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BY SUBSCRIPTION ONLY

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Contents

Club Staff.....	2
Swapmeets.....	3
Diary Dates.....	5
Messages From Margate.....	7
Model Maker March 1961.....	10
Members Moments.....	12
Traders Travels.....	15
The Storrington Prix.....	17
Ninco News.....	19
Letters.....	21
Model Car Photography.....	24
Bits And Pieces.....	27
Evesham Swapmeet.....	28
Shipment From Spain.....	31
SCX Reviews.....	33
I Can See Clearly Now.....	39
Alfa Romeo 158/159.....	42
Members Ads.....	45

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The independent club for slot-car enthusiasts

Opportunity knocks

A long time ago in a galaxy, far, far away I acquired my best ever Scalextric bargain when I attended an auction at Littleport in Cambridgeshire. Incidentally a certain Mr. Harley was deported to America from this town after a peasants' revolt. His grandson had some sort of interest in a motorcycle firm - not a lot of people know that!

But I digress; the auction mostly consisted of leftover stock from a defunct toyshop and the very last item was an unprepossessing wooden box containing Scalextric spares. Having sat through the entire afternoon's bidding I bought the box for the princely sum of £5 and, on returning home and examining it properly, I discovered an absolute treasure trove. It was literally stuffed full of mint 60s spare parts - motorbike and go-kart tyres by the dozen; guide blades galore; bumpers and other chrome parts aplenty, not to mention 10 brand new RX motors. That little wooden box provided me with restoration parts for a very long time and I sold on the surplus stuff at a handsome profit but, alas, it is now virtually empty.

Opportunity knocked again recently but, unfortunately, I was too slow in answering the call - a new employee arrived at work and was subjected to the usual interrogation: "Got any old Scalextric in your loft?" "No, but my former firm used to make all the carbon brushes for Triang motors!" It transpired that a King's Lynn firm, Electro Carbon, made the carbon brushes for every variety of RX motor for 20 years. Apparently they were quite tricky to make as it was a job to fit them to the kinked bit of copper but they sold them to Triang for £4 per 1000.

Yes I did ask if there were any still lying about, but the firm had been taken over a couple of years ago and the remaining stock of several thousand were thrown in the skip. I had worked within a mile of another pile of Scalextric goodies for 15 years and never knew they were there. Such is life!

And Finally - remember, you are only young once but you can be immature for ever.

Till next month

Brian





Lots of new releases since the article for the September Magazine was written.

Reference	Name	Description	No	Notes
C2488	Ford Focus "Police Car"	White / blue / green		
C2515	Dallara Indy "Coca Cola" No7	Red	7	
C2516	Dallara Indy "Mobil 1" No5	Blue / red / white	5	
C2532W	TVR440R No51	Red / silver / black	51	In Set C1121 TVR Challenge. Argos Exclusive
C2533W	TVR440R No55	Black / white	55	In Set C1121 TVR Challenge. Argos Exclusive
C2541W	BMW Mini Cooper "Hamleys" No3	Blue with Union Jack roof	3	In set C1126 Mini Cooper Challenge. Hamleys exclusive
C2542W	BMW Mini Cooper "Hamleys" No4	Red with Union Jack roof	4	In set C1126 Mini Cooper Challenge. Hamleys exclusive

C2532W TVR T440R No51/C2533W TVR T440R No55 in C1121 TVR Challenge Set-

The first new TVR T440Rs have arrived and are in an Argos exclusive set. These cars are only included in set C1121 and won't be available separately. These two versions are de-specified and are without the etched metal grills to be found on the Sport edition cars due soon. However they do feature the new quick change guide and come with 8 spare braided discs. We need to invent some new terms for this guide type. Hornby are keen to receive your comments

on this new guide so let me know what you think and I'll pass your thoughts on. Also interesting is the very thin moulding used to represent the double bonnet arrangement of the real car. A separate moulding is used for the outer bonnet retained by 4 pins. The set is Circuit 3 and retails for £89.99

C2488 Ford Focus "Police Car" - Complete with flashing headlights and roof lights that flash from side to side whilst the car is moving. Also fitted is a realistic siren. Most unnerving ! ➡

C2415 Dallara Indy “Coca Cola” No7 and C2416 Dallara Indy “ Mobil 1” No5
- The first 2 Indy cars with generic liveries. SRP is a bargain at £14.99

C2541W BMW Mini Cooper “Hamleys” No3 and C2542W BMW Mini Cooper “Hamleys” No4 in C1126 Mini Cooper Challenge Set- More new BMW Minis. This time in set C1126 exclusive to Hamleys – the huge toyshop on Regents Street in London. The set is a limited edition of 1500 items.

The cars are the same colours as C2526W and C2527W – the Argos Mini Mayhem cars but with considerably less decoration . The cars are de-specified without the etched metal front grills. The wheels are grey rather than white.

The set is the huge Circuit 4 but retails for an equally massive £149.99. To soften the blow purchasers will receive another Mini free. This is C2499 – a silver Mini, #7 with a Union Jack on the roof. These are not in stock yet and will be sent out free of charge in about a month’s time.

The Argos exclusive Subaru set has also been released but I haven’t got one yet to photograph and describe.

New Publications

Carson, the German Scalextric distributor has launched a German language catalogue. Apparently created independently from Hornby it is of high quality and shows the current range, new models expected this year and one or two surprises. More details in the next Journal.

C8161 The 2003 New Releases Catalogue is also in the shops, although proving quite hard to find in Surrey. Several proof reading errors to amuse us. The 1969 Corvettes have Cibie 1972 printed on the spotlights, obviously light-years ahead. The drivers’ names for the new Renault F1s are transposed and finally the picture of the new Subaru WRC does not match its caption – but which is correct ?

A new Race for Real concertina leaflet is also available. This is Release 8 and shows 2 Indy cars on the front cover.





Goodwood Revival Meeting

The classic race meeting at Goodwood was another success for Hornby. Over £3000 was raised for charity by a seemingly endless stream of people wanting to race. The huge layout used is pictured above.

New Track

Hornby have released a new curve and the rest of the borders required to complete the set. Interestingly, in the USA only- (part numbers in brackets) - the borders are available in black.

C8278 Radius 1 22.5 degree curve.

Brown Borders:

C8279 Radius 1 Inner Border 22.5 deg 8 segment half circle. (C8285)

C8280 Radius 2 Inner Border 22.5 deg (C8286)

C8281 Radius 3 Inner Border 22.5 deg (C8287)

C8282 Radius 4 Inner Border 22.5 deg (C8288)

Coming Soon

Issue 35 (August/September 2003) of Hornby's own Scalextric Racer magazine gives us the opportunity to order two more cars exclusive to the Scalextric Enthusiasts Club. These are the C2349 Mitsubishi Lancer Evo7 WRC in Silver and the C2351 Ford Focus WRC in black.

Details of two new Australian cars have also emerged: C2519 Bathurst V8 Commodore and C2520 Bathurst V8 Ford Falcon.

