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BY SUBSCRIPTION ONLY

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## Contents

Club Stuff.....	2
Swapmeets.....	3
Diary Dates.....	4
Membership Update.....	5
Members Moments.....	7
Factory Focus.....	8
Day In The Life.....	9
Chevron B19 review.....	11
British GT Report.....	15
Website Survey.....	18
Letters.....	19
Tyrrell F1 Cars.....	22
Slot Classic Review.....	25
Auto Unions .....	27
Cup Of Cheer.....	29
Bits And Pieces.....	30
Building Buildings.....	31
Rubber Track Part 4.....	34
Interesting Cardboard.....	35
Carrera Sauber Review.....	38
Members Adverts.....	39

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# NSCC

The independent club for slot-car enthusiasts



**There are more questions than answers**



**W**hy is there only one Monopolies Commission?  
Why is there only one word for Thesaurus?  
Who did shoot the deputy if Bob Marley didn't?

However, the one that really puzzles me is:- Why don't people read the rules before they send me a members advert for inclusion in the Journal? Every month I reject at least two because of missing membership numbers or some other misdemeanour. If I am in good humour I return them for amendment; if I am feeling grumpy, or there are too many of them, they end up in the round grey filing cabinet! The other month I received a cracker - a list of cars for sale with no contact details whatsoever. I am still waiting for someone to complain about its non-appearance so I can be rude to them.

The most common reason for rejection concerns email addresses; the rules state quite clearly that if an advert contains one then it must be sent electronically. This is because it makes the job of compiling the adverts easier; an email I can transfer to the page in thirty seconds whereas hard copy takes considerably longer. Yet every month I receive at least one advert, beautifully composed on a computer, from someone with email facilities who then puts a 27p stamp on it and posts it! Why???

I usually send these back, stating that adverts with email addresses will only be accepted by that method and, nine times out of ten, they cross out the email address and post it back to me again! Is it me that's barmy or the rest of the world? If someone could explain this phenomenon to me I would be most grateful.

**And Finally** - thank you very much for the response to my request for articles last month. I have received enough for a 44 page issue this month and even have a couple of articles left in the bank. Please keep them coming.

*Till next month  
Brian*



## McLaren crowned.

The silver McLaren Mercedes C2261 is reported to have a rear wing variation in that the sponsor names (top down) Loctite-Schuco-Crown has been seen in the reverse order of Crown-Schuco-Loctite.



## Printair print rare

The Printair BMW 320i cars, privately commissioned with only one hundred of each of the two colours produced, are probably the last to have been liveried at the factory in Margate. It was so touch and go that the cars were only assembled as and when there was someone from the ever diminishing workforce at the factory available to piece them together after they had been liveried up. All further commissioned liveries will now be produced at the factory in



China. It will be most unusual to see limited edition runs of anything less than one thousand units.

## Light up the track with Astra fireworks!

The new Astra V8 Coupe touring car goes like a rocket. Having seen the car at the factory I can report that the styling is excellent. The car looks right. As they say in racing circles, "If it looks right then you can bet your bottom dollar (Euro!) that it is right". It has a low, ground hugging stance that tells you that this is going to race well. Testing proved that this car is equal to the Cadillac Northstar and Porsche 911 GT3R. For non-magnet tracks you may wish to remove the self centring guide spring for better performance, but that's about all you'll need to do. On normal Scalextric track the handling is brilliant. The front stub axles are reasonably well behaved but smaller diameter tyres correct the wheel bounce. It's easy to fit a beam axle at the front if you desire to do so. Handling is superb with no other Scalextric cars being quite this good. It is going to be a favourite with most hardened racers.

What does it have for collectors though? You will not be disappointed. The full length driver sits in a complete interior, all the seats and other interior stuff is there in detail. Metal parts have been used on the front grill, the rear heat vents inside the rear window and front wheel arches. The brake discs, door mirrors and exhaust assembly are also metal parts and add that final realistic touch.

Another nice touch is that the LED light board can now be unscrewed and removed. A superb car that will be a red hot racer. Light the blue touch paper and watch the competition retire! ■

# A 'Day In The Life'

## Part 5 - Power to the people

BY ADRIAN NORMAN

Enough Scalextric customers wrote to Hornby requesting that the exhausts be bored out at their ends so as to look like pipes and not solid bars.

Even after normal production runs, moulds may be returned for improvements. One case in point is the TVR Speed 12 exhaust pipes; this was easily done and the mould was changed. Since the purple TVR, which sports exhaust 'rods', all subsequent TVR cars have the modified hollow exhaust pipes.

### Getting Better

During the past five years, the Scalextric development groups hard work has, year after year, little by little, reached the Scalextric racers and collectors alike.

Since the TVR, the Subaru has had its underpan changed to accept round magnets and the Cadillac has had a new guide type, centring spring and contact components. The underpans had to be changed to accommodate these new parts.

During the collection of data, consideration is made to the specification of the car. Should it have lights, the kind of magnet to be used (if at all)? At this stage the development team discuss and test the possibilities as to what innovations can be introduced. One of the most important areas is that of chassis design. We have seen almost every part of the chassis upgraded. The positioning of the guide blade to the furthest point forward as possible was a welcome improvement for all racers as was the multi-point magnet positions.

However, not all changes are for the benefit of the racer or collector. The quick-fit guide blades are made for ease of changing and thereby dispensing with the requirement to take the car apart to replace the worn braids. Taking the car apart and exposing the wiring is an accident waiting to happen in the hands of children or careless adults. This is taken into

account by the EEC safety regulations when producing toys for use by children as young as 36 months of age. These requirements led to the redesign of lighting systems in that the bulb has to be replaceable without allowing access to the electrical components or wiring of the toy.

After basic specification requirements are decided upon, the feasibility of design and production are investigated. Often, compromises have to be made. To illustrate this, consider the chrome badge on the bonnet of the Mercedes CLK GT1 car. The manufacture of such a small component has its constraints; in this case it had to be not too fragile. In consideration of the major part of the customer base, high street sales, a compromise was reached. The badge is small enough to look nice and to be more-or-less to scale but large enough to produce with the minimum of problems. ■

# WHEELSPIN

GB TRACK (GB12) CHEVRON B19 REVIEWED BY PETER NOVANI

It is often said that variety is the spice of life. And without question, GB Track have taken that rather hackneyed phrase to heart, as they embark on a diverse production programme. GB Track's rendition of the Chevron B19/B21 typifies their eclectic taste, and evidence that the powers-that-be have a penchant for that era of motor racing. No matter what your opinions are, regarding this embryonic range, GB Track should be congratulated for showing such ambition.

Chevron, B19, B21? None the wiser? Well, cast your minds back some thirty years. In motor racing terms, 1971 was a year that saw Jackie Stewart winning the F1 championship for the second time, Porsche's continued domination of endurance sports car racing, and the last time McLaren's CanAm successes could be taken for granted. A year that also saw Ford, BMW and Alfa Romeo vying for European Touring Car Championship honours, and Ronnie Peterson clinching the last ever 1600cc Formula Two title. And in the context of this review, 1971 saw a resurgence of interest in the 2-litre sports car category, highlighting in particular, the race cars manufactured by Chevron and Lola. Given a preference, I wonder how many enthusiasts would put this type of race car on their most-wanted list as a suitable subject for a slot-car? And how many slot-car manufacturers would have had the courage to produce such an unusual car?

## CHEVRON'S FORMATIVE YEARS

The company, Chevron Cars, was founded by the late Derek Bennett, a Lancastrian born and bred. He was also a race driver and engineer of some repute. From humble beginnings with his eponymous engineering firm in Salford, Bennett

built up a strong following with motor racing enthusiasts in the North of England. However, not content with tuning other makes of race car, he embarked on designing and building a clubman type car in 1964. Needless to say, with Bennett at the wheel, the B1 plus the updated B2, achieved numerous races wins. These cars formed the basis of an illustrious career in motor racing, for this often forgotten British marque.

Buoyed by those successes, Bennett set about building the first proper Chevron GT sports car in 1965, the 1600cc powered B3. (Incidentally, he conjured up the name Chevron while looking through a Ministry of Transport pamphlet on road signs!). Thereafter, it was a gradual progression which led to the smart little BMW powered 2-litre B8 raced in national and international Group 4 GT events throughout 1968/69. By which time the company, now based in Bolton, had diversified into building single-seater race cars.

