



No.251 FEBRUARY 2003

BY SUBSCRIPTION ONLY

© NSCC 2003

Contents

Club Stuff.....	2
Swapmeet.....	3
Membership Update.....	4
Diary Dates.....	5
Members Moments.....	7
Christmas Competition.....	8
Messages From Margate.....	9
Margate Extra.....	10
Sport Vs Classic - The Test.....	15
Bits And Pieces.....	19
Letters.....	20
Toy Fair 2003.....	22
Porsche Open.....	25
Scratch Building.....	29
NC2 Rantings.....	30
Gt Faulty Reviews.....	33
Vanquish Lola Reviews.....	34
Members Ads.....	39

EDITOR

Brian Rogers
27 Paige Close
Watlington
King's Lynn
Norfolk

PE33 0TQ

Tel/Fax:- 01553 813090

e-mail:- editor@nsccl.co.uk

TRADE ADVERTISING

Adrian Leggett
Roseville
Westwood Lane
Normandy
Guildford
Surrey
GU3 2JG

Tel:- 01483 810102

e-mail:- sales@nsccl.co.uk

The **NSCC**

www.nsccl.co.uk

The independent club for slot-car enthusiasts

There's no such thing as a free lunch

One of the few perks attached to this job is the dubious privilege of being accepted as "press" at major functions such as the annual Toy Fair held in January at the ExCel centre.

This year I travelled down to London with friend, and new member, Kevin Pieczka on press day to take advantage of the complimentary lunch on offer.

After a pleasant morning inspecting the various slot-car stands and thrashing Graham Smith (yes he!) on the SCX track layout we wandered down to the restaurant to partake of some welcome refreshment. We shared a table with a battle hardened hack from the Sunday Express and a very attractive young lady from the Naval Gazette; no I don't know why sailors would be interested in 'Bob The Builder'!

Once again I was amazed at the universal appeal of this extraordinary toy called 'Scalextric' - on discovering that we were from the NSCC the young lady informed us that her husband was obsessed with the stuff and had a large layout in their loft. The reporter bombarded me with questions about the history of the firm as he was thinking of doing an article about it. So, instead of relaxing with my usual glass of red wine or three I had to work through my lunch break on behalf of the club.

The afternoon soon passed and, having spent far too long chatting to Colette and her helpers on the Monarch Lines stand, we started the return journey to Norfolk at the height of the rush hour. It was then I remembered why I don't go to London very often these days; six stops crammed into a Northern Line tube carriage is not my idea of a fun day out!

However, the really puzzling aspect of the trip is - how come I end up with the reporter's e-mail address and friend Kevin gets the nice young lady's phone number?!

And Finally - Thanks for your input this month; I even have a couple of pieces to hold over for the next issue. More articles are always needed though, so keep up the good work.

Till next month

Brian

Competition Results

I received a healthy level of entries for the Christmas competitions but, surprisingly, not too many all correct ones.

First then, the official answers and some comments on the Scalextric part:

1. Croft - the downfall of many entries; this was a quiz about Scalextric, not Grand Prix circuits so Brands Hatch was not the answer! It referred to the three limited edition Caterhams produced on behalf of Scale Models.

2. C100 Knight rider - the clue was in the 'C' numbers of the other cars; C25, C50 and C75.

3. K1 Go-Karts.

4. Porsche 904 GTS.

5. 'Sport' track flying leap.

6. C2194.

7. It has solid exhausts - the later ones were hollowed out.

8. Gran Turismo.

9. Ayrton Senna Lamborghini Diablos.

10. Lotus 16 - the only one not reissued as a 'Power and Glory' car.

11. GM Opel (Holden) Commodore and Ford Falcon.

12. Team Hornby.

13. Datsun 260Z - paired in set with Knight Rider as Alfa and Bentley were in vintage set.

14. 'Sport'/'Classic' converter track.

15. Black and silver - other colours Spain only.

16. 1/30th - in first catalogue and price list.

17. 130mph - inside cover of catalogue #2.

18. E5 Marshals car - all were the first series of cars with lights.

19. 'Roar' - the sound effects record.

20. 'Ace' 1/24th cars.

The 'other makes' answers were:-

1. SCX mechanical, SCX control(electronic) and racing monitor SCX (PC system). Various types of answer were accepted for this so long as you differentiated between the three types.

2. TT - Total Traction cars.

3. SEAT 850 vintage.

4. Parma.

5. 50108 Renault Clio RACC94 (the first Catalunya car).

6. Carrera.

7. 1/24th, 1/32, 1/40.

8. VW Beetles - the original ones.

9. Formula 1.

10. 1/43 - diecasts - who said they were slot-cars? Mention 1/35 trucks and you are also wrong - the question said cars.

11. Saleen Ford S7R campeon GT 2001- probably never produced but it appears on page 25 of the 2002 catalogue.

12. Minic.

13. Fiat TC600 and Mercedes 250sl.

14. Matchbox.

15. Carrera Aston Martin DB3 'Aston Mayhem'.

16. MRRC.

17. Flashing Headlights - any mention of flashing roof lights as well meant you were wrong because they have been done before. Unless, of course, you stated that they flashed alternately with the headlights.

18. Vote For Insanity.

19. It's a police car. I also accepted variations on this theme such as flashing blue light etc.

20. Bugatti 59, Auto Union C-Type both in chrome.

And the winners are.....

Seven all correct answers for the Scalextric part and none at all for the "other makes" but five very near misses. Archie is pleased to announce the following main prize winners:

1355/93 Roger Halms wins the Scalextric prize of a unique single seater.

1718/95 Gary Buesnel wins the "other Makes" prize of a Slot Classic BMW.

2263/97 Dave Wilcock wins a Ramsgate car.

2509/99 Phil Skinner also receives one in the overseas members draw.

Whoops! - run out of space - you will have to wait till next month to find out about the other prizes! ■



By now I'm sure many of you will already have Catalogue 44 with the two MG Lolas on the front cover. However let's review what we can expect in the early part of 2003.

There are 3 completely new models due soon:

Opel Astra V8 Coupé

C2474A & C2474 Service Fit #7 – not number 18 as it says in the catalogue.

C2475A & C2475 TV Today #8

AMG Mercedes CLK

C2391A & C2391 Vodafone #1

C2392A & C2392 Works Team #2

I saw these four cars with their hand applied decoration ready for the Toy Fair and they really look good. I'm advised that the Mercedes is a particularly good racer too.

BMW Mini Cooper – Confidently expected to be one of the most popular new releases ever.

C2484A & C2484 John Cooper Challenge #1

C2485A & C2485 John Cooper Challenge #2

There are also a few reliveries too. Note that these don't have Sport versions.

C2481 Porsche GT3R De Walt – Racesports Salisbury #99

C2480 Porsche 911 GT3R Orbit Racing #75

C2496 Ford Focus Armin Kremer / Dieter Schneppenheim #34

C2490 Caterham 7 Gulf 2002 #1

C2509 Ford GT MkII Le Mans 1966 #3.

This red livery is fabulous and in my opinion looks just as good as the black version.

Single seaters - The catalogue shows 3 "new" single seaters too:

C2440 Team Xerox #1

C2441 Team Rapid #2

C2318 team Firestone #4

These aren't really new at all as we saw C2440 and C2441 in the recently released Toys-R-Us C1089L Monaco set. C2318 was previously released in a set in 2000 too.

Sets

There are 5 new sets on offer in the catalogue. All of the set cars are the same as those available separately.

The sets are:

C1115 Rally Champions – containing C2476 & C2477 Renault Méganes released at Christmas in the sets for Safeways.

C1111 Touring car Challenge with AMG Mercedes CLK & Opel Astra V8 Coupé.

C1112 John Cooper Trophy.

C1113 GT40 Sport - with C2403 & C2509 GT40s.

C1114 Le Mans 24 – with C2366 & C2367 MG Lolas

Challenger system

The other exciting new addition this year is the Challenger system. Two versions of this are available each with a Mercedes CLK – C8157 in silver and C8159 in black. These have blacked out windows to hide the mass of electronics inside. Apparently these cars really do learn your circuit in one mode using some clever trickery to work out where they are on the circuit and adjust the throttle accordingly. ⇒⇒

This means that they slow down *before* the ends of the straights and accelerate through the bends. You can race the cars in one of 2 modes and in the full race mode they are really difficult to beat.

The price list for 2003 shows that the latter part of the year has some new cars to look forward to – TVR Tuscan, Corvette L88s and IRL Single seaters. Hopefully more information on these will be forthcoming from Hornby during the year. Prices have gone up this year with Sport versions having a suggested retail price of £29.99 and standard versions of £26.99

C2412 Subaru Impreza Works 2002 different versions

How many of you spotted the difference between C2412 as shown in Catalogue 43 New Releases and Catalogue 44 and the car as released last year? The catalogue shows the car in a Catalunya Rally livery but it was released in a Monte Carlo Rally livery. This just goes to show how specifications change between the catalogue image being created and the product reaching the market. Unless, of course, any of you know differently and have the catalogue version of the car – please let me know. All of the information about this year's cars is subject to change so keep your eyes open for differences and remember that not everything will eventually see the light of day.

