

Iowa Interstate sets a steam-hauled tonnage record

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ROCK ISLAND, IL — Iowa Interstate, which bought two Chinese built 2-10-2s in 2006 and previously set a world record for steam-hauled freight tonnage in the 21st century, broke its own record yesterday. The pair of engines hauled 55 loads weighing 7,078 tons from Iowa City, Iowa, to Rock Island.

Railroad Development Corp. Chairman Henry Posner III alit from the two engines at North Star siding near Wilton, Iowa, Wednesday morning to deliver the news to fans gathered trackside to see the rare mainline doubleheader of two sister engines. He said the tonnage did not incorporate a four-axle Iowa Interstate Geep, No. 701, or two business cars, tacked onto the end of the consist. The diesel went dead in tow during the run.

The trip across the old Rock Island Railroad Council Bluffs, Iowa, to Chicago main line was a ferry move to get the two steam engines to Rock Island for Train Festival 2011, which opens today and runs through Sunday. The event features seven operating steam locomotives, the Illinois Railway Museum's Nebraska Zephyr trainset, and other historic railroad equipment.

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Doubleheaded Chinese-built 2-10-2s roll through Moscow, Iowa, on Wednesday, with a record-setting freight on the Iowa Interstate Railroad.

Photo by Jim Wrinn