It was not until 1970, and the introduction of the sleek B16 coupé, that Bennett designed an entirely new Ford powered 2-litre race car; 25 were built to meet the new Group 6 regulations. The coupé, in turn, spawned the B16 open top (spyder) for the latter part of the 1970 2-litre championship. The B19, and the subsequent (slightly wider) B21, were derivatives of the original B16 spyder. Both were campaigned in the 1971/72 championships, occasionally also fitted with BMW's potent 2-litre powerplant.

## 1971 2-LITRE CHAMPIONSHIP

Having won the final round of the inaugural 1970 series, the new B19 showed that it had the potential to be a leading contender the following year. The grandly titled "1971 European Trophy for Makes up to 2-litres" would see⇒

Chevron compete against arch-rival race car manufacturer, Lola Cars, and their T212 in a nine race series. Both companies built cars mainly for privateers, although favoured teams were offered works support. Championship honours in 1971 went to Lola with Chevron taking the runner-up prize. Other cars competing that year, included those from Fiat-Abarth and Porsche.

The series boasted drivers of the calibre of Jo Bonnier, Vic Elford and Helmut Marko, who regularly drove Scuderia Filipinetti entered Lolas. Other notable top-line drivers made guest appearances, including Formula One star, Ronnie Peterson. For their part, Chevron supported a single works B19 driven by Chris Craft, although it had little success. Fortunately private teams such as Chester based Red Rose Racing, run by Chevron Director John Bridges, and Dobie Auto Racing Team (DART), formed by Scottish investor Denis Dobie, upheld Chevron's honour with three wins between them. And Chevron could also boast a top F1 driver of their very own – Austria's Niki Lauda. He scored their first ever international victory that year, appropriately at the Österriebling in Austria.

As some of the GB Track Chevrons are based on those entered for the South African Springbok 2-litre series, it's worth mentioning that many of the leading European frontrunners took advantage of a lull in racing activities over the winter period to race in this popular series held at the end of each season. Incidentally, Lola also won the 1971 Springbok series. Although little known national circuits were predominant, the series often kicked off with a high profile nine hour race at the prestigious Kyalami Grand Prix circuit. The 2-litre cars benefiting from the addition of headlights for that particular race.

## THE SLOT CAR

As mentioned, the B19 nomenclature refers to the 1971 car, its successor, the B21 was the 1972 car. Visually there really isn't much to differentiate between the two variants. Hence, GB Track have chosen to base both versions on just the one mould. The diminutive B19/21 cars

feature a sharper, more angular design, rather than the curvaceous lines of Chevron's predecessors. Reviewed here is the smart looking white and red #5 Lucky Strike (cigarettes) sponsored, 4-cylinder Ford FVC powered B19. John Hine (depicted) and Dave Charlton drove this Red Rose Racing entered car to victory in the Welkom 3 Hours. This was the penultimate round of the Springbok series and the race was held at the Goldfields Raceway during a blinding sandstorm of all things!

You're probably already wondering how this car measures up to GB Track's inaugural offering, the Porsche 917/10 spyder. Unfortunately, the general presentation is still not quite on a par with that found on Fly's existing Classic range. Whilst the attention given to certain aspects of the detailing have to be admired, other areas leave you questioning GB Track's quality control and design. Aesthetically, the car is let down by the absence of a photo-etched front grille and the distinctive blue tinted windshield of this particular race car. They merely reaffirm GB Track's cost cutting measures, as does the solid air vents on top of the front wings and the patchy red tampo printed full length stripes that adorn my review sample. Oh, and as for that white plastic tube sticking out at the rear. It's actually supposed to be the exhaust pipe which, although accurate, somehow looks like an afterthought!

That said, on a more positive note, the engine inlet trumpets visible on the rear tail section, and the new style four spoke aluminium coloured wheel rims add much needed finesse and authenticity. Features that are supplemented by the superb rear suspension and gearbox detailing, which incorporate realistic coil springs – similar in style to those found on a Fly Porsche 908/3. For racing purposes the unusually large, yet accurate mirror, appears precariously mounted. Making it easily removable would have been a smart decision.

## ON TRACK IMPRESSIONS

In common with most other Fly/GB Track products, the Chevron's chassis and running gear feature well proven (Fly) components.

Treaded tampo printed tyres, front stub-axles, sidewinder Mabuchi type motor (in a silver coloured plastic mounting) and, of course, a powerful cylindrical magnet are all included.

Normally, Fly Car Model products are a byword for reliability. Therefore, it was a surprise to find that, during the test session, the Chevron failed to negotiate left hand corners at the appropriate speed. This unexpected problem was eventually traced to the non-gearred rear tyre's inner sidewall rubbing against the chassis. The slight axle movement, from right to left, under cornering forces being the main culprit, thus slowing the car and increasing lap times. No matter how the wheel was repositioned on the axle, the problem remained. So, for want of a better solution, the problem was finally resolved by lightly applying sandpaper to the offending sidewall!

Other than that, on first acquaintance, the Chevron's performance is everything you'd expect from a Fly based slot-car. For example, the aggressive application of power when exiting tight double inner curve hairpin bends – a stern test for any slot-car – failed to unsettle its poise. If you like your slot-cars endowed with plenty of magnetic downforce, you're sure to embrace this one. Alternatively, if you hanker after a tail-out attitude when racing, then simply remove the magnet and add some strategically placed ballast!

#### **GB Track (GB 11) – Chevron B19**

Fastest lap = 4.3380 sec\*

20 laps = 1 min 30.1808 sec\*

\*Set prior to the sidewall fault being rectified

#### **GB Track (GB 1) – Porsche 917/10**

Fastest lap = 4.0929 sec

20 laps = 1 min 24.8305 sec

With a plethora of race versions to choose from, expect GB Track to release plenty more Chevrons for your delectation, including the 1972 B21 and the BMW powered versions.

## **OTHER CHEVRON RELEASES**

### **(GB11) STP – Jarama 2 Hrs '71**

Already released is this blue #8 Red Rose Racing entered B19, as driven by Spaniard José Juncadella to second place. The additional rear view mirror to the right of the cockpit area has been nicely replicated on this version.

### **(GB13) Gunston – Cape Town 3 Hrs '71**

Another new release, the second placed Ford powered #1 B19, painted in the gaudy colours of Team Gunston (cigarettes). Brian Redman and bike racing legend, Mike (Mike-the-Bike) Hailwood, drove the car in this Springbok race.

### **(GB14) Tergal – ? '71**

Exact race details are unavailable at the time of writing. However, expect this to be the Spanish #27 yellow with green stripes Tergal sponsored B19 version entered by Red Rose Racing.

### **(GB15) Wynns – Lor' Marques 3 Hrs '71**

The soon to be released Lorenzo Marques (Springbok) winner. The yellow #6 Wynns (performance parts) B19 was driven by Ed Swart and Jody Scheckter.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

GB Track's Chevron is a fitting tribute to a British car designer who was undoubtedly one of motor racing's unsung heroes. Clearly, the introduction of this marque adds greater variety to our collections. A fact not lost on other slot-car enthusiasts, as sales are apparently outstripping those achieved by the Interserie Porsche 917/10. Moreover, it would be entirely appropriate for GB Track to respond to the demand by introducing a slot-car version of the Lola T212 to accompany the Chevron. My initial concerns regarding the quality of this range are, to an extent, still valid. GB Track would be well advised to address those concerns sooner, rather than later. Having seen Fly Car Models' impressive production schedule, it might be prudent for them to consider implementing a quality-rather-than-quantity policy.

Once again my thanks go to Pendle Slot Racing for kindly providing the review car, and for prompting me to wallow in all this nostalgia malarkey. Cheers! ■

# British Sports & GT Grand Prix 2001

A joint report from Brian Steptoe and Russell Turner

The weekend of 24th-25th March saw the British Grand Prix, which is the 1st round of the 2001 European GT. Series; the others being in Paris and Brussels later in the year. The series has been running since the late eighties and has seen the British event hosted by the Wood Green and Eastcote clubs in the past but it has been run by the West London club for the last four years and, with 78 entries, this was their biggest event to date.

This year's event was sponsored by Pendle slot racing and the Hobby Company (the Ninco importers) and attracted some of the best drivers from all over the country. The venue was changed to Combe Haven Holiday Park near Hastings. This was much closer to Dover giving ease of access to the drivers from Belgium. If the venue is used next year, perhaps we will see more from France again. There were some problems when the track was set up on Friday as the lighting in the room was poor and a search for candles and miner's lamps was under way.

Saturday was the practice day and saw people trying to get to grips with the West London circuit which is a six lane plexy track with some very interesting features; a Spa type bus stop and a Laguna Seca like corkscrew. Saturday practice was intended to be split into two sessions with the latter one being for drivers who were not members of West London and who had not practised there in the previous month but, as is always the case, people are not helpful and considerate of others and did not feel the need to allow the other drivers some more practice. Hopefully this will be enforced next year as it is necessary to try to create a more competitive event where the 'away' drivers do have a chance of reaching the latter stages.