Hornby In The News

Hornby Hobbies Ltd made the Friday 05/09/03 radio and TV news programmes and the Saturday 06/09/03 newspapers with the announcement at the Goodwood Revival Meeting of trains powered by steam. High precision miniature engineering uses electricity from the track to heat water and make steam to power the loco's. Like the real thing there is quite an art to driving the new models as there is a definite lag in the controls. The announcement caused Hornby shares to rise by 65p to an all time high of £9.80. I wish I had more of them. When will we see the petrol engined slot-car? A similarly radical announcement for Scalextric is promised soon too. ■

Scalextric Summary

Model Maker, March 1961

FROM VINE FENNEL

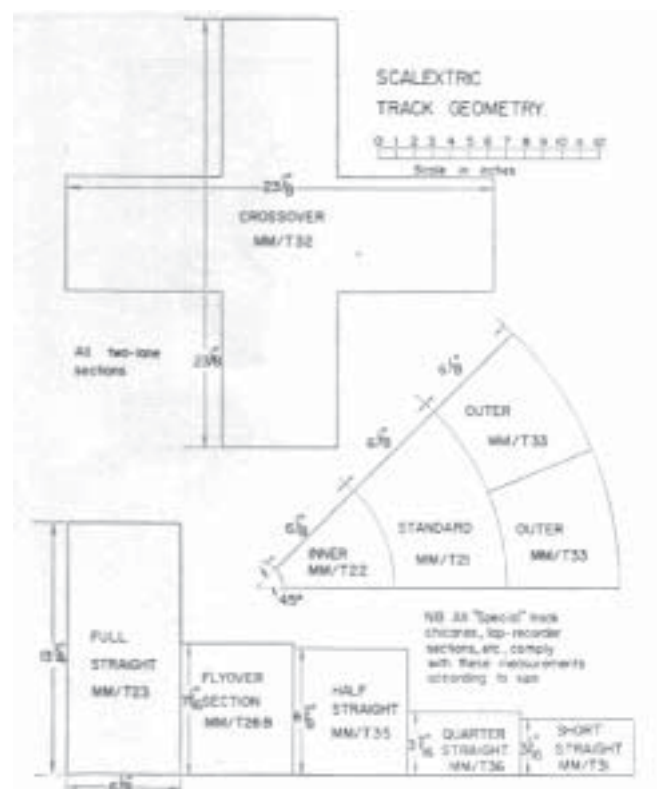
By a few weeks, Scalextric can justly claim to be the longest established proprietary electric motor racing system, though such revolutionary changes have taken place since the company became part of the Lines Bros. Group and added Tri-ang to their title that perhaps it would be more realistic to date them from then. Certainly in 1960 - which was their first full development year - they offered a completely new outfit, which, as we said at the time, retained only the track from the original conception!

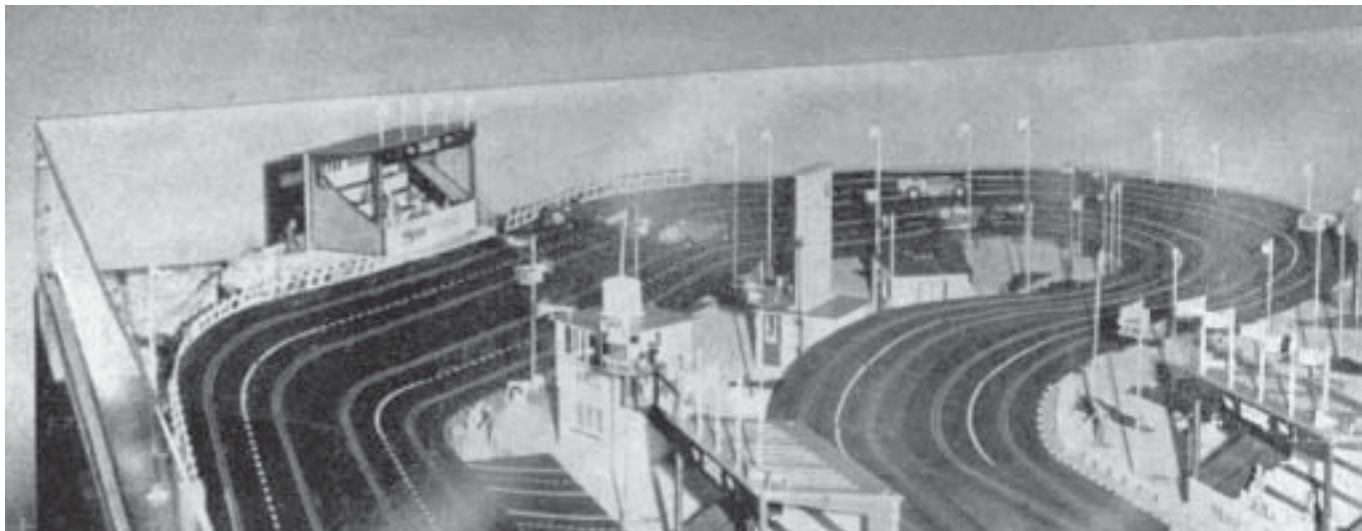
The first plastic bodied car employing a modified version of the famous Tri-ang Mk IV model railway motor, contrate gearing and Dunlop tyres was released in time for the 1960 Toy Fair in the shape of the Lotus F1. This was followed during the year by a Vanwall, and then by Lister-Jaguar and Aston Martin sports/racing cars. These all continue unchanged for 1961 and are joined by Cooper F1 and B.R.M. F1 (the better known 1958/9 model not the new rear engined type). New sports/racing models to come out during the year will be Porsche and Jaguar D Type (there is still some discussion on "to fin or not to fin"). Even more exciting to Le Mans fans will be news that this series will ultimately be available with working head lights and tail lights as a de-luxe class. First car for the full treatment will be the Lister-Jaguar.

All parts for all cars, by the way, are available separately. The modified motor, for example, complete with pinion gear, extended pole pieces (as on one side only of railway version) and U-bracket at rear costs 14s. 11d. against standard price of 12s. 10d. Tyres, wheels, axles, brushes, current wipers etc. are all boxed in dealers' replacement sets and should be on offer from the more progressive model shops.

On the track side, steady progress has been made. To cope with increasing car speeds all track is rough matt black finished for better tyre adhesion. It retains its useful degree of flexibility which is so valuable when banking up bends.

Introduction of large radius curves (16 to circle instead of 8 as with other smaller radius curves) greatly improves track designing possibilities. Short straights, half straights etc., make it possible to achieve virtually any layout that will accept the curves to any width from two lanes upwards that space will encompass. The chicane introduced last year has now been joined by the Goodwood chicane, modelled on the hazard of the same name, complete with the notorious Goodwood brick wall! Le Mans type starts are now possible with cars lined up off the track, which, on the flag dropping, cross over to their proper lanes and roar off, thanks to special track sections which will cope with two, four, or more cars so lined up. These extra sections are all to standard sizes and fit in with normal track pieces. To cope with cars on the outer lane running out of road at bends, track borders are now available which give that needed extra wheel surface. Bales, drums, etc., can be added as edge decoration if desired, using the pegging holes provided.





A corner of the four-lane layout at the Triang House display. Extensive use has been made of banking units - all flag-topped - and in right foreground will be noted start of the new Goodwood Chicane. Left foreground shows a tantalisingly small amount of the Le Mans start.

Ambitious track designers will be able to use the new "Grande Bridge", a contemporary structure that can be expanded to go over any number of tracks, thus easing the problems of multi-lane circuit design. Banking, introduced in 1960, will continue to be invaluable for fast circuits.

An electro-mechanical lap recorder capable of handling two lanes should also be available. We have seen the first off the line and are convinced that one of the greatest problems of the keen racing enthusiast has been solved. Laps from 1-99 and repeat are recorded on a score board designed as a track building, actuated by cars passing over a special track section. We have noticed no tendency to "jump" laps however cars are operated. A cheaper hand triggered version will also be offered. A battery operated public address system (transistorised) is another promised release for 1961.

The very reasonably priced variable speed controller released in 1960 has established itself as a prime favourite amongst the experts, and will doubtless grow even more popular as it gets more general use.

A plethora of plastic circuit scenery has already been released and will be familiar to Scalextric fans. Newcomers include a crafty "seven-up" cafe, starter on rostrum, TV camera crew on scaffolding tower and paddock open-sheds for cars.

Another valuable set is the pit accessories assortment comprising jack, toolbox, vice, hammer, fuel can, funnel, small and large tyres and fuel pump. These are much too small and fiddling for the keenest to attempt to make just for the finishing touch to the pits.

