

# Modeling the CGW's NW-2 and TR-2 Switchers

By Bill Landis, Reprinted from Summer 1987 *North Western Lines*

*Editor's Note: The original photos that accompanied the article are currently unavailable, possibly will be featured in a future update.--CLK. Photos credits from top to bottom: David Hamley (Mike Guss collection); Bob Bullermann; Mike Schafer (J. H. Yanke collection) These photos show the progression of paint schemes through the years. The three-color scheme was on these units as built, but this scheme was out of use by 1954. This scheme only lasted 10 years until being replaced by red and black in 1964.*



The years 1948 and 1949 brought major changes to the motive power roster of the Chicago Great Western . Not least among these was the total replacement of steam yard engines with new diesel switchers . These years saw the arrival of 17 Electro Motive Division NW-2 switchers (numbers 16-31 and 42) and nine sets of TR-2 switchers (numbers 58-66, A and B units), more commonly called cow and calf sets . The TR-2's were essentially two NW-2's semi-permanently coupled, the calf built without cab and controls . Each unit was powered by EMD's dependable, 12-cylinder 567 engine producing 1000 horsepower.

The TR-2's put out 2000 horsepower . These engines became the backbone of the Great Western's switcher fleet . Even in 1985, a number were seen plying the rails of the Chicago & North Western, 37 years after their delivery.

As delivered by EMD, these locos were painted in an attractive three color paint scheme : maroon, red, and black with yellow-gold striping . A number later received the "maroon dip" scheme (as several former CGW employees have referred to the all-maroon paint scheme of the later Fifties and early Sixties) . Some were even painted in CGW's last scheme before the C&NW merger - an attractive red carbody with black roof, frame and long-hood top portion . All three schemes survived into the CNW era .

As was often the case, these locos received the over-abundance of grab irons and other CGW distinctive details .

The prototype can be fairly simply modeled using a SW 1500 "cow" shell and frame from Athearn for the NW-2, and a "cow" and "calf" for the TR-2 . By adding various parts from the detail manufacturers a highly accurate model can be produced .

My model is an almost out-of-the-box Athearn with only slight modifications to the shell . The prototype's front cab windows were rounded on top while Athearn's are square . I used a round Xacto file to get the proper shape . Also, the radiator on the front of Athearn's shell is far too long . It should only be about 3'4" from top to bottom, so I filed about a scale 1'8" from the bottom of the radiator. A small strip of angle plastic cut from a packaging bubble finished the bottom of the radiator.

If you choose to add all the grab irons, hand holds, coupler lift bars, etc., now would be the time to drill the holes . On my model, I added only the grab right below the radiator .

I chose to paint my model in the original three color scheme.

Microscale makes a decal set for this model : Set #4011 . (By the way the "calf" for my #64 is in the paint shop and was not ready for the photo session .) I painted my model using Microscale's instructions, but have since found that they are incorrect . They show these units painted all black with only the one band of red going all around the loco . They forgot about the maroon . Actually, only the frame, trucks and cab roof should be painted black . Everything above the first gold stripe except the cab roof is maroon . Also the area inside the gold stripes around the bottom of the cab and the bottom of the long hood is maroon .

Paint coloration is a problem . I have seen some photos which show the maroon as almost a chocolate brown, and others as purple . (As a kid, I always thought that the CGW's engines were painted purple!) It appears that the Great Western's maroon weathered badly through the years, starting out a deep, dark maroon that looked almost chocolate brown but weathered to almost purple . I feel that almost any shade of maroon would be "accurate", depending on how well-weathered your loco is . I use Floquil's "Maroon" straight from the bottle with a little (about 5%) "Hi-Gloss" mixed in for decal adherence .

The red color presents another problem . Red also tends to weather poorly. My prototype pictures show various shades of red - from deep, almost scarlet red to nearly orange . It appears to me that originally the red was an orange-red, but over the years faded to the darker, duller color. Floquil's "SP Scarlet" is a good starting place, in my opinion. On several other projects I have mixed up bottles and bottles of CGW red and, when finally satisfied, found the color almost indistinguishable from the "SP Scarlet" . Again, add 5% "Hi-Gloss" for decal adherence .

I would suggest a toned-down Floquil "Engine Black" for the black to make the detail more visible . I use nine parts of "Engine Black" to one part "Grimy Black."

Take your time applying the Microscale decals following the manufacturer's instructions . When everything is dry, spray the model with your favorite flat finish, weather it a bit more, and sit back and enjoy your handiwork . Or better yet, take the engine down to the layout, couple up a few cars and relive the Chicago Great Western .