

PRICE GUIDE: LATEST AUCTION RESULTS



DIECAST

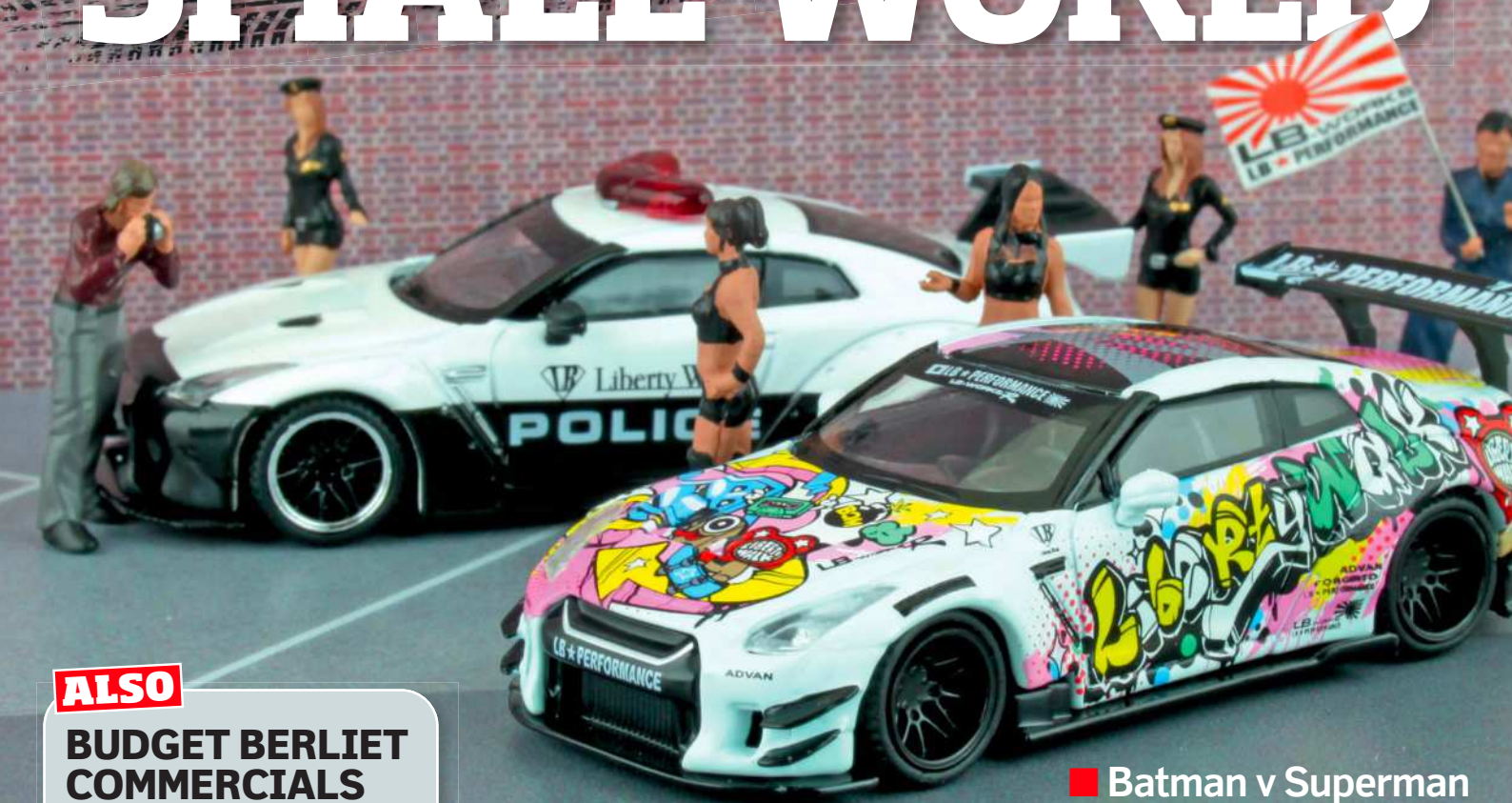
C O L L E C T O R

THE UK'S ONLY DIECAST MAGAZINE

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Turn to page 14 to find out more...

News & Events

Here's a round-up of the latest hobby news and events.

THE LATEST TOPLESS BEAUTY FROM DNA COLLECTIBLES



THAT incredibly talented team of car enthusiasts from Switzerland has done it again, with yet another exquisite 1/18 scale resincast offering of sublime Swedish automotive design.

The latest in a long line of Saab releases (and there are still plenty more to come) is the 2005 second generation 9-3 Convertible in Aero trim. Released in three stunning colour combinations, each is a limited edition of just 399 pieces, and perfect for the summer weather - they can be displayed with the top down or up, a switch that takes a matter of seconds.

The Saab 9-3 (pronounced "nine three" so as to not confuse it with the earlier, late 1950s model 93, pronounced "ninety three") was manufactured in three different generations by three different company owners during its lifetime (GM, Spyker and NEVS). This is the second generation version, which is fast becoming a classic car.

The turbocharged Aero convertible came with a low, sport-tuned chassis and featured an exterior body kit, along with 17-inch wheels, and tyre pressure monitoring. The models also came fitted with a 300W, 13-speaker sound system, and leather-appointed seats. Other accessories included rain-sensing wipers, rear parking support, a six-disc CD changer, and a leather steering wheel. Optional accessories included heated seats and Xenon HID headlamps with washers.

Available in either Black, Chili Red Metallic or Lime Yellow Metallic, as shown above, the interior colour varies depending on the choice of body colour. Each model is sumptuously finished, with flawless paintwork, incredibly realistic alloy wheels, and a bevy of beautiful detailing that really adds to the incredibly realistic appearance.

Focusing on the exterior, and in addition to the exquisite paintwork, DNA has taken great care to faithfully apply realistic badging all around the car. Then of course there are the headlights and fog lamps, in which you can actually see the bulbs.

The factory-fitted alloy wheels are perfectly recreated with the correct finish, right down to the wheel nuts, central badge and even the valve and its dust cap. These have then been fitted with very realistic, treaded rubber tyres.

The interior, easily visible with the optional 'hood up' part removed, is sumptuously appointed and the detail to the dashboard is astonishing, with the seating just as impressive.

For more information, and to order, the DNA Collectibles website can be found at www.dnacollectibles.com. Alternatively, get in touch with your preferred DNA stockist. ■



NEW PARTS FOR YOUR DIECAST RESTORATIONS

MODEL Supplies has revealed photos of three newly released reproduction part products:

- Matchbox 26B Foden Cement Mixer orange plastic drum – also available in grey
- Matchbox 51B Trailer yellow plastic barrels (set of 3)
- Lonestar 1472 Cadillac 62 chrome plastic grille and rear bumper

For the very latest catalogue featuring the full list of the company's reproduction parts available, priced at £4.00 including UK mainland postage, contact: **Steve Flowers Model Supplies Ltd, 25 Pennant Close, Glenfield, Leicester, LE3 8LL Tel: 0116 233 2288** info@model-supplies.co.uk, www.model-supplies.co.uk ■

BIG-SCALE MUSTANG FROM EAGLEMOSS

EAGLEMOSS has announced its latest ultra-detailed 'build-up' diecast replica, the 1968 Ford Mustang GT Fastback. The Mustang was soon cast by movie makers and in films as varied as *Goldfinger* (1964), *Gone with the Wind* (1939), and, of course, the 1968 cult classic, *Bullitt*.

The model has working headlights, taillights, and stoplights, plus opening doors, bonnet, and boot. The windows actually wind-down and the front wheels can be turned by the steering wheel. The interior also features folding seats. It also comes with an optional customisation kit that turns this already cool car into a street-smart racer.

Officially licensed by the Ford Motor Company, the replica measures an amazing 59cm in length and weighs an impressive 8.3kg when complete.

To find out more and to take advantage of the time-limited offers, visit the official website at www.build-mustang-gt.com. ■



Welcome



SURFS UP WITH THE CORGI MODEL CLUB'S LATEST REPRODUCTION

NEXT up from Corgi Model Club (and should have begun to arrive with early subscribers by the time that you read this) is No 485 Surfing with the B.M.C. Mini-Countryman. Featuring a superbly recreated box that's as close to the original as modern practices allow, the marvellous Mini comes with a surfing figure, two surfboards, roof rack and opening rear doors – just like the original release in March 1965 that was in production until 1969.

Even if you're not a subscriber, you can buy any of the releases so far (subject to stock) as a standalone purchase. This model will be available to buy on its own for £29.99, plus postage. But, as a subscriber, this would cost a whopping ten pounds less.

To find out more, visit the club's new-look website at www.corgimodelclub.com. ■

WEAR YOUR COLLECTING HABIT WITH PRIDE

THE Corgi Model Club has added a new line of stylish and evocative t-shirts. Pictured here is the version that features the graphics of the No 201 Team Corgi Mini 1000, released in September 1978. Each quality t-shirt is available in a range of colours and sizes.

To find out more, visit the club's new-look website at www.corgimodelclub.com. ■



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As you flick through these pages, scanning the news, have you ever noticed the box at the bottom of the page to the left of this column? It lists all of our social media accounts and where you can find extra content online. There you will find the link details to our website, Twitter page, Facebook, page, Instagram page and YouTube channel. Even better, if you're reading the digital version of the magazine on a suitable device, then you can click on those links to go straight to the relevant location. Clever, eh?

Assuming that the internet is an option (sorry for this ramble to those of you that don't 'do' this kind of stuff online), going to our www.ccofgb.co.uk website opens up a much wider range of content, and there are plenty of archived articles to be found there too.

When I say "plenty", I should have said "a truly massive amount"! There are over 500 model reviews, all reproduced from past issues, and nearly 1,000 articles (yes, 1,000!) from both *Diecast Collector* and *Collectors Gazette*.

So, grab yourself a coffee and disappear down a marvellous rabbit hole of diecastery. You'll also find special subscription offers and, when we have competitions in the magazine, you'll find the pages to enter them online too.

Take some time to peruse the shop area as well - it's where you can order the new 18th edition of our *Ramsay's British Diecast* guide, when it goes on sale later this year, plus our annual *Toy Collectors Price Guide*. There are also digital editions of our *Corgi Story* and *Fast & Fifty* specials (long since sold out in print).

All in all, there is plenty of content to keep you occupied and out of trouble. It's great for that holiday read or a lazy Sunday afternoon. And all just by glancing a few centimetres to the left. Yes, there it is. Have fun!



▲ Rick Wilson, Editor

WRITE TO THE EDITOR...

If you want to write a letter for publication in *Diecast Collector*, you can contact Rick on rick.wilson@warnersgroup.co.uk

DIECAST
COLLECTOR

Collectors Club
OF GREAT BRITAIN

Diecast Collector is part of www.ccofgb.co.uk

BUICK ELECTRA IN STOCK AND READY TO SHIP AT THE GOLDBARG COLLECTION

NEW from the Goldvarg Collection is this rather stunning 1963 Buick Electra, the company's latest release in its range of high-quality, hand-made 1/43 scale models. Available in Laguna Blue (No GC-023 A, shown here) or Dublin Green (GC-023 B), both have been manufactured under license from General Motors.

To find out more and to order, visit Sergio Goldvarg's website at www.goldvargcollection.com or contact your preferred specialist retailer. ■



DNA COMBATS IMPORT COSTS BY CUTTING ITS PRICES FOR THE UK MARKET

GOOD news! DNA Collectibles has confirmed that it is reducing prices of its exquisite 1/18 scale resincasts. Since Brexit, there are duties to pay on each parcel imported into the UK. To sustain your passion for and the affordability of DNA's models, the company has decided to decrease its UK prices on some current models, and for all the future releases. Visit www.dnacollectibles.com to find out more.

THE TRACKS OF A COLLECTOR'S TYRES IN BOOK FORM

DIECAST collector reader, Geoff Dendle's story is a familiar one, gathering models of cars owned and driven. Geoff has taken it one step further, though, and has committed his journey to paper and self-published his tale through Amazon. Focusing largely on the real vehicles, there is, however, a fascinating section where he shows the vehicles in scale form. Entitled *Tracks of my Tyres - A life in cars*, the 196-page book is available for purchase through Amazon (£8.50 in paperback form, £5.00 for the Kindle edition). For a taster of what to expect, there is a 'Look inside' feature on the Amazon order page, and Geoff has helpfully created a website at tracksofmytyres.wordpress.com.

GET YOUR CORGI WALL'S ICE CREAM VAN BEFORE THE STOCK LEVEL MELTS AWAY

THE recreation that started it all at the Corgi Model Club, No 474 Wall's Ice Cream Van, is very nearly sold out. With only a very small number of the original production run left, you can get one without having to subscribe for just £28.99 plus postage. Packed with features and an incredibly close copy of the iconic Corgi Toys release, order yours at www.corgimodelclub.com, but hurry!

EXTRA DROP TANK FOR CORGI'S RECENT MUSTANG RELEASE

FOLLOWING the discovery of an issue with Corgi's recently released AA27706 North American P-51D Mustang 'Happy Jack's Go Buggy', the company now has a supply of external drop tanks and mounting pylons available for customers who bought the model. For those affected by this omission, the required part can now be obtained free of charge from Corgi's spares department. In order to obtain one of the additional drop tanks please contact the Corgi Customer Care Team by telephone on +44 (0)1843 233512, or by email at spares@corgi.co.uk. Corgi has also promised that a fitting guide video will be made available on its website soon. As this is an additional part, fitting is at the customer's own risk.

INSPIRATION FOR REPURPOSING



Charles Barnett reports from *The Spring Classic Car Show*.

THE Practical Classics Classic Car and Restoration Show with Discovery, to give it its full title, took place over the long weekend of 18th to 20th March, at Birmingham's National Exhibition Centre.

Among the exhibitors in the extended autojumble section was EHB Coachworks, a small company that, despite its name, takes bodysells of models, strips them and mounts them either on plinths or in 3-D wall frames, as 'sculptures'. The end results are attractive, though a tad expensive, I thought (from £60.00 for a 1/43, £80.00 for 1/24 and £100.00 for 1/18, all plus the cost of the model itself), but it occurred to me that here's an idea for those of us with a battered or broken diecast or three, that are not good enough for the collection display proper, but too good to leave in the junkbox, give away or throw away. Take it apart, strip the paint off the bodysell, either polish the bare metal body or repaint it, find a nice piece of polished wood (or several, for a frame), dig out the superglue and, hey presto, a nifty 'objet d'art' to adorn the walls of any collector's model room – result!

The other exhibitors at the show included around ten model specialists, most of them with large stalls, so we had the equivalent of a small toyfair, with a wide variety on offer, old and new. I came away with, among others, a lovely Dinky conversion comprising the 1950s Commer Superpoise (breakdown truck, etc.) mated to the Pullmore Car Transporter trailer. Finished in Red, with "Dinky Auto Service" decals, spun wheels and windows, it really looks the part. Others from my haul included a nice plated Corgi Ford Consul Classic from the Golden Guinea Gift Set, not often seen, a very early Spot-on Ford Zodiac, original early French Dinky Citroën 2CV and Dinky Studebakers Land Cruiser and Golden Hawk.

Plus, of course, there were over 1,000 classic cars on show from over 150 clubs, and plenty of restoration tips for those of us with 1:1 classics that we're working on. So a full day out for sure!

Next year's event is planned for 24th to 26th March 2023. For more details, go to www.necrestorationshow.com. ■

Above left to right Selections of models old and new on sale at the show; EHB Coachworks' display of mounted diecast bodysells; My haul of model purchases from the show.

The John Garside Toy Collection

26 July 2022



Special Auction Services is very privileged to be offering the remarkable John Garside Toy Collection at auction: John was truly a legend in toy circles and a great friend to many. A stalwart member of the Maidenhead Static Model Club for decades and past organiser of the Windsor Swapmeet, few will forget the sight of John hurtling round the Montem Centre, cajoling the stall holders with his friendly banter. He took an idiosyncratic approach to collecting, avoiding the obvious, thus his focus was on such makes as CIJ, Gamda, River Series, Timpo, Milton, Maxwell, Nicky Toys, AR, Palitoy, Wend-Al and others. The auction will be an opportunity for collectors to bid for some extraordinary rarities amongst John's numerous treasures.

Please contact: Dominic Foster, Dave Kemp or Bob Leggett
on + 44 (0)1635 580595 or mail@specialauctionservices.com

Special Auction Services
Plenty Close, Off Hambridge Road, Newbury RG14 5RL

WHAT'S new

Our team of experts take a look at this month's model releases, including fine handbuilt replicas, scale construction and the latest in farm models.



ASTON'S SUPER STYLISH DB5 CONVERTIBLE IS DESTINED TO BE A CULT CLASSIC

1/18 scale

CULT MODELS

1964 Aston Martin DB5 DHC - Blue Metallic

PRICE: £204.99

REF NO: CML059-1

www.ayrey.co.uk

THE Aston Martin DB5 is easily one of the most recognisable cars in the world. Released in 1963, it was an evolution of the final series of the company's DB4 (Series V). With a body designed by the Italian coachbuilder, Carrozzeria Touring Superleggera, the DB5's status as a motoring icon was cemented with the car's appearance in a certain James

Bond movie, *Goldfinger*, and its subsequent immortalisation as a Corgi Toys release.

The convertible 'Drop Head Coupe' was introduced shortly before the film's release, and a total of 123 would be made before the DB5 was replaced by the DB6 in 1965. Of these 123, only 19 were manufactured as left-hand-drive, so 104 were as modelled here, in that respect.

Described as "extremely elegant and completely practical," the convertible lacked none of the successful features of the saloon. Priced at £4,490 in 1964, the convertible cost well above the average house price of the time, assuring that only a privileged few were able to afford one. The epitome of British elegance and class, celebrities snapped them up – Peter Sellers, Beryl Reid, and even HRH Princess Margaret could be spotted in a DB5 convertible.

The passing decades have only added to the allure of the DB5. With continued cameos in the most recent James Bond blockbusters, the

DB5 has become more than just an accessory and is now afforded as much attention as the stars of the films themselves. Far from being the car driven by ageing British gentlemen, the DB5 convertible has been the mainstay of young thirty-something stars, and easily drops jaws wherever it is seen.

Cult Models has been producing sumptuous resincast 1/18 scale replicas for several years now, and its focus on classic British machinery has rightfully earned the company an excellent reputation for both the accuracy and quality of its models. The choice of the DB5 DHC was an inspired one, as we can now fully appreciate the



◀ The very attractive look of the marvellous DB5 is not diminished at all by the conversion to convertible form, as Cult's wonderful model shows to great effect.

THIS MONTH'S INDEPTH REVIEWS:

8 Aston Martin DB5 DHC by Cult

12 Conrad's CASE CX800 Demolition Excavator

13 West Midlands Enviro400 MMC from Northcord

16 *EDITOR'S CHOICE* - Ixo's LBWK Nissan GT-R



▲ The styling of the convertible is perfectly captured and the stance to the rear is spot on. Look at that exquisite badge too!



▲ Any interior to a convertible model needs to be outstanding, and this one does not disappoint. Can you imagine yourself behind the wheel?

interior of this most classic of British automobiles and adds to Cult's impressive range of Aston Martins. The company has previously modelled both the DB5's predecessor and successor (DB4 and DB6 respectively, of course), and these are all in addition to the 1968 DBS, 1985 Lagonda, 1978 V8 Volante, 1986 Zagato, 1987 Zagato spyder, 1988 Virage, and 1955 DB2-4. This 1964 DB5 DHC is also available in maroon (CML059-

2) and the DB5 has also been modelled by Cult as the 1964 Harold Radford Shooting Brake. Quite the line up!

The model is exquisitely-replicated throughout, with nothing missed from the interior, and a sublime finish to the paintwork. The finesse to the chromework and the wire wheels is top notch too. Particular praise is reserved for the realistic look of the hood cover and seating. **DC**



NORTHCORD MODEL COMPANY
ADL Enviro 400 - Stagecoach London
SCALE: 1/76 PRICE: £66.99
REF: UK6528

Looking absolutely stunning in London's red, this simple-liveried example could be left as is or have adverts added, if desired. Excellent detail.

www.ayrey.co.uk



AUTOCULT
Babich Leningrad - dark red/yellow
SCALE: 1/43 PRICE: £104.99
REF: ATC 06050

Another wonderfully obscure rarity from the team at AutoCult. Sublime finish and detailing all over, with the bench-seat interior beautifully replicated.

www.ayrey.co.uk



IXO MODELS
Talbot Sunbeam Lotus #9 Tour de Corse 1981 H.Toivonen/F.Gallagher
SCALE: 1/43 PRICE: £47.99 REF: RAC370B

Lovely replica of the evocative Talbot Sunbeam Lotus in rally guise. Excellent throughout. Also available as the #2 car from the same event (RAC370A).

www.ayrey.co.uk



IXO MODELS
1970 White Western Star 4864 white/red
SCALE: 1/43 PRICE: £37.99 REF: TR107

Another superb-value truck release by Ixo. This time it's of the White Western Star. Excellent level of detail and finish, especially for the price.

www.ayrey.co.uk

New Models



IXO MODELS

Volvo 240 #33 ETCC Zolder 1985
G.Andersson/ M.Linden
SCALE: 1/43 PRICE: £47.99 REF: GTM153

www.ayrey.co.uk

The mighty Volvo 240 was an effective touring car racer, as modelled here from the 1985 ETCC. Excellent work by Ixo all over.



IXO MODELS

1980 Volvo 242 Custom - black
SCALE: 1/43 PRICE: £41.99
REF: MOC311

www.ayrey.co.uk

Making full use of the 240 series casting, Ixo has also released a pair of fabulous 'custom' road versions. Also available in green as MOC312. Wonderful!



CONRAD

Mercedes-Benz Arocs Meiller Skip
Truck - Prajo's
SCALE: 1/50 PRICE: 109.00 € REF: 78216-05

www.conrad-modelle.de

Two-axle skip with extendable rear supports and steerable front axle. Exterior mirrors and antennas included for self-assembly. Excellent detail.



CULT MODELS

Jaguar XJR XJ40 1990 - British Racing Green
SCALE: 1/18 PRICE: £209.99 REF: CML007-2

www.ayrey.co.uk

High-quality resincast, featuring plenty of exquisite detailing and a superb finish throughout. Limited edition of 250 models.



BRITAINS

Case IH 956XL Tractor
SCALE: 1/32 PRICE: £27.99
REF: 43328

www.britainsfarmtoys.co.uk

For 2022, Britains has reissued its earlier 1056XL model badged as the 956XL tractor. The well-built tractor features steerable wheels and working linkage.



KESS MODELS

1957 Ferrari 410 Superamerica II
Series - silver with red roof
SCALE: 1/43 PRICE: £110.00 REF: KE 43056181

www.kessmodel.com

Ferrari's Superamerica coupe, in silver with a Cherry Red roof, with a red interior. Great detail. Limited run of just 250 being made.



MATRIX SCALE MODELS

1975 Ferrari 365 GTB/4 Panther
Shooting Brake - black
SCALE: 1/43 PRICE: £110.00 REF: MX 50604-121

www.matrixscalemodels.com

Excellent front and rear end detail, and great wire wheels. Beige interior. Those rear side windows that extend into the roof, are tinted dark blue. Terrific.



BRITAINS

Muddy Land Rover Defender 90
SCALE: 1/32 PRICE: £19.99
REF: 43321

www.britainsfarmtoys.co.uk

Britains' Defender 90 gets a smart muddy finish for this 'At Work' edition. It has a detachable roof rack and removable winch.

Exoto Motorbox

1/18 scale Ferrari 500 F2

Sold For £360

March 2022



May 2022 Auction Dates

- Tuesday 10th May - Diecast Sale
- Tuesday 17th May - Military, Civilian Figures, Equipment & Accessories Sale
- Wednesday 18th May - Tinsplate Sale
- Thursday 24th May - Matchbox
- Wednesday 25th May - Diecast Sale
- Thursday 26th May - General Toy Sale
- Friday 27th May - Model Train Sale
- Tuesday 31st May - TV & Film Related Sale

Auctions commence at 10.00am unless otherwise stated - Dates are correct at time of print but are subject to change

Scouting For Toys TV Programme

Takes a nostalgic look back at the nation's favourite childhood toys, the show that goes behind the scenes at the world's largest toy auctioneers Vectis is on the Yesterday channel with all episodes available for catch-up on UKTV Play

Catalogues & online bidding at vectis.co.uk & invaluable.com

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Vectis

CONRAD'S LATEST REISSUE OF THE MIGHTY CASE CX 800 WILL DEFINITELY GRAB YOU

1/50 scale

CONRAD

CASE CX 800 Demolition excavator

PRICE: 186.00 €

REF: 2923-0

www.conrad-modelle.de

THIS replica represents the demolition version of the Case CX800 Excavator, so features a telescopic boom that facilitates the high reach required for the jaws to reach up multi-storey buildings. The model itself is very solid and heavy, weighing in at an impressive 2.5kg. The heaviness goes all the way down to the track frames and metal tracks, and the frames are nicely detailed, although the rollers are not moving parts. The tracks are made up of individual links and the overall effect is very pleasing.

The body casting features a myriad of detail, such as grilles and hatch handles, and there is a hint of texture on the driver's side walkway. The metal handrails and ladders are very good indeed. The cab has basic internal detail, such as seats and controls, and the body of the

cab is an excellent casting. A plastic debris guard covers the front and top windscreens.

