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## Contents

Club Staff.....	2
Swapmeet.....	3
Christmas Competition.....	4
Messages From Margate.....	5
Slot Spy.....	7
Members Moments.....	8
Track Talk.....	9
Model Maker May 1958.....	13
Swedish Championship.....	15
Letters.....	17
Guide to - Bugatti.....	20
A Story For Christmas.....	23
Connaught - If Only.....	27
Golden Wonder Rover.....	29
A Tale Of Two Icons.....	31
Brussels 24 Hour Race.....	35
Members Ads.....	36

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The independent club for slot-car enthusiasts

## And Here It Is Merry Christmas

And probably has been since early September according to Tesco; one of my pet hates is the way the festival is devalued by an ever earlier arrival in the shops. However, by the time you receive this copy of the Journal all should be well; Noddy Holder will be making regular appearances on Radio 2; the TV will be tempting you with adverts for all sorts of wonderful toys and Archie, my faithful editorial cat, will be looking forward to receiving his usual selection of treats from unscrupulous NSCC members.

Yes, as always, this issue contains the annual competition and there are some superb prizes on offer; see page 4 for details. There is also the now traditional piece of Christmas silliness. Last year we had the "Lord Of The Things" Panto from Adrian Norman and this year we have "Harry Pottle And The Hump-back Bridge Of Doom" from John Dilworth. I hope you enjoy it - I certainly did.

The most satisfying aspect of this job is the fact that so many new writers have appeared in these pages; my sincere thanks to everyone who has written something during these last three and a bit years and I hope that more members can be persuaded to join them next year. All contributions are gratefully received, from a short letter to a 15 page article. Remember, I only edit the thing - without your input there would be very little to read each month.

You may also have noticed that this is issue number 249 so the January 2003 edition is yet another small milestone in the history of our club. I hope to make it a little special but that does depend on finding some extra editing time over Christmas; please send any contributions as early as you possibly can, I really don't want to be slaving over a hot computer on Boxing Day!

**And Finally** - A Very Merry Christmas to you all, I hope Santa brings all that you desire in the way of slot-car goodies. Don't forget though that Easter will soon be upon us so rush out and buy your chocolate eggs now!

*Till next year  
Brian*

# Christmas Competition

Yes it's time for the Christmas quiz again; with a bit of luck your entry form should be included with this month's issue. As last year there are two sets of questions, each with its own separate prize. Thanks once again to the generosity of Hornby Hobbies I can offer a unique car for the winner of the Scalextric part; it is one of the generic single seaters with an evaluation livery which was never released. The prize is pictured below.

The second quiz is about makes other than Scalextric and the prize is, at present, a mystery but I have been promised something special from Colette Clark of Monarch Lines (I should be so lucky!)

The rules are simple - most correct answers wins, with a draw in the event of a tie. Archie, my faithful editorial cat, will of course be performing his traditional duties in this respect so don't forget the usual bribes.

However, all is not lost if you don't know all the answers. I have several other items for consolation prizes, including: one or possibly more Ramsgate weekend cars; 2 signed copies of Roger Gillham's book; some replica race numbers and cutters as advertised in last month's issue; one or more Ninco cars and a framed photo from this year's Le Mans Classic.

All entries received will be entered into a draw for these items so what have you got to lose apart from the cost of a stamp? As usual, committee members are ineligible to enter and the editor's decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into, as they say, so Graham Smith needn't bother to write me an essay about alternative answers to the questions!

My thanks to Steve Baker for setting the questions. The closing date is January 23rd 2003 and the winners will be announced in the February issue. Good Luck! ■



# Messages From Margate

BY ROB SMITH

Scalextric has become a traditional Christmas present and these days many retailers wish to capitalise on this by offering their own special versions to tempt customers to purchase from them. This year is no exception and Hornby have produced several special cars for sale only through an individual retailer.

\* First off we have C2469 Porsche GT3R available only from Hamleys in bright red with a white chequered pattern on the sides. Unlike previous years (and as I wrote in the last bulletin) this car is available on its own without the need to purchase a set too.

\* Secondly we have C2470 Porsche GT3R available from the Modelzone chain of model shops. This one is dark blue with red wheels and Modelzone logos.

\* Next we have a pair of Ford Focus' C2471A in red and C2471B in white both with colourful Gamleys logos. These are available separately from the Gamleys chain of toyshops in the south east.

\* Toys-R-Us have a new set too although we expected this much earlier in the year. The set is C1089 Monaco containing a simple loop of *classic* track and two high nose single seaters – C2440W in red and white and C2441W in white and blue.

\* The final Christmas special this year is another set for Safeways containing two more Renault Meganas. Reference C1093G Speed Challenge contains C2476W and C2477W Meganas in yellow and blue.

At the time of writing (21/11/02) all of the items are in the shops except the Safeways set which is due any day now.

For those of you who missed it last year the set C1075 Subaru Rally is back in Woolworths stores. This contains C2379W Subaru Impreza red and C2235W Subaru Impreza blue.



Some of you may already have seen C2417 & C2418 the new Williams F1 cars with the latest HP livery. What you probably don't know is that there are two versions of each car. In the UK they come with Visions on the side but in Germany they come with Veltsins on the side. This difference is due to the complexities of licensing with the Williams F1 team.

Two new Vauxhall Vectras have also been released which were not in the last new releases catalogue. C2467 Vauxhall Vectra Metropolitan Police is bright red and should be widely available. It has blacked out windows and little decoration but has working lights. C2466 Vauxhall Vectra Jersey Police is white and is a limited edition of 500 produced in a special sleeve. Most of these were delivered to the Jersey Police Force but a few are available elsewhere.

Hornby have been running a series of short but eye-catching television adverts recently. I caught them on weekend mornings on Channel 5 and have seen three so far – RMS, Sport and Bash'n Crash. More are due before Christmas. It seems very strange to be: a) videoing children's television and b) to fast-forward through the programmes and only watch the adverts! I can tell you all sorts of information about the latest MicroPets, Actionman or Barbie – very sad!

And finally ... watch out for Scalextric adverts in the press too. They had a full page advert for the GT40s in the Motorshow Catalogue and a double centre page spread for the McLaren and Williams F1 cars in Autosport dated 21/11/02. If you know of any others please let me know. ■

# News from around the world-

BY SLOT-SPY

Well Europe actually. Slot-cars, in this case in the form of Austin Healeys, are like buses; you wait for ages and then three turn up at once, only in this case it is two and a half. There is the Ninco Healey 3000 soft top, the Pink Kar S\*\*\*\*\*c copies CV044 'red'/CV045 'white' with what looks like a Polistil drive train complete with HO/truck/Fiesta motor - these will prove to be a valuable source of spares for original cars, especially as green and yellow versions are planned.

Also announced is the TopSlot Healey 100 'Le Mans '53' Ref. 0038; this is a resin body that is designed to fit on a Ninco chassis. With a wealth of detail such as extra lamps, bonnet strap, canvas tonneau cover and full length driver I'm sure this is one classic car that will find its way into many collections.

More classic cars from Hobby ~ Classic, a Citroën DS19 'Monte Carlo 1959' and Saab 96 'Rally Safari'. These look to be wonderfully detailed models which I suspect are only statics but that has never stopped people before.

Vanquish MG are producing a range of CanAm cars and they will all have working differentials, but the front axle is fixed, not of the steering variety for the final bit of realism, but the wheels could be free on the axle. More when I know more. Racer, an Italian company, are set to produce a range of Ferrari P4s, both open and closed. The four closed cars I have seen look absolutely stunning in some interesting liveries. Monogram are coming back into the slot business and their first offering is a Cobra Daytona Coupé. For the BMW fan both Evolution slot and World Classic are producing resin bodies of the 2002 Turbo. World Classic is a British manufacturer so these should be easily available. Finally P.R.S. are producing a Porsche Boxster 'Daytona 99'. This is a resin model with lots of photo etched parts and magnificent decals. Should be worth a look for you fans of American racing cars. Finally, my favourite a Fiat Abarth 500 Gp. 5 car! This also comes with lots of photo etched parts including wheel rims and windscreen wipers. I want one! ■

## Slot.It<sup>®</sup> Audi R8C

It has been quite a while since I put pen to paper for the Journal; literally, since I hand write this stuff.

It takes me quite a time, therefore, to complete a half decent article and I do not have so much free time these days; though it is fair to say that motivation plays a part in it also, since I have started many an article firing on all cylinders only to splutter to a halt halfway through.

However, I am pleased to say that this new model has inspired me enough to get the juices flowing again and I am very grateful to Brian for giving me the opportunity to review it.

The man behind the Slot.It<sup>®</sup> range is Maurizio Ferrari whom I had the pleasure to meet a few years ago when he visited the Wood Green Club whilst in London on a business trip.