Saturday night saw many of the racers spend the evening in the bar enjoying the local beverages and listening to the live soul music that was being played in the main hall.

Sunday dawned and there were 78 racers on the entry sheet; this meant there would have to be 78 fifteen lap qualifying heats, so we were in for a long day. With so many cars to check, some scrutineering had taken place the evening before and the event started around 10:50. The heats brought the usual consistent performance from the top seeds and there were some excellent performances. In particular, Andy Tomlin who is a junior member of Eastcote never finished out of the top 3 in his heats and missed the Q-F cut by a mere 4 points. Jack Thoburn was the outstanding 'newcomer' to the event finishing joint 10th after the heats.

So to the Quarterfinals. All the top seeds were successful and progressed. The surprise semifinalist was Simon Wilkins in only his second Grand Prix. The semifinals as usual were exciting with 2000 European Champion Matt Digby winning the first semifinal followed by William Oxley and Jonathan White, another previous finalist.

The second semifinal saw the surprise elimination of the 2000 British Grand Prix winner, Daniel Cale. After some early mishaps, he trailed in 4th 0.77 seconds behind 3rd placed Nick Picknall from South Devon who reached his first Grand Prix final. Nick is a talented driver who travels around the country to many events but this was surely one of his best performances.

So to the B final. Daniel won this despite, for some reason, choosing the Green lane with Don Stanley taking second place 1/100th second ahead of Russell Turner in the closest finish of the day. The final itself never lived up to expectations or to the previous year's event as Matt Digby drove an almost perfect race, even breaking the lap record of 9.6 seconds set earlier by his brother Robert with a magnificent 9.44 seconds. Matt made the race look a little closer by coming off near the end and he was then →→

badly marshalled leaving him 0.5 seconds ahead of Ashley Moorhouse with brother Robert only 0.5 seconds behind him.

Matt was a worthy winner and it will take a special effort to stop him retaining his European Championship crown in 2001. The next event is in Versailles, Paris over the weekend of the 28th/29th April 2001. I urge as many drivers as possible to make this trip, it is a worthwhile event on a superb Ninco track and an opportunity for some sightseeing or a romantic weekend!

This year due to the generous sponsorship of Pendle slot racing and the Hobby Company prizes were given to the top 24 drivers, as well as a rookie prize, won by Keith Fishenden from the Viking club. We would like to take this

opportunity to thank the co-organisers Ken Webb, Roland Brooks and Tony Asplin, as well as the other member of the European Committee Luc Van der Perre, for all their efforts to make the weekend a success. Most people had a very enjoyable weekend and we look forward to the rest of this season's competition. The 3rd round is in Waterloo, Brussels on the 22nd/23rd of September.

Finally a quick plug for the West London club - anyone who fancies trying out our challenging 112ft circuit, we race on a Thursday night 7.45pm at the scout hut Sweetcroft Lane, Hillingdon, Middlesex, further details can be obtained from Russell Turner 01895 470773 or E.mail [russell.turner@lineone.net](mailto:russell.turner@lineone.net). ■

## A personal view of the event

BY JON SWORD

When Paul Darby asked me if I'd be interested in a weekend away at a holiday camp in Hastings I had this horrible feeling that my life would never be the same again! However, he explained that he was looking to get together a small group from the Phoenix club to attend the British Grand Prix of Europe at Combe Haven Holiday Park in Hastings on 24/25 March 2001.

This event was organised by the West London Slot Racing Club in the shape of a competition using Sports/GT cars from the Ninco range. The cars were to be a standard build using NC 2 motors, strict rules applied; in particular tyres would be expected to pass the "paper test" (now known as the Paul Darby test ... read on to see why!)

The event utilised the holiday park and its facilities which meant as a club we could hire a chalet for six people which cost £100 for the weekend, splitting the cost meant it was good value and they even threw in a "soul night" as the Saturday night function. Little did we realise how much this particular evening of frivolity would affect our weekend!

Travelling down south we had a great natter about club issues; we are currently being fostered

by Oakland's who use a wooden track, we are very much in favour of Plexitrack and we were a little worried about our recent lack of experience/practice. Arriving early evening we made a mad scramble for the accommodation, in particular trying to avoid being coupled up in the double bedroom (Its a bloke thing isn't it?). Daz drew the short straw and ended up sharing a room with me — known throughout the land as a complete 'swamp donkey' when it comes to snoring!

We made our way to the track for a quick recce, not really expecting to put in any laps. What a sight befell our eyes in the shape of a magnificent six lane circuit, two long straights to power through and some mean twisting bends and finally a right hand corkscrew of bends descending in height which caused me problems all weekend. The build quality of this circuit was first class, being very flat. I was told that the organisers had used a roller to level it as much as possible. At first glance I thought I'd struggle to get on the pace at around a ten-second lap. Darbs (The Guvnor) got going as he had a car at hand and put some laps in as we gathered around watching and marshalling. We all managed to get some time in at the end of which



I'd never seen us so quiet as a group! Well we had come for a challenge!

After heading off to a restaurant for an Indian (well we are Brummies, what else would you expect!) the rest of the evening was spent relaxing, strolling along the seafront and discussing set-ups for the morrow as well as debating the current state of the club. A quiet peaceful evening I thought, dead sensible, off to bed early, ready for tomorrow.

Shep and Alan Buckley were up with the birds and went for a stroll, bit of a busman's holiday for two postmen really. I did the cooked breakfast and Darbs decorated the chalet with ketchup (nice one mate), then we headed off for the day's practice. A good system was in place to ensure that people did their fair share of marshalling. You could also get your car through initial scrutineering on the Saturday. I was impressed by the number of people attending, around eighty in all with a fair few from over the water making this truly a European event. As practice continued what struck me was that the fastest guys were also the youngest! I put this down to a combination of quicker reactions and a misspent youth in the age of computer games. Taking nothing away from them, the faster guys were very quick.

The overall standard was very high, it was an impressive display throughout the day, good to see. Stevie Beech was going well as was Daz; Alan Buckley and Shep got going steadily as confidence grew. Darbs looked after us all and coached us along. The "Guvnor" was the only one of us under any pressure because he is a known character and expected to do well. As for me I was just happy when at least someone else had an off! We soon realised we'd been missing our plexitrack and I think we all realised we would be struggling in the races. So in that kind of situation what else is there to do but party!

You never know who might be reading this so, to protect the innocent and to spare the guilty let's just say a good night was had by all. Stevie B became a born again bopper, dancing in a style which reminded us of "Skippy the bush kangaroo" (come the morning we officially christened him "Skippy"). When Daz has had a

few I can only understand one in ten words of his Black Country dialect! Darbs was on a one man mission to speak to everyone and managed to frighten to death an entire visiting rugby team who thought "playing Scalextric" was sissy ... but not any more, eh guys? Alan and Shep (the Tasmanian devil dancer) maintained their composure throughout, the pair of them about as smooth as a coconut picker's feet! Now I don't want to bitch about the home club advantage but organising the clocks to go forward was a dastardly trick, turning 3a.m. into 4a.m. makes a big difference!

I don't know how we got up; maybe it was the nuclear holocaust that had become our bathroom, shared by six blokes, enough to strip the tyres off your car! The organisers had done a good job of sorting out the race order and so we began. Darbs was soon up and having used some evil secret potion on his tyres he failed the tyre test because his tyres picked up the paper when pressed down on it. Off he dashed, cleaned and retested, failed, ripped off the tyres in desperation, fitted brand new tyres to avoid disqualification...his face said it all. To be honest I think we all set ourselves a realistic aim and then just enjoyed ourselves. I didn't want to keep coming last and I didn't, so I was happy. The atmosphere was good, competitive but good-natured and sportingly contested. Somehow some people felt that they should not do their share of marshalling which is a shame, one or two would not be parted from their "bodgeitandcratchitandson" hand controllers, fuelling suspicion between competitors. If these gadgets don't do anything then why insist on using them fellas?

As a group we entered into the spirit of the event, did our fair share of marshalling and competed to the best of our ability. The main point is that we really enjoyed ourselves. It was a real challenge and we left the event the better for the experience. Many thanks to the West London Club. Keen to do it again? You bet, and more besides, we are going up to Sean's at Pendle Slot in June for Jim's Porsche open challenge. Hopefully see you there. ■

# On-line survey

BY ROBERT LEARMOUTH

**W**e are currently running a vote on our website and we thought some of the results would be interesting to share:-

- What is your favourite make of Slot Car?  
Scalextric 54%  
Fly 27%  
Ninco 14%  
SCX 1%  
Pink-Kar 0%  
Other 4%

Reassuring then for Scalextric die-hards that the brand is still out in front, arguably I'd say because of the vast and varied range of items available and the long history. Fly is very firmly established now though.

