

Alex Belida's Steam Log Derrick



Since I have a sawmill and a log dump, I needed a way to offload incoming logs and move them to the mill. I used a modified version of the so-called stiffleg or “Scotch” derrick to scratchbuild my HO scale model. It is made of stripwood, with Sculptamold pedestals and metal brackets cut from a soda can. The rivets securing the metal pieces to the wood beams are Tichy. There are two scale 29’ legs joined to a 22’ high vertical swivel post with a 36’ lift bar. I used plastic sprue scraps to create the support brackets for the lift bar. The pulley wheels were made by slicing thin sections from a small styrene tube. I used alcohol and brown shoe polish stain with a later brushing of India ink wash on the wood. I painted the brackets acrylic “Rust” and the pulley wheels and the hook assembly acrylic “Gun Metal”.

My next project was to scratchbuild a steam donkey hoist to run the cables and the liftbar. I took stripwood and made a frame to support the machine. I then took some old watch gears and glued them to a dowel. Once they sat in the frame, I added floorboards to support the boiler and drive mechanism. I wrapped thread around the dowels and used ink to stain the thread black.

I used a Woodland Scenics boiler and motor-pulley drive to provide power for the cable system. I used scrap plastic bits from an old, discarded Atlas switch mechanism to create the drive system linking the wheel on the boiler-driven motor to the cable drums similar to the piston system used on some prototype steam hoists.

It still has to be fully integrated into the layout and the cables still have to be completely hooked up. **Alex Belida, MMR**