I remember he took part in our racing that evening using an SCX Audi 90 IMSA which he had brought with him from Italy. I also remember how heavy it was, due in no small way to the large amount of lead ballast he had inserted. Despite the resulting lack of performance, Maurizio impressed us with his ability to compete quickly on our fast track.

He told me then of his engineering business and his home town club in Reggio Emilia; and how he planned to manufacture a range of different gears for use in standard slot-cars. It was quite clear then that he possessed a clear understanding of the wants and needs of the model slot-car racer today and the subsequent expansion of the Slot.It<sup>®</sup> range is proof of that.

With the arrival of the Audi R8C, the first complete car from his company, it is clear that the collector's aspect has not been ignored either. For obvious reasons it is always a good idea to produce a car that has not been produced by

anyone else, and it also helps if it is pretty. For both reasons the Audi is a good choice; even though the real car had an all too brief racing life due to Audi deciding to put all their efforts behind the rather more ugly spyder that raced at the same time.

### So just how good is Slot.It's first born?

Well, first impressions are good as the car has an eye catching beauty even when still screwed in its regulation clear plastic box. The particular version received for review is the #10 Le Mans qualification car from 1999 but there are five other versions to collect or choose from. The livery is a basic plain silver with a minimum of tampo decoration, that should not have presented too daunting a task; indeed the printing is sharp and an all over coat of semi gloss lacquer gives a nice finish.

Decent mirrors, a wiper, plus two fairly thick roof aerials give the finishing touch to an excellent body, quite obviously specifically designed for the purpose of slot racing.

### Why?

Well the cockpit detail is fairly minimal, the driver having only a head and arms fixed to a flat bottom interior, keeping weight to a minimum and, more importantly, not impeding the choice of motor set up in the chassis.

The overall weight of the body is kept low, and, importantly, is made in one piece, fixed to the chassis by just two screws fore and aft on the centre line with no annoying interlocking parts that serve only to put a chassis under stress and stop the body running loose. When the screws are backed off it rocks freely with no serious restriction of movement due to any tight fit. ⇒⇒



The chassis is just about as flat and low as it could be due to a recessed guide that has been positioned as far forward as possible. The main feature is its removable centre section, as on the Slot.It® HRS adaptable chassis, which fixes into the main frame using four self tapping screws. It is similar to the Proslot system employed on the Toyota GT1 in that it locates and aligns the motor and rear axle, but differs in not using snap in type axle bushes. Instead the bushes are bronze gimbal types that are pressed into the centre section chassis moulding, requiring the axle to be pushed through rather than snapped in.

This is made possible by the use of a Slot.It® crown gear which fixes in place on the ground axle with a grub screw. There is no discernible play in the bushes and this set up gives the best possibility of smooth power delivery and gear longevity.

## First gripe

However, it is here that I have to report my first gripe, as the motor was a very loose fit in its mount which undermined all the good work done by the rear axle set up. The solution for me was a rubbery one as I would use Evostik to fix it in place. This is something I do anyway to all the cars I race as do most other club racers, but I was surprised just how loose the motor was and there is definitely room for improvement.

Also mounted on the centre section chassis, just in front of the motor is the track magnet, which places it approximately half way between the guide and the rear axle - similar in fact to a Ninco car.

The motor itself is dynamite, being a Slot.It® V12 of 26,000 rpm driving through a gear set of 9 tooth pinion and 28 tooth contrate with a brass boss. This means the car is fast and needs a big track to stretch its legs. The rear end is completed by a pair of machined alloy wheels with grub screw fixing, shod with a pair of soft tyres that feel exceptionally good, but, and here is the second gripe, they have a rather fat sidewall that protrudes past the rim and the bodywork. This will not worry the racers too much but it is not very realistic.

At the front end you get moulded plastic wheels on a conventional solid axle and a pair of what I assume to be Slot.It® zero grip tyres. The axle does not snap into place but has to be pushed through eyelets that are moulded into the chassis.

By placing the car on a flat slotted set up board it is evident that it rests on its front wheels rather than the guide. When running with the magnet in place things should be ok but, with the magnet removed, track undulation and imperfections could deslot the car. Therefore, in my judgement, either the smaller front tyres are needed or the axle eyelets need to be elongated upwards slightly.

Another nice touch with this car is the attention paid to the guide and its wiring; the guide is unsprung and does not require trimming to enable it to run on Plexytrack. It also features a chamfered leading edge to the blade which assists in riding imperfections in the base of the slot. It is wired with a very flexible cable which is cut to perfect length and pressed into purpose made channels which allow it to be positioned to

give tension on the rotation of the guide. This provides simple self centring without the need for clothes peg type springs. The guide will also rotate through very nearly 180° so jamming in double inner curves should not be a problem either.

All in all then, apart from a couple of niggles, we have a quality slot-car with all the credentials needed to compete with the best. The Audi's dimensions from guide to front and rear axles are virtually identical to the Ninco CLK, but with a lighter lower body that is only bettered by the Proslot Toyota GT1.

## Track test

Only a track test will tell me more; so off to Wood Green and a run on the 102ft Plexytrack, which includes a 28ft straight plus some shorter ones linking a series of fast sweeps and S bends which can be seen pictured in the latest edition of Roger Gillham's book.

First I ran the car with the magnet in place and merely loosened the body screws. I used a Ninco CLK and a Fly Porsche GT1-98 as a comparison. The Audi could not live with the Porsche through the bends, but it was not far behind, which was amazing considering where the magnet is placed and said a lot about the effectiveness of the Slot.It® tyres. The Audi did outcorner the CLK which, although it had similar magnet positioning, suffered with its heavy motor and less grip.

Down the straight the Audi suffered a sort of 'turbo lag' as the V12 motor struggled to overcome the pull of the magnet, only really kicking in as it reached the braking point; whereas the CLK powered out of the corners easily and the Porsche just needed more grunt. I would suggest changing the motor pinion for an 8 tooth one to improve this.

The track magnets are quite powerful in all three cars and, when the dynamic braking kicked in the cars stopped almost dead. The use of a 5 or 10 ohm resistor in the brake circuit made things a lot smoother.

Now on to the interesting bit - how does it go without a magnet? Well the first thing I noticed is how much grip there is and, as yet, I

have not treated the tyres with anything. Getting just the right amount of grip can be a difficult task and quite a black art at some clubs, so good grip straight out of the box is refreshing.

The 'turbo lag' has all but gone now but the car is almost too fast, even on this track. I would definitely try a different gear ratio and possibly a contrate with a lighter alloy boss to minimize the flywheel effect of the rear axle as well as the rearward weight bias.

Next I notice that the front end is pattering slightly down the straight and I fear a major deslot will wreck this wonderful car; so I put a small piece of lead ballast in the front corners of the chassis, fixed with Evostick, so that the car balances approximately 55/45% front to rear. The car feels much more secure now but it is not perfect till I fit smaller front tyres. Again this is something nearly everyone does to their race cars irrespective of manufacturer.

The Audi is now very sure footed and inspires confidence to push harder until I hear the telltale rattle of a loose motor and feel the car tramp at the rear axle. So out with the glue again and another problem is eradicated. I also quieten the whole thing down by placing a small piece of foam between body and chassis at the very tail end of the car.

It is now well and truly on the pace and, with that gearing change plus one final modification to superglue the tyres to the rims eliminating 'grow' at peak revs I am sure it will be perfect.

In conclusion I would say that it is obvious that a lot of thought went into this model in order to set a new benchmark for ready to run cars. Its precision parts and quality make it a must for racers and collectors alike; I hope the standard achieved with the Audi R8C will be continued with many future offerings from Slot.It®.

**As an object lesson to us all in how to write a car review I would normally award Steve this month's prize. However, as he got the Audi for free I am not going to give him another car; anyway he would only cut it about in order to improve its performance! So perhaps there are two prizes available next month. ■**

# The Auto Rail Racing Association

## Model Maker May 1958

FROM VINE FENNEL

**B**uilt in a cellar, the A.R.R.A. Circuit is a four-rail track with a lap distance of approximately 63ft. It is the home of the new Auto Rail Racing Association which has been formed in Southport, thus providing the town with two lively electric rail model car racing groups!

Space being at a premium, the membership of the A.R.R.A is limited to eight, all of whom are highly enthusiastic over the sport, and keen, friendly rivalry is enjoyed.

At the outset, members decided that scenery should play a prominent part in providing the circuit with a realistic and original setting. Considerable thought and attention has, therefore, been given to this aspect; the result of which can be judged from the accompanying photographs which show the A.R.R.A. to be an essentially scenic circuit.



