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Conrail (Railroad Color History)

Tim Doherty

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During its 25-year history, Conrail became one of the most familiar modern railroads, a freight line that connected most of the Northeast's population centers and was renowned for its clean locomotives, tight schedules, and frequent heavy freight trains. This comprehensive and gorgeously illustrated history examines Conrail's motive power and rolling stock, its yards and terminals, and its most interesting routes, as well as its operations. Much of the information is gleaned from interviews with former Conrail employees. The photography is sourced from a variety of collections and archivists around the country.Following a brief look at the Pennsylvania, New Haven, New York Central, Lehigh Valley, Erie-Lackawanna, and other roads that ultimately formed Conrail, the book launches into chapters detailing the major aspects of Conrail operations, including: 1. The Boston Line, the world's oldest mountain railroad which was home to scenic splendor and 5,000-horsepower Electro-Motive SD80MAC locomotives; 2. The Water Level Route, the former New York-to-Chicago path of the New York Central's 20th Century Limited that was one of Conrail's busiest routes, handling dozens of Conrail intermodals daily amongst the beauty of the Hudson River Valley and the Great Lakes;3. The Southern Tier, a scenic, broad-gauge engineering marvel in eastern Pennsylvania and New York State which, though long-dormant, came alive as Conrail's premier stack-train route; and4. Perhaps the photographic highlight of the book, Conrail in Pennsylvania, a state lauded for its Allegheny Mountain railways and Horseshoe curve and myriad coal lines and secondary branches amid bucolic beauty.Further chapters include coverage of Conrail's Midwestern operations in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, its smaller branch lines, Conrail terminals, and epilog detailing Conrail's 1999 split between CSX and Norfolk Southern and a brief look at "Conrail" under its new owners.

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