The building of Puget Junc

THIS display — "Puget Junction" — depicts a typical Puget Sound scene of the early 1900's. It was built by the Puget Short Lines Association, a very infomally united group of model railroaders living in the Greater Seattle area. They work as a group to enjoy model railroading in the form you see here as well as on their individual pikes. The association is proud to claim 100 percent NMRA-PNR membership; it consists of Herb Chaudiere, Dick Day, Howard Durfy, Brian Ellerby, Bob Johnson, Jack Robinson, Gus Swanberg, and Bob Williams. As individuals they mostly model period pikes, saying, "It is easier to model a broken-down and run-over-at-the-heels railroad, because that's the way most [of their] work looks anyhow."

"Puget Junction" is the product of many minds and meetings, but its basic concept was conjured up by Brian, Gus, and Herb in a martini haze after the 1963 PNR convention in Courtenay, B. C. At later PSLA meetings the "P-Slobs" refined their original plans and projections, with somewhere around 5005 unusable and probably unworkable ideas discarded in an effort to create a little more realistic scene. This is when lumber was purchased and the work started, more or less in earnest. Jim Coward, Jim Sabol, and especially Don Ellis also worked hard to aid with the project.

The display pike was entirely scratch-built with the exception of rail, spikes, and miniature electric lights. To begin, a grid was constructed, glued and screwed. On it Masonite hardboard was placed as a base for the water surface. Celotex was used for the reliefwork. Texture paint was spread over this to make the basic terrain. Rock faces were cast in plaster molds and set in place, using plaster as a binder. The chips and discards from the castings served as rock rubble and tailings.

The ties for the track were individually cut, placed, and ballasted. Code 70 rail was used on the main line and code 55 on

Northern Pacific class S-4 4-6-0 no. 1372 at the sawmill. The engine is a PFM import; it was given added detail by Herb Chaudiere, who also added realistic sound effects to the loco.

This is Puget Junction as it was seen by NMRA conventioneers a

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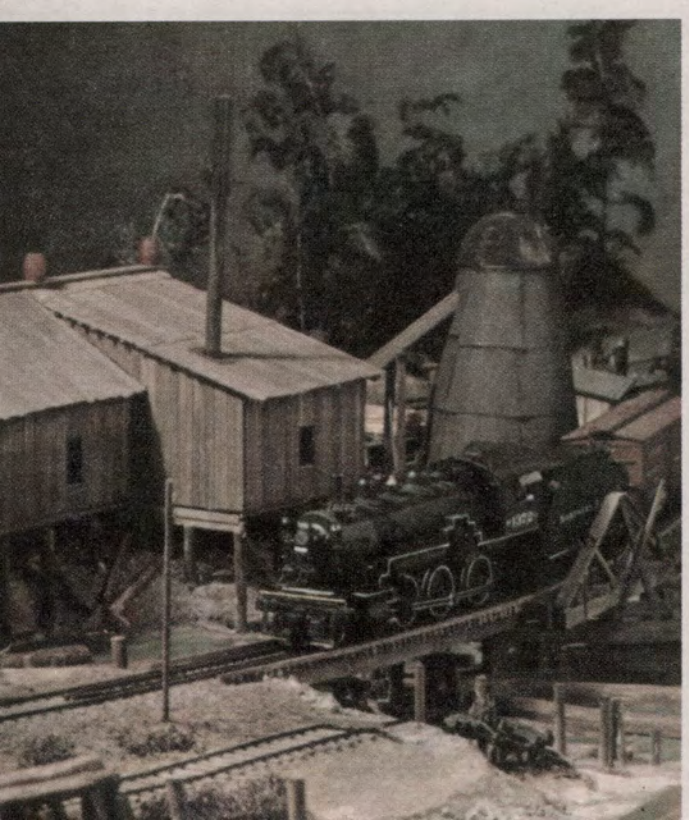
You can pack a lot of railroad into an operating diorama: here's how in words



Vancouver, B. C., Canada, in 1965: a colorful diorama seemingly only 22" deep but actually an operating oval extending another 30" beyond the backdrop.