The circuit plan is relatively simple. However, there are some “wicked” corners involved that although seemingly innocent, have proved the requirement of considerable skill to negotiate at reasonable speeds! All corners have been aptly named, and two in particular certainly live up to their titles! Both, very early became notorious to the “drivers”! Firstly, “The Twister”! This can impart a vicious, de-railing twist to any car attempting to round it at excessive speed! The left-handed “Calamity

Corner” has also proved a terror! The slightest misjudgment here and the car is “over the wall”, destined for a three foot drop on to a hard brick floor! Needless to say, “Calamity” has taken its toll!

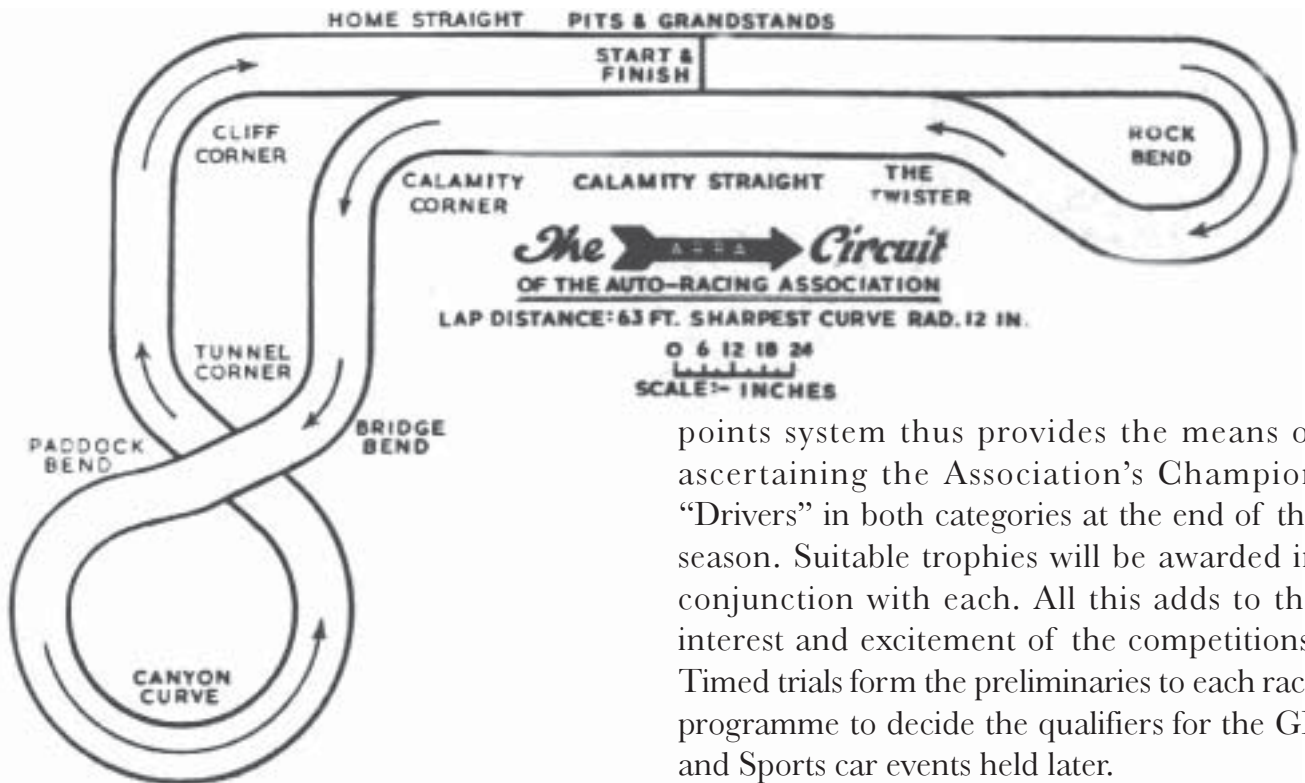
The circuit has been lapped in the unofficial time of seven-and-four-fifths. A time that will undoubtedly be improved upon eventually. However, taking into consideration the hazards - “The Twister” and “Calamity” are only two! - the unofficial time can be regarded as a reasonable basis.

The track is of Weyroc, except for the bridge which is constructed of hardboard. The guide rail is 3/32in. by 1/16in. brass strip, soldered to 1 inch, oval wire nail, driven it at approximately six inch intervals and bent over (heads being first clipped off on edge to the track surface). The positive rail is thin, hard drawn copper wire soldered to the head of copper tacks driven in flush with the track surface.

Controllers were supplied by Harry Gilpin of Walton-on-Naze. They are very efficient and can be highly recommended for the purpose. Lap scoring is still in the experimental stage at the time of writing. The “boffin” in charge, however, has great hopes of eventually achieving 100 per cent efficiency from them. The outcome of these experiments will duly be reported to the Editor when completed! ⇒







Race meetings are to be held once a month on the A.R.R.A. circuit throughout the season, which opened in January. A calendar of events has been drawn up. At each meeting separate races for GP and Sports Cars are staged and points awarded for the positions gained. Based on prototype World Championship practice, the

points system thus provides the means of ascertaining the Association's Champion "Drivers" in both categories at the end of the season. Suitable trophies will be awarded in conjunction with each. All this adds to the interest and excitement of the competitions! Timed trials form the preliminaries to each race programme to decide the qualifiers for the GP and Sports car events held later.

The eight Association members mustered 14 cars for the opening meeting on the new circuit and more are reported to be under construction. There is, therefore, the likelihood of the A.R.R.A. being in the position to field in the region of twenty models in the near future for its monthly meetings! ■

# The Swedish Scalextric Club Championship 2002

BYANDERS BRINNEN

The Swedish championship for Scalextric was held in Eskilstuna, a town 100 km from Stockholm in Sweden, on the 9th of November. This was the first championship for the twenty-first century in Sweden with Scalextric.

Many enthusiasts had turned up to compete in three disciplines. By the time the competition started snow had begun to fall gently and one of the competitors said that this was typical weather for Scalextric in Sweden.

The competition was to drive three different cars; One race with each car. The cars were one Rally car, a Subaru Impreza; one Williams F1 BMW FW23 and lastly one single seater without Magnatraction.

The competition took place on Classic track without dynamic brakes.

Afterwards we put together the time of each discipline and got a total driving time for each competitor.

The result of this was that it had been a very tight competition. The first and second place was clear but the rest were very close.

This year's champion was Thomas Werner; in second place was Axel Werner and in third place was Lasse Sandberg.

## Testing and comparing

At the same time as the competition was running, we were testing and comparing the new Sport advanced track versus the Classic and also testing the new RMS.

The conclusion of the testing was that all drivers thought that the Sport advanced track was a bit slippery and needed better tyres to get best performance. The hand controller with dynamic brake worked fine but it needs a bit of training to use it.

The RMS with a PC Laptop was easy to use and all right, but the digital voice at the start of the race irritated some of the drivers who were not familiar with it.

Some members of the Märklin Sprint Club were racing until the early morning next day, so we can say that enthusiasts never stop racing.

We are planing to have a 6-hours endurance race open for European drivers running on the new 6-lane sport advance track with RMS next year. Time and place with rules and hospitality will be announced later.

Best racing regards from Sweden. ■





Dear Brian,

My son, James, and I feel a few words of thanks are due to Steve Cannon and Roger Barker for making the Newark Swapmeet such a success.

After battling our way through the gales to set up James' stall the welcome we received was as warm as the complimentary coffee and the sausage baps! The auction caused quite a stir and some merriment. The feeling amongst the club members from Wolverhampton Slot Racing Club was "what a decent venue - when's the next one?"

Yours faithfully  
Malcolm Barnett

.....  
Dear Brian,

Thank you for a splendid magazine, I look forward to receiving it each month. I am working on an article about Scalextric buildings and accessories and their connection with Goodwood circuit. Do you think it would be of interest?

Also, would it be possible to reprint some of the older articles about the various models as I missed some of them? This may be a bit trivial for longstanding members but would be of interest to newer members such as myself.

Regards  
Gert Jørgensen

**An article about buildings would certainly be of interest to me Gert as they are a long neglected aspect of the hobby in these pages. I am full of good intentions about reprinting some of the older articles but, at the moment, I just don't have the time available to trawl through the back issues. Perhaps next year.**

.....  
Hi Brian,

Journal arrived yesterday, which was the quickest yet. Normally arrives after deadline, so hope you get this in time.

I noticed in the Journal a month or two back a member selling stuff from the USA, and saying, "ring my mum in Manchester to save phone calls." Just to let you and all members know that you can ring Canada/USA for approx 4 or 5 p per minute! The helpline is 0845 0201328 for full info; to call Canada you just dial 0844 888 444, and then the Canadian number, for 5p per minute. It just then adds to your normal phone bill, with no extra charges.

Cheers  
Gary Clift



Dear Brian,

With reference to the latest release from Scalextric, the Ford GT40; I would like to congratulate Simon Kohler and all at Hornby Hobbies for producing a really fantastic car, possibly their best yet - Fly watch out!

