Mail Train Help for SteamTRAIN 3

Choosing the **Mail Train** option provides new challenges for you the engineer (and crew) to deliver the mail on time! Basically, you show up for your work shift at your Depart Station and are assigned a locomotive and **Fast Mail Train** -- built up by the yard crew and parked it in front of the Depart Station.   Your pre-assembled train always consists of exactly the same 4 cars: Loco, Tender, government **Mail Car,** 1 Baggage, and 2 Coaches -- A-B-C-D. Your task is to deliver **7 Mail Bags** to 7 stations covering the entire ST Railroad main line -- as quickly as possible! You are graded on keeping your **Schedule**! **On Time** = 100% Pay. Of course, you could also be **Early** (good) or **Late** (bad). Various problems (crashes etc.) receive **Time Penalties** while you negotiate the rail circuit. Your Depart Station and final Arrive Station are always the two large **Terminals**.

Before trying the **Mail Train**, some user selectable options are available from the **Preferences** Window (under the SteamTRAIN menu). You have **3 choices** of increasing difficulty: (1) Fast Mail Train - 4 Cars Fixed, (2) Mail Train + Random Express, or (3) Mail + Express + Automatic Clock. Your schedule is pre-adjusted according to the degree of difficulty at the outset. The Demo (unregistered) version of ST lacks a few surprises. Options (1) and (2) above allow you to manually set the **Railroad Clock**. Option (3) automatically runs the clock from a random starting time. Light and dark are now related to the RR clock time. The **Express** option (2) and (3) adds more danger and challenge. **Note:** while your Mail Train is very important, the **Express** Train still has **higher priority** wherever they meet.

Mail Train ON is selected near the top of the **Station Menu**. The Station Map and **Mail Train Windows** both open with your train orders as well as today's operating conditions, including:

Depart Station:	Start at Listed **Terminal** Station
Route Direction:	EAST or WEST
Locomotive Type:	American 4-4-0, Mogul 2-6-0, Consolidation 2-8-0
Water/Coal/Sand:	Full (to Start)
Brake Type:	Train Air Brakes only (safest)
Train Cars:	4 (A-B-C-D minimum)
Grade/Slope:	Map Normal or Map Steep (harder)
Track Condition:	Dry Rails or Slippery (danger)
Time Remaining:	XX Hours
Arrive Station:	Stop at all **7** Major Stations including Listed **Terminal**

The **Station Map** shows each of the 7 stations where you must deliver a mail bag. The **Depart Station** has a Green Dot while the next seven -- including the **Arrive Station** -- gain Red Dots after you've stopped at each.

For better screen visibility, the Station Map and Mail Train Windows can both be shown or hidden at any time using the "**M**" key. For very large screens, both windows can be relocated off the main window. Some of your prior preference and menu selections become overridden under Mail Train. Pay particular attention to orders or conditions shown in RED. Note your initial Route Direction -- either **EAST or WEST**.

The number of Mail Bags yet to be delivered is shown just below the Track Map window as "**X Mail Bags**". Your train driving skills will be needed to avoid collisions, siding crashes, running out of coal and water, plus switch to safe tracks and climb steep hills -- all while keeping to an aggressive schedule.

When you have delivered all your mail bags and stopped your train at the destination "Arrive Station", you receive your **Mail Train Report**:

    Mail Bags   -- **7** (delivered -- or you wouldn't be here)
    Schedule   -- ON TIME, EARLY or LATE
    Reward (%) -- +/- XX
    PAY (%)   -- YYY

Your pay for this terminal-to-terminal mail delivery is based entirely on your schedule performance. Once you've gotten used to these Mail Train challenges, you should be able to retain more than 70% of your maximum pay, or even an occasional bonus. If not, please consider some career other than Fast Mail Train engineer!

At the bottom of the Mail Train Report, you have the option to exit Mail Train mode by choosing **Mail Train OFF** button. If you want to continue Mail Train at a new station with a new locomotive, choose **Mail Train Continue**. The **Station Map** reappears and some changes are made to the **Mail Train Window**.

Whenever you are finished using Mail Train mode, you can choose **Mail Train OFF** from the Station Menu.