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- ◆ A WEST HIGHLAND-THEMED DIORAMA



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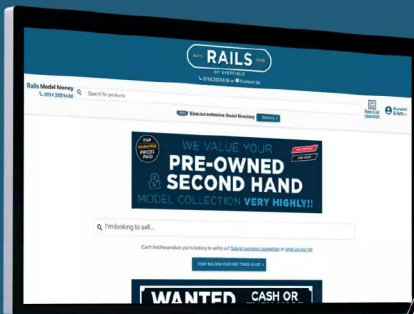
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Welcome

Happy New Year! I wonder how many of you have made modelling resolutions for 2025. My goals are largely similar to the past few years, with a hope of finishing several ongoing projects, and a desire to start a few more.

Dave Finney's 'Cheeky Shunt' layout, featured in this issue, piqued my interest. Partly due to the superb level of detail and the compact nature of the baseboard, but mostly down to Dave's mission to use up as much of his collection of scenic bits and bobs. As someone who hates throwing modelling stuff away, I have boxes of old buildings, kits and details awaiting a second (or third) purpose on future layouts or dioramas.

Indeed, a number of my photographic dioramas have used structures and materials reclaimed from old layouts, but there are some buildings, such as kit-built or scratchbuilt stations and signal boxes, that I'd love to make use of again, preferably on a working layout. Chris Nevard's 'Whitehall Halt', which also appears in this issue, makes use of second-hand model buildings, expertly built by Ian Robertson. I love the way Chris has incorporated them into the layout to create a coherent composition. Everything looks like it belongs there. It has certainly inspired me to take a fresh look at some of my hoarded models to see what could be done with them.

Don't forget that voting in our Model of the Year awards for 2024 is still open (the poll closes on February 16), so be sure to



George was recently searching through his boxes of salvaged buildings and layout details, retained in the hope that they would eventually become useful.

register your opinions on the models that have impressed you the most. And there's some fantastic prizes up for grabs for everyone who takes part. Simply go to www.model-rail.co.uk and cast your votes.

Happy modelling!

George Dent Editor

This month's cover image



'Whitehall Halt' is Chris Nevard's latest creation, an extension to a layout based on the Culm Valley line. See page 42 for the full story. **CHRIS NEVARD**

Meet the team behind the UK's best modelling magazine



Chris Leigh

Active in the hobby for over 60 years - he can claim to be experienced.



Chris Gadsby

The smaller the detail, the more interested he is.

This month's contributors



Chris Nevard



Peter Marriott



Dave Lowery



Ben Ando



Ben Jones

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- Bachmann BR 12t 'Palvan'
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Search the online index at:
www.ukmodelshops.co.uk/other/modelrail.html



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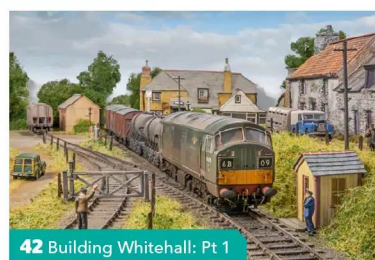
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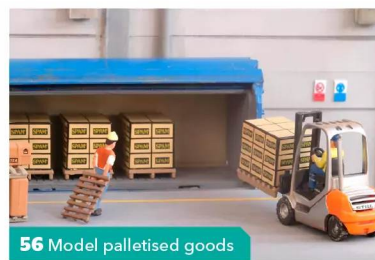
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Opening the box

The latest happenings from the world of model railways

The Big Picture

For a lot of people, an impending house move would result in the dismantling of their precious model railway, perhaps to be rebuilt, perhaps never to have a locomotive run across it again. This is particularly the case when layouts are built permanently into a room and cutting up the baseboards would result in an irrecoverable mess. However, life finds a way, and Phil Mason's 'Ebridge' has moved with him from one house to the next. Read more about how he has transferred the layout successfully and its subsequent expansion in an upcoming issue of *Model Rail*.
Photography: CHRIS NEVARD



The Big Picture



HORNBY TO LAUNCH 2025 RANGE

January 14 was the date on which Hornby publicly revealed its plans for 2025, with a number of exciting all-new projects on the cards. Although this issue hit the newsstands on January 16, subscriber copies were scheduled to go out up to five days before, meaning that we would breach Hornby's embargo if we published the story. But do not fear, we'll bring you the highlights of the range launch in next month's issue and, in the meantime, check out Hornby's website for the full lowdown of what to expect in the coming year.

Web: www.hornby.com

LATEST HORNBY ARRIVALS CLASS 08s AT THE DOUBLE

There has been a flurry of new Hornby models arriving with retailers in early January, with a striking pair of BR Class 08 shunters standing out.

Carrying the prestigious 'Swallow' version of BR InterCity livery, 08570 is also adorned with Haymarket depot logos. The model depicts the prototype during its time as Edinburgh Waverley's station pilot in the late 1980s, when it could be seen marshalling Sleeper and Motorail vehicles.

For the BR transition era, green D3069 sports 'wasp' ends and is based on a real '08' that spent the



1960s based in the Northamptonshire and London areas. Interestingly, D3069 never gained a Class 08 identity during the TOPS era, instead entering Departmental service as ADB966509 and being withdrawn in 1979.

The green '08' had been expected to arrive as part of the 2023 range and comes with a HM7000

Bluetooth-enabled DCC decoder onboard, along with Hornby's Triple X Sound. InterCity 08570 is offered in DCC-ready format, with both retaining the original 8pin DCC interface. Livery application is up to Hornby's usual high standards.

Models: • R30368 Class 08 08570 InterCity 'Swallow' (£199.99) • R30301TXS Class 08 D3069 BR green (£263.99)

Availability: Hornby stockists
Web: www.hornby.com



STEAM ERA '08' FOR 'TT:120'

Another Class 08 to reach Hornby stockists recently is BR green D3986 in 'TT:120'. After earlier releases of BR Rail blue, DB red and GBRf blue '08s', a 1960s version will be greatly welcomed by modellers of the late steam era. Portraying a Western Region-based prototype, D3986 worked mostly in South Wales during the 1960s.

The model features the same detail and technical specifications as previous releases, with a 6pin DCC socket and a quality finish.

Model: TT3028M Class 08, BR green D3986
Price: £149.99



GWR PARCELS RAILCAR

After several years out of the range, it's great to see the former Lima GWR parcels railcar return, this time in Hornby's RailRoad Plus range, carrying an impressive

rendition of GWR lined chocolate/cream livery, complete with 'shirt button' style logos.

Equipped with Hornby's reliable motor bogie and

all-wheel power collection, it features an 8pin DCC socket.
Model: R30384 GWR Parcels car No. 34
Price: £84.99

CLASS 153 GETS THE 'LOCAL LINES' TREATMENT

00
GAUGE

Announced as an extra treat mid-way through 2024, Hornby's Class 153 is now available in the popular First Great Western 'Local Lines' livery. Based on the blue/pink 'Barbie' scheme, the usual wavy lines were made up instead of hundreds of local landmarks and attractions covered by First Great Western's sphere of operation.

A tricky livery to replicate in miniature, Hornby has done

a good job of recreating the tonal transitions and all the tiny lettering is fully legible, although you'll need a magnifying glass to read it! There are no destinations boards in the cab windows, but working head/tail lamps are a welcome feature and the model now boasts a 21pin decoder socket.

Model: R30357 Class 153 FGW 'Local Lines'
Price: £169.99



MODEL OF THE YEAR 2024 - THERE'S STILL TIME TO VOTE

Voting continues in our annual Model of the Year Awards, with polling due to close on February 16 and the results due to be published in the April issue. Don't forget, you can vote for your favourite RTR locomotive and rolling stock models, in all the popular scales, plus your favourite model retailers. Everyone who votes is automatically entered into a prize draw, with over £3,500 worth of prizes up for grabs. Voting is easy and completely free, just head to the Model Rail website and register your opinions.

Web: www.model-rail.co.uk



REVIEW SAMPLES ARRIVE

Just before we closed for press, a pair of Hornby's much-anticipated 'TT:120' Class 66s arrived, in the form of DB red 66097 and GBRf's 66779 *Evening Star* in its special commemorative livery. Additionally, Rapido's new Great Northern Stirling 'Single' 4-2-2, with its newly tooled Sturrock tender, has landed, along with Heljan's new production run of the sought-after 35ton Class B tank wagons. Look out for detailed reviews of these products, plus Hornby's Class 802/2 TPE 'Nova 1', in next month's issue, on sale February 13.



EXCLUSIVE '26' ALMOST HERE

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GAUGE

Another recent parcel to arrive at Model Rail HQ bore a final production sample of our exclusive Heljan Class 26, BR Rail blue 26043. Giving a taste of Heljan's fully retooled Class 26, it's a highly impressive model in terms of detail and technical specification. We're hoping to have our models in stock and ready to order in February - more details will follow next month, or check the Model Rail Offers website for updates.
Web: www.modelrailoffers.co.uk



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NIR HUNSLET DECO SAMPLES REVEALED



Anounced late last year, the 'OO' gauge Northern Ireland Railways 101

Class Bo-Bo diesel electric locomotives have already reached the decorated sample stage. High-fidelity models of all three Hunslet-built locomotives are being produced by Irish Railway Models, depicting 101 *Eagle*, 102 *Falcon* and 103 *Merlin* in original maroon or NIR blue, the latter livery being portrayed with yellow warning panels, red



chevron or red 'whiskers'.

Production is due to get under way once the Chinese New Year celebrations are out of the way, with delivery

expected towards the end of the year. Both DCC-ready and DCC sound-fitted options are available for each version.

Prices: £220.00 (DCC-ready),

£319.99 (DCC sound)

Availability: Irish Railway Models/Accurascale stockists
Web:

www.irishrailwaymodels.com

SHOW PREVIEW: MODEL RAIL SCOTLAND

It's almost time to make the annual pilgrimage to Glasgow for Model Rail Scotland, one of the premier model railway events in the UK show calendar.

Held once again at the Scottish Event campus, the show is easy to access by rail with regular services from Glasgow Central (alighting at the adjacent Exhibition Centre station), as well as being close to the M8 motorway.

The show is open over three



'Illie Town'

Where is it? Hall 3 Scottish Event Campus, Glasgow, G3 8YW
Admission: Adult £17, Child £5, Family (2+2) £35
Times: Fri & Sat 1030-1800, Sun 1030-1700
Web: www.modelrail-scotland.co.uk



'Claremont'



'Trinity Dock Street Bridge'



'Uppingham'

days - February 21-23 - and is supported by Accurascale, Bachmann, Heljan, Hornby, Kato and Peco, all of whom will have stands displaying their latest projects, as will a broad range of other manufacturers including Cavalex Models, Revolution Trains,

Clark Railworks, Oxford Diecast and Rapido Trains UK. Countless other traders are also attending, plus a wide variety of modelling and preservation societies.

Visitors will be able to watch over 50 top-quality layouts in action, several of which have featured in *Model Rail* in recent years, including Martin Olley's 3mm scale 'Uppingham' (MR321) and Pete Latham's 'N' gauge 'Claremont' (GBMR2023), plus 'OO' layouts by Gavin Rose ('Trinity Dock Street Bridge' MR271) and Aaron and Keith Smith ('Illie Town' MR286).

Tickets can be booked in advance (for entry 30 mins before doors open) or purchased on the day.

DAPOL SET TO MARK VE DAY CELEBRATIONS

Having raised nearly £2,000 for the Royal British Legion last year, Dapol will be marking the 80th anniversary of VE Day this spring with a fleet of new model wagons carrying a selection of motifs. Celebrating the contributions made by the British Army, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force, various logos have been created to adorn goods vans in 'N', 'OO' and 'O' gauges.

The models are due to arrive with stockists in April, with pre-orders being taken now. Each model sale will result in a donation to the Royal British Legion.

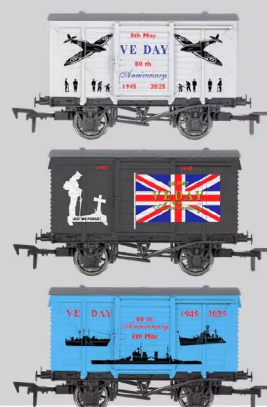
Prices: £12.30 to

£60.00 each

Availability:

Dapol stockists

Web: www.dapol.co.uk





EXCLUSIVE 'JONES GOODS' ARRIVES

00
GAUGE

In tandem with the arrival of the production batch of Rapido Trains' Highland Railway 'Jones Goods' (read our full review on page 80), comes a special version produced under the Railway Icons brand. Depicting No. 109 in Drummond's later HR plain green livery, suiting the 1916-1923 era, the locomotive features several period-specific fittings, including tablet catcher

equipment, wooden tender doors and a lack of a toolbox on the rear of the tender.

Available exclusively from Locomotion Models or Rails of Sheffield, No. 109 is presented in special packaging and is offered in DCC-ready or DCC sound-fitted format.

Model: Railway Icons/Rapido Trains UK 914008 'Jones Goods'



4-6-0 No. 109 HR green (late)
Prices: £219.95 (DCC-ready),

£319.95 (DCC sound)

Availability: Rails of Sheffield or Locomotion Models

Web: www.railsofsheffield.com
www.locomotionmodels.com

MORE 'TT:120' OPENS FROM PECO

Peco released its first batch of 'TT:120' seven-plank open wagons early last year (see MR322) and, due to healthy sales, three more versions are now available.

The models represent a common mineral wagon type, approved by the Railway Clearing House, built in their thousands during the 1910s-1920s and surviving into BR days. Rendered in injection-moulded plastic, the models come with standard 'TT:120' couplers (easily interchanged) and the markings have been applied via UV printer.



Models: RCH 7-plank opens • TTR7021P J.W. Davison
• TTR7022P Phorpres Bricks • TTR7023P Newbattle
Prices: £19.90 each **Availability:** Peco stockists
Web: www.peco-uk.com

TT:120
GAUGE

LNER BULK GRAIN VAN KIT REPRISED

00
GAUGE

Having been part of the Parkside range of plastic kits for decades, the LNER Bulk Grain van has been re-tooled by Peco to more modern detail standards. Portraying a versatile wagon that dates from the early 1930s, the vans featured moveable floors to allow conversion to general merchandise traffic when not required for grain. Examples could be seen working from various locations in Eastern England to Scottish maltings into the 1970s.

The kit features injection-moulded plastic parts, plus metal wheels, brass bearings, NEM coupler pockets, plus a full set of waterslide decals for the BR and LNER eras. Look out for

a full review of the kit in next month's issue.

Model: Parkside PC13 LNER Bulk Grain Van kit
Price: £18.95

Availability: Peco stockists

Web: www.peco-uk.com



VICTORIAN HOUSE KITS FOR 'N'

N
GAUGE

Following the success of Peco's '00' gauge

Victorian house kits, they're now available in 2mm scale. Offered in full relief form or

low-relief fronts or backs, the kits once again feature sheets of laser-cut parts designed to slot together.

The full relief pair of houses has a footprint of 87mm by 87mm, and all kits are designed to be standalone semi-detached structures or easily combined with other kits to produce terraced rows. Full instructions are provided. Prices had yet to be confirmed as we closed for press, but the kits were due to be available early in the new year.

Model: Peco Victorian semi-detached houses kits
• NB306 Low relief fronts • NB307 Low relief backs,
• NB308 Full relief

Prices: £TBC **Availability:** Peco stockists

Web: www.peco-uk.com



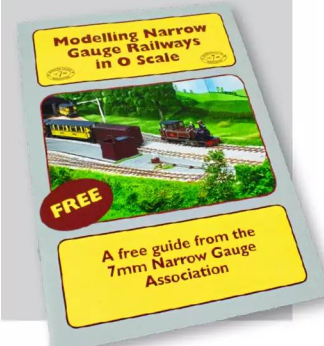
THINKING OF GOING NARROW GAUGE IN 'O'?

The 7mm Narrow Gauge Association

O-16.5
GAUGE

has produced a new, free booklet entitled *Modelling Narrow Gauge Railways in O Scale*, offering useful advice for anyone considering venturing into this gauge. The 20-page, A5 format colour booklet explains the various pros and cons of working in 'O', with information on loading gauges of prototype UK narrow gauge lines and an overview of what's currently available in terms of track, locomotives and rolling stock, in RTR and kit form.

Offered free to all members of the association, the booklet can also be picked up from the association's stand at exhibitions. For more details, see www.7mmnga.org.uk



WAGONS GALORE



The orderbooks for our upcoming LMS Iron Ore Hoppers and GWR O19 OPEN C wagons will be closing in March, so don't miss out, get your pre-orders in now!

RRP LMS IRON ORE HOPPER - £34.95

RRP GWR O19 OPEN C - £35.95



These **OO Gauge** wagons are made to the usual Rapido Trains UK high standard, with metal bearings and lots of separately-fitted details.

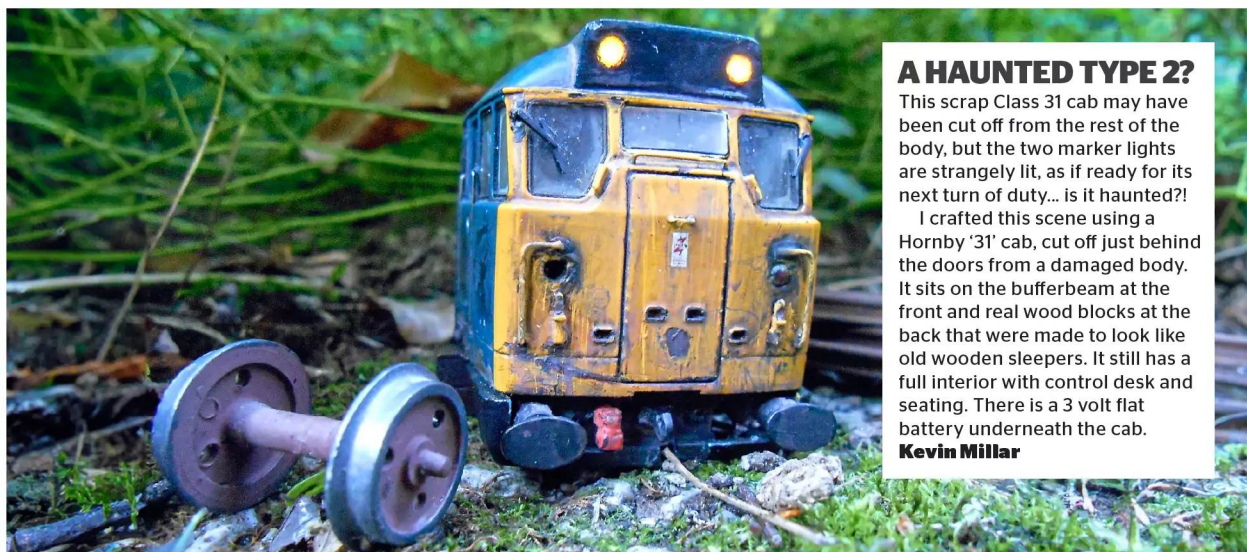


Available to order NOW from [RapidoTrains.co.uk](https://www.rapidoTrains.co.uk) or your local Rapido Trains UK stockist

RAPIDO TRAINS UK

Show & Tell

The place to share your projects with the *Model Rail* community.



A HAUNTED TYPE 2?

This scrap Class 31 cab may have been cut off from the rest of the body, but the two marker lights are strangely lit, as if ready for its next turn of duty... is it haunted?!

I crafted this scene using a Hornby '31' cab, cut off just behind the doors from a damaged body. It sits on the bufferbeam at the front and real wood blocks at the back that were made to look like old wooden sleepers. It still has a full interior with control desk and seating. There is a 3 volt flat battery underneath the cab.

Kevin Millar

PUZZLING IT OUT

This is my latest project, a shunting puzzle based (very loosely) on the former Crossley Evans Scrap Metal Processors' yard in Shipley, West Yorkshire, as it would have been in the mid-1980s: the site of which has recently been cleared to make way for a new Northern Powerhouse Rail depot.

The layout is still under construction, but the track (PECO Setrack) is substantially complete, as are the Valley Road Viaduct (one half of a Metcalfe Models kit) and the rolling stock and road vehicle fleets. Control is via a Gaugemaster Combi analogue controller, while the points are hand-thrown. Ground cover is still to be carried out though.

The single baseboard is 6ft long by 16in wide, with a small shelf at the front, and is constructed in an unusual way using up-cycled parts from an old flat-packed chest of drawers.

The accompanying photos were taken at



the layout's first public outing: an event celebrating local neurodiversity and creativity (I identify as autistic), at which I invited attendees to have a go at the shunting puzzle. Feedback included several

people who really enjoyed the experience, while one family whose youngest child had a go discussed the notion of getting their own train set out.

Kevin Russell

NEW NARROW GAUGE PROJECT

I have been a reader of *Model Rail* since 2001 and recently completed this 'OO9' gauge layout, 'Castell Bevan'. It's been exhibited a few times already, at local model and transport events.

James Maltby



GWR 'Mica B'

Refrigerated Meat Van

'MICA B', the telegraphic code 'MICA' designating a Refrigerated Meat Van of which 'B' is the ventilated variant. The ventilated vans were mainly used to transport chilled beef carcasses from ports such as Birkenhead to Smithfield and other markets. It is fitted with internal tanks for solid CO2 and trap doors on top of the roof for loading the dry ice. Meat hooks were fitted. Built between 1923 - 1926, 149 were produced based on the X8 diagram.

The decorated samples are now here and delivery is expected very soon



Thanks to the Severn Valley Railway for their support with this project.

Available in single van or a 3 pack, priced at £30.00 each or £75.00 for the 3 pack. 6 running numbers will be produced in OO gauge.



Van 1	105873 (preserved at Severn Valley Railway)
Van 2	105852
Van 3	105901
Van 4	105860 (preserved at Didcot)
Van 5	105923
Van 6	105923
Pack A	105873, 105852 & 105901
Pack B	105860, 105923 & 105966

Available to pre-order now at www.krmodels.net

WEIGHING UP YOUR OPTIONS



A common feature at many industrial locations in the pre-1980s railway era was the wagon weighbridge, which is the subject of this new kit from Ratio. Featuring laser-cut wood parts for the weighbridge and injection-moulded plastic parts for the accompanying shed, the kit also provides a short length of Peco straight track (Code 100 rail).

The deck of the weighbridge features realistic detail, with 'To Weigh 20Tons' instructions embedded into the ironwork. The wooden sections are designed to fit around the 'OO' rails and are equally compatible with Code 75 rail too.

The structure is fairly typical of installations found across the UK, which were used to determine the weight of a wagon's load for accounting and safety purposes.

Product: Ratio 555 Railway Wagon Weighbridge

Price: £11.95

Availability: Peco stockists

Web: www.peco-uk.com



Modeller's Bookshelf

George Dent presents a quartet of new titles to inspire and inform your modelling.



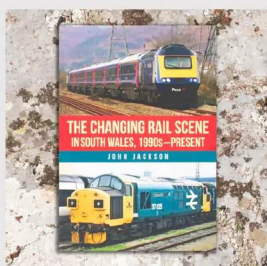
DIESELS ON SHED

This third instalment of an excellent series of titles focuses on BR sheds and stabling points in Wales and Scotland, with views of motive power and facilities at locations such as Cardiff Canton, Margam, Severn Tunnel Junction, Eastfield, Haymarket and Inverness. The images (mostly black and white) are sharp, and the accompanying text and captions provide much detail. Highly recommended for modellers seeking inspiration for a depot scene during the BR blue era.

Book: *British Rail Traction Maintenance Depots 1974-1993 Part 3*, by Michael Rhodes (Platform 5)

Price: £21.95

Availability:
www.platform5.com



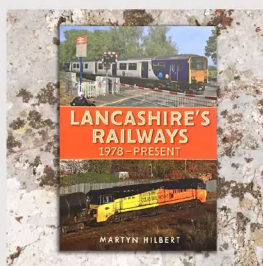
30 YEARS OF CHANGE

In this photographic history, the author illustrates how the railways of South Wales have evolved since the 1990s, in terms of traction and infrastructure. The last British Rail-built trains are only just giving way to modern diesel and electric units, while rail-borne freight has diminished significantly, albeit with lingering steel and oil traffic still to be seen. There are plenty of reference images of 'Pacers' and HSTs, plus Class 60s and '66s', with the new order of CAF and Stadler units also captured.

Book: *The Changing Rail Scene in South Wales*, by John Jackson (Amberley)

Price: £15.99

Availability:
www.amberley-books.com



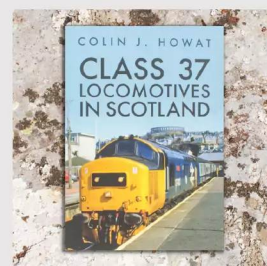
ON LANCS LINES

A colourful and fascinating selection of images is contained within this title, providing a glimpse of passenger and freight operations across Lancashire over the past 40-odd years. There's variety in terms of backdrops, from the modern cityscapes of Manchester and Salford to the former mills of Todmorden or the rollercoasters of Blackpool. Along with a procession of diesel and electric units and locomotives, there's also glimpses of industrial traction (including steam) at power stations and coal depots.

Book: *Lancashire's Railways 1978-Present*, by Martyn Hilbert (Amberley)

Price: £15.99

Availability:
www.amberley-books.com



SCOTTISH '37' GALLERY

Colin Howat presents a photographic overview of the English Electric Class 37s in Scotland, capturing them at work on passenger and freight services from the mid-1970s well into the privatisation era. The book contains nearly 200 images showcasing the many duties - and liveries - associated with the Type 3s over a 40-year period. Passenger services feature, but there's also a pleasing variety of freight action, including the oft-overlooked coal workings from Ayrshire and Lothian pits.

Book: *Class 37 Locomotives in Scotland*, by Colin J. Howat (Amberley)

Price: £15.99

Availability:
www.amberley-books.com



ON THE WORKBENCH

What new products have landed on George's workbench this month?

FOLDING FRENZY

Shaping etched metal components neatly, to precise angles, without damaging the material, is easiest when using a special folding tool, such as this device from Master Tools. Consisting of a 60mm square flat metal base and a spring-loaded clamp which can be rotated to provide four different working areas - with straightedge or variously shaped prongs - the parts are held firmly while being folded.

A pair of plastic folding levers are provided, helping to ensure precise shaping and knife-edge corners, with the clamping screw providing plenty of compression pressure to keep everything secure. As well as shaping etched brass or nickel silver detailing or kit components, the tool is also ideal for shaping strip or sheet brass for scratchbuilding tasks. This compact version is great for most tasks and fits easily within a toolbox, while Medium and Large versions are also available, for working on larger components.

Product: Master Tools 09933

Photo Etched Parts Bender (Small)

Price: £31.99

Availability: Scale Model Shop

Web: www.scalemodelshop.co.uk



STRIP-TASTIC!

Formulated primarily for use on plastic kit-built models, this paint stripping fluid is therefore safe for use on most plastics, as well as resin and metal components. It's effective at shifting acrylic and enamel paints, working within minutes. Smaller parts can be soaked in a glass jar filled with the fluid, or it can be brushed onto the surface and left for a few minutes. Using soapy water and an old toothbrush, the softened paint can then be washed away.

The clear fluid has a strong odour and must be used with care (wear gloves and eye protection) and, while I didn't find it so good for stripping away a factory finish, it made short work of stripping away paintwork from models I'd painted with a range of hobby paint brands. Be careful if using on 3D-printed components, as it may not be compatible with certain resin formulas.

Product: AK11586 Paint Stripper, 250ml

Price: £10.95

Availability: Scale Model Shop

Web: www.scalemodelshop.co.uk



WORKING PEOPLE

Modelu's latest packs of 3D-printed figures include useful trios of shopkeepers and market traders, all wearing suitable clothing and striking authentic poses. There's also a set of three street workers, including a road sweeper and a chimney sweep, with his brushes slung over his shoulder. Each figure features a superb level of detail, and they simply require painting. Each pack is available in any scale, from 'N' upwards.

Products: • 1362 Street Workers

• 1363 Market Traders

• 1364 Shopkeepers

Price: from £11.95 per pack

Availability: www.modelu3d.co.uk



SMELLS LIKE TRAIN SPIRIT

We have working lights and sound on our model trains, and a growing range of smoke generator units. So why not treat one of your other senses with this new range of room sprays from Precision Labels? 'Chuff Puff' aims to recreate the slightly sulphurous scent of steam trains, while 'Parfum de Pollution' is redolent of smoky, oily diesels.

These ethanol-based scents are offered in 5ml spray bottles, with just a few squirts providing a lingering smell. They're effective for helping immerse oneself into a miniature model railway world.

Products: Parfum de Pollution/Chuff Puff room sprays

Price: £3.45 each

Availability: Precision Labels

Web: www.precisionlabels.com



BUSY BEES

This Action Set from Busch provides a great cameo scene for a suburban garden, allotment or a countryside location. The pack provides four beehives on a stand plus a honey extractor, a table with miniature jars of honey, a pile of logs and the remains of a tree stump. It also includes a beekeeper, clad in a protective suit and wielding a 'smoker' tool, which is used to calm the bees while they are being inspected, with a small piece of white 'plume' to mimic the smoke.

The parts are nicely rendered, being a mix of plastic, 3D-printed and laser-cut wood. It takes around an hour to assemble the table and beehives on their stand.

Product: Busch 1179

Beekeeper and hives

Price: £32.35

Availability:

Golden Valley Hobbies

Web:

www.goldenvalleyhobbies.com



GARAGE SALE

Among the latest releases from Scale Model Scenery is a 1960s-style domestic garage, with a pitched roof and timber doors. The laser-cut walls slot together, and printed brick overlays are provided, along with a choice of asbestos or corrugated iron roof panels. A set of ladders is also included for storing outside or inside, hung from the rafters perhaps.

Using the same style of construction is Jack's Hut, a single-pitch structure that could be used as a lean-to extension or a standalone structure. Again, a choice of brick and roof overlays are supplied and it would suit a domestic, farm or industrial setting.

Another new release is the Christmas Market Stall, consisting of laser-cut



fibreboard parts for a small timber shack, complete with serving shelf and access door. Printed interiors feature various types of gaudy festive fare. All of these buildings could be enhanced by adding interior lighting, with a handy kit providing a pre-wired 3-12V LED, resistor and heat-shrink tubing for only £1.25.

Products: • KX117-OO

Domestic Garage (£7.99)

• KX118-OO Jack's Hut (£5.99)

• LX578-OO Christmas Market

Stall (£3.99) • WWSMD-KIT

Pre-wired warm white

SMT/LED (£1.25)

Availability: Scale

Model Scenery

Web: www.scalemodelscecery.co.uk

www.scalemodelscecery.co.uk



EASY BASEBOARDS

WW Scenics offers all sorts of products for crafting model scenery but is broadening its scope by introducing a Deluxe Baseboard kit.

Designed for layouts and dioramas, this lightweight baseboard, measuring 750mm by 300mm, is suitable for various scales and its modular nature makes it easy to connect with other similar baseboards. Laser-cut from 6mm plywood, the kit is easy to assemble, bonded with regular wood glue and using the supplied nails.