- Would you describe yourself as being?  
A collector 27%  
A racer 6%  
A collector and racer 52%  
An occasional racer for fun with the family/friends only 14%  
Other 1%  
I'm intrigued what the 1% other is...

- Are you a member of the following?  
NSCC only 1%  
Racer only 23%  
Both 25%  
Neither 51%

So 26% of visitors are NSCC members which is a healthy total but surprisingly half of all respondents belong to no club at all. It also seems like we have a lot of members for the oft maligned Racer Club in the NSCC! Maligned I should add very unfairly in my view!

- What is your favourite era of slot car production?

Pre 1960s 0%	1980s 11%
1960s 35%	1990s 8%
1970s 10%	Present 35%

These figures certainly reflect directly with what we sell although it masks the high demand for nice 1980s items somewhat.

The other questions we asked were related to the Westwood Models business but a summary of the results may still be of interest. Most site visitors find us by a link from a search engine (35%) or another web site (30%), although 10% are direct results of our NSCC Journal ads! 76% of customers would like a customer loyalty scheme - we're working on it! 71% would like to see more of us at local toy fairs (ie in addition to NSCC swapmeets).

And finally the vote is equally split when it comes to whether customers would prefer to see us sell current catalogue items as well as obsolete items with 34% feeling it might affect the emphasis we place on obsolete items.

The vote is ongoing and you can add your replies via our web site at:-

[www.westwoodmodels.com](http://www.westwoodmodels.com). ■



Dear NSCC

As a Danish amateur collector I've just come across one more problem, which I cannot figure out. I know about the following Ninco Catalunya-Costa Brava limited edition rally cars:

N50108 Renault Clio	1994
N50118 Toyota Celica	1995
N50128 Peugeot 306	1996
N50161 Renault Megane	1998
N50182 Seat Cordoba	1999
N50202 Toyota Corolla	2000
N50231 VW Golf	2001

Was there never a Catalunya-Costa Brava model in 1997? Maybe some of the readers can help me out here.

Best wishes and thank you in advance  
Holger Thor Nielsen

.....  
Dear Brian,

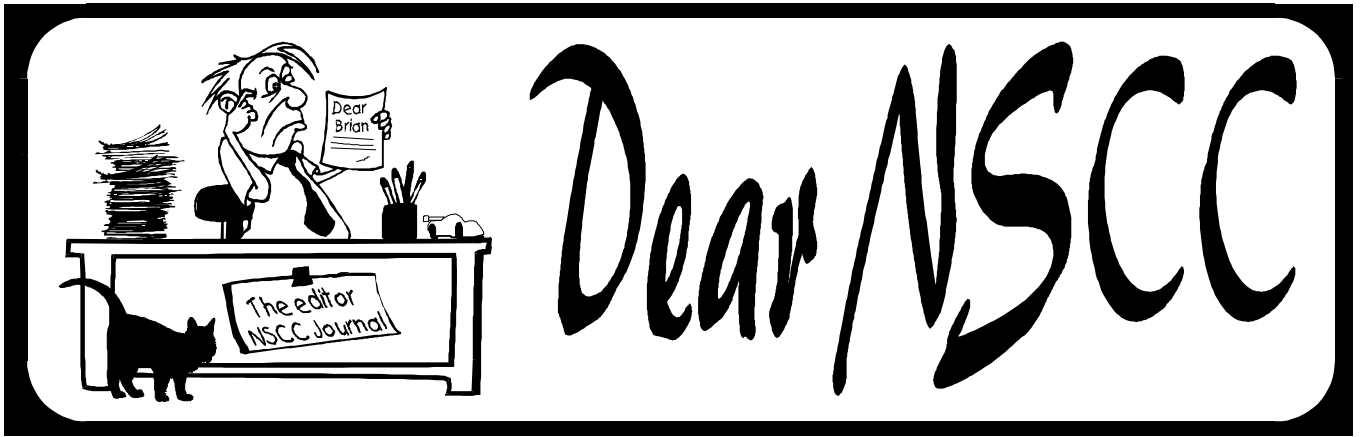
I am one of those annoying members of the club who do not have the time to get involved, but float around the edges, go to the odd swap meet or toy fair and do not participate as much as I would like. However I read with interest the article on figure painting and would just like to add one additional piece of advice.

When painting small figures (of any kind) after cleaning off any excess plastic and washing I always create a base to hold them on. How is this done? - Simple - get a used plastic film pod (35mm - you know the black tube with a grey lid!) put some double sided sticky tape or blue tack on the base of the figure and stick the figure to the pod lid (double sided sticky tape is better!). You can now place the lid and figure on a pod tube and hold the pod and paint any area without any real problems or messy painted fingers or worse fingerprints in the paint.

This gives the added benefit of being able to re use the handle from figure to figure by just swapping the pod to a new lid and figure. With a bit of planning (as the article suggests) you can paint the same colour onto several figures at once in a production line process that enables more painting to be done at each sitting. This ensures less waiting around for drying and less brush cleaning. My key tip would be never, never be tempted to paint another colour until the last one is DRY it is invariably a disaster if you rush any form of painting.

That's all I had to input - enough from me - I'll go back to obscurity and enjoying the great mag and articles and that odd swapmeet.

Regards  
Tony LeBaigue



Dear Brian

I am a newcomer to the club, but I thought you might be interested to hear of the race day that I recently enjoyed with a select crowd. This was not serious racing, believe me, just a great deal of fun.

I own around 300 feet of track and, inspired by some of the articles I had read in the Journal, decided to put some of it to good use by having a “Boys and their Toys” day. Careful negotiations with the wife saw her visiting her mum on the chosen day, and my lounge/diner became transformed into a four-lane raceway.

I had sketched the layout that I was aiming for, and careful calculation showed that it would just fit between the walls – none of this “CAD-package” stuff for me! The result was a lane racing length of 60 feet in basically an elongated figure-of-eight. A few skid chicanes, some bendy bits, and a couple of crossovers in a well-chosen spot ensured that we had a reasonable challenge.

There were three guests; my brother Jeff, my brother-in-law Lloyd, and my old friend Dougie. They arrived at 10.30, just after I had finished setting up the track! With some practice sessions completed, we got on with the morning’s racing. This was followed by pizza for lunch, some more practice and racing, and then a general free-for-all. Jeff became chief mechanic, I was chief steward, Lloyd volunteered to be commentator, and Dougie – well, he was just Dougie, and became champion of the day.

All too soon, (well, six o’clock, actually) Sonia returned, and within half-an-hour we had put the lounge/diner back to rights, feeling very happy little teddy bears. So guys, if you can negotiate with the missus, I can thoroughly recommend it. We’ve already made a provisional booking for the Autumn.

Regards  
Paul Horner

.....

Dear Brian

About four weeks ago I was involved in rather a serious accident with my wife and three year old daughter where my vehicle was rammed from behind by another vehicle at speed. My whiplash injuries have turned out to be far more serious than first thought, including trapped nerves in my neck and hand.

This is giving me a lot of pain, and so Brooklands this year is going to be cancelled. However, the event is being moved to Abergavenny. The date for this event is Sunday the 22nd July. Racing will be exactly the same as it would have been at Brooklands with the same races.

Best wishes,  
Jeff Davies

# Tyrrell mania

BY HOLGER THOR NIELSEN

**B**ack in 1973, 12 years of age, my father took me to my very first Grand Prix 'live' at Zolder in Belgium. Seeing Jackie Stewart and Francois Cevert taking a superb first and second in their famous Tyrrell 006s, it can come as no surprise, that I grew up as a fanatical fan of the cars produced by Mr. Ken Tyrrell.

Since I rediscovered my love for slot cars in the mid nineties I have tried to build up a separate collection of these famous blue cars.

## 002

The first one produced was the Scalextric (Spain) C48 Tyrrell Ford 002, which appeared in catalogues #14 (strangely shown as C47) to #15. This was the car with the famous hammer-shark front which brought Jackie Stewart his second championship in 1971.

The car in my collection has race number 11 as seen in the Gillham book, and a red driver's helmet, but in the catalogues it is shown with race number 7 and a yellow helmet. If such a version does exist I do not know. Later the car was also produced in green, red and yellow, but to a real Tyrrell fan these are of no interest.

