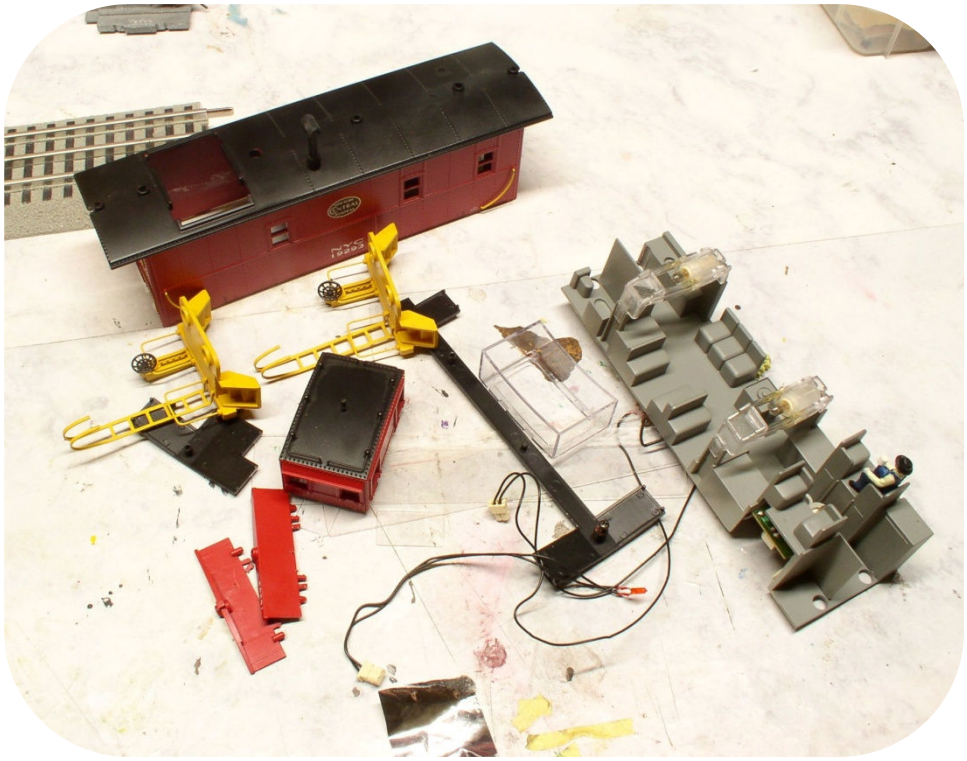
Caboose #14 Construction Notes

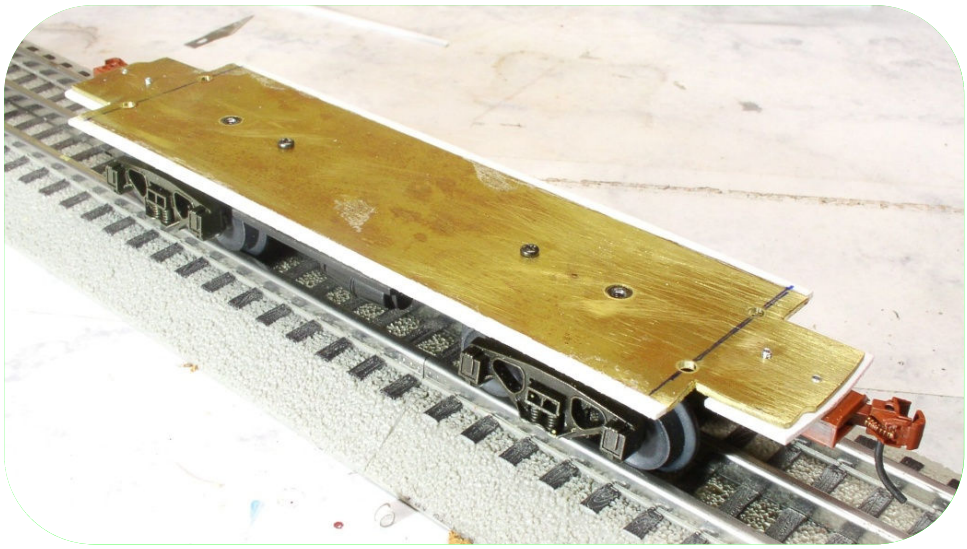
by Jack Hess

I have wanted to build a model of this caboose for a long time. The RailKing caboose looks to be the perfect starting point.