Product: Deluxe Baseboard kit

Price: £59.99

Availability: WW Scenics

Web: www.wwscenics.com



EXHIBITION DIARY - JANUARY-MARCH 2025

January 18 & 19

BIRSTALL, LEICESTER. Syston Model Railway Society, Model Railway Exhibition and Open Weekend. Birstall Social Club, 16-18 Wanlip Lane, Birstall, near Leicester LE4 4JS. **Times:** Sat 1000-1630, Sun 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adults £5, Families £10, Accompanied under-15s free. Unaccompanied children £4. **Tel:** 01162 605760.

January 25 & 26

EASTLEIGH, HAMPSHIRE. Southampton Model Railway Society Exhibition. Barton Peveril College, Chestnut Avenue, Eastleigh, Hampshire SO50 5BX. **Times:** Sat 1000-1700, Sun 1000-1630. **Admission:** Adults £10, Accompanied under-16s free. **Web:** www.southamptonmodelrailwaysociety.co.uk

ERITH, KENT. Erith Model Railway Society, Thamesmead Model Railway Exhibition 2025. Harris Garrard Academy, Yarnnton Way, Thamesmead, Erith, Kent DA18 4DW. **Times:** Sat 1000-1700, Sun 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adults (17+) £9, Accompanied children (5-16) £1. **Email:** erithmrs@gmail.com **Tel:** 07736 560956

IRVINE, AYRSHIRE. Kilmarnock and District Model Railway Club Exhibition 2025. Scottish Maritime Museum, Linthouse Building, Harbour Rd, Irvine KA12 8BT. **Times:** Sat 1000-1700, Sun 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adults £7, Concessions £5, Under-16s free. **Web:** www.kilmarnockmrc.com **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/KDMRC71

PONTEFRAC, WAKEFIELD.

Normanton & Pontefract Railway Modellers Society Model Railway Exhibition. Pontefract Racecourse, Park Road, Pontefract WF8 4QD. **Times:** Sat 1000-1700, Sun 1000-1630. **Admission:** Adults £10, Accompanied under-16s free. **Facebook:** <https://tinyurl.com/2x8prp3d>

February 1

HILLINGDON, LONDON. Hillingdon Railway Modellers - Test Track Open Day. Yiewsley Baptist Church Hall (side entrance), 74 Colham Avenue, Yiewsley, Hillingdon, London UB7 8HF. **Time:** 1000-1500. **Admission:** £6. **Web:** www.hillingdonrailwaymodellers.co.uk **Tel:** 0208 368 4090.

SHIREHAMPTON, BRISTOL.

Shirehampton MRC Annual Model Rail Exhibition. Shirehampton Public Hall, Station Road, Shirehampton, Bristol BS11 9TU. **Time:** 1000-1630. **Admission:** £5, Families (x4) £7. **Web:** www.shirehamptonmrc.com

February 1 & 2

KENDAL, CUMBRIA. Kendal Model Railway Exhibition 2025. Kendal Leisure Centre Burton Road, Kendal, Cumbria LA9 7HX. **Times:** Sat 1000-1700, Sun 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adult £6.50, Children (6-18) £2.50. **Web:** www.kendalmrc.org **Tel:** 01539 733844.

February 14 & 15

SOUTH SHIELDS, TYNE & WEAR. The Salvation Army, Model Rail 2025. Community and Worship Centre, Wawn Street, South Shields NE33 4EB. **Times:** Fri 1300-2000, Sat 1000-1700. **Admission:** Adults £5, Under-16s free.

February 15

TONBRIDGE, KENT. Tonbridge MRC. The Angel Centre, Angel Lane, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 1SF. **Time:** 1000-1700. **Admission:** Adults £8, Children (10-16) £1, Under-10s free. **Web:** www.tonbridgemrc.com **Tel:** 01959 523840. **Email:** tonbridgemrc@yahoo.co.uk

February 15 & 16

HIGHBRIDGE, SOMERSET. Sedgemoor Gauge O Group, Annual Model Railway Show. The King Alfred School & Academy, Burnham Road, Highbridge, Somerset TA9 3EE. **Times:** Sat 1000-1630, Sun 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adults £7, Accompanied under-14s free.

WESTON-SUPER-MARE, N SOMERSET.

Weston-Super-Mare Model Railway Show 2025. Burnham Model Railway Club Model Railway Exhibition, Priory Community School, Queens Way, Weston-Super-Mare, BS22 6BP. **Time:** 1000-1600 both days. **Admission:** £8, Children free. **Web:** www.bdmrc.co.uk

February 16

MONMOUTH, WALES. Monmouth Model Railway Exhibition. Bridges Community Centre, Drybridge Park, Monmouth NP25 5AS. **Time:** 1000-1600. **Email:** david_forbes2@sky.com

February 22

PRINCES RISBOROUGH, BUCKS.

Risborough & District Model Railway Club Risex 2025 Model Railway Exhibition. Wades Centre, Wades Park, Stratton Road, Princes Risborough, HP27 9AX. **Times:** 1000-1700 both days. **Admission:** Adult (18+) £7, Children (5-17) £1. **Email:** risexmanager@rdmrc.org.uk **Web:** www.rdmrc.org.uk

February 22 & 23

HEWORTH, YORK. Ebor Group of Railway Modellers, York Against Cancer Model Railway Show. Trinity Church Hall, Melrosegate, Heworth York YO31 ORP. **Times:** Sat 1000-1700, Sun 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adults £4, Under-5s free. **Tel:** 07899 861943. **Facebook:** <https://tinyurl.com/mr2jddj2>

TENTERDEN, KENT. Ashford Model Railway Club, 2025 Tenterden Model Railway Exhibition. Homewood School, Ashford Rd, Tenterden TN30 6LT. **Times:** Sat 1000-1700, Sun 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adults £6, Children £3, Concessions £5, Family (x4) £15, Under-5s free.

WATERLOOVILLE, HAMPSHIRE.

Portsmouthrailex 2025, Horndean Technology College, Barton Cross PO8 9PQ. **Times:** Sat 1000-1700, Sun 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adults £6, Children £3.

March 1

SWINDON, WILTS. Swindon Model Railway Club, Swindon Modrail 2025. STEAM Museum of the Great Western, Fire Fly Avenue, Swindon SN2 2EY. **Time:** 1000-1600. **Admission:** Adult £7, Accompanied under-16s free. **Tel:** 07880 654755. **Email:** imburbidge@btinternet.com **Web:** www.swindonmodelrailwayclub.com

YATE, BRISTOL. Sodbury Vale MRC Exhibition. Yate Community Hall, Yate Parish Hall and Yate YMCA. Station Road, Yate, Bristol BS37 4PQ. **Time:** 1000-1630 (0930 for Blue Badge and disability visitors). **Admission:** Adults £7, Accompanied under-16s free. **Tel:** 07388 893090. **Web:** www.sodburyvalermrc.co.uk

March 1 & 2

LEAMINGTON SPA, WARKS. Midlands Garden Rail Show. Warwickshire Event Centre, near Leamington Spa CV31 1XN. **Time:** 1000-1600 both days. **Admission:** Adults £12.50, Senior citizens £12, Children (5-14) £5. **Web:** www.midlandsgardenrailshow.co.uk

ABINGDON, OXFORDSHIRE. Abingdon & District Model Railway Club ABRAIL 2025. Abingdon & Witney College, Wootton Rd, Abingdon OX14 1GG. **Times:** Sat 1030-1700, Sun 1030-1630. **Admission:** Adult (pre-booked) £12, £15 on the door, Accompanied children (x2) free. **Web:** www.abrail.org.uk

REDDITCH, WORCS. The 52nd Redditch Model Railway Exhibition. Trinity High School, Grove Street, Redditch Town Centre B98 8DS. **Times:** Sat 1000-1700, Sun 1000-1630. **Admission:** Adults £6, Children free. **Web:** www.redditch-mrc.com **Tel:** 01527 540289. **Email:** enquiry@redditch-mrc.com

March 8

PUDSEY, LEEDS. Narrow Gauge North 2025. Pudsey Civic Hall, Dawsons Corner, Pudsey, Leeds LS28 5TA. **Time:** 1030-1630. **Admission:** Adults £10, Accompanied under-16s: £1 after 1330, Family £15 (2+2). **Web:** www.narrowgaugenorth.org.uk

...and finally



Unusual scenes captured by the lens of Chris Nevard

Engineman Willy and his cat Bob love to take their vintage 'Locomotion' out for a spin from time to time, while singing *The Loco-Motion* by Gerry Goffin and Carole King, later covered by Kylie Minogue. Bob's rendition of the song is more of a series of 'meows', but he keeps perfect timing with the locomotive beat while Willy sings the lyrics. The 200-year-old locomotive is quite high maintenance, so Gary the Greaser is ready with a brush and bucket full of 'gunk' which he has to apply every seven minutes to all moving parts. And that's before he starts on the locomotive...

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HORNBY		R3896 R&H 88DS BR 84£102.59	R614 LH Diamond Crossing£16.85	R8015 Point Motor Housing £6.60	32-679A BR C145 Green£161.45	
R30200 Railroad 0-4-0ST BR£43.19	R3899 BR Class 08 yellow£166.95	R615 RH Diamond Crossing£16.85	BACHMANN Steam Locomotives		32-755A C157 Arriva Wales£157.20	
R30221 The Railway Children Return 4F£125.99	R3901 Cl 60 Colas£161.99	R617 Uncoupling Ramp£3.95	31-002 Robinson BR Early Crest£94.99	35-312 Class 37 BR Blue Thornaby TMD£212.45		
R3527 N15 SR Black 'Camelot'£139.45	R30010 Sentinel Hitachi£98.09	R618 Double Isolating Rail£12.15	31-127 CL3000 BR ROD£118.45	35-418 BR Class 47 Construction£203.95		
R3635 BR Lord Nelson 'Lord Rodney'£152.95	R30013 R&H 48DS Gower Princess£98.10	R620 Railer Uncoupler£6.95	31-128 BR ROD Weathered£102.45	35-419 BR Class 47 Rft Distribution£203.95		
R3781 K&ESR Terrier£80.75	R30026 GBRF Class 60£206.09	R628 Half Curve 3rd Rad.£2.80	31-136 DC D11/2 BR£115.90	35-351 Class 20 BR green£152.95		
R3833 LNER A2/3 Chamossaire£171.00	R30073 Cl. 56 BR Blue£196.19	R8072 LH Point£11.85	31-442 LMS Ivatt 2mt tank£140.20	35-352 BR Cl. 20 Green£191.20		
R30134 LMS Turbomotive 6202£239.85	R30083 Sentinel 0-6-0 P o B£98.09	R8073 RH Point£11.85	31-443 BR Ivatt 2mt tank£140.20	35-352A BR Cl. 20 Green£191.20		
R30317 Railroad M&GNJR 0-4-0T£49.50	R30084 Sentinel 0-6-0 M.S.C.£98.09	R8074 LH Curved Point£18.85	31-462A C Class BR Early£106.20	35-357 BR Class 20 Rft.£152.95		
R30228 LMS Coronation Queen Mary£217.79	R30099 East Coast Trains HST£326.69	R8075 Y Curved Point£18.85	31-481 Class G2A BR Early£114.70	DAPOL/HELJAN/RAPIDO		
R30285 S&DJR Class 4F£139.50	R30115 Cl08 Blue 604 Phantom£167.40	R8076 Y Point£13.90	31-635B GWR 64xx£118.95	2570 Class 25/3 BR Blue 7513£177.65		
R30286 S&DJR Class 2P£139.50	R30121 BR Cl.08 Black (NRM)£185.99	R8077 LH Express Point£18.85	31-932 DC BR Compound£127.75	2549 Class25/3 BR Blue 25323£177.65		
R30287 United Glass Bottle 0-4-OST PUG£76.50	R30172 BR Cl. 101 Strathclyde£121.50	R8078 RH Express Point£18.85	31-932 BR Compound Early£169.95	2548 Class 25/3 Green FYE 7561£177.65		
R30325 S&DJR 3F Jinty Black£71.99	R30180 BR Cl.37 Intercity£87.30	R8261 4th Radius Curve£2.80	32-131A GWR 4575£140.20	2547 Class 25/3 BR Blue 25301£177.65		
R30316 S&DJR 3F Jinty Blue£71.99	R30188 Railroad LoadHaul Class 37£86.30	HORNBY Track Accessories		2546 Class 25/3 BR Blue 25904£177.65		
R3733 BR Robert Blake BR green late£202.50	R30191 BR Departmental Class 40(97)£87.30	R076 Footbridge£16.20	32-132 BR 45xx green£140.20	2545 Class 25/3 ETHEL2 UNPOWERED£177.65		
R3982 BR 2MT Green£206.10	R30203 Class 121 Coca-Cola£87.30	R169 Junction Home Signal£16.85	32-883 BRITISH RAILWAYS Fairburn£157.20	2544 Class 25/3 BR Blue 25095£177.65		
HORNBY Diesel Electric Locomotives		R30223 DRS Class 66£87.30	35-200 LNER green V2£195.45	2543 Class 25/3 Green SYP D5243£177.65		
R3373 Class 71 BR Green w/panel£134.95	R30300 BR Class 87 Large Logo£196.20	R406 Colour Light Signal£9.90	35-201 BR black V2£195.45	2540 Class 25/3 ETHEL1 UNPOWERED£177.65		
R3374 Class 71 BR Blue£134.95	R30167 Class 66 Fastline Freight£87.30	R574 Trackside Accessories£14.90	BACHMANN Diesel/Electric Locomotives			
R3376 Class 71 BR Green£134.95	R30150 GBRF Class 66 Grey£87.30	R626 Point Underlay£6.90	E83031 Class 144 BR WYPTE Metro£212.45	4S-001-014 BR 7802 Bradley Manor£151.95		
R3705 R&H 48Ds Dewars£71.99	R30151 GBRF Class 66 HS2 Green£87.30	R636 Double Level Crossing£28.80	E83022 Class 144 BR Provincial£212.45	4S-001-010 GWR 7806 Cockington Manor£151.95		
R3707 R&H 48Ds Longmorn£71.99	R30375 Railroad Grand Central HST£134.99	R645 Single Level Crossing£18.85	E84005 Class 58 Railfreight redstripe£157.20	914001 HR Jones Goods (1960s)£186.50		
R3742F Class 92 DB Romania£98.99	HORNBY TRACK		31-265A Class 419 MLV BR green£135.95	914002 HR Jones Goods (1890s)£186.50		
Mail Order Service All prices valid to 28.02.2025. You must state these prices when ordering POSTAGE & PACKING RATES PER ORDER: • UK Standard (48hr) £5.00 • UK Standard (24hr) £6.00 • UK Special Delivery Next Day £13.00 • UK Special Delivery By 1pm £15.00 • UK Courier Next Day £17.00 • Worldwide at cost • VAT free to non EC **Train Sets/Packs and Controllers/Handsets - Postage charged at cost** PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE. ***Please allow 7 days for clearance when paying by cheque** PLEASE QUOTE OUR SPECIAL PRICES WHEN YOU VISIT US CREDIT/DEBIT CARDS WELCOME.		R460 Straight Platform£4.00	31-267A Class 419 MLV Blue/Grey£135.95	914003 HR Jones Goods (1900s)£186.50		
		R462 Large Curve Platform£4.00	31-578 Windhoff MPV NR Yellow£271.95	914004 LMS Jones Goods (Early)£186.50		
		R463 Small Curve Platform£4.00	31-579 Windhoff MPV NR Orange£271.95	914005 LMS Jones Goods Lined£186.50		
		R464 Platform Ramp£3.00	32-613SF Class 90 Intercity Sound£280.45	914006 LMS Jones Goods (Late)£186.50		
		R8003 Water Tower£14.85	32-620SF Class 90 Freightliner Sound£280.45			
		R8007 Booking Hall£26.99s	32-652A BR C144 Blue Ingleborough£161.45			
		HORNBY Control Equipment		32-653 BR C144 Green Helvellyn£161.45		
		R044 Point Switch£10.75	32-678A BR C145 Green£161.45			
		R046 Two Way Switch£10.75				
		R047 On/Off Switch£10.75				
R602 Power Connecting Clip£2.80						
R8014 Point Motor£9.45						

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Contact Dave



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And in case you're wondering...
Albert is the dog.

Get In Touch!

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News Real

Our full-size railways are constantly evolving, providing fresh inspiration for modelling projects. BEN JONES looks at a few of the latest developments that could soon be appearing on our layouts.

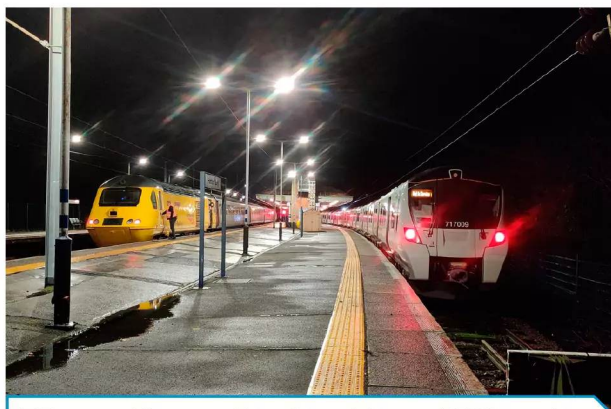


▣ The start of the 'Railway 200' celebrations was heralded at midday on January 1 with a global 'Whistle-Up' of 200 locomotives sounding whistles and horns across the UK and as far away as New Zealand, Australia, South America, the USA, South Africa and Sierra Leone, spanning five continents. More than 100 other events this year will include a major open weekend at Alstom's Litchurch Lane plant in Derby, a touring exhibition train, a three-month festival at the Bluebell Railway and the 50th anniversary celebrations of the National Railway Museum in York. The events mark the 200th anniversary of the opening of the Stockton & Darlington Railway on September 27 1825. See www.railway200.co.uk/events for more information. ALAMY

▣ What could be the final Class 66 to be delivered to a UK train operator arrived from mainland Europe in December. Euro specification 266 015 will become GB Railfreight's 66316 - one of 11 locomotives leased from Akiem in 2022 to become 66306-316. It takes GBRf's '66' fleet to 115 machines. ROB REEDMAN



▣ Eighteen months after it was delivered from Stadler's Valencia plant, Rail Operations Group 93001 finally undertook its first main line tests in 25kV AC mode on December 11. The tri-mode locomotive made several runs over the West Coast Main Line between Crewe and Carlisle using diesel/battery and electric power. SAM BOND



▣ Testing of European Train Control System (ETCS) in-cab digital signalling is progressing on the southern end of the East Coast Main Line. In December, modified power cars from Network Rail's New Measurement Train (paired with former CrossCountry Mk 3 trailers) were used to test the new systems. ETCS equipment is now installed between Hitchin and Welwyn and will be rolled out between King's Cross and Stoke Tunnel (south of Grantham) by 2030. NETWORK RAIL



Staff Show & Tell

POWER UPGRADE

Dave Lowery has been busy building a number of 'O' gauge HST power cars, using a recently upgraded metal kit.

I've shared several progress reports on my 'O' gauge Mk 3 carriages in *Model Rail* over the past year but, more recently, it has been time to tackle the all-important HST power cars.

PR Model Railway Products (PRMRP), the most recent owner of the original David Parkinson range of 'O' gauge locomotive kits produced in the 1980s, has recently upgraded a lot of the all-metal kits, while also producing a new multimedia kit for the Class 43 HST power car.

This new kit is very user-friendly, with a blend of etched brass, cast whitmetal and resin components, bringing this type of project within the range of most modellers.

Any kit is build-able if you take your time and are prepared to do some additional work. Not so here, this is a winner. Having built a fair number of the original all-brass HST kits – which I really struggled with – but not any more.

The main reason for this is the addition of a cast resin nose and cab assembly, plus a rear

bulkhead and driver's desk which all fit together beautifully, with just a little tweaking required with a file. There's also a resin casting for the gangway end too.

Aside from adding the resin parts, there is still some work to be done, which I will explain as we go along. The builder needs to be able to solder both brass and whitmetal, and there's the glueing of the resin parts to take care of too.

Another big advantage of this new kit is the pre-formed bodyshell, saving lots of effort bending the brass sides to the necessary profile. That said, the lower tumblehome is a little too severe and needed to be eased out with a pair of flat pliers. Also, the transition from the bodysides to the roof also needs a bit more curvature. This is achieved using a steel rod between a pair of vices and a little persuasion with a rubber hammer... who said railway modelling wasn't fun?

Web: www.prmrp.com



Above: The newly revamped PRMRP HST power car kit consists of pre-formed brass bodyshell, plus lots of other etched brass and cast whitmetal parts. A game-changing addition is a set of cast resin cab and gangway ends, making it easier to achieve consistent results.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Dave explains the rest of the assembly process in next month's issue.

STEP BY STEP



1 I opened up the body profile a little in order to fold over the small lip within the cant rail grille aperture with pliers, working gradually along the body. The line of rivets was then gently punched out from the inside.



2 The bottom tumblehome profile was eased with a pair of flat nose pliers, while the curve of the roof's shoulders was gently eased with the use of a rubber hammer and a steel bar strung between two bench vices.



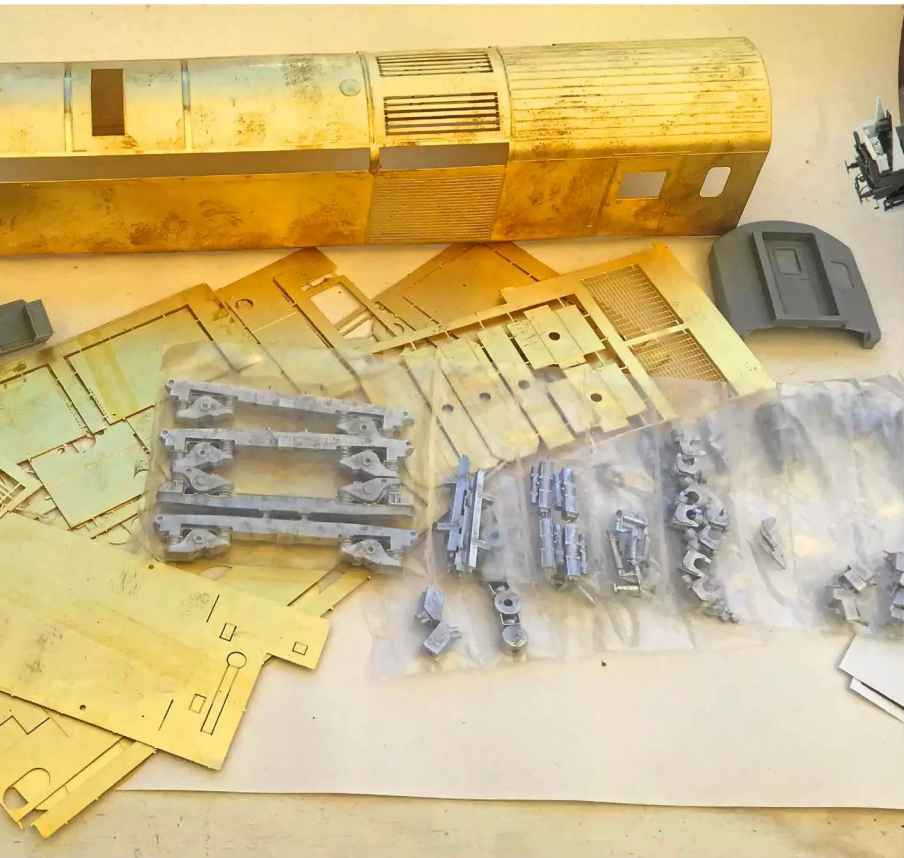
3 While fine tuning the body, use the resin cab and gangway end castings as gauges to get the correct profile. Once happy, the resin parts can be glued in place.



4 I applied contact adhesive to both surfaces to be joined, allowing a few minutes for the glue to turn tacky, before the parts were mated. I also applied cyanoacrylate and accelerator, and then the parts were held in place with a rubber band and allowed to dry overnight.



5 One of the worst things that can happen during construction is for the body to become twisted, so I laid it upside down on the workbench and laid a flat steel ruler across the lower edges, checking that both ends were true and in line.



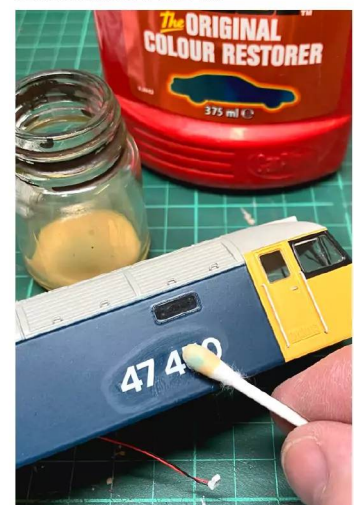
Searching for inspiration

After hours of sifting through images of Class 47/4s, GEORGE DENT has finally decided on a new identity for a Heljan model.

When Heljan's new '47' arrived last year, it was a 'large logo' BR blue version that came my way, which was fine by me, as it's one of my favourite liveries. However, I already owned a model of 47450, in the form of a Bachmann model, which I customised with the unofficial Tinsley name of 'Blackbuck', as per the real thing.

It took a bit of digging to create a shortlist of suitable alternative identities, to match the model's various detail fittings. Eventually, I settled upon the Scottish Region's 47635 *Jimmy Milne* and intend to model it while it was running with Highland Rail logos on the cab sides.

Having removed the TOPS numbers and double arrow logos (47635 wore slightly smaller versions), I still need to paint the former headcode panels black and add an orange cant rail warning line before an all-over clear gloss coat is applied prior to the new decals. Talking of which, new transfers and a set of etched nameplates have been obtained from Fox.



A concrete decision

PETER MARRIOTT'S recent visit to a model railway show in Belgium revealed an exciting new scenic product that will help with one of his future projects.

While walking around the show, a small diorama caught my eye, due to its convincing rendition of concrete groundwork. A newly established company, Modeltex produces sheets of printed foamboard in A4 and A3 sizes, featuring concrete panels for aprons, building or tunnel interiors, as well as retaining walls. There's also optional graffiti. The basic sheets are 3mm thick and aimed at 'N' and 'HO'

layouts, but other scales are planned.

Because of the nature of the foamboard, it's easy to imprint surface texture, especially panel seams, cracks and imperfections using a craft knife and other tools. The sheets come with a satin-printed finish, but a light spray with matt varnish improves the appearance.

I'm looking forward to testing these sheets myself, so watch this space.

Web: www.modeltex.be





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Inside track with Ben Ando

Ben Ando is the founder of Revolution Trains and a regular contributor to *Model Rail*.

“Just like a car, or domestic appliance, they need a small amount of care to keep them in optimum working order”

As I write this the New Year chimes of Big Ben are fading from memory and 2025 lies before us, full of promise and potential.

But the Christmas period – and the inevitable temporary shutdown for small businesses like Revolution – brings its own challenges and often the first job of the new year is to deal with issues arising during the last week of the old.

The combination of many customers receiving Revolution models as Christmas gifts from loved ones (or themselves!) and our emails and websites being unmonitored as the team takes a well-earned break can cause difficulties, and bring into sharp relief the nature of the relationship between the customer and the company.

At Revolution, we want our customers to enjoy their models and have a fun, trouble-free experience.

We work very hard at all stages of development to design out as many potential issues as possible, and ensure QC processes catch as many of the inevitable duds as possible before they are sent out.

But sometimes, of course, problems happen. And while the majority of customers are appreciative of the support we provide and are a pleasure to assist, we have found an apparently growing minority who are increasingly unreasonable in their expectations of the service they receive.

Our customer support manager told me of customers – who shall remain nameless – complaining that emails sent on Boxing Day were not answered immediately, or that models arriving for repair on Christmas Eve (when we all stopped for the holiday) were not returned before January.

Similarly, we have had some recent examples of customers who appear to think that models do not require maintenance of any kind.

Locomotives and units have been returned as ‘not



I recommend all modellers have a basic maintenance set of tools – guitar plectrums are particularly useful for levering off tight-fitting bodysells on some models.

working properly’ – yet when we checked them we found hair and fluff wrapped around the axles, or chunks of ballast lodged in the gears.

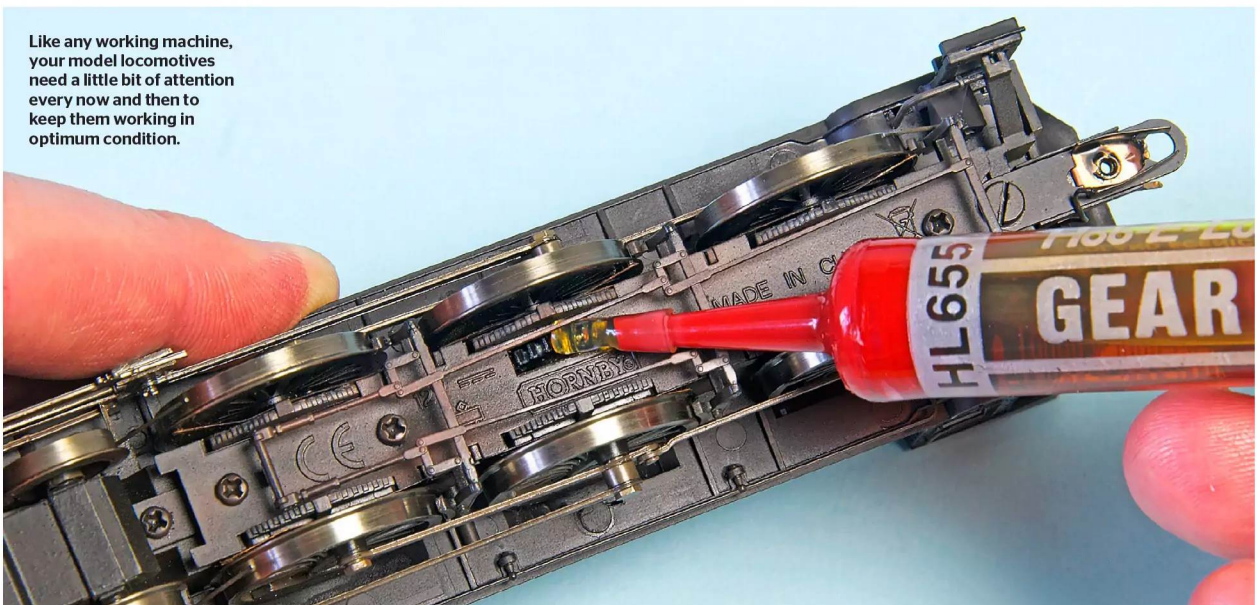
Just to be clear: these are working machines. Just like a car, or a domestic appliance, they need a small amount of care to keep them in optimum working order.

It is unrealistic to expect that once they have been placed on the track they will never require attention or monitoring again.

I would recommend that all railway modellers who want to run trains should have a basic ‘maintenance kit’ comprising at least some narrow tweezers, fine jewellers’ screwdrivers, plastic-friendly mineral oil and – my own top tip – a pack of thin guitarist’s plectrums which make unclipping tight-fitting bodysells a snap.

I am sure that every model train manufacturer in the country wants its customers to have the optimum experience – but we can’t do that without some effort from those same customers!

Like any working machine, your model locomotives need a little bit of attention every now and then to keep them working in optimum condition.



