



Portable Cane Track

Portable sections enabled the mills to lay temporary track into a cane field to load and transport the cane from the field to the permanent way. The earliest systems, as shown in these photos, used pressed metal sleepers bolted or welded to short lengths of lightweight rail. Curved sections were similar and had a fixed radius.



One half of a lightweight straight section with fastening yoke on nearest end. The white object is a metre measuring stick.

The rail sections could be carried by 1-2 men and were bolted together to reach the day's cutting site. The unballasted tracks were not heavy enough to support a locomotive, so wagons/trucks were hauled by horses or pushed by hand.



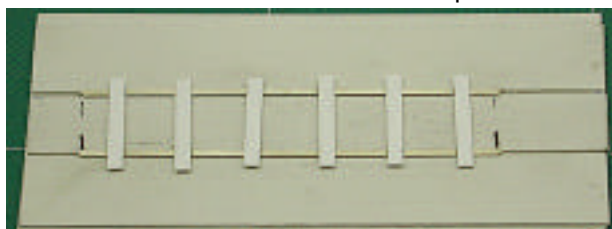
End of a curved 'climbing turnout', a special curved track to move between the permanent way and temporary tracks without requiring a regular turnout. This incline end was fitted over the permanent rails and bolted to the temporary field line so that a wagon/truck could be pushed up the incline and off into the cane field.

Eventually a British Standard was developed for a heavier weight of portable track to handle very light locomotives and heavier wagons/trucks.

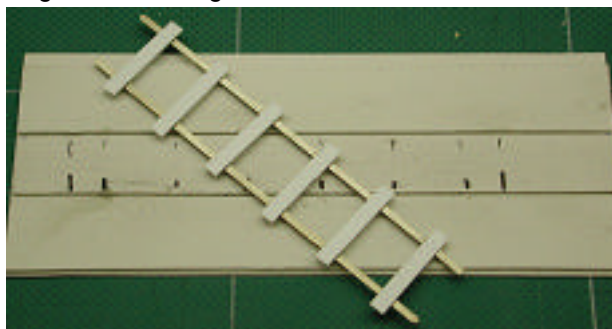
Modelling Rigid Portable Track Sections

This represents the British Standard heavier track, however, it should be possible to model the lighter track using a smaller sleeper, trimming the sleeper ends flush with the outside edge of the rail.

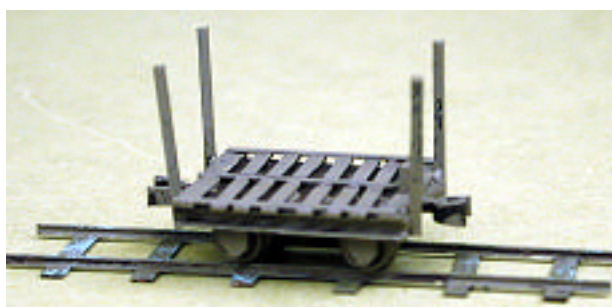
The template, four lengths of cardboard glued to provide a gauge of 9 mm (009 track), holds the rail securely in place and straight. Marks indicate the ends of the rails and the centre of sleepers.



A better template would also hold the sleepers square and have a stop to maintain a consistent length of overhang.



Standard straight sections came in 15 and 18 foot lengths. Eighteen foot lengths of code 40 rail and 4 foot lengths of scale 2 x 8 are assembled with 5 minute epoxy. Weight the assembly and leave to set for at least 30 minutes before bending the template to release the track. Paint the track and sleepers to resemble rusted metal to complete the model.



Reference: Link, Roy C (1994). *Industrial Narrow Gauge Catalogue and Handbook*, Link: Norwich, Norfolk, UK.