## 005

The second model out was the Scalextric (France) C100 Tyrrell 005. This car made Jackie Stewart second in the 1972 championship, and he used it again in the first two rounds of 1973, which would bring him his third and last championship. Unfortunately this French Tyrrell is in a darker shade of blue than the original Tyrrell colour.



## 007

Catalogue #17 then introduced C121 Tyrrell 007, the 'James Bond' car which brought Jody Scheckter his first three GP wins. Perfectly enough I was again present 'live' at Anderstorp, Sweden, in 1974 when he won his first with Patrick Depailler also taking second in an 007.

The car was shown for the last time in catalogue #19. My driver has a green helmet, but I know others do exist. All the 007s that I have seen have race number 3 (Jody Scheckter), none with number 4 (Patrick Depailler).



For me it was a nice surprise when in Catalogue #33 the C093 Tyrrell 007 was reintroduced within the 'Power and the Glory' range. The car was modified with a newer engine, fully chromed wheels and a yellow driver's helmet, but still bearing race number 3. In catalogue #36 we saw it for the last(?) time.

## P34

But back to 1977, where SCX (former Scalextric Spain) introduced 4054 Tyrrell P34. The marvellous 'Six-Wheeler'! With this car Jody Scheckter took his fourth and final victory in a Tyrrell at Anderstorp, Sweden, in 1976. Do I have to mention I was present at 'ring side' again, and that Patrick Depailler took a good second in the other car? This model is somehow a mixture of the P34 from 1976 and the P34/2

from 1977. It is all over blue and sponsored by Elf as the P34, but with a larger front it looks more like the P34/2. In my collection I have race number 3 with the correct drivers name, Scheckter' on it, but in Alain van den Abeele's book there is a version with number 4 and Depailler. Where can I get one? This car was also made in green, red and yellow and for some commercial reasons in orange as well. Again for the real Tyrrell enthusiast of no interest.

In 1999 this car was reintroduced by SCX within their Vintage range. This time the car was called 6059 Tyrrell P34 and repainted in blue and white sponsored by Elf and First National City Travellers Checks as in 1977, so it should correctly have been called P34/2. The race number was changed to 4 and even the helmet of Depailler is repainted in a fairly good copy. Best model of a Tyrrell made so far. Driven by Ronnie Peterson and Patrick Depailler this car never took a win, but achieved a good second driven by Depailler in Canada 1977.

### 008

Back to catalogue #20 which brought us C135 Tyrrell 008, when Ken Tyrrell was back on four wheels. This car gave Patrick Depailler his first ever GP win in Monaco 1978, and it was (sadly) the last GP win for a Tyrrell until Michele Alboreto's Las Vegas victory in 1982. My model has a yellow driver's helmet, but up till catalogue 23, when it disappeared, it was always shown with a red helmet. It has the correct race number 4.



### 018

C467 Tyrrell 018 was introduced in catalogue #31 in blue and yellow, sponsored by XP, but in reality never released that way. From catalogue #32 on to #35 the 018 was shown in its released form - blue and white sponsored by Epson. Funnily enough the box for C235 Pit Stop shows the XP version.



The cars and drivers of Ken Tyrrell claimed a total of 22 Grand Prix victories overall, all powered by Ford:-

Jackie Stewart	15 wins
Jody Scheckter	4 wins
Francois Cevert	1win
Patrick Depailler	1win
Michele Alboreto	1win

This was a little journey through the famous cars once built by Ken Tyrrell from a Danish point of view. Surely I have forgotten and missed some parts, so please accept my excuses in advance. In my collection I also have some Polistil and Strombecker Tyrrells, but somehow I don't think they fit in here.

Last but surely not least I would like to thank Julie Scale, Sean Fothersgill and Phil Smith for helping me find some of these rare, but fantastic blue cars.

Finally just one question. Was Tyrrell 006 ever made as a slot car? I still miss my personal favourite from Zolder in 1973! ■

# Slot Classic - Morgan 4/4

BY SANTIAGO HERNANDO-BARTRA

Whenever we look around us at the fairs we go to every year, we find ourselves amongst slot fans with a profile very similar to our own. The most obvious factor being that of gender: they are always MEN. Always men. We would all have to agree about one thing; the lack of women collectors at fairs. Have you ever asked yourself why?

The answer is simple: Cars aren't made with their tastes in mind. Can you think of a model which excites their interest? Not even the Heuliez Pregunta appeals to their feminine sensibilities. Where is the beauty of a Panoz for them? Would a woman say that the Marcos 600 is the car of her dreams? Have you asked your girlfriend about the aesthetics of a Toyota GT one? On the other hand, how would your wife react if you took her out for a drive in a Morgan 4/4? I think she would fall in love with you all over again. She would ask you all about its engine size, tyre type, year of manufacture, etc. Without a shadow of a doubt the Morgan 4/4 is a decided hit with women and the 1/32 a good reason to start a classic collection. I suspect that as this model appeals to women, the manufacturer expects to create new collectors amongst them.

Slot Classic couldn't have done better in producing an exquisitely English model, aesthetically, to my judgement, feminine. Even on first viewing this Slot Classic stands out for the beauty of its profile and proportions. The way the magnificent radiator is mounted on the bodywork, the access doors and the seating position are all perfect. It is a joy to behold from all angles, the lightness of the rear and the robustness of the front.

Slot Classic drivers and passengers have always been distinctive; each one appropriate to the year of manufacture and dressed in the style of the period. In this case they are dressed in an English country style. As with other models, the lights are a delight to the eye and the tyres have improved in comparison with earlier models, although, in my opinion, this time they are too wide for this model. In short, this model is a step up, perfect to exhibit due to its appearance, with an excellent performance on the track.

Collectors of both genders are delighted with the arrival of this handsome Morgan 4/4. We hope that a lot of women will be spurred on by it to start their own collection. Those of us already collecting await the latest from César Jiménez. ■



# Auto Unions return to Donington

BY GILES ASTON

As my all time favourite Scalextric car is the Auto Union I was delighted to hear that both the pre-war and modern cars will be appearing at 'The Return of Auto Union' at Donington Park on 19-20 May at the Richard Seaman Vintage and Historic Race Weekend run by the VSCC (Vintage Sports Car Club) and Historic Grand Prix Cars Association.

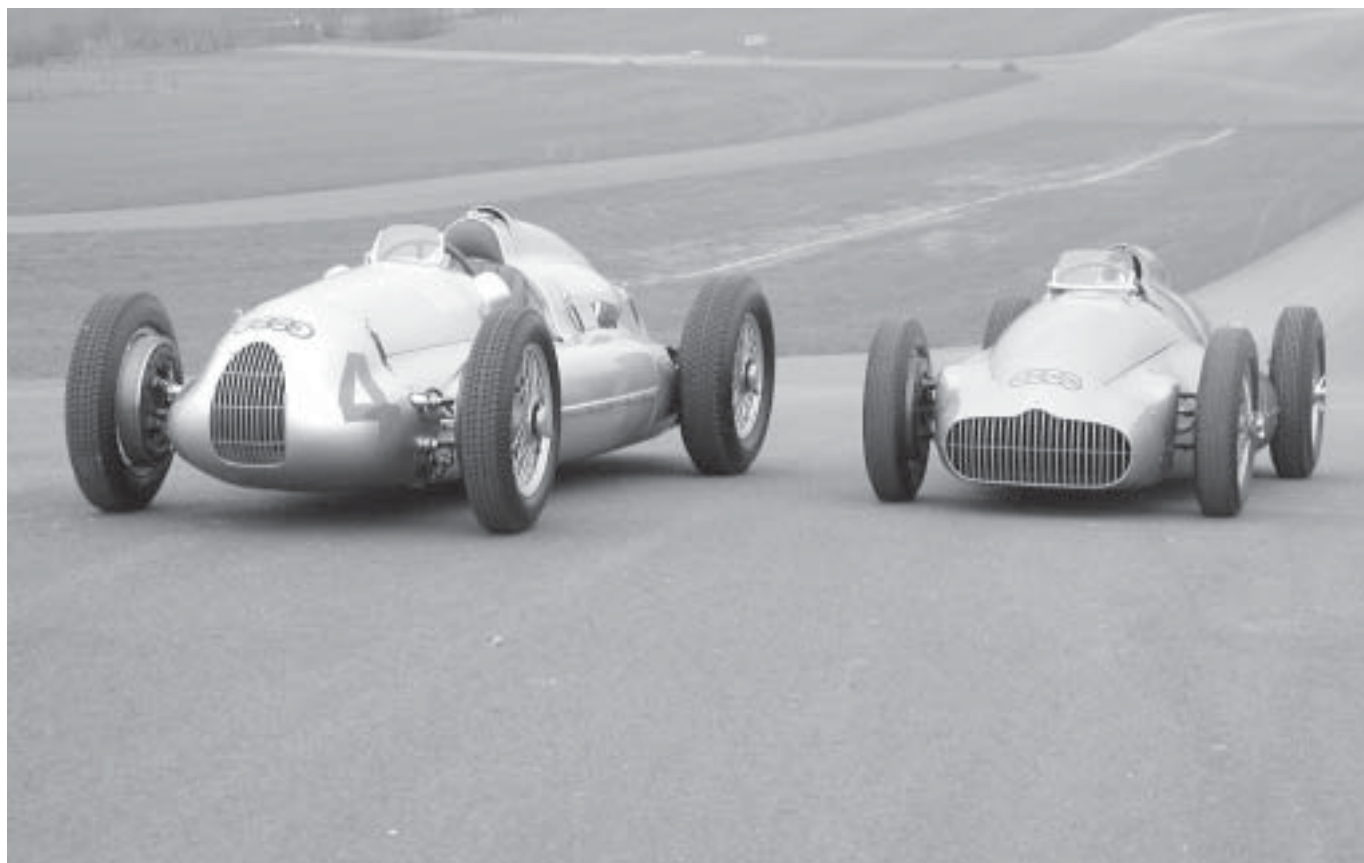
The C-type was driven by Bernd Rosemeyer at Donington in the 1937 Grand Prix (famously going airborne over the Melbourne hump in practise) who later went on to win. In 1938, in the last pre-war Grand Prix at Donington Park, the D-type was driven by Tazio Nuvolari who also won the event.