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Lost without **Lostwithiel**

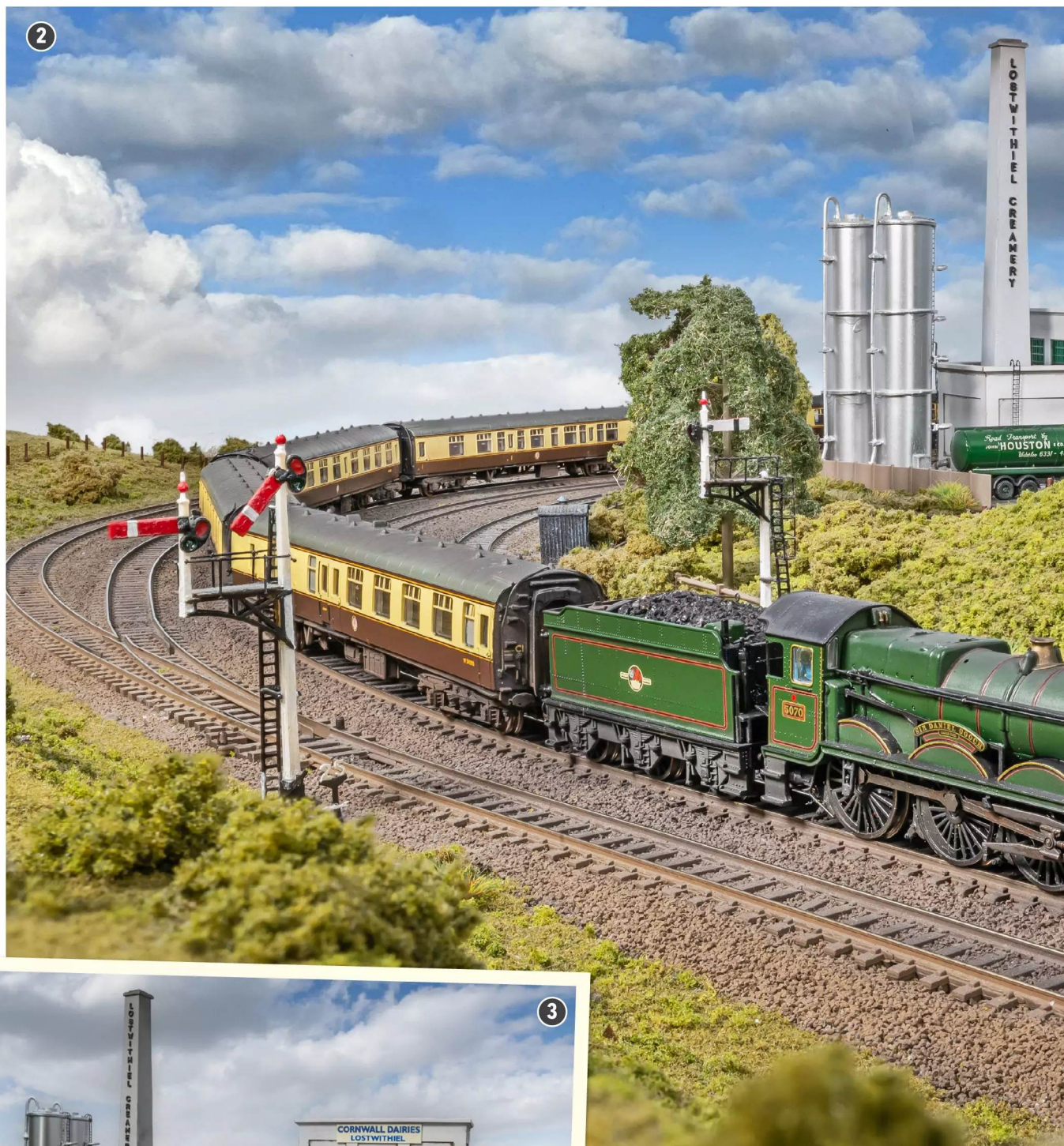
It has fascinated **Rob Elliott** so much that this is his third and finest rendition of Lostwithiel to date.

Words: **Chris Gadsby** Photography: **Chris Nevard** Artwork: **Andrew Mackintosh**



“What makes this layout great?”

We often talk about compression with a model railway, but with 'Lostwithiel' being an 'N' gauge layout, Rob has been able to get a realistic depth to his station area without having to cram everything in. It makes for a far more pleasing result.”



Think back to the last time you bought a house. Whether it was six months ago or 60 years ago, you almost certainly had a list of requirements. A lovely garden, side-by-side parking, perhaps a good-sized kitchen. A model room? Some of us could only dream of such a designated space, but when Rob Elliott and his wife moved house in 2015, a room dedicated to an 'N' gauge layout was high on the list of priorities. In the interest of fairness, a sewing room was also a must. Fortunately, the pair found a house that fulfilled both of these requirements and work began



on Rob's depiction of Lostwithiel almost before the cutlery had been put in the drawer.

"This is my third layout based on Lostwithiel in Cornwall, each one bigger and better than the last. My first was relatively basic, but the more I researched the area, the more interesting it became. Today, model number three is finished. The room is 9ft square and the layout almost fills it, with a 9ft by 5ft looped section and a branch totalling 11ft in an 'L' shape. There's enough room to get in and for me to have a decent-sized workbench. As usual, I began by creating a plan on Anyrail, getting as many ►

3 things we like



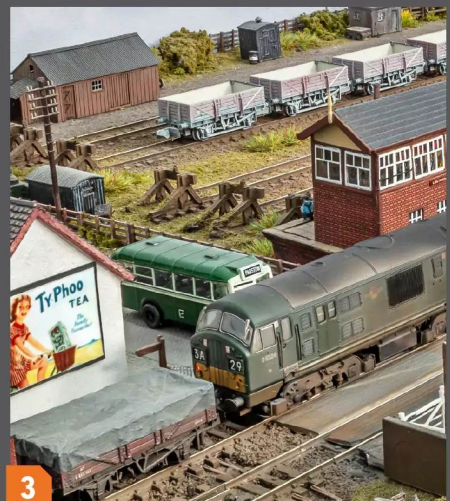
1

This couple having a lovely boat trip.



2

Lostwithiel, the Caribbean of Cornwall.



3

The period-appropriate advertising.

of my desired features as possible. I wanted a passable representation of Lostwithiel station with the crossing and sidings, the branch line to Fowey station incorporating Golant causeway and the clay docks at Carne Point, a version of the goods shed and dairy at Lostwithiel and a continuous run double-track main line for clay trains. The branch line also needed to be long enough so that I felt I was sending the trains somewhere. It's no good having the rear of the train at Lostwithiel station as the front arrives at Fowey. Cramming all of that into the available space was a challenge, and some of the points are in a different place from how they are on the prototype, but thankfully, in 'N', I was able to get almost everything in. I do wish there was additional room for a non-scenic fiddleyard though."

THIRD TIME'S A CHARM

With his plan in place and the walls painted a pleasing sky blue, Rob could begin building this iteration of 'Lostwithiel'.

"Similarly to the vast majority of modellers who have opted to build their layouts based on a real location, there was nothing available off the shelf that would fit, so I had to do a lot of kitbashing. The signal box on the Down line has been bashed from a couple ➤







A china clay port is a key element of a Cornish-themed layout and, since *Model Rail* visited, Rob has added a large clay vessel to the harbour scene.



of Ratio kits and plastic card, and the buildings on that side have a scratchbuilt canopy. The main station building was a wooden structure, and although I did have a go at scratchbuilding this, I discovered it was beyond my skill level at the time and have instead made use of a Ratio stone building. Other buildings, such as the dairy and clay structures, are converted Walthers cornerstone buildings that I've altered to fit the space."

Although the buildings were installed without a hitch, the same couldn't be said for the river and harbour, which was not only time-consuming, but very expensive! All in all, there's around 13ft of water at 'Lostwithiel', and a deep river meant a lot of resin.

"I used Woodland Scenics Deep Pour resin, but because I made the river too deep I needed 12 packs. At around £40 a pack you can see how quickly the cost adds up! The saving grace is that it does look very pleasing, now it is all set. That felt like a major milestone because it signalled the end of the major ➤



“ I used Woodland Scenics Deep Pour resin, but because I made the river too deep I needed 12 packs. At around £40 a pack you can see how quickly the cost adds up! ”





When building in 'N' gauge, the track laying has to be perfect to avoid derailments. Rob has used Peco Code 55 track with medium and long radius, live-frog points throughout, and all of the locomotives are fitted with stay-alive modules to improve reliability.

components, and I could move on to the signals. Some signals on the Western region were quite distinctive so I had to make sure I got them right. Rather helpfully, my dad was a locomotive driver for 50 years, so he was instrumental in telling me exactly where the signals would be placed on the prototype. These were built from lower quadrant Ratio kits with finer details added from Model Signal Engineering, brass fret, and plastic card. The small details make the world of difference, so adding things such as point rodding through the station area makes the whole area look so much better. The station nameboard and BR 'hotdog' signs were created by Sankey Scenics."

Rob's attention to detail is evident in his scenic elements. He used sheets of old newspaper covered with a cardboard lattice to create the frame for his embankments, which were then covered with plaster cloth, paint, and static grass. The trees, which are etched brass tree kits from The Model Tree Shop,

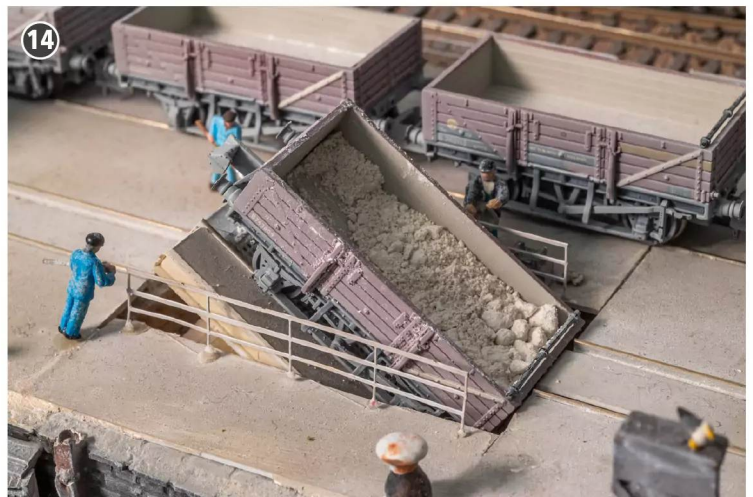
were meticulously assembled by Rob, who added varying flocks to achieve a realistic look.

"After trying various combinations of trees and flocks, I decided that these were the most realistic. With so much track, there wasn't a lot of space for scenic items and non-railway buildings, so I couldn't get as many buildings in as I wanted, just the indication of the start of the high street."

AUTHENTIC STOCK

'Lostwithiel' is set in the late 1950s/early 1960s, so Rob makes sure the majority of his stock suits the time period and region. However, he occasionally runs a London Midland, Eastern Region, or Southern Region service to change things around a bit.

"Most of my rolling stock is either Farish, Peco or Dapol, but as the range of models for the period and region is, thankfully, increasing, I've recently added some stock from Revolution and Sonic. I was very pleased when Farish produced its range of china clay ▶





FACTFILE: 'LOSTWITHIEL'

Gauge and scale: 2mm:1ft, 9mm gauge, 'N'

Size: 9ft by 9ft

Track: Peco Code 55

Power and control: DCC

Time to build: Nine years

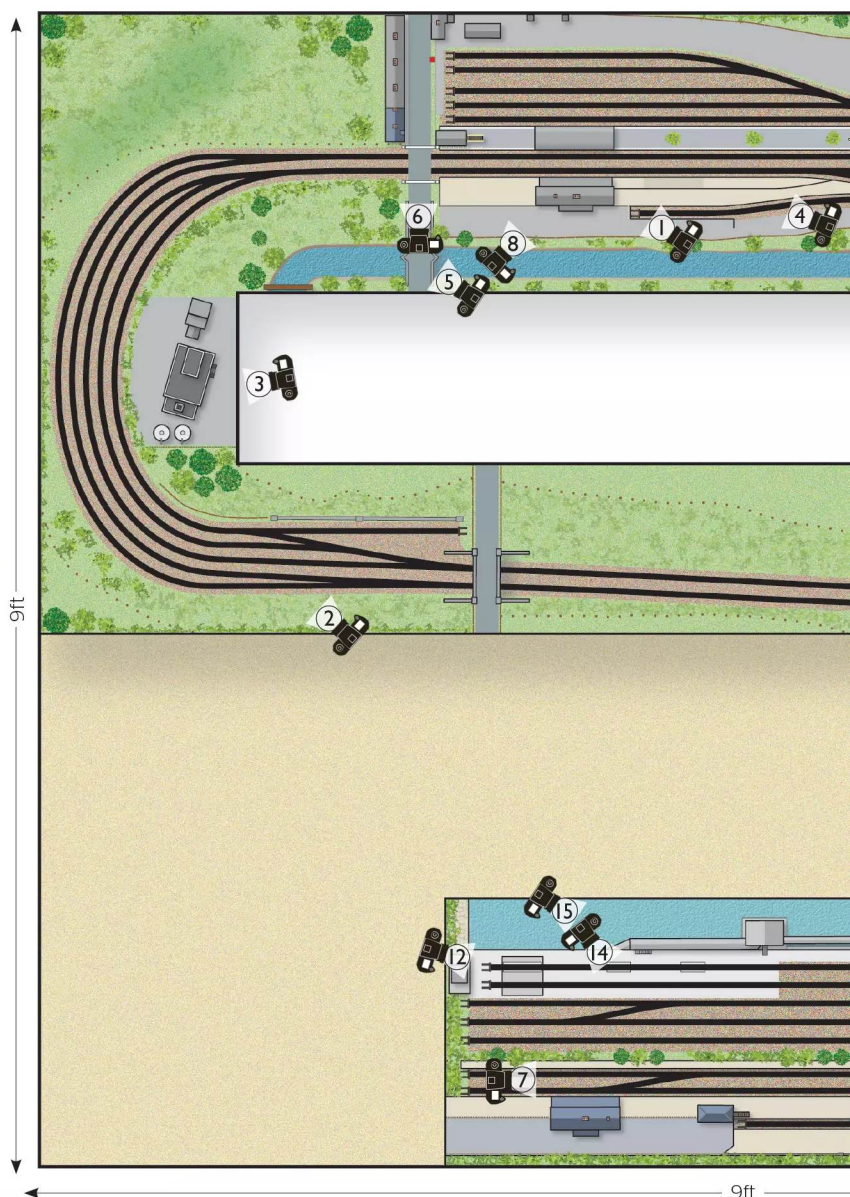
ABOUT THE MODELLER: ROB ELLIOTT

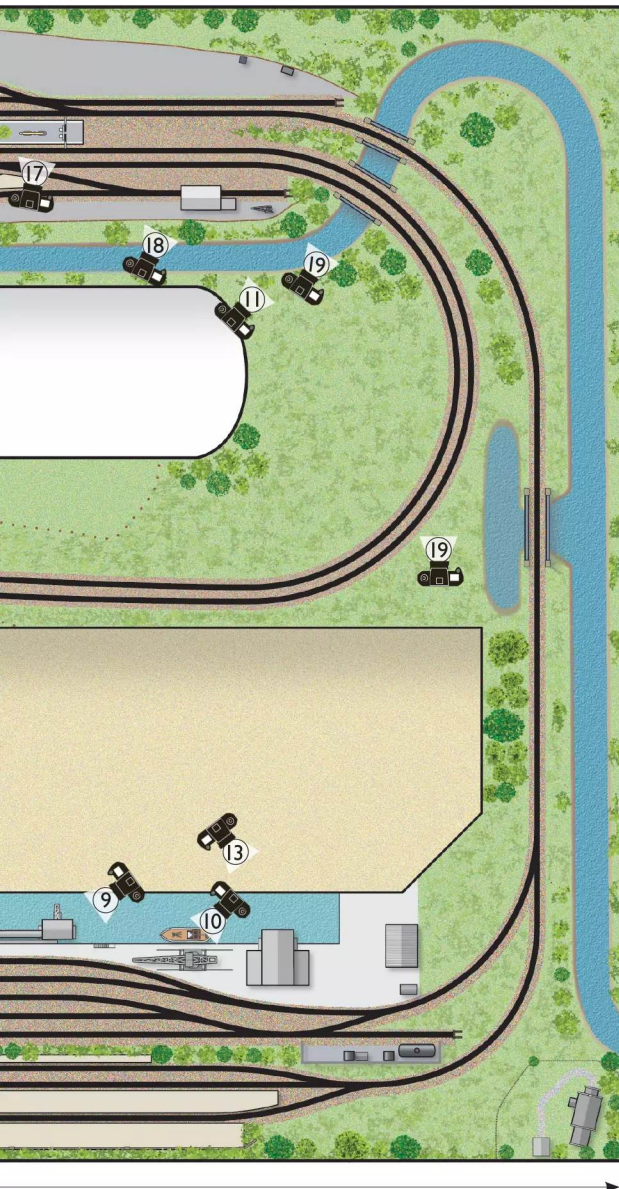
If he isn't tinkering away on a model, Rob partakes in historical battle re-enactments, specialising in the mid-18th Century period, but expanding the English Civil War and the Napoleonic wars.



wagons with Kernow MRC as they're much better than the Peco offering, although I have removed the tarpaulin and made my own from cigarette paper. These spend a lot of time travelling up and down the branch line at Fowey. All of my trains run with a headcode and lamps (provided by ModelU). Since all steam-era trains had to run with them, the omission is just something I cannot have on mine. Also they must all include crew and the necessary fire irons, brass lamp irons and real coal. Weathering models is probably my favourite part of modelling. I can't wait to get the airbrush or the powders out and get rid of the plastic look of the models. I enjoy it so much that I've started my own weathering business in 'N' gauge, covering everything from renumbering to a full respray. It's a nice little side hustle."

Although Rob and his wife aren't thinking of moving house again any time soon, he is already thinking about where another layout could go in the house and is eyeing up the loft for such a model. Does this mean we might see 'Lostwithiel Mk 4'? Only time will tell, but for now, Rob's work and shunting in Fowey is giving him enough to keep him occupied and away from building more baseboards. **MR**





Artwork: Andrew Mackintosh



Despite always modelling in 'N' gauge, Rob also has a fair-sized collection of 'OO' gauge locomotives, which he runs at his local model railway club.



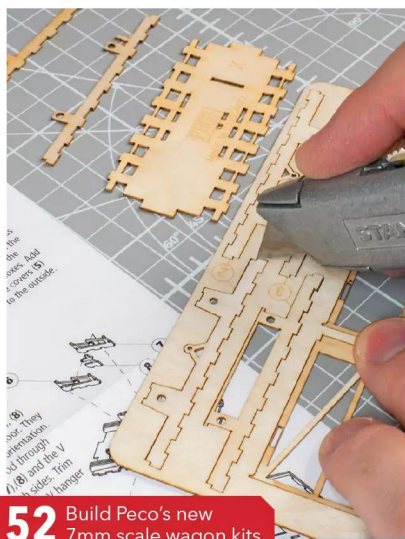
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Workbench

Inspirational projects, advice and top tips that show you how



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Meet the Model Rail Expert Modellers



George Dent
Learn from one of the country's best modellers.



Chris Nevard
Our ace snapper is also a hugely talented modeller.



Chris Leigh
Quite simply, what Chris doesn't know isn't worth knowing!



Peter Marriott
Scenic guru! Knows what's available and how to use it.

Project difficulty ranges from easy: one screwdriver, to very hard: five screwdrivers.

HOW TO

BUILDING WHITEHALL HALT

PART ONE

Chris Nevard takes us on the first leg of a journey towards recreating an impression of a rural Devonshire halt.



Regular readers of *Model Rail* will be familiar with my layout builds of Hemyock (MR309-312) and, more recently, Culmstock (MR327-329). 'Whitehall Halt' fills in the missing gap. In real life it was midway between Hemyock and Culmstock. These two layouts were inspired by their prototypes and are not strict copies, owing to the addition of extra sidings and buildings to increase operational and visual interest, while also working within the space limitations set out by my customer. However, to anyone familiar with the real railway, I hope the locations are recognisable.



Whitehall is far more fictitious, again for operational reasons, and also due to a collection of wonderful second-hand buildings by Ian Robertson, which desperately needed a new home to showcase them in a suitable environment.

Sadly, with the passing of time, layouts get broken up when a builder passes on, wishes to downsize, or simply gets bored. With permanent layouts, it is almost impossible to dismantle a layout without

breaking it up, especially if built into a loft.

Rebuilding a former permanent layout after dismantling will be far trickier than starting again from scratch. For this reason, I always recommend that a layout, however large, is treated as a modular exhibition layout, built into manageable sections, even if the layout is unlikely to be moved in the years ahead, or if the urge to exhibit arises. If this is done, while baseboard construction and wiring might take a little longer, the layout will be able to be moved and set up elsewhere, even if not in its entirety.

This is the approach we've taken with this



What you will need

SHOPPING LIST

- ◆ 5mm thick foamboard sheets
- ◆ DAS clay
- ◆ PVA glue
- ◆ Various 'organic' coloured matt household emulsion colours

TOOLS

- ◆ Knife and spare blades
- ◆ Steel rule
- ◆ Saws (including electric jigsaw)
- ◆ Pliers
- ◆ Drill and bits
- ◆ Files and abrasives
- ◆ Soldering iron (for wiring)
- ◆ Paintbrushes

rendition of the Culm Valley route, with the line split up across multiple baseboards, which are easy to bolt together, with the entire layout making up a U-shaped profile. The individual boards aren't too big or heavy and they each sit atop folding steel trestles. It's possible to erect one or two boards together in order to work on smaller areas at a time, depending on the circumstances. In theory, layouts built in this way can be extended at will, or even contracted if necessary.

Here, we'll look at how the track plan was put into practice, using Ian Robertson's buildings to help create a believable scenic composition. Next month, I'll explain how the scenery was 'planted', with a classic plastic kit being adapted to provide something of a scenic break. As you'll see, quite a bit of improvisation has been employed, which makes the project all the more interesting for the builder!

WHITEHALL HALT TRACKPLAN

We had a footprint of 2ft by 7ft available on the end of 'Hemyock', which is actually quite a sizeable area, but owing to the volume of buildings, this area would soon be used up, but hopefully not too crowded.

I used Railmodeller Pro software for the basic track plan (www.railmodeller.com), which features libraries for most commercial ready-to-lay track components, including Peco products. Railmodeller Pro is a simple drag-and-drop program and quite easy to grasp. It is only available for Apple Macintosh devices. However, Windows users can seek out other programmes, such as the following:

XtrakCAD

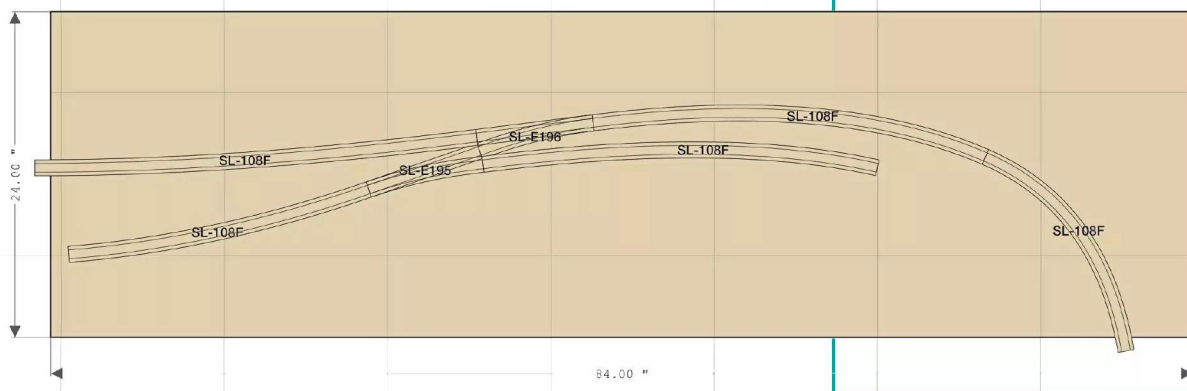
Web: www.sourceforge.net/projects/xtrkcad-fork/

SCARM

Web: www.scarm.info

TRAX3D

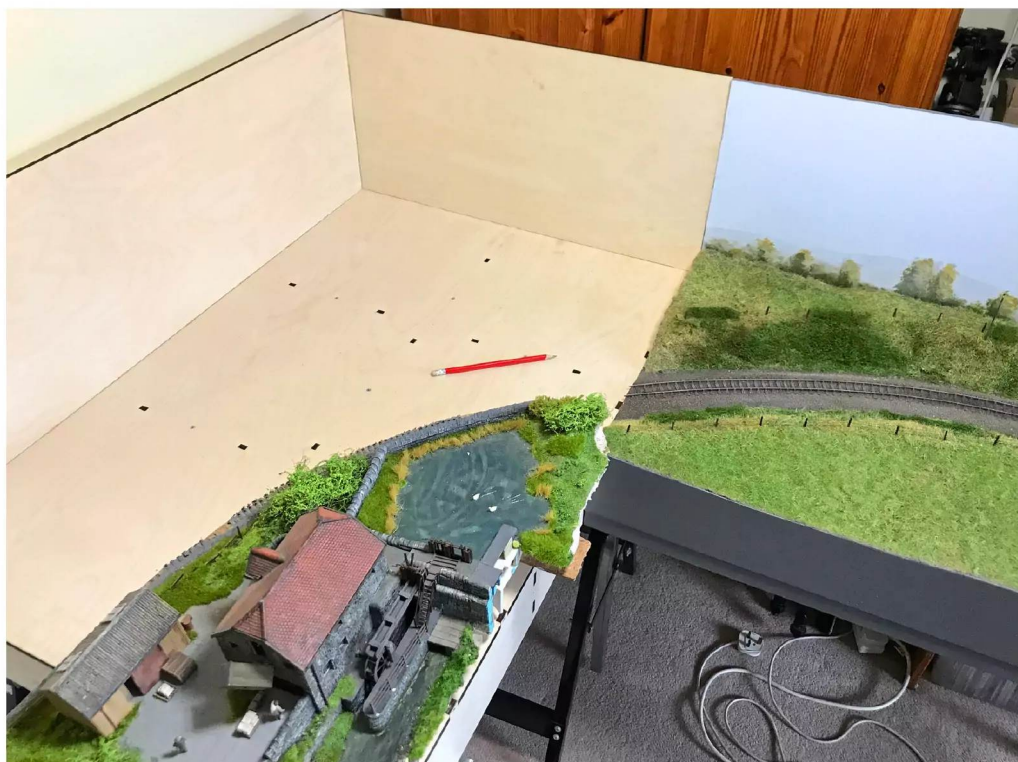
Web: www.trax3d.com



STEP BY STEP

1

After constructing the baseboards from Tim Horn laser-cut kits, and even though I'd created a track plan, the first step was to line up the geometry of the track leading from the Hemyock layout, making sure of smooth transitions without any awkward kinks or sudden changes in geometry, which will increase the risk of derailments. You can see here a Wills CK22 Watermill kit which was one of the second-hand buildings. The building had conveniently been modelled into a curved cameo which would work well. This can be one of the limitations of using second-hand structures, in that your track plan might have to be adjusted to accommodate them.



2

A bit of give and take was required to get these scenic modules to fit within the available space, with the mill scene having to be trimmed, as you can see here. This was done with a little trepidation, as I didn't want to damage the model. But I did come to realise how good a garden bench is as a cutting table, with the saw blade accommodated between the planks, while the model's base was fully supported.



3



4

The baseboard needed a little modification, with a section of the surface cut away to accommodate some of lower elements of the mill. This was easily done with an electric jigsaw and, of course, very much simpler to perform at the beginning of the build before any track is laid.



5

With the mill accommodated for, planning turned to the halt and platform. These sections had been salvaged from a previous layout. The real Whitehall only had a single siding, but to make operation more appealing, a head shunt was added by adding an additional point. While the track plan was created on computer, there's nothing like a full-sized mock-up to confirm how it will look.

6

With the track plan finalised, I used my usual 5mm foamboard base. Traditionally, cork sheet was my choice, but after using this method for 15 or more years, foamboard works just fine - it lies flat and is easy to source from the likes of Hobbycraft and online. Foamboard doesn't create quieter running, but it allows you to bed in buildings and gives you a ballast shoulder outside station yard areas. You don't want a ballast shoulder in yards though. Check out prototype photographs.

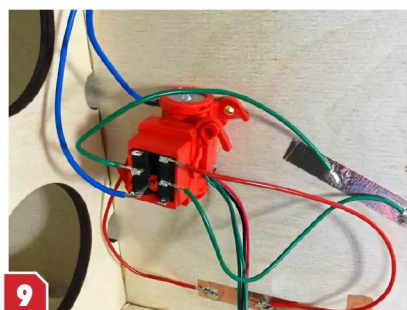
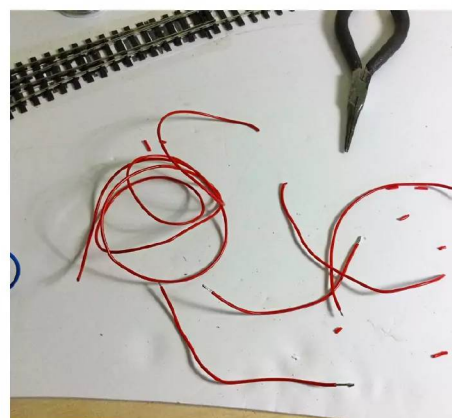




7 The track sections were laid out carefully before anything was joined or fixed down, checking for smooth transitions between straight and curved sections. Getting down to eye level gives the best view. Smooth curves and transitions look better but also promote more reliable running.



8 Next: wiring! It's good practice to have wire droppers from each section of track, to avoid relying on metal fishplates to transmit power between track sections. They may work initially but, over time, they may corrode, resulting in reduced or lost conductivity which can be tricky to rectify once the track is ballasted.



9 I used Peco Twistlock motors with additional frog polarity switching. They're easy to install and can be removed quickly when ballasting to avoid PVA glue gumming up the works before being reattached when all the glue has set.

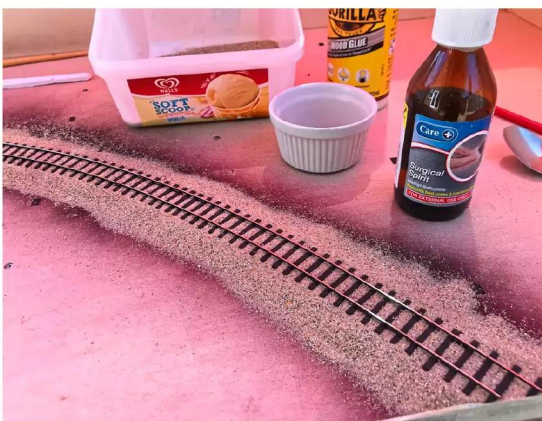


10 Point activation is done with small toggle switches, set into the fascia, positioned near each point. The other option would be a proper, centralised control panel. Being 'electrically challenged', I went for the simpler option.

11 Once wired up and running, the track and surroundings were painted. This protects the foamboard from PVA during ballasting and provides basic colouring. Halfords Brown Ultra Matt Camouflage is great for this. Priming first with Halfords primer is recommended, and gives good adhesion to the rails. Wherever possible, perform this stage outdoors or in a well-ventilated area, and wear a facemask - these paints are quite toxic.



12 Ballasting was achieved with sieved sand, a wire mesh kitchen sieve being ideal, but whether you decide to use the one from your own kitchen is up to you. Proprietary model railway ballast is equally good (I do possess loads of sand), but I prefer to choose a grade of ballast from the next scale down, using 'N' gauge for 'OO' and so on. Ballast, once tamped into position, is fixed into place with diluted PVA glue mixed with a little washing-up liquid (or dishwasher rinse aid) in the 'time honoured' fashion.