Finally, they have another winner in the shape of scale figures in a wide range. The basic sets are track officials and pit crews comprising mechanics, manager, marshals, spectators and press photographer - in sets of six figures. These, we understand, will be well mixed, otherwise the proportion of one pressman to five spectators would tax the patience of even the most beautifully moulded model John Eason Gibson!

Whither Scalextric, some may ask? Will the immense array of ready-to-race items have any bad effects on the model maker? We do not think so. Model railways, surely the most pampered of all model hobbies, is nevertheless still probably the strongest in numbers of any, and has continued to attract some of the most fertile model builders of our day. Full-size motor racing enjoys so large a following nowadays that the pure racing aspect of the model equipment will, in itself, attract a wide following. With this thought in mind we understand that Scalextric are now in the throes of organising their growing list of model clubs into suitable racing regions, and will arrange club matches, international events and the like under some form of central administration. ■

Traders Travels

BY ROBERT LEARMOUTH
(WESTWOOD MODELS)

Roger Gillham recently paid a visit to my home to take some pictures for the next edition of 'Past and Present'. I was a reader of the 1st edition back in 1981 as soon as the book was published.

Call it sad but as a 12 year old I used to make a weekly trip to the local library to check on the microfiches to see if there were any books due in on Scalextric. This was a pretty forlorn hope back in the formative collecting days of 1981 but to my astonishment this faith was eventually repaid. After waiting my turn 12 reservations down the line (it was that popular) I eventually got my hands on the book. Having read it from cover to cover several times, I painstakingly hand-typed the whole model listing before returning the book (and in due course getting my own copy as a birthday present). This listing duly accompanied me round swapmeets to see what I could find with my pocket money. To this day I'm amazed that any publisher, let alone Haynes ever took this book on back in 1981. Even the established world of die-cast collecting simply didn't have works of this type available back then. It must have been a man of some vision at Haynes to publish it. I take my hat off to him and Roger for making a very significant contribution to our hobby.

Auction news

Ebay strikes back after a quiet summer. Some enterprising fellow has discovered that giving second-hand Plexytrack a polish and supplying the correct pieces to form a famous racing circuit of the world in 4-lane will net you £360 for 154 pieces - £2.30 a piece. About the same price as you could find a brand new piece of Sport track for at a swapmeet. It's certainly all in the marketing!

Recent interesting finds on Ebay included two Scalextric TVRs, one in purple and one in blue made by Hornby for the 'City Challenge'

race (not sure what that was). There's a good chance that this car was only produced in single digit numbers so the prices were not surprising at £250 and £205 respectively. Also up for grabs was a beautiful Mexican Ferrari 330GT in bright yellow fetching £210. Finally, an NSCC Rover 3500 in silver fetched a surprising £100. You'd normally get a pair plus change for that!

Changing hands elsewhere recently were a gob-smacking pair of C69 Ferrari 250GTs from Phil Smith. Just when you think all the 60's rarities must have been discovered up pop these; one in pure solid white, the other in translucent mauve. Still out there is the brown Auto Union I was once shown but couldn't persuade the owner to part with. His uncle was a Havant employee and used to bring home all the 'rejects' and odd stuff.

One of the better recent cars through Westwood Models was a Jag XJ220 'Cummins'. One of the rarer low volume commissions made by Margate just before closure of the production facility. You've certainly got your work cut out collecting all the specials from this period. Without actually counting there must be 20-30 different models with several of them changing hands for £200 plus a time.

For those who have perhaps glanced over the Carrera range before, now is the time to take another look. Carrera is very much the up and coming brand and there are some fantastic models now available. That's if you can get your hands on one - demand has been outstripping supply on some models. The Classics range is particularly popular with cars like Jaguar D Type, Aston Martin DB3, Ferrari 166/212, Mercedes 300 SLR plus various American Muscle cars. Many people will also tell you that Carrera track is the only decent mass-produced track worth having. It's also very wide as it's designed for the 1/24 cars which of course Carrera produce. ■

The Storrington Prix – a potted history

BY CHRIS HOLT

I have been a member of the NSCC for over six years now and it has to be said that, apart from a couple of letters, I have not exactly been productive in terms of contributions to the newsletter. So, inspired by some fairly recent articles on the trials and tribulations of trying to set up new clubs, and an article in a 1992 newsletter (I managed to pick up two complete years at a recent swapmeet) I decided to put fingers to keyboard and have a bash at telling you about our club!

Now this, it has to be said, is no purist racers' club and it was never really meant to be. Although we take our various championships seriously, it is above all else a social occasion, where big boys, (and soon - girls - we are frightened, very frightened!) get together once a month and race! It has also, as an added bonus had a great, positive impact on professional relationships back at work (although now the club has a couple of non-work members as well)

The club began three years ago, and came about as a result of my changing jobs from a field role, to a head office based position within the organisation for which I work. Now I always let it be known that I collect Scalextric cars whenever I change roles (you get used to accusations of 'anorakism' etc. etc.) and have been amazed at the number of cars that have found their way into my sweaty paws as a result of having been liberated from dusty lofts and garages! This time was no exception revealing no less than; an Airfix Carrera 6, a boxed Aston Martin DB4 (E3), a Porsche Spyder (fair but restorable), various formula juniors, assorted (though sadly highly 'modified') Monogram body shells and to top it all off (believe me it's true!) a black Bentley! (In need of t.l.c. and a few bits but nonetheless fully restorable)

Now when I also mentioned that I had a largish track set up, a number of the guys suddenly expressed an interest in 'having a look' and well, the club was born. We have a core of

8 members who meet once a month (frequently swollen to 10 – that's the limit though, garage not big enough for more!) We race on a four lane 'classic' track with equal lane lengths of 47ft. (managed by a Virtual Racing System light/sensor set up, through the P.C., with timing accurate to 1/100th of a second)

We run four classes (over a six month 'Championship' period); BTCC, Porsche Cup, 'C' Class, and World Sports Car. All cars are pretty much raced 'out of the box' with the minimum of 'interference' (wheels trued, and a bit of oil here and there) although the 'C' class cars benefit from ProSlot neomidium magnets (making them the quickest cars on the circuit - quicker than Fly.)

I don't know how 'usual' this is, but in our club, cars don't change lanes for each heat, only the drivers change lanes. This way, all drivers get to race all the cars (thus preventing any 'that car's better than mine' issues!) and they all stay in parc fermé (my garage) between races for repairs and (often) rebuilds!

Each heat is a two minute 'sprint' so it's fast and furious stuff (and allows for up to 40 races a meet!) Needless to say, the marshals need to be very alert! This is especially true through the chicane section which consists of two back to back Goodwood chicanes (I did say this wasn't a 'purists' track!) get it wrong here, and your car will need digging out from under the bridge, or worse still will need rescuing by use of 'The Hand of God' ! (See note below!) – Not easy! With good judgement and a pile of luck, you can squeeze 2 'Tin Tops' through side by side (on lanes 1 and 4) re-creating beautifully the 'rough and tumble' of BTTC racing for real.

Points are awarded 10 – 6 – 4 and 2 (for turning up!) keyed into the championship spreadsheet at the end of each heat, and printed out at the end of the evening. At the end of racing, it's all off to the local Italian restaurant for post race analysis, i.e. general banter about →→

'iffy' marshalling standards, dubious(!) car preparation, and obvious(!) problems with software! The results are read out and the championship positions revealed (the evening's winner has to wear our equivalent of cycling's yellow jersey – a green baseball cap with 'unbeatable' written large across the front throughout the meal!)

This year, club funds will allow a trophy for each class winner, an overall winner's trophy and a trophy for 'most improved driver' (based on this versus last year's averages) thus even the less swift have something to aim at! There it is, our club, not your normal set up I grant you, but a great night all the same.

Any members who live in the West Sussex area are welcome to come and have a run around it or just pop by for a beer and a chat, just drop me an email (holtchris959@aol.com) you would be more than welcome.