At the end of the Second World War, eighteen Auto Unions were taken from their hiding place in Saxony by the Russians who

transported them back to Moscow, where they were distributed to scientific institutes and motor manufacturers for research, eventually most of them were broken up for scrap. Nothing was heard of the missing Auto Unions until the 1970's when a V12 D-type was discovered in Czechoslovakia. Later two more D-types were discovered in Russia and brought out in pieces over a long period and rebuilt in England in 1994.

Auto Union was founded in 1932 with the merger of Audi, DKW, Horch and Wanderer, and is symbolised by the four ringed logo Audi uses today.

I was fortunate enough to attend a recent VSCC press day and took the photo below. (D-type pictured at the Melbourne hump with a 1939 1.5 litre). I tend to agree with our editor - give me the real thing anyday. ■





# Cup of cheer

BY TONY SECCHI

Shortly after joining my old slot-car club in the early sixties I learnt about a unique (at that time) inter-club challenge. It was not National but every year during the season this event took place on non-club nights. Of course, we often visited (and were visited in return) local clubs for friendly matches. But the nature of these events was more structured.

I do not remember how it came into existence, but I think that six or so clubs participated. The point is that they were all in different areas of London - Mill Hill, Haringey, Ealing etc. We were located in Hornsey so we had to travel to these events. The funny thing is that we never hosted any of these events - I suspect that our facilities were too small and not up to scratch.

So we played 'away' as they say and consequently very rarely won, not being familiar with some of the circuits. Anyway, this was a 'loose' not official challenge and taking part was always lots of fun.

The format was that a team of three, always the top current point scorers in our overall championship, were chosen as representatives. The other teams did the same and the matches consisted of each competitor racing the other over the best of three 25 lap races. This meant that each challenge was over nine sets of races so that somebody had to win.

The category varied but most clubs raced under the loose title of GT and Sports. One of the best at this challenge were a club in the West End of London called the West Central Slotcar Club and they had been unbeaten at home in this competition since its conception. It was a proud and intimidating record, and like Manchester Utd. at home today, many clubs were at a disadvantage before they started.

I was in my second year of racing and, following a second place in the GT class the previous season, was standing fourth in the overall championship. The fixture against the W.C.S.C. came around and our three top guys

were nominated. Our club nights were on a Wednesday and the challenge cup was due to take place the following evening. On attending the club on the Wednesday I was told that I was in the challenge team as one of the guys had to pull out. I was a bit apprehensive, but I had no time to dwell on it. I had a night's racing to do at my club and this unique experience to follow.

Our team was the late much revered Bert Hyland (see my previous article) our current champion, a very fast and consistent guy called Mike Trackman - and now, me, untried in this particular kind of event. We arrived at the track on the following evening. I had never seen it but had been told that it was custom made and very fast. Well, it certainly was very fast as well as being very flat and very huge. I had never seen such a large slot-car circuit. It was virtually a square with reasonable straights and long open bends. The nearest bend that we had in style at our track was our famous banked oval, but as stated these bends were all level.

The racing started and it was obvious that their No. 1 was the star driver on this track. He won all his three races 2-0, Bert and Mike getting close, me hammered out of site. Bert and Mike beat their Nos. 2 and 3 and I lost to their No. 2. So, at four races each, we came to the final and deciding race - me versus their No. 3. We were quite 'up' because no team had run W.C.S.C. this close for a long time and even a 5-4 defeat would be a good result for us.

Part of the competition rules dictated that team members from each team had to referee the events to ensure parity and fairness. In my two stints at refereeing I had managed to get a close look at the style of their No. 3 (now my opponent) I had noticed that he started very fast and if left to his own devices could run away with the race, but if one stayed close he got more ragged and trying too hard would spin or de-slot. Either that, or if one got far enough ahead (as Bert had done in his race against him) his head would drop and he would give up. I knew  $\Rightarrow$

full well that I could not race him 'nose to nose' as was my style so I resolved to try a different tactic. So engrossed in this did I become that the responsibility and significance of this final and deciding event never dawned on me.

Although, as I said, being by nature an attacking racer I had decided to go on the defensive. I had nothing to lose and was not expected to win, so what the hell! My tactics were to drive as fast as I thought safe but to keep in touch so as to put him under pressure in the hope that he made mistakes. I used the analogy of a tennis player who is good if his first volley goes in but if the ball keeps being returned he eventually nets or overhits. I was casting myself in that returning defensive role.

In the first race he shot off and I could not respond. I made up some ground but not enough to pressure him. In the second race I had a lane more to my liking and after his usual quick start was on his tail in about ten laps. By 15/16 laps I occasionally had my nose ahead. He was getting more unstable and a big sideways moment put him behind. He recovered and came charging up on me on lap 19 and tried to overtake me into the tightest of the bends. I heard his car chattering under late braking and saw it sway from side to side on the apex. I came out of the bend ok but he flew off.

This was the first race that I had won all evening and I felt that my tactics were working

and that I 'had' him. He had lost to Bert and Mike but I do not think that he had expected to lose to me. The effect of that defeat must have had an effect on him as the deciding race showed. Again he went off quickly, but this time when I caught up with after about seven laps he gave up almost without a fight and although he kept in touch he always a length or so behind.

We had beaten West Central by 5-4, the first team to ever defeat them at home. Bert and Mike had driven out of their skins and I had managed to win the deciding race by changing my style and tactics. We were mutely praised by the West Central team and went off into the night to find the nearest pub. My final memory of that record breaking evening was eating fish and chips on the way home.

Our No. 3 recovered the next week and took his rightful place in the challenge team for the rest of the season. In future years I managed to gain a place by being in the top three ratings on a consistent basis, but we never rose to the levels of that magical night.

As a postscript I must say how surprised I am at the recall of this and other events of my model car racing career. At an age where brain cells diminish like snowflakes in the sun, the fact that these memories are so vivid is a cause of constant delight. I can only come to the conclusion that the power of Scalextric can span the decades. I hope that it continues to do so.■

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## BITS AND PIECES

### **A really useful website - allegedly**

Neville Marshall and Giles Aston have brought this one to my attention:-

<http://www.tv4.se/lattjo/kojan/bilbanan.asp>

It is all in Spanish but is easy enough to understand as it is an on screen slot-car set; build your own layout using the pieces provided then press the hand controller and "Go! Go! Go!"

### **New Scalextric enthusiast**

Adrian and Liz Leggett would like to announce the arrival of their son Jenson on March 30th. Mother and son are very well and came home on April 2. His Scalextric set awaits.

### **Slot car investment**

\$1,826.99 for a Monogram 1/32nd scale Ford GT... (recent auction) They sold for \$6.99 new back in 1967. I bet you wished you kept yours!

*Russell Sheldon*

### **Dodgy slot car investment**

A Thanet man who used Ebay to sell trains and cars stolen from Hornby Hobbies was sentenced to community service. Police recovered 400 items worth £13000 from his house. He was caught after the logistics manager at Hornby bid for some items in order to find the address.