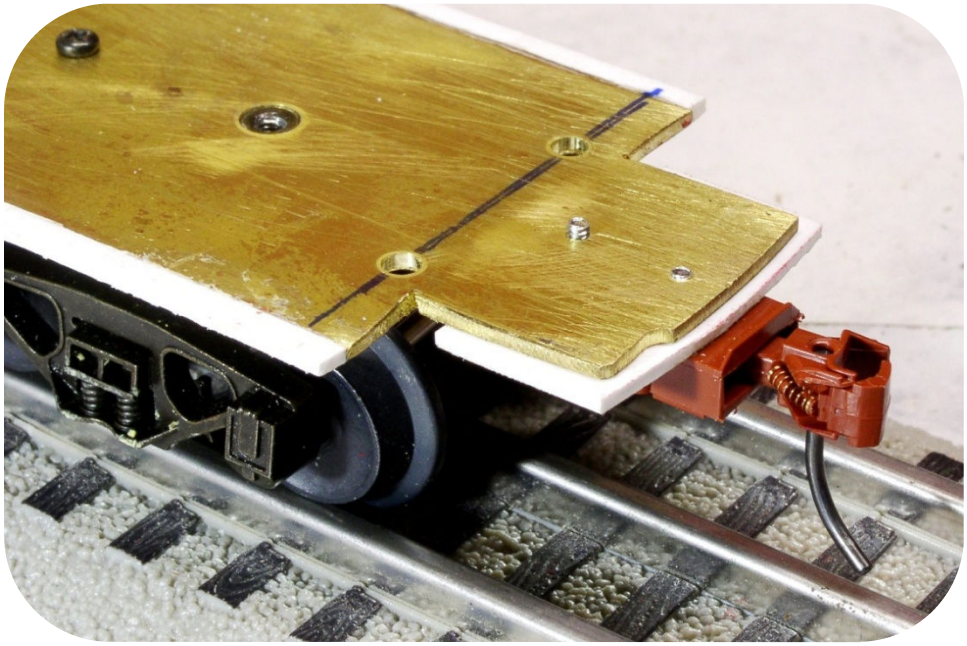
The Union Pacific version of the RailKing Offset Cupola Caboose. Unfortunately, the trucks are the wrong style and the leaf springs are undersized and barely visible.



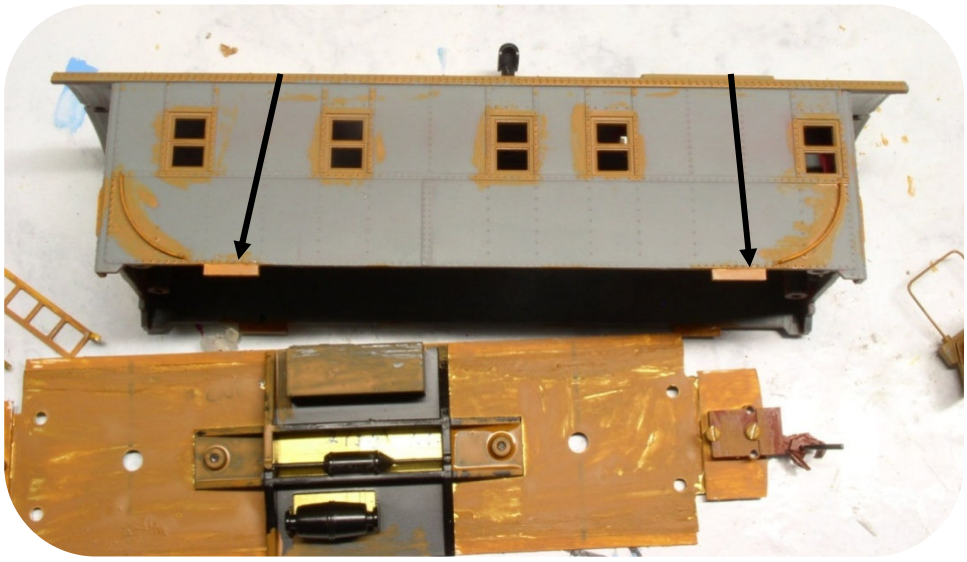
My model is disassembled.



A new chassis was built out of 2" brass strip. Truck wheelbase has been shortened to match the prototype. The styrene strips along the sides center the chassis In the body. The original underframe casting is attached.