NB; The 'Hand of God' is a garden 'pick-up' tool (the type with a trigger forcing two jaws together at the end of a two foot thin tube to save bending down) With a bit of rubber banding glued to the jaws to prevent scratching, it is ideal for reaching cars that have gone completely 'out of bounds'! ■



BY PETER SOLARI

Earlier this year Ninco released a new class of race car - the "Raid" series - and this month they release their first car of another new class - the "CART Champ Car" series. In the real world, Champ Cars are capable of top speeds in the region of 240mph and achieve this through methanol fuelled 750 horsepower engines.

The first of these Ninco cars is powered by the new NC-5 speeder motor. New slick tyres, front wheel steering and a removable super-magnet are also featured. The livery is a reproduction of this year's Team Rahal entry and uses the green, white and red colours of the Mexican flag. Why Mexico? Well this is the nationality of their very promising young driver Michel Jourdain Jr. as well as the team's main sponsor Gigante, the country's third largest supermarket chain). With 13 teams competing in the current Champ Car series, more colourful liveries are sure to follow soon. Although the Champ Car events are held mainly in America, this year two events were held in Europe; one at the Euro-Speedway (Germany), the other at Brands Hatch.

New Livery

The third in the Raid line up is the silver Mitsubishi Pajero driven by Russian Alexander Khrol. This of course includes the NC-7 motor, ProShock suspension and ProArm drop guide. To complement this, Ninco are increasing their range of "off-road" track. In addition to the Off Road Curve set (*described in the last Ninco News*), Rally and Raid circuits can now be enhanced

with 'mud effect' straights (10151) and standard curves (10152). To make the course more challenging for the Pajeros, clip-on obstacles (10251) can be fixed to these track sections and stone wall borders can be added.

New Version

The 2003 version of the highly successful Subaru Impreza rally car replaces the 2002 model. The most noticeable change is the rear wing design but the car also includes changes to the front and rear lights and now sports a silver roof-mounted camera. An NC-5 motor replaces the NC-2 unit and belt-driven 4-wheel drive remains. The car is finished in the familiar Subaru "works" metallic blue colour with faithfully reproduced graphics and logos.

New Artwork

Just as the Mercedes CLK GTR cars were becoming hard to find, Ninco have 're-released' the No.12 Original Teile sponsored car from 1999. However, this one now features the fantastic artwork (*originally airbrushed on the full size car*), simulating burst-open bodywork around the 600bhp engine. This is perhaps the most commonly raced Ninco GT car and is again offered with an NC-2 motor, spring-loaded guide blade and superb high-gloss finish.

New Limited Edition

Finally, the genuinely rare limited edition car from Ninco this year comes in the form of a Fiat Punto Catalunya Rally - Costa Brava. Sure to be much sought after by the true collector. ■



Dear Members,

Can anyone help please? I have recently come into possession of three pit lane remote plunger type hand controls, (PT 96), and have gone to connect them to the red buttons on the pitlane entrances only to find that I cannot get them to work. They look to be complete, having a spring and the connecting 'block' at one end which would appear to both fit in the red slider on the track, but when I try to operate the controller the button fails to move.

It would appear that the sleeve of the cable is the part that the hand control moves as the cable itself is fixed inside the controller and the plunger moves the cable down, but it does not spring back up - where does the other end of the cable sit in relation to the track piece? I have had a look at the plunger controller on the 'blow out' track but this has a few more bits on the track end and it seems that there is an inner spring-like part to the cable sleeve that helps the operation. Am I missing some bits or, more likely, am I being totally thick about their connection (polite answers only!) Hope one of you can help - a copy of the instructions would be brilliant if there were any.

Thanks
Shaun Bennett

Dear Brian,
I have just read Andrew Davis' article about Ebay. I must confess that I have frequently bought and sold cars on Ebay in the past, however I have been much more hesitant since a word with fellow racer, NSCC member and model shop owner Geoff Spencer.

We are probably all aware there is little profit to be made selling models, primarily because they are of relatively low retail value. I have had to curb spending of late due to personal circumstances, however when the bank manager allows I shall return to the model shops. I would much prefer to see the models before purchase, chat with a friendly shop owner (Geoff?) for advice and keep the model shops alive rather than simply rely on internet ordering. I uphold Andrew's view on personal service and am aware that although predominantly new models fill the shelves in shops, often obsolete models can be acquired from retailers like Phil Smith.

Regards,
Rob Cooper.

Dear Brian,
I have two blue go-karts; at the front one has 'Scalextric regd' and 'made in England' underneath. The other one is blank. Does anyone know why they are different?

Thanks
Chris Gregory



Dear Brian,

Further to my letter regarding filler caps on the C88 Cooper that you published in the July issue, and Roger Gillham's responses in the August and September issues.

Readers may be interested in the answer to my own question! It would appear that some early versions of the C88 Cooper were produced using surplus filler caps from the earlier C58. On later versions however, a larger filler cap was used probably from the C61/C92 Porsche Spyder, the latter Race Tuned version overlapping in production with the Race Tuned Cooper.

Regards
Peter Youd

Dear NSCC,

I read with a lot of interest the articles concerning members who want more adverts in the NSCC Journal and sell on eBay.

Since the beginning of this year I wanted to put ads in your Journal but because of your £1500 rule I'll have to be waiting till next year. Of course I could use the "pay" route but then there would be no margin for me any more and that's not the idea is it? Prices of some items have severely gone up and so you end up with only one or two adverts allowed. I don't like working with eBay and I am sure there are more members who don't.

So, want more adverts? No problem just adapt your rule.

Best Regards,
Francis Bogaert

The purpose of the adverts at the back of the Journal is to allow ordinary, non-trade members to buy, sell and swap surplus items. It is not a free service for dealers to sell large quantities of new stock. I have a great deal of discretion over the £1500 limit - for example: the sale of complete collections or single high value cars. It would be a little silly to apply it to the sale of a Bugatti for instance! In your case, Francis, you advertised, mostly mint boxed Fly cars, to the value of £1800 in the November 2002 issue. This was followed by an advert for over £1700 of similar stuff in the January 2003 issue and you attempted to advertise a further £1600 worth in the February issue. In my opinion this was an abuse of the service so I refused the advert. I notice that you also advertise regularly in the French and Dutch club magazines, not to mention a strong presence on Ebay. If you are not a part time dealer then you are doing a very good impression of one, so I suggest that you stop moaning and pay for your adverts like the rest of the traders. The cost of a half page trade advert in the Journal is about £150 for 12 issues which, I suspect, compares extremely favourably with the cost of selling on eBay.

Dear Brian,

After reading yet another letter about Fly tyres in the September Journal, I wasn't surprised when approached at Evesham swapmeet by another member with the same complaint. He had with him the offending tyre and I can only describe it as useless, at best! However, there is a very simple solution to this problem. As you know, I run a small hobby based business called R/S Racing, supplying repro tyres for all sorts of makes and models.

Amongst our range we have some tyres specifically designed for the racer and these include rear slicks for all Fly cars. I must point out that these are not copies of the originals (i.e with treads and lettering) but are super grip, slick racing tyres designed to fit Fly wheels. We have both modern (low profile) and classic (higher profile) tyres along with a specific fitting for Vipers and Panoz as these have a different wheel (centre bead) to the rest of the Fly range.

These tyres have been proven successful not only by Medway Model Racing Group, the club I attend, but also by The London Scalextric Club. The same rubber compound (NOT silicone!) is used in all our tyres, so even the repro tyres can be used for racing older cars where the originals have gone hard and shiny. I hope this will help those members who are experiencing Flays in the ointment, so to speak. See my advert in the Journal.

