

I was faced with a really sticky wicket while adding to the second level to my Salida Division layout. The backdrop needed to be placed behind Cerro Summit/Montrose and as most of you might agree for the most part backdrops are easy to install. Well sometimes. In my case the far end was a bit of a problem as I suspended the shelves from shelf brackets with the end result of not having bracing below the decking. The picture below shows this bracing and the “gap” or opening I needed to work around between both levels.

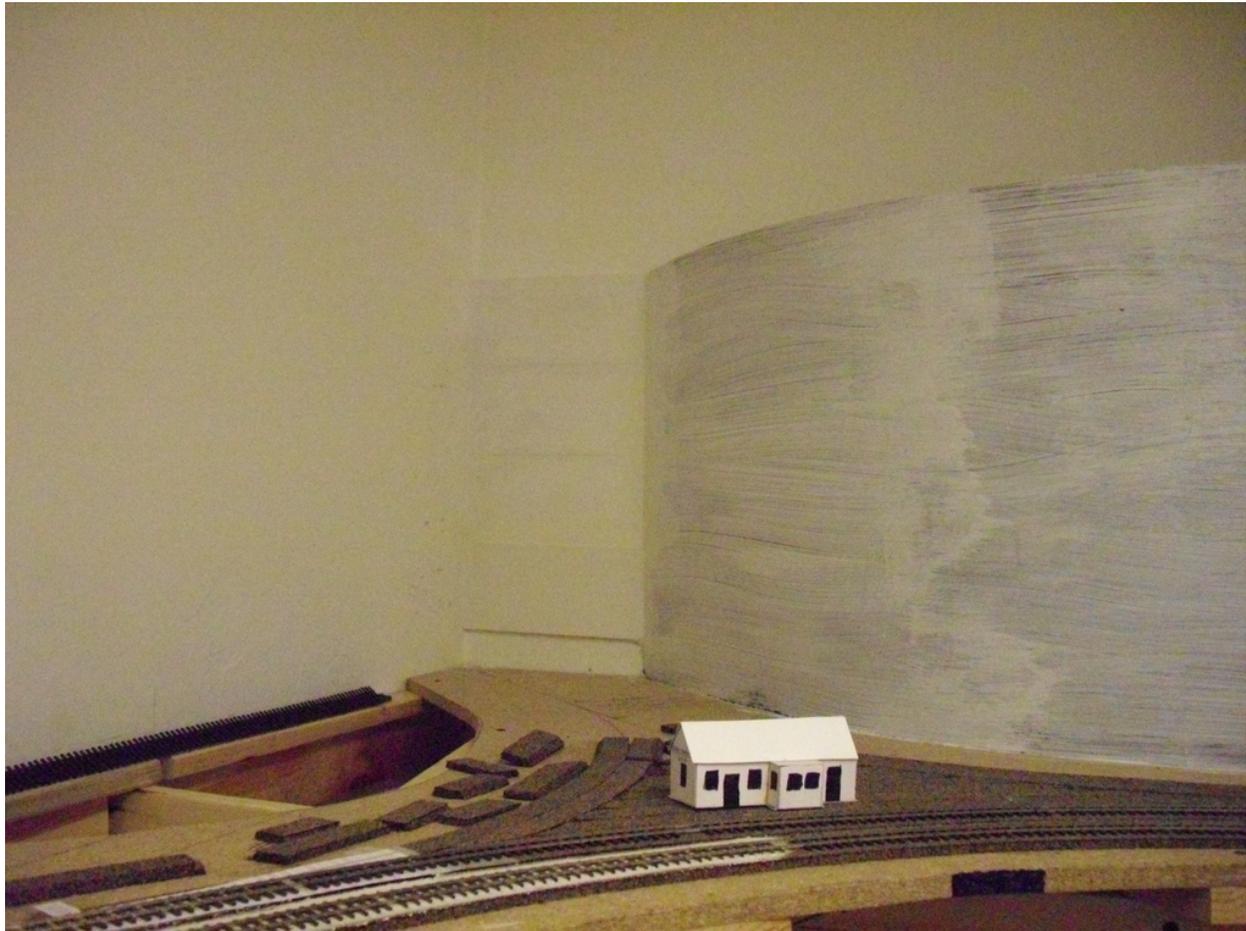


Standing on a ladder was doable as far as reaching where I had to but actually being up close and personal was the issue, still. The workbench is directly to the side of this corner and as I was contemplating options, I did manage to consider several. One was just going for it and letting things fall where ever they may was ruled out. Borrowing a friend’s creeper was considered but that was ruled out account of the moving involved plus there was not enough clearance under the layout for the base. I then thought about hot air/helium balloons (really) but that idea burst as well. Finally I decided on using thin piano wire and attaching the wire to the ceiling beams and hanging the whole thing by the wire. While that idea did not appeal to me, I was tinkering with the mechanics when it struck me, “Why not invert the wire and use it as bracing?”

A reverse wire was the idea and next thing the “Sky Hook” was born! Instead of wire I used 2X2’s for the bracing/supports. The picture below shows this.



The mechanics were rather simple to construct but here is my explanation on how I did it. The first piece of 2X2 I cut and fit was the bottom piece. I did cut it just a hair taller than the actual length needed. That was done to have a press fit, per se, so no glue or screws were necessary. The next piece of 2X2 was cut to fit the space between decks, again just a hair taller for that press fit. The idea here was to have a solid but removable section of support from the top deck down to the floor without gaps. That way my whole body could actually kneel on the upper benchwork and nor have a massive collapsing effect. Mind you though be careful and do not knock out the supports. Here are the results of using my "Sky Hook". The backboards are attached and primed with no collateral damage.





In the bottom picture I did have to lean over the back board to attach it to the framework but all went well so if you need to suspend some benchwork and are stuck in how to work around it try a "Sky Hook".