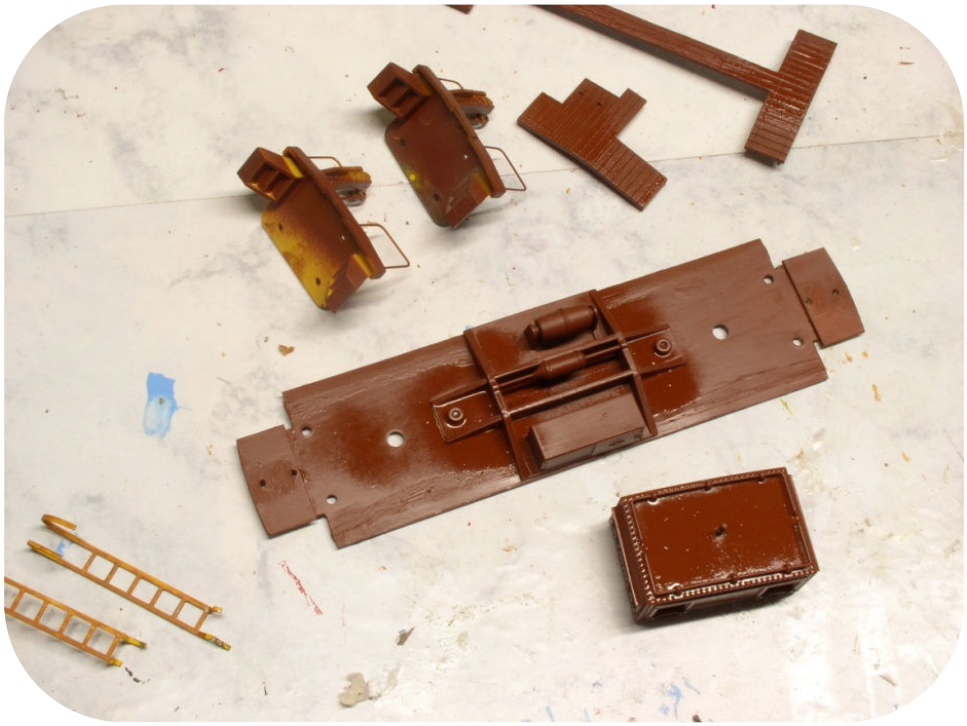


A piece of .060 styrene is CA glued to the bottom of the chassis on each end of the car to give the couplers the proper height from rail. The couplers are mounted with 2-56 screws.



The body, cupola, roof walks, and end platforms were stripped of paint with a day's soak in 99% Isopropanyl Alcohol. Afterward they were washed in warm water and dish soap to remove any bits of paint that still remained. The black arrows show styrene pieces glued to the bottom of the body at the body bolster area. I painted some areas with Testor's flat brown before spray painting in the event the spray paint didn't cover all cracks and corners.

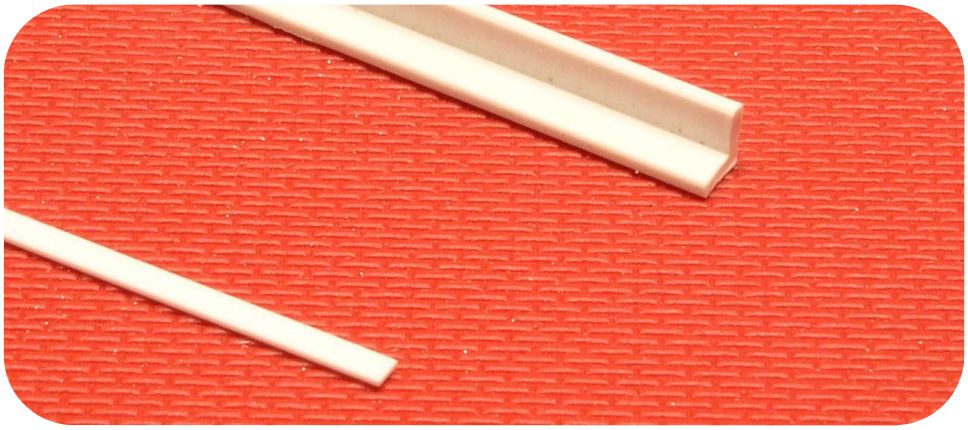
Rust-O-Leum 2X Flat Red Primer is used for the caboose color.



Parts are painted. When dry they were given a spray coat of clear gloss.