Margate Extra

As a collector one of my problems has always been to try and identify if I have missed anything that has been released and to determine what the reference numbers are for obscure items such as special set cars. With the help of Hornby and my own collection I have pulled together a list of all the Scalextric produced in 2002. The list actually starts at the end of 2001 when it was a bit vague when items were actually released. I

C2510 Ford Boss 302 Mustang 2003 retailer range presentation

Every year Hornby give a car to the retailers who attend the range presentations in Margate. This year the car is a 1970 Ford Mustang in a metallic blue and yellow livery. This is a limited edition of 250 cars.



And Finally ... Thank you to member Brian Mitchell who drew my attention to Auto Express Magazine (Christmas Special Issue Number 735) with a four page article and review of slot-cars. Their test gave the Scalextric GT40 5 stars and chose it as being the pick of the bunch. Also thanks to Patrick Chidgey for his letter. Patrick would also like to see Hornby produce a Ford Escort Mk I and Mk II and a 1969 Dodge Charger to challenge the Mustangs and Camaros. I'll pass the requests on. ■

BY ROB SMITH

have identified the reference numbers that have not been used. This does not mean that they will not appear at some stage in the future! If there are any omissions or mistakes please let me know together with any variations known on these cars. I'll republish the list during the year as new items get added. Hopefully you will find this useful. Please let me know if you would like more information added.

Reference	Name	Description	Race #	Notes
C2262	McLaren MP4/16 Mika No3	Black/silver	3	
C2262A	McLaren MP4/16 Mika No3	Black/silver	3	Sport version
C2263	McLaren MP4/16 David No4	Black/silver	4	
C2263A	McLaren MP4/16 David No4	Black/silver	4	Sport version
C2268WL	Porsche 911 GT3R Teng Tools	White / black	3	In Set C1095
C2274WL	Porsche 911 GT3R Paragon	Turquoise	77	In Set C1095
C2334	Williams BMW FW23 Schumacher No5	White / blue	5	
C2334A	Williams BMW FW23 Schumacher No5	White / blue	5	Sport version
C2335	Williams BMW FW23 Montoya No6	White / blue	6	
C2335A	Williams BMW FW23 Montoya No6	White / blue	6	Sport version
C2338	Porsche GT3R Seikel No83	Black/silver	83	Also in set C1082
C2339	Porsche GT3R White Lightning No31	White / yellow / red	31	Also in set C1082
C2340	Cadillac Northstar DAMS No 6	Silver / black	6	
C2349	Mitsubishi Lancer	Unknown		Proposed Scalextric Racer Club - t.b.a
C2350	Cadillac Northstar LMP 2002 Retailer Range	Black	n/a	Limited edition of 300 presented to retailers
C2351	Ford Focus	Unknown		Proposed Scalextric Racer Club - t.b.a
C2364	Mitsubishi Lancer EVO7 No8	Red	8	
C2364A	Mitsubishi Lancer EVO7 No8	Red	8	Sport version
C2364WL	Mitsubishi Lancer EVO7	Red	8	In Set C1080N - same as C2364 ?
C2365	Mitsubishi Lancer EVO7 No7	Red	7	
C2365A	Mitsubishi Lancer EVO7 No7	Red	7	Sport version
C2366	MG Lola	Black / green		2003
C2366A	MG Lola	Black / green		Sport version - 2003
C2367	MG Lola	Black / orange		2003
C2367A	MG Lola	Black / orange		Sport version - 2003
C2368	Porsche GT3R	?		In C1070 Argos only set - never released
C2369	Porsche GT3R	?		In C1070 Argos only set - never released
C2382W	Renault Mégane	Blue	6	In C1060 High Speed Challenge set for Safeway
C2383W	Renault Mégane	Silver	5	In C1060 High Speed Challenge set for Safeway
C2386	TVR Speed 12 No 5 Hamleys	Orange / silver	5	Hamleys only
C2387	Subaru Impreza Gamley 2001	Red with Gamleys logos	n/a	Gamleys only
C2388	Porsche 911 GT3R Collectors Centre	Gold	n/a	Collectors Centres only
C2390	TVR Speed 12 Modelzone	Silver with Modelzone logos	n/a	Modelzone only
C2391	Not Used Yet			
C2392	Not Used Yet			
C2393	Ford Focus WRC Works 2002 No4	White / blue	4	Collectors Centres only
C2394	Not Used Yet			
C2395	TVR Speed 12 Mobil No4	Red	4	Index Catalogue shops only
C2396	TVR Speed 12 Valvoline No3	White	3	Index Catalogue shops only
C2397	Not Used Yet			
C2398	Not Used Yet			
C2399	Chevrolet Camaro Penske Sunoco No6	Blue	6	
C2399A	Chevrolet Camaro Penske Sunoco No6	Blue	6	Sport version
C2400	Chevrolet Camaro Penske Sunoco No9	Blue	9	
C2400A	Chevrolet Camaro Penske Sunoco No9	Blue	9	Sport version

Reference	Name	Description	Race #	Notes
C2401	Ford Mustang Boss '69 No15	Red / white / blue	15	
C2401A	Ford Mustang Boss '69 No15	Red / white / blue	15	Sport version
C2402	Ford Mustang Boss '69 No16	Red / white / blue	16	
C2402A	Ford Mustang Boss '69 No16	Red / white / blue	16	Sport version
C2403	Ford GT40 JW Automotive Gulf No9	Pale blue / orange	9	
C2403A	Ford GT40 JW Automotive Gulf No9	Pale blue / orange	9	Sport version
C2404	Ford GT40 JW Automotive Gulf No6	Pale blue / orange	6	
C2404A	Ford GT40 JW Automotive Gulf No6	Pale blue / orange	6	Sport version
C2405	Ford Focus	Silver / blue	1	In Toys-R-Us only Set C1096L
C2406	Ford Focus	Silver / red	2	In Toys-R-Us only Set C1096L
C2407	GP Valvoline #10 Pontiac	White / black	10	
C2408	GP M&Ms #36 Pontiac	Yellow	36	
C2409	Opel Astra V8 Coupe Sat 1 No 16	White	16	
C2410	Opel Astra V8 Coupe OASE No11	Yellow / green	11	
C2411	Ford Focus WRC 2002 No5	White / blue	5	
C2412	Subaru Impreza WRC Works 2002 No10	Blue	10	
C2412WL	Subaru Impreza	Blue	10	In Set C1080N - same as C2412 without brake discs
C2413	Chevrolet Camaro	Red. Bob James T-Mart	7	Australia only
C2414	Subaru Impreza WRC Privateer 2002 No29	Blue	29	
C2415	McLaren 2002			
C2416	McLaren 2002			2003
C2417	Williams BMW F1 "No5 2002"	Dark blue / white	5	Veltins in Germany, no logo in UK
C2418	Williams BMW F1 "No6 2002"	Dark blue / white	6	Veltins in Germany, no logo in UK
C2419	Tide #32 Ford Taurus	Red / yellow / white	32	
C2420	Alltel #12 Ford Taurus 2002	White / black	12	
C2421	Porsche GT1 No2	Red	2	In Index only Set C1092N
C2422	Porsche GT1 No3	Yellow	3	In Index only Set C1092N
C2423	Not Used Yet			
C2424	Not Used Yet			
C2425	Single Seater High Nose Orange	Black / orange		Trial livery never released
C2426T	Cadillac Northstar LMP Model Car Racing	Blue / white	n/a	Available with US Magazine subscriptions only
C2427	Ford Focus	White	31	In Argos only Set C1092K
C2428	Ford Focus	Red	32	In Argos only Set C1092K
C2429W	Opel Astra V8 Opel Motorsport No7	White / yellow	7	In Set C1081
C2430W	Opel Astra V8 Sport Bild No 3	Red	3	In Set C1081
C2431W	Ford Taurus Robo Racer	Black	n/a	In Set C1077 Crash n Bang
C2432W	Ford Taurus Test Track	Silver	n/a	In Set C1077 Crash n Bang
C2433	Not Used Yet			
C2434	Not Used Yet			
C2435TF	Ford Taurus	White	n/a	US only
C2436	Ford Boss Mustang No15	Yellow	15	2003
C2436A	Ford Boss Mustang No15	Yellow	15	Sport version
C2437	Ford Boss Mustang No16	Yellow	16	2003