Regards
Colin Spark

.....
Dear Brian,

Regarding the most stupid way to promote a product using Scalextric: we, Foscolor, manufacture what (in layman's terms) are concentrated colours for inks, paints and plastics. I use the royal we as I am operations manager of aforesaid company, exhibition stand builder, and founder of East Lancs Slot Racing Club and www.slots4fun.net.

For Surfex 2000 (the exhibition of the surface coatings industry), we had a G-scale train pulling wagons full of coloured Foscolor granules. For Surfex 2002, we kept the train and added a 1/24th scale Tamiya tractor and flat-bed semi rig. The tractor was fitted out with sound and light and decorated in the Foscolor livery and the semi trailer was built up as a log trailer and filled with multi-coloured Blackpool rock with Foscolor all the way through the middle. This was driven round the G-MEX centre with hazards flashing and engine sounds, swapping rock for everybody else's freebees.

For Surfex 2004, there will be Scalextric on that exhibition stand even if it kills me. There will be prizes for record laps. All I've got to figure out now is how to relate Scalextric to Foscolor and it's a good excuse for an easy two days away from the factory playing with toy cars.

The best I've come up with so far is to decorate the cars in such a way that, when placed on the grid, they make up the colours of the rainbow, Foscolor's trade-mark. I could really use some bashed up old saloons for this. The ones like the Vectra, Laguna and A4 with the in-line chassis. I'll pay a fiver each if anyone has some they don't want.

Any better suggestions on a postcard please!
Ian Winstanley

Model car photography

BY ROGER GILLHAM

I certainly do not profess to be an expert photographer but, over the past two years, I have been taking images for the 6th edition Scalextric book myself. I have had to learn and work out how to make the images acceptable for publication.

I actually rather shocked the publishers when I advised them that the 6th edition should have 300+ additional images, including more cars, accessories, sets etc. - no way would they employ a professional photographer at vast expense visiting dozens of locations, the book does not have that large a circulation, so there was no alternative other than to take them myself. These notes may be of some use.

Problems

The main problem is one of correct lighting - the camera will usually take the light from what it sees in the lens, take close up and almost certainly the image will be under exposed, take farther away when the camera will see more surrounding light, the picture may be better but the model will then appear rather small. With a

good computer picture-imaging programme the image can be cropped (enlarged) but then definition will be lost.

Lighting presents all manner of problems, I have found it best to take pictures outdoors on a cloudy but bright day. See the accompanying photograph taken on a sunny day, far too much shadow. Also, the sun can cause too much colour contrast especially on white surfaces. Too dull a day is not quite so bad (little shadow) but then the image will again be under exposed.

Take indoors? - I've tried this with all sorts of lighting, remote flashes triggered from the main camera etc. - none with acceptable results, shadows in many directions etc. (It would, however, work with expensive professional lighting equipment actually connected to the camera itself where the light is reflected) Incandescent and fluorescent lighting also gives different colour effects and obtaining the correct light input and true colour pictures again are difficult.

The next problem is depth of field, how often do we see pictures where parts of the car are out of focus?



Too sunny a day, far too much shadow.

Now having stated the various problems (obvious perhaps?) how do we accomplish our goal of good clear, in focus, true colour, low shadow images?

Equipment needed

1) The camera - I use a Canon Powershot 45, about £420 if I remember. Four million odd pixels etc. I only bought this because it had manual override on all aspects, just like a good 35mm camera.

2) A tripod.

3) A good computer imaging programme - I do not use the one that came with the camera, however they will be suitable for most purposes. I use Paint Shop Pro 8. Takes a time to get used to (or rather it took me some time, I tend not to read the manual too often but experiment which does not exactly help).

4) Some sheets of different pastel colour artists' cards - normally 85 x 60 cm. 5) Sheet of clear glass - more later

6) Pair of vehicle axle stands or bricks to stand the above glass on - again more later.

The answers

Now for my recipe on obtaining good images.

How to adjust the camera - Depth of field, correct focus on all parts - any model taken at the usual $\frac{3}{4}$ view angle close up may have problems. The way round this is to adjust the camera to a high 'F' number (small aperture opening) I use F7.1 (my camera is adjustable but if yours is not then the macro facility may work). - This is where you will need the tripod - a small aperture will mean less light, therefore a much slower camera speed will occur. If hand held you will almost certainly get camera shake and the image will be blurred. =>

Caterham - front slightly out of focus and (below) the Mustang where the rear is slightly blurred.





A good example of what can be done to improve a damaged image; Spanish Set 56 - before and after - all damage repaired and the image acceptable for publication. The photo was sent to me by Flemming Grandjean from Denmark

Correct light input - as previously stated it is best on a bright but cloudy day. However, I have taken successfully indoors in my conservatory provided you adjust to get the correct light input. Most cameras have some form of light input adjustment, you will need to experiment. They usually have up to plus or minus 2 in stages of .33 at a time. This will automatically allow more or less light into the cameras than the auto focus thinks necessary. Taking close ups will almost always be under exposed so try at +1 first.

High resolution? - I have to use the highest resolution possible for publishing purposes, but for home use the standard setting is perfectly OK. Most people who send me images (mainly sets, from Australia as well) now know that I need high resolution, the only problem is that it takes ages to download. No Broadband available in our area, well done BT.

Background - always use a nice clean card to stand the cars on, white cars on a coloured background, coloured cars on plain white etc.

Sunny day - too much shadow? - this is where our glass and two columns on which to place the glass sheet comes in handy. Place the glass on the axle stands, pile of bricks, books etc. or whatever you use, with the required background coloured card on the ground. Then place the car on the glass; take the picture as normal but you may have to adjust the card to ensure shows under the car - No shadow under the car at all, great. - But beware of any shadow falling onto the background card, either from yourself or the axle stands etc. which may still show under the car. I only use this in an emergency as the publishers like some shadow under the cars, more realistic.

I know many will have only an Auto camera which will not have an adjustment for aperture, (depth of field)- you may have to take further away, a shallower angle for the car, or try Macro. However, I do think that the common problem is not enough light input and most cameras will have an adjustment - remember to set back to normal or your holiday shots will be vastly overexposed. It might be as easy as that. ■

BITS AND PIECES

MRRC competition

Much correspondence on this one and some dispute about one of the answers.

MRRC was founded by Alban Adams with Henri Baigent (he built diesel car wheels and engines) and Bert Walshaw (he manufactured wheels and diesel cars from his home in Dorset) when they joined to form Model Road Racing Cars Ltd.

The firm was founded in Boscombe, near Bournemouth and the date always given has been 1954. Indeed modern day MRRC quote this date in their literature. However this is questionable as some earlier examples of diesel powered cars have been found supposedly made by MRRC. Don Siegel is in possession of an MRRC leaflet dated 1952/3 and has evidence to suggest August 1951 as the start-up date.

I therefore allowed any date between 1951 and 1954 but most entries failed because they only mentioned one founder of the firm not three.

Archie the editorial cat has chosen from the correct answers and the winner is - 520/89 Andy Carmichael. Many thanks to Pendle Slot Racing for providing the prize - it should be on its way very soon.

Variations on a theme - update

Following on from Roger Gillham's query last month about different versions of C613 and C698, several of you have pointed out that the cars had some factory printing applied and decal sheets were also supplied.

However, as Roger tends to forget that this is a black and white magazine, he omitted to mention that the wheels on C613 are white on one and silver on the other and for C698 the wheels are either gold or blue. Also note that the radiator ducts on one pair are black and the other pair white.

Has anybody got any more information?

Even Cheaper book

Further to "Bits and Pieces" Feb 2003, the Book People are now selling Rod Green's 'Scalextric, The Story of the Worlds Favourite Model Racing Cars' for the princely sum of £3 (+ p&p) Tel:- 0870 6077740, www.thebookpeople.co.uk. Catalogue number is SXT.

Martin Pratt

Not top of the best seller lists then? Somebody paid £14 for one on Ebay recently - ah well!