The first stage of the boom has hydraulic hosing detail cast in to the top and at the base plastic hosing takes this into the body. The twin hydraulic cylinders have plastic sleeves, but the match to the body colour is excellent. The digging arm is all

metal except for the hydraulic cylinder jackets and hydraulic hosing, which are plastic.

The demolition arm is a similarly heavy duty piece of metal with plastic for the same items as on the bucket arm. The casting has hose lines and various other plates and covers which provide detail. The jaws are a superb example of scale modelling, with rivet detail.

The tracks work very well and the arms are readily interchangeable and the digging arm can be configured in either of two ways.

The demolition arm is impressive with the main part consisting of a three stage telescope that dramatically

increases its length. Despite this, and the weight of the arm, the model remains very stable due to the heaviness of the body. Furthermore, the hydraulic cylinders modelled are very stiff so there is no hint of cylinder bleed. The jaws rotate and can be opened and closed.

The sheer weight of the model gives it a quality feel and the standard of the castings and all moving parts is very good indeed. The very crisp paintwork and graphics enhance the model perfectly.

This is a very impressive model from Conrad. A large variety of display options are possible, giving collectors plenty of flexibility. **DC**



▲ The additional demolition boom can easily be swapped over and the three-stage arm extends impressively.

▲ The model is nearly all diecast and comes in at a weighty 2.5kg, making for a very sturdy and stable replica.



BRITAINS
Ford TW-20 Tractor
SCALE: 1/32 PRICE: £25.99
REF: 43322
www.britainsfarmtoys.co.uk

Re-joining Britains' line-up this year is this TW-20 tractor. The reissued metal and plastic model has a strengthened rear linkage.



KESS MODELS
1955 Ferrari 250 Europa GT Series 2 Pininfarina - silver
SCALE: 1/43 PRICE: £110.00 REF: KE 43056160
www.kessmodel.com

An early Pininfarina 250 coupe - beautifully modelled, as always by Kess. Red interior, and all the details inside and out. Limited production of 250.

NORTHCORD'S LATEST ENVIRO400 OFFERS PLENTY OF COMFORTING FEATURES

1/76 scale

NORTHCORD MODEL COMPANY

Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC - National Express West Midlands (6937 - SK68 MJE)

PRICE: £59.99 **REF:** UK6526

www.ayrey.co.uk

ONE of two new releases from Northcord Model Company reviewed this month, its Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC casting gets another outing, this time wearing the livery of National Express West Midlands.

Previously released in the liveries of Stagecoach in Oxfordshire, Bluestar, Stagecoach West Scotland, Southern Vectis, Stagecoach South, Ensign Bus and Xplore Dundee, Northcord brings us its thirteenth livery on the 10.9 metre long, single-door casting, featuring SmartVision camera mirrors in place of traditional driver rear-view mirrors.

The model represents fleet number 6937 (registration number SK68 MJE) and it was new to National Express West Midlands in early 2019. In addition to being the first bus to have the innovative SmartVision camera mirrors in the fleet, 6937 carries a full and colourfully branded livery for the Platinum X10 route. The livery and branding are 100% reproduced.

The stand-out features on the branding are “up to every 20 mins” frequency on all sides. The prominent route number “X10” is carried on both sides and the rear, whilst “FAST along Hagley Road” is carried on the top of the front destination glass, “Halesowen to city centre” and “FAST along Hagley Road” on the nearside above the entrance door and, on the rear, “Merry Hill | Halesowen | then FAST Quinton | Bearwood | city centre” is prominent. Fares details are carried on some windows on each lower deck side.

Within the advert panels on each side and on the rear, lower window, wording refers to the extra legroom available on board in addition to the comfy seats. The model also correctly portrays the name “Brooke Yvie” that is carried on the front, below the windscreen on the nearside, and on the rear, at the top of the engine cover on the offside.

The Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC is a one-



▲ Looking superb in the eye-catching livery of National Express West Midlands' X10 route, Northcord's excellent Enviro 400 MMC gets yet another fine outing.



▲ Of course, the detail and livery runs all the way around the back too. The casting is more than good enough to be able to show its detailing through the black paint.

piece casting whose clean lines accentuate the square, gasket-mounted windows. Another main feature on the model is its single tree protector at the front. The front dome on the model is significant, with curved windscreens on both decks.

Limited to 1,008 pieces worldwide, the model also features a fully-fitted, detailed interior that can clearly be appreciated through the expanse of glazing. It makes for yet another absolutely stunning release from NMC. **DC**



BRITAINS
International 1056XL Tractor

SCALE: 1/32 **PRICE:** £27.99
REF: 43329

www.britainsfarmtoys.co.uk

Just like the earlier 956XL, the rebadged 1056XL is a well-built, largely metal tractor with front wheels that steer, and a working rear linkage.



AUTOCULT
Reeves Octauro - dark green

SCALE: 1/43 **PRICE:** £115.00
REF: ATC01015

www.autocult-model.de

Another one-off from AutoCult, with fine gold pin striping to offset the dark green coachwork. Black seats, and off-white undercarriage. Quite a 'show-stopper'!

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New Models



IXO MODELS

Škoda Felicia Kit Car #19 Rallye Tour de Corse 1995 P.Sibera/P.Gross

SCALE: 1/43 PRICE: £47.99 REF: RAC371B

www.ayrey.co.uk

Fabulous replica of Škoda's superb little Felicia rally kit car. Excellent finish and crisp decals. Also available as the #16 car from the same event (RAC371A).



KESS MODELS

1957 Ferrari 410 Superamerica II Series - red

SCALE: 1/43 PRICE: £104.99 REF: KE 43056180

www.ayrey.co.uk

Another superb version of the 410 Superamerica by Kess, this time in Ferrari's sumptuous red all over. Absolutely gorgeous throughout.



NZG

Rokbak RA40

SCALE: 1/50 PRICE: 129.00 €

REF: 1047

www.nzg-shop.eu

Featuring a tiltable trough, articulated steering and a movable step, NZG's replication of this fascinating vehicle is absolutely top notch.



IXO MODELS

Lancia Delta S4 #1 Tour de Corse 1986 M.Alen/I.Kivimaki

SCALE: 1/18 PRICE: £82.99 REF: 18RMC083A

www.ayrey.co.uk

That Martini livery always appeals and it looks superb adorning the might Delta S4. Great model with excellent detail and superbly finished too.



BRITAINS

John Deere 3350 Tractor

SCALE: 1/32 PRICE: £27.99

REF: 43326

www.britainsfarmtoys.co.uk

The new two-wheel drive version of Britains' 3350 tractor features a revised bonnet and steerable front wheels. Excellent finish throughout.



STAMP MODELS

1975 Chevrolet Caprice Convertible top up - Metallic Orange

SCALE: 1/43 PRICE: £110.00 REF: STM 751004

www.stampmodels.com

Another great model of the Caprice, this time the 'top up' version. White hood, and Mustard Yellow inside. Again, just 149 examples are being made.



STAMP MODELS

1975 Chevrolet Caprice Convertible top down - light blue

SCALE: 1/43 PRICE: £110.00 REF: STM 751005

www.stampmodels.com

Fine replica of the mid-range Caprice. White interior and fully-detailed, as it needs to be for an open car. Folded hood is in white as well. Limited run of 149.



WIKING

Normag Faktor I Tractor

SCALE: 1/87 PRICE: £15.00

REF: 039801

www.wiking.de

Newly-tooled, plastic Faktor tractor from Wiking features headlights, air cleaner, black steering column and a drawbar for pulling equipment.



CONRAD

Mercedes-Benz Arocs 2-axle Schmitz Cargobull Dumper

SCALE: 1/50 PRICE: 135.90 € REF: 78202-03

www.conrad-modelle.de

Features a steerable front axle, tilting body, pull-out supports and a detailed cabin with interior equipment. Stunning finish throughout.



NZG

MAN TGS 8x4 concrete mixer

SCALE: 1/64 PRICE: 119.00 €

REF: 9651

www.nzg-shop.eu

With steerable front axles and a rotating drum, the model is packed with excellent detail and features a simple, but nevertheless superb finish all over.

GET READY TO GO STREET RACING WITH IXO'S LB NISSAN

1/43 scale

IXO MODELS

Nissan 35GT-RR LB-Silhouette Works GT Black 2019 Basis GT-R (R35)

PRICE: £41.99 REF: MOC314

www.ayrey.co.uk

DIECAST
COLLECTOR
EDITOR'S
CHOICE

THE LibertyWalk concept isn't about simply tuning or 'dressing-up' cars. The company isn't interested in common-place customisation either.

In the old days in Japan, 'Kaido Racers', as they were referred to, styled their cars by removing the bumpers, retro-fitting headlights from another car and cutting and installing 'overfenders'.

This is the roots of old-school, traditional Japanese custom car culture – a culture loved by some, yet hated by others. Much as I love classic car design, I have to say that there is something incredibly appealing about this form of art.

Starting with Lamborghinis, LB WORKS quickly added Ferraris and Nissan GT-Rs to its portfolio. The latter has become quite a market for the company.

Two of these incredible machines were built for the 2020 Tokyo Auto Show – the only difference between the two was the style of the rear wing. Both cars were constructed with carbon-fibre bodies, and virtually nothing was left untouched from the base cars.

Ixo has modelled this incredible design beautifully and captured all the design mods perfectly. From the huge air intakes in the front spoiler to the diffuser at the rear, this

amazing beast is wonderfully replicated. And the subtle picking out of the red bucket seats inside contrasts very nicely with the menacing look of the rest of the car.

Finally, what can't be fully appreciated from the photos here is the stunning finish to that body – close inspection reveals an incredibly subtle, but realistic carbon-fibre 'weave' all over. It's absolutely gorgeous, trust me! **DC**



▲ The modelling to the rear end, in particular, is an absolute delight.

▲ The super-aggressive look of this LB+PERFORMANCE Nissan GT-R is superbly replicated.

We really want your feedback! Do you agree with the Editor's Choice? Let us know your thoughts about this and the other releases at deareditor@warnersgroup.co.uk

JOHN AYREY

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1806104 - Ford Sierra RS500 1987 - 1:18



1800517 - VW Beetle 1303 Rallye Colds Balls - 1:18



1803705 - Renault 17 Gordini - 1:18



05039 - Adams Probe 16 - 1:43



04034 - Opel Super 6 Streamliner - 1:43



60081 - Plymouth Road Runner Rapid - 1:43



115-3 - Triumph TR7 Coupe 79/82 - 1:18



144-2 - TVR Griffith Purple 1993 - 1:18



068-2 - Triumph Vitesse DHC - 1:18



CLC410 - Volvo 144 1972
1:43



CLC411 - Volvo 940 Turbo 1990
1:43



MOC315 - Chevrolet Corvette C8
1:43

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On white rims

Following hard on the tailgate of last month's "Night eyes" new model spotlight, **Stephen Paul Hardy** takes a second dip into OttOmobile's recent releases with a trio that, by pure chance, are all shod with wheels finished in white.

Before looking at another dazzling (yes, with pun intended) array of night lights lined up for scrutiny, let's take a look at what, at first sight, might seem the odd one out of the trio...

MITSUBISHI LANCER EVO III - 1995 (OT382)

Subaru Imprezas have ended up under my spotlight a couple of times fairly recently and so now it's the turn of Mitsubishi's Impreza challenger. In the guise of an outwardly unassuming yellow Lancer it carries the EVO III sting in its tail. Like its arch-rival, the Lancer Evolution has gone through successive model iterations many of which (again, like the Impreza) resulted from participation in international rallying with notable success at the hands of drivers like Tommi Mäkinen.

OttOmobile's release brings us the production 'street' version with its turbocharged engine and 4WD, influenced by World Rally Championship experience finished out with full bodykit enhancements that included bumper modifications, side skirts and rear spoiler. The high gloss yellow paintwork leaves no hiding place and enhances the clean casting and shut lines of the complete model. Particularly eye catching are the bonnet venting inserts, the third brake light in the rear spoiler and



▲ The bright paintwork of Citroën's livery enhances the body styling and makes for a fabulous contrast to the alu-silver interior.



▲ Don't get totally distracted by the exterior of this Kadett because the interior is just as much a visual treat.

all of the tail end detailing found below it. It is the front end though that carries the detail that impressed me most with a fine mesh chin grille inset into the bumper, behind which can be seen the aluminium coloured radiator. Above that the matching upper grille carries a perfect miniaturisation of the Mitsubishi logo badge and is flanked by superbly convincing headlights and amber front indicator/side marker light. Being a model of an Evolution version sold in the Japanese home market it is also, of course, another RHD model.

OPEL KADETT GSI GR.A - 1987 (OT915)

Turning the clock backwards from the EVO III by almost a decade to the eighties comes this very welcome model of the 1987 Kadett GSI in Gr.A rally. Here finished in the guise fielded very successfully in the New Zealand Rally leg of the 1988 WRC, as driven by the Austrian Sepp Haider and co-driven by fellow Austrian Ferdi Hinterleitner.

It is difficult for the eyes not to be distracted by the highly colourful and very detailed sponsor-bedecked livery, but a peek at the interior is very rewarding. With black minimalist interior, roll cage and Recaro seating, with contrasting bright red full harness webbing, the whole effect is equally as enthralling as the vibrant exterior.



▲ Sharing a rallying common denominator theme, the competition versions of the Citroën Xsara and Opel Kadett were developed from street versions and the Mitsubishi Lancer EVO III street version was influenced by rallying experience.



- 1 Citroën Xsara 'Kit Car' - charismatic, dramatic and just downright captivating with its highly prepared, very visual, impact.
- 2 Mitsubishi Lancer EVO III - unassuming in its bright yellow paintwork, underneath is a package with a punch and lots of attributes.
- 3 Opel Kadett GSI Gr.A - a very welcome, refreshing change from the larger Opels that tend to get modelled in rally guise.

Another clinching detail for me on this model was Opel's period-specific wheels that make a refreshing change from the more usual run of alloys seen on many eighties cars. Those eighteen spoke white painted castings with their intermediate slots and holes are particularly well-modelled.

CITROËN XSARA 'KIT CAR' - 1999 (OT920)

Charismatic, dramatic and just downright captivating are immediate thoughts that come to mind when musing over this model of Citroën's highly-prepared Xsara. Bridging the gap between Citroën's famous Rallye-Raid program and full blown WRC rallying participation came the Xsara based 'Kit Car' series, the success of which, in the late 1990s, proved to be a springboard into WRC participation.

Working from inside out, the stripped interior in alu-silver with full roll cage, harnessing, stowed spare wheel, fire extinguisher and rallying instrumentation screams out for a removable roof section so that it can be better appreciated! Externally the night light pods surely challenge those of Richard Burns' Impreza featured last month in terms of dramatic appeal.

There is no doubt that the predominately bright red paintwork of Citroën's livery enhances the line of the widebody arches and general lower body line.



▲ A tail end packed with detail, from the spoiler mounted third brake light downwards...



▲ ... and an interior that captures the high-end street spec' equally packed with detail.



▲ The excellent interior detailing of the Xsara equals that of its exterior.

That in turn draws the eye to the wheels which when compared with those of the Kadett GSI Gr.A highlight the dramatic increase in size of rally wheels (and the braking systems behind them) within a decade. With such a colourful livery achieved with a mass of well-produced decals over a carefully-detailed and finished base model, this is an awesome display piece. And, like the Kadett, I reckon it also has equal appeal to marque specific and motorsport theme collectors alike.

Against reports of manufacturers being challenged with quality control issues prompted by managing production at arms (well, international video link) length thanks to being precluded from visiting their production bases in the Far East, all these recent OttOmobile releases are reassuring. The quality of all of them remains exactly as we have come to anticipate from the company. The rally models excel in the degree of authentic interior and exterior rally equipment detailing with complex external livery schemes. Stock of all three models has, I understand, sold very quickly as befitting models being eagerly sought by their respective theme followings and OttOmobile's brand loyalty amongst collectors. The rally cars, of course, are each very visually attractive display pieces, but I wouldn't underestimate the significance of the yellow EVO III either as a 'must have'. **DC**



End of the line

Stephen Paul Hardy explains why this recently-released 1/18 resincast Porsche from GT Spirit's coverage of the 911 story marks the end of the line for two reasons.

For 27 years, and spanning three generations of Porsche 911 from 1966 to 1993, the Targa model name had been synonymous with the optional fresh air body style offered as an alternative to the fixed roofed Coupé. This much-coveted version incorporated a distinctive, wide roll bar and removable roof centre section. With the short-lived fourth generation 911 – the 993, produced between 1994 and 1998 – came the even shorter-lived Targa version, produced for just two years, between 1996 and 1998, in a style that temporarily broke the mould, so to speak, of Porsche's original concept, until its return as a high tech reincarnation in 2014.

PORSCHE 911 (993) TARGA - 1996 (GT350)

GT Spirit's constantly expanding back catalogue representing Porsche 911 production history covers all but one of the Targa variations from the first three 911 generations and so this most recent release is a very welcome extension of that coverage, moving it into the fourth generation era.

Immediately obvious from this fabulous model is how fundamental the change in the Targa concept was. Contemporary with the 'Glasdach' fashion seen across many of Germany's automotive manufacturers ranges in the 1990s, the traditional Targa arrangement was replaced by a sliding glass roof centre section. From a factory production point of view, the upside to the glass roof Targa meant that the body line of the Coupé and Targa were



▲ The tail end of the 993, with obvious family resemblances to the preceding G and 964 series 911s.



▲ Whereas the 993 take on the Targa theme was in reality far more that of a Coupé with a 'Glasdach'...



▲ ... which throws lots of light on the wealth of interior detail.

virtually identical. From an owner's point of view, the downside was that solar gain in the 'glasshouse', as it became known – was often uncomfortable. From a model collector's point of view, the upside is most definitely the amount of light and viewing opportunity that the large extent of glazing affords to appreciating the wealth of interior detail, finished out with very attractive light grey upholstery. As with GT Spirit's 911(964) Targa (GT805), the combination of this interior colour and metallic turquoise exterior paintwork is very pleasing indeed.

With its flattening out of the classic 911 body styling, the 993 is considered by many to be an anti-climax after the earlier G series and immediately preceding 964 series. It did, however, set the foundations of the styling of succeeding water-cooled generations of the 911 family. From the front, the model illustrates very well the less prominent front wing lines and bumper integrated front ancillary lighting. Similarly, from the rear, the smoothed rear reflector panel (still incorporating the embedded "PORSCHE" script, introduced for the 1974 model year by the G series) integrated with the rear lighting clusters is beautifully modelled in crisp, well-fitting insert parts.

Totally consistent with GT Spirit's track record of producing superbly detailed and finished, authentic, 1/18 resincast models, this 993 Targa is extremely attractive. Not only is it a superb addition to any Porsche collection but is also significant by marking the demise of the classic Targa styling and the end of the line for the air-cooled generations of the 911. **DC**

▼ GT Spirit's extremely attractive, and superbly finished, 993 Targa marks a watershed point in 911 production history.





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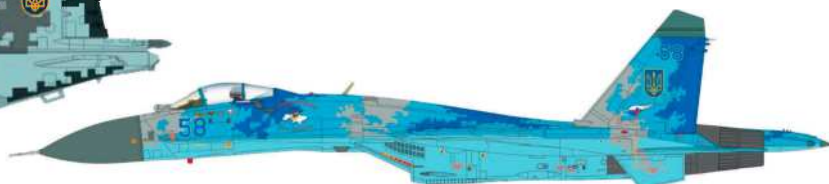


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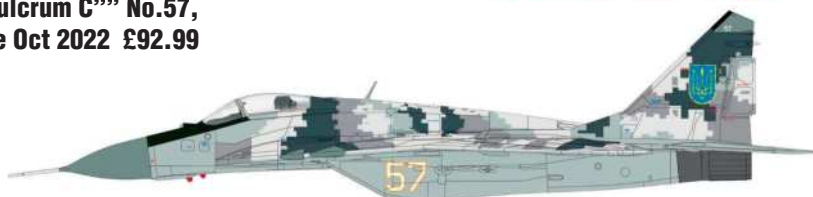
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The most beautiful Alfas

Alfa Romeo has a strong heritage in building beautiful two-door coupes. **Francisco Mota** traces the best from the brand's rich history with a collection of 1/43 scale replicas. **Photos: João Carlos Oliveira**

When we look at the history of car design, two-door coupes are the epitome of elegance and sportiness. Some of the best-looking cars ever made featured this kind of bodywork, maybe not the most practical of all, but surely one that captures the imagination of any car enthusiast.

Italian made, or designed, coupes are amongst the best examples of this philosophy, featuring a certain flair that simply cannot be found elsewhere. And it really doesn't need to be an ultra-luxury or ultra-expensive brand to provide such a thing as an attractive Italian two-door coupe. Fiat, Lancia and Alfa Romeo have all produced this kind of 'selfish' car, models that were made for the pleasure of owning and driving something beautiful, without spending much time thinking about practicality or room for passengers.

From this trio of relatively affordable Italian coupe makers, Alfa Romeo stands out as the one that has taken this matter more seriously over the decades. Pick up a good book on the history of Alfa Romeo and you'll find how rich the brand is in this particular kind of car and from the very early years in its history. This kind of reading always brings up the idea of reproducing a small museum in 1/43 scale, featuring some of the best models that can be found. From there, to start such a collection doesn't take much time and the search begins.

Not an exhaustive list of all the coupes made by Alfa Romeo, the collection you can see in these pages was built following some simple rules. First of all, scale models are easily available diecasts, even if some are no longer in production. Secondly, all reproduce road cars, leaving out concept-cars and racing cars. The third rule is the most important – the modelled cars have to be interesting. So let's see what this hunt brought in.



SINCE THE THIRTIES

The oldest Alfa Romeo coupe in this collection is a replica of the 1938 8C 2900B Lungo, a truly gorgeous car, designed by Touring coachbuilders. Lungo means Long Wheel Base, as there was a shorter version in cabriolet form. Engine was a race-derived 2,905 cc inline eight-cylinder producing 180 hp, good for 116 mph – one of the best cars in the world at the time. Minichamps reproduced this machine painted in a very thirties light blue with soft-top. This brilliant scale model is closer to a handmade replica, with lots of details, both in the bodywork (check those bumpers) and the cabin, with exact seats and complete dash. I couldn't think of a better way to start this collection.

After the pre-war luxury and exuberance, we turn to a very different kind of car in the 1947 6C 2500 Freccia D'Oro. Styling is much more restrained, with very little chrome, and shapes were obviously more austere. Cabin was very spacious, for a 4.95 metre-long 2+2, and the engine was now an in-line six-cylinder with 90 hp capable of launching the 'golden arrow' to 100 mph. Minichamps produced a great looking replica of this post-war coupe, following the spirit of the original car. This is again a high-end product that deserves careful observation, as there are lots of things to look at, like detailed wheels, front grille, rear lights and bumpers. Inside the cabin, all the materials look as if they were made from the same textiles, leather and plastics as the real car. A terrific scale model.

▲ Three of the most iconic coupes by Alfa Romeo, from the left: 1954 Giulietta Sprint, 1976 Alfetta GTV and 1965 Giulia 1600 Sprint GTA, all models by Minichamps.



▲ A peak inside the cockpit of 6C 2500 Freccia D'Oro.

▼ The 1938 8C 2900 B Lungo, on the left, and 1947 6C 2500 Freccia D'Oro, on the right - two classic coupes, both modelled by Minichamps.

We jump to the next decade and climb down from prestigious and luxury cars to more mundane offerings from Alfa Romeo, like the iconic 1954 Giulietta Sprint. This was the first experience for the brand in the sub-1,300 cc class of engines with a road car. Designed by Bertone, the Giulietta Sprint was a derivative of the corresponding Giulietta saloon, except it was actually launched one year before. It is a very short car, at 3.98 metres, with a shorter wheelbase than the saloon. The shape was both very clean and simple, but extremely elegant. This rear-wheel-drive coupe had a 1,290cc in-line four-cylinder engine that started with 65 hp, but was upgraded to 79 hp in 1958. Weight was limited to 880 kg, so top speed was a very respectable 103 mph. Minichamps reproduced this beauty with the utmost care. There are a number of interesting details such as the chromed hubcaps, front grille and a very nice steering wheel and dash inside the cabin.

Alfa Romeo production in the sixties was full of



ALFA ROMEO COUPES



▲ The small and beautiful, from the left: 1954 Giulietta Sprint, 1965 Giulia 1600 Sprint GTA (both by Minichamps) and the uniquely styled 1970 Giulia 1300 GT Junior Zagato (Spark).

great looking cars, it was probably the best period for the Italian brand, so it is not difficult to find interesting subjects. The first one is the 1962 2600 Sprint, a car with a front-end design that probably isn't to everybody's taste, with its "sad" looking face. The Bertone-designed bodywork had a briefing of its own as it was meant to be a stylish, yet spacious two-door coupe. It measured 4.85m in length and had room for four passengers. The engine was a 2,584cc in-line six-cylinder, good for 145 hp that took the car to a maximum speed of 123 mph. Several years ago, Italian model maker Bang released a very good diecast of this lesser-known Alfa Romeo. The model reproduces the unique shape very closely and features a nice front grille reproduction and the, slightly ungainly rear section. The cabin is well sorted, with a nice steering wheel and dash.