I agree with you about not wanting to pay well over the retail price - ok some of the cars are limited editions but they are available now from most model shops. In a few months time I can understand that their value will increase, due to the rarity factor, but I think it is wrong that some individuals and dealers have pushed up the price so soon. I ordered my black #2 car in advance from a model shop in Faversham, Kent where I am a regular customer; the purchase price being £21. The light blue #1 car was obtained from another shop via a friend for less than £20 - both cars are Sport versions and would appear to be a bargain.

In answer to John Dilworth's questions the #9 car is the Rodriguz/Bianchi Le Mans winner and the Sport versions do indeed have a brief race history inside the lid.

With Regards  
Ray Chambers

**My comments about prices seem to have struck a chord with several people judging from the mailbag this month but we do have to remember that we are living in a market economy, for better or worse. Scalextric sell their cars to retailers at a set price but have no legal right to enforce a selling price; a product is worth what people are prepared to pay for it. It would seem that there are customers out there who have more money than sense or are too lazy to look for the car they want at a reasonable price. If they are happy to sit in front of a computer screen and pay inflated prices for a readily available product then that is their own affair; one can hardly blame dealers for taking advantage of their gullibility.**

**With regards to the race history on the box - John is obviously as tightfisted as I am and bought the non-sport version which does not contain the information! It is a failing common to all manufacturers, not just Scalextric, that they produce wonderful models and often neglect to inform us about the real car on which it is based, a fairly basic marketing error in my opinion.**

Dear Brian,

Just a quick comment about the Short Circuits programme featured on the T.V.

I am a member of a couple of internet slot car groups and there was a lot of bad vibe kind of messages towards the programme; as I have not seen many shows of this nature I thought it was quite good especially Jon Sword's hints n' tips with some great n' cheap ideas..

Cheers  
Dave Dodd

Dear Brian,

I would be grateful if any of the club's members could advise myself on race management soft/hardware for my home circuit. I know there are a few systems around that provide race management for club events, but these don't, as far as I am aware, cater well for the home circuit environment. My requirements will differ to others, but, I enjoy 'time trial' racing of cars that have raced each other historically. The race management system would need to record the timings of each car, over a set distance, and compare each on a lap by lap basis.

To explain further, the first car would complete say 50 laps in the fastest time possible. Then, the second car would compete against the first car's time and so on, with the following information being presented as it (the second car etc) completes each lap: number of laps completed, number of laps remaining, completed lap time, race position, time difference with car one place ahead, time difference with car one place behind. At the end of the race, each cars position could be plotted on a lap by lap basis, to give a complete review the race. So, my question is, can any of the current race management systems be operated in this way, or is it a fairly simple task to modify a system to achieve these requirements ?

Whilst writing, one other daft question : has anyone translated the fastest lap information recorded on their Scalextric pacer system into a graph representing power values against distance/time travelled? If so, could this data be used to improve car and/or driver performance ?

Regards

Paul Taylor

.....  
Dear Brian,

I am a new member and a relative novice to the slot-car scene. I recently bought a Carrera D type Jaguar, a lovely looking model, but the guide blade didn't suit the new Scalextric Sport track with its lower flush conductor rails.

Not feeling confident about 'messaging' with a brand new model I exchanged it for a Ninco Ferrari 166MM; this does run well but I noticed that it rests on its front wheels with only minimum weight on the braids. Do other makes of slot-cars need to be modified slightly before they run well on the new track? Both new and old Scalextric cars I have do ride on the pick up.

I have also have some questions for Hornby, via Rob Smith; The new curved crossover is very good, one of the reasons I bought a new set to start me off with Sport track. Could Hornby now produce a straight crossover piece, similar to Classic track but using 'curves' instead of 'kinks'.

Recent interest in James Bond may be a good reason to relook at the Aston DB5 in silver and the chasing black Mercedes - a classic car chase if ever there was one. Talking of car chases - how about a dark green Ford Mustang and a black Dodge Charger on the streets of San Francisco - the 1968 film "Bullitt" is the greatest ever according to Jeremy Clarkson!

Yours Faithfully

Cliff Rustage

**Surprisingly enough, manufacturers don't really care whether other makes run on their tracks or not! In fact they are highly pleased if they don't - more sales of cars for themselves that way! It is worth bearing in mind that makes such as Fly, who don't make track, are essentially living off the backs of those who do. Without Scalextric track to run on and Hornby's advertising budget bringing in new converts Mr. Fly would not be driving a Rolls Royce today.**

**However, most makes can be made to run on most tracks - cue for an article please somebody.**

**As regards car chases - Bullitt cars - yes please Mr. Kohler - and a cd of that glorious soundtrack as well!**

# Guide to - Bugatti Type 59

BY NEIL DUNHAM

## The Real Car

In terms of success, the Bugatti Type 59 wasn't a real classic. Winning a total of 4 GPs over a two-year period, it was outclassed by the Auto Unions of Germany. It was also disliked by the drivers due to its erratic handling. The one area where most agreed however, was the car's stunning looks. A good example of the general attitude towards the car concerned the new 'Piano wire' wheels - the drivers complained about them as they were causing all sorts of problems. Ettore Bugatti's answer would be to laugh and say "Well it's too bad, you'll have to get used to it!" There was no way he or team manager, Meo Constantini, was going to change the look of the car.

## Scalextric origins

Scalextric first dipped into vintage cars in 1962 when they released the C64 Bentley and the C65 Alfa Romeo. These were deemed successful enough that a second pairing would be produced in the form of the GP Auto Union Type C and Bugatti Type 59.

The prototype Bugatti can be seen in the Gillham bible. This car included a round pin guide, which was to be substituted in favour of a two-pin guide in the production car, and an Alfa Romeo front axle mount. Unfortunately this car probably no longer exists. If it did then a mortgage would be required to buy it!

The C70 Bugatti was released in 1963 in blue only. The red version shown in the Gillham bible is probably a one off 'Friday afternoon special' or test. As stated above, the car came with a two-pin guide and full Ackerman steering. The front axle mounts had now been sorted out, resulting in the front wheels being slightly lowered, giving the production version a better profile than the prototype. If you are lucky enough to see two or more C70s together you may notice slight differences in the build e.g. paint colour schemes on the drivers etc. this is explained in more depth below.

## Race Tuned

In 1966, along with many in the range, the Bugatti was updated to Race Tuned spec. The new version was renumbered as C95 to reflect this change, but in line with the C62 Ferrari and others, kept the original C70 identification on the base. The C95 was produced in a darker blue, very different to that of the C70. It was supplied with the Race Tuned motor (black sided), soft compound tyres and a modified blade guide. As stated in the Gillham bible, the nut used to secure the guide encroached upon the radiator, so a small section of the grille had to be removed. While I am sure that some were supplied with hand-cut grilles, the tooling was updated at some stage for the modified piece (again, please see below for a possible explanation).

## Production and distribution

There are many theories as to why there are so few Bugattis surviving today. While there are undoubtedly very few around, there is a larger number than most people realise. The number stated in the Gillham bible is around 25, but in truth there are probably nearer 100.

One theory is that only a small number were made. This is challenged by Frank Buckland, of the 1960s Tri-ang Scalextric development team, who stated in an NSCC interview that the parts were made in a full production run. A probable explanation for the low number issued is a combination of factors. By the time the Bugatti and Auto Union were released the interest in vintage cars had dropped, with sales of the Bentley and Alfa tailing off. Also the Bugatti was a somewhat troublesome car to assemble, as anyone who has tried to fit one together will testify to - I believe the C70 was the only car in the range that required a part to be glued in place. Indeed one NSCC member who wrote to the newsletter a few years ago explained about this very problem. When asking for a Bugatti from the factory by post he was

charged for the car as spares (at the cost of separate parts) and was refused a guarantee!

The theory of cars being assembled to order would also explain the differing driver paint schemes on factory produced cars, not least those seen in the Gillham bible, as the controversial letters in this year's Journal highlighted.

The upshot of all this was that Lines Brothers only assembled cars to order, if at all. This would probably have meant that only the more enthusiastic of shop owners or racers persevered enough to go through with the transaction. There is some evidence to back up this theory. When the Power Sledge motor was being developed it was Bugatti bodies that were used to mount them on in the development dept., as Frank put it, 'there were always plenty of them lying around'. Incidentally, one of these cars was still known to exist as recently as 5 years ago (where is it now?).

Last year an amount of Scalextric spares came up for auction. Included in the lot was a number of C70 Bugatti underpans (NOT underpants). The spares were suspected to have come from a skip or suchlike at the time of the big clearout in the early 1970s. Were there a huge number of valuable Bugatti bodies just lying around, ready to be taken home and assembled? We will never know.

New Bugattis may have been uncommon, but did turn up in unexpected places. One NSCC member bought a C70 in a toyshop in Texas some time in the late 1960s. At only three times the price of Revell and Monogram cars it doesn't seem such a bad deal now!