Photos by Gus Swanberg

and color

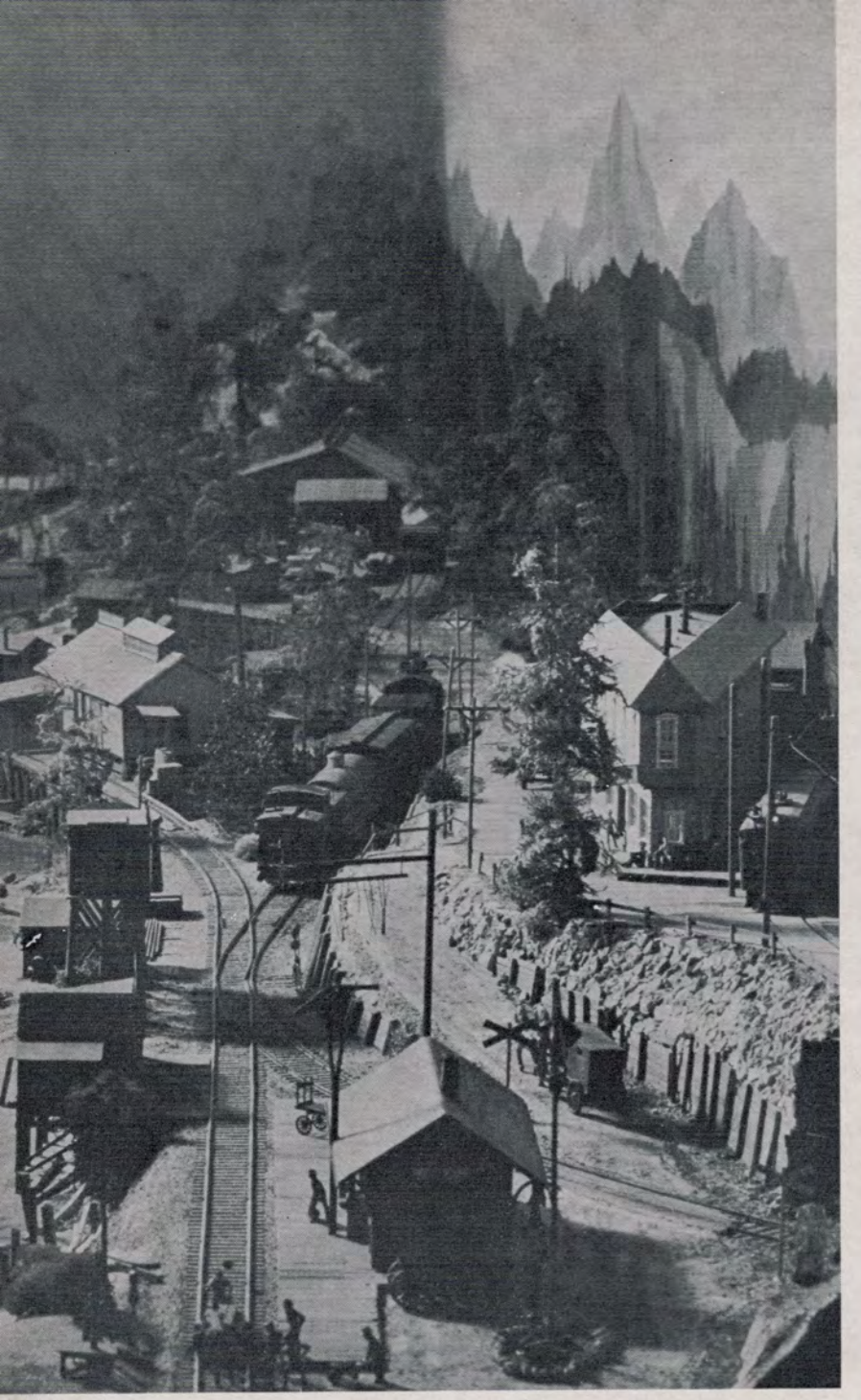
By the members of the PSLA

spurs and sidings. White glue and contact cement were used as binders.

The basic ground cover is "plain old dirt," in varying colors as called for by the surroundings, plus some sand and other miscellaneous "imported" dirt. The vegetation areas were covered with various hues and screenings of sawdust; trees were formed from a northwestern variety of moss. Water areas were made of Durham's water putty painted to simulate coloring of the northwestern region. The surface was then covered with a plastic coating to protect it.