13



14

Behind the platform, the landscape rises up a little. To achieve this, I used a mix of foamboard and insulation foam. Some of the second-hand buildings had been built to sit on a slope, so a cut-out was made into the raised foamboard to accommodate them.



15



16

When cutting insulation foam consider using a mask. The tiny foam particles are a health hazard if inhaled. A hot glue gun is ideal for attaching foamboard and insulation foam, especially the latter. But beware – the glue can remain hotter for longer than you might expect.



17

A coating of wet plaster smooths the transition between the various sections of foam and gives a good base for bumpy old farm tracks. Sand it down if it's too rough once set, but don't inhale the dust.

18 Regular readers will know that I'm a DAS clay junky. It's great for creating smooth surfaces such as yards and even between sleepers and rails in sidings. Application isn't an exact science and takes a little practice. A stiff paint brush is good for pummeling it into place, as well as introducing a little texture into the surface. With sidings, I ballast normally first with sand, then run a little clay in, using water and stiff brush to create a slurry. Ballasting first creates a key for the clay to adhere, making the job a lot easier than applying to non-ballasted track.





19

Irritatingly, the result is bright orange so will need painting, unless you're building a science fiction layout based on Mars. DAS is also available in white, which actually would be my choice if building a china clay layout, or a snowy winter scene of course. There are brown modelling clays available from other suppliers but, unlike DAS, they tend to shrink and crack as they dry.

20 The power of a little paint transforms things. I used interior matt emulsion, the grey being a 'slate' colour from Wickes and the brown being an old, discontinued B&Q colour called Chocolate Torte. The paint names change every few years, so seek out what works best. With grey, avoid anything too dark. Road surfaces are actually quite pale unless they're wet, or the Tarmac is fresh. I wanted the track to look like the ballast was rather old and dirty, so I opted for the darker grey shade. For a lighter effect, dilute the paint to allow the original ballast colour to show through. Be sure to thoroughly clean the rail heads and conductive areas of point blades, ensuring the moving parts are free and working correctly, test-running trains for a period to identify and potential issues, which will be easier to rectify now.





HOW TO

BUILD A GWR PAGODA SHED

Chris Leigh tackles an 'O' gauge kit which creates a first-rate model of a GWR icon.

The word 'iconic' is used far too much these days, often for things which really were not icons. I first took an interest in GWR branch lines back around 1963 when, on a family outing by car, we stopped in an abandoned gateway to have a picnic lunch. The gateway was the entrance to Fairford station, which was closed, trackless and derelict.

My brother and I, mere trainspotters at the time, went walkabout and examined the wrecked stone station building, the signal box and even a turntable, its pit full of water and the floating corpses of several animals which had fallen in and been unable to get out. The station was still in GWR light and dark stone paintwork, only the signal box having been repainted into BR Western Region brown and cream. Signalboxes were maintained by the S&T department and were subject to more frequent repainting than most other buildings.

Also in light and dark stone paintwork was the corrugated iron bike shed on the platform, a distinctive building with a curious curved roof. Above the doorway was a small blue and white enamel sign: 'JOSEPH ASH & SONS, MAKERS, BIRMINGHAM.'

This, then, was my introduction to the GWR 'Pagoda roofed shed', a GWR icon if ever there was one. These sheds, dating from the first decade, were to be found



MODEL Intentio IMRLK-156 GWR Pagoda hut/waiting room/stores ♦ Price £27.50

AVAILABILITY
www.intentio.shop



PAGODA EXAMPLES

Location	Doors	Windows	Use
Appleford Halt	open	none	Halt shelters (2)
Adlestrop	2	2	Down side shelter
Alvescot	2	2	Cycle shed
Denham Golf Club	2	none	Halt shelters (2)
East Garston	2	2	Halt shelter
Fairford	2	2	Cycle shed
Lechlade	2	2	Cycle shed
Loudwater	2	2	Down side shelter
Rodmorton Halt	open	none	Halt shelter
Stanley Bridge Halt	2	2	Halt shelter
Stockcross & Bagnor Halt	2	2	Halt shelter*
Welford Park	2	2	Up and Down side halt shelters
Witney (new)	2	2	Cycle shed

* now at Didcot Railway Centre

Larger versions of same design

Luxulyan	Station building
Kelmscott & Langford Platform	Station building

Models of the standard two-window version have been offered in both 'OO' and 'N' gauge as kits and ready-made models. However, for my most recent project I needed one in 7mm:1ft scale. A quick internet search revealed a kit by Intentio, a name that was new to me. I checked. They came highly recommended, so I placed an order. The kit comprises laser-cut plywood parts for the basic shell, to which a corrugated card overlay is added. Assembly is straightforward and a convincing and accurate structure is easy to produce.

◀ across the entire GWR system and even in one or two places which were not strictly of GWR origin.

Some 20ft in length, the standard version had a double door and two windows in one elevation. There were, however, versions with no windows and with doors in both

sides. I even saw a version with three sets of double-door openings but with no doors on them. Much depended, it seems, on the particular use and location of the shed as they could be found in use for storage, for bicycles, for parcels and as shelters on station and halt platforms.



What you will need

SHOPPING LIST

- ◆ Evergreen No. 244 0.125in half-round strip, No. 146 0.040in by 0.125in strip
Availability: Model shops
- ◆ RailMatch 1603 GWR Stock Cream paint (aerosol) - also available in jars of acrylic or enamel
Availability: www.howesmodels.co.uk
- ◆ Various Omen Miniatures acrylic paints
Availability: www.omen-miniatures.com

TOOLS

- ◆ Craft knife
- ◆ Cutting mat
- ◆ Small set-square
- ◆ Clothes pegs or small clamps

STEP BY STEP



1

As with the recent feature on building Timber Tracks kits, the Intention building starts with a carcass of laser-cut board parts which interlock. I used Velo-set adhesive and checked verticals with a small square.



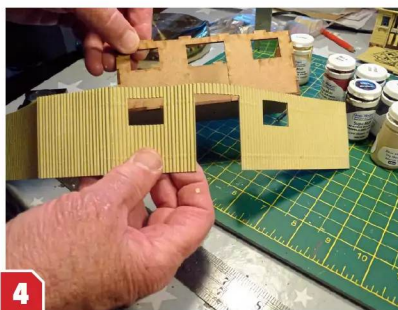
2

With the floor and walls assembled I checked the fit of the roof but did not glue it at this point as I wanted access to the interior. If you wish to paint the interior or add a bench seat, now is the time.



3

Attention now turned to the doors and windows. There are no written instructions so make sure you understand how these parts are meant to look on the finished model.



4

The external corrugations are a pre-cut thin card wrapper. I sprayed it with RailMatch 1603 GWR Stock Cream and allowed it to dry before gluing it in place. It comes pre-folded for the corners.



5

The doors were assembled next, corrugated pieces on the outside and frames on the inside. I made some hinges out of postcard strips painted black so that I could pose the doors open.



6 The frame for the roof is a bit of a jigsaw puzzle, so have a dry-run before glueing any of the parts. This all makes a particularly strong support for the card roof.



7 The roof supports have been glued in place. As the roof is only a layer of quite thin card, it is important that all the support ribs are positioned correctly and the tabs fully home in the slots.



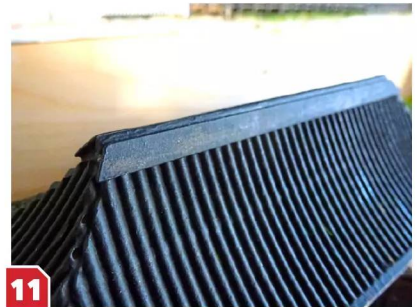
8 The corrugated roofing has to be curved 'against the grain' of the corrugations to create a smooth curve and no creases. I pressed the pieces, face-down, around a wooden rolling pin.



9 Now for a couple of embellishments. I added fascias of Evergreen No. 146 0.040in by 0.125in styrene strip under the eaves on all four sides of the building, attaching them with a spot of Evo-Stik Impact.



10 I then added gutters of Evergreen No. 244 0.125in half-round strip attached to the fascia with liquid polystyrene cement. The corners were mitred before fitting.



11 These buildings originally had a fleur-de-lys metal strip roof ridge, but by the 1960s it had usually gone missing. I added a folded card ridge with a strip of Evergreen plastic rod along the top.



12 Intention also offers packs of laser-cut plastic running-in boards, which can be customized to your chosen station name, although I made my own, as will be explained in next month's issue.

PROTOTYPE INSPIRATION



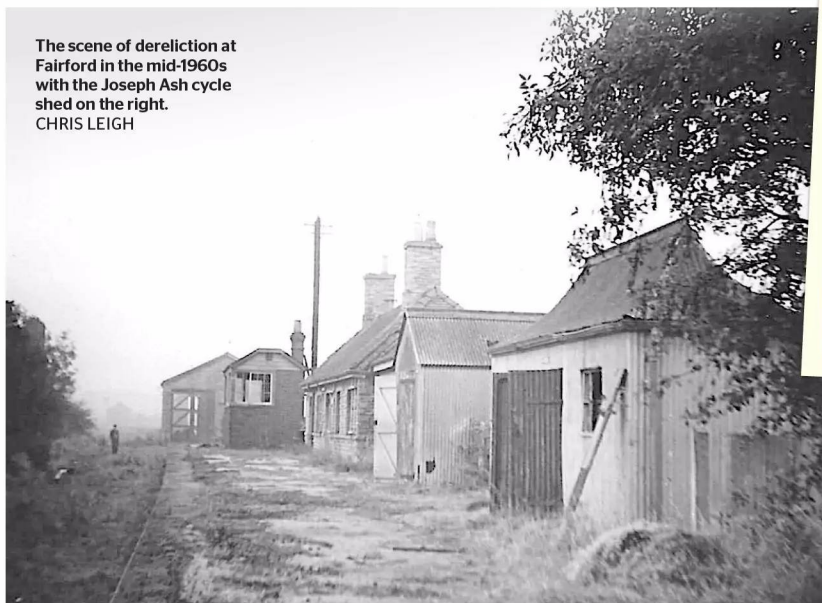
Above: Long-closed, nature takes over Mithian halt near Perranporth on the Chacewater-Newquay line, closed in February 1963. CHRIS LEIGH

Left: Denham Golf Club may originally have had windows in the ends of its otherwise 'blind' shelters. It retained its doors after many similar structures had lost theirs. KEITH JAGGERS



Above: A Joseph Ash 'pagoda' shed used as a cycle shed on the Up platform at Witney (New) station on the Oxford-Fairford branch in the mid-1960s after closure to passengers. CHRIS LEIGH

Right: A 'blind', windowless 'pagoda' in use as awaiting shelter on the Down platform at Appleford halt in the mid-1980s. Network SouthEast would eventually rebuild the halt with modern facilities. CHRIS LEIGH



The scene of dereliction at Fairford in the mid-1960s with the Joseph Ash cycle shed on the right. CHRIS LEIGH



Above: 'Pagoda' on a grand scale - Kelmscott & Langford platform on the Oxford-Fairford branch. CHRIS LEIGH

WHAT'S NEXT?

Next month, Chris will explain how he built a suitable platform for his GWR wayside halt.

**HOW TO**

BUILD PECO'S NEW SCALE WAGON KITS

George Dent dips his toes into 7mm scale narrow gauge modelling by assembling an exciting new range of wagon kits.

The arrival of Lionheart Trains' Lynton & Barnstaple locomotives and carriages in 2023 was the first time that 7mm scale narrow gauge piqued my interest, although it was Bachmann's more recent foray into what has been coined 'NG7' that really grabbed my attention.

Bachmann's 7mm scale 'Quarry Hunslet' O-4-OST, released last summer, immediately got me thinking of ideas for a micro layout in this enchanting scale. As with any new project, access to a decent amount of rolling stock is essential to maintain one's interest, especially during the winter months when spending time building baseboards in a cold workshop is less appealing. The prospect of assembling wagon kits, in the warmth of a kitchen, on the other hand, is much more welcome.

Therefore, I was excited to receive a box of wagon kits, kindly supplied by Peco, which are part of an emerging range aimed at the 'O-16.5/NG7' scale - that's 7mm scale/'O' gauge models running on 16.5mm gauge track. Peco has made suitable 'O-16.5' track and points for some time, although 'OO' gauge track can also be used if you can overlook the incorrect size of the sleepers.

'O-16.5/NG7' GAUGE | **6 hrs per wagon** |

So far, Peco has produced three wagon kit packs, featuring prototypes associated with the Glyn Valley Tramway, with a view to adding more vehicle types with a Welsh narrow gauge flavour.

Each kit consists mainly of laser cut wood components, plus metal wheels, brass bearings and plastic detail fittings and couplers (with NEM mounts). Some packs provide enough parts to build a trio of wagons, while the brake van kit featured here is a single vehicle kit.

The kits proved to be a joy to build, with only a basic kit of tools required and, apart for a couple of steps, assembly was achieved without solvent-based glues and painting undertaken by hand using water-based paints. Accordingly, building the wagons at the kitchen table over the Christmas holidays caused very little mess and virtually no smell, keeping everyone happy!

While many of us are more used to building rolling stock kits in plastic, metal or resin, Peco's laser cut wood components slot

together easily, with virtually no fettling. They have the advantage of possessing a lifelike wood grain texture and, thanks to laminated and interlocking parts, the wagons build into rugged, weighty vehicles which have operated very well under test.

My only gripe, albeit minor, relates to the spoked wheels supplied with the brake van and open wagons. On a few sets, the metal tyres had moved off the plastic hubs during transit and it took a little work with a 'OO' back-to-back gauge to get the wheels correctly re-aligned. So, I'd recommend checking your wheels before installation.

The use of 'OO' slimline tension lock couplers simplifies operation, although I eschewed those supplied by Peco in kit form, for the convenience of ready-made couplers which fitted into Peco's NEM slots perfectly.

The finished models, built virtually straight out of the box, really look the part and the kits offer excellent value. The wagons will look even better with the addition of some weathering and suitable loads. I can't wait to build more of these and to make a start on my planned layout.



Left: Peco's emerging new range of 'O-16.5/NG7' wagon kits are a boon for modellers working in 7mm scale narrow gauge, and a perfect addition to Bachmann's recent 'Quarry Hunslet'.

What you will need

SHOPPING LIST

- ◆ Peco • OR161 Glyn Valley Tramway Open Wagons (three-pack) • PR165 V-Skip Side Tip wagons (three-pack) • PR167 Glyn Valley Tramway Brake van
- Prices:** £19.95-£39.95 per pack
- Availability:** Peco stockists
- Web:** www.peco-uk.com
- ◆ Deluxe Materials Super 'Phatic, Glue 'n' Glaze, Rocket Rapid cyano and Laser-Cut Kit glues
- Availability:** Model Shops
- Web:** www.deluxematerials.co.uk

TOOLS

- ◆ Knife and spare blades
- ◆ Cutting mat
- ◆ Set square
- ◆ Steel rule
- ◆ Tweezers
- ◆ Files and abrasives
- ◆ Fine nosed pliers
- ◆ Paintbrushes
- ◆ Elastic bands
- ◆ Spring clamps
- ◆ Cotton swabs



1

The Peco kits consist mostly of laser-cut wood parts (using 1mm thick plywood), plus metal wheels, brass axle bearings and some plastic components. Full instructions are provided and only a small number of tools is required.



2

After familiarising myself with the instructions, I fitted a fresh blade to my trimming knife and began cutting the parts from the frets, working on a cutting mat. Tiny retaining 'tang's feature, so this job is quick and easy.

7MM



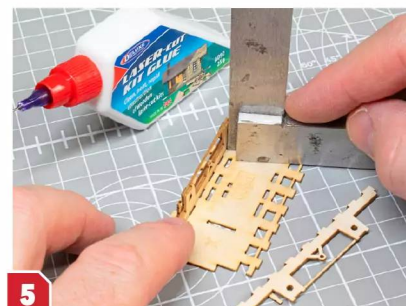
3

Assembly of the brake van began with the chassis side frames, each of which are laminated from three layers. I used a laser cut kit glue, applied in thin beads using the supplied precision applicator tip.



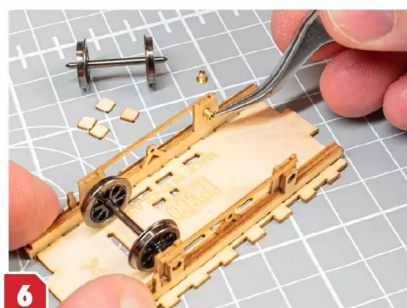
4

After aligning each part carefully and pressing together, further checks were made before each side frame was clamped in a miniature vice. Any glue that was squeezed out was wiped away with a damp cotton swab.



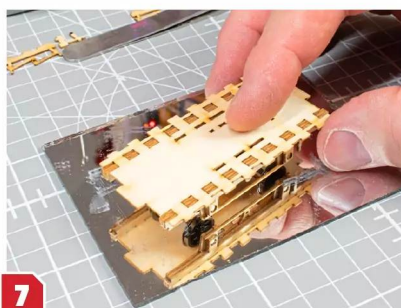
5

One of the side frames was glued into position in the wagon floor. All parts feature tab and slot joints, helping to get everything aligned. That said, a quick check with a set square ensured that the frame sat at a perfect right angle.



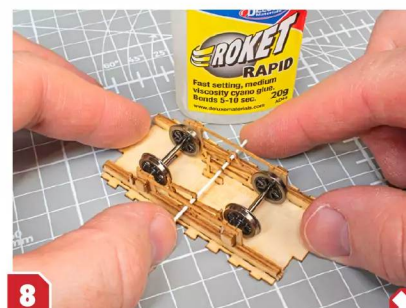
6

After adding the second side frame and allowing them to dry for 30 minutes or so, I glued the brass bearings into the axle holes (with cyanoacrylate glue) before slotting the wheel sets into place.



7

Placing the chassis onto a flat surface, such as glass, will quickly reveal whether the chassis is twisted - all four wheel flanges should touch the surface. Make any adjustments to the side frames now, before the glue hardens fully.



8

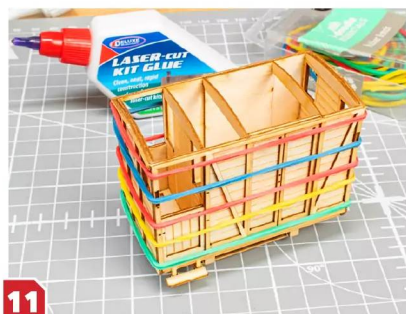
It's important to check that the wheels rotate freely. If they're tight, gently open out the side frames to give the axle more clearance. Once happy, set aside (upside-down) to dry, before adding the brake gear and plastic cross shaft.



9 The brake van's body could now be added, starting with the inner bulkhead and outer ends (laminated from inner and outer parts), slotting the parts in position and checking that they stood squarely in relation to the floor.



10 One of the sides was slotted into position, followed by the other, with everything clamped together using elastic bands. Choose the size of bands carefully, to keep the parts in place without distorting the body.



11 Allow the main bodyshell to dry for a few hours before removing the elastic bands and installing the overlays, which feature the body ribs and trusses. I added the end overlays first, followed by the sides, clamped again with elastic bands.



12 While the van body dried, I started on the open wagons, following a similar procedure, starting with lamination of the frames. The thinner material of the body sides and ends made them liable to warping when freed from the frets.



13 I wasted no time in laminating the body sides and end components, aligning the layers accurately and clamping tightly with spring clamps and clothes pegs, evening out the tension and ensuring they remained straight.



14 While the glue holding the body elements together dried, the chassis frames and ends were fitted to the wagon's floor and the bearings and wheels installed. As before, the wheels were checked on a sheet of glass.

Supplied as a pack of three wagon kits, the open wagons depict prototypes employed on the Glyn Valley Tramway, which would be suitable for carrying a range of commodities.



15 When the chassis parts had cured, the open wagon's body was assembled. First the ends, then the sides, with everything locking into place. Careful alignment of inner and outer laminations earlier makes all the difference.



16 Those elastic bands proved useful again for holding the body together without creating undue stress. Checks were made again by running the wagon on the sheet of glass to ensure the bands were not twisting the chassis.



17

With both bodysells fully cured and rigid, I added extra ballast weight from defunct RTR stock, secured with contact adhesive. Extra weight was added to the brake van to ensure a lower centre of gravity for this taller vehicle.

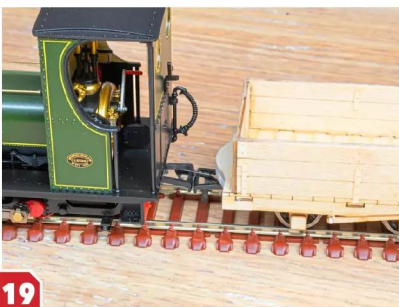


18

Contact adhesive was also used to secure the plastic NEM coupler mounts (supplied with the kits), which slot into holes in the floor. Instead of the tension lock parts provided I used some ready-made couplers to speed things up.



The V-Skip side-tip wagons offer various coupling options, to accommodate running in semi-fixed rakes, while the hoppers can be posed in the 'tipped' position if desired.



19

Once the glue began to set, but while it was still pliable, I checked the height of the couplers to ensure compatibility with other stock, especially my Bachmann 'Quarry Hunslet' locomotive, equipped with matching tension locks.



20

Only a few gaps arose on the brake van and open wagons, which were filled with Vallejo's acrylic Plastic Putty, which comes in a tube with a fine tip, allowing it to be 'piped' straight into the gap and smoothed with a damp swab.



21

After fixing glazing into the interior of the brake van (using material from the kit's clear plastic packaging), the flexible roof was glued and clamped in position with elastic bands. I left the interior walls in a natural wood finish.



22

The roof was finished with a layer of paper, cut using the supplied template. I used Deluxe Materials' Super 'Phatic glue, which can be spread thinly and dries quickly, reducing the risk of 'bubbling' under the paper.



23

Plastic tube is provided for the stove pipe (I sprayed it black). Fine wire is also supplied, plus a handy bending jig, to ensure the handrails are formed accurately, before they were bonded in place with cyano glue.



24

Just before completing this feature, Peco's latest addition to the range - a set of V-Skip side tipping wagons - arrived. They're assembled in similar fashion, although the skips require a bit more filling to tidy up the various joints.



25

When the filler had cured fully, sanding sticks and needle files took care of the tidying-up, producing an impressive structure. Keeping the skip and chassis separate for now will make the painting stage easier.



26

Each wagon was painted with LifeColor water-based acrylic paints. There's no need for a primer. Leaving the interior of the open wagon as bare timber added realism, although some weathering wouldn't go amiss!

A few simple improvements to a layout, such as cameo scenes, can provide more visual interest for onlookers and more satisfaction for the builder. Loading a wagon bound for the sophisticated food markets of Europe with pallets of Spam adds a tongue-in-cheek element.



HOW TO

MODEL PALLETISED GOODS

General goods are invariably transported on pallets these days, so **Peter Marriott** set out to see what was available to help detail the interior of his rail-served warehouse.

Despite the bulk of the general goods market moving from rail to road transport since the 1960s, recent years have seen a modest resurgence of rail-borne freight in certain sectors, encouraged by government incentives and a wish to help reduce emissions from heavy goods vehicles.

Therefore, adding a rail-served goods transshipment shed or warehouse to a contemporary-themed layout is an increasingly viable option, especially as there have been some wonderful wagons released in the past few years. Revolution Trains' IZA Cargowagon twinsets are a prime example (offered in 'N' and 'OO', along with Heljan's 'OO' IWB bogie vans. Both wagon types have been around since the late 1980s, employed to carry a wide range of goods between the



UK and Europe, initially via train ferry services and, latterly, through the Channel Tunnel.

Bachmann's new BR 12ton 'Palvan' (see review on page 92) also offers the option of recreating a 'modern' 1960s freight facility, portraying British Rail's ill-fated attempts to cater for the increase in palletised goods.

There's also a huge number of suitable detailing accessories available in all the popular scales, including the essential pallets and a variety of loads, plus warehouse staff, trolleys, forklift trucks and much more.

Here's a brief overview of the products I came across during the detailing of my own 'OO' warehouse scene, with some tips on how to add a little extra realism.

SPAM MAIL

Offered as loads for its range of flatbed lorries, Oxford Diecast's packs of palletised freight are worth investigating, with this pack featuring boxes of that great culinary institution, Spam. The pack of four loaded pallets come ready-made, making them a convenient and great value option. They fit nicely inside this 'HO' Electrotren Hbfis wagon, which features sliding doors.

Products: Oxford Diecast 76ACC010 Pallet load with Spam boxes

Availability: £6.95

Web: www.oxforddiecast.co.uk



TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Every warehouse needs at least one forklift truck, and this Still vehicle is from the 'HO' Wiking range, while the hand-operated pallet truck is from Noch. Another source of forklift trucks is West Hill Wagon Works (www.westhillwagonworks.com), although they're supplied unpainted.

Products: Wiking Still RX70-25 forklift truck

Price: £18.25

Availability:

Gaugemaster
Web: www.gaugemaster.com





BOXING CLEVER

Busch offers a pack of 12 pallets that are ideal for a warehouse setting. Supplied in kit form, the pallets are laser-cut from real wood and the various card packages must be folded to shape. They come pre-printed with a range of logos and markings, offering plenty of variety.

Another pack provides six pallets with a mix of builder's materials, such as clay pipe sections and stone blocks, all of which come pre-coloured.

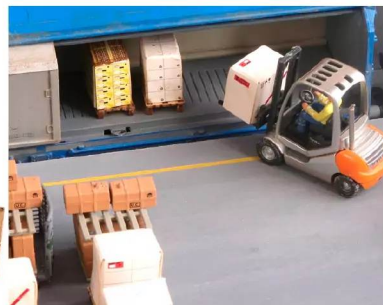
Products: Busch 1812 Pallets with boxes,

1813 Pallets with Building materials

Price: £18.50 each

Availability: Golden Valley Hobbies

Web: www.goldenvalleyhobbies.com



WAREHOUSE WORKERS

There are countless miniature figures on the market these days, plenty of which will be suitable for use within a warehouse, although figures in this pack of workers from Noch are clad in typical work wear and are striking appropriate poses. A hand-operated pallet truck is included, along with a special barrel trolley.

Also from Noch is a pack of distressed and rotten pallets, some featuring random loads. These will look perfect dumped around the rear of a warehouse.

Products: Noch 15038 Warehouse workers (£13.16), 14846 Pallets (£12.99)

Availability: Noch stockists

Web: www.noch.com



PACK IT IN

There's an attractive set of real wood packing cases available in the Proses range, supplied in laser-cut kit form. Portraying heavy-duty machinery crates, with loading and warning signs engraved into the wood, they're easy to assemble and can be painted or treated with wood stain for an aged appearance.

Products: Proses HL-K-02 Big wooden crates wagon load kit

Price: £9.00

Availability: Bachmann stockists

Web: www.bachmann.co.uk



WHET YOUR PALLET

The Ten Commandments range is always worth a look, as it includes plenty of stone-cast packing crates, but also sets of empty cast metal pallets, which simply require priming and painting before use. A little dry-brushing can improve the pallets, by highlighting the wood grain effect cast into the parts.

Products: L104 set of three pallets

Price: £2.95

Availability:

Ten Commandments

Web: www.tencommandmentsmodels.co.uk



Clean contact surfaces are vital to ensuring reliable layout operation. **George Dent** offers some simple tips to help keep your trains moving, and trials a new rail cleaning fluid.

Track-cleaning is a necessary chore for any model railway, even if your layout is kept under dust covers when out of use. Whether it's generic dust from the railway room or exhibition hall, stray paint deposits, or oil and grease dropped by passing locomotives, our track is inevitably prone to the build-up of unwanted contaminants.

Most track features nickel silver rail, which is naturally prone to tarnishing, while steel rail can corrode if employed in damp locations. The cleanliness (or otherwise) of locomotive and rolling stock wheels can also have a profound effect on the rails. There's an argument that plastic wheels can lead to dirtier rails, although how true that is, I'm unsure. I do find metal wheels easier to keep clean, however.

Areas of poor contact between the rails and



power-collecting metal wheels can lead to the creation of carbon deposits, thus making matters worse. Furthermore, any imperfections in the rail head's surface will act as a magnet for grime, so it pays to be methodical when cutting and laying track sections in the first instance.

As a child, I recall asking an exhibition layout operator for some track-cleaning tips and, while being temporarily perplexed by the term 'elbow grease', soon realised that there were few magic cures, especially as we're encouraged not to use electronic track-cleaning units these days, due to their incompatibility with DCC and modern motors.

However, time and experience have shown that there are numerous steps

a modeller can take to minimise the problem, mostly through adopting a preventative maintenance regime of regular cleaning.

Combining humble track rubbers with cleaning fluids, both of which are available from countless brands, plus a vacuum cleaner and old, clean T-shirts, the job can be achieved with minimum fuss.

One of the latest cleaning products to come my way is a new alcohol-based fluid from Geoscenics. I've tested it on a few of my layouts over the past couple of months and found it to be effective for removing general dirt and debris, as well as paint and oily deposits. It's equally good on rails and metal wheels and hasn't had any deleterious effects on plastic components or paintwork. It's certainly ideal for regular use, with a quick wipe down of the rails before each running session helping to ensure smooth running.



Maintaining clean and shiny rails will help to keep your trains working reliably.

EXCLUSIVE READER OFFER

Readers can claim a £2.00 discount off the usual £18.00 price of Geoscenics Track Cleaner. Each pack contains two bottles of cleaner fluid, and this exclusive offer runs until February 23 2025.

The discount is available for web orders only – simply enter the code **MRtrack** at the checkout stage.

Web: www.geoscenics.co.uk



STEP
BY
STEP

1

Rails will always pick up dirt, but we can help minimise deposits by ensuring railheads are as smooth as possible. When cutting and laying track sections, use fine abrasives to polish away any tool marks left by a saw or file.

2

It's also important to tidy up the rails after soldering power feeds or if installing copper-clad sleepers, especially at baseboard joints. A rub with successive grades of abrasive pads will remove any excess solder and flux residues.

3

Track rubbers are available from many manufacturers, consisting of various grades of abrasive material. They work quickly and effectively, but many are prone to leaving behind plenty of debris (see Step 6).

4

Track rubbers are great for removing paint from the rail heads, particularly after weathering. As well as the horizontal rail head surfaces, keeping the inside edges of the rails clear maximises the conductive surface area.

5

Finer sanding pads, of medium and fine grades, are useful for treating point blades and their contact surfaces. Again, working on the upper, inner faces of the rails provides a greater conductive area for the wheels.

6

It's important to remove debris from the track rubber, lest it be picked up by wheels and deposited elsewhere. A soft brush can sweep debris away from rails or, for best results, brush it towards the nozzle of a vacuum cleaner.

STEP BY STEP



1

Rails may appear clean, but close inspection may reveal a build-up of dirt. Dust is an ever-present hazard and nickel silver rail is naturally prone to tarnishing, especially in damp conditions, so regular cleaning is a must.



2

While an abrasive track rubber may be best for stubborn deposits, a cleaning fluid is ideal for more regular use. Dampen a scrap of cotton fabric (from an old T-shirt) with cleaning fluid and gently rub it over the tops of the rails.