Historically speaking

Classic Car magazine is doing a spread on Historic Slot Racing. It's supposed to be in the November edition which comes out first week in October.

Derek Cooper

Leeds update

Due to the intransigence of his local council John Jude has had to make some alterations to the timing of this event and slightly increase the cost of tables. The date remains the same but please refer to page 3 for full details.

Yet another Ebay bargain

SCALEXTRIC C52 MEXICO SPECIAL
MINT BOXED NEVER BEEN USED,
DECALS IN BOX SLIGHTLY
STAINED BUT REPOS ARE
AVAILABLE FROM SCALEMODELS,
PERFECT CONDITION, BRIGHT
WHITE, NEVER BEEN ON
THE TRACK.

Reproduced exactly as listed

The seller was testcell19

The buyer was marcor01

The above car was sold on ebay 28th September 2003 at 21:00 hrs for £1130.00.

I had to read the price twice - I had not been drinking! On that note I wish to sell my black Escort Mexico for £1100.00. Serious bidders only please...!

Karl Cornell

Evesham Swapmeet 2003

BY STEVE PITTS

How quickly the years pass! It seems only a month ago that the NSCC swappie wagon rolled into the green and fertile land of the Vale of Evesham but last weekend arrived and passed in a blur for this organiser.

Bookings this year had started slowly and I had been concerned at the numbers committed to attend but a final flurry on Friday and Saturday from a number of new names and some "Golden Oldies" ensured a good table take up.

Evergreen Andy Carmichael was the last to book, less than 24 hours before the event; it was refreshing to see him again and listen to his effervescent banter. Sadly his father couldn't make the trip having taken delivery of a real speed monster. Andy had suggested motorising his new addition but try as I did I really couldn't figure a way of installing a Mabuchi motor in a Jack Russell puppy!

As usual the pre-swappie get together at the Bell Inn went off well and all retired to bed looking forward to a restful night's sleep. Whilst I did not experience it myself I understand that the early morning slumber in the peaceful village was shattered when Southend Slot Racing club's Vic decided to take an early morning walk; he had travelled no more than 10 feet into the bar when he set off the burglar alarm. Whilst the guests and the landlord did not appreciate their unplanned early morning call it did ensure a punctual appearance at the swapmeet by individuals who otherwise would not appear till midday!

My day commenced at 7:30 A.M. when I left to finalise entrance procedures; on arrival I found a number of traders already raring to go, some 60 minutes before opening.

The first to arrive was, I believe, Mark Scale but the most expectant was that self confessed Scalextric nut, Richard Snell, who was attending his first event for some time. Apparently he has now finished hoovering up the last remnants of Scalextric in his home county of Devon and was

looking for pastures new to feed his insatiable appetite for anything originating from Havant or Margate.

Other golden oldies included Phil Pell who had a splendid day both on his table and renewing old friendships; Geoff Spencer too had arrived for a rare Vale appearance. The Jude clan were here in force, scurrying from table to table; John was seen on a number of occasions disappearing behind his stall clutching treasured goodies. Bob Bott was late arriving which is most unusual! He was without his right hand man and mentor Mark Robertson, who had double booked the weekend. This caused some concern at the refreshment stall where extra supplies of bacon and eggs had been ordered especially for the great man. Steve Cannon certainly did his best to reduce the stockpile, disappearing early on behind his table to demolish a full brekkie. I did manage to tempt him out by waving some cash to buy the latest Lancia 037.

Angus Heeps had travelled down from Scotland, via Coventry to see the Stock car racing. He was strangely subdued for most of the day and many people suggested that the English lowland air had affected him - either that or the lowland English beer!

Dave Harkin was here of course, though he was rarely seen in attendance at his own stall; preferring to circulate the mountainous stock displays in search of that elusive bargain.

Traditionally the Southend Slot-car club provide a themed display at Evesham and this year there was a distinct Anglo-French feel in the air. Looking across the table it was apparent that Joel and Vic had brought a collection to make the mouth water. Besides a smattering of slot-cars by Scalextric, SCX, Ninco, Jouef, Airfix and VIP there were indeed some mega rare plastic kits. There were a number made by Cle which included a beautiful Renault 4CV; Minialuxe were represented by examples of a Citroen DS saloon, Traction Avant and two stunning corrugated TUB vans. There was a Renault



Floride and Citroen 2CV by BS and a DS estate by Injectaplastic.

In the English corner Joel proudly displayed an Aston Martin DBS V8 made by Entex and a Lotus Elan by Japanese manufacturer Sharp. The display numbered some 110 vehicles and read like a who's who of model collecting. It attracted great attention throughout the day from members and dealers alike.

Whilst there was a wide cross-section of stock available the tables were dominated by new items from numerous manufacturers and prices were cut by many traders to stimulate demand. There was much debate regarding the effect of the Internet and Toyfairs in general and slot-car swappies in particular. The consensus of opinion from a number of sources was that while Ebay provided an armchair opportunity to buy items it could never match the social atmosphere which events like this provide. You also have the opportunity to inspect your goodies before parting with the cash.

Having said that there seemed to be much concern over the current saturation of events and only time will tell whether there is sufficient demand, cash and variety of stock to support this volume of events. Quality is, of course, an additional matter.

Attendance by members was down 15% at Evesham and, having worked so hard to arrange and promote the event for everyone's benefit I was a little disappointed at the low turnout. At the end of the day I suppose the basic laws of economics will sort things out as they have already done on the Toyfair circuit.

My thanks go to my team of helpers; the NSCC committee for their encouragement; Rob Learmouth for his support and Mac Pinches for promising to have his Lancia D50 available soon. My lasting memory of the day was a blur of movement as John Jude chased a James Bond set out of the door only to find that its owner was retaining it. You will never replace that thrill on Ebay! ■

Shipment from

Spain

by Gareth Jex

Busy busy at work again this month, copy in late (sorry Brian) but a busy month in the slot-car world also. Lots of new releases and most of Europe back from holidays.

Hope you liked the SCX mini catalogue last month, in this issue we should have a colour flyer on the two new cars reviewed. I hope to have several more colour flyers over the next few months.

There are a couple of new SCX cars reviewed this month - the Jaguar F1 cars and the new Subaru. I have received press shots also of the new SCX Dome. These look fantastic and with luck we should have a full review next month!

A few new products in the pipeline: lots of you requested a new Le Mans start and in part your request have been answered: In the very near future SCX plan to release a 'Le Mans' set with a Porsche GT1 (German livery race no. 28) and an Audi R8 (race number 3) with the normal track you will also receive a Le Mans start track section. Both liveries are exclusive to the set and if the box art is correct the cars have lights! (this is not confirmed as none of the GT1s or Audi have been issued with lights to date). Exact release dates and costs are still to be confirmed. I have pictures, but due to rights issues I can't print them - sorry.

Another item that has been seen recently is a Snow Effect Citroen Xsara body only (with the new square style light cluster), released under the Spanish 'PRO' range. Details are sketchy, if I get any more information I will let you know.

A (possibly) new item to add to the wants list as an apparent printing error on one the Miticos cars. All these cars are issued under the Spanish brand name, but I picked up an E-Type Jag (metallic blue) with an SCX logo printed on the windscreen. At first I thought it was just a

Miticos chassis built up with an old SCX Vintage screen, however when the E-Type was released they didn't print the logos on the windscreen! So after checking with Tecnitoys I can only assume that this is a one off! Please inform me if you know any different. Look out for them at the next Swapmeet!



Plans are under development for a possible SCX sponsored UK race series, more details to follow as soon as I know any confirmed info.

The new Jag F1s and Subarus are in your shops now and having played extensively with the Jag F1 I can recommend it both on magnet track and on wood and copper! The Dome and Merc CLK DTM are both due for release in October/November, cross your fingers, if the Dome goes anything like as good as it looks it will be a class winner!