Bought anything rare on Ebay lately?

*Thanet Times 3rd April*

# Creating trackside buildings

BY DAVID LAWSON

Recently while reading “Model Cars” a book by Vic Smeed published in 1980 I noticed a photograph of the 1960s ‘Corgi’ kit of the motor racing pits and press box. This was a model I had built years ago but have long since discarded, the picture got me thinking and before long I was sketching out the plans to build myself a model of a typical pits complex from the 1960s to use as scenery for my home track and for use in a diorama for photographing classic slot racers.

I roughly followed the shape of the Corgi design and estimated the dimensions from the photo and by measuring a couple of 1960s slot cars. Once I was happy with the shape and proportion of the drawings I drew out the sections on some stiff card, cut them out and roughly stuck them together with masking tape. I placed the mock up pit building by a piece of track with a Fly Lola T70 and a couple of Scalextric mechanic and spectator figures and looked at the size and proportions of the scene. With a couple of minor alterations carried out I was happy with the effect it gave and calculated what Plasticard sheeting I would need for the project.

I bought some brick and wooden plank pattern as well as a few sheets of varying thickness of standard white Plasticard and simply cut out my drawings and used them as templates for the shape of the walls, pit counter, roof and advertising hoardings. Using a ruler and model knife it was simple to cut out the shapes. I glued pieces of square section Plastruct along the edges of the sections and glued the walls together ensuring that the corners were at right angles.

Building the basic shape was quite a simple process but it looked a bit flat. To give the buildings substance and depth I cut out and attached ends of walls, window frames and sills and roof overhangs, which represented the thickness of the walls and gave the ‘solid’ feel I wanted. Once the pit and press box buildings

were formed I considered the details such as advertising hoardings, doors, railings and light switches. I wanted the display to be fairly accurate and detailed but not to the extent that a railway modeller might go; this was always meant to be just a background to the slot racers and with a project like this you have to draw a line somewhere.

Once again cutting out hoardings and doors was fairly simple as they are just rectangles but the railings around the viewing area on the pit roof and down the staircase was a little fiddly as it was made out of Plastruct tubing that was meant to represent scaffold poles and all the joints had to be chamfered and filed to fit around it’s adjoining piece.

Looking at photographs of the pits at Spa, Monza and Zandvoort in the 60s illustrates how gloomy and scruffy they were so I chose to paint the interior light grey and the roof and pit counter a dull grey rather than the bright white of a typical “Scalextric” Goodwood type building. As it was intended to represent a British track I painted the press box dark green with pale yellow window frames and the advertising hoardings were also dark green, the pit back doors were painted light yellow because I remember that was the colour at Silverstone when I first visited the paddock there in 1971. The only colour comes from the BRSCC logo on the press box, advertising posters and tucked away in one of the pits are a couple of wall posters of the Targa Florio and the feature film ‘Grand Prix’.

After about twenty hours of scratch building I had myself a row of three pits and a separate press box all for the cost of about £10 of Plasticard.

Spurred on by the result I decided to add a race control office, which would also serve as a base for the press box and because the MRRC figure sets include a lovely old and bulky TV camera and an operator it was logical to build a tower for the ‘filming’. I used Plastruct⇒



boarding effect sheet for the planked floor and tubing for the scaffold pole gantry. This was just made up of long uprights and horizontal bracing poles.

For the race control office I drew out the plans which, like the other buildings were basically various rectangular shapes and transferred these to Plastruct sheeting before cutting them out with a model knife. The roof includes a platform and balcony leading to the external staircase, which again I cut out from plastic sheet.

I checked through my collection of motor racing books and magazines covering the 1960s to help me decide what type of trackside advertising hoardings were the most common and which would therefore be representative of a typical British racing circuit. I chose a late 60s period as by then the advertising slogans had become bold simple graphics rather than the more artistic scripts used through the fifties into the early sixties and it was easy to scroll through the fonts on my computer and match as closely as possible to the originals. Having decided which were among the most evocative of the

period, obviously in those days it was generally trade products being promoted, I created a couple of pages of art work which I simply printed and cut out the various adverts and stuck them to the hoardings. I also lifted the film poster for the classic cinema film 'Grand Prix', a Targa Florio race poster and a BRSCC club emblem off the internet and reduced them to the appropriate scale size. These were added to the interior walls of the pit garages and in the case of the BRSCC emblem this was framed and glazed and attached to the front of the press box.

To populate the buildings it was simple to buy half a dozen boxes of MRRC figures. These sets are in fact reissues of the Monogram figures from 1966 and although they are a little American in their style of dress they are still very suitable and provide a range of mechanics, drivers, race officials, media and spectators. Painting about fifty figures is quite a daunting task but to organise the job I set up a mini production line and decided what type of clothing each figure was going to be wearing, I grouped the figures into batches of colours to minimise the number of times I needed to



*Front and rear views of the press/control box*

change paint and clean the brushes. I decided not to cut the bases off as the figures need to be moveable for various photographic displays but I painted the bases in a colour to match their surroundings, black for a mechanic standing on the track, grey for a spectator standing on the pit balcony etc.

By grouping figures in various activities they come alive and almost appear to be interacting with each other and it is important to ensure that

each figure is doing something and has a sense of purpose. Every time you look at the diorama you can see something that you hadn't noticed before and almost feel the atmosphere, sounds and smells of a busy race meeting, it is a great way to display your favourite slotracers.

For information about other model making by members of the Southend Slot Racing Club why not visit their website:-  
[www.thura.fsbusiness.co.uk](http://www.thura.fsbusiness.co.uk) ■

# The allure of rubber!

## Part 4 - painting

BY PETER BOITA

When I was faced with the task of restoring all the white track lines I tried various masking and spraying techniques to revitalise them. Nothing worked very well. It was either too inaccurate or it just didn't look original. The final solution was blindingly easy but somewhat time consuming! However, the results are stunning.

When you closely examine the original (screen-printed I presume) track markings they are pretty inaccurate! You will also find many of them are chipped, though I didn't find any completely worn away on any of my track sections, and certainly yellowed somewhat by age. Your first job is to neaten up what is there. I "squared off" all the broken white lines where they were crooked and neaten up edges elsewhere where the original process had either "bled" or got smudged slightly. To do this I took a sharp scalpel and with the sharp point "flicked" away, in tiny chips, the excess paint from the craters of the track surface. Do not scrape at the paint or you will scratch and mark the track surface, which will ruin the finished job. I didn't worry at this stage if a little too much paint came off as that would soon be rectified.

Once you are satisfied that all can be "painted up" symmetrically you are ready to restore the white track lines. I simply used a small tin of matt white Humbrol, paint stock number 34, and a tiny very fine pointed 3/0 Pure Sable 090847 own Beatties make brush bought directly from them. You need to thin the paint down to the point where it flows very easily, whilst still giving good covering power, but not quite as thin as spray paint would be if it was sprayed into a container. The technique I used was a two-part process. Firstly, I evened up the edges previously chipped away so that I got a perfect outer line. I used a normal brushing technique with a little stippling to work the paint down into the textured track surface and to take

away any excess paint, spreading it to other areas. Next, I filled in behind the perimeter lines, again using a normal brushing technique. Lastly, I used fresh paint on the brush to stipple and "push" the paint into the track surface to mimic the finish of the original screen printed paint being pushed firmly into the textured track surface.

I warn you though that this is an extremely tricky technique to master and that it does require time and patience to get it right. The results though are definitely worth the time and effort involved and look spot on. Even once I mastered the technique, each section of track would take me about an hour! I only ever used one coat of paint and you need to aim for comprehensively filling in the track "craters" so that you have a good solid colour but still be able to see the texture of the underlying track slightly. If the white line is totally smooth, you have definitely over done it with the quantity of paint you have used. The only time I had to do 2 coats of paint was on the much broader lines on the Start / Finish straight to get the depth of finish required.

By the way, when you finally start slotting the fully restored curves together later you will find that there is only one way to reassemble them so that the curved white lines actually make a continuous arc. It is easy to spot if you do it wrongly, as the curved lines are way out of alignment. If it does happen just disconnect one curve and reconnect it to the other end of the track it was connected to and hey presto the curved white lines will come into perfect alignment! So, now your rubber track is looking nice in the cosmetic department the next job is to refurbish the metal guide rails and connector tabs and reassemble them back onto the track sections. That's what we'll be tackling in the next issue. Time taken for this stage 60 minutes. ■

# All things cardboard

BY MONACO MARK

**C**hristmas 1975: And finally I managed to get my very own Scalextric set. I was thirteen. For the previous five years I had had to be content with racing my friends' powersledges and having the consolation prize of Catalogue #10. This was mine, having swapped a stack of Monkees bubblegum cards with a few Custer cards thrown in for good measure with a pal.

