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RAPIDO

Thank you for purchasing this New Haven 8600-series passenger car from Rapido Trains Inc. We stand by our products 100%. If you ever have a problem with your 8600 that is not solved by reading these instructions, please send us an email or give us a call at the number above.

When you send an email, you will usually get a response from us within one or two business days, and sometimes within minutes! If you don't receive a reply to your email within two business days, please call us.

POTTED HISTORY: In order to attract customers back to the rails after the end of WWII, the New Haven decided to modernize its fleet with new lightweight passenger cars. In December 1945 a large order was placed with Pullman-Standard for a variety of car styles, including 103 coaches, 25 parlor cars, diners, grill diners, combination baggage buffet lounge/ parlors, and two tavern lounge observation cars. These were produced in the old Osgood Bradley factory in Worcester, MA, so they bear more than a passing resemblance to the Osgood Bradley Lightweights delivered in the 1930s (and previously produced by some outfit called Rapido Trains).

The New Haven's stainless cars were not built entirely from stainless steel like the cars produced by Budd in Philadelphia. Instead, they were constructed from Cor-Ten steel and sheathed with stainless steel fluting panels. The New Haven touted the 8600s as "the newest of the new in coach equipment – gleaming stainless steel on the outside, the last word in attractive decoration and design on the inside."

The 8600-series coaches were ubiquitous, used on trains system-wide from delivery until the Penn Central years. Penn Central later sold 74 of the 8600s to MBTA and they remained in service in the Boston area until 1988! Northeastern modelers have waited far too long for accurate models of these iconic cars. The wait is now over.

Our HO scale model of the 8600-series coach has been produced in association with the New Haven Railroad Historical and Technical Association (NHRHTA).

INTERIOR LIGHTING: The 8600 has track-powered constant interior lighting. It works on both DC and NMRA-compliant DCC systems. The interior lights are always on as long as there is track power supplied. The 8600 is not designed for European AC systems or "train set" DC power packs (including the MRC 1300). Use of your 8600 with these types of controllers will melt your car and will void your warranty.

COUPLERS: Your 8600-series passenger cars come with Rapido's own medium-length Macdonald-Cartier couplers installed from the factory, which will easily navigate most curves down to a 22" radius on level track. These are compatible with all major brands of knuckle couplers on the market. If your model railroad has 18" radius curves, short crossovers, or wibbly-wobbly track, we recommend replacing one of the couplers with the extra Macdonald-Cartier long-shank coupler included in the box. To replace a coupler:

1. Place the car upside-down on a soft, flat surface and use a small Phillips screwdriver to remove the screw holding the coupler box in place. Slide the coupler box out from the end of the car.
2. Open the coupler box and remove the coupler, taking care to remember the orientation of the parts. Install the replacement coupler in the same order and orientation. The coupler box will snap back together.
3. Reverse the steps to put everything back together.

STIRRUPS: The prototype 8600 coaches have stirrups bolted to the corners of the cars. It is impossible for us to install these at the factory in a way that will withstand the rigors of packaging and shipping. So we have included them in a polybag, and we have also included a couple of extras for when yours go PING and disappear into the nether regions of your workshop or layout room.

We have extras at the office so if you lose more than two please give us a shout and we'll send you a couple more. There is no charge, unless you are secretly running a "Stirrups R Us" shop on the internet and selling our stirrups by the trillions.

We recommend you use CA or super glue to attach the stirrups. Normally we recommend using white glue but it just isn't strong enough for these stirrups. If you spill some glue, add some weathering to hide it.

TUNE-UP: All model passenger cars need to be tuned up before they hit the tracks, and with so many fiddly parts, our cars are no exception. Before you run your 8600, we recommend going through the following steps:

1. Check that all wheelsets are in gauge using a National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) RP-2 Standards Gauge. If any wheelsets are tight or loose, they can be re-gauged by gently twisting the wheels.
2. One passenger car truck should freely swivel from side-to-side, and the other should swivel both side-to-side and up-and-down. Tighten or loosen the truck screws as necessary.
3. Replace one standard-length coupler with the long-shank coupler if required for your layout.
4. Look at pictures of "New Look" transit buses on the internet.
5. Check that none of the underbody piping has been bent out of position during shipping. In most cases, it can be bent back into shape with your fingers.
6. Check the height of the coupler trip pins and bend them up if they foul your switches and crossings. We recommend using Kadee part #237 (Trip Pin Pliers) or Micro-Mark part #80600 (Trip Pin Bending Plier). The coupler heads should be at the correct height.

If after the tune up your car wobbles, check the wheelsets again. If you have any wheelsets which are not 100% true, we will replace them at no additional charge – just give us a shout.

WHEEL ROLLABILITY: Because of the electrical pickups in the trucks, your 8600 car is not as free-rolling as a freight car. Your Rapido FL9 locomotive will have no trouble hauling a realistic consist of these cars, and if it has trouble then you will have to follow prototypical practice and add a second unit. Don't own a second FL9? Buy one!

If you are not aware that we have produced the most amazing HO scale FL9 model on the planet, then please tell us why we have not been able to reach you. We advertise in all the major train magazines (including the back cover and inside back cover of RMC); we have a web site, a YouTube channel, a Facebook page and an email newsletter. Our models are reviewed online and in magazines. We go to the Springfield show every year with a huge (and expensive) booth. We genuinely want to know how you are getting your model railroad news because if you missed the FL9, chances are other people did as well.

THANKS: Our 8600 coaches would not be the amazing models they are today were it not for the generous assistance of NHRHTA and a number of people. Thank you to Rick Abramson, Dave Clinton, George Clinton, George Washington, Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum, Paul Cutler III, Paul Cutler IV through IX, Bill Dulmaine, Patrick and Lucille McGinnis, Lucille Van Pelt, John Sheridan, Asa Worcester.

WARRANTY: Your 8600 passenger car comes with a limited lifetime warranty. If there is any factory defect we will do our best to repair or replace your model. If you damage your model, do not hesitate to call or email us. We will still try and fix it for you even if the problem was "your fault." Though if you dunked your car in a bucket of super glue or accidentally baked it for 35 minutes at 375° until golden brown we may have to charge you for a new car. We aim for 100% customer satisfaction. Bear in mind we won't parts in stock forever, so if you are opening this for the first time in 2043, we probably don't have any parts. Sorry.

If you didn't bother to read these instructions, then we encourage you to go onto the internet model train discussion forums and complain loudly about everything wrong with your car rather than contacting us to have the problems solved, because it is much more rewarding to rant and rave online than to actually have a working model. Contacting us via YouTube video comments or some other strange method rather than sending us an email is equally as effective. We could go on, but we are out of