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F89F 89' Flat Car



Prototype Photos - Jim Panza



Introduced in the early 1960s, the Trailer Train (now TTX Company) F89F flatcar has been a mainstay of contemporary railroading. A product of Bethlehem Steel Company's (BSC) Johnstown, PA plant, over 9,000 of these 89' cars were built throughout the 1960s. Visually distinctive from other long flatcars of their era thanks to their "C" channel side sills, these versatile cars were adapted for many types of service and loadings over the years, ranging from Trailer-On-Flatcar (TOFC), to autoracks, to structural steel loading. While the majority went to Trailer Train, many were built for various railroads, typically for autorack service. Many were "de-racked" in later years, being reassigned and equipped for other service - TOFC, vehicle loading, pipe service, etc.

It wasn't unusual for these cars to see several different loading configurations throughout their careers, in order to meet the changing needs of shippers. In service with Trailer Train, the three or four-letter reporting marks indicated the cars' intended service and corresponding equipment. For example, an "XTTX" car was equipped with four collapsible hitches, capable of carrying various combinations of 28', 40', or 45' trailers. A car in the "RTTX" configuration featured a pair of fixed hitches at the ends, and a retractable hitch amidships, allowing it to carry a pair of long (up to 45') trailers back-to-back, or three 28' "pup" trailers.

This all-new Athearn Genesis model was designed from the start to incorporate as many prototype details and variations as possible, based upon field measurements and builder diagrams, in order to appeal to modelers of multiple eras. Many new hitches, body variants, and other separate details were created, allowing us to accurately offer these cars in their different configurations over the years, from four-hitch "XTTX" cars, to the distinctive drawbar-connected "TTEX" Triple-57 "Long Runner" bulge-deck conversions introduced in 1987. And you can rest assured of its smooth performance, thanks to a heavy diecast frame for reliable tracking, and our famed Genesis 70-ton ASF Ride-Control trucks with spinning bearing cap details, and .110" tread metal wheels.

This release of these highly-detailed Athearn Genesis models reflect Trailer Train Co. cars as they were equipped for intermodal service while wearing "KTTX" reporting marks, which were used on F89F-series cars from 1983 through 2008. Cars with these marks were equipped with a pair of model ACF 6-2, TT-2, TT-4, TT-5, or NRC-1-47 fixed hitches at either end, and were capable of carrying a back-to-back pair of trailers up to 45' in length, or a single 53' trailer. Many were of these cars operated in the familiar Trailer Train yellow scheme with the stylized "TT" logo and "Trailer Train" lettering that was introduced in 1970. Many were later "patched" with the Speed-Style "TTX" logo, introduced in 1991. Interestingly enough, at least one car was re-equipped and re-lettered for "KTTX", while still wearing its original 1960s-era oxide-red scheme!

Operationally, these cars are appropriate for any layout set from the 1960s to well into the 2000s. In TOFC service, F89Fs could be found mixed into manifest trains, or as part of dedicated TOFC trains. It also wasn't uncommon to find them mixed into stack trains, alongside such cars as Gunderson Maxi-Is or Maxi-IIIs, which are also available from Athearn. The new F89F also goes great with Athearn's extensive line of 40', 45', and 53' trailers, not to mention our various 20', 40', 45', 48', and 53' containers mounted on chassis, all of which are available in many different paint schemes to appeal to modelers of all eras.

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