All trestles, trackside structures and various railroad appurtenances were built entirely of stripwood and artist's boards. So were the buildings, streets, and sidewalks on the pike. Signs, striping, and similar detail were done by direct-lettering transfer material. Most painting was done with the new acrylic pigments. In-

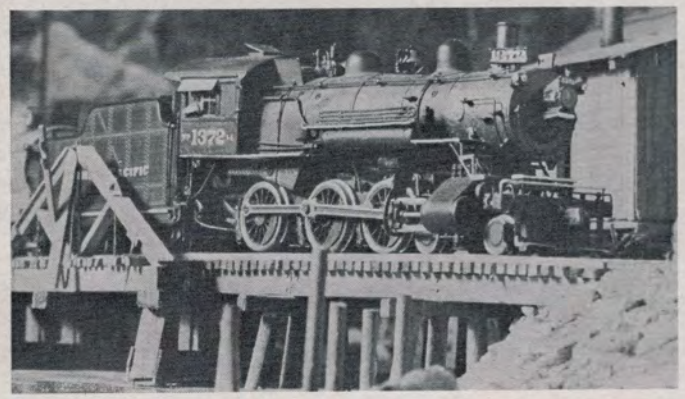
←In the center scene a Suydam interurban, detailed and painted by Jim Coward, runs between the hotel and Ruby's restaurant. The other scene shows Puget Junction station and Main St.



Looking west over the roof of Puget Junction station, you can see the Puget Rockfish Packers plant at left, with the Puget Hotel and the interurban at right, approaching.

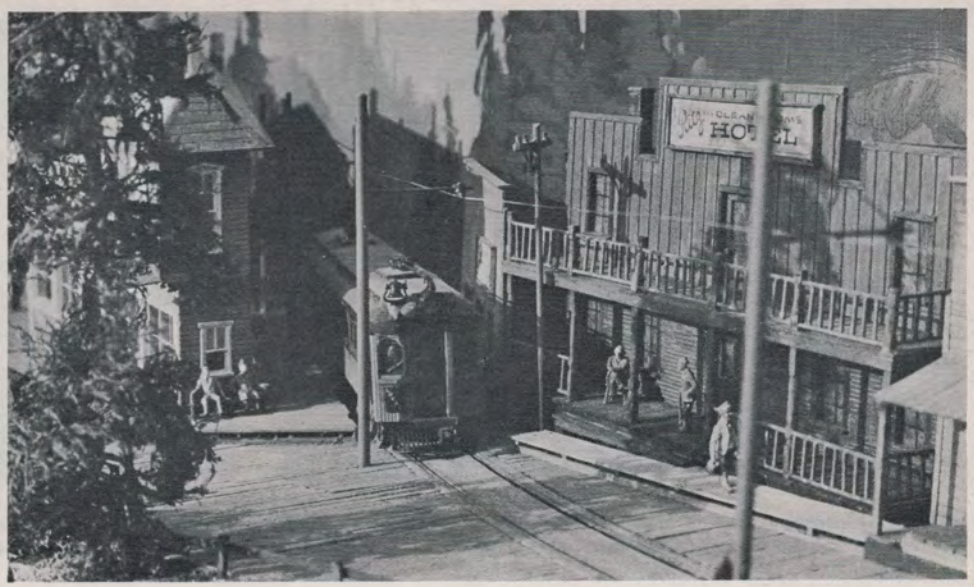
Main St. has an assortment of businesses and accommodations, ranging from jail bunks at right to the Ritz Hotel at center and the Puget Hotel and interurban station at the left.

Puget Junction station as seen from inside the east tunnel. The caboose is a Northern Pacific from Pacific Fast Mail.



Closeup of the huffing, hissing, ringing, whistling locomotive reveals some of the Kemtron and Cal-Scale castings used in the superdetailing.

It's a sunny afternoon down by the depot and the gandy dancers are working on the main line. Brian Ellerby scratchbuilt the Schmuck tank car.