One of the most famous of all the two-door coupes made by Alfa Romeo is the 1965 Giulia 1600 Sprint GTA. This was another styling job by Bertone, this time very successful in terms of elegance and sportiness. A truly iconic car that has a legion of followers even today. The GTA version was the sportiest of the range, featuring an in-line four-cylinder with 115 hp and reaching 116 mph. The GTA had lightened body panels, made from aluminium. It also featured a different front grille, light alloy rims without hubcaps and cloverleaf decals on each front fender. The cabin featured a lighter steering wheel and simplified interior in a more racy style. All of this can be found in Minichamps diecast. The model looks terrific with those special alloys, basic bumpers and spartan interior.

By the end of the decade, Alfa Romeo made the classic technology transfer from race cars to road cars and launched the 1968 33 Stradale. The basic chassis



▲ Residual tail fin tails on the fifties-designed Giulietta Sprint give a hint to the past.



▲ Zagato's front end features a Plexiglas-covered front grille.



▲ The menacing front grille on the 2600 Sprint, wonderfully modelled by Bang.

▼ The 1962 2600 Sprint had a difficult brief - it had to be both sporty and luxurious. Modelled by Italian manufacturer, Bang.

was a lengthened version of the 33 racing car's and the 2-litre mid-mounted V8 was a detuned version of the same racing car's unit, featuring 230 hp in road form. Top speed for this gullwing-door of 162 mph was at supercar level – 18 examples were built. Minichamps modelled this sixties supercar as a special scale model. The model has opening rear engine cover and was sold in a special gift box. It perfectly captures the rounded shapes of the original machine, including double headlights with Plexiglas covers. The same material was used for the engine cover, that allows the eight trumpets to be seen when closed. Opening the bonnet allows us to enjoy an excellent engine bay reproduction, fitted with all the major components and electric wiring.

SPECIAL BODYWORK

From one extreme to the other, the next coupe is the 1970 Giulia 1300 GT Junior Z, a special Zagato-designed take on the Giulia GT underpinnings. The car featured a short, vertical rear section and a Plexiglas fairing in front of the grille, both for aerodynamic reasons. The engine was the well-known 1,290cc in-line four-cylinder with 88 hp, taking this 2-seater to 110 mph. Spark reproduced this little two-door coupe with its usual precision and attention to detail. The four lamp front end is perfectly resolved and the unique shapes are just as in the original car. Inside, one can see the two spoke steering wheel and the uniquely designed dash, with all the secondary controls. The five-speed gearbox knob is placed in the middle of the vertical console, as in the real car.

First seen at the 1967 Montreal Expo, hence the name, the Alfa Romeo Montreal, designed by Bertone, was officially launched in 1970. It took the brand into the prestige segment once more. The





▲ From track to the road - the mid-engined 33 Stradale, on the left, and the stylish and luxurious Montreal, on the right. Both modelled by Minichamps.

car featured some innovative styling details, like the eyebrows over the double headlamps and waterfall designed air intakes behind each door. This front-engined, rear-wheel-drive coupe features a 2,593 cc V8 engine, delivering 197 hp and topping at 137 mph. Minichamps modelled this one in several colours, we retained the very seventies light orange that fits the car very well. Adding to the front grille and semi-hidden headlamps, the model also features multi-spoke wheel rims and all the chromed bits the real Montreal had. The cabin looks as comfortable as the real car's, with nice front seats, wide rimmed steering wheel and the typically Alfa Romeo 'binocular-shaped' instrument panel.

Three years later, a new affordable coupe was launched onto the market. It was called the Alfasud Sprint, a front-wheel-drive coupe mechanically based on the Alfasud hatchback. However, styling was very different, with a wedge-shaped profile and a nice opening fastback. At launch, the basic engine was a 1,286 cc in-line four-cylinder, good for 76 hp, which allowed a maximum speed of 103 mph. Minichamps released a great looking replica of this compact coupe, following the main shapes and details of the original car. The front-end treatment is particularly well done, as are the wheel rims and rear lamps. Looking inside the cabin, one can see the typical Alfa instrument panel, 2+2 seats and a nice steering wheel.

Also in 1976, Alfa Romeo launched the Alfetta GTV, based on the Alfetta saloon rear wheel drive platform. This stylish four-seater was designed by Giugiaro and was completely different from the saloon. The GTV version was the most powerful at launch, featuring the 1,962cc four-cylinder engine with 122 hp, making the GTV reach a top speed of 121 mph. There were 1.8 and 1.6-litre versions also



▲ Two large production coupes, the 1976 Alfasud Sprint (left) and the bigger 1976 Alfetta GTV, are both models by Minichamps.



▲ Minichamps even reproduced some of the 33 Stradale's cabling.



▲ The Alfasud's coupe version, the Sprint, featured completely different styling.

available in 1976, however, Minichamps decided to reproduce the fastest one. The model is painted a very seventies green that suits it perfectly. The front grille looks great with its unique line over those double headlamps. There are plenty of chromed parts, including window surrounds and door handles. The rear side windows are made of two parts, the front section could be lowered to give rear passengers some fresh air. The cabin has a wood-rimmed steering wheel, gearbox knob and instrument panel. A great classic scale model.

IN CAME 'THE MONSTER'

The Alfetta GTV went through a long life with several evolutions, however, Alfa Romeo was more focused in getting its four-door cars right, than designing new coupes. So it took until 1989 for a new two-door coupe from the Italian maker to see the light of day. And what a coupe it was! The SZ - also known as 'the monster', due to its 'scary' design - was built on the 75 saloon underpinnings, but it really looks like it's from another planet. Audacious design was by Zagato and part of it was the result of hours of wind tunnel testing, that gave the car a Cd figure of just 0.30. This was an achievement for a relatively

▼ Known as "the monster", the terrific 1989 SZ has been very well reproduced by Spark.



ALFA ROMEO COUPES



short car (four metres) featuring a fastback. The body was made from glass fibre and composites, over a steel chassis and the 2,959 cc V6 engine was also derived from the 75 V6 race version, delivering 207 hp. The car reached a maximum speed of 154 mph. Spark reproduced this unique car as a resincast and did a great job with it. The shape is perfectly reproduced and the telephone-dial wheel rims look great. The front-end treatment, with those six square lights, looks fabulous. The cabin is easy to see through wide windows – seats, instrument panel and steering were all bespoke designs.

It took until the late nineties for a new mainstream coupe to emerge. It came with the nostalgic GTV name, however it was made on the front-wheel-drive platform shared with other Fiat group cars. Top of the range had a 2,959 cc V6 engine with 220 hp and top speed of 150 mph. Minichamps modelled a 2003 modelyear featuring bigger wheels and slightly different bumpers, compared to the early version. The Pininfarina styled body looks as good as in the real thing and the cabin treatment is better than one could expect from an industrially produced diecast.

In the same year, Alfa Romeo released an unexpected two-door coupe derivative from the four-door 156 saloon. Named the GT, it shared almost everything with the saloon until the central pillar. From there, backwards it had a new design by Bertone. Several engines were available at launch, the best was the 1,970 cc four-cylinder with 165 hp that reached 135 mph. Minichamps also modelled this coupe, with its very unique rear section. Great wheels, nice front grille and, inside the cabin, all is very well reproduced.

One year later, Alfa came up with the gorgeous 8C

Competizione, a luxurious dream coupe, that shared parts with Maserati and brought back rear-wheel-drive to the brand. The body was designed by its own Centro Stile and featured some nostalgic touches. There was nothing nostalgic about the performance, though. The 4,691 cc V8 had 450 hp and took the car to 183 km/h. Spark modelled this one as a resincast and it looks splendid. The organic shapes are there, as are big size wheels and faired headlamps. The classic proportions, long bonnet and cab backwards, are very well rendered. The two-seat cabin is also an excellent reproduction of the original car's.

When the 156 saloon was replaced by the 159, a coupe version was on the cards from the beginning and it came to life in the 2005 Brera. It shared most of the parts with the saloon, but had a different design from the central pillar backwards. The best engine was the 3,195cc V6 that powered the front wheels with 260 hp and gave a top speed of 150 mph. Minichamps did not miss this one either, modelling it as a high-quality diecast. Best details are the six headlamps, wheel rims and the perfectly-proportioned rounded rear section. There are high notes for the cabin, too.

And we arrive at the latest coupe made by Alfa Romeo today, the mid-engined, carbon-fibre tubed 2014 4C. It uses the 1,742cc turbo engine from the Giulietta updated to 240 hp and capable of 161 mph, with a dual-clutch gearbox. Spark's scale model feels as low and wide as the real car, reproducing perfectly the styling that brings memories of past Italian supercars. In the near future, Alfa Romeo promised to go back to coupes, maybe even bringing back the GTV name. Maybe we'll have another addition to this collection, soon. **DC**

▲ The coupes for the new century, from the left: 2003 156 GT, 2003 GTV and 2006 Brera all had a new styling language that was reproduced very nicely by Minichamps.



▲ The rounded rear end on the Brera was not to everyone's taste.



▲ The sporty cabin of the 2003 GTV front-wheel-drive coupe.



▲ One of the best angles for appreciating the 2004 8C Competizione.



▲ The stylish rear deck of the 4C affords a view of the engine.



▲ A pair of special coupes - the black 2004 8C Competizione and the red 2014 4C, both modelled by Spark.

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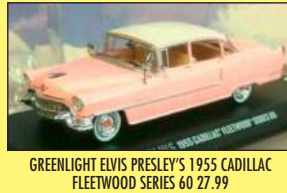
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Sentosa Express

Mike Pigott continues his occasional series on diecast trains, with a look at some models based on a monorail from Singapore.

Sentosa is a small island of the South coast of Singapore which is known as the country's holiday resort. The island contains a number of attractions including resort hotels, theme parks, restaurants and sporting venues. However, this wasn't always the case, as Sentosa had originally been a military island with a number of forts and a naval base. In 1970, the armed forces left the island, and Sentosa was developed as a tourist destination. Attractions included beaches, an aquarium, museums and restaurants, as well as historical Fort Siloso. A cable car was built to connect Sentosa with the mainland, and a monorail took visitors around the island.

In 2005, Sentosa was completely redeveloped as a world-class resort, with luxury hotels, casinos, golf courses and theme parks. A new causeway bridge was built to connect the island with the mainland, and the small monorail was replaced with the new Sentosa Express, which ran from the Singapore harbour area to various stops at the new Resorts World complex.

The Sentosa Express is a relatively short line, consisting of only four stations. The line starts at a shopping centre in Singapore Harbour front, with the other stations consisting of Resorts World, Imbiah and Beach.

ROLLING STOCK

The Sentosa Express is an elevated 'straddle' monorail, which travels along a central concrete beam. These vehicles run along the top of the beam on rubber wheels, with guidance and stabilising wheels fitted

▲ Three differently-coloured versions of the Sentosa Express.

▶ Sentosa Express train at Beach Station.



inside the overhangs that run along the side of the beam. The Sentosa Express trains were built by Japanese company, Hitachi Rail, and are the only existing examples of Hitachi's small-type monorail. The trains consist of two-section, double-ended trains that are articulated in the centre. They were originally driver-controlled, but an upgrade in 2017 allows them to run as driverless trains, although they are still fitted with cabs. Up to 180 passengers can be carried in each train, although there is not much on-board seating – there doesn't really need to be as the maximum journey is only eight minutes.

The six trainsets are all painted different colours – blue, green, orange, purple, red and pink. Occasionally they can be repainted in new colours. They are decorated with outlined silhouettes of Sentosa attractions, and the lower part is painted a darker shade of the same colour, with a wavy contrasting stripe in-between.

THE MODELS

Diecast models of the Sentosa Express trains were



- ▲ Sentosa Express in blue.
- ▶ Sentosa Express in green.
- 1 Sentosa Express in purple.
- 2 Sentosa Express model in its clear packaging.



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produced in 2006, to coincide with the launch of the real thing. These were commissioned by the Sentosa Leisure Group to sell at souvenir shops on the island. The models were made in China, although the manufacturer's name was not marked on the models or the packaging.

Initially the models were issued in the colours of the first four trains. These were light blue with a dark blue lower section and wavy yellow stripe, light green and dark green with a magenta stripe, mauve and magenta with a yellow stripe, and a mango colour with dark orange and blue stripe. In 2009, additional trainsets were added to the fleet in red and pink, and models of these were also produced. These had a slightly different design, with no contrasting colour on the lower section, and several coloured wavy lines under the doors. Each model features white outlines of the various attractions on Sentosa printed along the sides. One side shows the mer-lion statue, aquarium fish, palm trees, music and dancing. The reverse has the lookout tower, birds and butterflies, a cannon from Fort Siloso, shells and sandcastles from the beach, and golf.

Surprisingly, these monorail models are in 1/120 scale, which makes them the same TT scale as model trains from Corgi, Lionel and Siku – although they aren't exactly compatible. The model trainsets are diecast metal and quite heavy. Each set consists of two bodysheils positioned back-to-back, with a black plastic articulated joint in-between. The underside is grey plastic and includes the three lower overhanging sections. The detailed interior is also grey plastic, and clear windows are fitted with black printed frames.

These miniature monorails are actually much better models than they appear at first glance. They are well cast and accurately scaled, with detailed interiors and windows. The painting and tampon printing is to a very high standard, and is again very authentic, with correct logos plus headlights and marker lights. Unfortunately, they were not provided with a length of track beam to display them on, and a monorail

without a beam is a bit like a fish out of water. As a result, the models appear to sit too high and look slightly cartoony. This image is compounded by the fact that partly concealed wheels are fitted to each of the grey overhanging sections, presumably as a concession to play value for children. Seeing them roll along on panels that are meant to guide them along beams is somewhat bizarre.

PACKAGING

The Sentosa Express models were packaged more like expensive models than toys. They were mounted on long black plinths with clear plastic covers. The plinth had two raised cubic sections that fitted into the indents under the models – as noted, perhaps a length of imitation track beam may have been more appropriate. There was no outer card box, but a clear Mylar sleeve was fitted and had some details about the model on the underside. There was no obvious branding other than a Sentosa Express logo printed on each side of the plinth.

They were sold only at the souvenir shops on Sentosa, or at the train ticket offices. They originally retailed for around \$20 Singapore Dollars (approximately £11). **DC**



American muscle in France

Twenty years ago, at Le Mans, three famous US automotive brands were making a real name for themselves in endurance racing with front-engined cars. Rick Wilson was there and has the models too.

One of my first experiences in the world of journalism came about in the late 1990s, when I built a comprehensive website celebrating my passion for the Le Mans 24 Hours and, off the back of that, managed to get press passes for my favourite race. Come 2002, I was starting to make a name for myself, and there were also three famous US car makers that were doing the same for themselves in endurance racing.

Twenty years ago, the race in 2002 was an interesting one, with the epic straight run down from the Dunlop bridge to the Esses de la Forêt gone forever, replaced by a pair of sweeping curves (making the circuit safer for the 24 Heures Motos). That year's race was also the backdrop for filming of Luc Besson's Michel Vaillant, featuring the famous French comic strip driver as he attempted to win the race. But that's another story. Instead, we will focus on three entries that would thunder round the mighty circuit with their big, booming engines – three cars that I just so happen to have 1/43 scale models of, all by Ixo.

#12 - PANOZ LMP01 EVO

For me, the race took on a whole new importance, because a friend of mine, Gunnar Jeannette, had a real



▲ Panoz LMP01 EVO in its case, signed on the top by Gunnar Jeannette.

▼ Gunnar in the Panoz at Le Mans 2002 (this is the photo used for the customised backdrop in the image above). Photo: Rick Wilson



shot at the overall victory, if lady luck was to be on his side. Ultimately, she wasn't and both Gunnar's car and the team's other entry failed to finish.

The LMP01 Evo was an updated version of the LMP-1 Roadster S. The Panoz name might not be too familiar (it's a small-volume specialist sports car manufacturer), but company founder, Don Panoz, had a vision to produce "America's Ferrari". When the LMP-1s first appeared on track, in 1999, they carried the black, orange and silver livery of Visteon. Unsponsored for 2000 and 2001, the cars were painted red, prompting Panoz to make the link to Maranello. For 2002, though, with the original design now updated to the Evo, the cars were adorned by a patriotic stars and stripes scheme.

Notable for standing out as front-engined (incredibly rare at the top level of modern motorsport), the cars were powered by a big, powerful 6-litre V8. They sounded incredible!

I bought the model at Le Mans in 2003 – my first diecast purchase since childhood! I just so happened to have a Sharpie in my camera bag, so when I bumped into Gunnar in the pitlane, he kindly signed the model case for me. I've since added a custom background to the case, using one of my shots from the 2002 race, and that is how it's displayed at home.



▲ Left to right – Panoz LMP01 Evo, Chrysler Viper GTS-R and Chevrolet Corvette C5-R (all by Ixo).

#50 – LARBRE COMPÉTITION CHRYSLER VIPER GTS-R

Chrysler had been running its mighty V10-engined Viper at Le Mans since 1996 and took class honours at the 1998, 1999 and 2000 races and won the Daytona 24 Hours outright (the Viper was branded as a Dodge for all races in North America) in 2000. Now running in the hands of Jack Leconte's Larbre Compétition, well-known in European endurance racing, the Viper looked rather attractive in the team's white red and black scheme. Pedalled by three excellent drivers – Christophe Bouchut, Patrice Goueslard and Vincent Vosse – the car qualified 3rd in GTS and finished 4th in class (and 18th overall).

Ixo's replica captures the attractive livery that adorns the car's brutish styling perfectly. All the sponsor logos and scrutineering labels are there, and the wheels lose none of the finesse of the real thing.

#64 - CHEVROLET CORVETTE C5-R

When Chevrolet introduced the racing version of its Corvette C5 road car, designated C5-R, the GT class racing dominance of the Dodge/Chrysler Viper was about to be seriously challenged. First appearing at Le Mans in 2000, the C5-R took class honours in 2001, and again in 2002 and 2004, before being replaced by the C6.R for 2005.

The car that took the LMGTS honours at Le Mans twenty years ago was #63, but I bought #64 because of another friendly connection. One of the earliest supporters of my website was a chap by the name of Iain Macbeth, and he swiftly became a very good friend. It just so happened that he knew one of the Corvette drivers, Andy Pilgrim, and Iain was asked to join the crew looking after his car – #64. This car did finish second in class though.

1 Chrysler Viper GTS-R at Le Mans 2002. Photo: Rick Wilson

2 Chevrolet Corvette C5-R at Le Mans 2002. Photo: Rick Wilson

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The LMP01 Evo was an updated version of the LMP-1 Roadster S. The Panoz name might not be too familiar (it's a small-volume specialist sports car manufacturer), but company founder, Don Panoz, had a vision to produce "America's Ferrari". When the LMP-1s first appeared on track, in 1999, they carried the black, orange and silver livery of Visteon.

Un-sponsored for 2000 and 2001, the cars were painted red, prompting Panoz to make the link to Maranello.

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Ixo's model captures the shade of yellow very well and the car correctly bears allegiance to the US military and emergency services, in the wake of the act of terrorism in New York the previous September. The rear wing wears a French tricolour and the US star and stripes, flanking the message "NOUS SOMMES UNIS" (WE ARE UNITED). This version is a partwork release, but is seemingly identical to the mainstream release by Ixo, losing none of its detail – sometimes the way with partworks.

All three of these wonderful racers left a huge impression on me as they roared around with their mighty, thumping engines making the most glorious sound. Putting the three models together for the first time to take these photos brought some great memories flooding right back of a truly wonderful week in France, twenty years ago. **DC**



The best of Berliet

Olivier Weyl shares a selection of the famous French manufacturer's commercial vehicle models, from the *Camions Berliet* partwork.

The model collections sold with magazines at newsagents, or available by subscription, started in France at the beginning of the 2000s. These collections, by their mode of selling and their reasonable prices, make it possible to extend one's passion for model vehicles well beyond the limits that we knew before, creating a new concept of collection called commonly "partworks" in the collector's language.

Initially devoted to various themes of passenger and racing vehicles, these collections gradually opened up to commercial vehicles, first with the "Nos chères camionnettes" (Our dear vans) collection in 2005. But truck and heavy goods vehicle enthusiasts were hungry for more so, in 2009, Altaya launched a new collection, which became a milestone in the history of models and among enthusiasts of old transport vehicles, called "Camions d'Autrefois" (Trucks of another time).

Another small revolution in the world of replicas is that these trucks were produced at 1/43 scale, whereas most similar products, up to then, had been confined to 1/50. This choice of scale has undoubtedly contributed to the success of these collections, which has enabled enthusiasts to line up cars and trucks in their display cases in matching scales. This also made the issues popular among collectors who weren't particularly attracted to trucks until then.

This collection lasted nearly six years and included

▲ The first model in this series (left) reproduced the old, popular Dinky Toys release (right), but at 1/43 scale.

► This incredible vehicle (issue 13) is a 1971 Berliet GR 12 military vehicle equipped for nuclear charge transport used on the missile Albion plateau in the south of France.



▲ Hachette's website graphic, promoting the first release and showing the booklet style.



▲ Berliet GAK 5 from 1968 (issue 22), a French television relay vehicle used during the Olympic Games in Grenoble.



▲ The Berliet GBO 15 from 1959, another previously produced by Dinky Toys. It is one of the major pieces of this collection (issue 61).



▲ Berliet TBO 15 M3 exceptional convoy pusher 1971 (issue 84).

◀ Berliet GLM 10R asphalt mixer truck (issue 37).

1 Berliet GDR 7 W refuse wagon 1948 used in the city of Lyon (issue 78).

2 This Berliet CBA is an exact reproduction of a vehicle exhibited in the Berliet Foundation museum. The model was offered as a gift to subscribers of this collection. During World War I, 15,000 CBA were delivered to the French army with the production rate peaking at 1,000 trucks per month.



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▲ After World War I, the Berliet CBA will continue its career in civilian life. This is a 1925 version equipped with a still, intended to move around farms for fruit distillation (issue 43).



▲ The first Berliet GDR 7 came out in 1936. In 1946, it was put back into production with an 85hp diesel engine. It is the last of a long line before the arrival of the 'round noses' (issue 66).



▲ This impressive refrigerated van, a GPRK 10 type from 1959, is the longest chassis marketed by Berliet, here with bodywork by Ets Chéreau (issue 28). At 1/43 it measures more than 25cm.



▲ In the thirties, due to a shortage of petroleum products, many vehicles will be converted to wood gas. Berliet will market its own system, "Gazo-bois". This VDANG 16 released in 1939 is equipped with it (issue 32).

135 items at the rate of one every two weeks. Given the success, it has been followed by many other series, covering a huge range of vehicle types.

Among the various series are many vehicles of the Berliet brand, one of the most important truck manufacturers in France. These collections revealed an important passion for Berliet and, in 2018, the publisher Hachette launched a collection exclusively dedicated to this brand – "Camions Berliet" – with models made by Ixo. From the start, these models turned out to be even more beautiful and detailed than the previous productions. Here you see just a small selection.

Thanks to the collection of the Berliet Foundation and to vehicles preserved by enthusiasts, these models are accurate copies of real vehicles, and each model is

accompanied by a booklet. This collection ran to 100 releases, with the last issue just on sale, from 31st March.

The first model in this series is a clever choice, intended to capture the attention of collectors nostalgic for Dinky Toys, because it reproduces exactly the Berliet tipper that was released by Dinky Toys, but at 1/43 scale. In reality, it is a Berliet GLM 10 with a 6cyl engine produced from 1953. When it came out, this truck outclassed all the other existing ones in France and was produced in many versions until 1991.

The series was only available in France, but many models can be found on ebay and some have been entering the UK through the wholesaler, John Ayrey's – which is exactly where the editor found his, as seen on the next page. For retail customers, regular advertiser Keith's Cars of Derby is a stockist too. **DC**



Berliet Stradair

Never lost for things to talk about, Rick Wilson shares another selection from his collection.

The story behind this bit of my collection actually goes back to Andrew Ralston's article about the Berliet Stradair in his *Off the Beaten Track* page in the November 2013 issue. I have a certain fascination with angular designs and, in the modern world of compound curves, anything like this really stands out. Andrew's informative piece served as my introduction to the vehicle and planted a seed of desire that bore fruit late last year.

When leftovers from the French *Camions Berliet* partwork series, which Olivier Weyl details on the immediately preceding pages, started making their way over to the UK, I quickly snapped up a couple of Stradairs to take a closer look. I wasn't disappointed.

During the 1960s, products imported to France were heavily taxed. The products of French manufacturers reigned supreme in a market without competition. Paul Berliet, whose company had firmly established itself in the medium and large truck sector, wanted to do the same for urban delivery vehicles.

Berliet sets quite strict specifications for the future truck – it must be efficient, robust, functional and comfortable, with comfort equivalent to that of a passenger car. The initial run was released at the beginning of 1965, the specifications were respected and the Stradair was an immediate success. The 'Airlam' suspension (manufactured under licence from Citroen) generated a previously unexperienced level of comfort for the driver and any passenger.

▲ Berliet Stradair Autocar (left) and Stradair 10 Cochonnière (right).



▲ There is plenty of detail to these partworks bargains and the livestock carrier features an opening tailgate.

Initial enthusiasm led to a flurry of orders, with 1,500 sold by the end of the year. But reliability issues, particularly with the air suspension, the orders soon fell away and, when production of the Stradair ceased in 1970, only 3,000 had been sold. Its successor, the K range, was derived from the Stradair, but came with a shortened cab.

One area of success, with the Stradair, was its flexibility and a wide range of bodies were built by coachwork companies to suit the utility design. The two I chose (illustrating this point well) are a livestock carrier and a minibus, making for very different vehicles indeed.

