

GRANDE GOLD

A LEVIN DIVISION PUBLICATION

FROM THE YARD MASTER

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SAN LUIS CENTRAL R.R.

When you think of the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad the impression seems to always be of mountain railroading and multiple lash ups of loco power. This railroads operation in the San Luis Valley was something different with usually only one locomotive powering the locals to South Fork and Antonito. This was great for one who had become interested in smaller railroad operations and short lines. In the valley was the best of both worlds, the simple operation of the DRGW and a short line the San Luis Central R.R. I first came upon this little railroad in 1985. A tour of the line from the roadside resulted in nearly all the tracks layouts being recorded. It was not a good day for photography due to the low light from an impending thunder storm.

It was not until 1995 on another visit



Nature's Grande Gold.

that we found a large plant operated by Staley which was located on a short spur from the mainline.

The main yard at Center and the adjacent industries that it served were recorded on video. This was a great medium to gather a large amount of information which could be helpful for the modeler. When I started out to remodel part of my layout I came up with a scenario that I could do part of the alterations which would continued on page 3

Below; A general view of part of the yards at Alamosa looking to the west. Rich Schwerer, a great friend and rail fan from Denver is recording his view of this area.

FUTURE ISSUES

THE CREEDE BRANCH

SAN LUIS CENTRAL R.R.

**FURTHER TRACK PLANS
PROTOTYPE AND MODEL.**

**THE UNION RAILROAD OF
OREGON - A PROTOTYPE
FOR A SHELF LAYOUT.**



ALAMOSA

MY MODEL

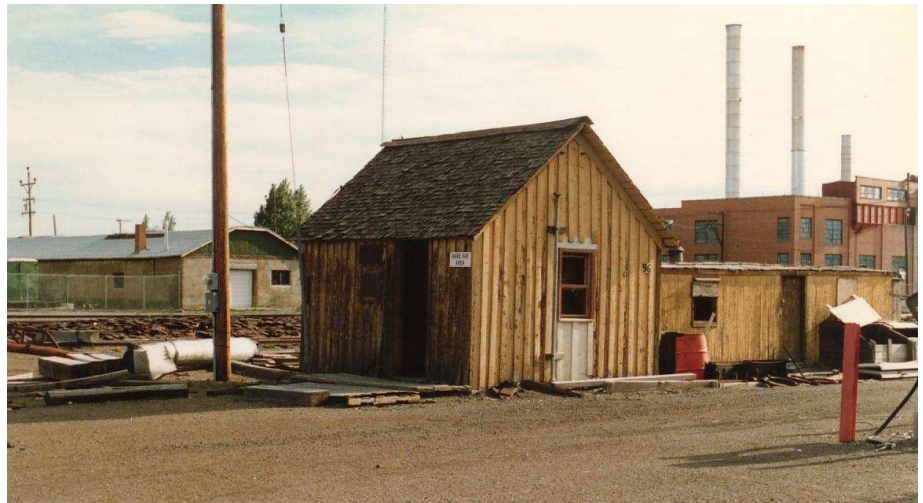
With the space available, a shelf about 17 inches wide by nearly 13 feet long, it was impossible to create an accurate copy of the yards at Alamosa. It was necessary to delete any of the sidings and industries that were located on the northern or depot side of the yards. The number of the yard tracks had to be reduced. The loco facilities would be a simple sanding tower and a small fuel supply all located on a stub track long enough for three GP40's.

The track plan for my model is shown on page 4. Similar to the prototype there is a track which will serve a fuel dealer, a flour mill, a moving company storage warehouse and perhaps another warehouse. A separate track will serve the coal unloading facilities for the local power plant. Another track will allow logs to be loaded onto bulk head flats, which on the prototype, is a relatively new source of revenue. Next to the loco track is a siding serving a local bulk cement dealer. The main part of the yard consists of four tracks, together with a switching lead which runs parallel to the main line for several feet on the other side of the wall. Track four which gives access to the industries has been purposely spaced wider apart from the other yard tracks, so as to give the impression of the wide spaces found in the prototype Alamosa yard. The model yard has been wired so that it is possible to operate three locomotives in the confines of the yard at one time, using home made hand held tethered throttles.

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Above; The Alamosa yards looking west and the industries served by the railroad in 1988.



Above; One of the railroad structures located in the Alamosa yards. It seems to have character all of it's own.