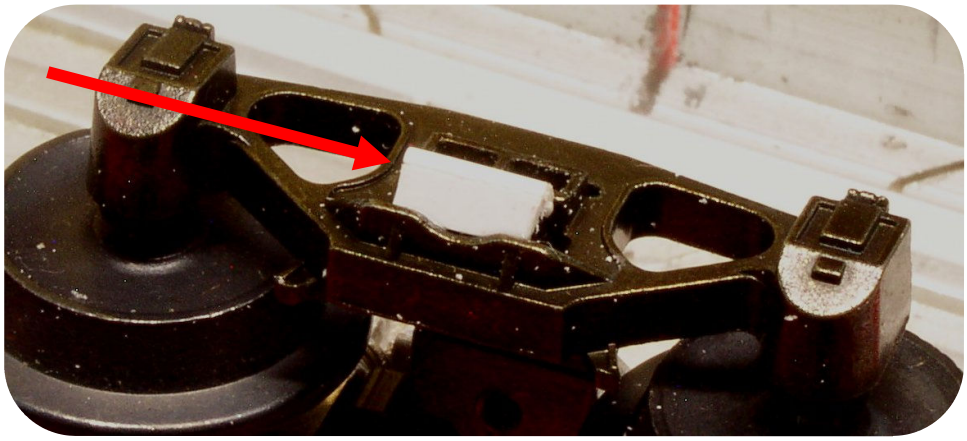
Decals were made by [Rail Graphics.]

Lettering applied to the sides and ends. I wanted to mimic the ATSF car, but didn't want to use initials. I lettered the caboose after its former owner, but with a T&H number and the 4 banded yellow stripe.

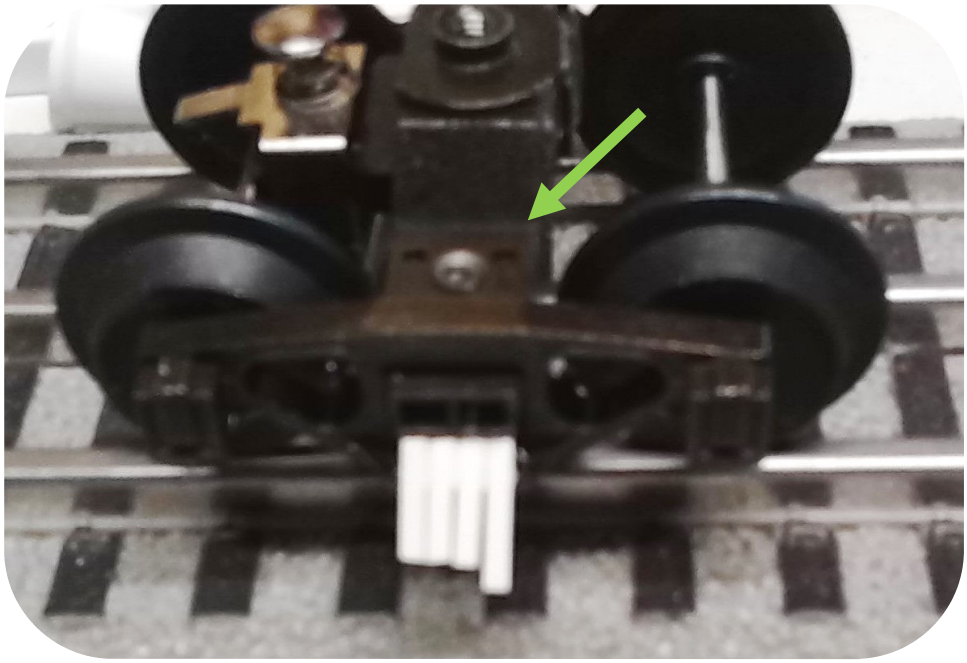


The leaf springs will be built from Evergreen 1/8" angle and .015 X .060 strip.