Catalogue 10 was the dream. Catalogue 10 was everything, but by 1975 everything had changed: No Graham Hill, no Jackie Stewart, no C8 Lotus and not a cameraman in sight, but I was to have some extraordinary luck and it's only in these recent times have I come to appreciate this.

## New tracks

I found, by chance, a small model shop in Hastings, and to my surprise, it had many accessories that should have disappeared years before. Over the course of that hot summer of 1976 I worked in a local garden nursery during the week and spent my earnings at that shop like a boy possessed paying him weekly/fortnightly, whenever and whatever I could. By the end of that summer 'Station to Station' was released by David Bowie and I, with a little help from my family, released my own track – complete with Control Centre, a bunch of Airfix spectators, a grandstand and to cap it all a lovely series of cardboard kit buildings by a company called SuperQuick which outshone anything Scalextric had to offer in that department by the length of a C8 for sure.

It was fortunate in a way that rock'n'roll completely took over my life in the following year, everything was boxed up, put away in the loft and ready for it to shine once more 22 years later. I had had my first gig at the local Baptist Town Hall in December 1976 and knew that was where my real destiny lay: Being a singer/songwriter/guitarist...as soon as my voice had broken that is.

## Donavan

Donavan Lloyd is still alive. And if you get the right side of him he's still kicking – even in his late 80s. Bit of a legend is old Donovan Lloyd, as bright as a button and well sharp. After the Second World War he became a graphic artist, designing book covers (an occupation, incidentally, that is dear to my heart), and at some point he started paper engineering setting up SuperQuick in the late fifties with the production of cardboard scale model building kits for trains. His first products appeared in 1960. His were very well crafted, easy to assemble (if you followed the paperwork that went with them), and bold both in colour and style, SuperQuick were set to be an immediate success.

Being very much a cottage industry though, the problem he faced was in the distribution of the sets and so he approached a well known leading manufacturer and distributor to help him: E. Keil and Co. (Keil Kraft aka 'KK') the balsawood scalemodel flying kit specialists who were quick to take advantage. They, however, weren't the only ones to take advantage of circumstance, Lloyd too took advantage of a new frenzy that was beginning to shape the new decade: slot car racing.

## Thruxton

In 1960 he designed the MR Series (Motor Racing Series), and put into production at least three cardboard kits that would suit any 32nd scale slot car tracks which were more colourful, stylishly designed, and, more importantly, cheaper than Scalextric/Airfix type equivalents. The three kits were: MR1 Racing pits, the Control Tower, and the Marshall's/Drivers/Press Hut. Possibly a fourth kit – a cardboard 'Dunlop' bridge – was intended although only a photograph has been seen which may have been only a pre-production model. What is sure, though, is that all the models were based on buildings at an old Ministry airfield-cum-race⇒

circuit along the A303 at Thruxton, Wiltshire (west of Stonehenge) and, as it happens, – not too far from Goodwood. (Bless). At the time Lloyd did his scribbles, Thruxton hadn't long been auctioned off by the Air Ministry – and by 1960 new buildings to support the new venture (like the racing pits) began to sprout up around the abandoned Nissen huts, T2 hangers and that ATC tower which, incidentally, still overlooks the Wiltshire countryside.

They say imitation is the sincerest form of flattery and so there you have it: Even the graphics on the front of the packs (after all he had been a graphic artist) more than slightly resembled the Airfix kits, although anyone who's seen these models would have to be impressed – they're very charming. But, in fairness, they were all at it and, in a world where only the strong survive, you have to pull some punches. One thing's for sure, if anyone came up with a good idea it was endlessly copied. Lloyd needed the exposure and in the face of stern competition he needed E. Keil and Co. if only for the time being.

E. Keil & Co. were owned by two brothers, Eddie and Ronnie. Both liked fast cars - Jags - and Eddie always reckoned he could do a ton on his journey along the streets of North London on his way to work in Wickford.

Well, that was the 60s. Nowadays, of course it'd take a miracle to get out of 2nd , but with this fast living attitude E. Keil and Co. distributed SuperQuick models for a few years before going bust. Ironically, this turned out to be a blessing



*MR1 Racing Pits*

as Lloyd began to see that the 30% the Keil brothers had been taking had shown that the ends hadn't justified the means. The following year he went it alone.



*Marshals/Drivers/Press Hut*

## **Axed**

Given the initial success of the Company, and the increase in administrative details that distribution would entail, Lloyd realised that he'd have to drop the less successful lines and concentrate on the moneyspinners if he was going to survive. The MR Series was really top of the pile to be axed. Further development had been put on hold from virtually day one, and with its print run being minimal, the MR Series was in production for, at most, twelve months, through 1960.

Lloyd was apparently phenomenally bad at keeping records of such details but the general feeling is that the MR Series only lasted that long, but no one is entirely sure. The Series went down like a lead balloon and everyone concerned preferred to move forward and to put it all down to experience, to concentrate on the larger picture; that of trains. After all, that was SuperQuick's area of expertise.



In retrospect, forty years on, it is thought that the series' failure to catch on was due to the differences in competitiveness between slot car enthusiasts and train enthusiasts as rarely the twain meet. Both groups buy the latest models but slot car racers tend to maximise their competitiveness on the track, train enthusiasts tend to maximise theirs on the accessories – the scenery. Only the smallest of percentages of slot car racers take an interest in scenery, that principle is still evident today, and it was for that reason, it is believed, the MR Series and with it, a few years later, the Scalextric accessories too, collapsed.



*Race Control Tower*

But this isn't adding up. Sets (like mine) were still being bought in the 70s – well, by me at least – how could this be? A theory is in the way the sets were printed. The most cost effective way was in runs of, usually, 10,000. Runs of this size were the only way to justify the costs: The offset litho printing was complex (with the use of a number of 'specials' to maintain colour intensity – the blue for example is beautifully rich), Lloyd also hand made the colour separations himself (particularly impressive when you see the stained glass work on the churches for 00 gauge) and then there's the cost of the cutting machines. A

clue to the answer to this could lie on the packaging itself with SuperQuick, E.Keil and the Export distributor Model Exports Ltd. on the labels. Could it have been that E.Keil and Model Exports Ltd. had been contracted to sell a certain number of these kits and were lumbered with them until they were all sold? It's feasible that if sales were really that bad it could have taken a few years to shift what was to become dated merchandise as the years went on – but fifteen years? Surely not.

## Golden Years

SuperQuick is still going strong today, still a cottage industry, and owned by the son of the woman behind Model Exports (the European distributors of the original product). They make and supply mainly European looking kits for the model train industry, and work out of a couple of barns somewhere in Devon. Sounds like a great life. See for yourself – they're on the internet – Rupert, the owner, told me that Donovan Lloyd sold up in 1976, and in the move he actually chanced to come across half an old box of the unsold MR Series kits in the clear out...I asked him (well, I had to)...but that last half box of kits were sold on to another distributor who took some of the old deadwood that SuperQuick had held on to for far too long and found them new homes.

I rang him. Immediately.

Maybe, just maybe he still had them...but no, he said that he sold them on at a Trade Fair within a matter of weeks of getting them. 'That was at the beginning of that hot summer of 1976...Do you remember that summer?' he asks.

'Yes' I reply, and my mind journeyed back to those cycle rides back home from the Nursery, and to my hands and clothes: Stained tomato-leaf-green from the day's pickings. I stop to think...wait a minute! Could that dealer from Hastings have been at that Trade Fair? 'I wonder'. I thought to myself. Well, who knows? Maybe. ■

# Carrera Sauber-Petronas C18

BY JEFF DAVIES

Particularly like the livery on this car, the model being extremely well detailed with the barge boards, skirts and suspension components. It is beautifully tampoed, even down to Sauber Petronas being printed over the entire top of the bodywork.

It has excellent true wheels and tyres of quite a soft sticky compound and the rear of the car's bodywork is actually in two pieces, with the rear wing being moulded in one with the two sidepods on the top of the rear bodywork. It also has the obligatory television camera moulded above the airbox.

Unfortunately I feel that the wheelbase and track of the car aren't quite accurate, as on any Formula One car the front track is wider than the rear, and on the model they are not. The wheelbase also seems slightly too long, as well as the bodywork appearing too deep. Mechanically



the car is identical to the Mercedes 300 SLR, with an adjustable magnet and switch to change polarity. I rather like this model, even though the accuracy of the dimensions is questionable. A good effort. ■