

Denver & Rio Grande Western Railway

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This American 'O' Scale (1:48) 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 set around 1905 at the peak of freight and ore transportation for the precious metals (mainly silver) mining industry in Colorado. The layout is based on Durango and its silver ore smelter. There are about 1.5 scale miles of track as well as 38 turnouts ('points') and a scale 48 foot diameter 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.

Trains featured are the Durango/Denver Mails, Durango/Silverton Accommodations and the Durango/Farmington Flyers. 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 domestic and industrial freight traffic plus, in winter, snow plows in action.

The layout buildings around Durango (Smelter, Station, Freight Depot, Engine House and Coaling Tower) have been modelled on the Denver & Rio Grande originals (many of which have been demolished, altered or rebuilt over the years since 1905).

The rolling stock is mostly of the period but with variations in livery. Some Denver & Rio Grande cars (as well as engine 138) have the Bumblebee (yellow) livery. The other engines are in the standard Vanderbilt (black) livery but with silver-grey smokeboxes and chimneys. All the engines are equipped with working headlights, and the cabooses, passenger cars and baggage cars have internal lights.

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 are geared engines used for haulage along temporary lightweight tracks laid in mining and forestry locations. At the last Show the Climax's front drive shaft failed; this shaft has been replaced.

If you would like to drive an engine and haul a train or shunt freight cars in the marshalling yard then please ask the Engineer Staff who will show you how to use one of the mobile throttles. 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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