Building Sides on Labelle passenger and interurban cars:

By Bob Parrish

Labelle offers a wide variety of wood prototype passenger and interurban rolling stock. This construction page offers suggestions for all models except the upper sides that use white metal framed window, kits: HO 15-19. The assembly procedures for HO and O scale are essentially the same. Yellow woodworker's glue is the best for wood to wood joints on Labelle models.

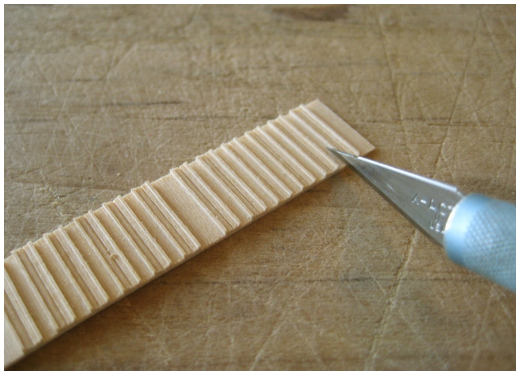
Labelle provides a full car side sub panel that incudes the window openings, window sill and letter boards above the windows. To this sub panel all other parts will be fitted and glued.

Above the window sill:

To prepare the sides, the window mullions, called window posts by LaBelle, and lower scribed stock should be applied. The mullions are provided in a sheet of about fifteen per sheet in a separate wood parts bag. Close examination will show that there is a spacing piece that will be discarded between each mullion. Further there is and up and down to these which is observable from the back side. The small window above the main window has a slightly raised profile that establishes the up and down to the mullions. This raised area can be found by running a finger nail up through the window area. Occasionally there is a slight raised area left from the milling process that needs to be sanded down flat to the level of the upper windows.

Above shows mullions as provided in kit.

The mullions need to be separated into the individual stips with a very sharp blade and cut perfectly square along the sides. Mullion should be glued between each window and centerd to show an equal amount of window sash on each side.

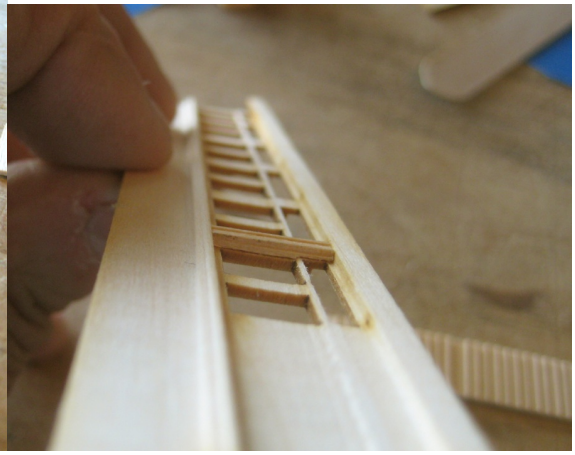


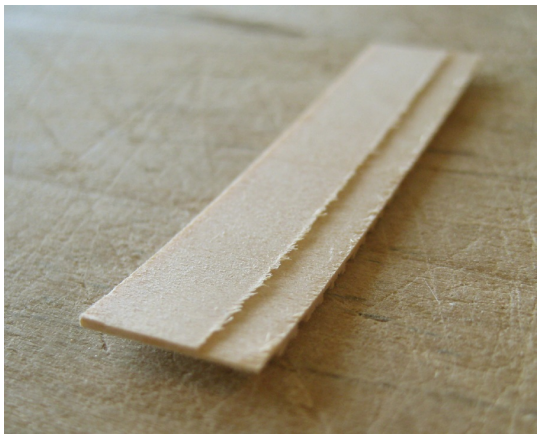
Above shows mullions being trimmed

Below is a finished mullion ready for assembly

Reducing the raised line between the upper and lower windows.

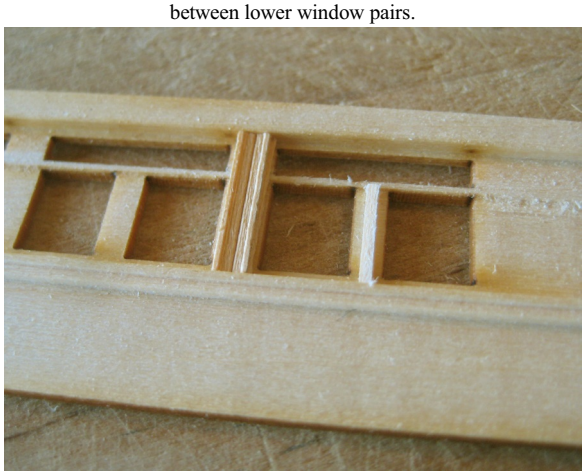
Fitted mullion layed into upper side panel.



