



# The Nickel City Dispatch

*News From The Nickel City Line Railroad*

**FEBRUARY 2003**

## Formal Ops Sessions Off and Running

The Nickel City Line Railroad has been hosting several Formal Operations Sessions since November 2002. The sessions are designed to provide model railroaders with an



opportunity to run trains on a schedule which incorporates several tasks. A dispatcher and a yardmaster control train movements on the mainline and in Nickel City Yard. Each operations session incorporates a 24 hour day using a 6:1 fast clock (24 hours in 4 hours). A session begins at midnight and continues to midnight the following day. Daylight conditions are simulated using overhead spots for sun and blue lights for nighttime. Operators are truly operating in the dark during nighttime hours.

Even the best planned train schedules can quickly go awry when the unexpected occurs. Trains often stack up and the "pressure" is on to complete each assignment on schedule. Train crews keep the humor up even when things get tough.

On one recent occasion, a passenger train was delayed for "hours" while a freight train worked the mainline ahead. The engineer repeatedly warned the dispatcher that a "Senator on the Transportation Appropriations Committee was on board the train." After some time the same engineer radioed the dispatcher to inform him that the same senator had decided to take advantage of his captive audience and started to give a speech.

It's humorous events like the above, that add to the fun of an ops session. Besides light hearted moments, train crews get time to learn something about train operations and scheduling. All in all, train operations add another dimension to an already great hobby of model railroading!