Reference	Name	Description	Race #	Notes
C2437A	Ford Boss Mustang No16	Yellow	16	Sport version
C2438W	Mercedes DTM No7	Black	7	In Set 1088 Toys-R-Us only
C2439W	Mercedes DTM No8	Silver	8	In Set 1088 Toys-R-Us only
C2440W	Single Seater Minolta	Red	1	In Toys-R-Us only Set C1089L
C2441W	Single Seater Rapid	White / blue	2	In Toys-R-Us only Set C1089L
C2442	Not Used Yet			
C2443	Not Used Yet			
C2444	GP Home Depot #20 Pontiac	Orange / black	20	
C2445	GP Interstate Batteries #18 Pontiac	Green / black	18	
C2446W	Castrol Australian Holden Commodore V8	Red	8	Australia only in Sets C1103 or C1104
C2447W	Pirtek Australian Ford Falcon V8	Blue	4	Australia only in Sets C1103 or C1104
C2448	TVR Double pack of C2395 & C2396			Index Catalogue shops only
C2449	Porsche GT1 Club 2002	Yellow	n/a	Scalextric Racer club car
C2450T	Ford Mustang '69	White	n/a	US Only
C2451	Chevrolet Camaro '69	White	n/a	US only
C2452	TVR GT ASRCC	Blue	1	Australian Scalextric Club car
C2453	Not Used Yet			
C2454	Not Used Yet			
C2455	Toyota F1 TF102 No24	Red / white	24	2003
C2455A	Toyota F1 TF102 No24	Red / white	24	Sport version
C2456	Toyota F1 TF102 No25	Red / white	25	2003
C2456A	Toyota F1 TF102 No25	Red / white	25	Sport version - 2003
C2457	Not Used Yet			
C2458	Not Used Yet			
C2459	Team Supernova No1	Black	1	Also in set C1079
C2460	Team Petrobas No3	Green / yellow / blue	3	Also in set C1079
C2461	Porsche GT3R Luc Alphand	Blue	?	France only
C2462	Porsche GT3R Carsport Racing No26	White	26	Switzerland only
C2463A	Ford GT40 MkII Shelby American No2	Black	2	Only available in Sport version
C2464A	Ford GT40 MkII No1	Pale blue / orange	1	Only available in Sport version
C2465A	Ford GT40 MkII No5	Gold	5	Only available in Sport version
C2466	Vauxhall Vectra Jersey Police	White	n/a	500 made for Jersey Police
C2467	Vauxhall Vectra Metropolitan Police	Red	n/a	
C2468	TVR Speed 12 NSCC 2002	Red	n/a	50 Made for Hornby NSCC weekend 2002
C2469	Porsche GT3R Hamleys	Red / white	44	Hamleys (with purchase of big set) only
C2470	Porsche GT3R Modelzone	Dark blue	n/a	Modelzone only
C2471A	Ford Focus WRC "Gamleys 2002 Red"	Red	n/a	Gamleys toyshops only
C2471B	Ford Focus WRC "Gamleys 2002 White"	White	n/a	Gamleys toyshops only
C2472T	Ford GT40 Mk I	White	n/a	US only
C2473T	Ford GT40 Mk II	White	n/a	US only
C2474	Not Used Yet			
C2475	Not Used Yet			
C2476W	Renault Mégane	Blue	6	Safeway Set C1093G
C2477W	Renault Mégane	Yellow	9	Safeway Set C1093G

Sport v Classic track - The answers?

BY TONY SECCHI

As those of you who regularly read the Journal know, there have been various comments, articles and observations on the comparison between Scalextric's new 'Sport' type track and the original (now called 'Classic') version.

To say that opinions of the new track have been polarised would be putting it mildly. For example, on the negative side "no grip", "lousy electrics" etc. and on the positive side the complete opposite.

Our beleaguered, overworked editor is in the middle of all this controversy and as his editorial comments at the end of Russell Turner's recent article showed, very confused.

Now we cannot have this state of affairs continuing, so in response to his heartfelt pleas I have done a controlled, back to back, one for one comparative test. Actually, we were talking on the phone and I mentioned that I was going to replace my 'Classic' circuit, piece for piece, with 'Sport' track and he suggested that I do such a test using the same cars, same lane, same race length, same controller, and the same power source. I agreed and embarked on the following "before and after" test programme.

So, further to Dave Wisdom's excellent review on page 37 of the Nov. 2002 Journal, let us put down some basics.

I have a five-year-old, approx. 55 ft. long Classic layout based on the old Monza circuit. The track is well 'seasoned' having been used a couple of times a week on a regular basis. All the cars are set up, tested and run for this track in respect of tyres, traction and pick ups etc. Each section of the layout is screwed to the baseboard for stability.

I use a Parma 45 ohm "Plus" hand throttle controller with no brakes and I do not use rear tyre 'goop'. The track is powered by the Classic C8066 power base with one standard Scalextric wall plug transformer per lane. Timing is by a

DS Racing DS020 electronic display coupled to a DS012 dead strip. Both these items have Classic track connections. A pair of Scalextric C252 power booster cables are used across the extremities of the layout. The tests were carried out at the same time of day to maintain parity of electrical supply.

So I have a well used, well rubbered, much loved circuit which works well and has good grip. So why change it? Well, my best beloved could not think of anything more special than a new track to buy me for my 70th birthday so I went for it.

I must emphasise that the 'Sport' track is an exact replacement for its predecessor except for the power base and dead strip; these have the 'Sport' C 8222 converter half straights on each side.

All the track was purchased from my good friend and supplier Sean Fothergill of Pendle Slot Racing. He has had a Sport layout for some time now as an additional circuit and has found no trouble with either grip or electrics. He did make one pertinent observation though. He found that on very long runs the cumulative length of the standard straight sections (Sports C8205) was shorter than the old (Classic C160) giving lie to the statement that "Sport track is fully compatible with Classic track" - it ain't, so beware if you are replacing one for the other in a landscaped layout.

In my own case, the overall longest length on my original Classic track was 11' 8" (35306mm) and this is now reduced by 20mm. - so bear this in mind.

Now for the tests - on both 'Classic' and 'Sport' I used the outside lane of my track which although slower (longer) than the inside (shorter) has the advantage of larger radius bends.

I used a combination of cars, trying to cover examples of all the makes and types that are raced on my layout. The cars were warmed =>

up for five laps and raced over a timed distance of ten laps. This was repeated and the fastest overall time was recorded. These times, details of the cars and my own observations on the track and the testing follow. I have tried to be as objective and honest as I can. Finally, all the cars have various levels of Magnatraction.

The cars

“Old” Scalextric: Porsche 962C - WSCP Group ‘C’ Sports Car out of box standard (Mabuchi ‘S’ motor in-line).

“New” Scalextric: Ford GT40 - sports coupé - 4 times Le Mans winner out of box standard (Mabuchi special motor sidewinder).

SRS1: Lancia LC2 - WSCP Group ‘C’ Sports Car, Lexan vacuum formed bodyshell, home constructed chassis with Scalextric running gear (Mabuchi ‘S’ motor - in line).

FLY: Panoz Esperante GTR Coupé - world Sportscar championship out of box standard (Fly motor inline front engined).

Ninco: BMW M3 GTR - European championship out of box standard (Ninco NC2 motor anglewinder).

Pink Kar: Ferrari 250 GTO-European GT Championship, plastic extruded body with home constructed chassis and running gear (Mabuchi ‘S’ motor - in line).

Own Make: Lola T260 - Can - Am Championship - Lexan vacuum formed body with home constructed chassis and running gear (Cheetah motor - in line).

Comments - Classic

Lola - not surprisingly, the fastest and most stable; it is the lightest, the most heavily magnetised and has the fastest, most flexible motor.

Lancia - lightweight body - almost as fast as the Lola but with a very good example of the Mabuchi motor.

Porsche - fastest ‘standard’ car. Very good for its age. More suited to my track as it does not have the straight line speed of present cars but can be powered earlier around and out of corners. Overall a very good compromise for both beginners and experienced alike - a very underrated model.

Ferrari - rather heavy bodyshell and interior - Mabuchi motors have variable power but this one is only 2 secs. slower than the Lancia over 10 laps.

BMW and Ford - both of these cars are very fast in a straight line - too fast for my small track. Because of their weight and speed they have to be braked early into corners, feathered around the apex and exit of the bend. They therefore lose overall speed on my track and are obviously designed for bigger, longer and more open club circuits where they should be exceedingly quick.

On my original “Classic” track, it is very plain that with short straights and lots of bends the more powerfully engined cars are not necessarily the fastest. You have to compromise with early braking and transference of power.

The results - Classic track

1.	Lola	40.39
2.	Lancia	40.77
3.	Porsche	42.24
4.	Ferrari	42.73
5.	Panoz	44.53
6.	BMW	45.29
7.	Ford	46.79

The results - Sport track

1.	Lola	40.05
2.	Ferrari	41.73
3.	Panoz	42.00
4.	Lancia	42.02
5.	Porsche	43.30
6.	BMW	43.99
7.	Ford	44.45

Comments - Sport

Lola - still the fastest and most stable car. 0.34 secs. faster and it flies on both tracks.

Lancia - a surprise - 1.25 secs. slower, but this quick and beautifully handling car was at home on both circuits.

Porsche - 1.06 secs. slower than on Classic track -but still a well balanced nice car.

Ferrari - the surprise package of the test. My home built car took to the new track like a duck to water. 2.00 secs. faster over the 10 laps.

Panoz - 2.53 secs. quicker; another surprise. A very well designed and produced all rounder.

BMW and Ford - Same old problems but 1.30 and 2.34 secs. quicker respectively.

Overall conclusions and observations

So there we have it. Five of the seven cars were faster on the new 'Sport' track, some by a significant margin. In my humble opinion there are a few reasons for this and I list them in no particular order of merit.

1. The surface is much more level due to the connection system of tongue and slot in the end face thickness of each section. This has the effect of aligning more accurately the top surface and makes for a flatter, smoother track. You do not get the bumping, clattering jumping ride that is inherent on Classic track and with the slot being deeper you do not get the standard guide clipping the bottom. This reduces resistance and gives the car a quicker passage. Hence the times.

2. The electrical contacts are excellent, even

on bends or direction changes where fitting the new sections to the base profile of the old. Some of the sections had to open up slightly, but the male/female contacts are tighter and better profiled so that even if only touching slightly, good electrical contact is maintained.

3. For the test cars to be quicker the track surface must give good grip and I certainly found this to be the case. The track is smoother to the eye and feel. Now that surely means more of the surface is in contact with tyre does it not? Slick tyres have more grip than treaded because more rubber is in contact with the track - think of that in reverse (track to tyre) and I think that is why the grip is better (or at least as good). Yes, the cars do sway a bit and hang out their tails when cornered hard, but they stay on track most of the time, and remember, looking at the test times five of the cars are about 5% faster over 10 laps.