3

You'll be surprised by how much dirt is absorbed by the fabric - these rails appeared clean beforehand. Repeat the process, using a cotton swab to reach into awkward areas. Take care when working around delicate structures.



4

Allow a few minutes for the cleaner to dry on the rails before wiping with a clean cloth to remove any remaining dirt or residue. The Geoscenics cleaning fluid is alcohol-based and evaporates quickly.



5

The same fluid is also ideal for cleaning wheels of locomotives and rolling stock - an equally important task. Dip a cotton swab into the fluid and wipe over the wheel treads, moving to a clean swab when the tip becomes dirty.

Mobile Rail Cleaners

Many of our layouts feature areas that aren't so easy to reach by hand, such as within tunnels or hidden sidings. Fixing a track rubber to a length of wood may help to a degree, but a mobile cleaner offers a labour-saving and far-reaching solution.

Dapol's motorised track-cleaning car offers an innovative option, with a spinning abrasive pad to clear away dirt from the rail heads, plus a vacuum to suck up dust and debris into an internal storage bin. It can also be fitted with cloth pads which can be loaded with a cleaning fluid (also offered by Dapol) to condition the rails.

Although it's not self-propelled, it does take power from the rails and can be hauled around the layout at regular intervals. Numerous special liveries have been offered over the years, including this exclusive *Model Rail* version from the late 2000s.

Web: www.dapol.co.uk



A quick repaint into a more convincing livery helped this track-cleaning wagon look more at home on a UK layout. Running this fictional de-icing train as part of the layout's regular operations helps minimise the build-up of dirt on the rails.



Other, cheaper mobile cleaners are also available, in the form of adapted wagons, mostly from European manufacturers, although Gauguemaster has commissioned several anglicised versions over the years. This tank wagon is from the Lima range (Hornby International) and features a floating cloth pad between the axles, plus a healthy amount of weight to help keep the pad in contact with the rails while the wagon is in motion.

Soaking the pad with a suitable cleaning fluid allows the pad to clean and condition the rails as the wagon is hauled around the layout.



***Offers available from 30/12/24.
T&Cs apply**

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HOW TO

RECREATE A SNIPPET THE WEST HIGHLAND



Scotland's West Highland Railway is a line that offers excellent modelling potential, especially for those lucky enough to have plenty of room in which to model the spectacular scenery and distinctive lineside structures. However, it's also a suitable subject for modellers with precious little space.

Opening in 1894, the West Highland line was built to link Glasgow with the busy ports of Oban and Mallaig. Leaving the North Clyde route at Craigendoran, near Helensburgh, the route heads into the Western Highlands, alongside Gare Loch and Loch Lomond before the line diverges at the famous junction at Crianlarich, where the line crosses the erstwhile Callander-Oban line.

Oban trains turn west and head via Loch Awe and Connel Ferry, while Mallaig trains head north across the wilds of Rannoch Moor before turning west and heading to Fort William, where Mallaig trains must reverse.

The route traverses some of the most spectacular scenery in the UK and, during the BR steam era, ex-LNER Class K1s, K2s, K4s and B1s were the staple motive power, followed by ex-LMS

Peter Marriott shares one of his new projects, which aims to capture a tiny slice of this famous route.

'Black Fives'. BR steam operations ceased in the mid-1960s, with Type 1 and Type 2 Bo-Bo diesels taking over (Classes 20, 21/29, 24, 25, 26 and 27), with the Type 3 Class 37s gaining dominance from the late 1970s on passenger, sleeper and freight services. The arrival of the 'Sprinter' diesel multiple units (DMUs) in 1989 saw an end to loco-hauled passenger trains, with the Class 156s ruling the roost for the past 30-odd years, latterly boosted by the addition of Class 153s modified to carry cycles and luggage.

Two-car Class 104 DMUs operated shuttle services between Oban and Crianlarich in the mid-1980s, with a special livery applied that gave rise to the nickname of 'Mexican Bean' (I look forward to the arrival of Heljan's 'OO' model later this year).

Regular steam trains still operate between Fort William and Mallaig during May-October, thanks to the famous 'Jacobite' services (currently operated by West Coast Railways), which remain extremely popular, especially given the line's links to the Harry Potter movies. The Fort William portion of the Caledonian Sleeper service to/from London operates throughout the year, currently hauled by a Class 73/9 and a '66', but previously was in the hands of Class 67s and, before that, Class 37s, while a regular freight flow of alumina tanks run to and from the aluminium smelter at Fort William and Blyth on the Northumberland coast, hauled by GBRf Class 66s. Oil from Grangemouth to Fort William was another regular freight traffic until relatively recently.

Other special trains operate over the line on an infrequent basis, such as the luxury 'Royal Scotsman', while timber traffic brought a resurgence in the 2000s, thanks to Kronospan's contract with Colas Rail to haul logs from Arrochar and Crianlarich to its paper mill in Chirk, North Wales.



The origin of this project is a Tim Horn 3ft by 1ft baseboard, which had been recycled from a previous layout.

OF LINE



NEW LAYOUT – OLD BASEBOARD

Over the years, I have built numerous small layout projects and many of them have sat in store among the rafters of my garage. Now and again, the boards are recycled for new undertakings, which was the case here, with a 3ft long laser-cut plywood baseboard (from the Tim Horn range) identified for re-use.

I usually covered the top surface of my wooden baseboards with a layer of mounting card, purely to make the job of removing scenery, buildings and track that bit easier. It prevents the plywood top face from splintering and ensures that a nice flat surface is left for a new layer of card and the subsequent laying of track. A flat-bladed screwdriver or scraper tool is all that's required to lift the corners of the mounting card.

I am always a little sad when I demolish a previous project, but I do try and salvage as much possible for re-use and, when the baseboard is back in its bare state, there's the thrill of being faced with a blank canvas.

The work on this 3ft by 1ft project took around two weeks, spending just an hour or so per day. While it's not a working layout

What you will need

SHOPPING LIST

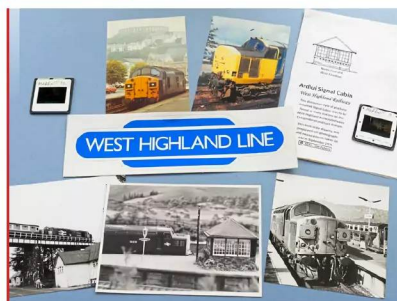
- ◆ Red track ballast, medium grade
Availability: WW Scenics
Web: www.wwscenics.com
- ◆ Evergreen 0.8mm diameter styrene rod
Availability: Model shops
- ◆ AMMO/MIG Muddy Ground, Mechanical Wash, various acrylic paints
Availability: Scale Model Shop
Web: www.scalemodelshop.co.uk
- ◆ Woodland Scenics • 2in Riser • Foam Putty • Foam Tack Glue
Availability: Bachmann stockists
Web: www.bachmann.co.uk
- ◆ LX463-OO Armco Safety Barriers (pack of 10)
Availability: Scale Model Scenery
Web: www.scalemodelscenery.co.uk

TOOLS

- ◆ Craft knife with new blade
- ◆ Self-sealing cutting board
- ◆ Steel ruler
- ◆ Selection of paintbrushes
- ◆ Pin vice and drill bits
- ◆ Felt-tipped pens (various colours)
- ◆ Sprue cutters
- ◆ Rail cutters
- ◆ Paintbrushes
- ◆ Tweezers
- ◆ Electrostatic grass tool

per se, it does provide an ideal photographic backdrop for my Scottish-themed rolling stock, with the main line raised up on an embankment, while the timber loading facility is in the lower foreground, as was the case near Crianlarich, where part of the 'lower' line towards Callander (closed 1965) was retained for freight use into the 1980s. ➤

Setting out the scene



I played around with a simple track plan to decide which formation would be the most visually appealing for this small project. I had in my mind a main line running track in the background raised on an embankment with the Crianlarich Lower timber loading yard at the lower level in the foreground.

I used Woodland Scenics Riser sections to raise the height of the main line by 2in. These are flexible sections of hard foam (polystyrene), available in heights of 0.5in, 0.75in, 1in, 2in and 4in.

The Woodland Scenics Sub Terrain system features various components, including pre-cut track inclines/declines with 2%, 3% or 4% gradients, including starter/transition pieces to ensure that changes in gradient are smooth.

All these components are lightweight and thus ideal for portable layouts, while they can be used in any way to suit your layout size and location. They can be fixed to each other and the baseboard using Woodland Scenics Foam Tack Glue or regular PVA. While the glue sets, hold the pieces down with Woodland Scenics T-pins or long nails. The foam pieces can be easily cut with a special Foam Knife available from Woodland Scenics or a hot wire cutting tool.

Why the West Highland Line suits compact layouts

- 1:** It's a single-track line with lots of curves.
- 2:** Many of the stations are passing places, some with a couple of sidings.
- 3:** Passenger trains are short, especially when modelling the post-1990s eras. Two-car Class 156 DMUs have predominated, recently boosted with a Class 153 single car added for cycle/luggage on busier services.
- 4:** Fort William portion of Caledonian Sleeper, plus various charters, adds interest.
- 5:** Steam services work regularly in the summer between Fort William and Mallaig.
- 6:** Range of freight services have operated the line over the years, along with engineers' trains.

- 7:** Most of the relevant motive power and rolling stock is available in either 'OO' or 'N' gauge.

- 8:** The scenery is splendid!

North British Type 2 D6108 (later Class 29) is reversing empty timber carriers into the timber loading area at Crianlarich in this view from around 1970. COLOUR RAIL



STEP BY STEP

1

When modelling the Scottish Region in the diesel age, choosing a suitable ballast is important, as the real thing is usually a pink-red shade. Suitable scatter materials is available from various sources, such as Geoscenics and WW Scenics.



3

I allowed a few days for the glue to set before painting the rails using two coats of rust acrylic paint with a small paintbrush. I then applied Ammo Mechanical Wash fluid to the ballast, to give it more of a 'lived in' appearance.



5

I wanted to create a muddy ground that would have been churned up by the log-carrying road vehicles. I used Ammo Muddy Ground to paint the land between the sidings, applied with old paintbrushes and a foam brush.



7

The area beneath the overbridge was laid with a sheet of Noch cobblestones, fixed to the baseboard with PVA glue. I used more of the Ammo Muddy Ground to help the cobbles blend into the surrounding area.



2

With the track laid and the dry ballast scattered and neatly arranged, it can be bonded with PVA diluted with water, and with a drop of washing-up liquid added. Stir the fluid fully and apply gently with a pipette or syringe, allowing it to soak into the loose material.



4



6

Before the mud had dried, I dragged a tractor's back wheels through the wet Mud to create tyre tracks. I washed the plastic tractor wheels under a warm water tap to clean the mud off after this was done



8

I made a timber foot crossing from strips of wood, building up the slopes on either side with Woodland Scenics Foam Putty (regular plaster will also do), which I left to dry before blending everything in with acrylic paints.

MAKE YOUR OWN SIGNS

1 I photographed this sign at the Crianlarich Railhead facility in 2006, when timber was being loaded within the station yard. In hindsight I should have taken the image head-on, but I wasn't thinking I'd be needing to make a replica of it in 20 years' time!



2

I cleaned the print heads on my printer and set the print preferences to 'best quality' before printing off a copy, experimenting with the scaling function until the dimensions looked about right.



3

There was enough of the red background to trim the printed sign in a way that allowed the lettering to be straightened. The edges of the paper were coloured to match the red face as close as possible with a felt tip pen.



4

I imagined that my depot was operated by Colas Rail and made up a sheet of signs based on a logo I found online.



5

MODELLING THE RETB ERA

Radio Electronic Token Block (RETB) is the signalling system used on the West Highland Line, as well as the Kyle Line and the Far North Line. Similar in principle to Electric Token Block, RETB uses 'electronic' tokens issued to the driver by radio on the West Highland line from a single control centre at Banavie.

RETB operation began on the Mallaig section from December 1987 and between Crianlarich and Fort William Junction by May 1988. Sixteen signal boxes were closed under the re-signalling scheme, although the Fort William area is still controlled by conventional signalling from Fort William Junction signal box. Accordingly, only RETB-fitted motive power is able to operate over these lines.

In terms of modelling, there are no physical signals to recreate, but there is a variety of telecommunications equipment to be seen at various locations. However, the most visible aspect is the lineside signage, which is essential to recreate. Thankfully, suitable sign packs are available from Sankey Scenics, in 'N', 'OO' and 'O' gauge.

Product: RETB4 Sankey Scenics RETB boards

Web: www.sankeyscenics.co.uk



Sankey Scenics' sheet of RETB boards are invaluable for the current West Highland scene. Each pack comes with a well-researched information sheet on RETB in practice and how to model it.



Using a fresh scalpel blade and a steel rule, the required signs were carefully cut from the sheet and the edges carefully touched in with a black felt-tip pen.



A pack of Evergreen 0.8mm (0.030in) diameter styrene rod provided suitable material for the signposts, which were painted grey before fixing to the rear of the signs with PVA glue.



When the glue was fully set, mounting holes were marked out and drilled into the baseboard and the signs glued in position, with the key element of the sign (the yellow circle in this instance) set at the driver's eye line.

SAFETY BARRIERS

A finishing touch came in the form of a pack Armco safety barriers from Scale Model Scenery. The laser-cut parts are easy to assemble, and enough sections are included to cover over 80mm of roadside. After building and painting, they were gently bent to the required shape and 'planted' into the scene, providing protection for the railway from encroaching road vehicles.

Web: www.scalemodelscenery.co.uk



WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Why not try and visit the area as part of your holiday plans for the new year?

BOOKS

◆ *Modelling Scottish Railways*

by Ian Futers (Santona)

◆ *Scottish Layout Projects books*

by Ian Futers (Santona)

◆ *Modelling the British Rail Era*

by Ian Fleming, Steve Flint, Ken Gibbons and Jeff Taylor (Santona)

Web: www.santona.co.uk

◆ *Iron Road to the Isles*

by Michael Pearson (Waygoose)

Web: www.amazon.co.uk

◆ *Modelling the West Highland Line* by

Peter Marriott, *Railway Modeller*,

November 1989

◆ *Dunn Roamin' in Scotland*,

Pip Dunn, November 2002 *Model Rail*

◆ *Telerail DVD - Rail Freight Today*

Vol 3: Scotland

Web: www.telerail.co.uk

◆ Join the Friends of the West Highland Line

Web: www.westhighlandline.org.uk

◆ Rail Scot website

Web: www.railscot.co.uk

Prototype inspiration



Left: Class 27 5396 is seen in the timber loading yard at Crianlarich Lower in September 1972. The line towards Fort William traverses the viaduct in the background. COLOUR RAIL

Right: Class 26 D5350 negotiates the former junction at Crianlarich in May 1963, between the Lower line (which once ran to Callander) and the line to Crianlarich Upper station and the junction with the Fort William line. The stub of the Lower line was retained for freight use into the 1980s. COLOUR RAIL



Cheeky little **number**

Dave Finney decided to use as many of the leftover bits and bobs he had amassed to create a fun and portable layout, and at minimal extra cost.

Words: Chris Gadsby Photography: Chris Nevard Artwork: Andrew Mackintosh





“ **What makes this layout great?** ”

With such a small space to work with, Dave could really pin down every small detail to create an overall scene which looks superb. Two three-way points provide plenty of operational interest, despite the lack of physical size.

”

If there's one thing model railway builders are good at it's accumulating lots of stuff. We are gifted with packs upon packs of figures and scenic details for our birthdays and Christmases, we rummage in the bargain bins at exhibitions and we never, ever throw anything away. We kid ourselves that those old kit sprues may be useful in the future.

In practice, much of this stuff gets put in a box of bits, never to be seen or touched again until eventually the pile gets so big that something has to be done. Do you chuck the lot? Or do you take the same approach as Dave Finney and build a shunting layout full of odds and sods, purely to get rid of them?

"I felt that I was spending far too much of my time

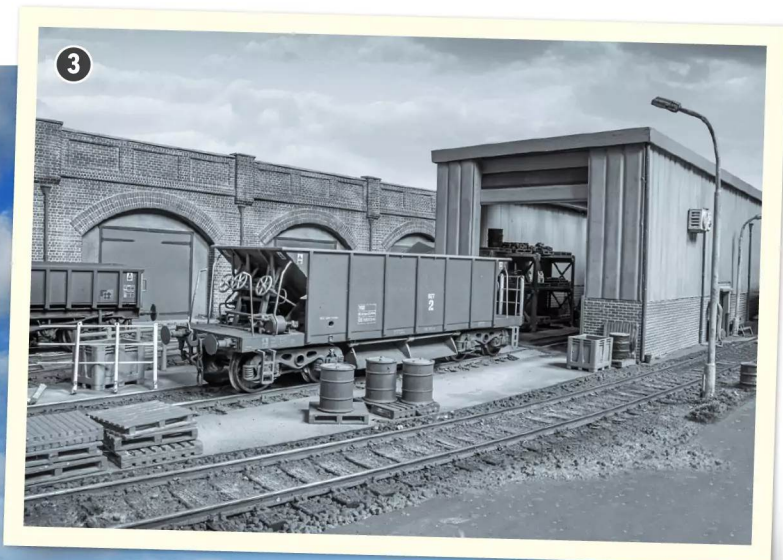
building model railways. The standards for exhibition layouts have become so high that it was all getting a bit much, and I was taking forever on tiny details just to get them looking as good as possible. I was keen to build something minimal, in a size that could easily be carried into any room of the house and played with, without having to worry about aligning baseboards or anything like that. Ultimately I had one overriding goal: get rid of all that accumulated stuff."

'Cheeky Shunt', as Dave titled it, measures 4ft 6in by 1ft and is set in the early to mid-1990s, about the time Dave had what he calls his first 'decent' car.

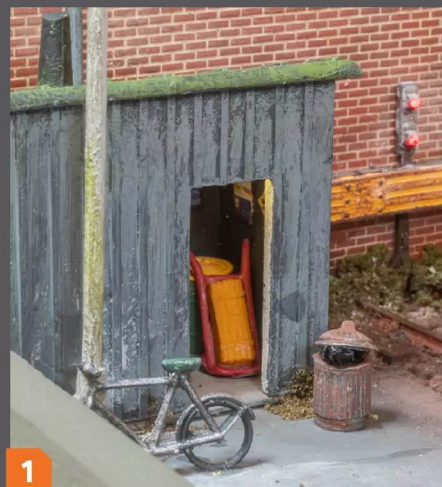
"I had a white Vauxhall Astra with the same year registration plate as a die-cast model that was ►



2 The rearmost line is not connected to the rest of the layout. It's created from various rail offcuts, and has been heavily weathered. Although it isn't operational, wagons can be posed there to provide extra visual interest.



3 things we like



The rusty metal bin, overflowing with trash.

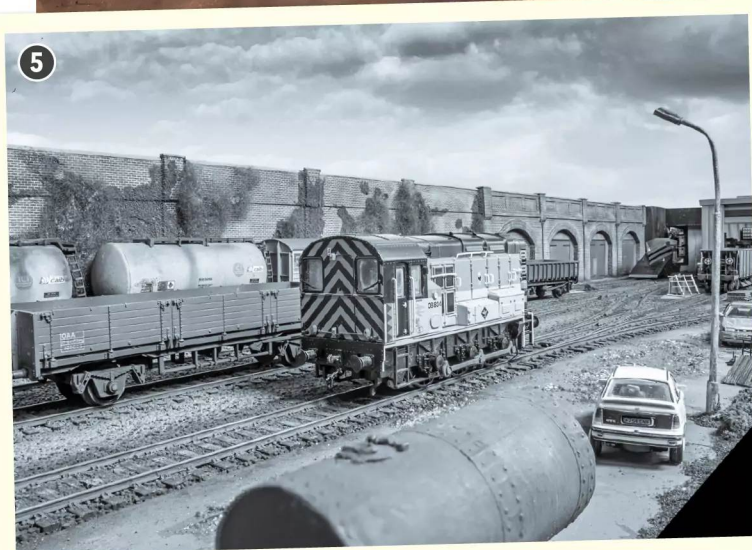


The fully detailed, illuminated repair shed.



The detailed interior of the workers' hut.

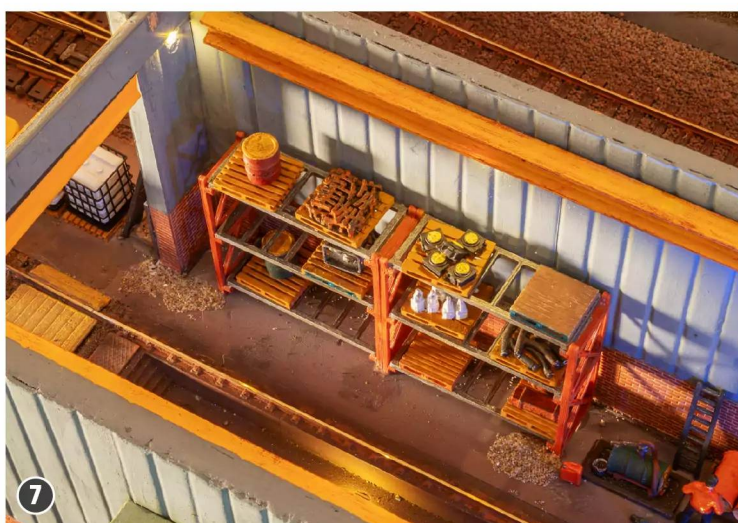
4 Dave has incorporated working lights across the whole of the layout, ranging from lamp posts to bufferstops. As the models used at 'Cheeky Shunt' also have working lights, Dave particularly enjoyed night-time operations.



available, so putting that on the layout sets the era nicely alongside a Ford Sierra saloon. That's pretty much the extent of anything that places it in a particular era. I can run whatever I want, or could, as I've since sold the layout."

Despite going in with the objective of wanting to get rid of as much as possible, Dave didn't just plonk things down with little care and attention just to get it done as quickly as possible. He gave 'Cheeky Shunt' the same care and attention to detail that his other creations have received, and came across similar challenges.

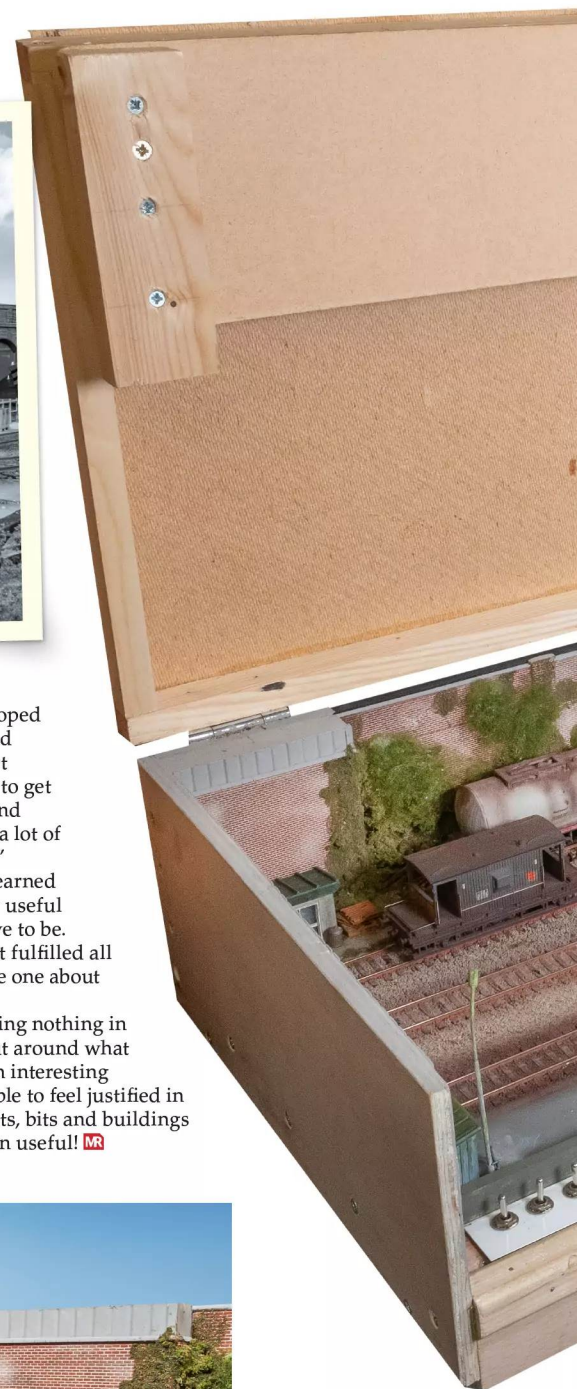
"The biggest challenge was, surprisingly, coming up with the track plan. The two three-way points take up quite a bit of space, but were necessary to give me more than just a couple of sidings. I knew I was going to sell it once it was completed so it had to have something that would make it appealing



to another user. The sidings, therefore, needed to be long enough to serve their purpose without being so long that the layout wouldn't be portable, and I needed space for something to provide a bit of extra interest so that the layout wasn't just lengths of track."

That interest comes in the form of a scratchbuilt shed with a removable roof, hiding a world of 3D-printed details.

"Removable buildings are great for keeping them safe while the layout is being transported, but it does mean you've got to be very careful as to how you place them back on the layout to avoid any unrealistic light leakage every time you put them in place. Being able to remove them is important for cleaning the track within, but if the building is so big that you can limit that to just the roof, it retains the rigidity of the structure and you can prevent light ►



leakage around the base. The rest of the layout is filled with believable details from my spares box and anything that was missing I got from a supplier on eBay, including pallets, barrels, a forklift truck, shelving units, parts of engines and of course, the worker's push bike. All of these parts came unpainted so they tested my patience with a fine brush! Even the bins, which came in silver, were the wrong shade, so they all needed re-doing."

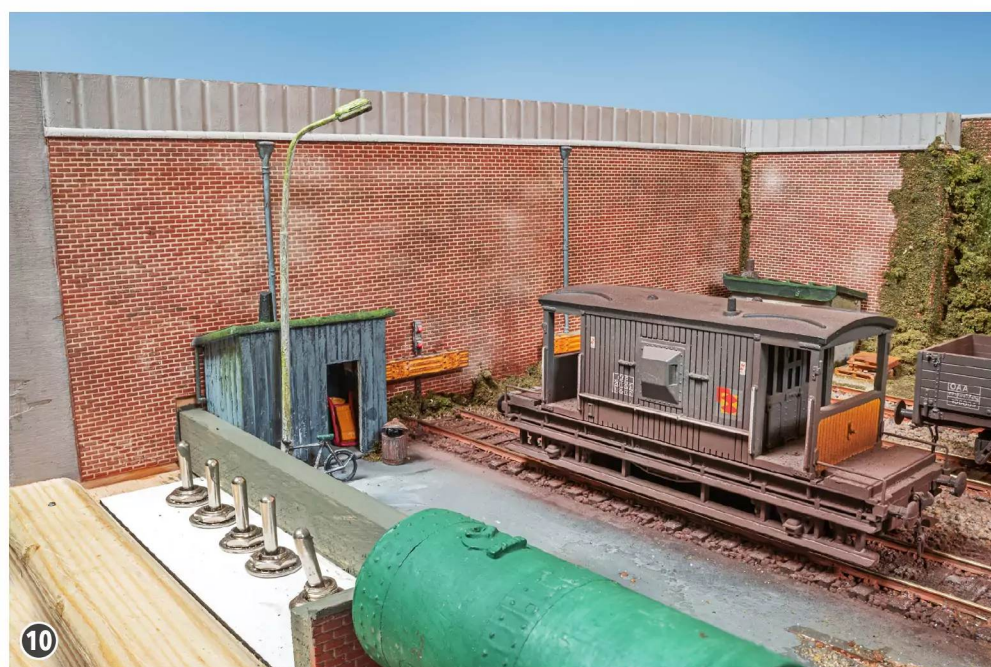
After spending so much of his free time creating miniature worlds for most of his adult life, the big question is 'can Dave really let it all go?'

"Sometimes I do miss it, but that feeling doesn't last for very long. The sound of hearing a train on tickover is what I miss the most, but then I remind myself that there are plenty of YouTube videos I can watch if I want to hear that sound, rather than building something new just to hear it. I think if I were ever to build something again it would most

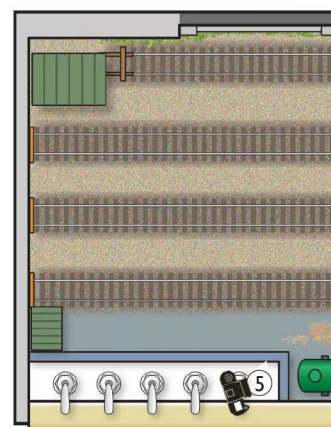
likely be a small 'N' gauge looped layout that I could sit back and watch. I could use super-short wagons that would allow me to get away with very tight bends and therefore it wouldn't take up a lot of space. I'm in no rush though."

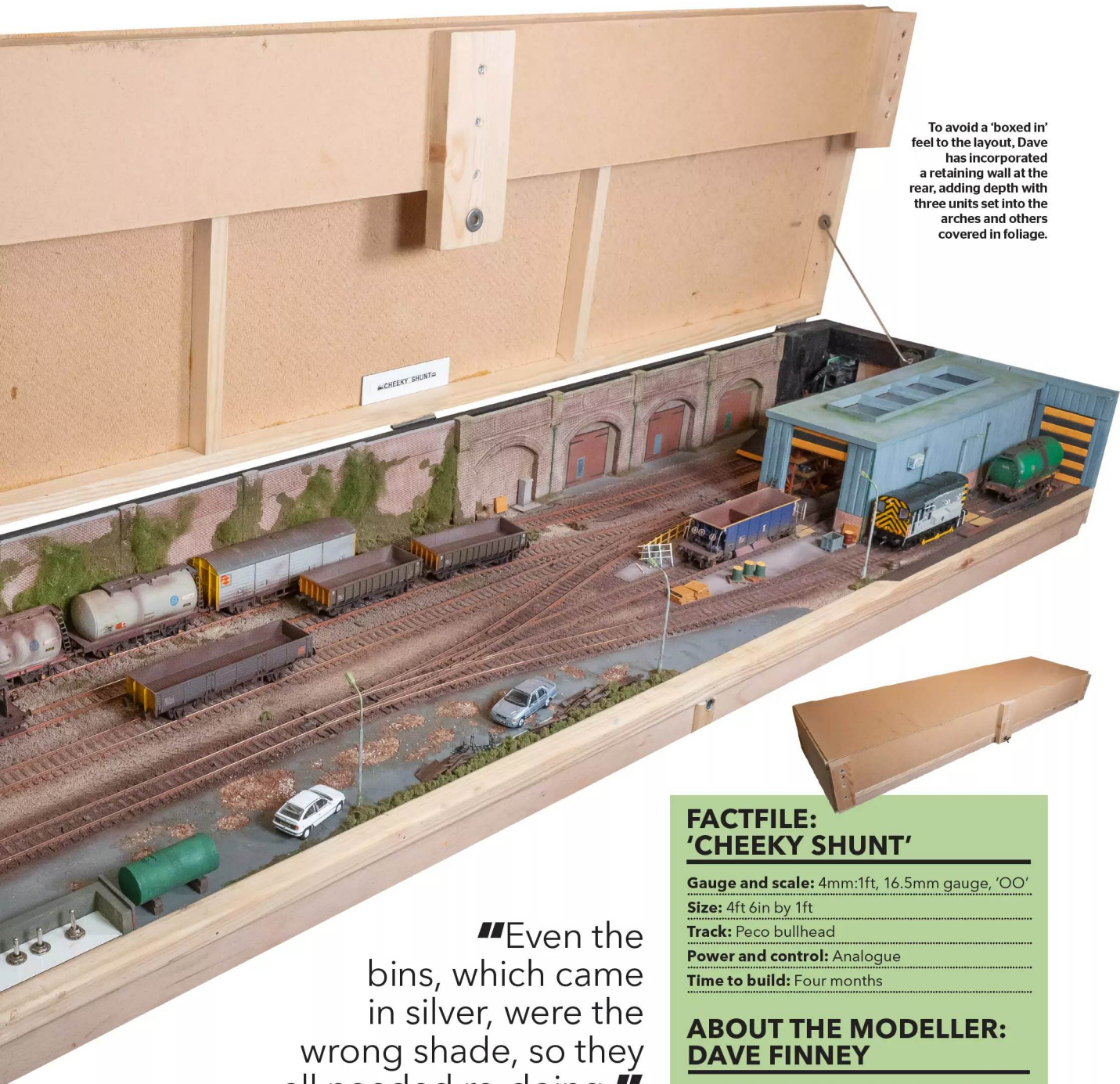
If there's one thing we've learned from 'Cheeky Shunt', it's how useful those odds and sods can prove to be. Dave has created a layout that fulfilled all of his criteria, particularly the one about having a clear-out.

