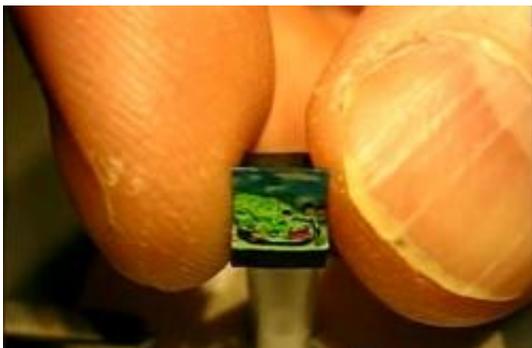


Tiny Train Model May be World's Smallest (w/ Video)

October 26 2009, by Lisa Zyga



David Smith holds the tiny train he created, which has a scale of 1:35,200. Image Credit: David Smith.

(PhysOrg.com) -- David Smith, who has been building model railroads since 1965, has always had a preference for the smaller scale train models. His most recent project is a five-car train that runs through a scene of mountains, a tunnel, trees, buildings, and a cloud-studded sky - the whole thing measuring just 0.125 x 0.2 inches (0.3 x 0.5 cm). The train's modeling scale is 1:35,200.

Smith, who is a business web developer from New Jersey, has been working on the train model since 2007, spending about \$11 on the project. As Smith explains, the train is a model within a model, as it appears in the window of one of the stores in his Z scale model railroad town (1:220 scale), the fictitious James River Branch on the Reading

Railroad. The tiny train is a Z scale model of a 2 x 4-foot N scale (1:160) layout.

At first, Smith ran into friction problems on the small scale when trying to miniaturize the geared mechanism he used for larger models. After trial and error, he discovered that he could make an oval tube attached to the rotating shaft of a miniature geared motor. To make the train cars, he simply cut "teeth" into the edge of the tube that would poke just above the surface of the layout. Then he colored the train cars with a Sharpie. He made the layout itself completely out of extremely thin styrene, and covered the mountain with a thin lumpy layer of Squadron putty to make a forest. He made the buildings out of bits of 0.01 x 0.02-inch strips of styrene, and colored everything with Sharpies.

At first, Smith thought about illuminating some of the buildings, but found that even the tiniest LED or fiber optics would be much too bulky. He still plans to make a single spotlight to hang overhead, to make it easier to see everything. Because the train is so small, even making the video was a major challenge to shoot. Although Smith used a macro lens, the camera would not focus close enough to get a good view; he had to blow it up 400% in post-production to make a decent-sized (yet grainy) image.

Smith is making no promises that the tiny train layout is made precisely to scale. "This new layout was entirely eyeballed as well, with no real intent to precisely represent an N scale layout in Z scale; it's only N scale by virtue of its overall dimensions," he explained. "So if anyone measures the passenger cars running on it and finds they're exactly the right size, I'll most certainly faint dead away."

More information: <http://jamesriverbranch.net>

via: [Telegraph](#)

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