

11. Todd Hermann's Ironton RR #750



The Ironton Railroad was an eastern Pennsylvania short line jointly owned by the Lehigh Valley and Reading railroads. Despite its name, by the mid-1950s the line originated mostly bulk cement, handing a good portion of that traffic off to Reading in West Catasauqua, PA. I model just a short portion of the Ironton's interchange that connects to the Reading on my HO scale Catasauqua Branch layout. To serve that interchange, I needed some Ironton power. In 1955, the line rostered just two locomotives, numbered 750 and 751, both Baldwin DS-4-4-1000 switchers. The family connection to the Reading was quite apparent from the color scheme and other details on these units. These units were built by Baldwin in 1948-49 as add-ons to larger RDG orders. Clearly, the Ironton had no interest in designing its own unique paint scheme.

My version of #750 started out as an undecorated Stewart Hobbies DS-4-4-1000. It's a twenty-year old model, but with some upgrades it holds up well. I detailed it using a set of etched stainless-steel parts from KV Models designed to fit the Stewart/Bowser Baldwins switchers. Adding the KV parts requires some surgery to remove the cast-on grills from the original body shell, but the result is worth it in my view. I added the typical Reading-style rain gutters on the cab roof and a two-chime horn, both from Cal-Scale. The flip-top cap on the exhaust stack was another unique feature on these units. I scratch built it using styrene.



I painted the unit with Scalecoat II Pullman Green and decaled with a mix of sets from CMR Products and Microscale. Internally, the loco features Stewart's original Canon can motor and drivetrain paired with an ESU Micro decoder, one of their "keep alive" capacitors, and a Scale Sound Systems speaker. The Ironton was known for keeping its locomotives in good shape, so the weathering is relatively minimal. I used a wash of light gray gouache, along with Pan Pastels to achieve the look I wanted for this Pennsylvania Cement Belt workhorse. **Todd Hermann**