Oh nearly forgot! I'm off to Barcelona next month to meet up with the chaps at Tecnitoys, have a look around the place (no doubt buy too much in the Barcelona Slot shops) have a play on the new Digital track(!) and ask any questions you may have. ■



Review

SCX

**61230 Subaru Impreza
WRC 2003 "SWRT"
By Scott Brownlee**

Other SCX rally cars use the driver's, sponsor's or event names as a designator. Therefore, I thought the word "SWRT" on the box was perhaps some device to get around licensing issues, but surely even an enigma machine does not translate "SWRT" as Tommy or Mäkinen.

I decided to look up some reference material on the real car. The web site I found it on? You've guessed it; www.swrt.com, the official site of the Subaru World Rally Team.

So having established that I'm a bit thick - and blind since the web site address is on the car - you may wish to reserve judgment on this car for yourself. In truth, if you've got any of the recent 4WD SCX rally cars then you'll know what it is like to drive because this car shares the same RX-81 motor, wheelbase and shaft-drive 4WD system. And that's a good thing. It means you can buy two or more different WRC models and be sure they will compete on pretty equal terms, a handy feature for kids and club racers alike.

For those who haven't tried one before, the car is a bit noisy and a bit slow relative to a

Hornby or Ninco. However, it is great sideways fun with the easily removed magnet being put to better use holding a shopping list to the side of the refrigerator. Simply put, I think SCX 4WD rally cars are some of the best fun to be had. Not as smooth in a slide as a Ninco, not as tippy and zippy as a Hornby, the SCX cars are more, well, agricultural. Just as a rally car should be.

Lurid, yet controllable, slides are the almost inevitable way around every turn. You find yourself driving harder and harder, but with visible, frenetic results, not imperceptible micro seconds shaved from a lap time that you need the RMS to confirm for you. Consequently, these cars spend longer on the track, both in terms of being hard to de-slot and number of laps driven, than many others.

Debate rages as to the benefit or otherwise of driving the front axle on a slot-car. Others have even conducted comparative tests, but I really can't see the point. The cars are hugely enjoyable to drive whether the front tyres are really helping you to pull back from the brink of oblivion or not. For what it's worth, I think they do. ⇨⇨



So, if it's a case of more of the same performance wise, why buy this new Subaru, especially when essentially the same car is also on offer from Hornby, AutoArt and Ninco?

Well, answer - and the joy - is in the details. The full size Subaru Impreza went through a spot of mid-life image enhancement with a typical motor industry face-lift. New lights, new bumpers, a tweak here, a tweak there and enough had been changed to warrant use of the word 'new'. SCX have taken what was already a very nicely detailed model of the previous Impreza WRC and not only matched the changes made to the full size car, but also added some slot-car specific extras such as the underside of the chassis which now sports extra detail and colour.

Now, I have never seen the underside of an Impreza WRC, but I doubt it looks much like this. Gold sump guard, exhaust and drive shafts? I think not. Don't get me wrong, added detail is always welcome, but detailed undersides just don't seem to add much value since they make the car neither drive nor look better.

Where I do applaud SCX is the detail on the top, and let's be frank, visible part of the car. Working ground up you have a new exhaust tail pipe, faithfully replicated new front spoiler, bonnet, lights (with so-called 'Xenon' bulbs) and roof finished off with three aerials. The livery is printed accurately and with a degree of fineness that my eyes need outside assistance to discern. The interior, although only a tray style, has two very detailed (half) men sitting amidst a web of roll cage tubing.

Most importantly, the car looks right overall, a goal I would say SCX has been consistently better at achieving than its mass production rivals. Hornby WRC cars are too glossy and never quite the right shape, Ninco's a bit too chunky and Auto Art... Well, I don't know. AutoArt need to produce a model of a car I haven't already bought from SCX before I'll find out. Given the company's die-cast model portfolio you'd think that was easy to do. Apparently not, but I digress.

Comparing the model to the real thing the only significant item not replicated accurately is

the rear wing. The 2003 Subaru sports a multiple box-section device that offers higher downforce during yaw (sideways, to you and me). It seems odd, given that the wing is presumably a separate moulding and easily within the capability of its moulding techniques, that SCX chose to invest in making the changes to the body and chassis, but not the wing.

Another pleasing feature is the New Zealand rally plates. I presume New Zealand was chosen for its use of non-tobacco livery, but it is a welcome change from a Catalonia or Monte Carlo identification.

I like this car a lot, but unless you are a fanatical collector of WRC cars, SCX or Subaru then it is hard to say you must have this as well as the previous version. However, if it is a choice between this and the same car from other brands, then I would say this is the best all round package. It looks good, it offers unique features, but most importantly it is a great drive. ■



Review

SCX

61140 Jaguar F-1 "De La Rosa" by Jamie Coles

"Letting the cat out of the Bag"

Well, box actually! There are some racing car liveries that just have a certain "something" that makes them stand out from other cars – sadly in real life performance doesn't always match the looks and you have all the time in the world to examine the livery as the car goes at breakneck milk-float speed around the track, before suddenly de-slotting itself!

"Don't judge a book by its cover", can certainly be applied to at least one car in all of our racing stables - so we display it instead!

As was mentioned in this journal previously by a few people, myself included, the Gulf livery is one such paint job that would even make a wheelie bin look good – but clearly acceleration would be an issue!

Another long-awaited car, judging by many comments, is the Jaguar F1 with its adaptation of the famous British Racing Green colours with the broad white "go faster" stripe.

Ever since the Stewart team was taken over by Jaguar I had been toying with painting a

Stewart green but knew I couldn't do the model justice. Now I don't have to as SCX have produced two new models The 2002 Jaguar R3 driven by De La Rosa and the 2003 Jaguar R4 driven by Mark Webber.

As I tend to use my cars for racing and not display, the attention to the exact replication in 32nd scale doesn't really concern me too much, but I realise there are other readers who do collect only or combine the two disciplines.

So, first things first, how does it match up to its big brother? Well we almost failed at the first hurdle and were behaving like Daleks when confronted with a staircase. SCX have developed a cunning new plastic twisty widget thingy device to hold the car in the box. Very good and probably aimed to make life easy for a child of five to get their car out and race and not wait for a grown up with a screwdriver.

Unfortunately you can never find a five year old child when you want one and so after about 10 minutes two adults managed to get the better of this new technology. ⇒



First impressions - short and sweet - **“the best looking F1 car in my box”** The paint has a slight sparkle to it – almost as if it has been lovingly waxed and polished in preparation for the race and to eliminate any aerodynamic resistance. I wasn’t at first sure of the match in colours and I still feel after looking at some photographs of the 1:1 car that the shade is a little lighter, but that could be the reflective paint.

It is also nice to see the main sponsors’ names appearing on the vehicle – even the lager drink sponsor (Becks) is replicated as “Bests” as seen at some races where drink sponsorship is prohibited.

The attention to detail is excellent even down as far as the wing mirrors (with silvered printing) and the small winglets in front of the rear tyres. If there was any criticism – which would be a minor one – I would suggest that the axles were too wide, but then I was only comparing the model with a couple of pictures from an angle which could distort the scale.

There is some slight discrepancy in the placing of the logos around the driver’s cockpit; the driver’s name may be off-scale too and the cockpit area itself is slightly thicker than the real car – but let’s not get too fernickety.



However there is very good detailing inside the cockpit where so often attention to the features is overlooked by the racer and the manufacturers. Only after close inspection do you realise the driver is only 3/4 length. The creases in the overalls and the painted seatbelts are as good as could be achieved by hand painting.

For even more realism the steering wheel has a couple of yellow and red buttons – and with the silvering of the mirrors it is a nice additional touch to quality.

