

Denver & Rio Grande Western Railway

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This American 'O' Scale layout portrays the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railway's Three Foot Gauge service in Colorado from Denver to Durango (450 miles) and then on to Silverton (a further 45 miles) or along the branch to Farmington in New Mexico (50 miles). The date is 1905 at the peak of goods and ore transportation for the precious metals (mainly silver) mining industry in Colorado. The layout is set around Durango and its silver ore smelter. There are some 1.5 scale miles of track as well as 38 turnouts ('points') and a turntable. Electric Dual Cab Control enables any two engines to be run at the same time. The daily train schedule at Durango showing arrivals and departures is set out overleaf. The full timetable can be seen on request.

Trains featured are the Durango/Denver Mails and the Durango/Silverton Accommodations. There are also Way Freights to and from Alamosa and Chama (between Durango and Denver), metallic ores brought down from Silverton for smelting, coal for the smelter from the Durango City Coal Mine just south of Durango, lumber from the Posta forests for the Durango Sawmills, and livestock movements (sheep from Silverton, beef and horses from Farmington). There is also domestic and industrial goods traffic - and snow plows that run in the winter.

The buildings around Durango (Smelter, Depot, Freight Depot, Engine House and Coaling Tower) are modelled on the Denver & Rio Grande originals after allowing for the layout's space limitations.

The rolling stock is predominantly of the period but with some variations in livery. As part of normal maintenance this winter some track within Denver Yard has been replaced and realigned. Fresh ballast has been laid down as part of this work.

The all-steam Engine Register now totals 14 and consists of two Porter 0-4-0 coal-fired Switchers, one Porter 0-4-2 wood-burning Switcher, one 2-4-4 Forney coal-fired Tank, eight 2-6-0 coal-fired Moguls and the Colorado Mining Company's 28 Ton coal-fired Climax and 14 Ton wood-burning Shay – the latter two are examples of geared engines used for haulage over temporary tracks involving sharp curves and steep gradients in rough and remote areas such as the Rocky Mountains in Colorado. Rio Grande Mogul 21 is a new arrival for switching; its tender has a Doghouse for the Brakeman to use during coupling/uncoupling work in the yards around Durango.

If you would like to drive an engine please ask the Engineer Staff who will show you how to use a mobile throttle. If you are new to model railways the Club hopes that driving an engine today will encourage you to take up railway modelling as a hobby - one from which you can derive much enjoyment as well as acquiring new friends and the skills for construction and operation of a layout of your own. Come and join us!

Please feel free to give advice and ask questions – your interest will be appreciated.

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