

### **Andrew's Musings Part 13**

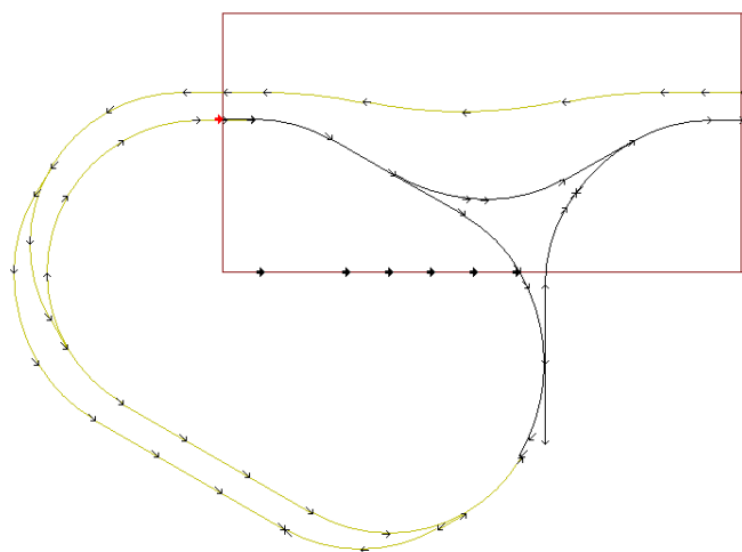
So, the final chapter for now. Instead of writing about it, I really need to get on with finishing all these modules! Usually, I am a lot more onto things, but too many ideas coupled with too little time has put me where I'm at currently. Hey, I won't have any problems with being bored once I retire.

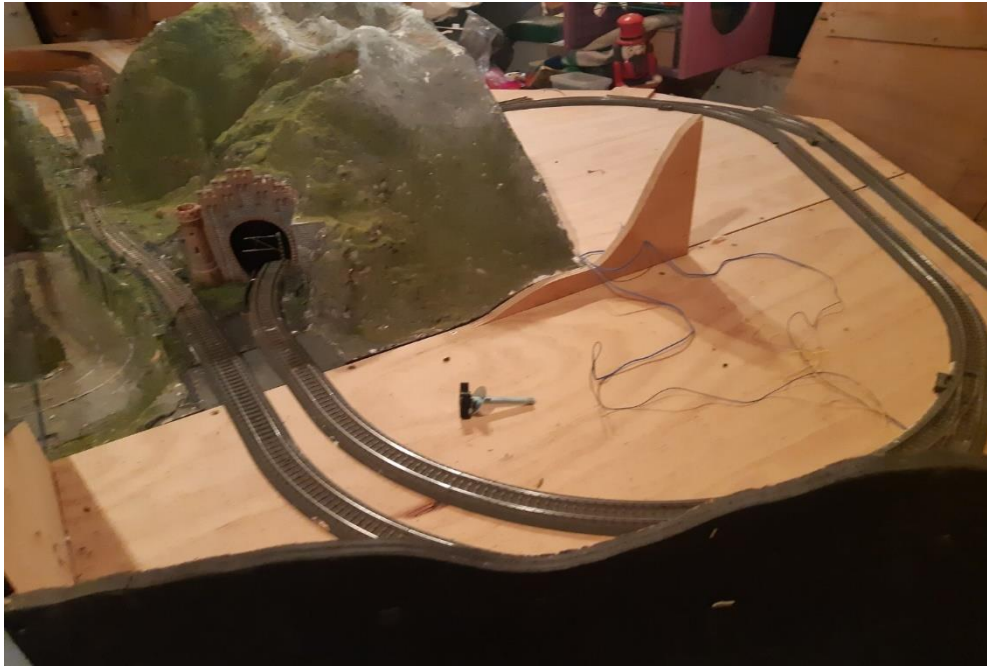
So, the final instalment is Matthew's layout. He's keen to do something, although more so from a clean slate, rather than having to fit in with any specification and rules. That's okay, he can come up with the ideas and I will incorporate it into the standard. It's his module in name.

Talking names, he came up with a great one for it. SchonBerg, which means beautiful mountain. It got me thinking about why someone named it this, and out of that came the story of the early adventurers looking for a way to get through the Alps, finding this sheltered resting place at the high end of the river they had made their way up. They set up camp and over time more permanent buildings were erected as more people made their way through the pass. Eventually trains and cars serviced the area, but being rather narrow at this point, the village has maintained its charm and is still a great place to stay and enjoy the surrounding natural environment.

Except that these villages can't survive on nature alone and across the winter months it is busy with people using the bobsled facility built on the precipice above the village. This was Matthew's idea, which I thought was cool for another different thing on the layout that the audience can be involved in. Matthew would like it to be an actual 1/87<sup>th</sup> bobsled model, but after a few iterations it is a marble run that the audience can place the ball at the top and time it down to the bottom. What would be even cooler would be if I could find a small timer to display on the model that detects the ball at the start of the run and at the end, to give the milli-seconds count. Different balls go at different speeds (size and weight) so it would be something the audience could have competitions with. Suffice to say it is cooler again being covered in snow.

Well, it will be. At this stage it is just chicken wire, much like my other alpine scene. This one's taking a bit longer to get there because I have gone a bit mad with the Faller Car system on it, which means a lot more work to be done underneath the layout. You have seen the module(s) before because it is the Loreley tunnel module described earlier which I finally took the bulldozer to, and the dogbone clip-on as pictured below (the trackwork is slightly different now, but it gives you the idea).





The existing module is now totally different, with the train diving through a steep mountain range and emerging to a bridge over the river to get across to the next module. Next to the river is a loop of Faller car system, providing some extra movement and interest for the module. With the car going in both directions, but due to limited space this means it is on two levels to get sufficiently wide corners radii on it. This module can still be used as an independent 1220mm long one in the middle of an exhibition if necessary, providing a natural scene for the trains to journey through.

However, the clip-on extension (the bare boards shown above) can convert the module into a dogbone with the village of SchonBerg nestled in the steep valley. It too has the Faller Car system driving around, but I was not satisfied by the car just going on a loop within the village. What if it could interact with the other loop down by the river, so the car drives off into the distance and returns a while later? Ignoring all the advice from Benjamin about going over module joins (these ones being very hidden below mountain ranges, track, village, river and base board, I have managed to get it working, hoping it will continue to do so over the next several years of getting taken to exhibitions. As I say, it's a bit complex, because the car is travelling over 4 different levels. One day I might try keeping things simple.

The following photos don't do the modules justice. It is hard to see the eventual landscape when what is visible is baseboard and crunched up chicken wire. If anything, it does show how much of a radical change it is from the original Loreley tunnel module and flat dogbone in the previous photo above. Give it a few more weeks and I will have prepared the modules for some on mass papier mache making. However, I have another problem now . . . what to do with the Loreleys? Another module? No, NO MORE! I'll probably look at building it into one of the small corners 😊, since I have 3 more to scenic.