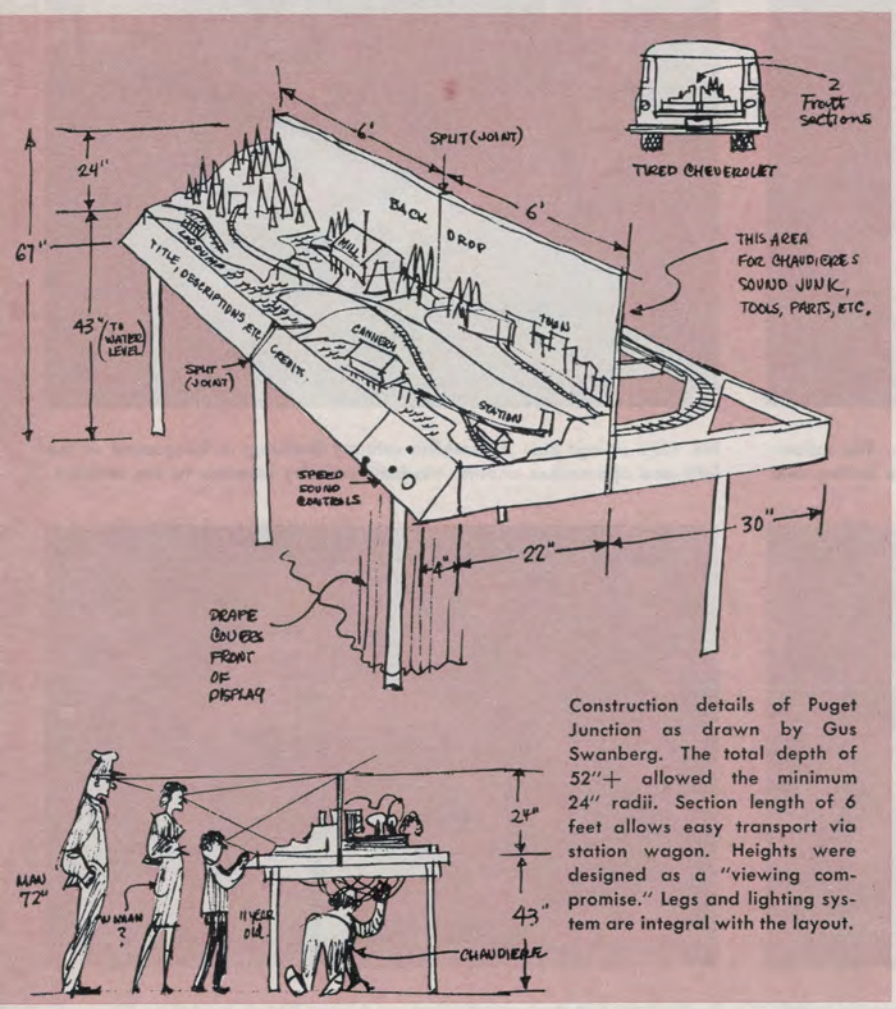
Closeup of the competing hostelries reveals the interurban loading platform. The window behind the two benchwarmers looks into the interurban waiting room. That realistic tree is made of northwestern moss.

dustries, town buildings, and houses are typical of the area during the period represented, but a small amount of artistic license was taken here and there to add to the realism of the scene.

How are your sinuses today? Clear? Then look out! You're downwind from the fish cannery! Actual fish fertilizer was put in the fish fertilizer shed, and you *can* smell it if you get too close.

The PSLA men feel that model railroads should not only look realistic and be operated realistically, but also should have realistic sounds. The unique PSLA sound system adds a new dimension of realism to a model railroad: it provides a perfectly synchronized exhaust sound as well as "engineer-controlled" whistle and bell. A loudspeaker in the locomotive tender makes the noises, but that's not the whole story. Herb Chaudiere tells you the rest in the pages following this story.

We are sure that after you ever "hear the train blow" in the way it does on the PSLA diorama, you'll agree that a model railroad sans sound simply isn't complete.



