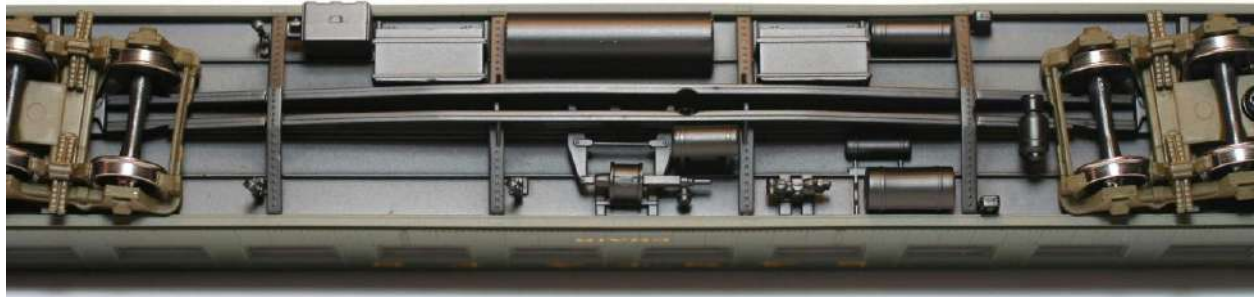
"Finally, with somewhat more window closure etc., the basic car could be converted to one of the "1527" etc., Lounge-Dorm conversions Topeka did in 1948. These were the last HW lounges ATSF had. They were turned out, initially, in shadow-line paint and were later repainted to the two-tone gray (with black roof and dark gray trucks etc.) circa 1950." Colin Kikawa has done just that (see presentation elsewhere on this website).

3100, 3101, 3103, 3104, 3105, 3106 subsequently became Coach-Baggage combines in 1956/57 for mixed train service.

The trucks for these cars are also new: straight-equalized trucks. John Fiscella reported: "It was *the first* integral pedestal truck widely produced when Commonwealth Steel (CS) introduced it in 1917. It was also one of the first 6-wheel trucks with clasp brakes and 11' WB, I believe. (Pullman's first integral pedestal truck was introduced into production in 1922, the 242. The frames for that truck were not made by C.S., but by A.S.F. or Malleable Steel. Later, Pullman outsourced the frames for their 242 and 242-A to CS) A 4-wheel versions of that truck ("CS:41-EIN" and "41-EFIN") were also made by C.S. and later by General Steel Castings Corp. (GSC). Later than that (perhaps starting in c1928), Pullman "allowed" their customers to specify the CS:242 for Pullman-built cars; Pullman never actually built that truck. That is somewhat hard to prove without production photos or eyewitnesses, because Pullman or Malleable Steel never had official unambiguous castings marks, whereas CS and GSC (its successor) did. That CS:242 truck continued to be made by GSC after the GSC takeover of CS in 1930-31, well into the early 40's, because ACF, CCF, Bethlehem Steel, and Standard Steel made heavyweight cars into that time period, and they were good CS-GSC customers, because Pullman wouldn't sell to competitors. 40's examples of the CS:242 truck display the GSC shield-shaped casting mark, instead of the squat diamond-enclosed-S castings mark of C.S. Good customers of the CS:242 truck (design) were ACL, ATSF, CN, CP, GN, MP, NYC and others."

All in all, the Walthers effort is a great and needed model.

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Steam Ejector Air Conditioning Hatches without handles

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Truck clearance