

Italian UIC-X Coaches

From Fleischmann DB Models

©2007 - Blaine Bachman



Figure 1 - FS UIC-X Couchette built from a Fleischmann N Scale Model

This article Copyright ©2007 by Blaine Bachman. You may download this article for your personal use and research. You may also make paper copies and distribute them to other individuals providing that the article is copied in its entirety, including the byline and bibliography, no fee is charged (except for nominal costs of reproduction), and this notice remains intact.

You may link to this article on the Web provided you do not incorporate it in a frame or other method that would lead the average user to believe that it is part of another Internet site. You may not 'mirror' this article or this site without permission of the copyright owner.

The Problem:

Accurately modeling mainline FS operations in the Seventies and Eighties requires a goodly number of the ubiquitous UIC-X series of 26.4-meter long passenger cars. These coaches, couchette sleepers, baggage cars, and postal cars were built following standardized plans published by the UIC (*Union Internationale des Chemins de fer* – International Railway Union) beginning in the mid-Sixties.

From early on, Rivarossi's N Scale line included the First- and Second-class coaches in FS lettering and with reasonably correct details. Lima produced a later version UIC-X with full underbody skirting, but only the First-class car and only in the gray and *rosso fegato* paint scheme of the Eighties and early Nineties (this model should not be confused with the shorter nine- and ten-compartment coaches that were in the Lima line for decades which are actually modeled after the 24.5-meter long UIC-Y design).

By current standards, the biggest failing of the Rivarossi coaches is their lack of flush-fitting windows. Even after the Rivarossi-Arnold Rapido merger and the subsequent reissue of these cars under the Arnold banner, nothing was done to correct this defect (even though the cars did receive the close-coupling mechanism). But by far the biggest practical problem for the FS modeler is the extreme scarcity of the Rivarossi coaches; they always command top *Euro* on ebay.

The Solution:

Since the UIC-X is a standard design adopted by several European railways, it stands to reason that suitable models ought to be available, albeit decorated for other railway administrations. Arguably the best and certainly the most complete assortment is from Fleischmann. Their offerings have flush fitting windows and, in the most recent production, close-coupling mechanisms; a minor modification, a new coat of paint, and new decal lettering is all that is needed to build a convincing coach or couchette.

Available Fleischmann models include:

1st Class Coach
Nº. 8641
10 evenly-spaced
compartment windows



2nd Class Coach
Nº. 8114, 8643
Nº. 8618 w/o roof vents
12 evenly-spaced
compartment windows



1st/2nd Class Coach
Nº. 8113, 8193, 8642
11 compartment windows;
5 at First-class
spacing, 6 at Second-
class spacing



Couchette
Nº. 8192, 8119
11 evenly-spaced
compartment windows



The Fleischmann DB coaches all have Minden-Deutz trucks, which were also installed on most of the Italian coaches as well. The only physical modification necessary is to add two rectangular pieces of thin plastic to the roof of each car representing the covers for the water tanks serving the two restrooms, a unique spotting feature of the Italian cars.

After disassembling the model, remove the paint from the body using Scalecoat Paint Stripper, which is plastic compatible. There's no need to strip the roof; simply paint the water tank covers to match and add some weathering. For North American modelers, a good substitute for the FS's dark gray *grigio ardesia* is Floquil 110132 SP Lark Dark Grey. Decals for various permutations of the Italian UIC-X cars can be obtained from decalEnne (<http://www.decalenne.com/>).