

Mohawk Valley Southern

Bernie Messenger

The MVS Southern is a nice layout to watch trains run. After about fifteen years it has grown to be an operational point to point working railroad. It begins at Buffalo, NY and terminates at Massachusetts having two yards between. A typical operation session moves about 100 cars utilizing twenty trains. These include local switching, through freights, passenger and coal trains. This layout occupies four rooms in the basement. Physically it has ample room for moving. Thanks to Ken Cameron and others this layout has a complete signal system running on CTC or ABS. One room houses the dispatcher's desk. The crews keep in radio contact with the Dispatcher and visa versa. A separate phone system connects the staging yards and yard operators to each other when empty cars may be required from one yard to the other.

Contact Info

Bernard and Sharon Messenger

9388 Paris Hill Road

Sauquoit, NY 13456

(315)737-7437

hernardmessenger@gmail.com

Layout at a glance

Name: Mohawk Valley Southern

Scale: HO

Size: 28x14', 12x15', 10x13' and 1x13'

Prototype: NS/ with CSX trackage rights

Locale: Follows Rt 20 Upstate NY

Era: Present

Style: Linear walk around

Mainline run: 220'

Minimum radius: 36"

Minimum turnout: All #6

Maximum grade: 3%

Benchwork: open grid

Height: 42" to 50"

Roadbed: cork and ceiling tiles

Track: Atlas code 100 and yard code 83

Scenery: Hydrocal

Backdrop: Painted wall and photos

Control: DCC/Digitrax



Operating positions:

Crews assigned via Schedule. Three or more operators are running at once.

These crews will run trains as per their placement in the schedule so after running the way freight; your next train may be a through freight, passenger or coal drag. Three passing sidings are used quite a bit. Another passing siding comes into play at Avon were the an other way freight uses it as a turn.

One yard master: One at Paris Yard.

Dispatcher: Controls train movement

Comments:

The waybill system uses one modified laminated 2.5x3 index card for each car. This shows where the car has been where it is and where it is headed. It's simple and straight forward. Another card gives the operator his origin destination and stops. No switchlists are used. These sessions last from one to four in the afternoon. The drops and pickups are pretty straight forward so there are no switching puzzles. It really is fun to operate. And you can put your coffee cups and soda on the layout.

I will have people on hand to assist those who sign up if it is needed. I hope this overview has been helpful to you. Regards and happy model railroading.