Released with issue 9 of the *Camions Berliet* series, on 5th May 2018, the Berliet Stradair 10 Cochonnière livestock carrier features a diecast cab with a plastic, double-decked rear body that incorporates a drop-down tailgate. The Berliet Stradair Autocar was released almost exactly a year later, on 15th May 2019, with issue 35 of the series. Featuring a fully diecast body (with a plastic glazed unit, of course, the chassis is fully plastic. Interestingly, the chassis on the Cochonnière is mixed, with the cab floor being diecast and the livestock body floor being part of the rear body plastic moulding.

There are several more of these superb 1/43 scale Berliets, made by Ixo for Hachette, around at the moment. Get in touch with Keith's Cars of Derby (see advertisement on page 27) if these bargain beauties are of interest. **DC**



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N Gauge

Oxford Diecast - Buses



NLRT007 Leyland Royal Tiger North Western... £8

Commercial vehicles



NSHL01ST Scania Highline Nootboom 3 axle Semi Low Loader Stobart Rail... £13.50



NVOL4007 Volvo FH4 Semi Low Loader Cadzow... £13.50
NVOL4009 Volvo FH4 Semi Low Loader G F Job... £13.50

OO Gauge (1:76 Scale)

Buses



OM46627A Wrightbus New Routemaster GoAhead London LTZ 1394 Route 15 Blackwall Royal Fusilliers £42

Northcord Model Company - Buses



UK6513 ADL Enviro400 MMC - "Stagecoach South"... £51

Oxford Diecast - Buses



76IR6005 Irizar i6 - Guideline / Official England Football Team Coach - Collector's Edition... £21



76IR6006 Irizar i6 City Link Air... £21



76SB003 Saro Bus London Greenline... £18

Cars



76ND110001 Land Rover New Defender 110... £7

Public Service vehicles



76SAL001 Scania Aerial Rescue Pump "Strathclyde Fire & Rescue"... £20.50

Commercial vehicles



76ATKL005 Atkinson Cattle Truck L Davies & Sons £13.50



76CA007 Bedford CA van - "Royal Mail"... £5.50



76DAF03CT DAF 105 Skeletal Trailer Freightliner... £19.50



76EC003 ERF EC Flatbed Trailer - Pollock... £21



76CUS002 Ford Transit Custom White NEW... £6.50



76FCR001 Fowler B6 Crane Marstons Duke of York (Dorset) £15.50



76SET45 Hayton Coulthard Centenary Set... £42.50



76MB008 Mercedes Actros SSC Tipper Ronnie S Evans... £23



76MB002 Mercedes MP4 GSC Actros Curtainside Pollock... £23



76SHT001 Scammell Highwayman Tanker Shell/BP... £15



76SCT006 Scania Car Transporter - ECM... £31.50



76SRH001 Scania R Series Highline Box Trailer in Eddie Stobart NEW... £24.50



76SNG001 Scania S Series Highline Fridge Whitelink Seafoods... £24.50



76SCA05LL Scania Topline Nootboom Low Loader Smiths - Bridgend... £20.50



76SCV002 Showmans Caravan in green and cream... £12



76VOL08REC Volvo FH Boniface Recovery Truck Manchett's... £20.50



76VOL4009 Volvo FH4 GXL Nootboom Semi Low Loader G F Job... £21.50



Farming and construction



76TK006 Bedford TK Horsebox in green/brown... £9



76CHV001 Combine Harvester - Red... £15



76LDL001 JCB 531 70 Loadall JCB... £18.50



76ML1001 JCB Major Loader Mk1 Excavator JCB... £22



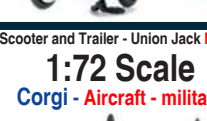
76BF001 40mm Bofors Anti-Aircraft Gun as used by the British Army/Navy 1937- late 1980s in brown... £8.50



76WOT003 Ford WOT 1 Crash Tender RAF Bomber Command... £13.50



Motorcycles & Scooters



76SC002 Scooter and Trailer - Union Jack NEW... £6



1:72 Scale

Corgi - Aircraft - military



AA32626 Avro Lancaster B.1 PA474, operated by The Battle of Britain Memorial Flight, the only airworthy Lancaster in Europe... £139.50



AA27204 Avro Vulcan B.2 XM575, RAF No.101 Sqn, Waddington Wnq, 1975... £180



AA35314 North American B-25J Mitchell 'Betty's Dream', 499th BS, 345th BG, Le Shima, Okinawa, 1945... £94.50

1:50 Scale

Corgi - Commercial vehicles

CC99203 Edward Stobart 1954-2011 Commemorative Set (Scania 4 Series Curtainside and Scania 111 Tractor Unit) (RRP £124.99)... BARGAIN... £83



A very strange pair

Paul Brent Adams takes to the skies to find an interesting brace of miniature replicas.

Some models are so bizarre that you wonder if they are based on something real, or are just a figment of someone's imagination. Well, this pair of strange, twin-engined aircraft certainly fall into that category. Yet both are based on real aircraft that have actually flown. Twin-engined, propeller-driven aircraft usually have their engines in the wings, flanking the fuselage, with the propellers set ahead of the wing leading edge, but the designers of these aircraft decided to throw the rule book out, and go their own way. At least recognition is not going to be a problem, as there is little else like them in the sky.

RUTAN MODEL 202 BOOMERANG

American aircraft designer, Burt Rutan, is well known for his unconventional, high-performance designs. The Boomerang was intended to improve the safety of twin-engined aircraft. In a normal twin, with widely separated engines, losing power on one side unbalances the aircraft, making it more difficult to control. The strange, asymmetrical layout of the Boomerang moves the engines closer together, reducing this problem. The slender port boom houses only a 200 hp engine, while the fatter starboard boom contains both a 210 hp engine, and the passenger cabin. It carries a pilot, and four passengers. The design also features forward-swept wings, their shape giving the aircraft its name. Only a single prototype was built, which made its first flight in 1996. An enlarged production version, the Morrow MB-300, was planned but not built.

THE MATCHBOX MODEL

Despite having first flown in the 1990s, this Matchbox Sky Busters model did not appear until 2019. It is nearly all plastic, only the upper half of the starboard fuselage, including the starboard

▲ The Italeri Dreamwings Collection Piaggio P.180 Avanti II twin turbo-prop, and the Matchbox Sky-Busters Rutan Boomerang, an asymmetrical piston-engined light twin.



▲ The Matchbox Rutan Boomerang on its card, with the aircraft flying over clouds and a beach. The clear plastic display stand sits just below the model.

fin, is metal. The port boom, the lower half of the starboard boom, the wings, and the tail are all plastic. The backing card does say "metal parts" rather than diecast. There are no clear windows, these are all printed on in black. The three-bladed propellers are black plastic. Unusually, there is no undercarriage, a very low clear plastic display stand being provided instead. This plugs into a hole in the lower main fuselage. Tampon printing is confined to the metal fuselage. Twin red cheatlines run the length of the fuselage on both sides, with strange markings on the nose. The name "BOOMERANG" on the fin, and the US civil registration N24BT on the fuselage, are confined to the starboard side. These markings are correct for the sole prototype.

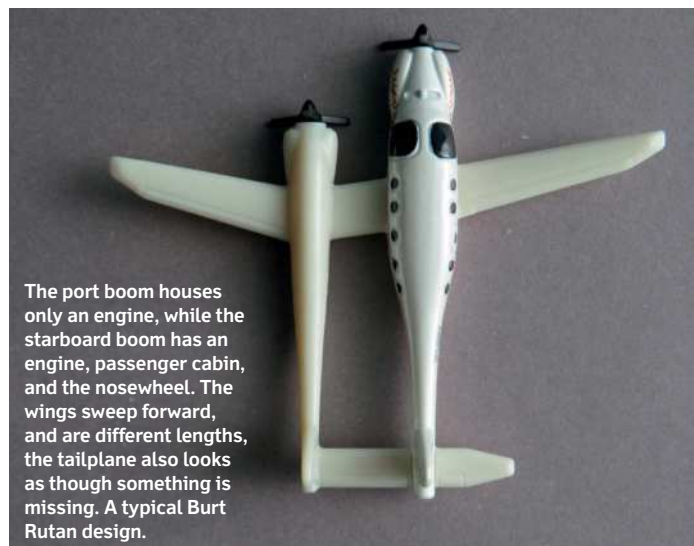
The underside is well marked, carrying the name Rutan Boomerang, a small elephant, "made in THAILAND", the Matchbox name, model number SB144, the Mattel name, and a copyright date of 2018. The model comes on either a blue card, with a cloud background, or an orange card with an image

From the starboard side, the Boomerang looks perfectly normal - note how short the display stand is.





The metal upper fuselage is joined to the rest of the model by three rivets. The keyhole shaped hole is where the display stand plugs in. There is no indication of the undercarriage doors, but plenty of information is moulded beneath the model.



The port boom houses only an engine, while the starboard boom has an engine, passenger cabin, and the nosewheel. The wings sweep forward, and are different lengths, the tailplane also looks as though something is missing. A typical Burt Rutan design.

of clouds with a beach visible below.

Wings 102 mm

Length 87 mm

Weight 30 g (model only)

Scale 1:110

PIAGGIO P.180 AVANTI II

The Italian company Piaggio was founded in the late 19th Century, and moved into aircraft and aero engine production during World War I. It was not a major player in World War II, but was more prominent in post-war years. The original P.180 Avanti, a nine-seat executive transport, first flew in 1986, followed by the improved and more powerful Avanti II some two decades later. The unusual features are the main wing set well back on the fuselage; the twin turbo-prop engines, which have rear-mounted 'pusher' propellers, the small foreplanes or canards ahead of the main wing, and the high T-tail. More than 200 have been built in various versions, for both military and civil use.

THE ITALERI MODEL

Italeri is an Italian company, best known for its plastic kits. But in recent years it has moved into diecasts, the Dreamwings Collection being devoted



▲ The Italeri Dreamwings Piaggio P.180 Avanti II in its window box; the black plastic display stand comes in two pieces.



The model is basically white, except for the blue fuselage cheatlines. These carry AERONAUTICA MILITARE (Italian Air Force) titles and the serial number MM62164 in tiny, but readable, characters.

◀ The Avanti II is a sleek, twin-engined turbo-prop of high performance, this model carrying the colours of the Italian Air Force, note the unusual positioning of the roundels.

to aircraft that have served with the Italian Air Force. Scales vary, depending on the size of the real aircraft. Most are 1/100, but some are 1/72, 1/144, or 1/200. At least all of these are recognised collecting scales. The models themselves are made in China.

The model is diecast, with a clear plastic windscreen and cabin windows, and a basic black plastic interior. The five-bladed propellers are again black plastic, with silver spinners. The navigation lights have been touched in with red and green. Again, there is no undercarriage, and the model sits atop a two-piece black plastic display stand.

The model carries the colours of 14° Stormo (Wing), 71° Gruppo (Squadron), in 2010. The aircraft is white overall, with blue fuselage cheatlines (which have "AERONAUTICA MILITARE" titles and the serial number "MM62164" in white), and a unit badge on the fin. There are small Italian Air Force roundels in green, white, and red, on each side of the rear fuselage, above the port wing, and below the starboard wing.

The undercarriage doors are indicated by recessed lines, the main gear being under the wings. Most model aircraft have various markings cast into the underside somewhere, the name of the maker, the aircraft itself, and where it was made, but this model has nothing. All the information provided comes from the square, blue box. This has large plastic windows in the top and bottom, with the plane sitting in a clear plastic tray, giving a good view of the model. The aircraft type, name of the maker, country of manufacture, and scale, are all printed on the sides. There is also a small leaflet showing other models in the series. Unlike the Matchbox Boomerang, this is clearly not intended as a toy, the box stating "Metal scale model for adult collectors age 14 and over".

Wings 141 mm

Length 143 mm

Weight 48 g (model only)

Scale 1:100 **DC**



It's a small world

There has been a huge surge in the popularity of 1/64 scale in recent years. Rick Wilson has been truly swept along by the wave of new manufacturers and highly-detailed miniatures.

You may have noticed a certain scale featuring more and more prominently over the last few years. It's not a new one, as Brian Salter covered so well in his recently-finished Size Matters series, and has been a very popular scale for decades over in the USA, with the likes of Greenlight, Johnny Lightning and Auto World leading the way.

I'm talking about 1/64 scale, of course. In my world, I fully blame/credit both Hot Wheels and Matchbox for me having a fascination with diecasts at this size. Whilst neither are out and out 1/64 manufacturers, with fit-the-box very much being the order of the day, the seeds were sown very early on in my life for smaller models to appeal so much. Of course, there is the added benefit of being able to fit so many more into a given display size. Oh, and not forgetting the inevitable cost implications. I mustn't give all the credit to those two companies for starting me on this road, though, as an unlikely brand has also had a big hand in things where I'm concerned – Aurora AFX slot racing. Something I got into in a big way when I was 15 and visiting an old school friend in New York for the 1979 summer holidays. It might be known as HO scale (technically 1/87), but the cars are most definitely 1/64.

In recent years, 1/64 has been growing very fast in terms of high-end collectibles. Once the domain of more toy-like pocket money models, the market

▲ The MINI GT range includes a wide variety of car manufacturer brands, some commercial vehicles and even a pair of parking mats for display – this one is the first design (MGTAC01). The models shown are MGT00207 Pandem Toyota GR Supra V1.0 ADVAN SEMA 2019, MGT00172 Lamborghini Urus Blu Eleos with roof box, MGT00065 Honda Civic Type R in Championship White with carbon kit, MGT00050 Pagani Huayra Roadster in Monza Red, and a limited edition reworking of MGT00112 Mercedes-Benz Actros with 40ft container, featuring a TSM-branded container – restricted to just 120 pieces and given away at the 2020 Spielwarenmesse.



▲ Each model comprises a diecast body and chassis, a plastic moulded interior and accurate wheels, shod with rubber tyres. This is MGT00018, the McLaren Senna in Mira Orange.

for highly-detailed, quality diecasts, with opening features and increased realism, is booming.

In this short series, in four parts, we will look at those American brands, others from around the world, and then the very specialist world of incredibly-dedicated customisers, who strive for levels of detail that simply astonish. And as 1/64 scale collectors have so much more space to work with, I'll take a look at some diorama options. So, we'll be leaving out brands that don't stick to this scale, such as Tomica, and focusing on the dedicated sixty-fourths.

We start with the brand that really caught my attention, when it launched in 2017. It hit the UK in 2019, thanks to our friends at wholesaler, Cleveland's Diecasts (www.clevelandsdiecast.co.uk). So, those in charge need to take some responsibility for introducing me to it, and for the following pages too.

THE BEGINNING OF MINI GT.

TrueScale Miniatures was founded in 2006, based in Hong Kong, and began distributing diecast models



▲ Five of those early Honda and Nissan releases. Anti-clockwise from top left, we have MGT00001 Honda Civic Type R in Championship White, MGT00004 LB*WORKS Nissan GT-R in Matte Grey, MGT00003 LB*WORKS Nissan GT-R in Light Blue, MGT00009 LB*WORKS Nissan GT-R in Matte White, and MGT00010 Honda Civic Type R in Championship White (Modulo Edition).



▲ McLaren was an early licence addition – MGT00018 Senna in Mira Orange, MGT00013 Senna in Victory Grey and MGT00081 Senna in orange and white (basically an Ayrton Senna tribute, bearing the number 12 on the nose and rear wing endplates – the number on his car for the 1988 season when he won his first F1 World Championship when driving for the racing team).

▲ An example of when a casting can be used for both road and racing car use, with minimal modification – MGT00196 Mercedes-Benz 190E 2.5-16 Evolution II 5 "Berlin" 1992 DTM Zolder and MGT00164 Mercedes-Benz 190E 2.5-16 Evolution II Black Pearl Metallic.



▲ A fairly recent collaboration, but already proving to be massively popular with collectors, these are the first four Kaido House releases with their respective special boxes.



▲ Seven of the many Bentley Continental GTs so far produced – this seems to be a very popular casting. Amazingly the GT has had a fair bit of racing success too, in a wide variety of series.

the following year. Over time, most collectors referred to the company as TSM, for short, and a few years ago, this became part of the new trading name – TSM-Model.

On its website, the company's states "TSM-Model strives for a perfect blend of passion and detailed craftsmanship in each model we produce. From our humble beginnings making accessories to accentuate your collection, we have selectively expanded our offerings each year to offer not only key pieces of motorsports history, but to capture both classic street cars and the newest vehicles you admire on the road today. We are always looking for ways to improve our craft, using a combination of the newest technology and honed technique to get all of the details just right."

One of those areas of improvement came to light in late 2017, when the company announced the launch of its brand-new range, dedicated solely to 1/64 scale, and nothing else – MINI GT (use of full upper case is part of the brand identity).

During early production, only a few licensing arrangements were in place, notably Honda and Nissan (these two account for the first 12 models, in Honda Civic Type R and Nissan GT-R guise, six apiece), but many more big names were to follow, with most of them already being replicated at TSM's larger scales.

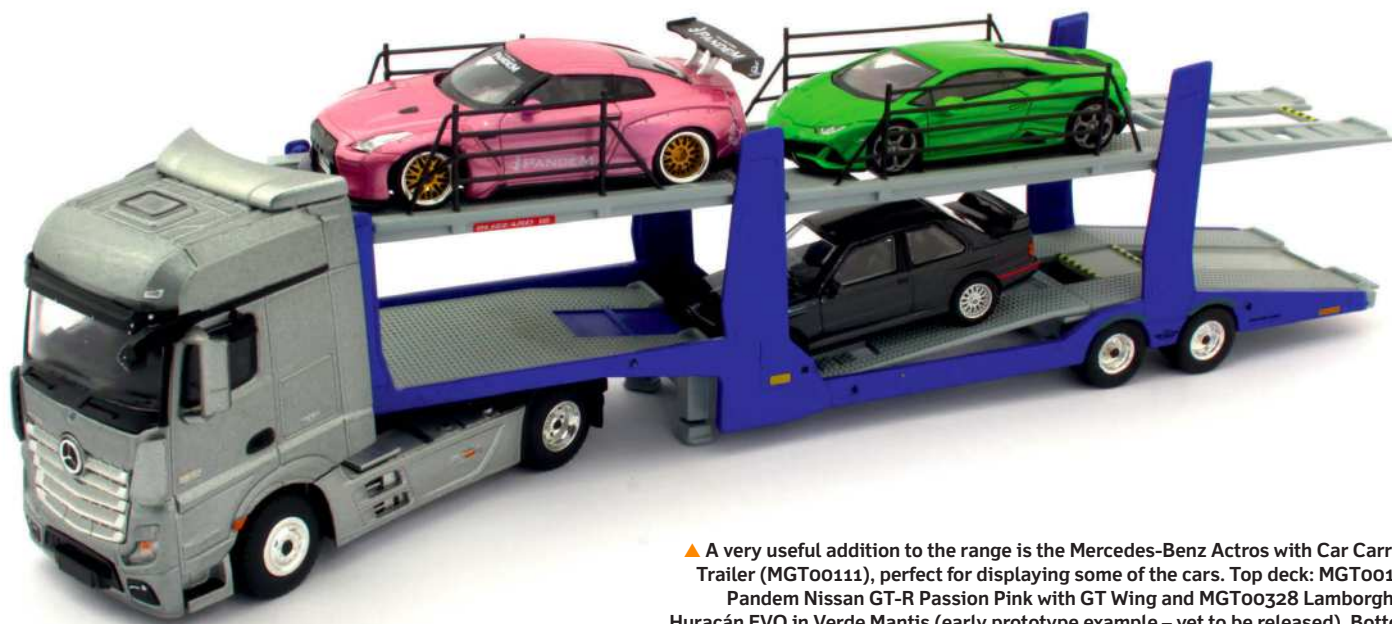
Starting with these two car types, the Nissans had already begun to appear under the 'Liberty Walk' banner (a Japanese custom design shop for high-performance cars – more about this later). But the range would soon include more standard road cars, tuned 'street' cars, off road vehicles, commercial vehicles, motorsport and a growing range of suitably-scaled accessories.

Most vehicles are produced in both left and right-hand-drive versions, where relevant. An example of where this wouldn't be the case is for motorsport replicas, where the correct layout for the car being modelled is adhered to. If both versions are available, these are differentiated by the addition of "-L" and "-R" suffixes to the product reference number.

STANDARD ROAD CARS

The backbone of the MINI GT range comprises an excellent selection of major car manufacturers, including Porsche, BMW, Toyota, Lamborghini, Honda/Acura, Pagani, McLaren, Nissan, Datsun, Mercedes-Benz, Mazda/Eunos, Chevrolet, and Bentley. The latter focuses purely on the Continental GT (and GT3 racing version) at the moment, but we have seven excellent versions in the photo. Back row coming forward, left to right: MGT00088 Bentley Continental GT in Passion Pink (2020 toy fair gift car), MGT00116 Bentley Continental GT in Orange Flame, MGT00188 Bentley Continental GT3 (2020 Christmas edition), MGT00247 Bentley Continental GT 2020 GP Ice Race, MGT00238 Bentley Continental GT3 #7 Bentley Team M-Sport 2020 Liqui-Moly Bathurst 12 Hours winner, MGT00162 Bentley Continental GT 2019 Pikes Peak International Hill Climb and, at the front, MGT00176 Bentley Continental GT3 2018 Presentation.

1/64 SCALE IN THE SPOTLIGHT – PART 1



▲ A very useful addition to the range is the Mercedes-Benz Actros with Car Carrier Trailer (MGT00111), perfect for displaying some of the cars. Top deck: MGT00123 Pandem Nissan GT-R Passion Pink with GT Wing and MGT00328 Lamborghini Huracán EVO in Verde Mantis (early prototype example – yet to be released). Bottom deck: BMW M3 in black (prototype sample, not released).

TUNED 'STREET' CARS

This is proving to be an incredibly successful strain of model releases, with collaborations with LB*WORKS from the very beginning, and now Kaido House (more about these later). Both generally focus on the Nissan GT-R (R35) and Datsun 510 respectively.

OFF ROADERS

The classic Land Rover Defender 110 makes for an exquisite casting at this scale and pick up versions have begun to go on sale too. We have four of the classic 110s to share – MGT00221 1989 Camel Trophy Winner Team UK (dirty version), MGT00108 Camel Trophy Winner Team UK, MGT00109 Light Blue with surfboard, and MGT00152 Royal Mail Post Bus.

COMMERCIAL VEHICLES

Both hauled by the Mercedes Actros tractor unit are two designs – a car transporter and a container truck. Just about to be released are a series of alternative containers to mix and match with the latter, whereas the former is obviously perfect for displaying the car models.

Just arrived in the shops are a pair of smaller LB*WORKS car carriers. These are obviously meant for the various similarly-branded performance cars, but would work just as well with others.

MOTORSPORT

The top endurance races – Le Mans, Daytona, Sebring and Spa – have all featured in the range with a selection of models, as has the Japan Touring Car Championship, to name just a few. One gift set of particular note is the special set of all four Ford GT LMGTE Pro entries from the 2016 Le Mans 24 Hours (MGTS0001), comprising MGT00276 #66, MGT00277 #67, MGT00278 #68 and MGT00279 #69. In our photo, in the centre of the front row, is also the test car in black (MGT00246).



▲ Another three LB*WORKS offerings. Front to back: MGT00133 Nissan GT-R Martini Racing, MGT00057 Lamborghini Aventador in Light Blue and MGT00064 Nissan GT-R in white.



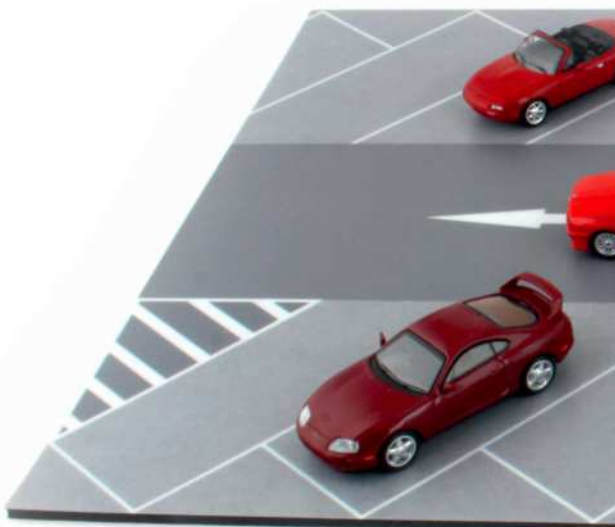
▲ MGT00093 Pandem Nissan GT-R in Velocity Blue, complete with 'duck tail' rear spoiler.

TRADE SHOW GIVEAWAYS AND SPECIALS

In addition to the mainstream releases with LB*WORKS branding, there are special collaborations with MiJo (M & J Toys, a US-based distributor that commissions special models across many brands) and Kaido House, a collector lifestyle brand concept by Jun Imai, born out of a love for car culture in all scales.

The Kaido House models all focus on the iconic Datsun 510 in 'Pro Street' guise, all with funky bases in a bespoke style. In the photo are the first four releases – KHM001 in green (flipped over, showing the base), KHM002 in purple, KHM003 in red and KHM004 in orange – with many more already in the pipeline, including Station Wagon versions. They come in special boxes too.

Also, there are special versions given away at trade and toy fairs, such as the Mercedes Actros container truck and Bentley Continental GT (2020) and the Honda NSX GT-3 (2019). Many more region-specific exclusives have also been issued.