## 1984 Reissue

The next chapter in the Bugatti story begins in 1984. Even as early as the mid 1970s collectors had started advertising in local and national newspapers for old Scalextric. Some of these early enthusiasts joined together to form the London Scalextric club. Although primarily a racing club, the collectors 'branch' produced a monthly newsletter – this is where the NSCC finds its origins. Even this early in the collecting period it was accepted that the Bugatti was of

Holy Grail status.

It was against this background that during a factory visit an NSCC member spotted a white Bugatti body top. Scalextric were testing the tooling of the Bugatti and Auto Union for a possible reissue alongside the Bentley and Alfa Romeo. The Bugatti and Auto Union tooling was deemed too rusty to run an official release, whereas the others did indeed make a comeback.

It was another NSCC member, Steve DeHavilland, who took on the mantle of badgering Hornby to reissue the Bugatti and, luckily for us, succeeded in persuading them to run off a small limited edition. Some of the original tooling was beyond saving so the factory only produced the body shell, front axles, drivers arm and rear view mirror. All remaining parts were cast in resin from an existing car. For the record the numbers originally produced were: 60 each of green and yellow and 100 red (red being slightly contentious as there was an original issue in that colour). Of the 25 white body tops spotted from the test run: 2 remained in the factory archive, 2 were flawed so didn't make it out of the factory, and 21 found new homes with lucky collectors. Interestingly, the white cars were issued with a black underpan and white axle and steering parts.

A little later a second lot of these cars appeared, probably around the same number again of the yellow, green and red cars and also a number of red body tops with black underpans. There were also an unknown number of black underpans.

The last factory produced Bugatti item is, however, less well known - and probably more common. Next time you look at your 'Power and the Glory' Ford 3L take a close look at the driver's head. The car was fitted with a blue Bugatti drivers head as none of the other production heads seemed to fit in the car! My only question about this is: If the tooling was OK for the Ford 3L, why was it not used for the cars produced for Steve DeHavilland? Although these heads are blue I have fitted one to my red re-issue, partly to make it a little more 'factory produced', but mostly for a bit of devilment. =>

## 1990 Resin copies

By 1990 even the 1984 re-issue Bugattis were changing hands for £200+. This led to Graham Perris, NSCC member and toy trader, producing a fully authorised resin copy painted in either blue or red. The cars were presented with a rather nice repro box with instruction sheet, and issued in an initial limited edition of 200. While these cars were nice to have, they were not a fantastic reproduction, although they were good enough to fool one of the major London Auction houses, who had very red faces when told that the blue Bugatti featured on the front of their catalogue was a copy. Especially as it had sold to a commission bidder for £1450!

## Pink Kar copy

In 1994 it was Pink Kar's turn to manufacture a Bugatti copy. This time the cars were produced in plastic, not from the original tooling, but from a mould cast from an existing car. All Scalextric identification was removed from the underpan, leaving a completely flat base with no ID mark. Initially issued in black as a limited edition of 300 and in blue – a slightly more aqua colour than the original C70. It is worth noting that the black cars often turn up with the black Scalextric re-issue underpan fitted by previous owners.

Later issues in white, green, red and chrome were to appear, this time with Pink Kar stamped on the base. The white and red issues were sold with fixed front axle as opposed to Ackerman type on the other cars.

For the record, other known colours produced in small quantities were: Pink (for obvious reasons), clear, plinth-mounted chrome, and, most impressively, gold plated. The last was issued in a limited edition of 3, presented to the three company principles in brown suede presentation boxes.

So that's it for the Bugatti. A small number of cars to collect, but I bet you a pound of dried bananas to a ha'penny bun that there are not many people with all variations. Bye for now.

Thanks to Roger Gillham, Steve DeHavilland, Gary at MRE, Malcolm Parker and John Couser for their help in putting this information together.

C70 Bugatti Made in England  
Two pin guide – blue, red (one off)

C95 Bugatti (Race Tuned) Made in England  
Blade guide, tuned motor, soft compound tyres,  
C70 on base – dark blue

C70 reissue commissioned by Steve DeHavilland (1984) Made in England  
Some parts not supplied – red, green, yellow,  
white/black underpan

C70 mystery re-issue (1984) Made in England  
Some parts not supplied – red, green, yellow,  
red/black underpan

**One small point about the Perris replicas - does anybody know the full number produced? I doubt the figure of 200 as many people were still waiting for theirs some four years later!**



# Harry Pottle and the Hump-back Bridge of Doom

BY JOHN DILWORTH

Harry Pottle woke up. It was the middle of the night at Pigwarts Academy of Magic, but those Betty Bopp's All-Flavour Beans he'd eaten after supper hadn't agreed with him- especially the diesel-oil ones. On his way to the bathroom he passed his pal Ron Weedy's bed but it was empty. Harry hurried on, slightly puzzled, with an urgent need rising in his stomach. As he stumbled past more beds on his way to the magic bathroom, he slowly realised that no-one was in the dormitory at all. By now his curiosity had overcome the turmoil in his tummy, and headed out into the corridor with the intention of finding out what had happened to the students of Pigwarts.

It didn't take him long. The hallways of the great castle were reverberating with cheers and laughter. Harry moved towards the sound, along passages he never knew existed, down stairways that creaked and moved beneath his bare feet. The magic paintings which lined the walls were mysteriously empty, the occupants gone. Some had left hastily scrawled messages inscribed "Gone to the race. Back later" or somesuch. Finally he came to a huge wooden doorway in an ill-fitting and warped frame, through which came bright light and the continuing sounds of an excited crowd. Nervously, Harry reached for the huge iron bolt that held the door. It slid easily back, and the door swung open instantly and silently, revealing a scene that he could not believe.

It seemed as if the whole school was there, crowded round a huge eight-lane Scalextric track. Their attention was so caught up in a race that it took a while before anyone noticed Harry. But when the race finished, people began to look around at the open door and the boy standing there. "Oh bloody hell. That's the end of Pigwarts Scalextric Club then. Harry blooming Pottle. It'll be all vomiting demons and three-headed hippos crawling round the track, and guess who winning everything." Harry was

surprised and not a little disappointed to recognise his friend Ron's weasly voice. "Sorry, Ron...I didn't...". "Oh it's all right, Harry", said Ron. "It had to happen sometime. We were just trying to hang on to a bit of undisturbed innocent fun. You do tend to take everything over, you know. You might as well join in now though... do a bit of marshalling to begin with. But do try not to be a superstar slot racer just like you've done with every other blooming thing in the school. Give the rest of us a chance."

"I wouldn't know where to begin", replied Harry apologetically. "The Doursleys were more into model trains really. I never had room for a Scalextric set in my cupboard under the stairs. How does it work?" "I'll help you, Harry lad" came a booming voice some way above his shoulder. It was Haggard, the huge school groundsman. "They won't let me race either. Look." He sat down next to Harry and pulled a car out of his huge overcoat pocket. "They say it's too big. It's a 1/24 E-type I exchanged for some pterodactyl eggs at a swap meeting in Newark." "There's something moving inside" exclaimed Harry. "Of course Harry lad. That's the driver. These aren't just ordinary old Scalextric cars. That's Gerry Marshall in there. He's the only magic driver I could find who's big enough. I tried to get Froilan Gonzalez, but he didn't like sports cars."

The burly figure inside the Jag waved cheerily at Harry who, for the first time, realised that the whole track was swarming with 1/32<sup>nd</sup> scale figures. In the pits, some were straightening out pick-up braids, others were oiling bushings. One character was hoisting the back wheels of an F1 Stewart onto a strip of sandpaper, while another braced himself against the front wing to stop it moving. But mostly Harry watched the drivers hopping in and out of the tiny cockpits. Some of the older ones seemed to be just a head and shoulders, but that didn't seem to impede them as they made their way to and from the =>

pits balancing on their hands. They were helped considerably by the newer drivers, who mostly had a complete set of limbs.

Harry was snapped out of his daze by a piercing cry coming from the track near his elbow. "Who's the three-toed sloth we've got for a corner marshall here?" It was a tiny Eddie Irvine calling out from a beached Ferrari, waving his fist wildly. "Put me back on!" Harry reached out and fumbled with the car. The steering front wheels confused him, and he couldn't fit the guide into the slot. "Oh my sainted aunt. I'll bloomin' well do it myself" the little Eddie shouted (or words to that effect). He struggled out of his seat belts and heaved his car back into the slot, his tiny helmeted head knocking against Harry's fingers. The car shot off while Eddie was still struggling back in, and you could hear his cries for several more laps as the car swept round the track, with the driver half in and half out of the cockpit. "Ron had better go easy over the hump-back bridge, or poor Eddie will cop it" muttered Haggard in Harry's ear. "Watch." Harry watched, realising that the little Ferrari was being controlled by his friend Ron Weedy, whose hand was clutching the throttle at the driver's rostrum at the other side of the track.

