

Removing Numbers and Lettering from your model trains:

As done by Scott Williams

I have two Western Maryland FA1 models from Aristocraft. One diesel was an early run model and was incorrectly numbered [2029] from Aristo. Western Maryland had four FA2 Alco A units numbered 301-304. The FA2 had larger lighted number boards mounted further forward than the Aristo FA1 models. The #304 I bought is a later special edition model and was more accurate with yellow painted handrails instead of the early brass ones and proper numbers in the lighted number boards so I painted the brass handrails to match.

Jeff Shawmut specializes in painting trains for people and he printed me a set of decals proper for WM with the numbers 301-304. <http://shawmutcarshops.com/> He advised me to use an ink eraser and Solvaset to gently remove the numbers without going through the factory paint. G Scale Graphics has a video on how to remove numbers using Super Clean available from auto parts stores in a purple spray bottle and it supposedly works quite well on Bachmann lettering. I decided to try Solvaset on one side and Super Clean on the other side and document the results removing the 2029 numbers. Both solvents do a good job dissolving the letters with patient, gentle rubbing of the ink eraser without going through the factory paint. On Aristo numbers I think Solvaset may have worked slightly better but Super Clean worked pretty well also.



The surface afterwards is slightly 'sanded' looking but a light dusting of Krylon Clear restored the surface slightly 'glossier' than the original finish and as Jeff advised decals don't adhere to a 'flat' surface so this is a necessary step. [I tried Rustoleum 2X clear on the other side and the finish 'orange peeled'. After it dried I sanded it back down with 600 grit paper and used the Krylon on that side and it repaired the finish so I'd say avoid Rustoleum Clear]. I then applied # 302 decal to the engine, masked off the windows and headlamp and sprayed the entire engine with Krylon "**Matte**" finish as Jeff advised and the decals look factory applied.

Next, I had to address the number boards which had 2029 on them also. Again, apply Solvaset and gently rub with the ink eraser to get down to the clear plastic and I then cut and trimmed and applied the black and clear # 302 numbers Jeff sent me and Matte sprayed them too:



I'm happy with the results and the engines should look pretty good run MU back to back.



There are subtle differences between the earlier and later edition engines and I probably shouldn't even point them out **but**, basically, nit-picking aside, I'm pretty pleased with the engines as they are now, so...I probably will call this project; **'done'**.