If you have a lot of stuff doing nothing in boxes, then designing a layout around what you have in store would be an interesting exercise. You'd certainly be able to feel justified in hanging on to all those old kits, bits and buildings – they will finally have proven useful! **MR**



Artwork: **Andrew Mackintosh**





To avoid a 'boxed in' feel to the layout, Dave has incorporated a retaining wall at the rear, adding depth with three units set into the arches and others covered in foliage.

“Even the bins, which came in silver, were the wrong shade, so they all needed re-doing”

FACTFILE: 'CHEEKY SHUNT'

Gauge and scale: 4mm:1ft, 16.5mm gauge, 'OO'

Size: 4ft 6in by 1ft

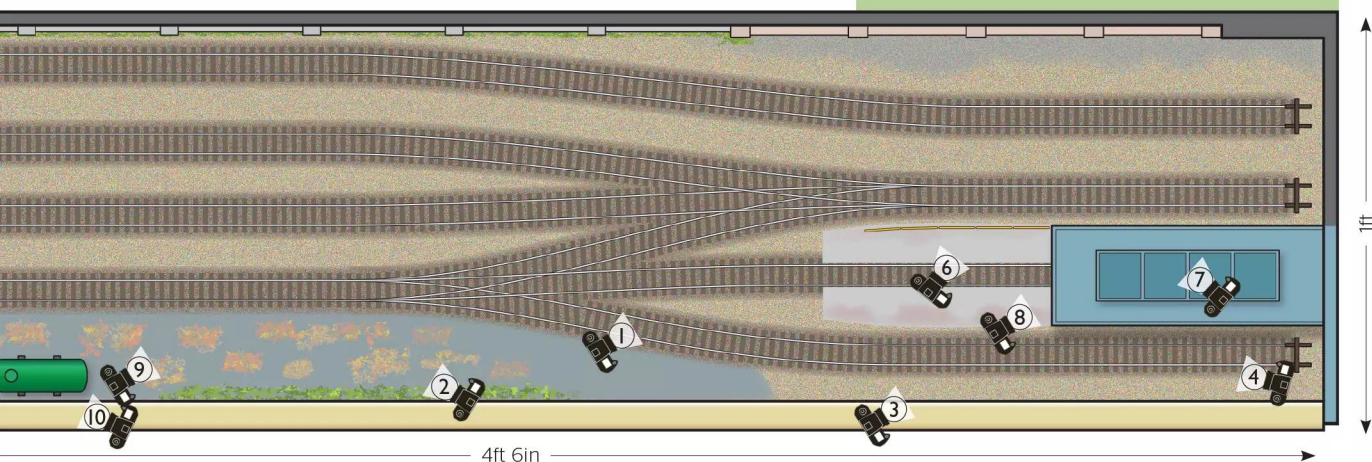
Track: Peco bullhead

Power and control: Analogue

Time to build: Four months

ABOUT THE MODELLER: DAVE FINNEY

“Now I'm not beavering away with model railways I like to travel around the world and head out on my mountain bike.”





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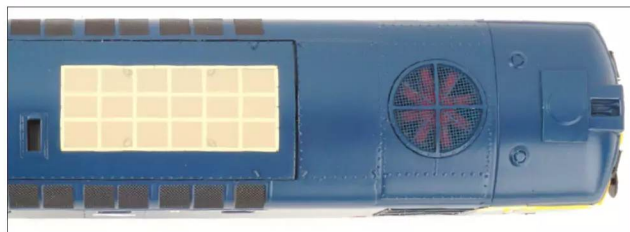
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Reviews

In-depth and unbiased reviews of the latest products

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FR Brake Third
- 94** Hornby S&DR
Locomotion No. 1



Our reviewers

George Dent

Model Rail's modern image expert also has a passion for steam.

Chris Leigh

Wrote his first review in 1964 and hasn't stopped since!

How we test

At Model Rail, we pride ourselves on the quality, thoroughness and unbiased nature of our reviews. We assess models on their looks, performance, features and value for money. We also run them on our own test tracks, which feature various gradients and numerous challenging track configurations.



Lionheart Trains BR '3MT' 2-6-2T

◆ **GAUGE** 'O' ◆ **MODEL** Lionheart Trains LHT-S-8201 BR '3MT' 2-6-2T No. 82010, BR lined black, late crest ◆ **PRICE** £621.00-£739.80

◆ **AVAILABILITY** Dapol stockists **Web** www.dapol.co.uk

With a number of impressive 'O' gauge steam locomotives already under its belt, the latest addition to the Dapol/Lionheart Trains range is the BR Standard Class 3MT 2-6-2T. It has been a few years in the making, with many of us having followed this project closely, due to the enduring popularity of the prototype. With the first decorated samples revealed at the 2022 Warley show, it's great to now have one of these lovely models in my hands.

Several versions are now available, in a choice of lined BR black or green liveries, plus plain green options, with each livery being offered with or without numbers. All versions can be purchased in DCC-ready, DCC-fitted or DCC sound format.

Dapol's design team have incorporated a few detail variations across the range, including the revised lamp bracket array employed on Southern region-allocated '3MTs'. Indeed, it is one such model that Dapol kindly loaned us for review, in the form of No. 82010, which sports a 72A (Exmouth Junction)

shedcode plate on the smokebox door. A set of white disc headcodes is also provided, which slot over the lamp brackets, allowing for easy repositioning.

Presented in a sturdy, foam-lined box, the model comes bolted to a clear acrylic plinth for security in transit. The countersunk bolts conveniently allow the 2-6-2T to be displayed

on the plinth, if desired, thus keeping handling of the model itself to a minimum. Given the locomotive's substantial weight and the many plastic detail fittings, this is not a bad idea.

Indeed, it's evident that die-cast metal has been employed extensively throughout this model, as it's a hefty old thing. Much of the body is metal, giving it a very purposeful air and minimising any plasticky vibes, which is often more tangible on larger scale models.

In terms of looks, it really does





capture the appearance of Riddles' versatile workhorse. The neatly fitted chimney, smokebox and all-round 'face' of the locomotive is hard to fault and all scale dimensions are spot-on.

There's a pleasing definition to the various raised rivet and bolt heads throughout the body and chassis, with plenty of separately installed detail fittings, including lamp brackets, wire handrails, lifting eyes, water filler hatches and exposed pipework. I particularly like the rendition of the insulation coating on some of the pipes, while the copper and brass finishes on the feed pipes and clack valves is superb. The brass safety valves and whistle have a slightly tarnished appearance, which is highly convincing and the cab windows are flawlessly glazed.

Initially, I assumed that the cab roof was fixed, as it



appeared to be part of the main cab casting. However, it's actually a separate plastic part, retained with a single magnet at the bunker end and small clips at the front. Once lifted away, the fully detailed interior is a joy to behold, with printed gauge dials, sight glasses, controls, valves and pipework, all rendered in

appropriate colours. The driver's green padded seat and back rest are even incorporated and, thanks to the easy access, fitting a suitable footplate crew becomes an essential job for the modeller. ➤



“The fully detailed interior is a joy to behold, with printed gauge dials, sight glasses, controls, valves and pipework, all rendered in appropriate colours”

3 things we like



1

Highly detailed cab interior, with seamless magnetic roof.



2

Quick and easy access to the DCC interface via the hinged smokebox door and pull-out PCB.



3

Additional, low-friction power collection via the pony wheels' brass bearings.



Lionheart BR Standard Class 3MT 2-6-2T - in detail

Below the footplate, the elegantly spoked and profiled wheels catch the eye, as does the motion and valve gear. Most of the rods are die-cast metal - including the slide bars - giving them an ultra-purposeful air while maintaining an authentic, scale appearance. The copper effect drain pipes and brass effect relief valves enhance the cylinders, while the brake gear and pony truck frames add further finesse. The plastic footsteps are securely fitted, the sprung buffers and drawhooks work well and the sanding pipes and other plastic details combine for a very satisfying effect.

Factfile: BR Standard Class 3MT 2-6-2T

Building on the experience gained from Ivatt's Class 4 2-6-2Ts, designed originally by the LMS and built largely by British Railways from the late 1940s, the BR Standard Class 3MT tanks were created under the auspices of Robert Riddles.

Constructed at BR's Swindon Works, and featuring a GWR-style boiler, the locomotives still retained many LMS features, especially in terms of chassis fittings. A total of 45 examples were built between 1952-1955, with assembly running concurrently with the similar 2-6-0 tender locomotives.

The resulting engines were lightweight and extremely versatile, with examples being allocated to the London Midland, North Eastern, Western and Southern regions for all manner of lightweight passenger and freight duties.

With a design optimised for branch line operation, the '3MTs' operated over many well-known routes, including various branches in Devon and Cornwall, plus the Somerset & Dorset and Cambrian Coast routes.

The arrival of diesel multiple units and railcars, plus the closure of many branch lines during the Beeching cuts, rendered the class surplus to requirements.

Riddles' design would be ideal for today's heritage lines but, sadly, none survived into preservation. The last example was withdrawn in the summer of 1967, while one of the first to succumb - No. 82019 - was less than 15 years old when removed from traffic, despite originally being intended for a 40-year operational lifetime.

For the past few decades, a group of Severn Valley Railway volunteers have been building an all-new BR '3MT' 2-6-2T. For more information, see www.82045.org.uk



1: BR '3MT' No. 82027 simmers away at York shed in the late 1950s. The '3MTs' were regular performers on the Scarborough to Whitby line, as well as other branches in the area. COLOUR RAIL



2: The Southern region's No. 82019 shunts the docks at Southampton in June 1964, shortly before the locomotive became one of the first '3MTs' to be withdrawn. COLOUR RAIL



3: The '3MTs' were well suited to the branch lines of North Wales and plain green No. 82020 is seen at Towyn in July 1962 at the head of a mixed goods train. COLOUR RAIL

Power is collected from all but the centre driving wheels, which feature a useful degree of compensation. The outer driving wheels transmit power via plunger pick-ups, while the pony truck wheels are equipped

with split axles and brass inner bearings, from which power is fed to the main circuit board.

A chunky, vertically mounted five-pole motor drives the rear coupled axle via a set of covered gears, which are easy to access

for periodic servicing (full instructions are provided). The hinged smokebox door, retained with a small magnet, reveals a pull-out circuit board housing a 21pin DCC socket. There's ample space within the

body for a speaker, with sound holes formed into the base of the chassis block.

Straight from the box, the '3MT' ran supremely well, with the mechanism proving to be smooth and quiet. The valve gear and connecting rods all moved gracefully, with no knocks or squeaks. I was a little concerned by the stiffness of the springs over the pony trucks, but the sheer weight of the locomotive ensured that they navigated the curves and points of my 'O' gauge test track without any problems.

For a mixed traffic Class 3 tank locomotive, there seems to be ample haulage capability, especially given the space required to run scale-length trains in 'O' gauge at the best of times, but our sample handled a three-car rake of Heljan and Lionheart coaches without issue. Likewise with a load of 10 twin-axle goods wagons.

This is a very handsome model, offered at a reasonable price, especially given the level of detail and performance, with many retailers currently offering a healthy discount off the listed prices.

It's great to see Robert Riddles' '3MT' finally appearing in RTR 'O' gauge, not least as it lends itself perfectly to all manner of idyllic branch line settings. It's yet another draw towards 7mm scale modelling, even for those with limited space. And with Dapol/Lionheart also now developing Ivatt's precursor LMS 2-6-2Ts, there's even more to look forward to! (GD)



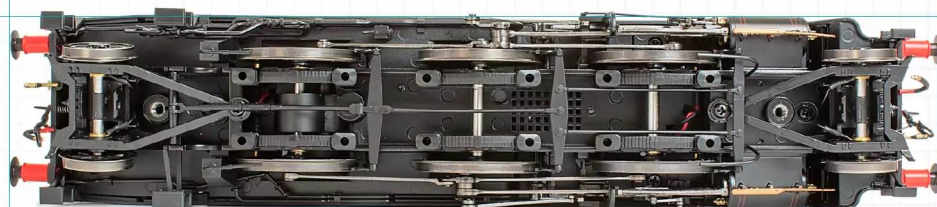
287mm



915mm



607mm



VITAL STATISTICS: LIONHEART BR STANDARD CLASS 3MT 2-6-2T

OVERVIEW

Manufacturer: Dapol
Ref. No. LHT-S-8201
Unit No. No. 82010
Scale/gauge: 1:43.5 scale, 'O' gauge
Body: Metal with plastic parts
Chassis: Metal with plastic parts
Weight: 1,630g
Min. curve radius: 1,028mm (second radius)
Wheel back-to-back: 29.1mm

DIMENSIONS

Length
Height
Width
Wheel diameter (driving)
Wheel diameter (pony)
Coupled wheelbase

PROTOTYPE

40ft 10½in
13ft 0in
8ft 6¼in
5ft 3in
3ft 0in
7ft 7in

1:43.5 SCALE

286.4mm
91mm
60mm
36.8mm
21mm
53mm

MODEL

287mm
91.5mm
60.7mm
36.8mm
21mm
53mm

ELECTRICS

Electrical system: 12V DC two-rail
Motor type: Five-pole skew wound
Lights: Firebox glow
DCC-ready? 21pin socket inside smokebox

MECHANISM

Drive system: Motor drives rear coupled axle via gears
Flywheel(s): Yes
Traction tyres: No

SERVICING

How to dismantle: Body unscrews from chassis
Where to oil: Gears – see instructions

SUMMARY

PROS

- Looks and prototype fidelity.
- Impressive level of detail.
- Smooth runner.
- Top class finish.
- Useful prototype.

CONS

- Not a lot.

FINAL VERDICT

Superb.



Rapido Trains Highland Railway 'Jones Goods' 4-6-0

◆ GAUGE 'OO' ◆ MODEL Rapido Trains UK 914001 HR 'Jones Goods' 4-6-0 No. 103 HR lined yellow (1960s condition) ◆ PRICE £219.95

◆ AVAILABILITY Rapido stockists **Web** www.rapidotrains.co.uk

Sometimes a modeller has an affinity with a particular prototype thanks to personal memories or a family connection, or its relevance to a period or place that may have inspired layout projects. While I'd been aware of the 'Jones Goods' 4-6-0 for many years, it wasn't until I was tasked with building a DJH metal kit over a decade ago that No. 103 won my heart.

Perhaps it was due to the kit being challenging to build and, especially, to paint, but I spent a lot of time searching out information and images of the real thing, along with a few trips to Glasgow's Riverside Museum to see No. 103 in the flesh. Eventually, the finished kit made its way to its recipient and I enjoyed the fine

wines I received in return, but the 'Jones Goods' remained a topic of conversation among the *Model Rail* team in the years that followed. Indeed, it was regularly mooted as a potential exclusive model project.

As things transpired, Rapido Trains UK has brought this important prototype to the ready-to-run market, with a variety of Highland Railway and LMS livery options on the table. There's also a 'what if' British Railways version, in lined black and numbered as 57925.

Unsurprisingly, Rapido has also replicated No. 103 in its preserved condition, as it appeared between 1959-1966 when working a series of special trains around the Scottish region, after being restored to working order by BR. It is this striking version that we received for review.

MEETING MR JONES

The model is presented in a lovely foam-lined box, decorated in a matching livery, with the locomotive and tender retained in separate clear plastic shells. A 10-pin clip-together coupling marries the two vehicles together, but it's not the easiest device to navigate.

Indeed, I was immediately concerned that I'd broken something when I heard an





3 things we like



1

Detailed cab interior with printed gauge dials, firebox glow and hinged fall plate.



2

Cast metal coupling rods have a meaty yet refined appearance.



3

Paint finish and lining is top-notch, with a discreet nod to the 1960s with the overhead line warnings.

unnerving snapping sound. Luckily, it was just the guide pin for the coupling's pivot mechanism, which was easily slotted back into position. But compared to how other manufacturers have approached the slot-together, conductive coupler idea, Rapido's solution seems to be fraught with risk. The instructions suggest as much in the recommendation to join/uncouple the vehicles only when essential. Given that the model does not fit back into the packaging when coupled together, there's a slight flaw in this arrangement!

With that minor gripe out of the way, there is precious little else to criticise. The elegant looks of the prototype have been captured supremely well, and there's an impressive level of detail throughout. The long plastic footplates are not entirely straight, but the minor undulations are barely perceptible. The boiler barrel is rendered in full relief, with a smidgen of daylight visible between the leading pair of splashers.

The fine handrails are painted silver, rather than simply using a bright metal wire, and the open-backed cab allows the full array of details to be readily admired. The hinged fall plate features an embossed tread pattern texture, and bridges the gap between locomotive and tender fully, without hindering the articulation.

The plastic coal load is a loose fit, and falls easily out if the model is upturned, revealing the full bunker interior. A set of fire iron brackets is installed (they're easily dislodged), but there aren't many other overly delicate fittings. Sprung buffers are fitted at each end and the lining scheme extends to the shanks, although these are the only areas in which the finish is less than perfect.

The locomotive and tender frames are exquisite, in terms of detail finesse and finish. The

wheels are a treat on the eyes, especially the fully lined driving wheels and cranks. The centre wheel set is flangeless, as per some of the real locomotives, which greatly helps the model to negotiate layout curves. The leading bogie is gently sprung, with plenty of lateral clearance.

A set of optional frame extensions is provided, for those whose layouts can accommodate the reduced cornering ability.

The coupling rods and slide bars are cast metal, with a texture and finish that really looks the part - solid enough without appearing overly bulky. Brake rodding is pre-installed and the flexible sanding pipes are nicely unobtrusive.

COLOUR MATTERS

With the aforementioned kit of No. 103, one of the most vexing

tasks I was faced with was matching the distinctive shade of yellow employed during BR's restoration job. Relying on period colour images was not ideal, with the shade looking significantly different, thanks to the vagaries of film and processing. I wasn't totally happy with the shade I mixed myself, but it was closer than what was then available directly out of a tin. Rapido's team, on the other hand, look to have done a better job, with a much more pleasing shade, to my eye at least.

As already mentioned, the ➤

Rapido HR 'Jones Goods' 4-6-0 - in detail



Factfile: Highland Railway 'Jones Goods' 4-6-0

Famed for producing the first 4-6-0 steam locomotive to appear on Britain's railways, the Highland Railway 'Jones Goods' gained their nickname as a tribute to Chief Engineer David Jones, although it was Chief Draughtsman David Anderson Hendrie who had suggested adopting this wheel arrangement.

The small fleet, numbered 103-117, was built by Sharp, Stewart of Glasgow in 1894, with all 15 completed in the same year. The 4-6-0s were intended to haul goods services between Perth and Inverness, proving a resounding success, especially after a few tweaks were made to the draughting arrangement. As well as working the Highland main line, the 4-6-0s also ventured further afield, including to Kyle of Lochalsh.

The full fleet of 'Jones Goods' 4-6-0s was taken into LMS stock at the Grouping of 1923, although withdrawals began in 1929, with the last example taken out of service in 1940. The LMS recognised the historical significance of No. 103 (since re-numbered to No. 17916) and, following withdrawal in 1934, it was set aside at St Rollox for cosmetic restoration.

To coincide with the Scottish Industries Exhibition in 1959, British Railways restored No. 103 to working order, allowing it to operate special trains across Scotland. Wearing an enigmatic shade of yellow (yet known as Stroudley's Improved Engine Green), No. 103 cemented its place in the hearts of enthusiasts during its second main line career, before retirement beckoned in 1966 when it was presented to the Glasgow Museum of Transport. Currently wearing its original Highland Railway livery, No. 103 now resides in Glasgow's impressive Riverside Museum.

None of the other 'Jones Goods' survived.

2: Resting at Kyle of Lochalsh, No. 17925 is seen in LMS livery in June 1937. L.R. TOMSETT/ RAIL ARCHIVE STEPHENSON

3: Following its return to the main line, preserved No. 103 is seen at Blackstone Junction, while operating a rail tour around the south west of Glasgow in April 1965. RAIL ONLINE



1: Highland Railway No. 115 hauls a mixed freight near Luncarty, Perthshire, in the 1910s. Re-numbered by the LMS to No. 17298, the 4-6-0 was withdrawn in 1933. STEVE ARMITAGE COLLECTION/ RAIL ONLINE



lining is virtually flawless, and the paintwork has an understated, satin overall finish. Cabside numberplates are printed neatly, with an effective brass effect, although a set of etched versions are also supplied in the detail bag, along with cosmetic screw couplers.

Inside the model, the 21pin DCC decoder resides in the tender, along with a series of speakers pre-fitted below the PCB, with sound holes in the chassis floor. There's

a sizeable metal weight inside the tender and extensive use of die-cast metal in the locomotive (including the boiler), ensures that the weight is evenly distributed.

A brass flywheel is fitted to the output shaft of the motor, and a brass worm transfers the power to the wheels via a vertical gearbox.

A twin-LED firebox glow unit is installed, with DCC operation promising the most realistic flickering effects.

LOOSENING UP

At first, the model appeared a little 'sticky' under power, but a running-in period resulted in a dramatic uplift in performance. The 4-6-0 was soon purring around the test track, looking utterly splendid. A rake of eight bogie coaches was tackled effortlessly, along with a train of 20-odd mineral wagons and vans. It's a quiet runner and the front bogie negotiated the curves and crossings of my test track and layouts without

issue, while tender-first running was also successful.

After producing a series of impressive tank locomotives, it's great to see Rapido tackling something bigger and, the loco-tender coupler aside, it feels like a big success. It looks the part and runs sweetly, doing full justice to such a vital prototype. *(GD)*

SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

Manufacturer: Rapido Trains UK
Ref. No. 914001
Unit No. No. 103
Scale/gauge: 1:76 scale, '00' gauge
Body: Plastic with metal parts
Chassis: Metal with plastic parts
Weight: 280g
Min. curve radius: 438mm (second radius)
Wheel back-to-back: 14.4mm

DIMENSIONS

Length
 Height
 Width
 Wheel diameter (driving)
 Wheel diameter (bogie)
 Wheel diameter (tender)
 Coupled wheelbase

PROTOTYPE

58ft 6in
 13ft
 8ft 4in
 5ft 3½in
 3ft 2½in
 3ft 9in
 13ft 3in

1:76 SCALE

235mm
 52mm
 33.4mm
 21mm
 12.9mm
 15mm
 53mm

MODEL

238mm
 53mm
 35.5mm
 21mm
 13mm
 15mm
 53mm

ELECTRICS

Electrical system: 12V DC two-rail
Motor type: Five pole
Lights: Firebox glow
DCC-ready? 21pin decoder socket in tender, speakers pre-installed

MECHANISM

Drive system: Motor drives centre driving axle via gears
Flywheel(s): Yes
Traction tyres: No

SERVICING

How to dismantle: Body unscrews from chassis
Where to oil: Gears - see instructions

SUMMARY

PROS

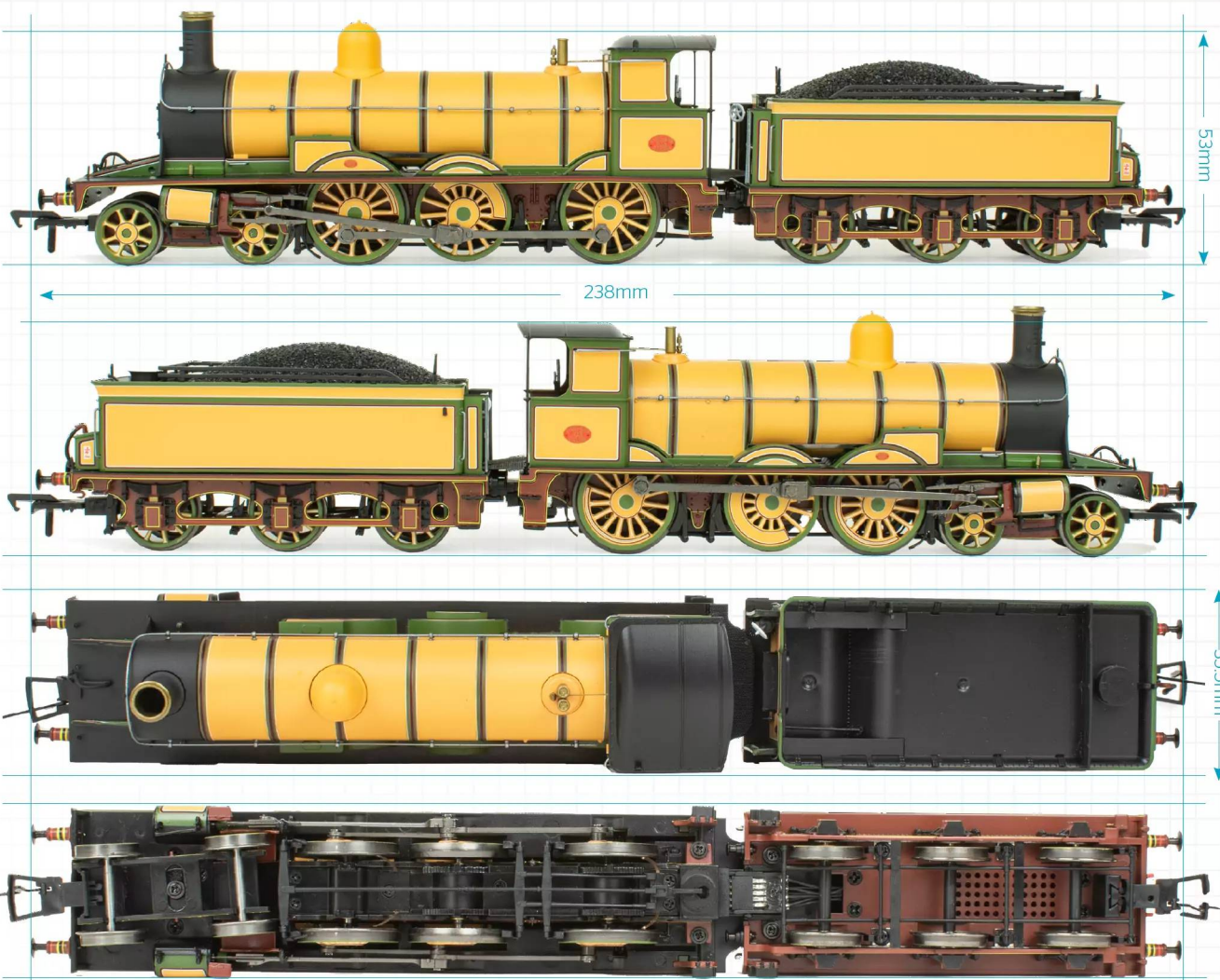
- Looks.
- Top-class finish.
- Performance.

CONS

- Loco-tender coupling.

FINAL VERDICT

Fabulous.





EFE Rail Class 41 'Warship'

◆ GAUGE 'N' ◆ MODEL EFE Rail E84524 Class 41 'Warship' D602 Bulldog, BR blue ◆ PRICE £174.95 ◆ AVAILABILITY Bachmann stockists **Web** www.bachmann.co.uk

The D600 'Warships' have long enjoyed a level of popularity out of proportion to their contribution to the story of UK diesel traction. Perhaps the same is true of any small, short-lived class. Certainly, justice had never been done to the class in model form until, in 2010, Kernow MRC announced that it had commissioned an exclusive 'OO' ready-to-run model.

Through the Kernow/Bachmann tie-up under the EFE Rail label, an 'N' gauge model of the D600-series NBL 'Warship' is now available, doubtless making good use of all the research involved in the original 'OO' model.

Model Rail received a sample of the version in Swindon's 'chromatic blue' as No. D602 *Bulldog*, exactly matching the 'OO' version which we reviewed in *Model Rail* No. 260. At over 5in long it is the size of this 'N' gauge model that immediately impresses. It's heavy, too, and should be capable of some impressive haulage.

The one-piece plastic bodyshell is essentially a shrunk version of the 'OO' model and it carries an impressive level of detail with the numerous grilles and access doors of the real thing convincingly reproduced. The character of these early

'Warships' has been well captured, despite there being no preserved example to scan.

I recall seeing No. D602, exactly as modelled, on a Down freight at Lostwithiel, and a friend who was with me photographed it. Comparing the model with the photograph I feel that the shade of blue is disappointingly dark. Bachmann has used the same colour as on the 'OO' model to represent the chromatic blue and, of course, the smaller the scale, the darker that colours appear. The chromatic blue used a special paint to suit Swindon's new airless spraying





“Separate wire handrails are fitted in the recesses either side of the cab doors and there are separate hand-grabs on the headcode boxes, too”

system and, although the finish was matt, the colour was quite vibrant. To my eye, the model does not capture that. It's a pity because the quality of finish is otherwise exceptional.

The side doors – including the cab doors – are flush-glazed and the 20-plus grilles are equally convincing. The cab windows and windscreens are also flush-glazed and the frames are finely picked out in silver colour.

Separate wire handrails are fitted in the recesses either side of the cab doors and there are separate hand-grabs on the headcode boxes, too.

The moulded plastic bogie sideframes carry a wealth of detail including the complex suspension springs and brake blocks in line with the wheel treads. The wheels are blackened metal and accurately reflect the spoked design used on the real thing, the middle wheelset correctly being slightly smaller in diameter.

A Next18 decoder socket is fitted and there is space for

a sugar-cube speaker in the fuel tank area of the chassis, which unclips.

This blue version of D602 has pre-fitted headcodes 3C09 and 5C53, a West Country passenger train and a partially fitted freight, and these are illuminated in the direction of travel. One front light and the leading cab is also lit in the direction of travel, the cab rather too brightly. The left-hand small light is red and illuminated when at the rear.

Under test, the model ran superbly throughout the speed range on the plain track test circuit at Kettering & District MRS' clubrooms. I had seen reports on social media that some modellers had found that the centre axle 'mound' on the keeper plate fouled the crossings on Code 55 points, so I rigged my DCC 'Staines West' layout for analog operation in order to check.

