

RAIL YARD MODELS

PENN CENTRAL/KELLOGG'S X79 BOX CAR

Prototype Information

In 1973, Thrall Freight Car built 100 of these 60' outside braced, double plug door cars. The cars were owned by the Kellogg Company and leased back to the Penn Central railroad on a ten year program set to expire in 1983. Their primary use was shipping Kellogg's cereal products made at their Battle Creek, Michigan plant to distribution centers around the northeast and notably to Omaha, Nebraska. Since their primary service was cereal products, they were designed as 70 ton nominal capacity cars due to the low density of this type of product.

The Penn Central class X79 was applied to these cars and they were assigned numbers 281300-281399. Cars 281300-281355 were built in 5-73, cars 281356-281399 were built in 6-73.



PC 281336 on 6/25/1978, Photo by Craig Bossler, from the collection of Mark Branibar © 1978, 2009



PC 281303 from the collection of Mark Branibar © 2009.



PC 281326 7/31/1978 Rail Scene Photo © 1978, 2009.

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Conrail Era

On April 1 1976, Conrail took over Penn Central's equipment. Most of the cars continued on wearing PC green and PC reporting marks until the end of the Kellogg Company lease in 1983. A small number of these cars were painted in full Conrail colors around 1977. Cars have been found that were repainted at Meadville, PA and Hollidaysburg, PA. There are minor variations in the Conrail lettering arrangement depending on where the repaint occurred. There is some evidence that Conrail renumbered these cars into the 288xxx series, but no evidence has been tracked down in the ORER records.

After The Lease

In June of 1983, the original lease expired, and the cars were reclaimed by the Kellogg Company. The Penn Central and Conrail names, logos and reporting were painted over and were stenciled with KELX reporting marks while retaining the original numbers. Many of these cars remain in service today, but their numbers are dropping. Most of the cars shown on the next couple of pages were found on what was probably the scrap line awaiting the cutting torch.



KELX 281342 Photo by Jeff Feldmeier



KELX 281391 taken on 9/16/2007 at Hollidaysburg, PA. The X79 cars have been showing up on this track over the past several years, possibly being repaired at the facility across the highway. (Former Millenium Rail) Photo by Gene Fusco © 2007, 2009



KELX 281361 taken on 9/16/2007 at Hollidaysburg, PA.
Photo by Gene Fusco © 2007, 2009

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KELX 235 taken on 9/16/2007 at Hollidaysburg, PA. This ex-Conrail car was found between two PC green KELX paint-outs. The paint outs on this car were examined very closely revealing that the car once wore a complete Conrail paint scheme, as CR 281355.



The ghost of the Conrail logo can be seen under the paint on this close-up photo of KELX 235. The text painted out under the ownership stencil was "PC 281355"

This photo shows the painted out CONRAIL name spaced out one letter per panel. The "A" appears to have been painted over the door stop. The car numbers also show that the car likely started out as CR 281355, then was changed to CR 288355 before being changed to 235.

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(Right) This photo shows the car was given a full repaint on 6/77 at MDV, which was the paint code for the ex-EL shops in Meadville, PA. Since the original lease ran until 1983, it is likely the Conrail markings and numbers remained intact until June of 1983.



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DETAIL PHOTOS



B End of Car



A End of Car



All photos on this page are of KELX 281391 in Hollidaysburg, PA on 9/16/2007 taken by Gene Fusco © 2007, 2009

(Left) Close up of draft gear, uncoupler lever and hand brake chain & pulley

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DETAIL PHOTOS



Brake Cylinder



Brake Cylinder & Hand Brake Linkage



Hand Brake Levers & B End Brake Lever



Hand Brake Intermediate Linkage



Air Reservoir. (Sorry about the lens flare!)



Air Reservoir and Brake Valve

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DETAIL PHOTOS



Draft Gear Support. Note Hand brake pulley and linkage.



B End Brake Lever and Pivot



Cushion Package Support



A End Brake Lever and Pivot



Door details.
Note visibility of brake rigging from car side.

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GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

INSIDE LENGTH: 60' 9"
 INSIDE WIDTH: 9' 4"
 INSIDE HEIGHT: 10' 7"
 LENGTH OVER PULLING FACES: 68' 2"

DOOR OPENING WIDTH: 16' 0"
 DOOR OPENING HEIGHT: 10' 8"

TRUCK CENTERS: 46' 4"
 WHEELS: 33"

NOMINAL CAPACITY: 137,000 Lbs
 APPROXIMATE LIGHT WEIGHT: 60,500 Lbs



A string of KELX X79 cars seen on 11/23/2006 at Berea, OH. These cars represent some of the ultimate survivors for Penn Central fans. Although the lettering and logos have been covered over for over 30 years, these cars are still instantly recognized as a Penn Central signature car. Photo by Jerry Jordak © 2006, 2009

ROSTER

Reporting Mark	Number Series		# Cars	Built	Notes
PC	281300	281355	56	May 1973	1
PC	281356	281399	44	June 1973	2
CR	281300	281399	100	-	3
KELX	281300	281399	100	-	4
KELX	200	299	100	-	5
Notes					
1: Construction begins in May 1973					
2: Construction continues into June 1973					
3: All cars transferred to Conrail on April 1 1976, retaining their Penn Central numbers.					
Some cars were given complete Conrail repaints, also retaining their Penn Central numbers.					
4: All cars returned to Kellogg's in June 1983. PC green and Conrail red cars were painted out and given KELX reporting marks while retaining their former numbers.					
5: Kellogg's renumbering, occurring between 2006 and 2007					

Roster information compiled by Mark Branibar & Gene Fusco