Right in the middle of the circuit was indeed a hump-back bridge, where several abandoned cars were strewn along the barriers. "You don't want to come off at the bridge" Haggard said with heavy emphasis "Cos you know who lives under a bridge, don't you, Harry?" Harry tried to piece all this information together, while the next race went on with increasing intensity. Full-size drivers were yelling at marshals (often at Harry himself who, after all, was new to the job), spectators were yelling support and derision at drivers, and at a slightly higher pitch, the yelling was going on on the track itself, between miniature garage crews and their pea-sized pilots. Harry watched the hump-back bridge, trying to remember who it was that might live beneath it, worried that he'd missed some important lesson in Magic classes. He watched Ron's Ferrari, with its little Eddie Irvine hanging on for dear life. Every time it approached the

hump-back, Ron eased the throttle and the car crawled over the crest, losing yards of track to the other cars. But now Ron was starting to push, to make up time, and he was taking the bridge faster and faster. Then it happened. Little Eddie had managed to hunker most of the way back into his cockpit, and Ron kept on the gas over the bridge. Too much speed.

The car lifted out of the slot on the brow, and Harry watched little Eddie frantically sawing at the wheel, trying to regain control of the airborne car. He couldn't. The Ferrari landed across the stone wall of the bridge, and Harry got the answer to his unspoken questions. He gasped as he saw several hideous little trolls swarm out of the dark space underneath it. Laughing fiendishly, they lifted little Eddie out of the car, and dragged him, struggling, back to their lair under the bridge. Harry blinked, then stood up and tried to grab the last of the spiteful little trolls as they scampered under the track. But he couldn't reach. The bridge was right in the middle of the track - too far away to be marshalled. "Nothing you can do, Harry." said Haggard. "Bad luck Ron. You'll need another driver for next season." Ron was unplugging his hand controller, looking disappointed, but not dismayed. "If you're off at the bridge, you're out", Haggard explained. "Club rules. No-one likes to argue with the bloomin' trolls. They've had some good drivers off us in the past...Jim Clark, Jochen Rindt, Ayrton Senna..."

But Harry was preoccupied. That awful smell was hovering around his nostrils - the one that no-one else in Pigwarts could detect but him. The one that always meant trouble was coming. And trouble was coming from that hump-back bridge. Everyone else was watching the race, which had continued uninterrupted by Ron's crash. But Harry was still watching the bridge, fascinated by the trolls and the nasty aroma. So he was the only one who saw what appeared to be little Eddie re-emerge from under the bridge, walking awkwardly, and with his helmet perched strangely on top of his head. "Do the little drivers ever get away from the trolls, Haggard?" Harry asked. "Not usually. No-one really knows what happens under there.

Best not to ask, lad.” Harry peered closer as the little driver manhandled the Ferrari back into the slot. “Well look at that then, Haggard - Ron, I think you’re back in the race.” Ron and Haggard looked astonished as Harry pointed out the little arm waving from the cockpit of the Ferrari, waiting patiently on the crest of the bridge. Ron didn’t stop to think, but rushed straight back to the drivers’ rostrum and plugged in. The Ferrari took off like a scalded cat and ran a half lap at good speed.

Harry noticed the foul smell in his nostrils get stronger as the car raced past his corner, then decrease as the car headed off down the track. It happened at each lap, until Harry noticed one more thing. The car was taking his corner faster and faster, and the tiny driver seemed to be turning the steering wheel hard, in the wrong direction. The smell was becoming unbearable, and Harry was losing his concentration, almost passing out. But before his eyes fell shut, he realised that the little driver was trying to crash the car out, at his corner. He realised exactly why in a sudden flash. Without speaking, he lurched to his feet, grabbing Haggard’s 1/24<sup>th</sup> E-type as he went. He staggered to the driver’s rostrum, struggling to clear his head. As he placed the E-type on a vacant lane, he whispered to the miniature Gerry Marshall within, “Get him, Gerry.” Harry grabbed a controller, and felt a surge of power in his right arm. It was the ghost of his dead father taking control. Unbeknown to Harry, he had been a true Scalextric fan, a former Pigwarts’ slot champion, until he had been killed by that, by that evil..... Harry blinked, shook his head, and concentrated on the track. The other drivers were shouting in protest as the outsize Jag swept round the circuit in pursuit of Ron’s Ferrari. “I thought that thing was banned.” “I told you Harry Pottle would mess everything up”, people were calling. But Harry blocked it out of his head, and drove the car ruthlessly, his disembodied father guiding his

thumb on the throttle. Approaching the last turn before the hump-back, the Jag was level with the Ferrari and on the inside lane. “Go, Gerry” Harry yelled, as he mashed his thumb down hard. The back end of the Jag broke away and slid wide across two lanes, collecting the little Ferrari as it went. The momentum shot the Ferrari clean off the track and into a barrel-roll down the main straight. It came to rest upside down in front of Harry, who fainted from the stench. “Get Angus Doubledoors- quick”, he managed to cry, before he collapsed, his fists clenched hard around the Ferrari, stifling the hideous screams of the trapped driver.

He woke in the hospital, with a crowd of familiar smiling faces around him, including that of the wise old headmaster, Angus Doubledoors. “Leave us now, boys and girls”, the old man intoned, smiling sagely at Harry. When they were alone he continued. “Harry, you did a brave and noble thing. You knew it was He-who-must-be-kept-downwind hiding beneath the hump-back bridge. His powers had been so diminished by your presence here at Pigwarts that the had been reduced to 1/32<sup>nd</sup> scale, and had not the strength to escape from the trolls’ lair. But by grabbing a car, he hoped to get away. If he had managed to crash it through the barriers and onto the floor, he would have been free again, free to wreak havoc in the magic world. But once again, dear boy, you were too quick, too clever, too powerful for him. I extracted him from beneath Ron’s Ferrari, and have disposed of him in the Hell- towers of B’scra far away in the islands of Vacformosa. We are all safe now.” “Yes, Angus, sir, and thank goodness I won’t ever have to bear the smell of Lord Moldyfart again.” “Please, dear boy. Don’t mention that terrible name again. It is too dreadful to utter. To us magic folk, he will always be known merely as... He-who-must-be-kept-downwind.” ■

# Connaught - if only!

BY DAVID SYKES

If asked to list British racing cars that contested early Grands Prix most of us would mention BRM, Vanwall, Lotus and Cooper; some may remember the ERA but I am willing to bet Connaught would be missing from the list. Yet, this small company set up by designer Rodney Clarke and engineer Mike Oliver with money from Kenneth McAlpine was to bring home the first win for a British driver in a British car for 31 years.

Connaught began with club racing sports cars, soon followed by an F2 single seater - the A type in 1950. The A type was a series of nine cars raced from 1951 to 54 achieving reasonable placings in 52 including fourth and fifth in the British GP.

The chassis was a standard tubular design with a de Dion rear axle and the engine was a 1960cc Lea Francis with a claimed BHP of 135 to 165 when F2 became a world championship category. Drivers of the A type include B. Bira, Stirling Moss, Jack Fairman, Tony Rolt and Roy Salvadori amongst others.

The B type was a new design with an Alta 2470cc 240 BHP engine, a de Dion rear axle with wishbone and coil spring front suspension and disc brakes. The car appeared late in 1954 in a streamlined body that enclosed the wheels but was soon changed for an open wheel design. The B type became known as the Syracuse after Tony Brooks drove it to victory in the Sicilian Grand Prix. So, was it up against poor opposition? No, Brooks, with only 15 laps of practice as the team were scared of a breakdown and losing their entry money, placed the car third fastest and on the outside front row of the grid. Alongside him were the two Maserati 250Fs of Musso and Villoresi; he finished a minute ahead of Musso and set the fastest lap 5 seconds quicker than his qualifying time. Not since 1924 had a British car and driver won a Grand Prix.

The team competed in only two championship races in 1956 - the British GP gaining fourth for Jack Fairman and Monza

where Ron Flockart and Fairman took third and fifth. The last race for the works team was in 1957 when the "toothpaste tube" bodied car was fourth. The company by then had run out of money and folded. Bernie Ecclestone (Yes him!) bought two cars for Tasman racing. Drivers of the B type include Tony Brooks, Reg Parnell, Roy Salvadori, Archie Scott-Brown, and Jack Fairman.

When Connaught folded they already had designs for a lighter space frame chassied C type and an advanced rear engined monocoque chassis the D type. The big "what if" with Connaught is whether, with a little more funding in 1954 Britain have seen its first World Championship Winning car and beat Cooper to the rear engined revolution?