▲ Four examples of the popular, classic Land Rover Defender 110; A special gift set of all four Ford GT LMGT Pro entries from the 2016 Le Mans 24 Hours (MGTSo001), comprising MGT00276 #66, MGT00277 #67, MGT00278 #68 and MGT00279 #69. In the centre of the front row is the test car in black (MGT00246).

CANCELLED PROJECTS

In January 2021, in the midst of the global pandemic and its associated product delays, a list of cancelled models was released. This was stated as either being due to a change in a licensing agreement

(Aston Martin and Maserati), or because the real manufacturer has brought out a newer vehicle that it would prefer to have modelled (BMW, Corvette, Land Rover, McLaren and Paganì). Corvette's C7 and C7.R were dropped in favour of the new C8

▼ There have been four versions of the Calsonic-sponsored Nissan Skyline GT-R Gr.A from the Japan Touring Car Championship produced. From left to right: MGT00165 (1990), MGT00166 (1991), MGT00167 (1992) and MGT00104 (1993).



▼ The second parking mat (MGTAC011) with eight road cars. Back row: MGT00288 Mazda Miata MX-5 in Classic Red, MGT00087 Nissan Skyline GT-R in black with BBS LM wheels, and MGT00298 Eunos Roadster in Classic Red. Centre row: MGT00043 BMW M3 in Henna Red and MGT00150 Chevrolet Corvette Stingray in Torch Red. Front row, a trio of Toyota Supras: MGT00046 in Renaissance Red, MGT00014 in Super White and MGT00200 TRD 3000GT in Alpine Silver Metallic.



▲ The Honda/Acura NSX GT3 is another popular casting. From back to front: 2019 toy fair gift car in blister packaging (MGT00027), a presentation version in black (MGT00025) and two racers – MGT00052 #82 2017 IMSA Watkins Glen and MGT00051 #30 2018 24 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps.



▲ MINI GT produces two sizes of display units – MGTAC02 for 20 cars (illustrated) and MGTAC03 for five.

1/64 SCALE IN THE SPOTLIGHT – PART 1



▲ More racing cars have started arriving in the shape of the new Corvette C8.R. Starting with this pair of entries from the 2020 IMSA 24 Hours of Daytona – MGT00253 #3 in yellow and MGT00254 #4 in grey. The versions from Sebring 2021 have just arrived in the shops and cars entered at the 2021 Le Mans 24 Hours have just been announced.



and C8.R – a huge shame, as the C7.R in particular would have offered a huge range of versions for an endurance racing nut like me – and, of particular disappointment to many, the planned Land Rover New Defender 90 and 110. Thankfully, I'd grabbed a shot of the prototypes at the 2020 Nuremberg Spielwarenmesse – they did look rather good.

ACCESSORIES

Completing the range is a selection of accessories to add to the display options. These so far include parking mats (two versions), battery-operated turntables (two versions), display units (two versions) and suitably-scaled figurines (two special packs of three, plus some sold with models).

PACKAGING

There have been two basic card outers for the models, both with a neat moulded plastic insert for ease of swift removal that also keeps the model securely held in place. Special editions usually command a bigger box, especially if figures are included, as with the Liberty Walk Police Car. Blister hangers have also

◀ Our cover stars all come in bespoke packaging – MGTAC04 LB*WORKS Mr Kato & Show Girls Type A figure pack, MGT00147 LB*WORKS Nissan GT-R R35 Liberty Walk Police (with figures), and MGT00244 LB*WORKS Nissan GT-R Type 2 LBWK Kuma Graffiti.

▶ There are, so far, two types of turntable on offer. This is the plain, mirrored version MGTAC12, but there is a Liberty Walk branded variant too (MGTAC14). Powered by two AAA batteries (not included), they turn nice and slowly to afford full appreciation of the models displayed. Here we have MGT00283 Porsche 911 Carrera S in Guards Red and MGT00063 Porsche 911 GT2 RS Weissach Package in GT Silver Metallic.



▲ A sample of some of the packaging varieties – larger special edition Christmas 2019 Bentley GT3, two variations of the early box style (one with Liberty Walk branding) and, at the front, the latest style of mainstream release box that features colour cues taken from the model inside and stronger logo branding.



been introduced, with the car displayed outside of and sitting on top of its usual box.

There are, of course, plenty of future models in the making – several are announced each month. Plus there's an exciting new collaboration just announced, with MINI GT taking on the exclusive worldwide distribution for the upcoming 1/64 scale range by BBR Models. With the quality and attention to detail that BBR is renowned for, this is most definitely a future article in the making.

Next month, we cross the Atlantic and take a look at the 1/64 scene in the USA. Don't forget your passport! **DC**



▲ Two models displayed in early prototype form at Nuremberg Spielwarenmesse, in 2020 – Land Rover New Defender 90 and 110 – that were cancelled in January 2021.

Grading guide

A = Mint, A—A= VN Mint, A-= N Mint,
B+= Excellent Plus, B-B++ Very good,
B= Good

A wide range of models can
be viewed on my website
www.diecastgems.com

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- 36d Rover Blue & Light Blue Wheels. Rare. A—A/U **£395**
39A Packard Pre-War Lacquered Base. Green. Rare & Superb. A—A/U **£350**
39f Studebaker Dark Blue B+/U **£125**
102 MG Midget Green & Cream. Rare Spun Wheels. Chip to rear cover. A-/U **£295**
107 Sunbeam Alpine Comp. Cerise/Grey A/A- **£195**
170 Ford Forder Highline. Scarce, Pink & Blue. Stiff rear wheels. A **£425**
179 Studebaker President Blue. Spun Wheels. A/A- **£220**
233 Cooper Bristol Green Dual Box. A—A/B-B+ **£135**
252 Bedford Refuse Wagon. Green & Black. WINDOWS. Scarce, A—A **£550**
254 Austin Taxi Dark Blue A—A/B **£195**
280 Observation Coach Cream/Red. Red hubs. Rare late Issue Black shiny base. A/B-B+ **£240**
298 Emergency Gift Set. Rare. Complete with all accessories. A—A/B+ **£950**
301 Field Marshall Tractor Orange Silver metal wheels. P/Piece. Dual Box. A- **£245**
340 Land-Rover Orange/Dark Green Rare Green plastic hubs. A/U **£275**
341 Land Rover Trailer Orange & Red plastic hubs. A/A- **£70**
418 Leyland Comet Wagon Rivet Back not screw. Green & Orange, A—A/B+ **£395**
431 Guy Warrior 4 Ton. NO WINDOWS. Scarce. Tan & Green A/B+-A- **£620**
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475 Citroen Safari 1964 Winter Olympics White A/B+-A- **£185**
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497 Oldsmobile 'Thrushbuster' Purple. Cast Hubs. A—A **£350**
506 Police Panda Imp White & Black doors and bonnet. A **£195**



Other Models Sales Stock

- FD 32D Delahaye Fire Engine Extendable ladder. A—A **£185** FD 579/33C Simca Mirror Cargo Truck Grey A—A/B+ **£130**
FD 885 Steel Carrier Scarce. Red/Grey. Complete. A/B+-A- **£475** SO 116 BMW Isetta Turquoise leaflet. No CC. A-/A—A **£145**
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Batman v Superman

Mike Pigott continues his series on superheroes, with a look at these high-quality diecast figures from Tomica of Japan.



The 2016 film, *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice*, was the second instalment of the interconnected series of films known as the 'DC Extended Universe' – following *Man of Steel* from 2013. Both of these films had a significantly darker tone. This was notable for being the first cinematic meeting of the two title characters. Both heroes had featured in several solo movies, but had never appeared together on the big screen. Of course, they had been teaming up in the comic books since the 1950s, and appeared together in animated cartoons.

After witnessing the damage and destruction caused by Superman fighting Kryptonian criminals, Batman regards Superman as a dangerous loose cannon. Superman, on the other hand, is less than impressed by Batman's brutal methods of dealing with crime. Both heroes are independently suspicious of young entrepreneur Lex Luthor, as is an exotic woman named Diana Prince, whose alter-ego is Wonder Woman.

Tomica released three diecast figures, based on the film, as part of its 'Metacolle' range (short for 'metal collectibles'). These were marketed under the name of the parent company, Takara Tomy – presumably because they aren't vehicles.

The DC Comics range only consisted of three items – Superman and two versions of Batman. Surprisingly, there was no Wonder Woman figurine. The figures were made to an impressive standard and are incredibly well-detailed, given their small size of around 8cm tall. They had diecast metal torsos and legs, with the heads and arms in plastic. There are four points of articulation – at the waist, the neck, and both shoulders, meaning they could be posed in different positions.

▲ The three figures in the range: Armoured Batman, Superman, and Batman.



▲ The figures came in boxes similar to Tomica vehicles.



▲ Official *Batman v Superman - Dawn of Justice* promotional poster.

SUPERMAN

Superman is wearing his new-look costume without the red shorts. His super-suit is in dark blue with the seams very finely touched in with light blue. His boots are dark red with bright red piping, and his belt is gold. The S-logo on his chest is very accurately printed in red with a gold background. His face and hands are finished in flesh-tone, with blue eyes, black eyebrows and shiny black hair. The cape is supplied as a separate piece, and is made of thick vinyl painted bright red.

BATMAN

The Batman model represents the older, harder, weather-beaten version of The Dark Knight, as played in the film by Ben Affleck. His costume is all grey and black, and has a very large black bat-emblem on the chest. His gloves, boots and utility belt are black with gold highlights, although the piping on his suit is not highlighted. The cape is fixed in place by the head. His lower face is painted flesh-tone, and resembles Affleck's rugged jawline. Included in the box is a small gun which can be fitted into Batman's hand. This is a grappling gun used for scaling buildings.

ARMOURED BATMAN

This heavy, chunky figure shows Batman in the armoured costume used to battle Superman. The exosuit is painted gunmetal-grey with gold trim and belt, plus a black strap around his upper body. The helmet and arms are also dark grey, but without a matching metallic finish. His eye-slits are white, as these were back-lit in the film. The cape is a separate, substantial piece of black vinyl, and has a stud that clips onto a hole in Batman's back. The powerful looking weapon is the Kryptonite pellet launcher used against Superman.

PACKAGING

The figures came packaged in card boxes, similar to Tomica models. The box panels featured photos of the enclosed figure in several different poses. Surprisingly, there was no model of the Batman v Superman Batmobile in the Tomica range, although there would later be one from the following film, *Justice League*.

These are figurines may not appear to all readers, but are diecast, and related to one of our favourite model car brands, Tomica. They are only licensed for sale in Japan and neighbouring Far-Eastern countries. I actually bought mine while in transit at Singapore Airport, where they cost the equivalent of about £9 each. **DC**

▼ Renault Frégate, one of the earliest Minialuxe cars from 1953/4. Considerable effort was put into the colourful and attractive box design.

1



From plastic to diecast

Andrew Ralston tells the story of this French company that started by producing plastic cars in the 1950s and made a surprise entry to the diecast market nearly sixty years later.

To the casual observer, the products of the French Minialuxe company seem very similar to those from Norev and, as a result, Minialuxe has, to some extent, been overshadowed by its more famous rival. Yet it would be unfair to suggest that Minialuxe lacked a separate identity and, as we shall see, the brand was not short of original ideas. Norev, of course, is still a major name in the collecting world, not only producing a vast range of current diecasts, in a large factory in China, but also being behind the recreations of classic models by CIJ and Atlas Dinky Toys. Minialuxe, by contrast, disappeared in 1978 yet it, too, made a reappearance with the launch of a new range of diecasts in 2012 and, like the previous range in plastic, is not so well-known outside of France. In short, British collectors might be surprised to learn just how prolific Minialuxe has been.

The story begins in the town of Oyonnax, in the Rhône-Alpes region of France, where an industry developed in the late nineteenth century around the production of combs and other items made

1 The Hotchkiss Grégoire was the most original subject in the first group of Minialuxe cars, even though it is not a very accurate likeness.



▲ The automotive illustrator Alexis Kow flattered the shape of the Hotchkiss for the sales brochure and it looks like the Minialuxe model is based on these drawings.

from celluloid. It was here that the Établissements Grand-Clément was founded in 1903, by Eugène Grand-Clément, to make a diverse range of products that included buttons, buckles for belts and stays for corsets. The development of new plastic raw materials, after World War II, brought further prosperity to the factories around Oyonnax and the area soon became known as 'Plastics Vallée'.

In 1953, Établissements Grand-Clément started to make toy cars, initially under the name 'G.C.O.' (standing for Grand-Clément Oyonnax) and, soon after, Minialuxe. In the same year, 100 km to the south-west, in the city of Lyon, Joseph Veron had the same idea and launched his own range of cars using his trademark Norev, created by reversing the letters of his surname. Both firms made their cars from a plastic material called rhodialite and it was inevitable that the two ranges would overlap. Like Dinky, CIJ and other French toy car makers, Norev and Minialuxe, initially at least, concentrated mainly on French vehicles and, as a result, many of the same Citroën, Renault, Peugeot, Panhard and Simca cars appeared in both ranges. Of the first ten



2

2 Another of the 1/32 series is this Simca Vedette Beaulieu. Features such as the 'Beaulieu' lettering stamped in gold, and the opening boot, were advanced for toy cars at the time.

3 The futuristic shape of the Citroën DS 19 was well-captured by Minialuxe in both 1/43 and 1/32 scales. This is the bigger version. The roof and window glazing forms a separate component.

4 A later Citroën DS 21, in 1/32 with 'Presse' stickers.



3



4

▼ Compared to the rival Norev firm, Minialuxe placed more emphasis on accessories, such as this garage ramp. Again, the period artwork on the box is outstanding. The car is a Renault Dauphine.



Minialuxe cars, in roughly 1/43 scale, introduced between 1953 and 1956, eight were also modelled by Norev (the eight being the Citroën Traction Avant, Citroën DS 19, Ford Vedette, Peugeot 403, Renault Frégate, Renault Dauphine, Simca Aronde and Simca Versailles). Again, both makers felt that friction mechanisms were a good selling point and, being lighter, plastic cars were better suited to these than heavier diecasts.

Though collectors today prize the early, fragile Minialuxes for their simplicity and charm, it must be admitted that the Norevs were more accurate replicas. But that might not have been so important to children in the mid-1950s and the Minialuxes stood out from Norevs in a number of respects. For example, some lesser-known French cars, overlooked by Norev or Dinky, found their way into the Minialuxe line-up. Norev chose the Peugeot 203 saloon, but Minialuxe made the more unusual 'Utilitaire' station wagon. Above all, Minialuxe was the only toy manufacturer at the time to model the Hotchkiss Grégoire, an advanced design dating from 1950, which in real life sold a mere 248 examples. The real car bristled with innovative features, such as the extensive use of aluminium, but it was not particularly elegant in appearance. The famous automotive artist, Alexis Kow, elongated the car in his flattering brochure illustrations and it looks as if Minialuxe based its model on these drawings rather than on the real thing.

Right from the start, Minialuxe recognised the importance of accessories. Publicity material from as early as 1956 lists a comprehensive selection including a garage ramp, a plinth with two petrol pumps and a paper 'BP' or 'Super' sign, a single petrol pump stand with attendant, a figure of a policeman directing traffic, standing in a box that in French is known as a 'mirador', and a clock ('horloge') of a type seen outside railway stations. Garages were available too, either in the form of individual lock-ups, that could clip together, or larger service stations. There were also various battery-powered lamps and traffic lights, of necessity much bigger than the vehicles in order to find space for the batteries. Together with cardboard advertising hoardings and sets of road signs, Minialuxe offered enough to bring a miniature French street scene to life. The lighting-up accessories didn't last long, but some petrol pumps and figures remained in the Minialuxe catalogue in the late 1960s, albeit mounted on backing cards rather than coming in attractively illustrated boxes. (A fuller study of these accessories appeared in the January 2021 issue.)

In addition to offering accessories, Minialuxe diversified further in 1956 with a parallel range of cars in 1/32 scale. The first two were a Citroën DS 19 and a Simca Versailles, joined by a Peugeot 403 in July and a Renault Dauphine in September. Being to a large scale, these offered a number of features that were advanced for the period – plated parts, window glazing and (with the exception of the Citroën) an opening boot. On the rear-engined Dauphine, the 'boot' was of course at the front and this model had another novel feature, a drop-down tray underneath containing a spare wheel. Though

SPOTLIGHT ON: MINIALUXE



▲ As explained in the text, there is a good reason why this Austin van is marked with the name 'Lawrence White'. Photo: Vectis

◀ Minialuxe's series of veteran and vintage cars appealed to adult collectors, though such models are not so popular today. Photo: Vectis

known to the press since the end of 1955, the real Dauphine was not officially launched to the public until 1956, so Minialuxe was certainly quick off the mark and must clearly have co-operated with Renault behind the scenes. It was not for nothing that the toymaker put the words 'autorisation du constructeur' on the baseplate or box. In 1/32 scale, there were also models of the ubiquitous Citroën 'H' van and the Renault 1000kg van, both with fragile opening rear doors. This move into a larger scale was not followed by the rival Norev firm which instead chose to develop in the opposite direction by launching smaller HO scale 'Micro-Norevs' in 1957.

The next landmark in the Minialuxe story occurred, in 1964, with the launch of a series of veteran cars called 'Les Tacots' (literally 'Old Cocks'), a response to the success of Matchbox Models of Yesteryear that had in-turn influenced the development of French ranges like RAMI and Solido's 'Age d'Or'. 'Les Tacots' seem to have been exported more widely than other Minialuxe products and they certainly marked an advance in detailing, incorporating many small plated components. While there are some familiar Model T Fords, the majority of subjects – 1912 De Dion Bouton, 1912 Clement Bayard, 1908 Lanchester, 1902 Jamieson 7CV and many others – were commendably original. The series eventually ran to thirty-four different models, with another four in 1/86 scale. An interesting point about the 1911 Austin delivery van is that it carried the words 'Lawrence White and Co. Ltd. London' on the side. The reason for this was that the family member in charge of Minialuxe at this time, Édouard Blanc, had a daughter called Laurence and 'blanc', of course, is the French word for 'white'. As we shall see, Laurence herself would later play a key role in the Minialuxe story.

The improved quality of Minialuxe models, demonstrated by the 'Tacots', was carried over into the range of contemporary vehicles produced in the later 1960s and early seventies. These were fitted

► Laurence Blanc-Tarpin-Lyonnet, daughter of former Minialuxe boss Édouard Blanc, was instrumental in the revival of the Minialuxe name in 2012.



▲ The Ford Consul Classic is one of the few British cars modelled by Minialuxe. The roof rack is a nice touch but, like many plastic models, this one has suffered from 'melting' wheels and the front has started to curve upwards. Photo: Vectis



▲ 1950s petrol pump set in original box. A small stock of these turned up in a few years ago and they can still be found online, albeit in replica boxes.



with chrome wheels, 'Minia-stable' suspension, interiors and sometimes opening bonnets or boots, though these do create a problem as the separate parts tend to warp or weld together. Most of the popular French family cars of the era were modelled, though once again these were generally available as Norevs too, one notable exception being the Matra Djet. Other countries were represented as well, with a Porsche 911, Ford Taunus and Volkswagen K70 from Germany, a Volvo 144 from Sweden, Fiat 124 and Fiat-Siata coupe from Italy and – of particular interest to British collectors – two Jaguar E Types and two Fords – the Anglia and Classic. Minialuxe often produced variants on the same model and versions with a roof rack, a Driving School sign or in taxi livery are particularly sought-after. Even harder to find are various combinations of models in sets. In some cases these take the form of a car with a trailer, the 'Sécurité Routière' sets with a police vehicle and motorcycles, or a car with cyclists



▲ Paris buses were another Minialuxe speciality. The special box showing famous Paris landmarks made this a popular item in souvenir shops.



▲ The later Berliet bus was a very accurate replica and is notable for being in 1/43 scale.



▲ Sets with accessories carry a premium on the collecting market. This BMW with boat is one of several 'Week-end' sets.



▲ Packaging of this Citroën Traction Avant Police car draws inspiration from the famous 'Maigret' detective stories. Paris Police headquarters were situated in the Quai des Orfèvres.

reflecting the French passion for the 'Tour de France' cycle race. Strangest of all is the 'les Gitans' (gypsies) set consisting of a horse-drawn caravan and figures. There are also much more elaborate dioramas variously entitled 'Parking Luxe', 'Place de la Gare', 'Grande Circulation' or 'Sur l'Autoroute', which take the form of a plinth printed with road markings to which at least six vehicles, and often some accessories, are attached. These all date from the early seventies, but several examples of extremely rare gifts sets from the early 1950s have surfaced at auction.

Another Minialuxe speciality was Paris buses, and one of its longest running models was the Somua Paris bus – similar to the French Dinky, but in 1/43 scale. It had opening side doors and came with a variety of paper stickers indicating different routes. This must have been a big seller on the souvenir market and I can clearly remember visiting Paris for the first time, as a child in 1965, when my younger brother acquired one of these buses in a tourist shop



▲ By 1969 Minialuxe was already contemplating a move into diecast with this Berliet Stradair.



▲ Use of Swarovski crystals as jewelled headlights, as on this Panhard, is another marketing technique used by Minialuxe.



5 By the early 1970s the quality of Minialuxe plastic models was on a par with diecasts of the era. The Jaguar E Type was also produced as an open sports.

6 Minialuxe marketing was sophisticated in the 1950s. This Renault Dauphine is one of many promotional models produced for the 'Tintin' comic.

in the Rue de Rivoli. Sadly, at that time a plastic bus was viewed as nothing more than a toy for a young child – I was far more interested in getting some French Dinky Toys! There are at least three different box styles – one with evocative 1950s artwork, another for souvenir shops with drawings of Parisian landmarks like the Eiffel Tower and Arc de Triomphe, and a later issue on a plinth with perspex top.

In 1964, the RATP (Régie Autonome des Transports Parisiens) embarked on a process of modernisation and ordered 600 new buses, 300 from Saviem and 300 from Berliet, the first of which was delivered in 1964. So successful were these that 1,650 similar types were in service by 1970. No surprise, then, that in due course the Minialuxe Somua was joined by a 'nouvel autobus Parisien', based on a Berliet and again similar to the French Dinky. The Minialuxe came not only in Paris livery but in the colours of other French cities such as red and white as used in Lyon.

By 1969 Minialuxe had reached a crossroads. With so many high-quality European diecasts to compete with – not to mention the seismic effect of Hot Wheels on world toy car markets – the appeal of plastic cars was diminishing, while the rise in the cost of raw materials resulting from the oil crisis of 1973 severely dented the company's products. Affected by the same factors, Norev took the plunge and launched a diecast 'Jet-car' range in 1971. Minialuxe had already considered a similar move and in 1969 had tentatively introduced a hybrid model of a Berliet Stradair tanker with a diecast tractor unit pulling a plastic tanker body but the company did not pursue this further. In the mid-seventies only a few more new plastic cars – the Renault 5 and 30, the Peugeot 604, Citroën SM and CX2000 – would appear before the Minialuxe factory closed in 1978. French collector, Didier Beaujardin, who has researched the history of Minialuxe in conjunction with surviving family members, states that Édouard Blanc never got over the loss and he died at a relatively young age in 1996.

MINIALUXE REBORN

Little was heard of Minialuxe over the ensuing

SPOTLIGHT ON: MINIALUXE



decades, though one important legacy of the brand to the model car industry was the work of skilled mould-maker Louis Surber who started his own firm, Eligor, anticipating the change in the market from the production of toys for children to the creation of models for adult collectors. With the passage of time, enthusiasts of another generation reached the stage of becoming nostalgic about the toys of their childhood and a successful businessman called Marc Faujanet retained such powerful memories of playing with Minialuxe cars as a boy that he investigated the possibility of reviving the brand. In 2010, he contacted the daughter of Monsieur Blanc, whose married name is Laurence Blanc-Tarpin-Lyonnet, to seek her permission to reuse the trademark. Monsieur Faujanet made it clear that his intention was not to follow the Atlas Dinky approach and make copies of toys of the past, but to create an entirely new range. Even though quite a few of the subjects are the same as earlier Minialuxes, the new models are not reissues, copies or recreations of the originals and they're made of diecast metal not plastic.

With one or two exceptions, Minialuxe has played safe by choosing old favourites like the Citroën DS 19, Citroën 2CV, Simca 1000, Volkswagen, Simca Aronde, Austin Mini, Renault 5, Peugeot 203 and 404 estate, the Citroën 2CV and H vans, and Peugeot D4 and J7 vans. Initially, these were produced in different levels of finish, from the basic 'Classic' series, without windows or interior, to the 'Luxe', with glazing, seats and steering wheels – which suits some of the later 1960s and early 1970s cars better, as these wouldn't look right in a stripped-back 1950s style. The proliferation of liveries such as Police, Gendarmerie, taxi, fire, postes and DDE (Service Autoroutes) allowed the range to

grow quickly and many models were also sold in sets – cars towing a caravan, limousines and emergency vehicles with motorcycle escorts, and so on. As a result, within four years, so many variants had been issued that the 2016 catalogue ran to 164 pages. Construction methods hark back to an earlier era – the cars are fitted with spun wheel hubs, jewelled lights and riveted baseplates and a nice detailed touch is that the word 'Minialuxe' is moulded into the wall of the tyres.