The new 'Sport' track has thrown up no negative problems with any of the cars that I tested or any others that I have driven round it. Other members who have installed, used or raced on the new track may find experiences and conclusions different to my own. But I have tried to make the test as fair, varied and comprehensive as I could and I stick by the results. With its extra track sections and the R.M.S. race management system I personally think that it is a good package.

Finally, if you would care to peruse the classified adverts at the back of the Journal you will find that I have put my complete 'Classic' layout up for sale. The track is in good working condition and has given me a lot of interest and fun, from designing the layout, purchasing the sections, assembly, laying out and racing on it. I hope that the new 'Sport' layout continues to do the same. ■

BITS AND PIECES

Scalextric on TV

"I really need to get out more", writes *Max Winter*, "I was watching 'Thunderbirds Are Go' the other week on C5. What catches my eye as the Zero X craft is blasting down the runway for take off - a Scalextric hairpin turn trackside sign in the background. If that wasn't enough the Supermarionation bods delved into the toy box again for the final - Zero X crashes into a town-extravaganza. This time a repainted Scalex' control tower gets trashed, close up and centre stage in a blaze of pyrotechnics.

Seems like our favourite toy was much favoured by Mr. Anderson's special effects chaps. Could there be more appearances of, disguised or otherwise, slot-car accessories on film or TV? Is that a first aid hut I spy in M*A*S*H?"

Scalextric on TV - 2

Ray Chambers also needs to get out more; he spotted a 'Set 80' from the mid sixties on Jack Sugden's sideboard in the Christmas day episode of 'Emmerdale'. His daughter was holding an Aston Martin DBR in red - is Jack, or one of his sons, a collector? I think we should be told!

Cheap book

'Scalextric The Story of the World's Favourite Model Racing Cars' by Rod Green is available in the latest Book People catalogue at a price of £7.99 as opposed to £19.99 elsewhere. They can be contacted on: 0870 6077740 or www.thebookpeople.co.uk. The reference number for the book in their catalogue is 341SXT.

Spotted by Lee Edmunds



Dear Brian,

I have a question regarding Carrera slot cars which I hope NSCC members will be able to help with. I recently purchased the Carrera Aston Martin Vanquish (JB 007) for track use - not as an investment.

I found its performance to be reasonable enough for home track use but, as with other Carrera cars, dynamic braking is poor. In general dynamic braking is very good on my home circuit, e.g.: a Ninco car with NC2 motor goes from flat-out to zero over six inches to one foot, Fly and Scalextric take slightly longer. Although there is some braking effect Carrera cars seem to coast to a stop over several feet.

I'm not sure if this is due to gear ratios, the relatively heavy weight of Carrera cars, or the motor wiring. I have noticed that Carrera, like Ninco, fit what appear to be either resistors between their motors and lead wires. I would like to purchase other Carrera cars in the future but would like a stock solution as far as possible for this. I'm not a club racer but imagine that this is a minor issue on large club tracks where top speed is the priority, but it becomes relatively important for home circuits where there is a hard wall waiting at the end of each straight !

I would welcome the suggestions and advice of other NSCC members either via the journal or by phone on 01442-399822 or E mail at Christopher.Fenlon@BTopenworld.com

Finally, I would like to thank Maxi Models for generously sending me a free of charge supply of suppressors in response to my last letter in the Journal regarding Radio Interference. I would also like to thank you, Brian, for your work as editor and particularly for the January 2003 copy which - as always - brought lots of pleasure.

Many thanks
Chris Fenlon

.....

Dear Brian,

I have taken a notion to put lighting around my circuit, perhaps it's all these dark winter nights, are there any old articles you could republish which would help me? My home circuit is built on a table 16ft by 6ft so a considerable number of lights will be required, as well as those for inside buildings.

If there aren't any articles can anyone out there help with a new article? Obviously I would like to power it from the mains but how many lights and what voltage can I use?

Regards
Ian Thompson

In view of the continued requests for reprints of older articles - is there anybody out there who could help me find some of them? I simply don't have the time to trawl through all the back issues so I need an editor's research assistant; please get in touch if you are interested in the job.

Dear Brian,

Thanks for the excellent 'Messages from Margate' article, although I feel a guilty blush creeping up ear-wards. I didn't expect that my fairly flippant diatribe about the GT40 would reach the ears of the Scalextric designers themselves, but thanks to Rob Smith for going right to the top even though he may have exposed me to the possibility of a libel prosecution. I didn't mean to be quite so mean to the men from Margate. Just kidding guys.

I do appreciate the difficulties of designing a model for mass production, and that each new car is a collection of minor miracles of ingenuity and engineering. But although I take the point about the rain tyres, a little history on the box would help explain matters, especially with the possibility of confusion over the double Le Mans winning no.9 Gulf car which I bought. In my copy of 'Ford GT40, An Anglo American Supercar Classic' by David Hodges, that car certainly has a prominent interior rear view mirror and appears to be running in sunny conditions on a dry track. So there.

The truth is I only really enjoy models that I think I can tinker around with and improve. The day Scalextric make the perfect car is the day I will lose interest (talk about a back-handed compliment!). I've now succeeded in widening the rear track and filling in the nose joint, and I feel totally happy with my GT40. But ironically that means it will probably sit on the shelf lonely and unloved while I mess around with my MG Lola. If it helps matters, I've bought more Scalextric cars in the last few years than I ever did before, since they're now well and truly worth the effort. Thanks Mr. Scalextric designer, this Bud's for you.

I notice in Member's Moments, Mike Adams dislikes any article longer than three pages. Can he mean me? I'll stop now.

Paranoically yours,
John Dilworth

Toy Fair 2003

BY GARETH JEX

This year marked the 50th Anniversary of the London Toy Fair. Held for the second year at the ExCel Exhibition Centre in London's Docklands, the show was split over two halls, with exhibitors nearly filling both of them.

I was attending the show as a happy helper for Colette from Monarch Lines, helping set up on the Friday night and ensuring nothing went MISSING during the Sunday. This was my first visit to the Toy Fair as an exhibitor for over 15 years. Previous visits have been in a professional capacity as an exhibition designer. Whilst the stands were not as impressive as other industries we work in, the overall effort made by most was pretty good.

Slot-car manufacturers and distributors attending this year were: Hornby, SCX/Bachman, Monarch Lines, Carrera (Nikko), and Revell. I managed to visit all the stands and most were very happy to discuss present ranges of models and future releases for 2003. Many of the exhibitors did say however that most of the major announcements would be made at the German Toy fair held the following week in Nuremberg. Fly and Ninco were not represented at this year's event.

Hornby

Hornby had by far the largest and best designed stand with half dedicated to their model railway and the other half for Scalextric and Micro Scalextric ranges.

On the front of the stand was a large four lane circuit in Sport track linked up to an RMS control system displayed on a large plasma screen. Demonstrations were being given all day of the new Challenger system which was described as a working prototype. The system is based on an infra-red receiver at the side of the track sending and receiving data from a new car (the Merc DTM). The car first drives the track slowly 'learning' the track and then is ready for a race of between 1 and 99 laps (the demo

model on display was set to race for 10 laps). The race over, the car then does a parade or slowing down lap. The system worked well and I suspect will sell well for them. The production car is planned to be in F1 Safety livery with flashing light roof mounted and it is hoped that the RF sender mounted on the roof will be less obtrusive.



Mock up versions of the new Merc and Astra were on display along with new liveries of the GT40. Unfortunately, none of the other new models were on display, but the new Indy racers were discussed. They will be available in two real liveries and four non branded cars; they will be new mouldings, not based on the existing Team single seaters. The new TVR Tuscan and 60s Classic Corvettes were in the development stages, liveries t.b.a.



The sales rep I spoke to was friendly and was happy to discuss future developments and did say that feedback from NSCC members was helping to shape the release of future cars! I obviously plugged away for an MG - sorry! New track sections were also being considered with more details to follow.

Monarch Lines

Colette was manning a very busy stand during Sunday with examples of Spirit, Slot.It[®], Vanquish MG, Proteus, Racer, Top Slot, World Classics, MRRC, Proslot, DS, A2M etc. With the largest range of different manufacturers the stand was pretty busy all day with regulars like Sean Fothergill turning up to look at the latest prototypes and for a chat.

New models on display included a prototype Porsche 956 from Slot.It[®], a Ferrari 512M from Spirit, mock ups of the Sunbeam Tiger from World Classics and prototypes from Top Slot.



I was fortunate enough to meet up with Maurizio Ferrari who runs Slot.It[®] for a chat and was extremely impressed with his enthusiasm for his product and for slot-cars in general. Based in Italy he had come over just for the show and showed his Porsche 956 model which he had tested to near destruction at the Spanish endurance event. This model should be on sale during May 2003 with a Nissan R390 being announced at the German Toyfair. Other planned releases include the Porsche 962 which should be out during October 2003. He plans to

release future cars with two motor frames, one with a magnet and one without. He explained that he designs and tests his cars without magnets for club racing, but has to ship with magnets for the mass market!

Of all the stands visited, the Monarch Lines stand was probably the only one manned by people who obviously appreciated slot-car collecting and racing rather than just viewing them as toys.

