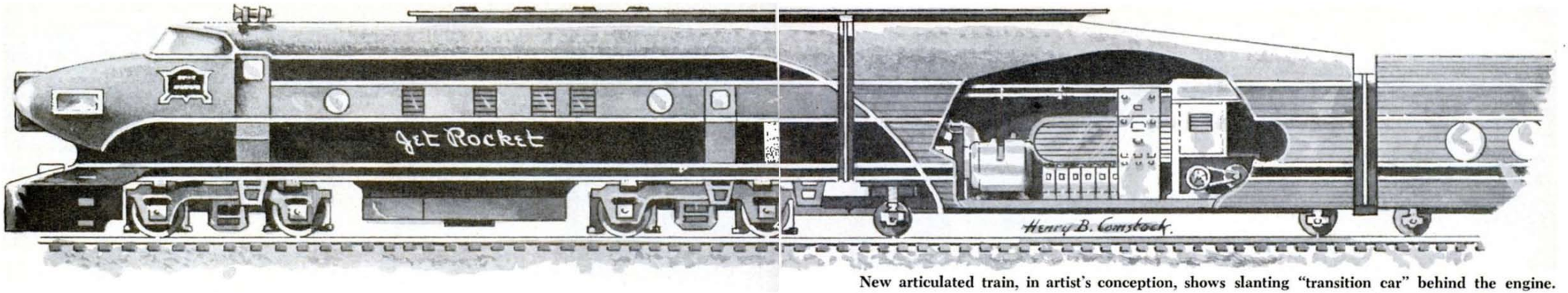
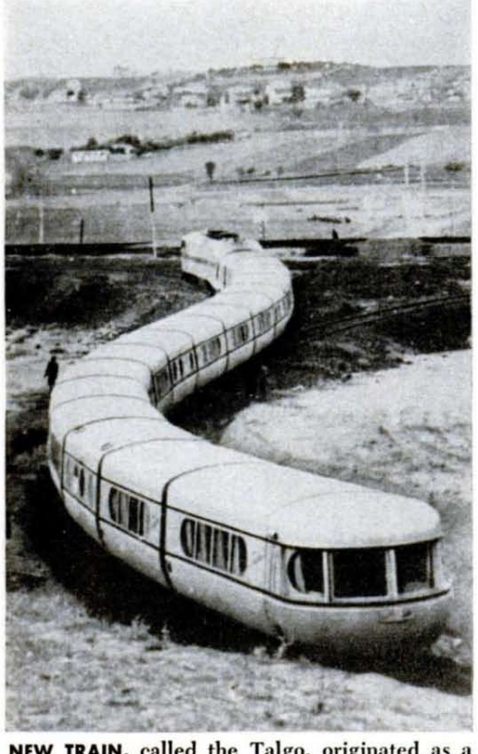


New articulated train, in artist's conception, shows slanting "transition car" behind the engine.

Midwest Gets Snaky Train

Short, ground-scraping coaches built to round curves at high speeds are the newest innovation in American railroading.



NEW TRAIN, called the Talgo, originated as a Spanish design, was built in U. S. by ACF Industries. Spanish version, shown above, has streaked through mountainous terrain between Madrid and Hendaye, on the French border, for four years, beating standard trains by hours.

THE world's limberest passenger train —it goes around corners like a snake— will be shuttling the 160 miles between Chicago and Peoria, Ill., in the near future. It's like nothing else ever ridden by American rail travelers.

It's low. The floors are 25 inches above the rails, compared with more than 50 inches for the standard railway coach.

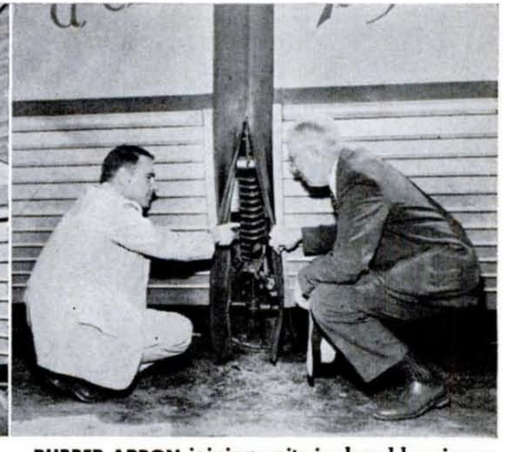
Like the Toonerville Trolley, the cars are short. They measure about 36 feet, compared with around 80 feet for the standard U.S. railway coach.

Stranger still, most of the cars have wheels on only one end. And they aren't the familiar four-wheel trucks in use practically the world over—they're just two wheels, one for each rail, on separate stub axles. The car-ends without wheels ride piggyback on the lips of the cars next to them.

That, in fact, is the whole point. A train of cars, put together in short, articulated units of three, can round curves at high speed and maintain a higher *average* speed than standard trains.

Two of the new trains, fashioned after an experimental model built five years ago (PSM, June '49, p. 136), will go into service on the Rock Island late in 1955.

IT'S ONLY A STEP from the middle-entrance coach to a low platform or ground when leaving the Talgo. Four Rock Island triple-unit cars will accommodate total of 300 passengers.



RUBBER APRON joining units is closed by zipper. Wheels, on stub axles, are guided, instead of dragged, around curves. Talgo cars weigh only a fourth as much as like-capacity standard cars.

UNIQUE METHOD of suspending coaches is shown below in opposite-end views of a Talgo unit. On left is "widow" end on dollies that are lowered by hand cranks when units are detached from each other. On right is wheeled, or piggyback, end with two wheels on separate axle stubs. In three-unit "car" one unit has four wheels, the others only two wheels each.