Throughout, the aim has been to pitch the new range upmarket with numerous limited issues that tap into niche interests. For example, the prestigious annual Paris Rétromobile classic car show was chosen to launch the revived Minialuxe name and, for several years, Minialuxe had a prominent stand at the event and special issues of various models were produced with the Rétromobile logo. Also very popular in France are the illustrated comic books for adults (known as 'les bandes dessinées') and there are

▲ The new Minialuxe range was promoted at the prestigious Paris Rétromobile classic car show.



▲ Many versions of the ever-popular Citroën DS feature in the new diecast range.



▲ New series comes in various trim levels. This Citroën 2CV, without interior or glazing, recalls the style of 1960s Dinky Toys.



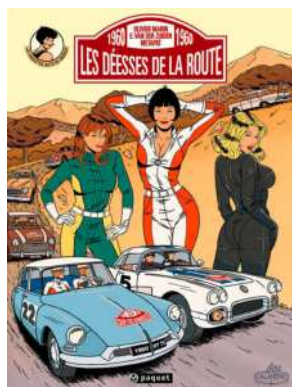
▲ One of the non-French subjects modelled by Minialuxe is a Morris Mini, produced as a limited edition of 500 in this finish.



▲ Volkswagen Beetles and the T1 van, pick-up and minibus have also been modelled.



▲ Minialuxe really went to town on the packaging, with models being supplied in inner and outer boxes, plus protective cloth bags.



▲ Another clever marketing approach is to tie-in models with adult cartoon books which are popular in France, such as this story by Olivier Marin entitled 'Les DéesSES de la Route'.



▲ For the collector who has everything! This artwork containing a large number of Minialuxe Volkswagens in Swiss Postal livery was created by an artist called Alben and used to promote the Minialuxe range.



▲ Recent diecast Minialuxe Citroën 2CV.



▲ Minialuxe has fully exploited the gift set theme, as in this 'Cortège Gendarmerie' set with motorcycle escorts.

several artists who specialise in producing books of this kind on automotive themes – an ideal subject for promotional models. The picture story by Oliver Marin entitled 'Les DéesSES de la Route', about rival female rally drivers, plays on the connotations of the word 'déesse' which means 'goddess' but also represents the way the name of the 'DS' Citroën is pronounced in French. Cue for Minialuxe to produce a special model in a box illustrated by the artist.

The boxes, in fact, are probably the most distinctive thing about the new Minialuxes. Each car comes in a traditional illustrated cardboard box, whose design has a sixties look to it yet manages to avoid being a mere pastiche of earlier box styles. But that's only the first layer of packaging. The box comes inside an outer box which also contains a cloth bag to protect the model. Each colour variation is a limited quantity and the models are all individually numbered.

A further touch of class is given by a link-up with Swarovski, makers of glass, crystal and jewellery, and Swarovski crystals are used by Minialuxe as jewelled headlights. There has even been an attempt to develop the idea of the model car as an art form, with the production of large-scale sculptures in solid resin of the Citroën DS and SM. Another curiosity used for promoting the brand was a statue in the form of the Venus di Milo, the famous ancient Greek of the goddess Aphrodite. Created by a Bordeaux artist, who goes by the name of Alben, this is a transparent outer shell filled with Minialuxe Volkswagens. What does it stand for? Well, according to Minialuxe, the artwork is "inspired by Surrealism and the new Realism" and "the creative approach of Alben is to express a universal thought in a manner which invites each observer to embark upon a



▲ The accompanying Minialuxe model with artwork from the story. Note the sign pointing to 'Oyonnax', a nod towards the original Minialuxe plastic range which was manufactured in that town.

personal cognitive process." So now you know!

Launching a new diecast brand entirely from scratch in today's collecting market is certainly no easy task. Inevitably, Minialuxe models came with a high price tag of 80 to 100 Euros, making them more expensive than, say, the Dinky-based offerings from Atlas and Dan Toys and this was no doubt a consideration for many collectors. After about five years of expansion, new releases dried up after 2018, one of the last – and largest – being a Berliet Stradair similar to the original diecast Minialuxe of 1969. Most of the existing production is still on sale via the website www.minialuxe.fr. Monsieur Faujanet must have sunk a great deal of money into the venture and his commitment to preserving the Minialuxe name must be commended. **DC**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS!

Some of the historical information in this article comes from the book 'Minialuxe: La Saga d'Une Grande Marque Française' by Didier Beaujardin (2013).



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Alexandr Bistriy

Dmitriy Lisin and Richard Young once again collaborate to turn the spotlight on another prolific Eastern European model maker.

Russian model expert Dmitriy Lisin and Richard Young, in the UK, have once again worked together in order to introduce *Diecast Collector* readers to another of the many excellent Eastern European model makers, whose products are almost never seen in the UK.

Mostly working in their workshops at home, they produce some amazing models, usually in small quantities. This series includes model makers from Hungary, Russia, Bulgaria, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Armenia, Belarus and Romania, demonstrating that model making transcends political ideologies and national borders. In this article we feature a Ukrainian model maker, Alexandr Bistriy, and his model company – Koleso Studio, in Kiev.

It is rather a strange fact that, of all the model makers in the former Soviet Union countries, practically 80% of model experts and workshops are located in Ukraine or have Ukrainian roots. The reason for this phenomenon has not been satisfactorily explained, but, without a doubt, an entire series of articles could be written solely about Ukrainian model makers.

However, we are dealing with just one of those, Alexandr Bistriy. Even as a young lad, Alexandr was dissatisfied with the models he could obtain in Kiev and overcame this by cutting, shaping and modifying his few model cars, what we call Code 3 models in Western Europe. Over time, becoming a certified engineer, he expanded his interest into creating interesting models of cars from scratch, which he made now not only for himself, but also for his friends and acquaintances. Such was the demand for his models that he decided to start a workshop to produce his models in greater numbers and to make it a paying business. However, he realised that he did not have the capacity to carry out all the necessary aspects of the business, such as packaging, distribution, etc.,



Top Alexandr Bistriy (the name Bistriy means 'fast').

▲ The model of the Moskvitch 416 (above) looks remarkably like the real vehicle (below) demonstrating the accuracy of Alexandr's workmanship.



so he established a consortium of colleagues to help him. And thus, in 2011, a new manufacturer of car models was created under the name Koleso, which means Wheel.

FIRST KOLESO MODEL

Alexandr's first foray into the market was with a model of the Moskvitch 416. This was a prototype USSR four-wheel-drive car produced at MSM (Moscow Small Car factory) in the mid-fifties, which never went into full production due to technical and financial problems. However, it appeared that there was demand for a model of this vehicle and it was expected that one of the larger model companies would get it manufactured in China. But Alexandr beat them to it and produced a good quality model in resin, exceptionally good for the company's first product made from scratch, which received considerable acclaim and quickly sold out.

His success was assured when publicity about

MODEL MAKERS OF EASTERN EUROPE

▼ The first Russo-Balt car modelled by Alexandr was this Type C24-40, shown in the black and white photo below left with drivers A.Nagel and V.Platonov during the 1912 Monaco Rally. You will see from these models that vehicles were right hand drive at that time in Russia, the same as us. In fact many cars in Russia are still RHD, especially east of the Ural Mountains, where cheap Japanese imports are RHD, although the government are trying to discourage RHD vehicles by introducing severe charges and penalties.



his Moskvitch 416 model resulted in him being inundated with requests. This enabled him to ramp up his model range and quantity. He concentrated on USSR vehicles which had not been modelled before and, like most East European specialists, the Koleso brand concentrated on 1/43 scale models. In 2015, Koleso Studio decided to make a 1/43 scale model of a Russo-Balt car for the first time.

RUSSIAN-BALTIC CAR DEPARTMENT

For those of you who are not familiar with the Russo-Balt name, it began life in 1869 as the Russian Baltique Wagon Plant in Riga, Latvia, mainly producing agricultural wagons and equipment. By 1874, it was one of the largest engineering companies in the Russian Empire, covering 20 hectares and employing 4000 people, and its range of products expanded to include buses and trams, trucks, fire engines and military vehicles. In 1908, a car department was opened, the first new car being the Russo-Balt C24 which was developed in several body and engine variations. The car department thrived and production increased, with new types being introduced, the Limousine, Landulet, Phaeton and 'Torpedo' versions of the C24 car were very popular.



▲ The second Koleso model in the Russo-Balt series was this C24-30 Military Ambulance, looking very basic but was fairly normal by 1914 standards.



▲ M24-40 Military Truck, issued in 2016, strangely fitted with light grey tyres.

► Two versions of the Russo-Balt M24-35 Buses in 2-window and 3-window formats. Note the blinds and curtains.

The Russo-Balt factory continued its success and increased production until the outbreak of World War 1, which halted its development plans and caused a shortage of materials. In the autumn of 1915, the car department was evacuated out of Riga to Tver, a city 180 km north west of Moscow.

In 1916, the Russo-Balt company changed owners and was moved to the Phili suburb of Moscow. The new factory began production in mid 1917 under the imaginative name 'Russo-Balt Second Car Plant'.

Having established the new plant in Moscow,





the next situation to arise was the Russian Revolution of 1917, a complicated revolution with many factions in which the Bolshevik Red Army eventually beat the Imperial White Army in 1923. It can be imagined that, with the disruption and up to 12 million (mainly civilian) casualties, the market for private cars was seriously hit.

In 1918, after the Bolsheviks had taken control of most of western and central Russia, the plant was nationalised and by a resolution of the Council of People's Commissioners was renamed the State Armoured Plant No.1. This, as its name implies, was solely concerned with the production of armoured vehicles for the Red Army, which ended the company's 10-year career of making civilian cars.

RUSO-BALT MODELS

For his first model of a Russo-Balt car, Alexandr decided upon the Type C24-40, an open 2-seater that competed in the Monaco Rally in 1912. The model sold sufficiently well to encourage him to continue with a series of Russo-Balt vehicles.

For his next model in the Russo-Balt series, Alexandr opted for a Military Ambulance from

1 Being up to the axles in mud was a common occurrence on the 7,000 mile trek.

2 The only way through some obstacles was on a railway track.



▲ The courageous Captain Golovachev.

1914. Based on a C24-30 chassis, so popular was this model that it sold out very quickly and he had to re-issue it due to the high demand.

Following his success with the Military Ambulance, Alexandr continued with the military theme for his next model, which was two versions of the Type M24-40 truck with oval radiator. One version was a general purpose military truck with tilt, while the other one featured a rather odd open truck with central storage area and enclosed rear storage locker.

In 2017 Koleso set its sights on the Russo-Balt M-series chassis with two versions of M24-35 buses. Although these models had been made before by other model makers, the detail on those was poor and Alexandr wanted to maintain the high standard of accuracy achieved with his previous models and also to show people how it should be done. To help achieve this, each 1/43 scale bus has 65 photo-etched details.

For his next Russo-Balt model, in 2018, Alexandr chose the Type C24-40 'Torpedo' bodied open tourer, which made an amazing trial run from Vladivostok in the East to St Petersburg in the West. This unimaginably hard journey



▲ The sturdy C24-40 which completed the 7,000 mile Vladivostok-to- St Petersburg trial run in 1914. Notice the protection guard at the front.



▲ Modelled here is the Russo-Balt Type C-14 which undertook the 2,500 mile San Sebastian-to-Moscow Rally in 1912. Note the fine detail, for example on the spare wheel strap buckles, and other equipment - all hand-made.

MODEL MAKERS OF EASTERN EUROPE



▲ Part of Alexandr's 'production line' of models.

was undertaken by Staff Captain Golovachev of the Imperial Russian Army. As the crow flies the distance between the two cities is over 4000 miles and by road today it is some 6000 miles. However, in 1914 there were no roads, just mud tracks and countryside, so that journey, having to go around all sorts of geographical obstacles, was probably closer to 7000 miles. Sometimes the only way through rough country or mountains was a railway, driving along the track, which must have been highly uncomfortable as well as extremely hazardous.

Continuing the theme of motor competitions, Koleso Studio decided to recreate the legendary Russo-Balt Type C, Chassis No.14, car that took part in the 2,500-mile 1912 San Sebastian-to-Moscow Rally. It is not known how well this car fared in the rally, but the model itself is said to be an excellent representation of it, flags and all. A similar car for the St Petersburg-to-Sebastapol Rally was also modelled.

Next came two models on Russo-Balt Type C chassis, which took part in the St Petersburg-Berlin-St Gotthard-Rome-Naples-Berlin-St Petersburg Rally with a crew of five men. The captain of the

crew heading to Rome and Naples was outstanding Russian racing driver, scientist, journalist and public figure, Andrei Platonovich Nagel.

In 2019, Koleso modelled a rather odd vehicle. Probably the first security vehicle in Russia, Russo-Balt Type D No.394-13 was fitted with a Bank Collection body. Complete with large safe installed in the rear compartment, this vehicle did what its name suggests – collected and delivered cash to banks around Moscow. Consisting of some 104 parts, the Koleso model is said to be one of the most faithful reproductions of a Russian car from that era.

Although that is the last Russo-Balt model which Koleso has issued to date, there are already plans for more. In its relatively short existence, the Russo-Balt company produced scores of different types of cars, trucks, buses, fire engines and others, so Alexandr Bistriy has plenty to choose from. **DC**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS!

Dmitriy Lisin offers thanks to Alexandr Bistriy for his permission to use his photographs and to Richard Young for his effort in introducing the Koleso Studio products to *Diecast Collector* readers.



▲ Looking well-equipped for the lengthy St Petersburg-Berlin-Saint Gotthard-Rome-Naples-Berlin-St Petersburg Rally, this model shows the sort of detail that the Koleso Studio is well known for.



▲ One of Alexandr's 'production line' models (see left), this is a Russo-Balt Type C 24-40 as owned by Czar Nicholas II with luxurious interior, shown on its plinth with the box behind it, ready for packing. This resin model has grey tyres which Alexandr moulds himself. Interestingly the headlights are moulded from clear plastic with the casing painted, leaving the lens clear, which sounds like an effective method.



▲ Not looking quite like the security vehicles of today, this Type D Bank Collection car was in the forefront of cash transportation in pre-World War I Russia.

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Superfast 1969-1982

Rick Wilson charts the evolution of the Matchbox Superfast range during the Lesney years, from 1969 to 1982.



Number 23 in Lesney's Matchbox Superfast line-up features one of my absolute favourites from childhood – VW Camper (as evidenced by the photo on the opposite page). This ran for several years and was replaced by a fantasy/futuristic tipper truck. At the time, I was not so drawn to this, but in recent times, it has become much more appealing and I have several now – although there is one variant that I'm still after.

VOLKSWAGEN CAMPER

Catalogue: 1970-75

Box Styles: G

This was the third VW Camper to appear in the Matchbox range, but this was based on the more modern Type 2 version. A great casting, it was

▲ **VW Camper and Atlas Truck in their respective first-look forms – atop their relevant initial release boxes.**

instantly recognisable and its main feature was an opening roof hatch that revealed a nicely-appointed interior, with table, seats, sink and cooker.

Initially, it came painted in an attractive mid/sky-blue with an orangey-yellow interior and an orange pop-up roof. The earliest versions had the outline of a petrol filler flap cast in (and these fetch serious money in mint condition now), although this was later removed. One of the reasons why this might have happened was made obvious a short period after this, during 1971, as the model was soon adorned with a sailboat motif sticker on both rear flanks – clearly the raised filler flap outline would have prevented the sticker from adhering properly on the one side.

Later in the production run, during 1972, the colour was changed to an orange body with a

No.
23



▲ Back row: US Pizza Van release and later (1977) version of Atlas Truck with its 'K'-style box. Middle row: early (no sticker) VW camper with its roof up, very first casting version with fuel filler flap cast in and original release of Atlas with chevron labels reversed. Front row: VW camper with sailboat labels in orange and blue, military Two Packs release with pop-up roof removed and red cross labels, and final Lesney version of Atlas Truck with red cab and silver chassis.



▲ Close up on the very first VW Camper casting, with fuel filler flap – in playworn condition and a stripped version for clarity, with its nicely-appointed interior moulding.



▲ Me, aged 6 in 1970, proudly showing off the No 23 VW Camper that I had just bought with that week's pocket money.

white interior. The roof flap was still orange, and most examples had small sailboat labels stuck on the rear flanks, as per the later releases in blue. A few orange-painted examples were issued with orangey-yellow interiors during the crossover and, although this doesn't look so good, it is quite sought after due to the rarity, of course. The VW Camper was an extremely popular model with kids, and remains desirable with collectors today, especially among Volkswagen enthusiast collectors. This is reflected in the values, of course, and the same can be said of any good condition boxes.

The Camper remained in the range for six catalogues, and was replaced in 1975. Interestingly, it kept the same box style throughout. However, that wasn't quite the end because in 1977 the casting was revived as a military ambulance as part of the

Two Packs range. It was now in olive drab, with the opening roof deleted, and no interior. It was adorned by three large 'red cross' labels – one on each side and another on the roof. Another highly sought after version is the 1980 US release as a pizza delivery van – again with a closed body and no interior.

ATLAS (LATER ATLAS TRUCK)

Catalogue: 1976-82

Box Styles: J, K

Another futuristic truck introduced this year was the tipper known simply as 'Atlas'. Atlas was an ultra-modern design, with a large front overhang, wrap-around windscreen, and a large glassed area behind the cab that revealed the engine. The cab and chassis were dark metallic blue, the base was usually painted silver-grey, and the working dumper/tipper section was in light orange. Early examples had chrome interiors, amber windows and paper labels with red and yellow chevrons on the dumper sides – occasionally, these would leave the factory with the stickers reversed, with the chevrons pointing backwards.

In 1977, coinciding with a new box style, and now called 'Atlas Truck', the stickers disappeared altogether, and both of these points were reflected on the new box artwork. At the same time, the 'glass' was now clear and the interior was moulded in white.

In 1981, the colour scheme was changed to red body and silver tipper, with light grey interior and clear windows. There was, as usual, some crossover as components were used up and the last few blue-cabbed versions had the silver rear body, so these can occasionally be found, but will be priced accordingly. This is the version I'm still searching for. They are available – there are two on ebay right now, but the price is too high for me.

The Atlas cab style was also used on No 37 Skip Truck, released the following year, in 1976. More about that in 14 instalments' time, of course. **DC**



Opel Diplomat V8 Coupé

David Lynn reminisces about one of his old European favourites.

When I was a car-mad young nipper, I was often fascinated by stuff that was never sold in Britain, so absent from the pages of my father's copies of Autocar or Motor. However, my much-thumbed Observer's Books of Automobiles gave intriguing glimpses of these alien riches, so when British toy makers sometimes released something off their usual path, I'd be hooked. One example was Matchbox's No 36c Opel Diplomat saloon, released in 1966 in a metallic yellow-gold with an opening bonnet and a detailed engine, which I now realise depicted a V8. I think I had three of them, including one with the later Superfast upgrade, and they sat nicely together with my No 53c Zodiac Mk4 with a similarly opening bonnet.

Zooming forward a few decades, model makers still sometimes surprise me with versions of things I never knew existed, such as the Minichamps release of a Diplomat V8 Coupé a few years back. This hit my

▲ Four of the five Diplomat Coupés released, with a Kapitän 4-door in the background for comparison.



▲ Two by Ixo for Altaya's Opel Collection partworks - the silver version as part of its 'Designer Serie' release.

nostalgia button and, more recently, a couple of Ixo/Altaya Opel partworks examples arrived, so I now have a quartet of these glamorous models to describe.

Known collectively as the KAD range, the 1964 Diplomat saloon sat at the top of a three-runged ladder, with lesser Kapitän and Admiral versions, just Ford UK's Consul/Zephyr/Zodiac hierarchy, although Opel's naming imposed a very patriarchal context for potential buyers. Amongst the Diplomat's extra fittings over its brethren, with their 2.6 and 2.8 sixes, was a Chevrolet-sourced 283 V8 283 (4.6-litre), later upgraded to a 327 (5.4-litre).

German manufacturers in the 1960s regarded a coupé as an essential addition to their normal ranges, so a Diplomat Coupé followed, although without Kapitän and Admiral equivalents. Its launch at the 1965 Frankfurt motor show was accompanied by a roofless silver Cabriolet, but this remained a svelte one-off with no further examples built. Visually, the Coupé was simply a 2-door shortened saloon minus

a solid B-pillar, although strong influences from parent company GM's exotic 1963 Buick Riviera are clearly apparent. The underlying differences were more significant, and it was handbuilt by coachbuilder Karmann, at its Osnabrück works, and was advertised as having a full Corvette-spec version of the 327 V8, along with a 2-speed GM Powerglide transmission. In practice, the spec was more extreme, as development testing at a sustained 200 km/h (125 mph) on German autobahns caused repeated engine failures, so they were quietly upgraded to Detroit's more robust "endurance racing" spec, although without affecting the nominal 230bhp rating.

All this manual assembly was reflected in a very high price, and only 347 were made until production ended in 1967. The KAD saloons continued until 1969, when a new [B] range was introduced with more modern styling derived from stablemate Holden's Kingswood, but there was no accompanying coupé. There are several models of the KAD and [B] saloons available, again from Minichamps and IXO/Altaya partworks, with a dark blue Minichamps Kapitän [B] illustrated here for interest. The five available Coupé diecasts are listed in the table, shown above right.

Minichamps included the optional vinyl roof to give a subtler appearance than the single colour Ixos, and its shiny detailing is more precise, with neater wheel covers and wipers. However, both ranges would benefit from a better grille treatment to give some depth, and the blank Minichamps chrome number plates are irritating. They all have dark interiors, which camouflage some fairly intricate inclusions for the wood trim panels, dashboard and controls, with Minichamps again showing slightly greater precision if you peer hard enough. Oddly, Minichamps have the retracted radio aerial on the LHD driver's side rear wing but Ixo show it on the opposite front wing.

The mid-blue metallic livery was an exclusive for the German ModelCarWorld retailer and is my favourite, although the most elusive now. The silver Ixo comes from its second Opel Collection series, with all releases given the same colour and matched to a particular Opel designer. In this case it is credited to Chuck Jordan who was one of GM's leading designers in Detroit for 40 years, including a

	Colour	Edition size	Comment
Minichamps			
400048020.	Silver, black roof	2016	(Not illustrated)
400048021	Royal blau (dark blue), black roof	1008	-
403048023	Metallic mid-blue, black roof	1008	Exclusive edition for ModelCarWorld
Ixo Altaya			
[none]	Gloss mid-blue	Not stated	Opel Collection partwork
[none]	Silver	Not stated	Opel Collection – Designer Serie partwork



▲ The Minichamps version for ModelCarWorld is the author's favourite.



▲ It's easy to see why, with some great attention to detail and that sumptuous paint job.

▼ Comparing the Ixo (left) and Minichamps (right) versions nose to nose.



▲ Both by Minichamps, but the mid-blue metallic was an exclusive release through ModelCarWorld.

stint with Opel from 1967-70. This raises a quizzical eyebrow as Coupé production was ending when he arrived, so it is unclear what his contribution could have been.

Ultimately the Minichamps is marginally the better model and easily found online at reasonable prices in the silver (not shown) and dark blue choices. Ixo's pair lag slightly behind, but are cheaper. In real terms, personal preference for whichever colour scheme is as good a selection criterion as any.

Some 1/43 scale resincasts were discovered online from the obscure Swiss-Mini brand, including a possibly unique depiction of the silver Cabriolet shown at Frankfurt in 1965 and coupés in champagne gold and mid-blue metallics, both without vinyl roofs but bearing Swiss plates from Berne. These seem to be limited editions of 500 each from several years ago and, in the handful of pictures I could find, they seem reasonably detailed – although the large windcreens look strange without wipers and the cabriolet lacks any quarterlights. **DC**





▼ Dinky Toys Brinks Armoured Car (No 275) first issue, with bullion boxes, and the later issue with blue 'bull' bars and chassis.

Brinks Armoured Car

DTCA Chairman, Michael Driver, picks another vintage favourite by Dinky.

When I was young, cash was king and the credit card had not arrived. On birthdays and at Christmas, getting cash as a present was a bonus. This added to your saved up pocket money, meaning you could buy another Dinky Toys model. If you did not have enough money to buy a particular model, you could use the Dinky Toys saving account at the toy shop!

Special vehicles, then as now, delivered cash to banks and, with this in mind, Dinky Toys introduced the Brinks Armoured Car (No 275) in December 1964. In the *Meccano Magazine* review of that month, it says "I must move on to the very last Dinky Toy due to appear in 1964 – the Brink's Armoured Car (No 275). Brink's are a private security company who do the same sort of job in America that a firm such as Securicor do in Britain."

The model has the Brink's name, logo and "Security since 1859" transfers on the sides. The body is in light grey and the chassis is dark blue, as is the front bumper crash bar. The wheels are in white plastic. The plastic doors have adjustable wing mirrors and the rear doors are in white plastic with all the doors opening. The windscreen and windows are tinted. There is a driver and a guard and, in the rear, are two plastic packing cases marked with "U.S. Treasury" labels.

These were sold in illustrated card end flap boxes and Visi-Pacs before deletion in 1970. The model was also used in a promotion for Brink's and this was packed in a special beige card lift off lid box.

The model reappeared in 1979 for the American market as a Brinks Truck, in a darker grey with a white roof and grey plastic doors. The chassis and front 'bull' bar are in blue and the wheels are metal. The stickers



▲ *Meccano Magazine* December 1964 advert, part image.



▲ Dinky Toys Brinks Armoured Car (No 275) factory promotional for Mexico (Luis R Picaso Manriquez).