Nikko U.K. distributor for Carrera

I met up with Jon Burcham, their marketing manager. They had a large stand with a new BMW Mini on the stand as an attractor with a relatively large area set aside for Carrera slot-cars and related toys. Their full range of 1:24, 1:32 and 1:43 cars was not on display, but most were there, including a few new models. Of most interest was the new Mille Miglia range, including Ferrari 166/212 mm Mille Miglia '52 and '51 models, Ferrari Enzo in red and yellow and at last the Ferrari F2002 V10 No.1 in 1:32. They also had examples of the McLaren F1 and Williams BMW F1 FW25 No.3 but I was told that the Williams will not be available in the UK due to licensing contracts. Fans of American classics will be pleased to see their new range of Plymouth Roadrunners and custom cars.

Jon listened to my comments regarding the 'unusable' gearing of the present cars with interest and said that they had addressed this issue and that all new models would be released with better gearing, motors and electronics. He then went on to show me their latest slot-car related toy; a 1:32 scale alarm clock! Some of the range of slot-cars have been presented on a display base with a built in clock, engine start button and accelerator pedal/button! The engine sounds from each car, be it the classic Merc. or F1, have been faithfully recorded from inside the cockpit and can be heard starting, accelerating up through the gears and braking! He also expressed an interest in a closer relationship with the NSCC and said he would be in touch to discuss test cars and feedback. =>

Revell

Stuck away on the corner of their stand, behind glass was their one and only slot-car. Being marketed under the Monogram Model Racing brand they were displaying their Shelby Cobra Daytona Coupe no. 5 Le Mans '64 in metallic blue. Their main man responsible for slot-cars was not on the stand; I was given their latest brochure which shows 7 cars in total with the Corvette Grand Sport being described as New? I understand that the entire range is from new moulds and should be available from May 2003. The one car on display did look very good quality, but they wouldn't open the display case for a closer inspection.

SCX

The Bachman sales team were very happy to see me and discuss the latest offerings from SCX and I was shown the latest cars and accessories

which included this year's Vintage Limited Edition - the Corvette Dragster in blue with white and orange flames, like the recent vintage series this will be powered by the improved RX-1 motor.

New cars on offer this year will include the Fiat Abarth in 'Gulf' livery, Opel Astra DTMs in two liveries, Mercedes CLK DTM, Dome S101 Judd in 'Holland' livery and the new Jaguar F-1 in 'De La Rosa' and 'Webber' liveries. Nearly all the new models will feature 'Xenon' lighting.

New accessories this year include hand controllers and infra-red controllers, rally pit boxes with figures and safety protection tyre walls made from foam.

New track sections are also being discussed, more details to follow. During 2003 look out for a possible SCX U.K. race championship and a travelling road show. ■



Slot-tech Porsche Open - round 5

BY JOHN STEWART

Saturday 23/11/02 Join the A1, then link to the M1 via the M18 and follow the A42/M42 all the way to the A435 turn - it doesn't come much simpler than that. Then it all went haywire when I misread Jon Sword's directions, which had a printed '3' which looked, exactly like an '8' without specs - so I ended up in Coventry! Once I'd sorted this out, finding Junction 3 and Jill Lane was easy.

Inside the club I spotted the juniors making an absolute mockery of the "Bus Stop" and I knew instantly I was up against it with my Open Challenge Porsche; no way would I be able to get through there at those sort of speeds. At the end of the day John Cook let me try a magnet F1 car, which I suspect may have been a multi-magnet car - just like the ones I'd honed to perfection on Scalextric track during the final year of Middleham's ASF1 Club. I soon realised the junior I'd been watching (Adam Hannah) was using a magnet car, and so it proved. But whereas I detected more than one magnet in John Cook's car, Adam's had only the single standard item. Even so, this speaks volumes; Phoenix is essentially a magnet track and it would have helped enormously if, just this once, everyone could have used a medium strength magnet. Instead on Saturday alone, 1,000 cars needed marshalling. I counted them - that's all the junior spills and all the visitors' practice spills combined!!!

Now we come down to the nitty-gritty about Phoenix; club principal, Jon Sword, is a scenery man, and he has a vested interest since he sells 1:32 scale white metal figures throughout the globe so there are plenty, all beautifully painted, here at Phoenix. Then, quite odd this, Jon got the idea to stick Polo mints together because when they're painted they look exactly like bundles of tyres for barriers. Amazingly, in my view, he sets these out on the circuit every day the juniors race but tidies them away (not the

juniors, chump, the Polos) and takes them home every night. Is this guy nuts?

Well, you decide, because what happens if he doesn't is this; the rats creep in at night and eat the Polos! At the same time, Mickey Mouse crept in to design the "Bus Stop" and no one even noticed! That's right; those thousand spinning cars in one day are down to Mickey, not really Jon's fault at all. Then we come to the bridge and the final corner; are you guys nuts? From brown, white and blue, on the right of the rostrum when you're on it, your pride and joy zooms, not under a bridge, as such, but into a 'tunnel'! You don't see your car again until it appears out of the final corner - which is actually four very clumsy corners-in-one, all driven blind because of tall grandstands and pit buildings which block your view. The grandstands are not glued in position, so I offered Jon a whole quid of my own money just to spirit them away for this event. Unfortunately, he declined.

Sunday 24/11/02

I can assure you now, memories are made of this. If you were there, participating, you will always remember the day. I swear that, overnight, Big Jim McKie gave his son, Ross, food for thought with a big, long pep talk but I'm only guessing. In contrast, I must admit it, I almost drove away. But then, alone in my car for the night, I hatched a plan; enjoy the fast first half of every lap by whanging it and taking a risk or two, but then carefully, steadily (and painfully slowly), negotiate the hated bits without mistakes. Go in on race day and just marshal, marshal, marshal leaving extra track time to the late Pendle arrivals - and do one test, in a lull, to evaluate my new 40 ohm throttle in comparison with my usual 15 ohm. This all ran smoothly and according to plan, not very Ayrton Senna of me, I know, but it was either this or practise here for a solid month or something, for which I =>

found myself minus the required Tardis! However, if Schumacher (yes, that one) was present and correct in the guise of one Paul Darby (Phoenix), I can reveal that Ayrton, or the spirit of Ayrton, had invaded the psyche of ONE of the visitors. The format of the event was at the discretion of the hosts, and I must admit that, in my non-Ayrton Senna mode, it won me over completely. All the races, were to be of 10 laps with points awarded for each of the regular six runs of 8, 6,4,3,2, and 1. This is how it's always done at Phoenix, Another plus point was that juniors would race only juniors, and seniors would race only seniors.

I can remember a few aspects of everybody's six general runs, not least my own. Remember, you get one point at Phoenix for just being there, so my 2 points on green and 3 on yellow were not much to write home about. Suddenly, on red, it all came good with a solid 6 points, only to crash back to 2 again on brown with, appropriately enough, a crash into a de-slotted car under the bridge. The worrying aspect of this is all too apparent when I tell you I was clear in 2nd at the time. At that moment, I ceased to be a slot racer and became a plum, standing there, waiting, wondering, and feathering my throttle, with nothing on the end of it and all thanks to those grandstands! Then I got another 2 points on white and finished off nicely with 6 on blue, 16th overall from 30 seniors (there were 20 juniors), with 21 points in total. the top finalists chimed in with:

Jim McKie (Hamilton) P/slot GT2	37pts
Mac Pinches (Independent) Fly GT198	37pts
Ross McKie (Hamilton) P/slot GT2	38pts
Ritchie Welch (Phoenix) P/slotGT3	40pts
Darren Hampton (Phoenix) P/slot GT3	40pts
Paul Darby (Phoenix) P/slot GT2	48pts

Jim McKie had one very bad run with his rear tyres worn to the limit, causing umpteen de-slots due to bottoming. But for this mishap, his total may well have been up into the mid-forties. Mac Pinches' only bugbear appeared to be that he always seemed to be up against Jim McKie! After the night before, Ross McKie must have been pleased (and relieved!) to be the fastest visitor, and what can you say about cool dude,

Paul Darby, the odds-on favourite with six straight wins (a full house), and never out of shape in the "Bus Stop" section. The segmented finals met with everyone's approval when we realized we would all get one more run. There would be three junior finals first, to be run in reverse order; 'C' then 'B' and then 'A'. All these could shuffle the final order, but only within each race, so if you qualified 6th, say, you had a chance to steal it outright, and if you qualified 12th, you had a chance of improving to as high as 7th.

And it was now that we got one of the most entertaining races of all, the junior 'C' final. I am told his name is J.Holden and he's about four-foot-nothing, a squirt in fact. And he was up against five big lads, all 5' 6" at least. And from green, the diminutive Master Holden was off like a rocket, pulling away from the rest all the time, with a very serious face on it, borne of absolute commitment. He won it easily, we all cheered him to the echo and you could say he was quite pleased with himself!

But on with the top six, and once again there were two this time much smaller than the rest, a little taller than Holden, but still quite weedy and, yes, you've guessed it, it was all down to this pair. Bespectacled Sam White, cool as a cucumber, set the early pace, with Adam Hannah in pursuit, and it stayed this way for many a lap. But this all changed with the odd spin by White and some remarkably clumsy marshalling. With both these two together now, you sensed it may all end in tears, and it did! Two laps go and Hannah was ahead, but White hadn't given up, charging back into contention on the final lap. He nudged by going into the Bus Stop and then lost it with another spin. This time, even with a lightning response from the marshal, it looked to be over but, mere seconds later, exiting the "Bus Stop" section, Hannah lost it too. Sam White's GT3 cruised past, and that was it - BIG celebration and arms in the air for White, and floods of tears from poor Hannah who'd just thrown it away. Pure Autoblub!

