Modelling Challenges

As was seen in the previous section, the cane railways themselves provides the major source of inspiration for freelance and prototype modellers alike. This section includes images that illustrate the variety of cane railway operations and equipment, and their modelling potential. Visit the CaneSIG web site for additional images and details.

A concrete transfer ramp (above) and two views of a simple timber transfer ramp (below). A tractor pulls a trailer with bins over the ramp above, and parallel to the track below (wheel marks in the dirt pile), then backs into place. A guide pan on the back of the trailer lifts the hinged rail section into place.

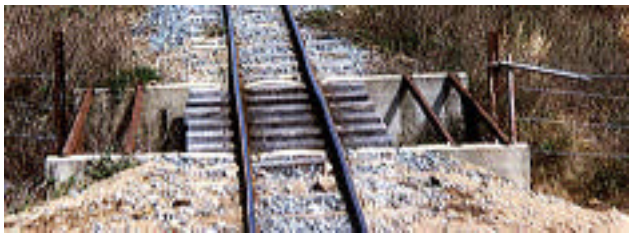
This drawbridge-type cane railway crossing of a high speed QR line near Mackay is remote controlled from Townsville. The cane tracks jog on both sides of the crossing and are fully protected by derails to prevent accidental movements. The bridge rails are roughly 2 m long.

QR North Coast line (above) level crossing with the 2' gauge using automated signals and remote controlled derails.

An off-sider holds the crossing as the cane loco crosses a lighter traffic QR line (above). Note the derail and signal

differences; crossing either line requires clearance from the QR controller (Townsville).

The cane railway underpass (above) eliminates the crossing but requires a lowered roof on locomotive cabs.



Fence and guard so cattle don't stray along the line.

Low spot filled in with de-barked logs but no sleepers (above) and a proper dressed timber crossing with sleepers (below).

Larger bridges may be timber, steel or concrete, depending on location and use. West of Mackay, for example, the cane railways often run over main line bridges where the ex-QR branch has been abandoned. Bridges, both new and old, may also be joint use with road traffic.

Steel girder on concrete risers (above and below); the gauge is maintained with welded braces, rather than sleepers. This was the inspiration for the small bridge on one of the ANGRMS dioramas.

A rural grade crossing (above), the diagonal ruts through the timbers on the top crossing are the result of a derailment.

Wooden tool box on a wholestick cane truck chassis (ILLRS).

Iron on three side and the roof, canvas 'door' on the fourth, all mounted on an old cane bin. This could be easily modelled in HOn30 using one of the N gauge chassis kits. Moreton Mill has a longer bogie version of this van with all four walls sheathed and several other mills have variations on the same basic idea.

Looks like a garden shed: an aluminium sheathed tool shed on a cane bin chassis. The white object propped against the door frame is a metre stick.

Ballast spreader for towing, but not likely heavy enough for pushing (above) and heavier unit (top next column). The CaneSIG web site has photos of several other designs. Try 'plough' or 'ballast spreader' (without the quotes) as search terms.

An end-of-rake marker can be almost anything that can be seen from the loco, now likely a safety marker (right).

Mackay Sugar's Clyde-built Broadsound 0-6-0 loco. Note the end-of-rake markers, wooden chocks, fire extinguishers, air cleaner, horns, lights, etc.

Mackay Sugar bogie locomotive, note the end-of-rake markers, jacks, lights, etc.