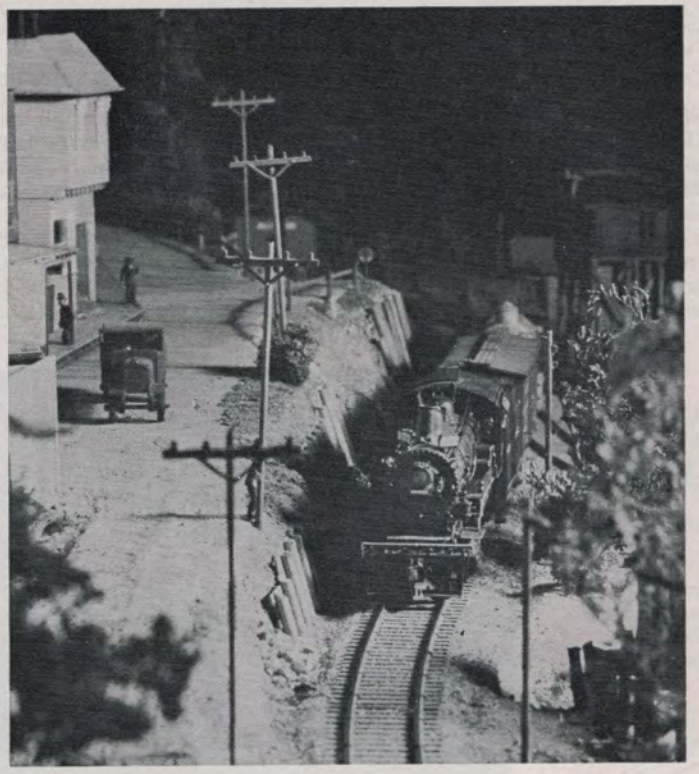
Construction details of Puget Junction as drawn by Gus Swanberg. The total depth of 52"+ allowed the minimum 24" radii. Section length of 6 feet allows easy transport via station wagon. Heights were designed as a "viewing compromise." Legs and lighting system are integral with the layout.

Looking west from Puget Junction station for a closer view of the odoriferous Puget Rockfish Packers plant.

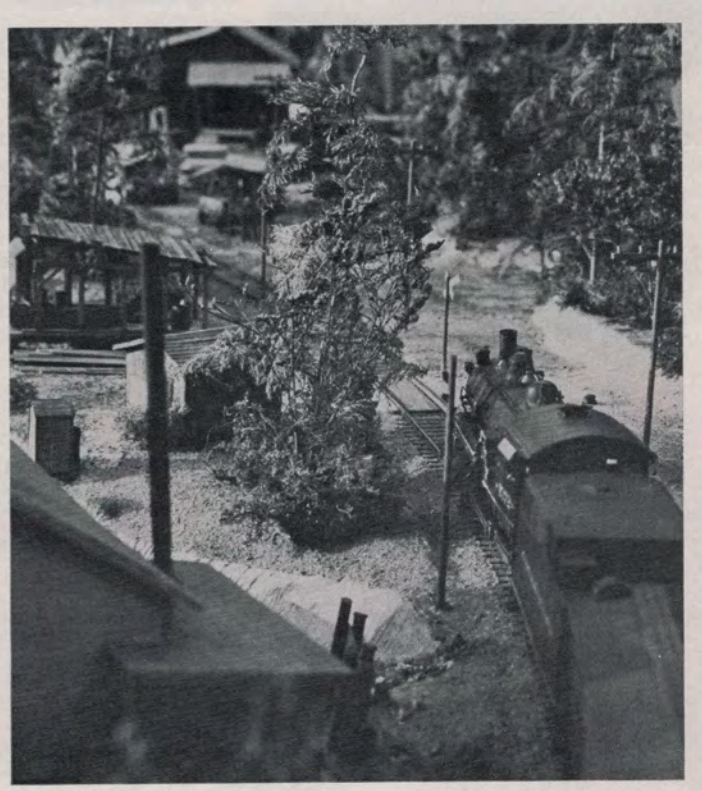
MORE PHOTOS FOLLOW

Closeup of interurban station and Puget Hotel (nine rooms, two baths) reveals yet another hostelry over there at the left: "Ruby's Rooms."

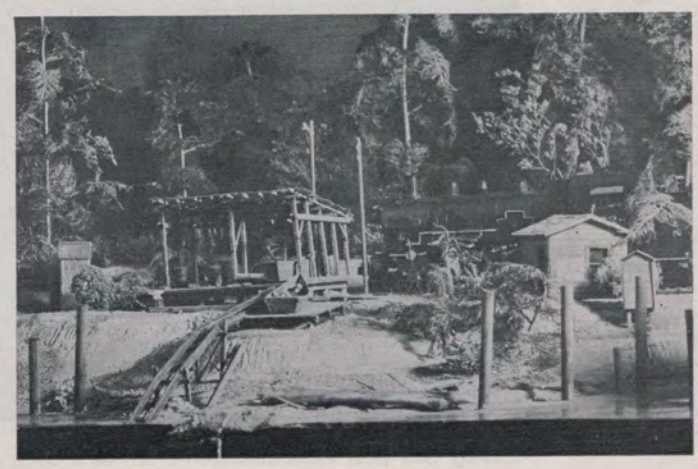
Pilings under the fish packers and other buildings on the wharves are cut at water level so building, wharf, and all can be lifted as a unit.