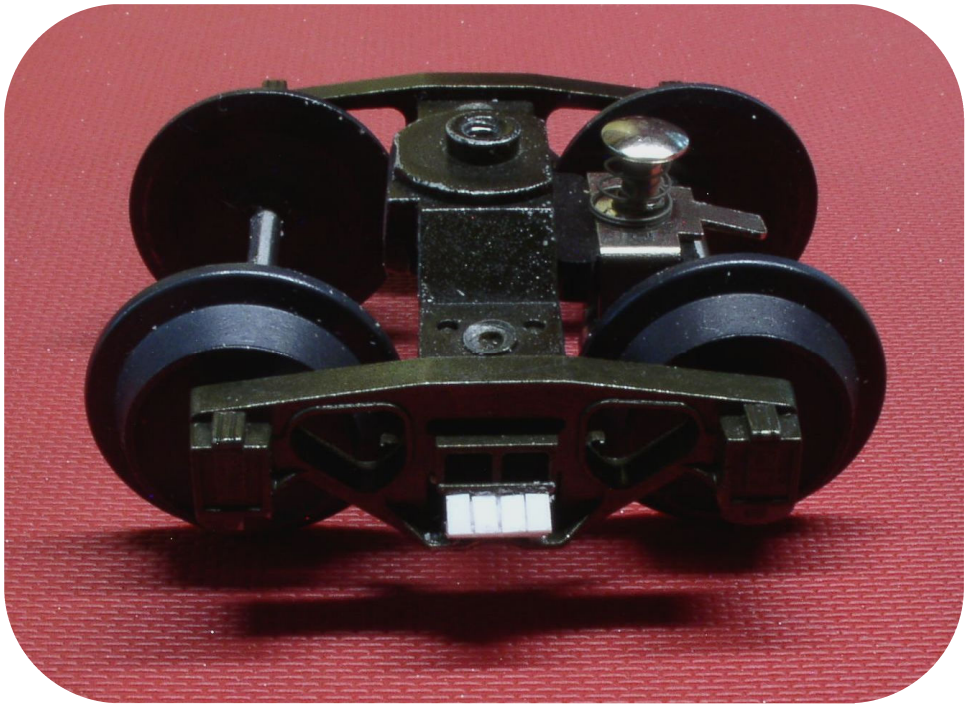
Use a razor saw and saw the inside of the corner.
Hold the saw blade so the cut is at 45 degrees to each side.
Then lightly cut into the bend on each side as shown.



When there is a slight groove, squeeze the sides together to slightly collapse the L shape. Though hard to see in the photo, but pointed out by the red arrow, one of the sides breaks and I glue this break on the downward side, using slightly thick CA glue.



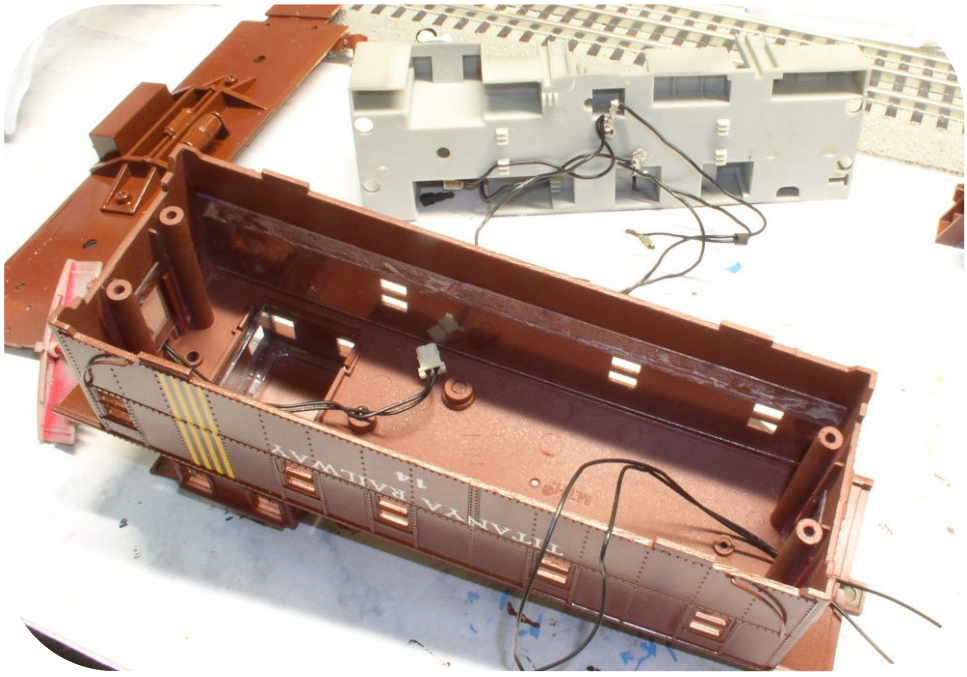
The strips glued onto the bent L channel. Green arrow points out that the sideframes have been riveted to the bolster and will not come off.
This means they can't be interchanged with sideframes from another truck.