FURTHER INFO

The more unusual or less common Dinky Toys models were always part of the series and sometimes feature in the DTCA Journal with photographs. You can find out more or join by visiting the website www.dtcawebsite.com.

have "Brink's" in white, outlined in red, and also now state it is "a subsidiary of Pittston". On the doors are shields in blue with the letter B in white. The hanging window box also has a form on the base to join The Dinky Club of America by sending \$1.00. This model was deleted in 1980.

A factory promotional model was made for a Mexican company in 1976 under the name of 'Luis R Picaso Manriquez'. This model is a darker grey with a black chassis and 'bull' bars. The doors are also in grey as are the plastic wheels and the company shield logo transfers are on each side of the body. It came without the driver and guard or the plastic bullion crates and was in a plain white card end flap box.

According to the *Meccano Magazine*, the real Brink's Armoured Car was made by General Motors and the Dinky Toys model is a copy of this vehicle. I suggest that a model of a Securicor bullion van would have been perhaps appropriate, but I suppose exports were more important at the time. **DC**

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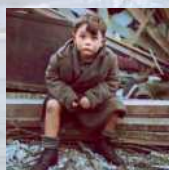
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AUCTION NEWS

VECTIS FARMS OUT THE HECTOR HAMER COLLECTION



THE specialist sale held at Vectis Auctions in Thornaby on 12th April featured an impressive collection of farming-related models.

Born in April 1930 in Farnham, Surrey, Hector was brought up on a farm and always loved the countryside. As a child, he was fascinated by tractors and his first toy was a Fordson Standard. For over five decades, Hector found himself unearthing special models and his tractor collection grew exponentially and eclectically, from construction to military, tin plate to modern plastic, European to Japanese. Sadly, Hector passed away late last year, at the age of 91.

His last wish was that his collection should now allow others all the enjoyment and happiness it had given him over decades. Manufacturers in this collection include Britains, Tri-ang Spot-on, Corgi, Dinky, Joal, Ertl, NZG, Fun Ho and many others.

The sale produced some truly impressive results, with many lots exceeding pre-sale estimates by some margin. Here are the details of three that really caught the imagination of those bidding.

- **Lot 278 Tri-ang Spot-on No 137 Massey-Harris Ferguson 65 Tractor**
Red including mudguards, grey engine and body, yellow wheels, black seat

and steering wheel, silver grille. Good plus to excellent in fair carded box, with folded leaflet and correct colour collectors card.

Estimate: £400 - £500 Sold For: £1,600

- **Lot 279 Tri-ang Spot-on No 116 Caterpillar D9 Bulldozer**
Yellow including rollers with black rubber tracks, silver blade. Good plus in good lift off lid box with correct inner packing piece, folded leaflet and correct colour collectors card.

Estimate: £300 - £400 Sold For: £750

- **Lot 296 Denzil Skinner & Co Ltd Nuffield Tractor**

Orange, including hubs. Excellent in good lift-off-lid box with paper label, complete with instruction leaflet plus some facsimile sheets and original paper advert.

Estimate: £150 - £200 Sold For: £1,800 ■



MAGIC HAPPENS AT BAMFORDS

THERE was plenty up for bidding at Bamfords' March sale, but one that really caught our eye was the hard-to-find, especially in this condition, Dinky Toys No 107 Stripey the Magic Mini, complete with its inner card display stand intact and all three figures. Lot 3030 closed with a hammer price of an impressive £300.

Comprising the correct white Mini with red, yellow and blue stripe sticker decals, red interior and chrome spun hubs, with Candy and the Bearandas plastic figures, all were in excellent condition. As was the inner cardboard display plinth, and everything came in a good, but worn box.

Bamfords' next toys & collectables auction will be held on 14th June. More information can be found at www.bamfords-auctions.co.uk. ■

SCOUTING FOR TOYS ON TV

SCOUTING for Toys, the new TV show that goes behind the scenes at Vectis Auctions, is now on the Yesterday channel (channel 27 on Freeview, Youview, BT and TalkTalk, 129 on Virgin, 155 on Sky, and 159 on Freesat) at 9pm each Thursday, and episodes that have already aired can be viewed using the UK TV Play 'catch up' facility.

The fascinating new documentary series, narrated by Kirsten O'Brien, takes viewers back to their childhood as it follows selected auctions held by Vectis in Teesside, where buyers and sellers from all over the world come to trade every toy imaginable, from Star Wars figures to vintage dolls and, of course, diecast. No two days are the same - some toys will smash the guide price, while others may fail to meet their reserve.

The series discovers how Vectis' team of experts value and catalogue a range of toys ahead of their weekly auctions. Along the way, the show meets passionate people selling the treasured collections they've amassed over decades.

In the second episode, on Thursday 7th April, the focus was on the incredible Graham Hamilton Matchbox collection. In a future episode, currently planned to air on 12th May, as the 7th part of the 10-episode series, you should catch a glimpse behind the scenes at *Diecast Collector*, as the crew film and interview the editor at work in his home studio and then follow him up to an auction at Vectis where some of his collection is up for grabs. Don't forget to tune in! ■

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PriceGuide

75
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▲ **Dinky Toys No 30hm Daimler Ambulance** military green, white and red crosses to roof, sides and rear, ridged hubs with smooth tyres. Excellent, unboxed. **£220, Vectis, March.**



▲ **Dinky Toys No 665 Honest John Missile Launcher** green including plastic hubs and platform, comes complete with white and black missile - with white and red triangle decals to front and rear. Excellent in good yellow and red carded box with detailed picture. **£320, Vectis, March.**



▲ **Dinky/Meccano 13 "Hall's Distemper" 2-piece Figure Set** with advertising card. Good plus in good yellow lift-off lid box. **£380, Vectis, March.**



▲ **Corgi Toys No 1100 Bedford Type S Carrimore Low Loader** yellow cab, silver trim, flat spun hubs, metallic blue trailer with silver winch box, flat spun hubs. Excellent in fair to good blue and yellow lift-off lid box with some inner packaging. **£60, Vectis, March.**



▲ **Corgi Toys No 1110 Bedford Type S "Mobilgas" Petrol Tanker** red cab and tanker, silver trim and gantry, flat spun hubs (accessory packs applied). Good plus in good plus blue and yellow lift off lid box with some inner packing. **£150, Vectis, March.**



▲ **Corgi Toys No 1120 Midland Red Motorway Express Coach** red body, black roof, yellow interior, silver trim, spun hubs (with accessory pack applied). Good plus in good blue and yellow lift off lid box. **£160, Vectis, March.**



▲ **Dinky Toys No 952 Vega Major Luxury Coach** pale grey, cream interior, cast hubs - battery-operated issue. Good plus in fair to good yellow and red lift-off lid box with detailed picture. **£40, Vectis, March.**



▲ **Dinky Toys No 107 Stripey the Magic Mini** comprising white Mini with red, yellow and blue stripe sticker decals, red interior and chrome spun hubs, with Candy and the Bearandas plastic figures. Excellent on excellent inner cardboard display stand in a good box. **£300, Bamfords, March.**



▲ **Matchbox Moko Lesney 'Regular Wheels' No 1a Aveling Barford Diesel Road Roller** dark green body with cast seated tan driver figure, red metal roller wheels. Very good to excellent in good to very good box. **£35, Bamfords, March.**



▲ **Corgi Toys No 428 Smith's Mister Softie ice cream van** cream and pale blue body with decals, pale blue interior with plastic swivelling ice cream salesman. Near mint in good box. **£100, Bamfords, March.**



▲ **Dinky Toys No 481 Bedford 10cwt van 'Ovaltine'** mid-blue body with Ovaltine decals to side panels, pale blue ridged hubs. Excellent in good box. **£65, Bamfords, March.**



▲ **Dinky Toys No 482 Bedford 10cwt van 'Dinky Toys'** cream and deep yellow body with red Dinky Toys decals to side panels, lemon yellow ridged hubs. Near mint to mint in good box. **£75, Bamfords, March.**



▲ **Corgi Toys No 236 Austin A60 de luxe saloon motor school car** pale blue body with red steering wheel control to roof, red interior with instructor and pupil plastic seated figures, spun hubs. Near mint in very good to excellent box. **£35, Bamfords, March.**



▲ **Corgi Major Toys No 1139 Chipperfield's Circus menagerie Scammell Handyman Mk.3 tractor unit and trailer** red cab with pale blue chassis, pale blue and red trailer, three animal cages with plastic figures, comprising a rhinoceros, two tigers and a bear. Excellent in fair box, with original inner polystyrene display/packing piece. **£95, Bamfords, March.**



▲ **Corgi Toys No 336 Special Agent 007 James Bond Toyota 2000GT** from the James Bond film "You Only Live Twice" white body with red plastic flag intact, seated plastic figures of James Bond and Aki to black interior, spoke wire hubs. Near mint to mint in excellent box with excellent original inner pictorial display stand, original 'secret instructions' in packet, eight yellow plastic concealed missiles, and self-adhesive '007' badge. **£220, Bamfords, March.**



▲Corgi Toys No 486 Kennel Service wagon orange and white body with various decals including 'Vari-View', rectangular decal of a dachshund, cast wire hubs, with four plastic Dog figures. Mint in excellent box. **£55, Bamfords, March.**



▲Dinky Toys No 132 Packard Convertible light green, seated driver figure to red interior, clear windscreen, red ridged hubs. Near mint in very good box. **£55, Bamfords, March.**



▲Dinky Toys No 157 Jaguar XK120 coupe deep yellow body, yellow ridged hubs. Good in good box. **£50, Bamfords, March.**



▲Dinky Toys No 172 Studebaker Land Cruiser light green body with green ridged hubs. Good in good box. **£45, Bamfords, March.**



▲Dinky Toys No 181 Volkswagen Saloon lime green body, mid green ridged hubs. Near mint in excellent box. **£85, Bamfords, March.**



▲Dinky Toys 470 Austin 'Shell/BP' van red and green body with decals to sides, red ridged hubs. Very good in good box. **£65, Bamfords, March.**



▲Dinky Toys No 480 Bedford 10cwt van 'Kodak' deep yellow body with red and black decals to sides, red ridged hubs. Excellent in very good box. **£55, Bamfords, March.**



▲Dinky Toys No 104 Captain Scarlet Spectrum Pursuit Vehicle metallic blue body and base, white front bumper. Very good in good to very good box. **£130, Sheffield Auction Gallery, March.**



▲Tri-ang Spot-on No 122 United Dairies Van red, with spun hubs, original elastic bands are present but perished/broken. Good to good plus in fair plus box. **£20, British Toy Auctions, April.**



▲Dinky Toys No 918 Guy Van in Ever Ready livery blue, red hubs, with Ever Ready markings to sides, original unsold shop stock. Near mint in very good box. **£110, British Toy Auctions, April.**



▲Dinky Toys No 660 Mighty Antar Tank Transporter drab olive green, original unsold shop stock. Near mint in very good box. **£55, British Toy Auctions, April.**



▲Dinky Toys No 697 25-Pounder Field Gun Set drab olive green, original unsold shop stock. Near mint in very good box. **£50, British Toy Auctions, April.**



▲Dinky Toys No 966 Marrel Multi-Bucket Skip Lorry yellow with black hubs and silver skip, original unsold shop stock. Very good in very good box. **£60, British Toy Auctions, April.**



▲Corgi No 18006 Heavy Haulage 'Northern Ireland Carriers' Scammell Contractor, Nicholas Bogies & Vessel Load appears to be in mint condition with certificate # 1238 of 4000. In mint polystyrene inner, within a good lift off lid box. **£35, British Toy Auctions, April.**



▲Corgi No 18004 Heavy Haulage 'Siddle C. Cook' Scammell Contractor, 2 Dyson Trailers and Crane Girder Load appears to be in mint condition with certificate # 1246 of 4000. In mint polystyrene inner, within a good lift off lid box. **£30, British Toy Auctions, April.**



▲Corgi No 18007 Heavy Haulage 'Wrekin Roadways' Scammell Contractor x2' 24 Wheel Girder Trailer and Transformer Load appears to be in mint condition with certificate # 2733 of 4000. In mint polystyrene inner, within a good lift off lid box. **£60, British Toy Auctions, April.**



▲Franklin Mint 1/24 scale 1929 Rolls-Royce Phantom I Cabriolet De Ville appears to be in near mint condition, with certificate and Franklin Mint ephemera. In mint inner polystyrene packaging, in good box. **£30, British Toy Auctions, April.**



▲Danbury Mint 1/24 scale 'Dukes of Hazzard General Lee Dodge Charger' appears to be in Mint condition. In mint inner polystyrene packaging, in very good to excellent box. **£220, British Toy Auctions, April.**



▲Franklin Mint 1/24 scale 1951 Citroën 2CV appears to be in near mint condition, with certificate and Franklin Mint ephemera. In mint inner polystyrene packaging, in good box. **£50, British Toy Auctions, April.**



▲Franklin Mint 1/24 scale 1967 Volkswagen Beetle appears to be in mint condition, with certificate and Franklin Mint ephemera. In Mint inner polystyrene packaging, in a fair plus to good box. **£35, British Toy Auctions, April.**



▲Danbury Mint 1/24 scale No 127-004 'Replica of the 1928 Coca Cola Delivery Truck' appears to be in mint condition, with bottle loads contained in plastic strips in inner box lid. In mint inner polystyrene packaging, in excellent box, with certificate. **£45, British Toy Auctions, April.**

PRICE GUIDE



▲ **Danbury Mint 1/24 scale No 127-003 'Replica of the 1931 Coca Cola Delivery Truck'** appears to be in mint condition. In mint inner polystyrene packaging, in excellent box. **£30, British Toy Auctions, April.**



▲ **Danbury Mint 1/24 scale James Bond 007 Aston Martin DB5** appears to be in mint condition, but missing its certificate. In mint inner polystyrene packaging, in excellent box. **£85, British Toy Auctions, April.**



▲ **Franklin Mint 1/24 scale John Dillinger's 1933 Ford Deluxe** appears to be in mint condition, with certificate and Franklin Mint ephemera, plus a tray of accessories. In mint inner polystyrene packaging, in excellent box. **£70, British Toy Auctions, April.**



▲ **Franklin Mint 1/24 scale 1911 Stanley Steamer** appears to be in near mint condition, with certificate and Franklin Mint ephemera. In mint inner polystyrene packaging, in fair box. **£30, British Toy Auctions, April.**



▲ **Corgi Hauliers Of Renown Seddon Atkinson Strato fridge trailer in Thomas Gibb Scotch Beef livery # 342 of 1300** with certificate and accessories. Mint in very good box. **£70, British Toy Auctions, April.**



▲ **Corgi No CC99188 Stan Robinson set of 4x trucks** contains a MAN TGA, DAF XF, Scania Topline and a Kenworth tractor unit with curtainside trailer, # 23 of 1810 with certificate and accessories. Mint in good box. **£80, British Toy Auctions, April.**



▲ **Corgi No CC99185 150 Years Of Foden set** contains a 1931 Foden Steam wagon in P.E. Jones livery, S21 8 wheel tipper in Smith and Sons livery and Alpha XL in William Armstrong livery. Mint in good box. **£40, British Toy Auctions, April.**



▲ **Corgi Heavy Haulage No CC12810 Scania T Topline 5-axle King trailer & boiler load in Sandy Kydd Transport livery # 2225 of 2600.** Mint in very good box. **£45, British Toy Auctions, April.**



▲ **Tri-ang Spot-on No 137 Massey-Harris Ferguson 65 Tractor** red including mudguards, grey engine and body, yellow wheels, black seat and steering wheel, silver grille. Good plus to excellent in fair carded box, with folded leaflet and correct colour collectors card. **£1600, Vectis, April.**



▲ **Tri-ang Spot-on No 116 Caterpillar D9 Bulldozer** yellow including rollers with black rubber tracks, silver blade. Good plus in good lift off lid box with correct inner packing piece, folded leaflet and correct colour collectors card. **£750, Vectis, April.**



▲ **Denzil Skinner & Co Ltd Nuffield Tractor** orange, including hubs. Excellent in good lift-off-lid box with paper label, complete with instruction leaflet plus some facsimile sheets and original paper advert. **£1,800, Vectis, April.**



▲ **Corgi Toys No 50 Massey Ferguson 65 Tractor** pale grey, red, including hubs, silver trim, black steering wheel, tow hook. Good plus to excellent in fair to good blue and yellow carded picture box. **£100, Vectis, April.**



▲ **Corgi Toys No 66 Massey Ferguson 165 Tractor** grey, white, red including hubs, black steering wheel and seat, tow hook. Good plus to excellent in excellent plus blue and yellow carded picture box. **£110, Vectis, April.**



▲ **Corgi Toys No 67 Ford 5000 Super Major Tractor** blue, grey including plastic hubs, chrome trim, driver figure. Good plus in good plus to excellent striped window box w. **£90, Vectis, April.**



▲ **Corgi Toys No 73 Massey Ferguson 165 Tractor with Saw Attachment** grey, white, red including hubs, black seat and steering wheel, yellow attachment with chrome saw blade and trim. Excellent plus, excellent inner plastic tray and display card in good outer blue and yellow window box. **£80, Vectis, April.**



▲ **Corgi Toys GS13 Gift Set to include Fordson Power Major Tractor** blue, orange hubs (plastic), silver steering wheel and seat, black attachment with red and yellow Four Furrow Plough. Excellent, good plus inner carded tray, fair blue and yellow carded picture box. **£110, Vectis, April.**



▲ **Corgi Toys GS9 Gift Set to include Massey Ferguson 165 Tractor** grey, white, red including hubs, with driver figure, with Tipping Trailer - yellow including detachable raves, red including hubs, with correct carded packing display piece. Excellent to excellent plus, good plus polystyrene tray, good plus blue and yellow window box. **£600, Vectis, April.**



▲ **Corgi Toys GS34 Gift Set to include David Brown 1412 Tractor** white, red including hubs, black roof and chimney stack, amber tinted windows, with Tipping Trailer - yellow, red including hubs. Near mint to mint, near mint polystyrene tray, good plus striped window box. **£60, Vectis, April.**



▲ **Corgi Toys No 1112 David Brown 1412 Tractor (Combine Harvester)** white, red including hubs, black roof, clear windows with red and yellow plastic Combine Harvester attachments. Near mint in good to good plus striped window box. **£130, Vectis, April.**



▲Corgi Toys No 1111 Massey Ferguson 780 Combine Harvester red including hubs, yellow plastic tynes, seat and steering wheels, driver figure. Good plus to excellent in fair to good blue and yellow lift off lid box, with one packing piece. **£100, Vectis, April.**



▲Corgi Toys No 1103 Euclid TC-12 Twin Crawler Tractor green including metal rollers with black rubber tracks, silver trim, blue engine, silver-grey plastics, metal tow hook. Good plus in fair blue and yellow lift off lid box. **£80, Vectis, April.**



▲Corgi Toys No 438 Land Rover 109WB metallic green, dark green plastic canopy, lemon interior, grey base, black plastic tow hook. Near mint in good plus to excellent striped window box. **£80, Vectis, April.**



▲Dinky Toys No 305 David Brown 990 Tractor red, yellow, white chimney stack. Excellent in good plus to excellent yellow and red carded box. **£190, Vectis, April.**



▲Dinky Toys No 305 David Brown 990 Tractor white including hubs and rear plastics, brown, red chimney stack. Excellent in good plus carded picture box. **£90, Vectis, April.**



▲Dinky Toys No 305 David Brown 990 Tractor white including hubs and rear plastics, brown, red chimney stack. Good plus to excellent in good plus bubble pack. **£100, Vectis, April.**



▲Dinky Toys No 305 David Brown 995 Tractor white, red engine, hubs and rear plastics. Good plus on good plus carded base with fair bubble. **£40, Vectis, April.**



▲Dinky Toys No 308 Leyland 384 Tractor orange, silver, white hubs, driver figure, metal tow hook. Excellent in good plus window box. **£50, Vectis, April.**



▲Dinky pre-war 22 Series Tractor (Meccano Dinky Toys) base - finished in yellow, blue, red. Fair to good. **£60, Vectis, April.**



▲Dinky Toys No 27ak Gift Set to include Massey Harris Tractor red, yellow metal wheels, black seat, steering wheel, chimney stack and tow hook, light tan driver figure with Hay Rake - red, yellow. Good to good plus in good blue and white striped lift off lid box. **£140, Vectis, April.**



▲Dinky Toys No 399 Gift Set to include Massey Ferguson Tractor red, yellow hubs (plastic to front), plastic driver figure and bright yellow chimney stack, complete with Trailer - finished in red, grey, chrome hubs, metal tow hook. Good plus, on good inner carded tray in fair to good yellow and red window box. **£100, Vectis, April.**



▲Dinky Toys No 563 Heavy Tractor blue, light blue metal rollers with green rubber tracks, light tan driver figure, tow hook. Fair to good in fair blue lift off lid box with paper label. **£60, Vectis, April.**



▲French Dinky 886 Richier (Motor Grader) yellow, red plastic hubs, grey blade, driver figure, drab green engine. Good plus in good blue and white striped lift off lid box with some inner packing pieces. **£90, Vectis, April.**



▲Budgie Toys No 282 Euclid 21 Yard Scraper yellow, black solid wheels. Good plus in good to good plus yellow and black carded picture box with colour folded leaflet. **£60, Vectis, April.**



▲Budgie Toys No 234 Transporter orange cab, tan trailer, grey plastic hubs, with Tractor load - finished in orange, metal rollers with black rubber tracks. Excellent to excellent plus in good yellow and black carded picture box. **£35, Vectis, April.**



▲Chad Valley Co Ltd Fordson Major Tractor dark blue, orange, black steering wheel, silver trim and exhaust stack. Good plus in poor to fair (with inner packing piece) carded picture box. **£80, Vectis, April.**



▲Clifford Series (Empire made) Fordson Major Tractor mid-blue, silver grilles, orange hubs. Good plus in good carded picture box. **£260, Vectis, April.**



▲Denzil Skinner & Co Ltd David Brown Tractor red, black steering wheel and chimney stack. Good, unboxed. **£920, Vectis, April.**



▲Crescent Toys No 1806 Hay Rake orange, black rubber tyres, brown seat with figure. Good plus in good lift off lid box. Also comes accompanied with Tractor - orange, silver, black rubber wheels, 2x figures. Good plus. **£320, Vectis, April.**



▲Crescent Toys No 1803 Dexta Tractor blue, red plastic hubs with black tyres, complete with Trailer - red including plastic hubs, yellow including detachable raves. Near mint in good plus to excellent red and white striped lift off lid with green base. **£220, Vectis, April.**

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8 MAY

- **Lincolnshire**, J&J Fairs, 01522 880383
- **Rayleigh**, SRP Toy Fairs, 07739 998012
- **Birmingham**, BP Fairs, 01604 846688 or 07966 527177

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- **Elsecar**, Newcomen Fairs, 01226 744425

15 MAY

- **Shepton Mallet**, Bulldog Fairs, 01373 452857
- **Kempton**, RM Toys, 023 9238 1529 or 07957 823507
- **Walsall**, Transtar Promotions, 01922 643385

21 MAY

- **Sandown Park**, BP Fairs, 01604 846688 or 07966 527177

22 MAY

- **Orpington**, SRP Toy Fairs, 07739 998012
- **Oxford**, Richard Atkins, 01869 347489

23 MAY

- **Spalding**, J&J Fairs, 01522 880383

29 MAY

- **Port Sunlight**, James & Jackson Events, 07967 681080
- **Ditton**, SRP Toy Fairs, 07739 998012
- **Newton Abbot**, Ray Heard, 01823 480097

31 MAY

- **Garstang Toy Fair**, Janet Pearson, 01282 439009

AUCTIONS

4 MAY

- **Kent**, C&T Auctioneers, 01233 510050

10 MAY

- **Stockton-on-Tees**, Vectis, 01642 750616

13 MAY

- **Chippenham**, Wessex Auction Rooms, 01249 720888

17 MAY

- **Stockton-on-Tees**, Vectis, 01642 750616

18 MAY

- **Stockton-on-Tees**, Vectis, 01642 750616

- **Warwick**, Warwick & Warwick, 01296 499031

24 MAY

- **Stockton-on-Tees**, Vectis, 01642 750616

- **Newbury**, Special Auction Services, 01635 580595

25 MAY

- **Stockton-on-Tees**, Vectis, 01642 750616

26 MAY

- **Stockton-on-Tees**, Vectis, 01642 750616

- **Sheffield**, Sheffield Auction Gallery, 0114 281 6161

27 MAY

- **Stockton-on-Tees**, Vectis, 01642 750616

28 MAY

- **Kings Langley**, Excalibur Auctions, 02036 330913

31 MAY

- **Stockton-on-Tees**, Vectis, 01642 750616



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More on the Dinky Herald

Jose F. Heraud provides additional notes to his earlier article on the Dinky Triumph Herald.

The Dinky Triumph Herald (No 189) was issued in April 1959, at the same time the real saloon car was exhibited at the Royal Albert Hall car show, and there were promotional models made to advertise the real car and given for free, when a customer bought one. These promos were issued to dealers in 1959 and had many color combinations – from the single colour scheme, to two-tone finishes, a list of which has been published in my original article – A Triumph of Colour – published in issue 203 (September 2014), on pages 72 to 74.

BASE PLATES

The base plates of the car were made of pressed metal, with embossed lettering and numbers.

