ITALIAN RAILWAY ERAS AT A GLANCE

From NEM 814-I

Era & Period	Characteristics	Documentation	Modeling Difficulty	Remarks
Ia: 1839-1865	Early railway construction in the various city-states. Wide variety of equipment & influences.	Sparse	High	
Ib: 1865-1885	Italy Unification: Five railway networks with common operating practices but differing equipment.	Limited	High	Significant British influence in locomotive technology and signaling.
Ic: 1885-1905	Bankruptcies and reorganization into three networks. Improvements in signaling. First attempts at electric locomotives.	Limited	Medium-high	
Id: 1905-1922	Formation of the FS. Standardization of locomotive numbering system.	Adequate	Medium	Hundreds of Prussian and Saxon locomotives and thousands of wagons received as war reparations at the end of WWI.
IIa: 1922-1931	Most new rolling stock constructed of steel. Maximum expansion of tri-phase electric system. Beginnings of 3000 VDC system.	Adequate	Medium-low	
IIb: 1931-1943	First appearance of the two-tone brown paint scheme for electric locos and passenger cars. Standard lettering placement on freight cars. Wider loading gauge. Beginnings of push-pull commuter service. Signaling expanded to give speed indications.	Adequate	Medium-low	
IIc: 1943-1949	Extensive war damage; many temporary bridges. Influx of British and American rolling stock. Beginnings of post-war reconstruction.	Limited	Medium-low	
IIIa: 1949-1956	Widespread application of two-tone brown paint scheme to electric locos and passenger cars. Development of luxury trainsets ETR 300 '*Settebello*' and ETR 250 '*Arlecchino*' augmenting prewar ETR 200/220/240.	Adequate	Medium-low	
IIIb: 1956-1968	3rd class passenger service eliminated. 'Golden Era' of TEE and other named trains. UIC 12-digit car numbering instituted for international use. Beginnings of UIC standard coach designs; phase-out of wooden coaches. Wide use of Diesel switchers. E444 electric loco capable of 200 Kph introduced. Adoption of 'searchlight' signals.	Extensive	Low	Cross-border freight-car interchange under the EUROP marking. New signals very similar to US design and use.
IVa: 1968-1980	Twilight of steam, the tri-phase system, semaphore signals, and CIWL rolling stock. New electric locos appear in grey and blue. Eurofima coaches introduced. New push-pull commuter train designs. Development of intermodal solutions including 'rolling highway.' Larger truck-equipped freight cars. Traffic control improved to allow wrong-way running on double track. Widespread use of concrete ties.	Extensive	Low	Construction and opening of the high speed *Direttissima* between Rome and Florence.
IVb: 1980-1989	Vast improvement in solid-state locomotive control. Continued developments in commuter and high-speed equipment. Introduction of dark red and grey coach paint scheme and new trapezoid FS logo. Ex-TEE coaches absorbed into 'Grand Comfort' paint. French TGV extends to Milano. First use of concrete ties under turnouts.	Extensive	Low	
Va: 1989-2001	Privatization of the FS; later divided into Trenitalia to operate the trains and RFI to manage the physical plant. Introduction of ETR500 and ETR460/470/480 high-speed trainsets. Latest 'XPMR' scheme appears on passenger cars and locomotives.	Extensive	Low	Many tunnels modified (by lowering the floor) for increased clearances.
Vb: 2001-	'Foreign' trains begin circulating on RFI rails.	Extensive	Low	EC regulations require 'common carrier' rail corridors available to all approved freight carrier companies.