Like Dave Yerbury I also make body shells of my favourite cars, selling them to cover the costs of mould making and the casting resin (see advert in back of magazine). My interest stems from the Scalextric Cooper, Vanwall and BRM but I was distraught when I found they never really raced each other, deciding to fill in the gaps myself when I gave up waiting for others to model the cars. I first made the B type but was later fortunate to get my hands on some plans for the A type which really I favour. The A type Connaught has always been one of my favourite cars on the classic Grand Prix circuits at Goodwood, Silverstone and this year at the Oulton Park Gold Cup, especially David Wenman's yellow example. I do not think I have seen the B type run in the flesh but you can see one at the Donington Park museum (Well worth a visit after the Loughborough Swap meet). ■



# The Golden Wonder Rover 3500 V8

BY ALAN SLADE

This is NOT a 'Brief Collectors Guide' type of article. When I was having my recent clearout I came to a box marked GW Rovers and I wondered just how many were in there. The answer is eight.



Many people assume that the GW Rover was made in small quantities, but that is not the case. They were used by Golden Wonder as a promotional tool to publicise their rally team and as a consequence were given out by the bucket load. They were even put into sets, one of the original cars having been taken out first (normally Porsche cars). Over the space of two years I must have had 20 + cars pass through my hands, all of which were raced hard. All I have left are these eight cars, though I do know the whereabouts of two more.

Why did I have so many and not have them now? Well, the pictures tell some of the story. Adam (my son) and I were sponsored by Golden Wonder for two years to race whilst the rally



programme was in place. When they changed from the ex BL Rover to a new works spec 6R4 we also changed cars, and I have two GW 6R4's that started life as Ternco cars to prove it. I wonder which is more valuable - the original cars or the fact that they are now race prepared and proven winners?

Why the Rover pick-up? This particular car only competed in one race before it changed shape as it suffered what Murray would call a 'racing incident'. Those of you with good eyesight will see that this one was built for my daughter Emily, and at a race meeting in Kent she was taken out in a big way and the bodyshell was split right across the back and front when it landed on the floor. One of the advantages of sponsorship is that you do not have to repair things, so a new car was purchased and the shell put on the existing race chassis. The old shell was 'adjusted', a few truck bits added to the shell, a jack and some oil drums added and we then had a tow car and trailer. The flashing light on the roof does work.



The car at the front of the line-up at the bottom of column one is another interesting car. This was built for a Formula Libre race at a London club and I guess my interpretation of Libre was slightly more free than the organisers expected. It is fitted with a 13UO motor with  $\Rightarrow$

Champion magnets and Mura armature running in ball bearings. The end bell is a Champion bullet-proof item with special brushes and springs. The inside of the original chassis is a giant heatsink to which is attached the spring front suspension.

The front wheels are Scalextric small saloon with hard ribbed tyres and the back wheels are 1/8" aluminium hubs with sponge tyres. Gearing is Taylormade. The guide is a Parma item cut down to fit in Scalextric track and the braids are MRRC.

The result is a rather quick Rover which handles well. The big problem is the power it takes (around 7 amps). While it ran very well at my home track the race was held on a track that had 1.5 amp Scalextric transformers and they lasted about 2 minutes before they tripped out. This neither pleased me nor the organisers. Eventually a compromise was reached, I fitted a slightly less powerful motor and they found some better transformers! The rules said the motor choice was free and did not mention the track power. How rules have changed since then.



The current colour scheme is plain white with a dayglo red front and lower doors.

The next car is the plain white car behind the pick-up. This was modified for a long distance saloon car race that was held at Quorn (I suppose it was the forerunner to the Quornhurst 100K – a race that takes around 11 hours, or at least it did the last one I entered). For this particular race it was decided that there should be a section run at 'night', and that during this period the track would be only illuminated by moonlight. No, we did not remove the roof of the clubhouse but fitted some

blue bulbs over the track instead. Because of this the cars had to have lights fitted.

Wanting to use the Rover as we were still sponsored by GW at that time I fitted headlights, tail/brake lights and some marker lights on the roof. I used LEDs as they take very little power and fitted some capacitors so that they stayed on when there was no power under braking and when I got onto the green stuff. At that time I used high power yellow LED's, but now that white ones are available at sensible prices I think I will change them. Other than that the car is standard. Well, OK, I have sorted the front. It is also in a plain white livery at present.



The last two cars are the ones that I have recently rebuilt so that I can use them again. One of them is intended as a rally car and is the one at the back of the picture above. This car is basically standard and even has bumpers and wing mirrors. The front is slightly sorted to give it a bit better handling, but as rally tracks are anything but smooth there is no point in getting it to sit low on the track. Power is proved by a Johnson 111 motor and 3:1 gearing.

The other car is my Historic Racer and has a much modified front end that is lower and stiffer with a sort of front suspension. Power is via a Mabuchi 'S' type engine and I am experimenting with gear ratios. The wheels are from a Mondeo and currently tyres are Scalextric front and Ninco rear. I also want to fit a Ninco sprung guide, but that will require a little more thought and modification. I will gradually detail both of these cars.

My aim is to get it so that I can race it on an even footing with my Fly Capri, and before you declare that to be impossible, remember that it will be on a wooden track where the magnets do not work. I also intend to 'Scalextricise' the Capri and use period motors, etc.. But that will be another article. ■

# A tale of two icons \*

\*(an object of particular admiration)

BY TONY SECCHI

In no priority order of merit, the two icons of this tale are Tom Walkinshaw of TWR Racing, at present running the Arrows F1 project (just!) and Dave Yerbury of AA Bodies and author of the interesting and original 'Tales from a box of stuff' in our Journal.

Tom Walkinshaw raced in Formula 3 in 1970 but lacking funding drove saloons for Ford and BMW, winning the Tourist Trophy at Silverstone in 1977. He went on to win it three more times as a driver and five as a team owner.

About the time of the BMW drives he got involved with race preparation and helped Mazda win the British saloon car championship in both 1980 and 81, also winning the Spa 24 hours in the latter year. Wanting to run a British car, Tom got wind of the fact that Rover were about to pull the plug on their racing programme, so he approached them and, as we say in Italy - "made them an offer that they could not refuse." He agreed with them that for every tenth of a second he made the cars go faster Rover would pay him a certain amount. In two weeks he delivered the car for practice at Silverstone and it was on pole first time out - three seconds a lap quicker than before

Then came Jaguar, and the core interest of this article. At that time Jaguar were in turmoil, emerging from the clutches of the monster that was British Leyland. Tom approached Sir John Egan and told him that the present regulations for Touring Cars were changing from Group 1 to Group A and he felt that he could develop a Jaguar Car into a winner. That car was the XJS.

At the time the European Touring Car Championship had, for many years, been dominated by the quick and nimble BMW M1's and the heavy, untried XJS seemed a strange choice. However, Walkinshaw got a deal for parts and access to the engineering department for technical information. He drew up a hit list, went away, and worked from there. He did it his way and despite starting on the front row and

leading its first European touring event, results took half a season to come; but come they did. Winning first at the classic Brno course in the summer of 1982, the XJS won four of the last six races to finish third overall.

The next year (1983) it was five wins and second place, the crowning glory coming in 1984 with seven wins - more than all the other teams put together - clinching the manufacturers title for Jaguar and the drivers title for 'Major Tom'. Rule changes neutered the big cats and they bowed out on top.

Later of course, TWR Racing prepared, entered and raced the XJR/6 XJR/8 XJR/9 XJR/12 and XJR/14 group CI World sportscar championship prototypes that won world titles in 1987, 1988 and 1991, with Raul Boesel, Martin Brundle and Teo Fabi taking the drivers world championships. They also won Le Mans in 1988 and 90.

Despite my Italian heritage, I have always been a Jaguar enthusiast - real Jaguar that is, not the P.R. produced, Ford financed conglomerate that we have posing at the moment, but the proper thing. My first three cars were a MK1 2.4, a MK2 3.4 and a 3.8 XK150S coupe. I belonged to the Jaguar drivers' club and at various times have driven Brands, Silverstone, Crystal Palace and Goodwood in my own cars, so you can say that I am a fan - fired by the early 'C' and 'D' type Le Mans wins in 1951, 53, 55, 56 and 57 it was a natural evolution.

Apart from the ill fated Broadspeed XKR Coupé programme in the mid seventies, I have purchased or made all the racing model Jaguars in either 1/24 static or 1/32 slot-car mode, sometimes in both formats (I have even made a passable XJR/11 slot-car from redundant body bits). The only one exception was the XJS. I had seen these cars race and win on several European tracks culminating in the truly magnificent Spa victory which gave Jaguar both drivers' and manufacturers' titles in 1984. =>

Just last year I purchased an Hasegawa 1/24 static kit of that particular car and it made a fine model, but to my limited knowledge and research no proprietary manufacturers made a 1/32 slot-car version of the XJS so I decided to build one myself.