There were two kinds of finish; glossy and matt black. In general, all the cars, including the promotional issues of 1959, had a glossy finish, except the two-tone blue and white example, which had a matt finish, to distinguish it from the typical commercial blue/white scheme. This is important to separate the promotional model from the typical one, a fact that very few collectors and experts know, as it has not been widely written about.

The way the base plate was attached to the body was with two rivets, one at either end. The early issues have generally a dimpled round rivet, while the later issues have a domed round one.

BOXES

There have been four types of boxes issued for this model:

1) Typical yellow box, with images of the car on both sides, blue/white and green/white and with a printed circle showing the respective two-tone colour scheme inside. It includes the Triumph Herald logo on both ends. This box was issued for the commercial model.

2) Typical yellow box with printed light blue circle at both ends, Triumph Herald logo, blue and white two-tone scheme painted car on both sides. Information on the Dinky Toy Club on one side of the box. This box was made for the promotional two-tone powder blue/white variation only.

3) Newer yellow and red box with no images of the

► Rare pale yellow and white version that came to light after the original article was published.

1) Domed rivets signify a later release.

2) Early baseplates are easy to identify with their dimpled rivets.



▲ A typical yellow box with a printed light blue circle at either end with Triumph Herald logos.



car, and no colour circles at ends. Information on the Dinky Toy Club on one side of the box. This box was used for either regular models or promos. No Triumph Herald logos shown.

4) Newer yellow and red box with no images of the car on the sides. Round colour sticker on one end flap, either light blue or green. Information on the Dinky Toy Club on one side of the box. No Triumph Herald logos shown. This box was used for regular models or promos.

COLOURS

When the original article was written, the light yellow/white two-tone color scheme was not known to exist. Years later, an original model was found. The technical name was of the colours are pale yellow and white, probably issued from 1961–62. **DC**

1940s Buick from Timpo

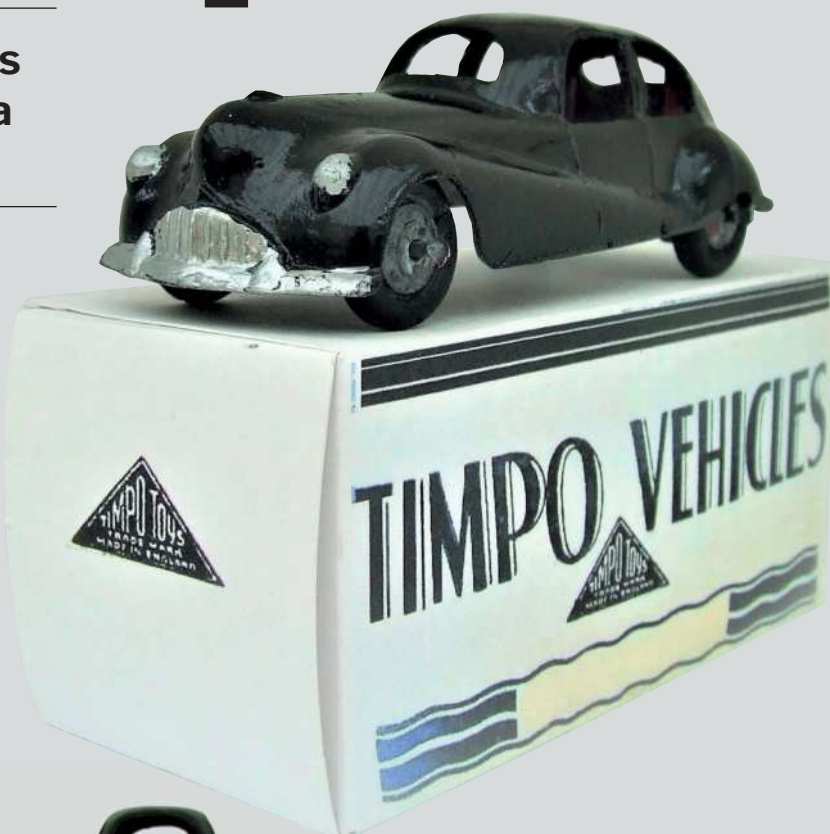
Andrew Ralston explores the possible identity of a budget vintage diecast.

It is a well-known fact that, after World War II, new cars were hard to obtain in Britain as the priority was to 'export or die' in order to rebuild the country's shattered economy. This situation was reflected in the toy market, too, as better quality products like Dinky Toys were exported around the world and initially only modest stocks were released to toy shops at home. All this provided an opportunity for smaller manufacturers who hastily produced less sophisticated toys for distribution via markets, corner shops or hardware stores.

One firm that was quick to exploit this situation was Timpo, founded in 1938 by a Mr Sally Gawrylowicz. Timpo had managed to keep a certain amount of toy production going during the war years, making toy aeroplanes and figures from a composition material as well as wooden forts and garage buildings.

For a few years in the 1940s, probably up until 1951, Timpo made a range of fairly crude diecast vehicles that could be sold cheaply and met the needs of the time. Quality varied widely and, in some cases, it is hard to identify what, if any, real vehicles they were based upon. The car shown here is one of the most extreme examples. It is of typical Timpo construction – that is, a bodyshell with the axles crimped at both ends and no baseplate. The only 'extra' feature is that rubber tyres are fitted, unlike some other similar products of the time (the Crescent Jaguar, for instance, or the Jolly Roger Saloon car made in Wales), which have metal wheels sprayed the same colour as the body.

Four inches in length, the Timpo is a curious rounded shape, with clumsy proportions, the wheels being too far back, and featuring extraordinarily thick windscreen pillars. These measure 0.3 inches which, if scaled up from 1/43, would mean that the real car's pillars would be 13.5 inches thick! It is only at the front that we get a clue as to the possible source of inspiration, for the grille has a vague resemblance to post-war Buicks, but it seems the mould-maker changed his mind halfway through and gave the car a rounded back, which looks more like a Standard Vanguard! It may even be that he was not working from any detailed drawings, but simply from a photo of a Buick and did not realise that the boot should



▲ One of the least realistic cars in the Timpo series, this one is believed to represent a Buick.



▲ Grille shape is the only clue to the car's possible Buick origins.



▲ A real Buick of the late 1940s.

protrude, as from a three-quarter view the model does vaguely mirror the proportions of a Buick circa 1946 or 1947.

Dinky and others often modelled American cars with an eye on the export market, but it is unlikely that Timpo's ambitions stretched that far. Yet American cars were not an unusual sight in the UK. Many were used for wartime purposes such as ambulances, and Lendrum & Hartman distributed Buicks and Cadillacs from its head office in Mayfair at Buick House. Moreover, films from Hollywood made American cars familiar to every cinema-goer.

In an article written back in the 1980s, Robert Newson, the expert in early post-war diecast, suggested that Timpo's Buick was so crude even by its usual standards that it was only produced for a short time and was therefore quite hard to find. That was over thirty years ago, so perhaps it's time for this mysterious little model to re-emerge from obscurity! **DC**

Dear Editor...

EMAIL YOUR LETTERS AND QUESTIONS TO rick.wilson@warnersgroup.co.uk
OR WRITE TO US The Editor, Diecast Collector, Warners Group Publications plc, The Maltings, West Street, Bourne, Lincolnshire PE10 9PH.



THE ROAD TO RUIN

I'M prompted to write having read the letter in the March issue by Robert Walker, regarding paint defects on his Oxford Diecast Austin Princess AP007. I searched for mine and found that it also had the same mottling, but mine was all over the car. Being a model maker (of sorts) I took off some paint and found out it hadn't received a primer coat in the factory, thus causing the paint to react with the bare metal. I noted that he bought his from Keith's Cars of Derby, where I buy all of my models, and asked if he had any knocking around. He did, so I sent for another Princess and a hearse. The Princess had the same problem but the hearse is perfect and blemish free. I intended to create a diorama of an abandoned country undertakers, or a scrapyards, which I remembered from 1972, when, on Sunday mornings, my dad and I would go looking for parts for his 1939 Wolseley 12/48 and Armstrong Siddeley Sapphire 234. I would have been 12 in 1972 and really loved these times with my dad. I can still see, in my mind's eye, the two Austin Princess limousines and a sister hearse rotting away in a field. Oddly, they were only 15 years old then, but I expect the fuel prices back then put paid to lovely large cars of the time. If you would like a step-by-step guide through how I achieved the model in the enclosed photo, I am more than happy to type out my techniques - that's if you're interested, of course. I thought some of your readers might like to see the exact opposite to what normally fills the pages of *Diecast Collector*. Would you please credit Clive Brown of Artwrite art supplies (www.artwrite.co.uk), Hythe, who took and printed the enclosed photographs.

Chris Pearson, Hythe



ED Wow, Chris! What a great job you've done there, so different. And yes please to a write up - that would be most interesting. Robert kindly sent me his faulty model and it's in my stash of 'projects' to do something with, so I could take some cues from your instructions and try to replicate it.



ERA RACER IDENTIFICATION

PHOTO enclosed of an ERA racing car. It's not mine and I know nothing about it. Might someone 'out there' be able to help?

Brian Gower, Dorset

ED Oh she's a beauty, sir! And you've come to the right place as the real cars were made less than a mile from where *Diecast Collector* is produced, in Bourne, Lincolnshire. It's by Scamold and these are rather hard to find. This model is No 101, and a quick internet search brings up one sold on ebay at some point since 2013 (specific date not known) in very similar condition for £53, unboxed. Scale Models Ltd., hence the name Scamold, made these at a small factory at the Brooklands site, in Surrey. True-to-scale, with proportionate dimensions accurately miniaturised, these were stated as being to 1/35 scale and featured working suspension. Produced between 1939 and 1950, there were three racing models manufactured - this one (in British Racing Green, light blue, royal blue, white, works light green, and yellow), No 103 Maserati (bright red, dark blue, dark green, Maserati Red, mid-green, and silver) and No 105 Alta (dark green, light blue, light green, pale blue, silver, and white). Supplied in very attractive cardboard picture boxes, these gave a hint of what might have been for future models, as they sported Austin, Bugatti and MG logos as well as the three brands released. These wonderfully accurate models proved to be too expensive to be successful, compared to the Dinkys available after the war, and the moulds and jigs were sold in the summer of 1950 - the business was wound up a decade later. These were also known to be sold in kit form and, given the bare metal of this one, it could well have been made up from one.

SHEDDING LIGHT ON THE DINKY FUEL TANKER

AFTER reading Nigel Hendry's question in the May issue, regarding the Dinky Shell-BP Fuel Tanker (944), it reminded me of some old *Classic Toys* magazines I kept from years ago. I found 'Volume 1 Issue 6 July/Aug 95', which has an article on the Dinky Toys Leyland Octopus 1956-1970, which covers all the body types and colour variations fitted to that chassis. The article includes pictures of 944, including, a white chassis version with both grey and black wheels and quotes production from 1969-70. Comments suggest dropping the grey chassis saved the cost of the additional masking and painting operations towards the end of the models production life. Hope this is of use. Enjoy reading the magazine and particularly like your restorations in the new *Workbench* section.

Paul Fletcher, email

ED Brilliant detective work, Paul! That makes perfect sense, as we know that cost saving could play quite a part at times. Handling so many Matchbox Superfast as I do, I come across this practice all the time. Many thanks for the kind words about the mag. Sadly no *Workbench* this month, but I have been working on plenty of bits, so it will definitely return in the July issue.

IT'S IN THE DETAIL

READING the May issue of *Diecast Collector*, I was fascinated by the letter about the Corgi Aston Martin DB5 James Bond model. The sheer amount of detail about this model and previous issues, is incredible. There are also other instances where readers write in to correct the slightest of errors, in features and articles. I have to say, that as a regular visitor to vintage toy fairs, I have often overheard similar discussions. People pointing out slight variations in colours for a particular old Dinky vehicle. Or perhaps knowing that a model had a limited production run and why. Others can point to a model bus and say that the destination board is wrong because the actual bus was never on that route. As a collector of vintage Dinky as well as vintage hollow cast figures, I have picked up a fair amount of knowledge myself over the years. I know for example, if an item has been repainted in a colour that was never originally issued. My main point is to praise all your contributors who write such detailed and informative features in your magazine. The fact that, on occasions, some eagle-eyed readers make contact to point out an anomaly, demonstrates the incredibly detailed knowledge they have. Such knowledge is generally gathered from years of collecting and researching particular models and brands. It is often said that our hobby is the preserve of older people. It would be a great pity if detailed knowledge was lost, with the passing of this generation. *Diecast Collector* has an important role to play in keeping our hobby and the knowledge alive.

Don Townshend, Chelmsford

ED Many thanks for writing in, Don. When I first took over as Editor, in July 2013, I have to confess that my knowledge was in very specific areas of diecast collecting, but I soon picked up on other areas too. Whilst I would never consider myself an expert (more a 'Rick of all trades'), I too bow to those that focus on their specific interests. It impresses me so much too, and I hope that being of a slightly younger generation (not by much, though!), I am helping to pass it down a little. It is always so heartening to make contact with and hear from younger collectors, but they are few and far between these days – many are lost to the distractions of electronic devices. But those that aren't certainly give me hope for the future of our hobby and that the knowledge won't be lost forever.

TWO-DOOR TAXIS PLY FOR HIRE!

WILL Roe's letter about the taxi model with two doors when should it have had four was spot on. Many years ago I had a 1955 Buick Century taxi in 1/18 scale by Mira, and this model was exactly that.



There is also a taxi convertible in the same shade of yellow with its taxi number decal in the same place as it is on the coupe. While the actual car on which the model was based did have two doors, did any taxi with the physical dimensions of a Buick Century, ever have two doors? Beside the taxi model, there was also a 'Sun State' police car, presumably from the same casting, and there are also various road cars. Although not a bad model as such, it just never looked right. My model left the cab rank many years ago, never to ply its trade again.

Mick Haven, email

FOLLOWING on from Will Roe's letter in the 'Dear Editor...' section of April 2022's edition of *Diecast Collector*, I can confirm from personal experience that two-door taxis used to ply for hire on the streets of Mexico City and Acapulco in Mexico, and Rio de Janeiro Brazil. There were probably more in other cities in South America. The front passenger seats were removed making entry/exit easier and two or three passengers could sit on the rear bench seat. Unfortunately, this arrangement also put the passengers at risk from robbers who could simply open the passenger door and jump in leaving their victims with no way to escape. Thus, four door taxis became the norm! I do doubt though that any Fiat 130 Coupes were in use as taxis anywhere in the world as they were expensive, top of the range models suitable for a much more genteel way of life!

Anthony Hutson, London NW9

ED Excellent intel, gentlemen! Another example as to why I love this section of the magazine so much. Fascinating stuff! Thanks to you both.

ON THE CASE OF THE CORGI ZEPHYR



IN the May 2022 issue, you report the upcoming Corgi Model Club reissue of the Mk 2 Ford Zephyr Police car, No 419. You mention too the TV show "Z Cars" which screened from 1962-78. For us older collectors the key Zephyr police Z car is the Mk3, modelled first by Spot-on in the 1960s (No 309) and much later in 2001 by Corgi Classics, No 502. By comparison, the earlier Corgi No 419, introduced in 1960, was based on the cars employed by Hertfordshire and other county police forces to patrol the then new M1 motorway, which was featured on the cover of the 1960 Corgi catalogue. It was an estate car variation of the Ford saloon, bodied by Abbotts of Farnham and known as a Farnham estate. The Corgi police version had a detailed interior with police equipment in the rear, unlike the standard estate car version No 424 issued by Corgi the following year, 1961. Both versions have the feature roof rack cast in, and the curved side trim identifies it as a later Mk2 Farnham, a 'lowline', having a lower roof than the first 1950s Mk2 Zephyrs. I attach a photo of the front cover of the 1960 Corgi catalogue, featuring the a motorway scene with the Zephyr passing an M1 sign, together with Mk2 and Mk3 cars.

Patrick Hogan, Beaconsfield

ED I think you would have made an excellent policeman, Patrick! Your skills of detection are most impressive, thank you for sharing. And that Corgi catalogue cover is one of my favourites, such a wonderfully evocative image.

PLAYING THE NUMBERS GAME

AS somebody interested in vehicle registrations as a hobby, I appreciated David Lynn giving details of the models' registrations in his article about Princesses in May's magazine. I must, however, correct one thing David said, though I cannot really blame him for the mistake. He said UVX 24F was a 1968 Essex issue. It is not. Essex's F-suffix marks ran from WEV-F to BWC-F, so this clearly does not fit this sequence. This is a genuine number on the DVLA database which can be confirmed on websites such as the DVLA vehicle enquiry one. It would not have been issued by Essex in 1968. There are quite a lot of such strange marks on the database and the explanation for most of them is either clerical errors or fraud for the more attractive ones. The most famous one is MAG 1C, which belonged to the late Paul Daniels.

Regarding KCP 262G, I can help with the significance of that. David pointed out that it was a Halifax number. Woodall-Nicholson, one of the major hearse manufacturers, was based in Halifax, so this model is presumably intended to represent a Woodall-Nicholson conversion. I cannot help regarding the comment about the significance of KWO 1 on Princess Elizabeth's car, except to point out the mark would have been issued in June 1952, not 1953.

John Harrison, author of "The Number Plate Book"

ED As if to illustrate Don Townshend's letter on these pages, this is where I so enjoy hearing from experts in their field – it's so wonderful to receive and be able to pass on all this knowledge. I actually have connections to the late Mr Daniels through one of my bestest buddies – his father was Paul's manager – so I've asked him if he has any insight into that most famous of number plates and will report back accordingly.

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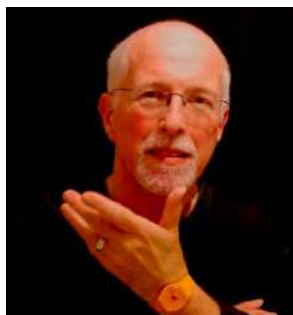
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A Safari beckons

Stephen Paul Hardy wonders if an excursion out via East Africa might possibly end up in the Netherlands.



▲ Stephen Paul Hardy.

When my copy of last month's *Diecast Collector* dropped through the letter box, I couldn't help grinning at the first page I opened. There laid out before my eyes, on page 5 next to the Editor's *Welcome* column – always my first stop – was fate's response to my having tempted providence in "Getting hooked" (March issue). After saying that I felt smug that no trap was visible on the horizon, there listed amongst the next nine Corgi Model Club releases was the Corgi No 256 East African Safari Beetle.

Now there are good reasons why that model evokes fond memories for me of when we were kids back in the mid sixties. More pertinent, though, right now is the series of iterative thoughts that surged through my little grey cells, after the initial delight of seeing that news had subsided a little.

I tried to quantify in my mind just why these Corgi Model Club releases are so appealing. Yes, there is the inevitable nostalgia factor. But then it occurred to me, quite forcibly that, first and foremost, the model and all its contemporary catalogue stablemates were beautiful scale models.

That Safari Beetle (and the Polizei version of the casting) had some superb little authentic details cast (and moulded) into them that, although maybe unnoticed by many, really struck a chord if you were into Volkswagens.

Although incorporating a generally excellent level of (reasonably) authentic detail, that era of Corgi Toys scale models were, as their name suggested, sold in toy shops and played with as toys. Yet within a decade I felt that the whole Corgi catalogue – and that of Matchbox – had sunk several notches and become far more toy-like than scale model. So is then the substantive reason for the appeal of the reissues from Corgi's 'Golden era' because they were, in reality, scale models first, toys second?

The cogs of my iterative thought process churned on – in that era currently being covered by the Corgi Model Club releases there were, originally, some delightful 'export' versions that have always been quite challenging for the majority of collectors to acquire in VGC. I wonder, then, what possibilities there are for the inclusion of some of those to be replicated in the release schedule at some point in the future ... a Politie Kever for example? **DG**

NEXT MONTH

July 2022
Issue 297

Pre-war Le Mans winners

All the cars that were victorious in that most famous of endurance races before war broke out.



PLUS...

- New from Corgi
- Porsche's X-files
- The Land Rover 80"
- It's a small world – part 2
- Play trucks from Greece
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- Workbench
- Auction results
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Positively presidential



Brian Gower travels to the USA to take a ride in style.

During its brief period of production, the 1956 Lincoln Continental II was America's most expensive car; even more costly than an imported Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud. The waiting list was instantly over-subscribed for one of the thirteen Continentals that would be produced each week.

Between 1956 and 1957, every car would cost Henry Ford more than its selling price. Much of the car was hand-built with many layers of paint and well-padded upholstery and, although it did wonders for Ford's reputation, you can only lose money for so long.

Huge as well as pricey, I only describe it as presidential because of the status it generated for every fortunate owner; I don't know if the president of the time possessed a Lincoln, Cadillacs still being the obvious choice for the top man, but most people wanted one.

The other Continental shown here is the spiritual successor to the 1956 car, despite another Lincoln Continental coming in between them. It could be that the stepping-stone model, less expensive but highly unattractive, was viewed by Ford as something of a mistake with its restyled headlights, reverse-slope rear window and inexplicable rectangular coves over the front wheel-arches.

There was nothing inexplicable about the 1961 Continental, which was destined to remain in production for nine years with only slight changes. A four-door convertible was made, and various stretched versions. Bearing no resemblance to the '56 model apart from the subtle lift to the rear wings, this was a totally new look that turned its back on fins and excessive chrome. It was an exercise in simplicity of form. I would say it was understated, but nothing

▲ **1961 Lincoln Continental bore virtually no resemblance to the 1956 model.**



▲ **A not-so-subtle clue as to where the spare wheel might be stowed in the 1956 Continental.**

▼ **During its brief period of production, the 1956 Lincoln Continental II was America's most expensive car.**

that big can be so described. At over eighteen feet long and very wide, loaded with electrical aids, it needed its 7.5-litre V8 to get it rolling. If asked to, the Continental could shift, but its main function was to float around with the driver playing 'Look at Me'.

With this Lincoln Continental, I have no qualms about saying it was presidential. I can even say it twice because the Lincoln was soon in use for White House duties and Kennedy bought one for his private transport. Already established as the car to aspire to, buyers could now say, "If it's good enough for Jack, it's good enough for me."

Both of the diecast Lincolns here celebrate the real cars in style. The Minichamps version of the earlier car is near-perfect, lacking only a back-washed grille for complete satisfaction. I don't know if it is still available, as it dates from 2005 when it was also released in pale blue. Yat Ming made some in 1/18 scale.

The later Lincoln, by GreenLight, is excellent and the first I've come across that isn't either a stretched limousine or a Bond movie extra. This one is a straightforward black beauty, beyond criticism and "If it was good enough for JFK ...". **DC**



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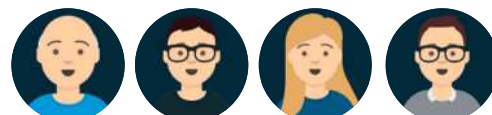
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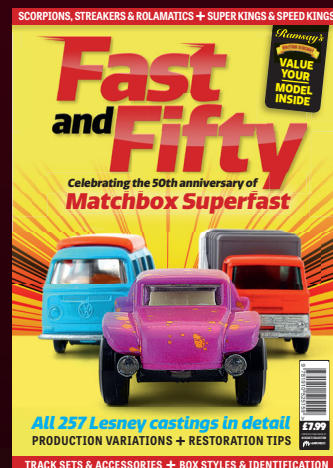
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The Battle of Britain

IN COLOUR



“Praise where due. This is the best magazine available which I have read - I am very impressed. I thoroughly enjoyed reading each chapter and it was written in such an easy style. It covered every aspect and I was saddened when I reached the end.”

This 164-page special collector's edition commemorates the 80th Anniversary of the momentous Battle of Britain, making it the perfect gift for any aviation or Battle of Britain enthusiast.

THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN IN COLOUR



The Battle Looms

The Battle of Britain was one of the most iconic battles of the Second World War, embedding itself indelibly into the nation's consciousness. Earlier, the Battle of France could easily have spelled defeat before the air battles got underway in July 1940.

As for the outbreak of war in September 1939, there followed eight months of what became known as the 'Phoney War'. It was clear that large-scale fighting would ultimately follow, and a British Expeditionary Force was sent to France before the end of that year. As part of the BEF, a large Air Component was supplemented by an Advanced Air Brigade. In total, there are forces amounted to six squadrons, six of which were Hawker Hurricane-equipped.

Predicted Catastrophe

When the fighting had broken out in France and the BEF, several of the Air Component were in almost certain trouble, and there had to be a contingency plan for their evacuation.

On 10 May 1940, German forces landed their all-out assault on France and the Low Countries and what followed in Belgium, the Netherlands etc, was the complete collapse of those countries under the overwhelming might of German military power. Across France, German forces moved inexorably towards the English Channel and while the French and British tried desperately to stem the advance, the situation became ever more desperate.

BACKGROUND TO BATTLE

Left: A Hurricane of 501 Squadron awaits its operational sortie at Bethune, France, May 1940. An RAF Hurricane of 501 Squadron is seen in action over France, May 1940. Right: A Hurricane of 501 Squadron is seen in action over France, May 1940.



THE RAF FIGHTER PILOT



It was not until the start of the Battle of Britain that the RAF Fighter Command was pushed into a full-scale operational role. The RAF Fighter Command was established in 1936, and its primary role was to defend the British Isles from enemy aircraft.

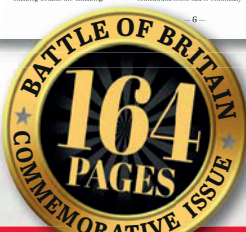
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