

required. Also, only a few stations have platforms of sufficient length to accommodate this consist, so either double spotting or restricting passengers to specific cars for short platform stops will be required). On August 1, 712 departed Emeryville 1-hour and 9-minutes late and arrived in Bakersfield 2-hours and 24-minutes late. I was told yesterday while riding 711 that this consist has been sitting in Amtrak's Oakland yard since the initial run.

Eventually, I have been told, this equipment will operate on 711 and 718. 711 is already chronically late and this equipment could make the delays even longer (I have ridden 711 forty-five times this year and of those it departed Stockton on time only four times).

Bob Heywood

**There is a simple solution to the loading, handicap and bike problems with single level equipment. Lease a few surplus Metrolink bi-level cars and add them to the single level cars. People can quickly get on and off of the low floor train-lined doors on the old Metrolink equipment. A simple ramp to a raised platform is easy to use for boarding for people in wheelchairs or with walkers or pushing a baby stroller. People can easily walk over to the Comet cars on the train from the bi-level cars. The Metrolink cars with a few seats taken out have plenty of room for bikes, oversize luggage, wheel chairs, walkers or baby strollers. The Metrolink cars also have large handicap bathrooms and wheelchair tie downs. NB**



The test San Joaquin train in push mode with the rebuilt Comet Cars on August 1st. Picture by Bob Heywood

### **Re: Not Just Spain has dangerous segments of track**

Just a short notice to thank you for all that you do on behalf of rail transit in California. Your efforts will be rewarded sooner or later and, sad to say, probably later. I especially like your comments at the end of each issue.

I am a former railroad employee, completing 42 years of service with Southern Pacific and Union Pacific. I started as a fireman, promotion to engineer, clerk, telegrapher, Chief clerk, and ending as a Network Control specialist at the General Office in San Francisco.

I would like to comment on the train wreck in Spain and express my condolences to all who suffered in that wreck. I am surprised that the curve was there and why it was not banked.

This brings to mind an incident on the Southern Pacific in the middle of the Salinas Valley. There is a tunnel between Salinas and King City where there are no mountains. It seems that the original line, when built, went around this low-lying hill requiring a decrease in speed. As expected, a first-class passenger train did not slow down and went off the rails. At the investigation following the wreck, it was determined that the original plans included a tunnel at that spot and money had been assigned to the building it but the tunnel wasn't built. A tunnel was built on this site after this accident.

This information was relayed to me by a fireman who was working a yard job in Bayshore and were making up the wreck work-train.

Keep up the good work.

Michael J. Hayes

**It only goes to show you that all through history there seems to never be enough time or money to do something right; until there is a disaster. After the disaster then money and time is no object to fix the problem. I found the tunnel in question on Google Satellite Maps just north of Kings which shows a county road which likely follows the curve the train derailed on. NB**

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