So here come the seniors, with no less than five finals in reverse order. So with not much point in dwelling on the no doubt heroic 'E' 'D'

'C' and 'B' final exploits, let's go straight to the top show. On the grid (see previous list) we had crowd puller and controller par excellence, Paul (the "governor") Darby in pole (first lane choice). Then it was two more Phoenix hotshots, Darren (the 'Ice Man') Hampton and the bubbly Ritchie Welch, tossing a coin for second lane choice. The dapper Ross McKie (immaculate white Ferrari shirt again) lined up 4th, with another toss of a coin deciding where Big Jim McKie and Mac Pinches would start. I love these big turn out affairs, with the sheer number of bods providing all the heat!

All eyes were on this chosen few, and you simply KNEW, because of the calibre, this was going to be mega fast, mega furious and more or less mistake free. "Watch your lights" rang out for the final time. Bang! It was Darby, equally adept at controlling a race as well as crowds but who was this, clear in 2nd, and going with him? The rest were nowhere. Ross! So where did he find all this speed? Suddenly, we found ourselves whispering "go on lad" and his dark red GT2 was flying. And then it happened. Always inch-perfect in the Bus Stop Darby now dropped it there! Ross, thrilling us all to bits, moved ahead. Meanwhile, 'Pinch-perfect' was having a great time, clear in third, only he knew he couldn't match the pace of the pair ahead of him. Mac's reward was that 3rd place trophy, so he went home happy as a sand boy; not bad for an old-timer. Ross McKie found himself in the lead until 3 laps from home when he dropped it just after the "Bus Stop". Darby had had his scare, and was now back to the inch-perfect stuff to retake the lead.

Ross was now in a stalemate situation, waiting in vain for another mistake, but it didn't happen. The cheers at the finish were genuine and heartfelt. Paul Darby was a worthy winner, but as the top pair shook hands, the eyes had it - and Ross McKie's had a glint of Ayrton Senna's this time, no question it all worked out well enough in the end. Everyone went home happy (even little Adam Hannah) and I hope against hope I haven't offended the true hero of this event a marathon race controller, Jon

Sword, with any comments here. What's wrong with Phoenix? After what we'd just witnessed, nothing much at all. In fact, my biggest disappointment over the whole weekend was that my camera worked perfectly well on Saturday - and then jammed on Sunday. Tall grandstands aside then, Phoenix is an absolute gem. No wonder the juniors turn out in droves; it's like a veritable Aladdin's cave. And I loved the big mountain scene across a whole wall. A little like Charlie in "The Darling Buds of May", I'm glad I didn't drive away from all this. Thank you, Phoenix, that was more exciting than any 2002 GP!

In 2003 the "slot-tech" Porsche open is set to become bigger and better, the 1st round will take place at North Staffs Scalextric club on 1st and 2nd March 2003. For further details contact John Bailey. Tel: (01782) 512579 e-mail: johncway@talk21.com ■

Scratch building pre-1960 Grand Prix cars

BY JOHN ROCHE

I don't claim to be an expert by any standards but I thought I would share my method of building simple chassis. As they are only really raced at home (a 55', 4 lane routed track) overall performance isn't too important as long as they are fairly equal. In fact, in many ways, they are similar to the 1:1 versions in that their motors produce more power than their tyres can handle resulting in lots of wheelspin and powerslides. It doesn't seem to matter what motors you use as a more powerful one only increases wheelspin.

The starting point is a U-bracket from SCD, this mounts on to the back of the motor, either by solder or epoxy and carries the rear axle. It is available with oilite bearings for either 1/8" or 1/32" axles.

Depending on how much room there is under the body, I either solder two lengths of 1/16" brass rod either side of the U-bracket or solder it on top of the rear of a length of 3/4" x 1/16" brass strip. The length of these will depend on the wheelbase of the car (the distance between the axle centres). Obviously, the rod chassis is wider.

With the brass strip chassis, everything is mounted on the length of brass strip. It is worth drilling a couple of cooling holes for the motor ahead of the U-bracket. You might also need to cut a slot to give clearance for the gears.

I check the fit under the body as the brass strip at the front may need filing to fit if the body is narrower than 3/4". If it is narrower at the back, you will need to make your own U-bracket, you can then use narrower brass strip.

If I am using the brass rod method, I solder a shorter length of brass strip between the chassis rails at the front.

A tongue for the guide is then soldered on top of the front of the brass strip, you might want to reduce ground clearance with a thin brass shim between them. L shaped 1/8" x

1/16" strips soldered either side of the tongue support the front axle tube. This tube, fitted with the complete front axle is soldered in place with the guide and braids fitted to ensure correct positioning. A jig can ensure all is square. The guide tongues and chassis jigs are also available from SCD.

Suitable wheels, tyres guides, braid and gears are available from Patto's or SCD. I tend to use 27mm diameter tyres for pre-war cars and 25mm for post war. Patto also supplies suitable wheel inserts. If there isn't much body overhang in front of the rear axle, Patto supplies a trailing guide that won't be seen from above, otherwise I use jet guides. Both may need the blades trimming for width or depth for use on plastic track. Patto also has a good range of motors.

I mount the bodies by drilling through the front chassis plate into a 1/4" x 1/4" length of wood epoxied inside the body and use a countersunk self tapping screw. I have used bodies from Classic, Nostalgia, Pre-Add and Patto in the past. All are quite good but I would really recommend the Pre-Add range. They are more expensive but well worth it. I hope to try the bodies made by David Sykes and David Yerbury in the near future. I use Halfords paints, primer first. Their car touch up range covers a broad range of shades which is useful as so many cars of this era are red or green.

These chassis don't handle too badly as the weight of the brass lowers the centre of gravity. You can also add weight to the chassis to improve handling, lead balance weights for 1:1 tyres are useful.

I have used these methods to build my entries for the Marconi Charity Proxy race meeting in California for the last couple of years. They may not be the most high tech. entries but it is for a good cause. This year's meeting raised over \$1,500 for disadvantaged children. ■

NC2 + magnet = no fun

BY MEL TURBUTT

Graeme Thoburn's sentiments in his review of the new Ninco Mini prompted me to write this article. For a long time now I have been infuriated by Ninco's decision to fit all their cars with NC2 motors.

The beautiful little Citroën VTS Super 1600 is the latest addition to my field of 30 odd rally cars. Straight out of the box the Saxo sat on the startline of Oakwood Park (see "My home circuit" - March 1999). The throttle was depressed and the little yellow car shot off like a startled cat..... for two feet before it stopped dead! The cause? The magnet is so strong and the car's ground clearance so limited that it stops on any slight bump in the track as the magnet holds the underpan against the contact rails.

Never mind, I always remove the magnets from my rally cars anyway. I see them as a substitute for 'ground effect' in F1 and sports cars but my opinion is that they play no part with rally cars.

So now the little Citroën is ready to go again and, at least in 'sans-magnet' form, it is capable of completing a lap; it even handles quite well, though, with its short wheelbase it's bound to be a bit 'twitchy'. Not really a problem except, of course, Ninco insist on fitting the same motor in this little hatchback as they do in their F1 cars! What's the point? Oakwood Park has got three decent straights but anything more than the merest hint of full throttle is out of the question with the Saxo.

I have many of Ninco's older rally cars (Renault Mégane, Peugeot 306 etc.) all fitted with NC1 motors and no magnets - they are cracking little models. Even in this lower specification they're capable of occasionally beating SCX 4wd rally cars on smooth tarmac stages, just as they used to do in real life. All that Ninco have achieved by fitting an NC2 into the Saxo is to create a car that is no fun to drive

either with or without magnets. I am sure it would be quicker over a lap with an NC1 motor.

New rally stage

Now Oakwood Park was recently shortened to make way for a new scenic rally special stage which is decidedly tight, twisty, bumpy and slippery; that was the next test venue for the Citroën. Once again the car handles pretty well, its short wheelbase an advantage through the tighter sections. Unfortunately its low ground clearance results in the occasional de-slot on the bumps but the biggest bugbear is still that damn motor! Even half throttle is now out of the question.

Selfish?



Ok, I should take a deep breath and think about this. Perhaps I'm being selfish here; just because the car doesn't suit my requirements doesn't mean it won't be suitable for other markets. Let's think about the alternatives:

- **Children** - after all this is a 'toy' car. Well my experience seems to show that, unless the youngster's circuit is dead flat (unlikely I would have thought) the car won't manage to complete a lap straight out of the box. If it can be made to run will the NC2 motor make any difference to a junior driver? Personally I doubt it. Probably the only noticeable effect will be the size of the dent in the skirting board following the inevitable high speed crash.
- **Collectors** - well it is a superb model but surely someone who keeps it on a display shelf couldn't care less which motor is fitted.
- **Club racers** - although it is not my cup of tea I accept that people may get enjoyment from racing this car with the magnet fitted. But, as Graeme pointed out, what are you going to race it against? The Saxo's natural opponents are rightly fitted with NC1s or an equivalent.

Logic?

So, for the life of me, I cannot see any logic in fitting this lovely little model with an NC2. Then again I couldn't see the point of putting one in the DTM safety car either! I guess that Ninco think that having produced a high specification motor they can't lower standards in future releases, even if this means that a 1600cc rally car enjoys the same power output as an F1 car!

