

4-4-0 Driving and Tender Truck Wheels  
 Friends Yankee Shop Models  
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 781/932-2561  
 \$795 for casting and prints package

Friends Yankee Shop Models is a new supplier of old designs that were once popular in the American live steam circle. The designs have become sought after due to their proven workability and uniqueness, especially rare for the 1" scale and smaller markets in the last few years.

An abbreviated history of both the Friends and Yankee Shop operations was given by owner John F. Kurdzionak in the Winter 2006 issue of *The Home Railway Journal*, so I won't go into detail here on how these designs came to be.

Upon opening the box, I discovered that the driving and tender wheel samples were bubble wrapped. The castings were packaged well and arrived in good condition.

Friends Yankee Shop Models castings are poured from either the original patterns which have been brought up to modern standards by a professional patternmaker, or from brand new patterns which were made by a patternmaker based on the blueprints, the original pattern, and/or an existing casting (used only as a sample to guide the patternmaker).

Knowing this, I expected the reused pattern casting sample to be worn out. That was not the case. The driving wheel casting was in great shape with a smooth surface and no mismatched parting line. The tender wheel looked a touch better being a newer pattern, but you wouldn't be able to tell the difference between the pattern sources once the loco was finished.

In fact, I was so impressed with the quality of the castings that I had to show them to a few friends. These really are good looking castings.

I know, you're asking, "So what? It looks good but how does it machine?"

My response is, "Like butter." The high quality



of American made castings really shone here. It was a pleasure to machine the wheel. I love to machine cast iron, and this was one of the finest rough sand castings I have come across in 1" scale.

I did not find any hard spots or come across any air bubbles in the sample tender wheel casting. The wheel was round - really round. When I chucked up the rough casting for the first operation, the wheel was only about .010 out of round. Impressive.

The surface was very smooth when finished, even on my old South Bend Junior lathe with no cross feed.

Friends Yankee Shop Models designs are giving smaller scale modelers something to be "wow"ed with in the rough casting market. In fact, seeing these designs again is like seeing brand new products as they have been gone so long. The designs have shown themselves to be successful and now the company is making castings that are on par with those standards.

*The tender wheel in rough form on the left and the machined back on the right. You can see the casting machined very smoothly.*