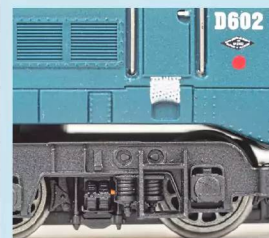
I found no problem at modest speed, but when running slowly

3 things we like



1

Bodyside grilles and panel seams are neatly executed.



2

Bogie frame detail and spoked wheels.



3

Body unclips to provide easy access to the Next18 decoder socket.



EFE Rail Class 41 'Warship' - in detail



Factfile: North British Class 41 'Warship'

Despite the popular myth that the Western Region just wanted to be different, its choice of diesel-hydraulic traction rather than diesel-electric was both carefully considered and far-thinking. Under pressure to modernise and to increase speed and efficiency, the WR believed that the fitting of automatic continuous brakes to wagons was the single most significant measure towards speeding up and rejuvenating the railway.

Also, a higher power-to-weight ratio in locomotives would enable trains to be accelerated more quickly, while excessive weight in locomotives would no longer be needed to stop loose-coupled freights. The WR recognised that the diesel-hydraulic locomotive fitted perfectly with that scheme.

However, the British Transport Commission only had limited experience of diesel-electrics with heavy, slow-running engines and no experience at all of diesel-hydraulics.

As the Western Region insisted that some of the proposed Type 4 (2,000hp) diesels should be hydraulics, so the BTC insisted that they should be of heavyweight construction for direct comparison with its 2,000hp diesel-electrics. However, none of its proposed diesel-electric behemoths was yet in service.

An order for a small number of medium-sized diesel-hydraulics had been given to North British Locomotive Co in Glasgow. These would be the first of the 'D63XX' (later Class 22) locomotives. There followed an order for five 2,000hp locomotives running on two six-wheel bogies. As NBL engineers were unable to design a pivotless six-wheel bogie, the middle axle of each bogie had to be unpowered, giving an A1A-A1A wheel arrangement. The D600s weighed in at 117tons 8cwt, compared to 133tons for the English Electric and 138tons for the BR/Sulzer diesel-electrics. The diesel-electrics requiring four-axle bogies to carry the weight.

The WR locomotives were to be named after Royal Navy warships, and the first, No. D600 *Active*, appeared in 1958 ahead of the diesel-electric equivalents from English Electric and BR/Sulzer. No. D600 was thus the first Type 4 diesel to enter traffic. It and No. D601 *Ark Royal* had MAN engines and Voith transmissions made in Germany but the remainder of the class, Nos. D602 *Bulldog*, D603 *Conquest* and D604 *Cossack* used equipment made under licence by NBL.

All five D600s were based at Plymouth Laira and were quickly put to work on the premier Paddington-Penzance express, the 'Cornish Riviera'. However, even before the end of 1958 the Western Region had taken delivery of D800, the first of its 78ton, 2,000hp diesel-hydraulics built at Swindon and based on the German V200 design. Now it had the lightweight diesel-hydraulics with quick-running diesel engines that it had originally wanted.

The D600s were now destined to spend the rest of their short working careers between Plymouth and Penzance, seldom getting even as far east as Exeter. Although built with an illuminated disc-headcode arrangement, all were modified with crudely attached two-character headcode boxes either side of the end access doors. Nos. D601/2/4 were temporarily allocated to Landore (Swansea) in August 1967 to cover for English Electric Type 3s which had gone to the Eastern Region. They proved to be particularly useful on heavy freight trains where their tractive effort was second only to that of the Class 52 'Westerns'.

Nos. D602/3 spent a prolonged period out of service at Swindon works during 1964/5. All were withdrawn at the end of 1967, and though D601 lay at Woodham's scrapyard for more than a decade it was eventually cut up, although as Britain's first Type 4 to enter traffic it warranted a place in the National Railway Museum.



1: Less than a year old, D603 *Conquest* waits to depart from Paignton with the 'Torbay Express', in July 1959. COLOUR RAIL



2: Class pioneer D600 *Active* sports a fresh lick of paint outside Swindon Works. COLOUR RAIL

3: D603 *Conquest* is seen again, this time in May 1966 at Truro, having been rebuilt with twin alphanumerical headcode boxes, replacing the original discs. COLOUR RAIL



over one particular turnout the model would stall and it appears that the centre axle 'mound' was indeed fouling the switch blades of the turnout by a few thousandths of an inch. Bachmann has recognised that this can be a problem and has suggested a solution which involves minor

filing of the keeper plate 'mound'. Modellers who would prefer not to do this themselves can arrange for it to be done at Bachmann's service department. George also tested the model on his own 'N' gauge set-up and, although no significant issues arose, he was aware that the

clearances between the underside of the keeper plates and the check rails and point blades was extremely tight. This issue aside, the EFE 'Warship' is a very fine little model which will be welcomed by all who model the BR Western Region scene of the 1960s. (CJL)

VITAL STATISTICS: EFE RAIL CLASS 41 'WARSHIP'

OVERVIEW	DIMENSIONS	PROTOTYPE	1:148 SCALE	MODEL	ELECTRICS
Manufacturer: Bachmann Europe	Length	65ft 0in	130mm	133mm	Electrical system: 12V DC two-rail
Ref. No. E84524	Height	12ft 10in	25.5mm	25.5mm	Motor type: Coreless
Unit No. D602	Width	8ft 8in	17.5mm	17.5mm	Lights: Directional head/tail lamps
Scale/gauge: 1:148 scale, 'N' gauge	Wheel diameter	3ft 7in	7mm	7mm	DCC-ready? Next18 socket
Body: Plastic with metal parts	Wheel diameter (carrying)	3ft 3½in	6.5mm	6.5mm	MECHANISM
Chassis: Metal with plastic parts	Bogie wheelbase	7ft 6in + 7ft 6in	30mm	31mm	Drive system: Motor drives outer axles of each bogie via cardan shafts and gears
Weight: 109g	SERVICING				Flywheel(s): No
Min. curve radius: 265mm (second radius)	How to dismantle: Body unclips from chassis				Traction tyres: No
Wheel back-to-back: 7.5mm	Where to oil: See instructions				

SUMMARY

PROS

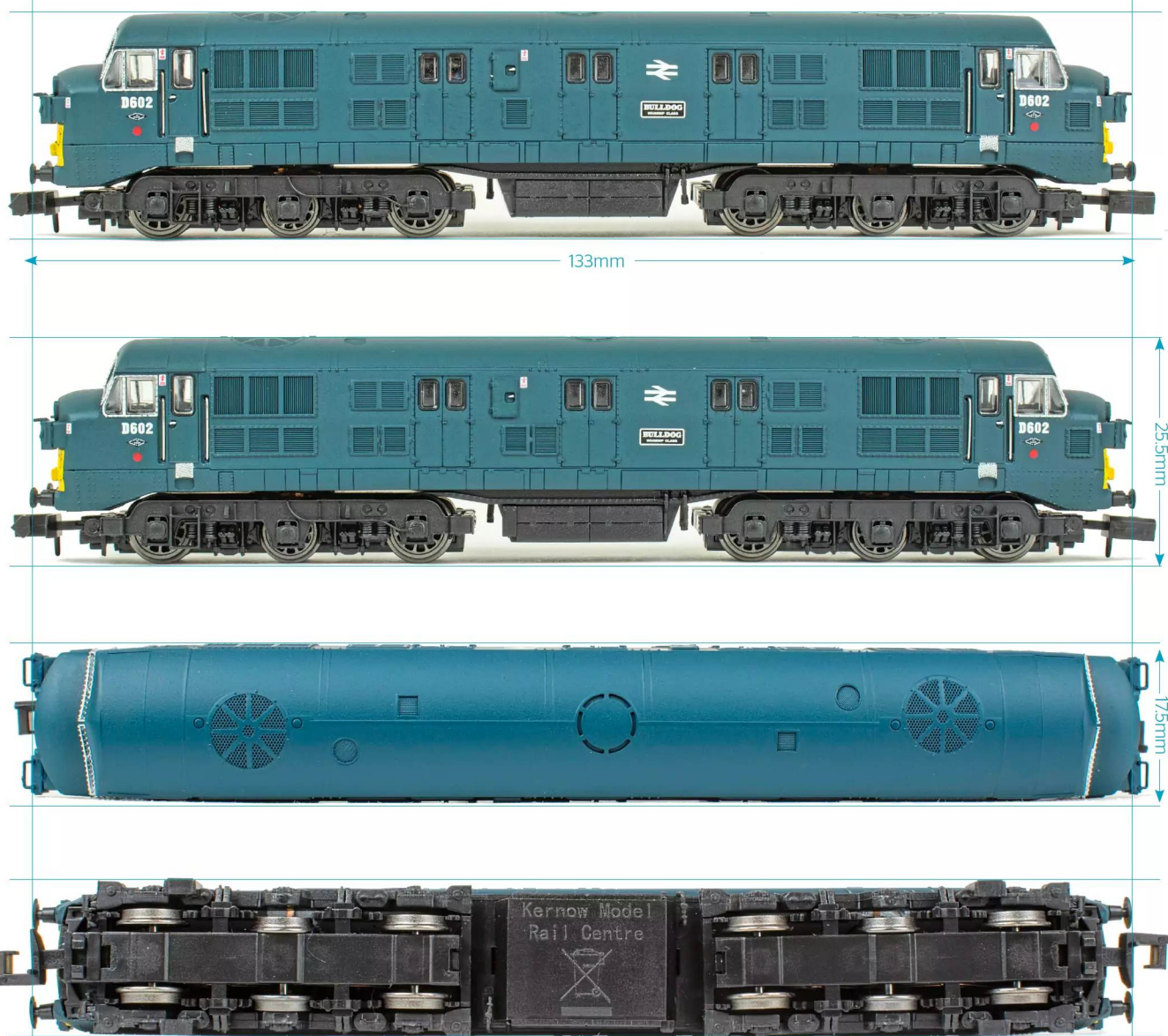
- Looks and fidelity.
- Fine detail.
- Weight and pulling power.

CONS

- Dark shade of blue paint.
- Low keeper plate issue.

FINAL VERDICT

Once tweaked, it's a cracker!





Hornby LNER 'Coronation' observation car

◆ GAUGE 'OO' ◆ MODEL Hornby R40227 LNER 'Coronation' observation car No. 1719 ◆ PRICE £81.99 ◆ AVAILABILITY Hornby stockists **Web** www.hornby.com

Hot on the heels of the articulated twinset 'Coronation' carriage packs, as reviewed in last month's issue, comes the famous 'beaver tail' observation car, in matching two-tone blue livery.

Like the twinset coaches, the stylish livery is adorned with polished foil lettering, numbers and decorative beading. With

a full-size version now residing in the One:One Collection in Margate – the restored No. 1729 – Hornby's designers didn't have to go far for a look at the prototype, and they've done a cracking job in capturing the sleek, Art Deco-inspired looks. Scale proportions are spot-on too.

In terms of overall specification, the observation car

is on a par with the rest of the 'Coronation' stock. Straight out of the foam-lined box, the carriage is fitted with a traditional gangway at the 'inner' end, retained with a trio of tiny magnets. A small bag of optional details provides a replacement, air-smoothed cowling for use when coupled to the articulated twinsets.

Also provided are vacuum

brake and steam heat hoses, plus optional NEM couplers (fixed bar and magnetic knuckle), plus a tension lock unit designed especially to fit to the 'outer' end without interfering with the bufferbeam cowling. A cosmetic screw coupler is already installed at this end and there's no need to remove it if adding the tension lock as well.

With the real observation cars



“The 16-seat accommodation is replicated faithfully, with 14 padded armchairs and a twin sofa”

uncoupled, turned and remarshalled to always be at the rear end of the stock, the option to shunt the model from both ends is important, adding some fun operation to a terminal setting.

Behind the streamlined lower valances lie a full set of battery and equipment boxes, twin vacuum cylinders, reservoir tank and dynamo. The Gresley bogies, which are made up of several elements, are excellent, and the maroon disc wheels with white tyres provide a touch of panache. The numbered axles, applied throughout the full 'Coronation' rake, are another small but important detail.

As befitting an observation car,

there's plenty of clear glazing, which is neatly installed and crystal clear, allowing the superb interior to be viewed. The 16-seat accommodation is replicated faithfully, with 14 padded armchairs (complete with patterned fabric) and a twin sofa. The decorative veneer of the corridor panels is also visible through the windows.

Accessing the interior, to add passengers, is simply a case of separating the bodyside from the hidden retaining clips of the chassis frame. Slices of an old credit card proved ideal, removing the risk of damaging the paintwork and, especially, the foiled decoration.

Like the rest of Hornby's 'Coronation' stock, an interior lighting unit is pre-installed, complete with a capacitor unit for flicker-free running. Power is collected from the pinpoint axles, ensuring friction-free running. An extra bonus is the working tail lamps on the 'Beavertail' end, along with a set of sprung buffers.

With beautiful packaging and super-smooth performance, Hornby has really 'nailed' the 'Coronation' stock. Modellers have clearly appreciated their arrival, as they were selling extremely fast as I write this. Hopefully another full rake will feature in Hornby's plans before too long. **(GD)**



3 things we like



1

Livery application is top-notch, especially the polished lettering, numbers and beading.



2

Patterned armchairs and wood grain panels bring the interior to life.



3

Interior lighting is excellent and twin tail lamps are a bonus.

SUMMARY

PROS

- Looks and fidelity.
- Superb finish.
- Super-smooth running.
- Lighting system.

CONS

- Nothing.

FINAL VERDICT

Truly fit for a king!



Bachmann BR Mk 1 FO, BSO, RB

◆ GAUGE 'OO' ◆ MODEL Bachmann Branchline BR Mk 1s ◆ 39-825 First open crimson and cream ◆ 39-801A Brake standard open maroon
◆ 39-851 RB restaurant buffet BR chocolate and cream ◆ PRICE £67.95 each ◆ AVAILABILITY Bachmann stockists Web www.bachmann.co.uk

Since the dawn of 'OO' ready-to-run it seems that the standard basic range of coach types was a corridor composite and a brake second, to which, in due course might be added a full brake and a refreshment vehicle and, perhaps even a sleeping car. Some vehicle types were, however, frequently neglected,

making full prototypical formations nigh-on impossible in model form.

Bachmann has given its range of BR Mk 1 coaches a major uplift with the introduction of some 'open' vehicles which are completely new toolings but a good match for existing Bachmann Mk 1s in terms of appearance and detail.

Received for review are three different vehicles in three different liveries and each vehicle type is available in all three liveries plus, recently announced Rail blue and grey. The exception is the buffet restaurant (RB) car which is not offered in crimson and cream. The Mk 1 refreshment vehicles were the last types to be produced, most not entering service until the latter half of the 1950s, after crimson and cream livery

had been abandoned, though one or two have subsequently appeared in this livery in preservation. Thus, pretty much the whole working life of these vehicles is covered.

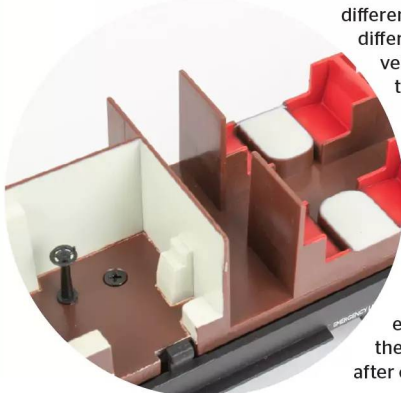
These new Mk 1s differ from most earlier Bachmann Mk 1s in having a one-piece moulded bodysell incorporating sides, ends and roof. On earlier Mk 1s the roof was separate and although it was a good fit, the new arrangement is a definite improvement, bringing a less prominent gutter strip and a perfect transition between side and roof. This is exemplified by faultless separation between the paint colours. Interestingly, the maroon vehicle has a darker roof colour than the two earlier colour schemes, reflecting the changes made by BR to the treatment of roof painting in the 1960s.

The open first is finished as E3048 one of the batch built at Doncaster under Lot 30091,

with a centre vestibule between the fourth and fifth seating bays, and a two-bay non-smoking saloon. First class 'lozenges' and no smoking triangles are printed on the windows. The interior features the correct 2+1 seating with each bay having a white-topped table. It has the standard underframe and BR1 bogies with insulated and blackened metal wheels.

The open brake second in maroon is also finished as an Eastern Region vehicle and the first of its batch, E9277 of Lot 30244. The white-topped tables are featured with 2+2 seating in this second class vehicle. The etched security screen in the guard's van section is top notch.

Buffet restaurant car W1732 was based on a 1956 design and built by Birmingham RC&W, one of eight which went to the Western Region and were painted chocolate and cream for use in the named prestige trains.





“The underframe carries the plethora of battery boxes and gas tanks, while close inspection reveals that the buffet counter is modelled”

An unusual feature was the 'door and third' arrangement in the kitchen and pantry, an early indication that the standard Mk 1 door was too narrow when loading boxes or carrying luggage. The model replicates this feature and the small seating area includes 2+1 seating and tables, plus curtains at the windows. The underframe carries the plethora of battery boxes and gas tanks, while close inspection reveals that the buffet counter is modelled, though the lack of windows on one side must have made this a dark area.

Bachmann Mk 1s have long been the best Mk 1s offered in 'OO' and with the new vehicles Bachmann has managed to make

subtle improvements while still producing coaches which match the earlier models. There's a crispness to details such as door hinges, while the glazing has been tweaked to recess the lower edge of droplights and the toilet windows are little works of art. The upper part of the toilet window glazing even has the two 'spy-holes' in the frosted glass, so that, if the train stopped while you were 'in the loo', you could peep out to see where you were! Separate wire handrails are fitted where appropriate.

In the past I have tended to have a love/hate relationship with Bachmann Mk 1s, finding that although I loved the way they looked, they never seemed to run

particularly well on my layouts.

I test-ran these samples on the back of a rake of earlier Mk 1s and they performed faultlessly over Peco code 75 track and pointwork.

I'm writing this in the season of turkey and all the trimmings and these coaches match the mood. In the words of Bernard Matthews, 'bootiful!' (CJL)

SUMMARY

PROS

- Looks and fidelity.
- First class finish.
- Run smoothly, coupler system effective.
- Useful prototypes hitherto missing from existing range.

CONS

- No interior lighting.

FINAL VERDICT

Beautiful.

3 things we like



1

One-piece bodysells present a perfect transition between the sides, ends and roof.



2

Flawless paint finish across all three versions, with fine lining and printed curtains.



3

Detailed, painted interiors include a see-through security cage section in the Brake Standard Open.





Bachmann BR 12t 'Palvan'

◆ GAUGE 'OO' ◆ MODEL Bachmann Branchline 38-954A BR 'Palvan', Johnnie Walker green ◆ PRICE £34.95
 ◆ AVAILABILITY Bachmann stockists Web www.bachmann.co.uk



In the post-war years, as palletisation spread across the freight transportation industry, British Railways tried to play catch-up by introducing a purpose-built wagon to cater for loading by forklift truck. The Diagram 1/211 'Palvan' was the result, with over 2,300 examples being built between 1953-1961. Built on a standard 10ft wheelbase steel chassis, the 12ton van featured plywood body panels and twin hinged doors ranged on the left-hand of each side.

The large doors created an aperture 8ft 5in wide, offering a big improvement over existing general-purpose vans, although the slightly oddball design resulted in uneven loading and premature wear on the suspension, resulting in a propensity for derailing. Initially intended for express freight operation, especially once clasp brakes and roller bearings were

specified on later builds, 'Palvans' were eventually restricted to slower workings.

As larger, more effective new stock came on stream, BR began selling off 'Palvans', with the Ministry of Defence amassing a fleet, while the Johnnie Walker whisky distillery purchased 20 'Palvans' in 1966 for local transfer work around the Kilmarnock area.

Hitherto available only in plastic kit form, Bachmann Branchline's new BR 'Palvans' fill an important gap in the range of RTR BR freight stock, with the tooling allowing for the original Morton-braked chassis with oil axleboxes or the later clasp brake variant, with roller bearings.

With a quartet of BR bauxite 'Palvans' on offer, Bachmann has also produced a pair of wagons in Johnnie Walker green livery, complete with the famous Striding Man logo panels at the right-hand end of each side.

Indeed, it's one of these green examples that's reviewed here.

Our sample is equipped with Morton brake gear and oil axleboxes but sports a (correct) set of Oleo buffers. The underframe features crisply moulded detail, and the brake gear is equally well rendered. Blackened metal wheels run freely on pinpoint axles, with the wagon performing well under test. Couplers are mounted in pivoting NEM pockets.

The bodywork is also impressive, with excellent definition to the steel framework and doors. Fine wire grab handles and separately fitted door opening brackets and lamp irons provide extra finesse.

All key dimensions are scaled correctly, and the paintwork is applied to the highest standard, the shade of green matching contemporary images of the real wagons. A detail bag provides an optional set of

vacuum brake hoses and cosmetic Instanter couplers.

Portraying an important prototype in the history of UK rail freight, this is an excellent model, with Bachmann's various tooling differences providing even more welcome variety. (GD)

SUMMARY

PROS

- Looks and fidelity.
- Good level of detail.
- Quality paint finish.
- Interesting prototype.
- Runs well.

CONS

- Not a lot.

FINAL VERDICT

Excellent.



Bachmann FR Brake Third

◆ GAUGE '009' ◆ MODEL Bachmann Narrow Gauge 394-085 Ffestiniog Railway Passenger Brake Third, crimson and cream
◆ PRICE £59.95 ◆ AVAILABILITY Bachmann stockists Web www.bachmann.co.uk

In *Model Rail* 334 I reviewed Bachmann's Ffestiniog Railway 'tin car' saloon coach, modelled on one of the FR's 'modern' coaches of the 1980s. Now we have a model of a much smaller and older vehicle, a wooden-bodied Brake Third, finished in the same crimson and cream livery as No. 8. It is also offered by Bachmann in green with red ends as No. 10 and in yellow, panelled out with crimson as No. 2.

Built originally in the 1870s as luggage vans, with a distinctively shaped roof (leading to the 'curly roof' nickname), the vans were eventually rebuilt as passenger brake vans, with more conventional styling. Bachmann has produced models of the original 'curly roof' vans (including a depiction of the 2004-built replica), as well as the rebuilt passenger Brake Third, as reviewed here.

With a length over headstocks of just 82mm, a scale 20ft 6in, this little model will be of interest to many '009' modellers, not just those seeking stock to run behind a Bachmann Fairlie. Engineering-wise a good match for the 'tin car', it runs on insulated and blackened metal wheelsets mounted in tiny plastic bogies having a 14mm (scale 3ft 6in) wheelbase.

The standard 'hook and loop' couplings are in pivoted mountings attached to the chassis, which has wire truss rods

and exquisite footboards below the two passenger doors. The solebars carry rivet detail and exquisite little brackets for the footboards. Tall vacuum pipes are fitted at both ends, well clear of the couplings. The coach weighs 37g (1.31oz), enough to give it good road-holding without a lot of drag.

The body is moulded in clear plastic and nicely represents the vertical match-board finish of the real thing, with its doors, windows and end platform at the 'van' end only. Detail of the vertical match-boarding and the horizontal planked guards lookout duckets is really fine. The vehicle has just two seating bays, with external doors, each having a droplight. Separate grab handles are fitted beside passenger and guard's doors. Internal detail represents the wooden bench seats of the prototype.



As with the 'tin car' Bachmann has really excelled with the finishing, though this coach does not carry the lovely FR circlet emblem. There are 'no smoking' triangles on the windows, and the words 'Guard' and 'Passengers luggage' are printed in yellow with black shading. You'll need good eyesight or a magnifier to appreciate it fully. The '3' third class markings on the doors are

printed in yellow shaded with black, red and white, as is the fleet number 8, setting off a high-quality product.

Another delightful little offering in a popular scale/gauge combination which Bachmann is clearly seeking to make its own. (CJL)

SUMMARY

PROS

- Excellent level of detail.
- Superb quality finish.
- Weight/free-running combination.

CONS

- Not a lot.

FINAL VERDICT

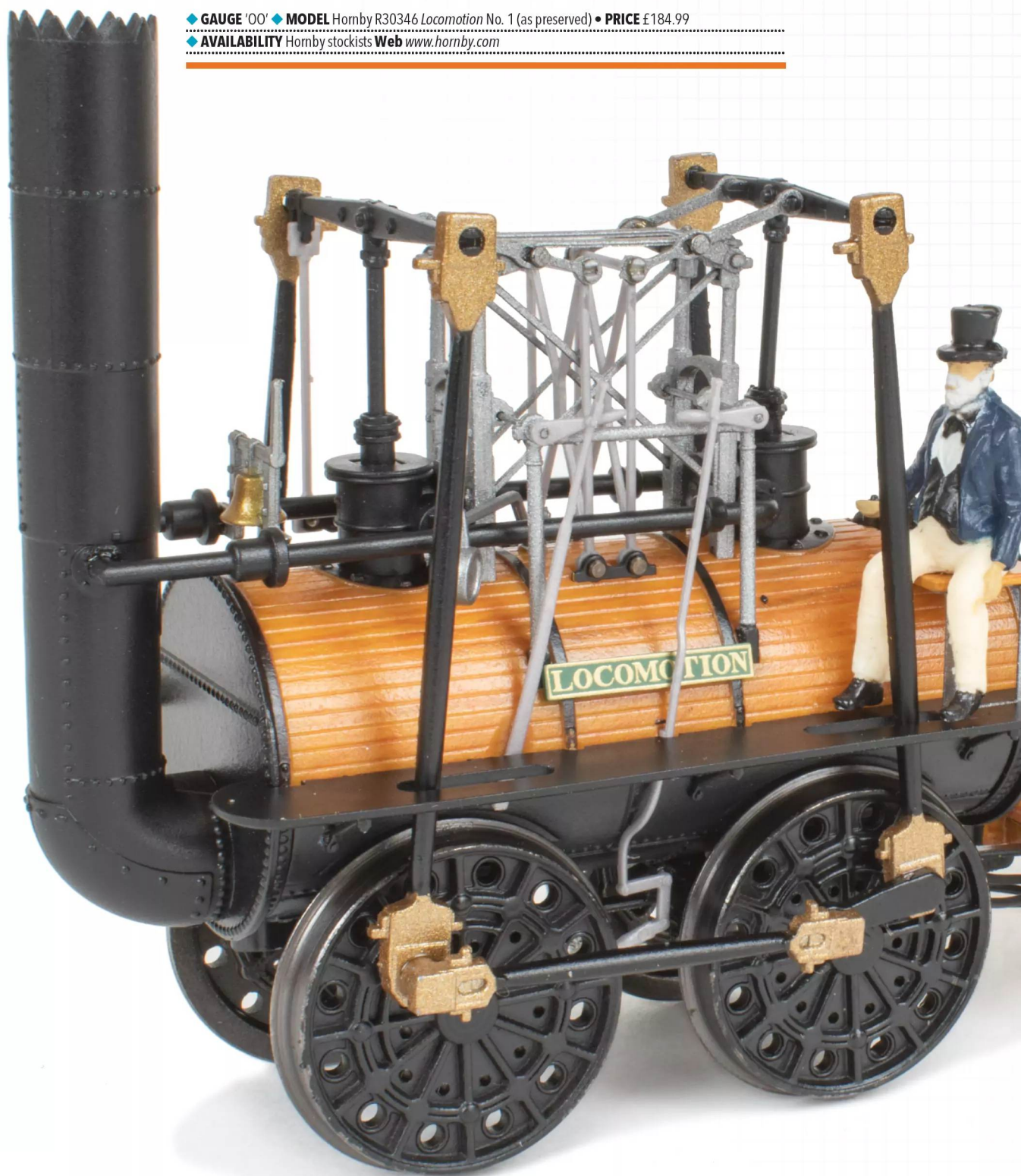
Tempting.



Hornby S&DR *Locomotion No. 1*

◆ GAUGE 'OO' ◆ MODEL Hornby R30346 *Locomotion No. 1* (as preserved) • PRICE £184.99

◆ AVAILABILITY Hornby stockists Web www.hornby.com



With 2025 marking 200 years since the world's first public railway – the Stockton & Darlington – began operation, the year has got off to the perfect start with the arrival of Hornby's eagerly awaited *Locomotion* No. 1.

Built by the father of railways, George Stephenson, the 0-4-0 is depicted in its current preserved guise, and thus billed as suitable for 'Era 11' (2014-present day). Just the one version has been produced thus far but, with sales reported to have been extremely healthy, one imagines that more will follow.

Many modellers have been watching the progress of this model with interest, due partly to the historical significance of the prototype, but also to see how Hornby's engineers would manage to replicate the intricate working valve gear. With so many tiny moving parts, each of which must synchronise carefully with its neighbour, this truly must have been some challenge to replicate on a RTR model.

Presented in a high-quality, foam-lined box, the locomotive is held secure inside a tough acrylic shell, with a small retaining thumbscrew holding the chassis to the base. It's a simple, quick task to free the model which, despite its intricacy, is well put together and not as fragile as one may assume. The locomotive and tender are joined via a low-profile steel coupling bar, with a four-cable power link to the circuit board below the tender chassis.

While the Next18 DCC interface is located inside the tender, there's also a 'sugar cube' speaker pre-installed inside the water tank. The primitive timber-framed tender is well rendered, with a convincing wood grain pattern, plus a moulded coal load. A set of dumb buffers are installed, and the same plastic chain coupler system is adopted to match Hornby's previous Liverpool & Manchester-themed locomotive and rolling stock releases.

Unsurprisingly, it's the locomotive that's the most eye-catching element. Hornby's designers have done well to

capture the basic profile as well as all the various coupling rods, balance weights, levers and brackets. The chimney really looks the part, with the riveted plate seams, while the printed wood grain on the cladding, footboards, driver's seat and nameplates are accurately reproduced, as is the firebox door and twin drain cocks on the back plate. The commemorative bell, bestowed on *Locomotion* during its visit to Chicago in the 1880s (and still carried on the preserved ►



“The model, despite its intricacy, is well put together and not as fragile as one may assume”

3 things we like



1

The moving valve gear works well and is a joy to watch.



2

The printed wood grain on the boiler cladding and tender body is impressive.



3

The mechanism and the coiled wire pickups, wrapped around each axle, work well.

locomotive) is present, sporting a brass paint finish that contrasts nicely with the polished steel of the brackets and valve gear.

The distinctive cast plate locomotive wheels look authentic, as do the gently curved spokes of the tender wheels.

A detail bag provides a pre-painted driver and fireman, both clad in 1820s garb, complete with top hats. A set of three different couplers is provided, with regular or magnetic chains or an NEM adaptor unit to choose from.

LOCO-IN-MOTION

Under test, our sample of *Locomotion* benefited from a running-in period to free up the mechanism, with a little oil applied

to various points, following the lubrication instructions provided. After about 30 minutes of running at a sedate speed, the model was running smoothly and quietly, with the intricate rods and levers all moving freely.

Power is collected via low-friction wire coils encircling the steel axles and the motor, located within the boiler, drives both locomotive axles via a set of gears. With the boiler rendered in full relief, the motor and initial drive are hidden completely from view, and I wasn't brave enough to try and dismantle the locomotive to look inside - I doubt I'd be able to get it back together properly.