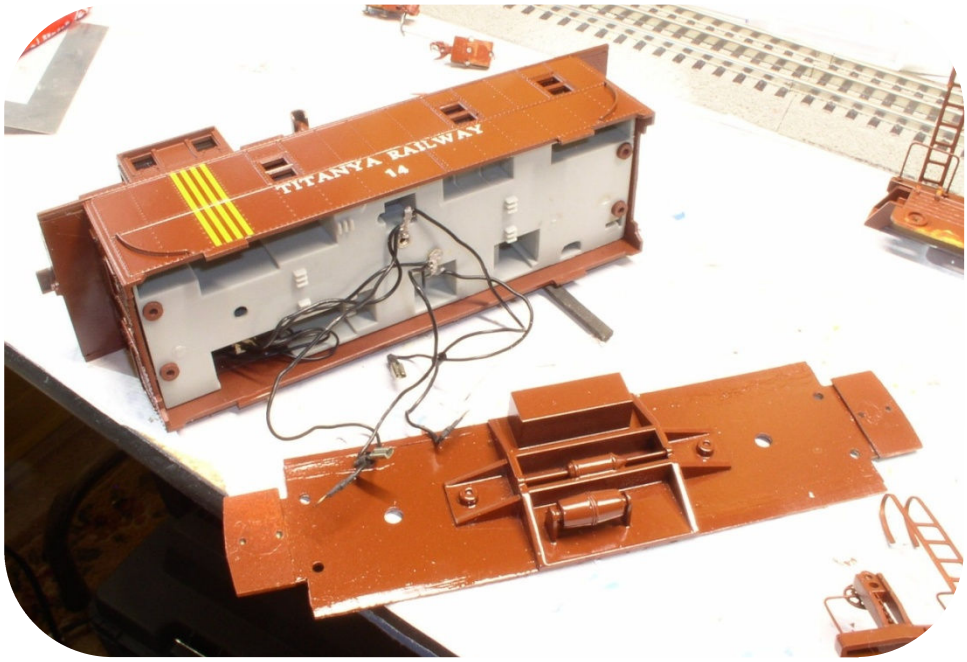
Strips are dried and then trimmed off. Make sure the end
of the new spring assembly is parallel with the truck sideframes.

Trucks were masked except the sideframes, sprayed with the
2X Flat Red Prime and then given a coat of clear.

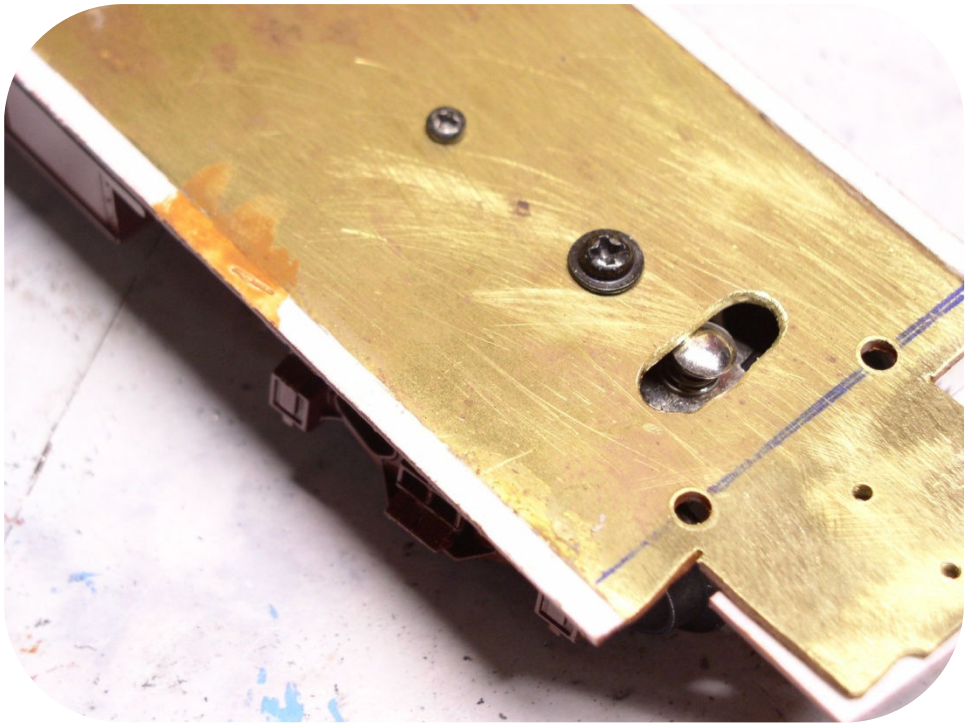
The axles and the area on the truck bolster where the coupler tang was cut off were painted flat black. The ladders are installed on the ends but need to be completely painted before the end casting is installed.



Reconstruction of the body begins.



Body reconstruction coming along. I did not cut a slot in the chassis for the LED wires to attach to the trucks.



The slot for the wires to reach the trucks.

Finished caboose.