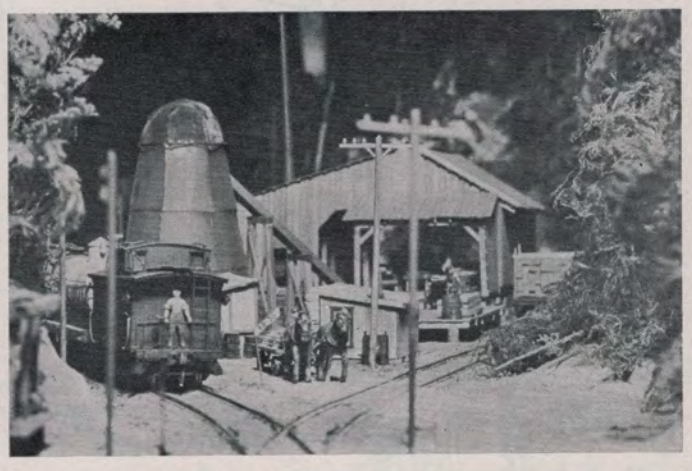
Looking down the track at the outskirts of Puget Junction. The tallow-pot of the westbound train must look into the glare of the setting sun.



No. 1372 swings past the rockfish cannery (building in foreground at the left) and approaches another maritime industry common to the territory.

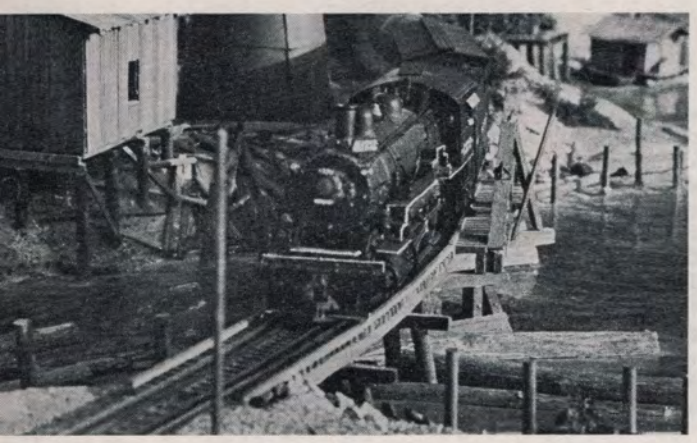


The boatyard builds and repairs watercraft up to 16 feet in length.



Looking toward the sawmill from trackside. Speed restriction: 20 m.p.h.

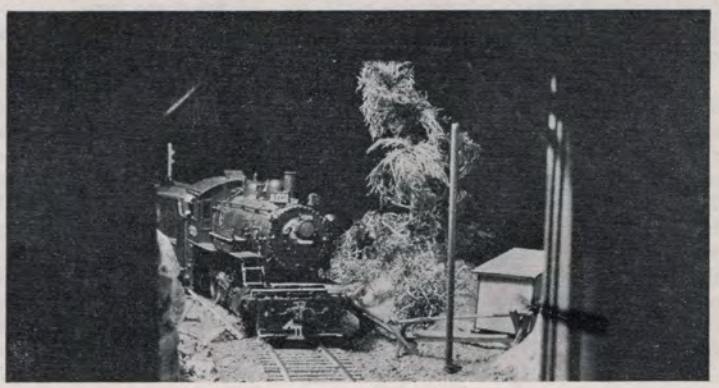
Aerial view of the sawmill finds 1372 and her train crossing Puget Slough on a truss bridge canted to the flow of the current. Stacked lumber is alder.



Looking east from the sawmill's log dump. Logs float beneath bridge.

Log dump from which picture at left was taken is served by its own railroad.

Lumberjacks pole the logs to the log hoist, partly hidden by the trees.



No. 1372 is about to enter tunnel at west end of the Puget Junction scene.