It's a real joy to watch this locomotive running and, despite

Hornby S&DR Locomotion No. 1 - in detail



Factfile: Stockton & Darlington Locomotion No. 1

George Stephenson was commissioned to build a fleet of four 0-4-0 steam locomotives for the Stockton & Darlington Railway (S&DR), one of which hauled the inaugural train on the world's first public railway in September 1825. The locomotive, originally christened *Active*, was driven on the opening day by Stephenson himself and was designed primarily for hauling coal trains.

Subsequently gaining the identity of No. 1, the 0-4-0 was rebuilt several times during its career on the S&DR, with the original spoked wheels being replaced by Hackworth pattern 'plug' wheels, plus a revised boiler. After being taken out of service, it was loaned to a colliery in nearby Crook and briefly converted into a stationary engine.

However, owing to its historic status, the locomotive was preserved in the 1850s and rebuilt closer to its original condition at Shildon Works, whereupon it was mounted onto a plinth for display at the S&DR's Darlington North Road station.

In its preserved state, No. 1 also spent time on display in various locations, including Liverpool, Newcastle, Edinburgh and London, as well as venturing to North America and Paris in the 1880s. Having gained the name *Locomotion*, it was relocated to a plinth at the North Eastern Railway's recently built Darlington Bank Top station in 1892, where it remained - save for wartime storage and occasional restorations - until 1975.

Ownership passed from British Rail to the Science Museum and, in more recent years, the locomotive has been located, appropriately, at Locomotion Museum in Shildon, although it is due to return to Darlington during the Rail 200 celebrations this year.

A number of working replicas have also been built over the years.

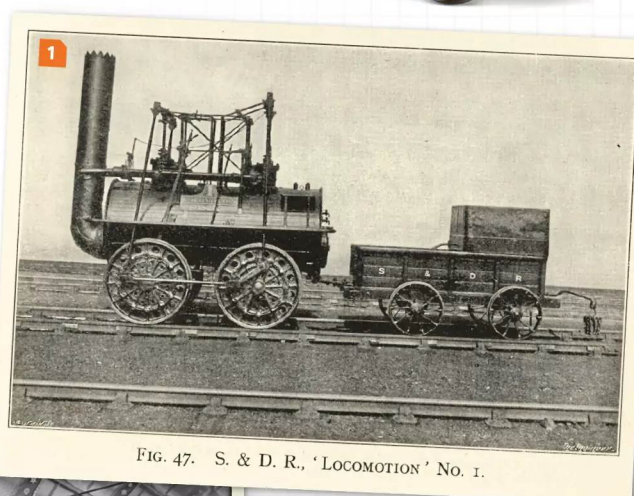
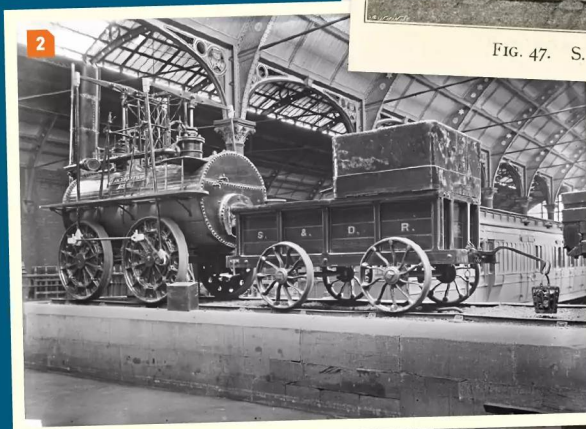


FIG. 47. S. & D. R., 'LOCOMOTION' NO. 1.

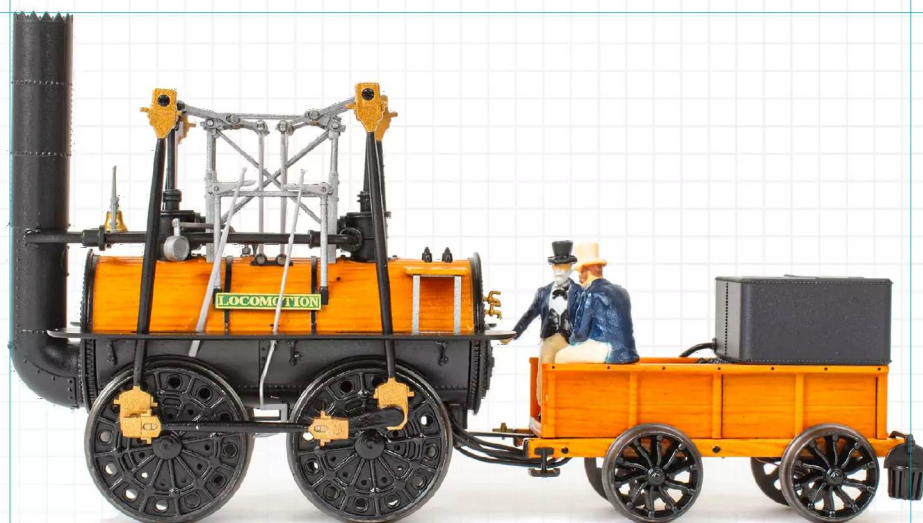


1: During its early preservation career, *Locomotion* gained a large nameplate, with the number '1' included above the name and the year 1825 below. ALAMY

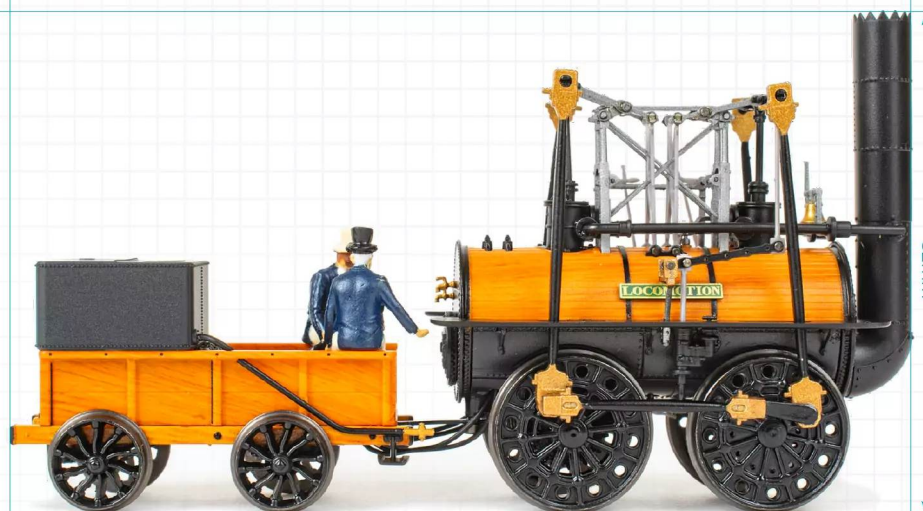
2: Stuffed and mounted onto its stone plinth at Darlington Bank Top station, beside the bay platforms for the Stockton line, *Locomotion* resided here between 1892-1975. It is seen here in the 1920s. ALAMY

3: Stephenson's *Locomotion* No. 1 on display at its namesake museum in Shildon, County Durham. ALAMY

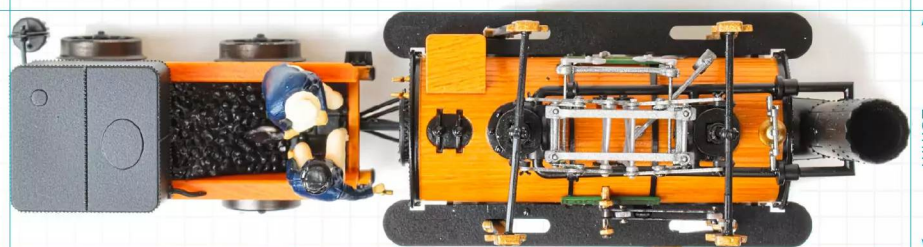




95mm



52mm



28mm

VITAL STATISTICS: HORNBY S&DR LOCOMOTION NO. 1

OVERVIEW

Manufacturer: Hornby
Ref. No. R30346
Unit No. N/A
Scale/gauge: 1:76 scale, 'OO' gauge
Body: Plastic with metal parts
Chassis: Plastic with metal parts
Weight: 49g
Min. curve radius: 371mm (first radius)
Wheel back-to-back: 14.5mm

DIMENSIONS

Length
 Height
 Width
 Wheel diameter (driving)
 Wheel diameter (tender)
 Coupled wheelbase

PROTOTYPE

26ft 9 1/2in
 N/A
 6ft 9 1/2in
 4ft 0in
 2ft 5in
 5ft 0in

1:76 SCALE

107mm
 N/A
 27.4mm
 16mm
 9.5mm
 20.5mm

MODEL

95mm
 52mm
 28mm
 16mm
 9.5mm
 21mm

ELECTRICS

Electrical system: 12V DC two-rail
Motor type: Three-pole
Lights: No
DCC-ready? Next18 socket, speaker pre-fitted

MECHANISM

Drive system: Motor drives both axles via nylon gears
Flywheel(s): No
Traction tyres: No

SERVICING

How to dismantle: Model assembled with screws
Where to oil: Axles, gears, motion – see instructions

its relative lightweight nature (just 49g), it managed to haul the limited number of 'Era 1' stock in my collection. It certainly looks great at the head of a train of Accurascale's chaldron waggons (with the magnetic chain couplers being compatible), managing six of these plus a couple of Hornby L&M coaches.

When running models such as this, with such a short wheelbase and limited number of wheels, it's vital to keep your rails spotlessly clean, and to avoid the use of insulated point frogs and crossings if possible. A little extra weight in the tender wouldn't go amiss, to help keep the wheels in full contact with the rails, so it's a surprise that plastic has been used for the body and water tank.

Indeed, it would be worth experimenting by adding a little extra weight where possible, to see if it leads to improved performance. Although the moulded coal load is integral to the water tank, and thus lifts away when accessing the DCC socket, I'd be tempted to try modifying this to allow a load of real coal chippings to be fixed in place, over a layer of Deluxe Materials' Liquid Gravity (which consists of fine metal balls), to add a few extra grams of ballast over the leading tender axle in particular.

For those wishing to mark 200 years of railways, whether it be running a model on your layout or displaying it proudly on a shelf, Hornby's *Locomotion* is a splendid re-creation of a true icon of the industrial age. It looks the part and performs impressively.

Hornby's L&M *Rocket* certainly grabbed our imagination, and *Locomotion*, despite being a less pretty prototype, is likely to follow suit. Will we start to see more 'Era 1' layouts in future, I wonder? I hope so. (GD)

SUMMARY

PROS

- Looks the part.
- Mechanism and valve gear work well.
- Wood grain finish.
- Runs well.

CONS

- Not a lot.

FINAL VERDICT

Excellent.

LMS/BR CLASS 11 0-6-0DE

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The Class 11 holds an important place in railway history, emerging in the steam era and offering sterling service to the Allied cause during the Second World War.

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To reflect the long and varied careers of the real Class 11s, we've produced 15 different versions, each limited to just 300 pieces. The tooling has been carefully designed to allow several key variations to be observed across LMS, War Department and British Railways locomotives, while the handful of Western Region locomotives built at Swindon have also been included.

00
GAUGE



MR-502 War Department 878 Basra, Longmoor Military Railway blue/red



MR-505 BR 12043, black, BRITISH RAILWAYS lettering



MR-503 LMS 7120, pre-war black



MR-506 BR 15101, WR green, BRITISH RAILWAYS shaded lettering



MR-501 War Department 70271, olive green



MR-504 LMS 7128, post-war black



MR-507 BR 15106, WR green, BRITISH RAILWAYS shaded lettering

WEATHERED

BR/SR CLASS 12 0-6-0DE

00
GAUGE

FIVE VERSIONS UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Specification list

Made by: Heljan

Motor: Five-pole

DCC socket: Next18

Features: • NEM

coupler pockets • brass flywheel and high-reduction gears • working exterior lights (where appropriate) • cab interior lights • factory-fitted speaker • tooling allows for early and late BR versions.

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Expected
mid2025

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➤ **MR-508** BR 12125, black, early emblem



➤ **MR-512**
BR D12062, Rail blue with 'wasp' stripes

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➤ **MR-513** BR 12052, Rail blue
with 'wasp' stripes



➤ **MR-510**
BR 12105, green, late emblem



➤ **MR-514** MP228
(ex-12052), Derek Crouch Mining Co. red/cream



➤ **MR-511** BR 12100, green with 'wasp'
stripes, late emblem



➤ **MR-515** (ex-12099),
National Coal Board orange

Specification list

Made by: Heljan

Motor: Five-pole

DCC socket: Next18

Features: • NEM coupler
pockets • brass flywheel
and high-reduction gears
• working exterior lights (where
appropriate) • cab interior
lights • factory-fitted speaker
• tooling allows for LMS, WD,
GWR and BR versions.

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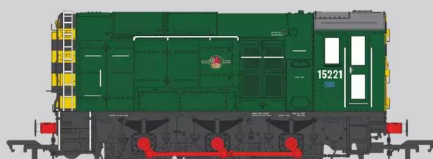
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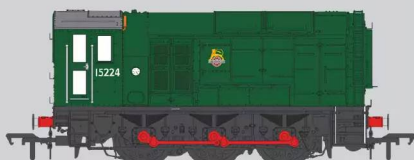
- ◆ MR-520 BR/SR Class 12, 15220,
BR black, early emblem
- ◆ MR-521 BR/SR Class 12, 15224,
BR green, early emblem
- ◆ MR-522 BR/SR Class 12, 15221,
BR green with 'wasp' stripes,
late emblem
- ◆ MR-523 BR/SR Class 12, 15212,
BR Rail blue with 'wasp' stripes
- ◆ MR-524 BR/SR Class 12, (ex-15231)
Tilcon blue with 'wasp' ends



➤ **MR-520**



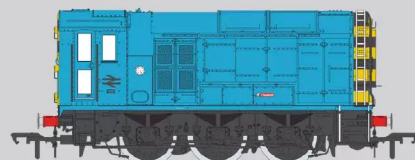
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➤ **MR-521**



➤ **MR-523**



➤ **MR-524**

'16XX' 0-6-0PT

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GAUGE

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Specification list

Made by:

Rapido Trains Inc.

Motor:

Five-pole

DCC socket:

Next18

Features:

• NEM coupler
pockets • factory-fitted
speaker • sprung buffers
• firebox glow • 'Busby'
spark arrestor chimney

£149.00

£134.10 price for Model Rail
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BR BLACK, EARLY EMBLEM (PRISTINE)

- ♦ MR-301A: No. 1609
- ♦ MR-301B: No. 1623
- ♦ MR-301C: No. 1624
- ♦ MR-301D: No. 1657
- ♦ MR-301E: No. 1664
- ♦ MR-301F: No. 1658
- ♦ MR-301G: No. 1668
- ♦ MR-302A: No. 1646

LOW
STOCK

SOLD
OUT

LOW
STOCK

BR BLACK, EARLY EMBLEM (WEATHERED)

- ♦ MR-302B: No. 1649
- ♦ MR-303: No. 1604

BR BLACK, LATE EMBLEM (PRISTINE)

- ♦ MR-304A: No. 1636
- ♦ MR-304B: No. 1655

BR BLACK, LATE EMBLEM (WEATHERED)

- ♦ MR-305A: No. 1627
- ♦ MR-305B: No. 1628

GWR GREEN

- ♦ MR-306: GWR green No. 1638

SOLD
OUT

'BUSBY' CHIMNEY

- ♦ MR-307A: BR black early emblem pristine, No. 1616
- ♦ MR-307B: BR black early emblem pristine, No. 1629
- ♦ MR-308: BR black early emblem weathered, No. 1661

NCB GREEN

- ♦ MR-309A: NCB green, No. 1600
- ♦ MR-309B: NCB green, No. 1607

PRESERVED GREEN

- ♦ MR-310A: Green early BR emblem, No. 1638
- ♦ MR-310B: Green 'Dart Valley' lettering, No. 1638



Ruston 'PWM' 0-6-0DE

CHOOSE FROM EIGHT VERSIONS

00
GAUGE

Specification list

Made by: Heljan

Motor: Coreless

DCC socket: Next18

Features: • Cab interior lights

• NEM coupler pockets

£169.00

£152.10 price for Model Rail subscribers



MR-403 PWM653
BR light green



MR-405A PWM 97651
BR yellow



MR-405B PWM 97652
BR yellow



MR-404 PWM652
BR Rail blue



MR-402 PWM651
BR green, 'wasp' ends



MR-400A PWM651
BR green



MR-400B PWM652
BR green



MR-401 PWM654
BR green, 'wasp' ends

LNER Sentinels - the new batch

00
GAUGE



MR-018 LNER Class Y3
Sentinel, No. 8172,
LNER black with Gill Sans
lettering/numerals



MR-021 LNER Class Y1
Sentinel, No. 45,
LNER black with shaded
lettering/numerals



MR-019 BR Class Y1
Sentinel, No. 68144,
BR black, early crest



MR-020 BR Class Y3
Sentinel, No. 68162,
BR black, early crest

Specifications

Made by: Dapol

Motor: Five-pole 'Super-Creep'

DCC socket: Eight-pin

£99.00

£89.10 price for Model Rail subscribers

LNER 'J70s'

SIX TO CHOOSE FROM

Specification list

Made by: Rapido Trains

Motor: Coreless

DCC socket: Six-pin

Features: • NEM coupler pockets • space for sound speaker • sprung buffers • removable cowcatchers • poseable windows and end doors • etched worksplates

£127.50

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00
GAUGE

Open or closed end doors

Heavy die-cast chassis

MR-203
No. 68225, BR early emblem, no skirts

Full interior detail

Poseable side and end windows

Sprung buffers

Version without side skirts



MR-203
No. 68225, BR early emblem, no skirts



MR-204
No. 68226, British Railways lettering, no skirts



MR-206 No. 7128, LNER wartime livery, full skirts



MR-207 No. 8223, LNER post-war livery, full skirts



MR-208 No. 7126, LNER lined livery, no skirts



MR-210 No. 7139, LNER lined livery

'USA' 0-6-0Ts

Made by: Bachmann/Kader

Motor: Three-pole

DCC socket: Six-pin

Features: • NEM coupler pockets • two types of cab • different smokeboxes • different footsteps • separately fitted hinged platform

SR cab windows

DCC-ready

Original clack valves

00
GAUGE

MR-111
£129.95

£116.95 price for Model Rail subscribers

Original grab handles

Front platform (supplied separately)

NEM coupler pocket

MR-111
'USA' 0-6-0T No. s73
British Railways unlined black, 'Sunshine lettering'

Six-pin decoder socket



We've frozen the original 2017 price on these models



MR-101 No. 1968, USATC black



MR-107 No. 36, National Coal Board black



MR-110 No. DS237 Maunsell, BR Departmental green



MR-108 No. 72, Keighley & Worth Valley Railway ochre

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£112.46 subscriber price

Our 'USA' 0-6-0Ts are selling out - order yours today!

BR/BRUSH TYPE 4 CLASS 48

FOUR TO CHOOSE FROM

Specification list

Made by: Heljan

Motor: Five-pole

DCC socket: 21pin

Features: • NEM coupler pockets • illuminated headcode panels and tail lights • interior lighting • sprung buffers • detail pack includes snowploughs

When Heljan announced its all-new 'OO' gauge Class 47 project, we took the opportunity to commission the first ever ready-to-run model of the Class 48 – a small fleet of Brush Type 4s equipped with experimental Sulzer V12 power units. Although very similar to a '47', the Class 48s featured significant alterations to the roof to accommodate a revised exhaust system, engine room access doors and ventilation grilles.

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(Subscribers' price £220.50)

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- ◆ 4821 Class 48, D1704 BR two-tone green, small warning panels, weathered
- ◆ 4822 Class 48, D1706 BR two-tone green, full warning panels
- ◆ 4823 Class 48, D1703 BR two-tone green, full warning panels, weathered



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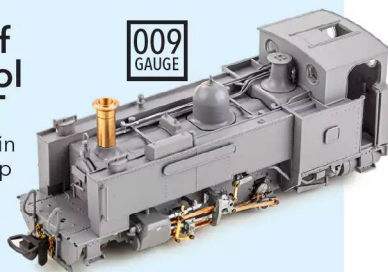


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**Vale of
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partnership
with
Revolution
Trains



**009
GAUGE**

**BR Class 26
26043 in Rail** **00 GAUGE**
**blue with Haymarket
depot emblems**
Produced by Heljan



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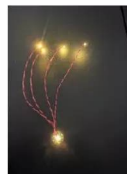


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- 08-09 February 2025 - Festival of British Railway Modeling (Doncaster Racecourse)
- 14-15 February 2025 - Burnham & District Model Railway Exhibition (Weston-Super-Mare)
- 01-02 March 2025 - Midlands Garden Rail Show (Warwick Event Centre, Lemington Spa)
- 15-16 March 2025 - The London Festival of Railway Modeling (Alexandra Palace)

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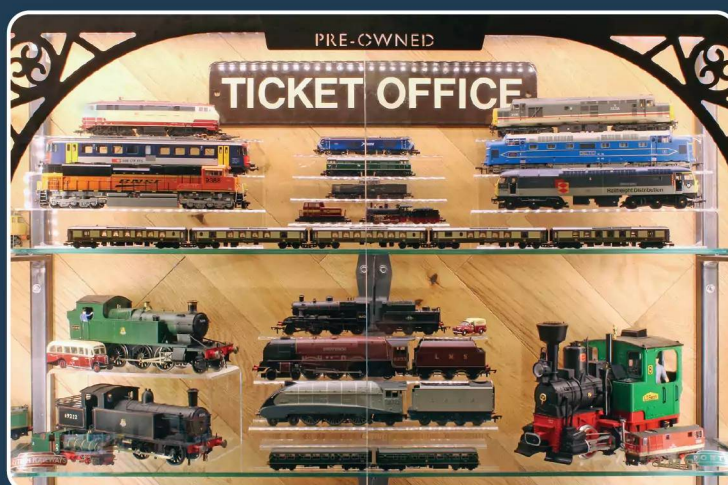
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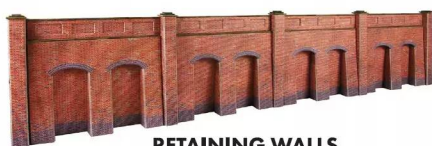
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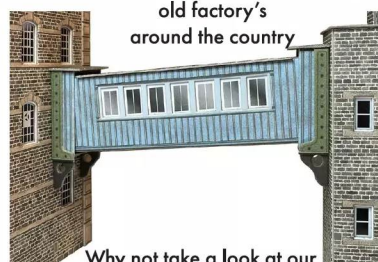
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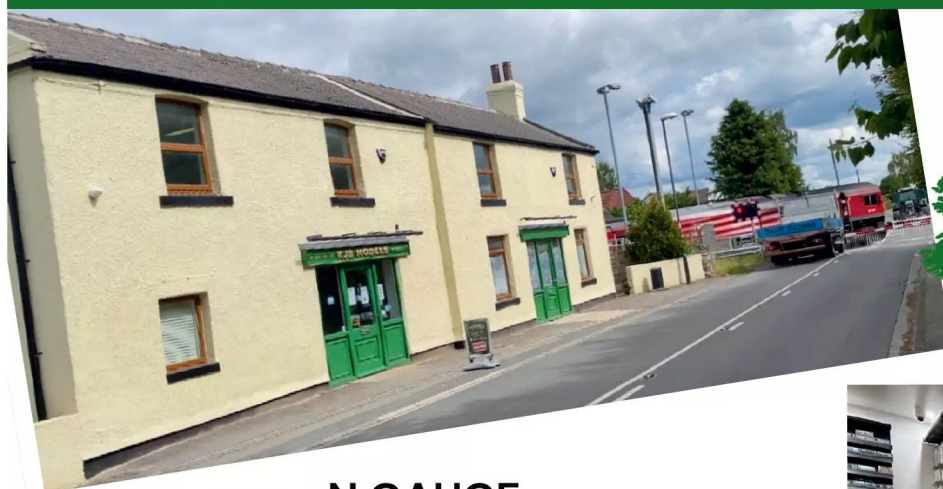
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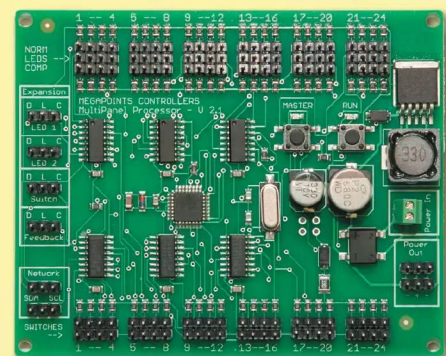
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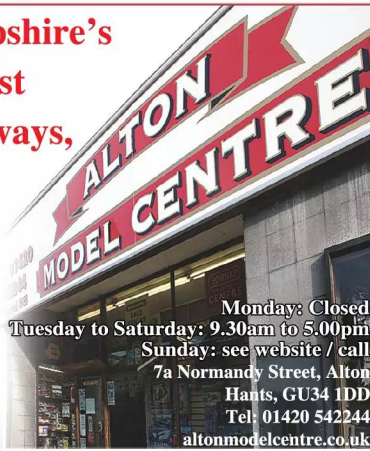
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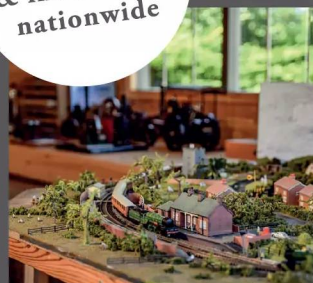
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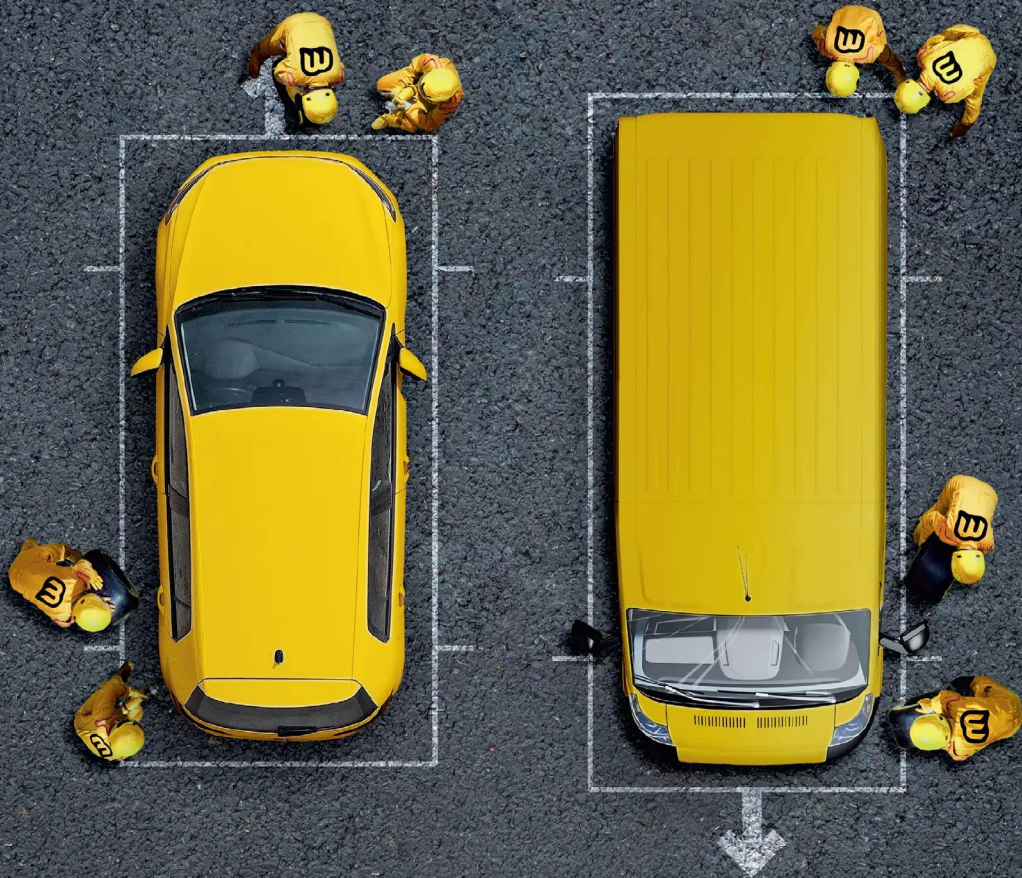
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Backscene



Nothing is really new. **CHRIS LEIGH** remembers where he first saw diesel railcars with bike artwork, and gets the inevitable layout inspiration.

My fascination with single-unit railcars has recently focused on the ScotRail and

Transport for Wales Class 153s modified for carrying bikes and hikers on the West Highland and Central Wales lines. I was reminded how these 'novel concepts' are not really new at all, and how British railways have shamelessly copied ideas from overseas, particularly from the Netherlands when it comes to DMUs.

We should give credit where it's due. For instance, the word 'Sprinter' was used for two-car EMUs by NS (Nederlandse Spoorwegen) before BR adopted it for the new Class 150-series units. NS liked to tie such titles to places, so some Sprinters became Strand Sprinters because they served seaside resorts, 'strand' translating as 'beach'.

With family in the Netherlands and holidays there in the late 1980s, I became acquainted with the single-car and two-car DMUs known as 'Wadloper' ('Wad' is short for the Waddensee area and 'loper' means 'runner'). I was sufficiently fascinated, at that time, that I drew up artwork for an etched kit to make one in 'HO' scale. The project went no further, as DJH produced a kit, though I never managed to get my hands on one.

It's probably 30-plus years since I last went to Holland and my various Dutch outline models from Lima and Fleischmann have languished in a cupboard ever since. That was until I discovered that a model bus manufacturer, PB Models, had produced a DCC sound-fitted 'Wadloper' in 2023. The model was sold out at the manufacturer but I found one on eBay in the classic livery with the large bicycle vinyls on the sides. I had photographed No. 3106 in that livery at Leeuwarden in 1989, working the branch line to Harlingen Haven ('haven' means 'port') a port on the Waddensee.

I seldom plan layouts on paper, preferring to try the main elements in place on the baseboard.
CHRIS LEIGH



With revived interest, I gave my old Lima and Fleischmann models a test run. They needed nothing more than a drop of lubrication to revive them. The revival of my interest and inspiration was timely as it followed an overnight stay in hospital, apparently a leftover from my prostate cancer treatment.

I bought a couple of baseboard kits and began planning a small, portable layout that would accommodate both my old analog EMUs and the new DCC 'Wadloper'. I also wanted a terminus for a preserved railway, inspired by the Stoomtram Hoorn-Medemblik, on which to run a couple of Russian carriages. These came to me in the Gorbachev era, when communication with a Russian modeller became briefly possible. He wanted some Fleischmann wagons, so we did a swap. A locomotive would have been next but he warned me that thefts from the Russian post office were rife and not to try sending anything more. Then Gorbachev was overthrown and that brief window of opportunity was gone.

My new project will use mainly European plastic building kits and I've already been impressed by the quality and ease of construction of a Kibri station kit, fully coloured and mainly clip-together, requiring a minimum of glueing. With British outline kits mainly in printed card or laser-cut wood, there's nothing really comparable among British outline models. Going Dutch is making a fascinating and inspiring break.



With cyclists aplenty, Netherlands railways introduced 'Wadloper' railcars, converted and branded for cycle-carrying back in the 1980s. This one was at Leeuwarden in 1989. **CHRIS LEIGH**

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