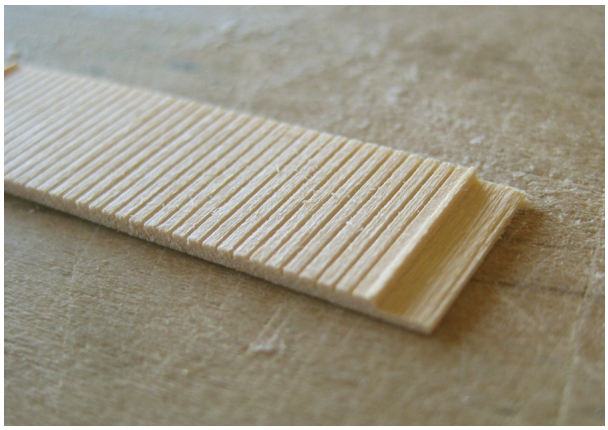


Showing the back of mullion sheet with relieved edge for upper window area. Be sure to de-fuzz the routed out area shown above. Fuzz takes up space.

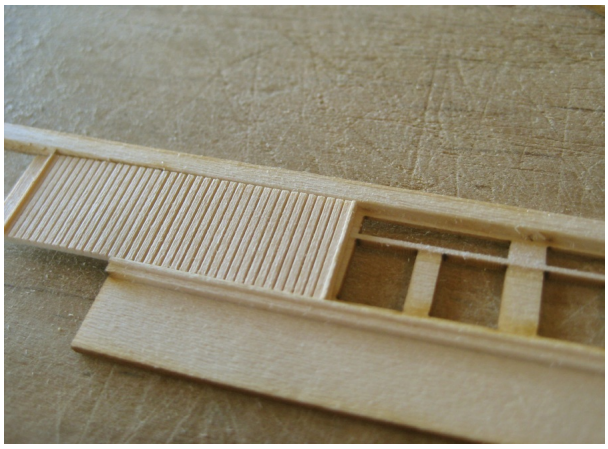
Mullions inserted in window frames. Note also a narrow mullion between lower window pairs.



On the combine versions of these models and some passenger applications, there is an area adjacent to the windows, above the window sill, that also has a scribed panel insert. This too has an up and down due the milling of the side panel. Each panel has a raised mullion at the edge of each panel. The waste edge should be trimmed back to this raised board and then the entire panel should be glued to the side wall. Do not attempt to trim the scribed panel to length at this time. Make up both sides. After glue has set up turn the side wall over and trim the excess length from the door openings in the side wall.



Upper wall scribed panel with waste edge and first raised board. Trim to this first board.

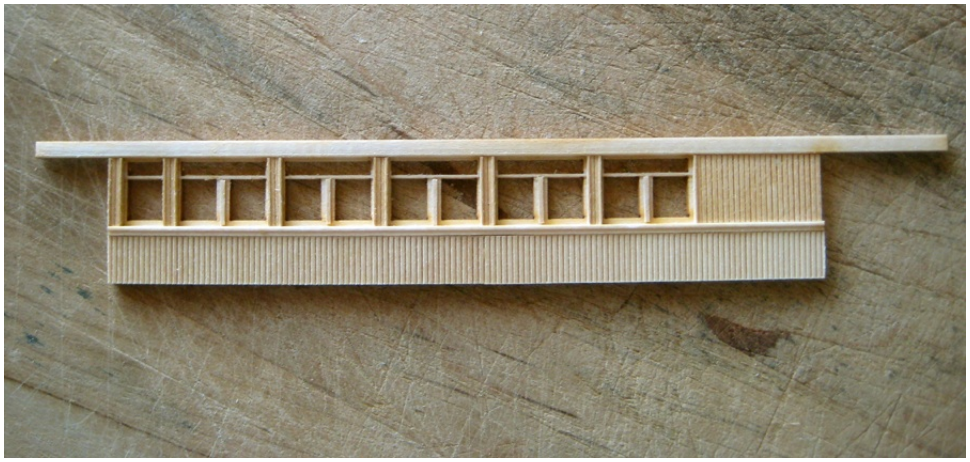


Lay in scribed panel allowing the same window sash spacing as other sash openings around mullions.

Below the window sill:

Identify the lower scribed panels provided in the kit and edge glue them as shown in story elsewhere on this web site called “Good Car Sides Forever”. When the scribed strips are ready, pull a thin film of glue along the full length of the car side and apply the scribed strip. Be sure that scribed panels are tight to the window sill. Attempt to align the scribe marks vertically aboveand below the window sill. It’s a subtle thing but good judges will notice such things. Apply weight to hold in place and set aside. Make up both sides with mullions and scribed siding.

Trim back all scribed siding to the inner side strip. In most cases the kit will supply a piece of 3/32 quarter round molding that will create the transistion from the side to the end of the car or door opening. Use a straight edge to get all of the various layers to one straight line at each end of the car side.



Completed side with all scribing and mullions installed. Note that the seam between the two lower scribed sheets is now invisible.