

Thinning HO Mantua General Side and Main Rods

by Al Mueller

1. Use layout dye or some other method to blue or otherwise color all rods. I leave the main rod attached to the crosshead for these operations.
2. Use a caliper to scribe a line 0.011" from each edge of the side rod on one side.
3. Clamp the side rod in the metal jaws of a hobby vice with one scribed line just slightly above the jaw.
4. Use an 8" bastard mill file to remove metal from the flat surface of the rod until you are within about 0.002" of the line. Use a small round or half round hobby file to dress the curves at each end. Use a diamond file to dress the edges down to the scribed line.
5. Turn the side rod over in the vice and repeat step 4., above. The straight part of the finished side rod should now be 0.045" wide.
6. Use a caliper to scribe a line 0.012" from the edge on each side of the main rod on one side.
7. Repeat step 4., above for the main rod.
8. Repeat step 5., above for the main rod. The fattest straight part of the main rod should now be 0.045".