I do hope that we shall be seeing some more junior rally cars from Ninco but I've resigned myself to buying replacement motors and adaptor plates. That's the only way I can fit these cars into my rally championship with any sort of realism. At least I know that these Ninco cars will handle well without their magnets which is more than you can say about some other manufacturers. But perhaps that's another story!

 **I have no hesitation in awarding this month's prize car to Mel -  simply for pandering to my own prejudices. Why are all the manufacturers, not just Ninco, hell-bent on making every car travel at the speed of light?**

I have no problem accepting that F1 slot-cars should be the quickest things on the planet but surely the real GT40 didn't lap as fast as a 2002 Williams? Several cars are approaching the flat-out lap territory which could ultimately destroy the hobby.

All the major manufacturers are producing the most amazingly accurate bodysells at the moment so surely it is about time that they turned their thoughts to some performance differentials between the various classes. ■

GT faulty reviews

BY PETER NOVANI

Over the past few months the Scalextric Ford GT40 has received more than its fair share of column inches in the Journal. Unfortunately, inaccuracies have crept into the published articles, prompting me to embark on another of my ‘anorak’ crusades!

It’s possible that John Dilworth’s amusing, if somewhat irreverent, take on the Scalextric GT40 (November 2002), went down like the proverbial lead balloon with the Hornby Hobbies hierarchy. Nevertheless, it displayed a refreshing approach, with much to admire. That said, I question his judgement in criticising Hornby for fitting those “strange blocky treaded tyres.” Especially, as he erroneously added that the race car “ran at the dawn of the lovely doughnut slick era.”

Rob Smith confuses matters by pointing out in his ‘Messages From Margate’ column (January 2003), that treaded tyres were fitted because the 1966 race was a “wet affair.” Indeed, race conditions were hazardous, including torrential rain. Yet, no matter what the conditions, it’s unlikely that any race car would have been fitted with anything other than treaded tyres during the period of Ford’s Le Mans 24 Hours domination (1966-69). In truth, it wasn’t until the following decade that motor sport fully embraced slick tyre technology. So, contrary to John’s comments, Hornby are quite entitled to fit treaded tyres to that range, even if the treads themselves are not particularly realistic in appearance!

Conversely, he was totally justified in raising the issue of the missing (interior) rear view mirror - it should feature on all the slot-cars. Again, by way of a riposte, Rob Smith proclaims “no rear view mirror is visible in those pictures,” after apparently having studied a photo of the car in a contemporary magazine. Hardly a convincing argument in support of Hornby’s oversight. Trust me, fellow members, having delved through my own magazine collection, and checked various GT40/Le Mans books, there clearly is an interior mirror fitted. Other

than securing exterior mirrors to the race car, how else were the drivers supposed to see behind them?

Let me continue with the GT40 theme. Without wishing to detract from his laudable efforts, it’s a pity Tony Secchi’s fact laden GT40 review (October 2002), perpetuated that often held misconception about the JW Automotive entered and Gulf sponsored Ford GT40 being “the only car in history to win Le Mans twice.” Agreed, the team did famously score back-to-back victories at Le Mans in 1968, and again in 1969 with their GT40 (chassis #1075). But, didn’t a Porsche 956 manage to emulate that remarkable feat?

Of the seven Le Mans victories notched up by Porsche during the 1980s, two were scored by Reinhold Joest’s privateer team. Using their New Man sponsored ‘customer’ Porsche 956 (chassis #117), Joest won in 1984 with the Pescarolo/Ludwig pairing, and again the following year with a trio of drivers, Ludwig/Barilla/‘Winter.’ Unfortunately, Tony’s omission did the Porsche marque a disservice, and in the process, may also have misled the reader. Whether accurate or not, historical facts and figures are now a common occurrence in the Journal. Therefore, I’d urge contributors to research that aspect of their deliberations before hastily expounding dubious assertions. Alternatively, play safe and leave out any contentious motor sport related issues.

Steve Carter possibly took that rather cautious approach when writing his Slot.It® Audi R8C ‘Track Talk’ (December 2002). Although emphasising the technical aspects of the slot-car to good effect – and in his own inimitable style – there was a paucity of information regarding the actual race car. Admittedly, the ‘anoraks’ amongst us will not be too displeased with his critique – at least it was devoid of those annoying factual errors. However, I accept that it’s unlikely any NSCC member possesses a truly encyclopedic knowledge of motor sport. But, in all honesty, I’d rather have a lack of information in preference to misinformation. Cheers! ■

New cars on the (V8) block-Vanquish MG

Gentlemen, the goal posts have been moved again! The Flycar organisation has split and spawned Vanquish MG. Without doubt their cars will cause as big a shake-up amongst slot-car manufacturers as the original Fly Viper did when it burst onto the scene in late 1996.

On opening a parcel from Monarch Lines recently I discovered the expected prize for the annual competition plus the first two Vanquish Lola releases. A note with them explained that they were a Christmas present from Colette (Bless her!) - true to form they arrived during the second week of January!

The man who produced these cars has got to be a total loony. "Wouldn't it be a good idea to take the biggest, ugliest cars ever raced and turn them into slot-cars complete with subframe, working differential and a wealth of internal

detail?" I doubt you could get two of them to race side by side on Scalextric track - yes they are that big! But they are magnificent and I can't wait to see what this firm will achieve in the future.

In the meantime, two members have bought them with their own money so read on for their thoughts:

The reign breaker by Tony Secchi

"Some Can-Am cars will win, some Can-Am cars are different, but only the Lola T260 is both". So wrote Peter Lyons in 'Road and Track' magazine of Oct. 1971. He was referring to Eric Broadley's design, which in 1971/2 took on, and sometimes beat the mighty McLaren machine that had dominated the Canadian-American race series.

A Lola T70 had won the first Can-Am



championship in 1966 but from 1967 until 1972 McLaren won 42 out of 52 races. Both Bruce McLaren and Denny Hulme each winning the Championship on two occasions. Not for nothing did the Can-Am series in this period become known as the "Bruce and Denny" show.

But in 1971, Eric Broadley and his team - which included a youthful John Barnard - came up with the T260. Powered by an 8.1 litre Aluminium Chevy and driven by Jackie Stewart it was the equal of the all-conquering McLarens. Jackie, in his debut at Mosport Park was almost a second faster in practice than Denny Hulme, took pole position and led for a number of laps before he succumbed to a leaking gearbox. At St. Jovite he was on pole again and won. He also won at Mid-Ohio. Out of 10 races in 1971 the T260 won 2, led 6, and set 2 poles.

At Laguna-Seca the T260 appeared with a large aerofoil perched well out ahead of the nose on massive outriggers and by the next round at Riverside the rear wing had been moved well back giving the blunt nosed car what looked like a couple of tea trays, one front and one rear. That car is the subject of this review.

Being a confirmed Can-Am fan I was over the moon when the Spanish firm Vanquish Miniatures Garzon announced that they were going to produce several of these exciting cars - 6 McLarens, 3 Lolas and 2 Shadows with more to come.

Thank you Santa

I immediately got on to my mate Sean Fothergill of Pendle Slot racing and pre ordered four of the cars - M8D and M8B McLarens, Lola T260 and Shadow Mk 2. I must have been a good boy last year because Santa sent me an extra present - Sean and the boys at Pendle had obtained the Lola T260 and sent it to me poste haste.

The car is a little beauty, full of class and new ideas not least the rear axle differential which I will come to later. The body detailing is superb, among the best that I have ever seen, almost up to the level of a Tamiya static kit. The tampo printing on the outer body is excellent as

are the multi small holes in the front panel which, on the real car, allow air to escape from underneath to reduce lift.

I say outer body, because this car also has an inner or sub-body. This fits over the chassis and carries the rear suspension, super engine detail, side radiators, riveted fuel tanks, cockpit, full length Jackie Stewart (with correct tartan trimmed helmet) and seat belts plus right hand gear lever, instrument panel, fire extinguisher, battery and foot pedals. It is a work of art on its own and only weighs a few grammes.

The chassis is yet another innovation, comprising of the normal full length 'pan' with openings for pick up guide and engine, but on top of this is a removable 'sub' chassis which houses the engine, Fly type circular magnet, front axle and pick up pivot. It is basically 'I' shaped with horizontal flanges front and rear. The former securing the front axle and the latter acting as the engine mounts. This arrangement necessitates six body-fixing screws. The magnet is approx. mid chassis being 52mm from the front and 64mm from the rear. It is housed in the 'sub' chassis immediately in front of the engine.

Performance

The engine itself has no markings, but I am sure that it is a V12 "boxer" by Slot.It® which is a replacement for the Ninco NC2. It is 30mm long and 20mm square and it fits all the parameters of the "boxer" - very short pinion shaft projection, red and white coded wiring terminals which are the wrong way round (white is positive, red is negative) and dramatic top end performance which has the edge over the NC2. Although with a powerful magnet and the radical rear diff. the power characteristics are still not too flexible. However, the car is very quick, stable and reasonably easy to drive on my new 'Sport' track layout.

The car holds the road well, but has the small drawback that, like the NC2, the 'boxer' motor's power comes in too late for my track and if one is not careful, pushing too hard at the entry of a corner can cause the car to take off.