Above; Another view of the Alamosa yards looking west with the little yard buildings, the transfer crane, and a caboose at some time used on the locals to South Fork or Antonito. Even part of the dual gauge tracks that once made this yard so interesting still remains on some sidings.

Continued from p 1.

give me some of the elements of the operations from Alamosa to South Fork without wrecking any of my existing layout.

If I chose to complete my ideas for the top deck, the existing layout on the lower level would have to be demolished and rebuilt with same foot print as planned for the top deck. In the next issue of *Grande Gold* ideas for a track layout representing the San Luis Central R.R. will be presented.

Because of space limitations I decided to locate my representation of Monte Vista between Alamosa and what would be Sugar Junction rather than as it is on the prototype. In doing this the proposed peninsular which would extend into the length of the layout room rather than across the breadth. The Y at Sugar Junction could be used for turning the locomotive on the run to Monte Vista as well as the interchange with the short line. In the meantime there is sufficient tonnage to keep the South Fork local very busy without any interchange traffic from the San Luis Central Railroad.

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Above; The local from South Fork hauled by GP 40-2 3119 about to enter the yard at Alamosa. Note that several track switches have been removed.



Above; Caboose 01410 sitting in the yards at Alamosa. Judging from the rust on the wheels it had not been used for some time.

Below; The loco re-fuelling plant at Alamosa.
Left; The sanding facility at Alamosa. Both of these railroad structures would make ideal prototypes for modeling purposes.
The two lower photos by Roland Levin of Sweden.



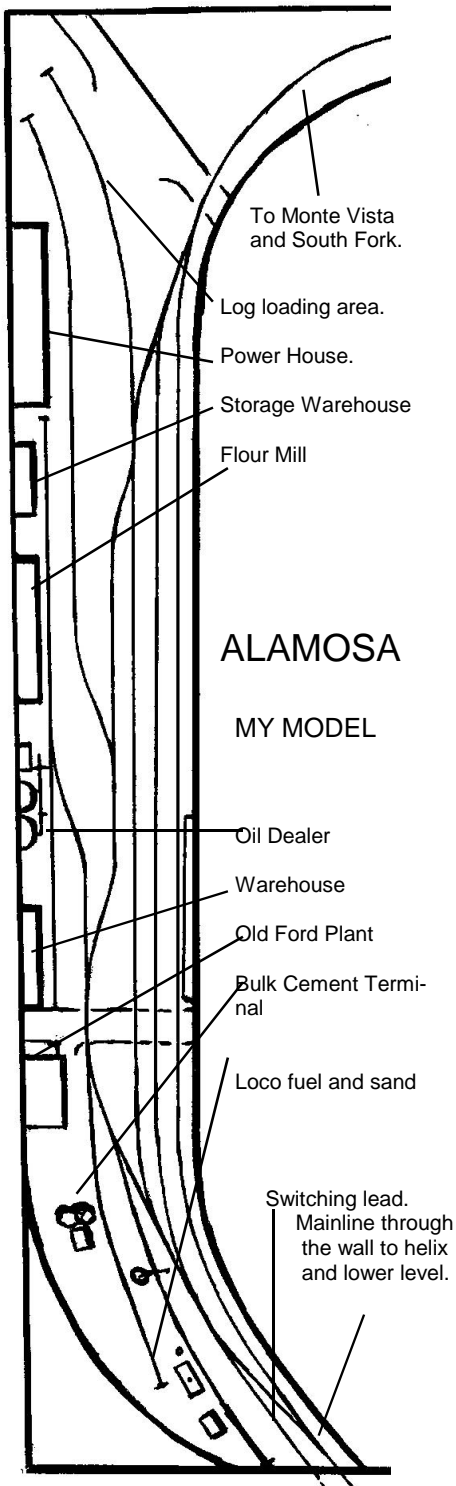
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Above; The original layout before the top deck was built.
Below; The same area with part of the Alamosa yards visible on the top deck. The coal mine became a casualty of the rebuilding.



Right; A view of the Alamosa yards looking towards the location of the power house. Several of the tracks have been widely spaced in a effort to copy a feature of the prototype.

Left; Track plan of my model of Alamosa. None of the buildings which are proposed for this part of the layout have been completed. The tracks have been laid and the design of the yard has been successfully tested for switching and making up train consists for Monte Vista and South Fork and back to the original part of the layout via the helix.

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