Herewith enter Dave Yerbury. Well known by the more discriminating members of the NSCC as the maker of fine vacuum formed bodies. Several of his cars have been featured in the Journal and he is always on the look out to make more original, generally unavailable items.

I myself have made up several of David's bodies into real racers including the Panoz GTR, Nissan 390 GTR, Toyota T5020 GT One, Riley and Scott and a particularly good 'brace of British' - an Aston Martin DB4 Zagato and a Jaguar 3.8 mk2 saloon.

So I phoned him up and asked if he would be interested in doing a bespoke XJS body for me. He was in the middle of moving house at the time, but he agreed to the project if I would wait upon his work programme. In the meantime, he asked me to obtain an "Autocar" road test report on the XJS which gives side, front and top elevations of the car plus all relevant dimensions and which, by pure chance, is approximately 1/32 scale. I duly contacted "Autocar" and ordered said item and whilst waiting for delivery, I bought a static "Airfix" kit of the XJS in 1/43 scale, assembled the body and sent it to him for use as a three dimensional model. of course if Airfix had done this model in 1/32 scale as the rest of their then current range (Jaguar E Type, Ferrari 250LM: Porsche 917K etc. I would not have needed Dave's skills and experience - but then I would have missed the satisfaction and fun of creating something totally unique and original.

In due course, I sent copies of the XJS road test to David and eventually received a 'first try' body for evaluation. David was not fully satisfied with this and forbade me to use it, he just wanted to show me the work in progress. Being a perfectionist, when he did send the final items they were terrific. I had three complete vacuum-formed white plastic bodies with clear full length, one-piece windows, and screens. My first

intention was to make the whole TWR team of two cars plus the spare, but product availability prevented this - I will come to that problem later. All I had to do was cut out the screen and window apertures on the body and find a running chassis to fit underneath

Just a diversion on size - the XJS is a **big** car. In real life racing trim it weighs nearly 1.5 tons! (1510 Kg or 3328 lb.) including the 5.3 litre aluminium V12 engine. To see "Major Tom" wrestling it around Spa or Silverstone was really something to remember. The overall length is 15' 7" (4765mm) and the width 5' 10" (1794mm) - the real size wheelbase is 8' 6" converting to 85mm at 1/32 scale.

I used a spare Scalextric Porsche 962C chassis which possesses almost the same scale wheelbase and front and rear overhangs which on the XJS are about 30mm at 1/32 scale. Although the body is lightweight, because of its length the chassis interior and big wheels it would be relatively heavy so a high powered engine was selected which fitted the mountings in the 962C bodypan. I chose a 'Cartrix' 1163 SH Pro V12 motor which revs at 30,000. I matched this with a standard Scalextric final drive, but upped the pinion from nine to ten teeth. Along with bigger diameter wheels, this gave a good compromise between acceleration and top speed.

The wheels incidentally were a problem because in real life they were specially made for the XJS (by the Dunlop factory I think). After several trials and errors, I finally settled on a set of wheels and tyres from a Fly Porsche GT1 LM98. These were spoked, so in no way did they reflect the real ones but they are about the right size and diameter and they certainly suit the car.

The pick up was of the 'Scalextric' quick fit type and has so far caused no problems. The chassis/bodypan had to be modified here and there to fit the sill and apron profile of the body and needed four fixings - one each side of the cockpit, one front and one rear.

Track testing resulted in using two magnets - a very low powered one at the centre and a Proslot PS6001 (more powerful) at the rear. This



configuration gives good 'slot holding' at the front and helps to counteract the rear end yawing that the car suffered from due to its long wheelbase and overhangs. Provided one feeds the power in with feeling and control it reaches high speed quickly, corners well and is very competitive in its class.

Having done all the hard work, I thought that the livery of the car(s) would pose no problems - but how wrong can one be! The basic colour scheme was easy - British racing green body with wide white horizontal stripe from headlamps to rear light clusters. Numbers were OK - plain white on the BRG, but the bugbear came when trying to find the logo decals. The ones that I could find were all too small.

The decals are mainly block white - three large "Jaguar" motifs on the bonnet and doors (one each): a smaller "TWR Jaguar" atop the windscreen: "Dunlop" and "Motul" (oil) on the front and rear aprons. There are white lined "jumping cats" on the sides and "TWR" on the rear valance. At the bottom of the sills are "Ferodo, Champion, Speedline and Bilstein". The race numbers, the windscreen and sill logos I could provide from my own stock, but getting the others sourced at the right size was a pain. David gave me some "Jaguar" decals which were correct but too small for the bonnet and doors and I could not find any "Motul" decals at all. Eventually I used a combination of 1/24 scale "Jaguar" and "jumping cat" decals from surplus stock of an XJR/9 static kit (actually too small), switched to "Castrol" and "Zent" for oil and had to use very small "Dunlop" decals for the tyres. I managed to make up a fair sized "TWR Jaguar" for the windscreen from spare SCX XJR/14 decals. Another white outline 'TWR' from the same source completed the rear end.

From a distance, when on track, the car looks fine but up close you can see the compromises. Yes, that is the key word when one embarks on an unknown project like this - you have to compromise, but it is only in the minor detail and to my mind it does not affect the running and racing of the car and I can assure you that when it wins and sees off the opposition

in the manner of its real life predecessor, the compromises fade by comparison.

The car is a bit of a handful to drive (much like the real thing) but like all slot-cars it is rewarding when one consistently gets it right.

David is a great enthusiast and innovator and I personally think that it would make a terrific article if he could be persuaded to write up his technique and method of producing these bodies. I am sure all NSCC members would find it fascinating. Although classed as a "cottage industry" David's work can stand comparison with some of the best vacuum forms and are certainly better than the professionally produced Lexan SRS1 Spanish series that were around between 1982/92. More than that though, he has provided me with the opportunity to build, own and race an hitherto unavailable car that was one of my favourites. I can now, on occasion, re-live those great memories of 82/83/84 when the TWR Jaguar XJSs took on and beat the best of Europe.

I cannot ask for more than that - Thanks Dave. ■

# Brussels 24 hour race

BY RUSSELL TURNER

The weekend of the 9th/10th November 2002 saw the 13th annual 24 hour race hosted by the Brussels Scalextric club at the Joli Bois centre Brussels.

For any one who hasn't heard of this event it is run on 2 mirror image 8 lane Scalextric circuits thus providing 16 lanes for racing with Ninco sports cars (magnets removed). It attracts teams from all over Europe; this year, as well as the 8 Belgium teams, there were entries from Britain, Spain, France and Italy. I attended the event as part of the 6 man Eastcote Scalextric club team. It had been announced a few months ago that this year's event was to be run on the new Scalextric Sport track instead of the conventional classic track that had been used for the previous 12 years. Having never raced on the new sport track I was looking forward to trying it. So how did it perform? Well I'll start with the plus side, it sat very flat and there were no problems with electrical contact (though the track is hard wired.) On the down side there was absolutely no grip in the surface, so much so that it totally spoiled the race, the cars were sliding around so much that lap times were 3 or 4 seconds slower than in other years with similar cars and driving was a toil rather than an enjoyable experience. My overall impression of the Sport track is that it is a very poor product, I run the West London Scalextric club which has a 6 lane 112ft track made from the classic track and I had considered replacing much or all of it with Sport track, that is now not an option and I'm looking towards Ninco track.

As for the race it was won by the Spanish team from Catalunya. The British teams did reasonably well, Eastcote finished a creditable 9th and the other team captained by Wood Green racer Nigel Williams and made up of

racers from all over England finished 5th and this would have been 2nd had they not had a 200 lap penalty for allegedly covertly applying a tyre treatment to their car, I don't know if they did or didn't do it, but I do know in the first two sessions before the penalty their car was the only one with grip and was lapping a second and a half quicker than anyone else, I'll let you draw your own conclusions.

Finally I would just like to thank the Brussels committee for organising a good event, despite the Sport track, and say I'm already looking forward to next year.

**I must confess that I find all the conflicting views on the new track somewhat puzzling. With any product there is usually a consensus of opinion that it is either mostly good or mostly bad but Sport track seems to have a Jekyll and Hyde personality; some say that the electrical connections are fine, others that there are serious problems with it. At the recent Ramsgate weekend I heard no criticisms of the grip levels at all and can personally detect no differences between new and old - I can lose traction on both varieties with equal ease! In theory, as the surface is flatter than before, more rubber should be in contact with it and grip levels should be higher. Is it down to the tyres?**

**I suppose it is possible that there are some quality control problems with the stuff but we are unlikely to hear about them. I wonder if anyone can do a controlled back to back test with Classic and Sport track for the Journal?**

**If you have access to two identical layouts in both types with timing facilities I would love to hear from you. Some test runs with the same cars on both versions would help us reach a definitive conclusion. ■**