



**Fig. 5 Safe handling.** These **DO NOT HUMP** signs alert train crews not to route this car through a hump yard. Mont made the signs using trimmed down 1 x 12 and 3 x 4 stripwood.

excess glue and touched up the areas with Dullcote and fine paintbrush. Then I added **DO NOT HUMP** signs, which I made using stripwood and a Jaeger HO Products placard. I inserted one homemade sign on each end and side of the car. See **fig. 5**.

The AAR rules also call for installation of cables or rods to secure the tractor wheels to the deck, or more likely, the stake pockets. Since the tractors will be removed during operating sessions, I ignored this portion of the rule.

## Car routing

Wabash flatcar no. 415, complete with eight John Deere model 520s, draws a lot of attention during operating sessions.

Loaded with tractors consigned to four John Deere dealers located on or near the Monon, crews enjoy spotting this interesting car on team tracks across the layout. Between operating sessions, I remove the tractors consigned to their respective customers, turn the car cards, and ready the car for pickup by the next local or yard job during the next operating session. Here's what the car routing looks like.

Operating session one: Wabash no. 415 first appears on the layout in train No. 73, a southbound second-class freight from South Hammond, Ind., to Louisville, Ky. The car had been picked up at Dyer, Ind., in a cut of cars at the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern interchange where cars had been staged for pickup by a local freight train earlier that day. The

flatcar was set out in a cut of cars for Monon, Ind., around 4 a.m. Since there's an engine on duty (second trick yard job) at that time and the crew has the time, they spot the car at a ramp on the north side of town where two tractors consigned to a local implement company are to be unloaded.

Operating session two: The flatcar is picked up by the Monon second trick yard job and with six tractors remaining. The next destination is Frankfort, Ind., on the Air Line, or Indianapolis, Branch. The car is moved to the north yard where train No. 47, the daily-except-Sunday Indianapolis local, is being assembled. The train is scheduled out the next morning at 6:45 a.m.

Operating sessions three and four: Wabash no. 415 leaves Monon, Ind. The entire Air Line Branch is hidden staging, so the car will not reappear for two operating sessions.

Operating session five: The flatcar returns to Monon, Ind., in the early afternoon on train No. 46, the daily-except-Sunday local, with four tractors remaining. The car is now consigned to Reynolds, Ind., about 7 miles south of the Monon main line. The second trick yard job breaks up train No. 46 and puts Wabash no. 415 in the south yard with a cut of southbound shorts for pickup by the daily-except-Sunday South Hammond-to-Shops local No. 45.

Operating session six: The car is picked up at Monon, Ind., by train No. 45 at 1 p.m. and delivered to the

agent at Reynolds, Ind., just an hour later. The car is set out on the wye, which doubles as a team track.

Operating session seven: Wabash no. 415 is picked up at Reynolds, Ind., by train No. 45 at 2 p.m. with two tractors remaining. The car is moved to Shops Yard in Lafayette, Ind., where the train is terminated.

The last two tractors are consigned to Crawfordsville, Ind., 30 rail miles south of Shops Yard. As train No. 45 is disassembled, the flatcar is spotted on track 3 with other McDoel (Bloomington) shorts that will make up tomorrow's daily-except-Sunday train No. 43.

Operating session eight: The last time I saw those two remaining John Deere model 520s, they were on train No. 43 heading for south staging (Crawfordsville).

While running trains is the name of the game on our layouts, loaded flatcars can add another layer of interest to operating sessions. I hope you'll give these techniques a try. **MR**

*Mont Switzer lives in Middletown, Ind. He'd like to thank Chad Boas, Chet French, Mike Johnston, Ron Marquardt, Bill Taylor, and Rick Ware for their assistance with this article.*

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