

New Haven-Springfield Line

Amtrak NORTHEAST CORRIDOR 1976

On June 28, 1976, a Metroliner operated by Amtrak passes an NJDOT commuter train making a station stop at Elizabeth, N.J., on tracks owned by Conrail. This was the state of affairs until Amtrak purchased the majority of the Northeast Corridor route from Conrail.

BOB KRONE PHOTO



to about 3 hours and 20 minutes. The regular Amtrak train schedules were generally unchanged, taking about four hours. Amtrak's timetables carried a prominent note advising that a major track rehabilitation project was underway and that the company regretted any delays that might occur. There was also a note advising that the Metroliner cars were being refurbished, and that it might be necessary to operate regular Amfleet equipment at various times.

While the slower NECIP schedules eventually affected all trains, the impact of construction-related "slow orders" was greater on the Metroliners. Since the pre-NECIP Metroliner schedules were based on higher speeds than the regular Amtrak trains, the slow orders meant that more time had to be added to Metroliner schedules than regular train schedules. Soon the schedules were no better than the conventional Amfleet trains, and many passengers no longer saw the value in the "premium" fares being charged for Metroliner service.

Longer trip times were not the only disruption to Metroliner in 1978. In addition to the NECIP track work, Amtrak began pulling the original Metroliner cars out of service for the major overhaul and modifications funded by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). These upgrades, including the telltale roof hump, were initially applied to 34 of the 61 cars. The remaining 27 cars were not upgraded as a financial analysis showed