It does twitch a bit at track direction changes, the rear tyres being a bit 'loose'. =>

This is difficult to redeem as the tyres are so wide I have nothing in my large stock of spares to match and replace them.

The rear differential runs very free, so that on occasion when the power comes in you can flip the car out if your entry to a bend is a bit late. It all depends on your track and your driving style. I am sure that on a long club circuit, controllers with brakes and a touch of WD40 on those fat rear tyres this car would be a real flyer. However, I believe that the unique radical differential is the most significant factor of all and I just have to find the modifications to the car and adjust my driving technique to take advantage of it. A very pleasing experience that I look forward to with relish.

On first inspection it is most alarming to see the diff. in action. After years of conventional crown wheels and pinions it is weird to finger spin the rear wheels and note that the final drive does not move! You think that it is broken, but as soon as you put on a solid surface and push it under load the whole unit works as 'normal'.

The diff. is enclosed in a two piece cover and cannot be dismantled - at least I never attempted it! But according to the illustrated brochure that Sean kindly sent me it has four horizontal convex pinions in two sets at right angles to each other, one at the end of each rear drive shaft and the other two meshing at the front and rear of the shafts on their own mini axle. This allows both rear wheels to turn independently thus eliminating the problems usually found with a rigid rear axle.

That is the technical description, but whether or not this diff. makes that much difference to cornering is debatable. What it does not do is inhibit the performance or add greatly to the overall weight and cost of the car. Only a back to back test using a conventional rigid rear axle in place of the diff. system and using the same car would tell. I personally think that with a bit of practice over time this innovation would prove its worth.

As it stands, with sub-chassis, sub-body and diff. it is a unique and exciting car. Superbly detailed, well engineered, fast and relatively

stable it reigns as state of the art. It did a 10 lap stint on my new track in 44.17 secs which is OK for a new car and I am sure there is more to come.

My mouth drools like Homer Simpson's as I await the next issues in the series. We have a Can-Am championship in our set up and these cars are going to be a great asset to it. I have been racing since the early sixties, but my pleasure and enjoyment at using the latest advances in slot-car technology have not been abated. The renaissance of our sport over the last few years has raised standards by unthinkable amounts and one wonders how much further it can progress and where it will all end. Long may it be so.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Wheelbase	85mm
Front Track o/a	63mm
Rear Track o/a	70mm
Front Tyres	18mm rad. x 10mm width
Rear Tyres	21mm rad. x 14mm width
Body length	120mm(excluding wing overhangs)
Body height	22mm
total weight	18 gr.

What's the Difference?

By John Dilworth

As long as I can remember (and that's getting shorter all the time) differentials have been a fringe issue in slot racing. They're the territory of engineer types who prefer driving their Unimat lathes to getting down to some tough car on track action. Fair play to them. I prefer browsing through books and finding hairline inaccuracies in body shell shapes; I've got more paint-hardened brushes than racing trophies myself.

Anyway, I thought, the day a car with a 1/32 scale diff. wins a race is the day I'll take it seriously. I don't know if that's happened, but there is now a mass manufactured slot-car fitted with a differential as standard. Well, I still don't take it too seriously. The things I'm interested in are that the company responsible, 'Vanquish MG', are an offshoot of 'Fly'- a guarantee of quality if ever there was one, and the subjects; a range of hi-spec race-specific Can-Am models. My thing, altogether.

So what does the diff. do? The publicity claims a '20% increase in cornering power'. Well that may be the case on a big commercial track, but at home the benefits are dubious. The first impression of driving my Vanquish MG 1971 Lola T260 is of a handful of a car with not enough rear end grip, which seems to want to change gear in tight corners. Smaller radius curves, where I thought the differential might make a difference, are actually even more of a challenge. Getting the brute to slide controllably round without an odd 'downshift' hesitation is a trick I'm still struggling to acquire. It's as if the rear wheels have a brief committee meeting to discuss which one should take the load ('after you Cecil, no - after you Cuthbert'), and by the time they've made up their mind, the car is tailwagging down the straight. I can power round the outer curve sweeps, but so far power and grip are not enough to put it on a par with a standard sidewinder chassis. It's fascinating really; maybe I need to evolve a new driving technique. But I have to say performance on my modest home track, is fine but not shattering.

After running it loads, and tinkering with it loads, I still feel the same way about differentials in models of this size. It's a lot of extra weight and power sapping friction, and it takes up a lot of space. It requires an inline motor layout, which means the magnet, on this car at least, is way forward of the wheelbase centre. Result; guide nailed in the slot, but no grip at the back. And if you've got wheelspin under almost any degree of throttle anyway, what good exactly does the diff. do? It seems to me that there is simply not enough loading on the rear tyres to make it work properly, but I'd be interested to hear of other people's experiences on different tracks.

Even though the Vanquish differential unit is beautifully engineered, precise and compact, and turns smoothly with no slackness or play, is it anything other than a gimmick? To compound my confusion is the curious decision to use one of the long can NC2-type motors, which doesn't seem to offer any power advantage over the usual Fly Mabuchis or Cheetahs but takes up an awful lot more space. Why the change? Some sort of contractual difficulty?

What ultimately spoils this beautifully detailed and innovative model for me is the sheer size, which must have been forced on the manufacturer by the use of the differential and long can motor. I bought the Lola T260 from MRE as a Christmas present to myself, and it looks really wild in the box, as anticipated. On track, the car dwarfs everything else, and it's not because of the huge wings hanging off each end. A quick look at the books and a jab at the calculator shows that the car is actually 1/29 scale. Now why does this annoy me so much? Plenty of other models are made to a pretty broad range of scales; '1/32' seems open to a fairly wide interpretation as far as slot-cars go, historically. But the thing just looks wrong on the track with other compatible types (Ed- would I get away with another plug for Maxi-Models here?). And it doesn't leave a lot of room for racing manoeuvres on my Scalextric Plexytrack. What irks me is that if Vanquish had stuck with the old motor and ditched the diff., everything

⇒ could have been fitted nicely into a true 1/32 scale model. Which I would have been very happy with.

There is a lot I'm very happy with though, to be sure. The model is fantastically engineered. The chassis is in several parts; the motor/differential unit is connected to the front end by a spindly plastic moulding which incorporates the magnet. This clips into a flat floorpan which holds everything rigid. On top of this fits the 'monocoque', including the cockpit, engine and suspension detail, and lastly the bodywork drops over the top. The only thing is that the car is so packed full that it's difficult to make many worthwhile track tuning alterations. The level of detail is wonderful, a lot of it only visible when the bodywork comes off, but it is slightly inconsistent. The cockpit is a major fudge, because of the lack of space, and Jackie Stewart looks oddly uncomfortable in there. It's a repeat of the old Fly Kremer Porsche syndrome. The poor wee lad looks as if he's trying to escape. And the reason is that long motor pushing him out of his seat. J.Y.S. himself looks like one of those old 'Swoppet' toy cowboys; his plug-in arms don't quite reach the steering wheel, and he has a separately moulded seat belt which just looks daft. But there's a well detailed 495 cu.in. Chevy engine (mmm!!) with those bizarre staggered length intake trumpets, plus rear suspension detail and fabulous finned brake discs mounted behind the big rear slicks. But although there's room for it, there's no front suspension detail. To be really picky, the bodywork should be in two parts; on the real car the monocoque extended behind the cockpit and formed part of the bodywork itself. But credit where it's due, Vanquish have chosen a very imaginative prototype.

Looks like a pig - drives like a pig

The original car was one of the ugliest Can-Am contenders, but I have a soft spot for eccentric designs, and I just love that ridiculous 'cow-catcher' front wing. The Lola T260 promised to liven up the McLaren-dominated Can-Am in 1971, and at the first round at Mosport it seemed

to be the only car that could take the race to the McLarens in 1971. It soon turned out that in reality it was a pig, and it was Jackie's driving alone that put the pressure on Denny Hulme and Peter Revson in their M8Fs. Hence the desperate cow-catcher wing bolted on to the front to correct the chronic understeering, the exact opposite problem to the model's handling qualities.

Eric Broadley had originally come up with a radical nose shape intended to eliminate the dreaded front-end lift. Instead of the usual wedge shape, he went for a very blunt front, perforated with dozens of mesh-screened holes to vent high-pressure air from the underside. Now Vanquish have chosen to depict these as blind holes in the front panel which doesn't really do the job as far as I can see. I rubbed over it with dark grey acrylic paint to emphasise them, and it all looks a little more realistic, but really they should be flush. The gun-metal-chrome plating on the roll bar and intake trumpets is a little garish too, and benefits from a coat of flat black for authenticity.

Well, I've taken out the seat unit, chiselled a hunk out of Jackie's shoulder blades, and he now looks a little more comfortable with the rollover bar actually above his helmet. I've stuffed about 4 grams of lead beneath each rear half-shaft, and I'm learning to drive it. I can't see an easy way to change the gearing to suit my track a little better, but I'm happier, although it's never going to be my favourite car.

Vanquish have been admirably brave and produced the most radical new model for years, in an increasingly competitive marketplace. As with full-size racing though, the most radical ideas need long development and a lot of getting used to. I'm intrigued as to where Vanquish will go with this concept though. The in-line/differential drive chassis design will only suit prototypes with a very forward cockpit position. But who knows; in a few years we could all be running differentials made by rival companies, and the whole hobby could have gone over to 1/29 as the official standard. But by then I'll be even older, crabbier and harder to please than I am now. ■