And now onto the track

Fortunately I was asked to review the car on the night that we race F1s with strong magnets at my regular club in Farnham. I was a little reluctant to use it “in anger” as I only had about 10 laps prior to the start of racing to get used to the car and wouldn’t have any opportunity to tune the tyres or the magnet.

My usual car is a Ninco Jordan which has the only ‘modification’ of slightly worn rear tyres which drop the magnet nearer to the track, and wins most of its races. So I was worried about starting the evening with a bad first class.

The car was certainly admired as it went around on its parade lap and I waited with anticipation for the starting signal.

Go! Go! Go!

I floored the trigger and was ahead of the other three cars by the end of the starting straight (five feet) and wasn’t seriously challenged during the four races in this class.

I have found with my style of driving that with most SCX F1s the acceleration isn’t the greatest aspect of this car – it reaches the maximum speed earlier than the Ninco and Hornby rivals and they can just about keep up on a long straight.

But the SCX then comes into its own and more than compensates for this with speed around twisty parts of the track and the road holding with the magnet is awesome – it fairly scoots around the inner field part of the circuit and there is no-fear about letting go on the elongated hump-back bridge section.

On a very cursory investigation it seems to have the same mechanical layout as other SCX F1 cars, and I was loath to take apart the race winning car. However, I can assume that the hard wired connections between the engine and the guide flag are part of this car which has the added benefit of making the guide almost a sprung one and compensating for fluctuations in the ride height over track joins.

For all those who like to learn more about the “guts” of cars I am afraid that I have not had the heart to dissect my newest race winning vehicle. If it ain't broke why furkle?

The car was raced literally straight from the box; the usual SCX adjustable magnet is there but I was loath to adjust it, although the option is there should your driving style be different from mine.

This can be done by adjusting two screws just either side of the slim but powerful magnet behind the engine. Instructions are on the reverse of the box, which again features a pit-lane crew about to change tyres, another nice packaging touch, especially if you wish to display rather than race this car.

One thing I was pleased to see, after reading a previous review, was that there was no wobble or undue play in the rear axle mounts, obviously quality control has been improved or the previous review car was a rogue.

My initial concerns I had about the fragility of the wing mirrors and the little “winglets” being broken in a “racing incident” were unfounded as for the majority of the time this car will be on its own in the lead of a race.

The only time in the evening's racing that the car failed to finish first was when it was unceremoniously punted off the track in the first lap by an overambitious Ferrari – isn't scale racing so much like the real thing!!

So the next time you are racing and are leading the pack, the green and white vehicle in the distance that is getting smaller is the SCX F1 Jaguar..... and you're in **SECOND PLACE** !!

My thanks as usual to Gareth Jex for allowing me to race this car and score more points than him(!) - and for Tecnitoys for the provision of the test vehicle.

P.S. from Gareth

As Jamie has mentioned, SCX kindly supplied both of their latest models for us to try and after Jamie thrashed my normal F Super magnet car, I too decided to race the Jag straight out of the box. In terms of racing I concur completely with Jamie on the performance, it's a great car to race. This model appears to be slightly longer than the previous SCX F1 cars and apart from the revised box fixing method the chassis of the car appears to have been redesigned.

One point of interest regarding these models is the different cars they represent. The 'De La Rosa car' is the 2002 'Jaguar Racing R3' with all the correct sponsors logos in the right places. The 'Webber' car is in fact based on the 2003 R4. The differences between the two models decoration is fantastic, even the main racing cat running down the rear airbox has the correct thicker lines on the older model. ■

I Can See Clearly Now

BY JOHN DILWORTH

I've never taken to lights on slot-cars particularly. Well, they make 'em look like toys, don't they? Especially that paley-waley yellow gleam that's supposed to pass for the searchlights of a real 200 m.p.h.-down-the-Mulsanne-at-midnight endurance racer. And we're serious collectors and hobbyists aren't we? All those wires and lights and resistors do us weigh down a good racer unnecessarily and scare the spit out of the cats.

But the new Xenon lights interested me strangely. Could it be because I've finally got my own track permanently nailed down in my rather gloomy loft? Could it be that the track, gradually becoming landscaped by my children to the chagrin of this hardened old racer, is starting to take on a pleasing character at odds with the stripped down hard-core speed track that I first envisioned? Yes, it might be fun to race in the dark, children. Cheaper than getting the electrician round to rig up the attic with strip lights, anyway. I began to imagine all my favourite old sports prototypes literally flashing under the Dunlop bridge and glinting through the branches of the boscy copse of (Oh the shame of it- after all these years as a full-on speed merchant) 1/32nd scale larch trees that now inhabits the infield. So I was intrigued at the Lighting Kits offered by GetSlotted on their website. Very reasonably priced- £7.99 per car. I typed in my order and began to dream.

Gleaming in the gloaming

My favourite car is still my TopSlot Chaparral 2D. Thoroughly run in and equipped with a Slot-it V12 it creams round the track in the sub-6 seconds range with ease. And it looks wonderful. But how much more wonderful would it be with twin beams emanating from those distinctively oriental-looking faired-in headlights, and red tail lights gleaming in the gloaming? Then it really could show the GT40 the way home (sub-6 second laps achievable with some difficulty). GetSlotted had the lighting kit

round to me in impressively short order and wrapped rather fetchingly in a blue paper package that would put our family Christmas tree efforts to shame.

But out of the package the first problem became apparent. This gear takes up a fair amount of room. What you get is two little white bulbs 5mm long and a touch under 3mm diameter, each with two long rigid but easily bendable wires for connecting up, two similar tail lights moulded in red, a tiny circuit board with no fewer than eight colour coded wires, similar to motor lead wires, and a resistor, all of which require joining together as per a rather skimpy instruction sheet. After staring at things from every angle, retiring to the men's thinking room (up the stairs, second on the left, remember to put the seat down) for several hours, and finally resisting the temptation to wade in and try it anyway, I looked around for another project.

No room at the inn

The endearingly pointy little nose of the Chap is just too small to contain the lights, tiny as they are. I've spent months finding the right wheels and shimmying down the chassis so the whole car sits mean and low on the track, so now there's no room anywhere for the electronics. Those wires, slim as they are, have to fit in somewhere, and without crossing or tangling with the wheels. And there has to be enough slack in the system to allow the shell to be separated from the chassis.

I began to realise that a lot of more modern prototypes would offer the same difficulty- the headlight cluster is just too close to the front wheels to get everything in - you need at least 8mm between the front wheels and the headlight fairing or lens cover to fit the bulbs and wires in, and more to do it with good scale appearance. So I began to cast around my collection for a suitable subject. It's amazing how few offered themselves; Can-Am cars don't have lights. ⇒⇒

Neither do F1s. And some just didn't deserve them. When did Jim Clark ever need to light the candles of his Lotus 40? Too pre-occupied with keeping it on the road, I guess. Then I remembered an old project I've had shelved for some time; an old bits box Scalextric Ferrari 250 SWB with a cracked and rotted underpan. I'd got as far as tidying up the shell, respraying it a proper blood red, and marrying it to an old SCX chassis. With Ninco wire wheels wedged under it, it looked nice as a static sitting on a workshop shelf. But looking at it again I saw lovely big headlamps, jutting well forward of the front wheels. Lovely little die-cast rims and separate clear lenses. Now's the time, as Charlie Parker might have said, to get this little fox on the road.

Read, study and learn

Out came the lighting kit instructions again. I'm getting used to the hardships of having to read poorly translated kit spec sheets; this product originates in Germany, care of Overdrive Slotservice of Leverkusen. So I read, studied and was patient. It took a lot of time to figure out what they meant, but it is all there if you look hard enough. Take for instance the fact that it is very important to get the polarities right, and the positive and negative sides of a light bulb you could easily lose in your navel are not easily discriminated.

The positive side has a longer connecting wire. The circuit board is the size of a 5p piece, and has eight colour coded wires coming from it. All have to end up in the right place. This is no small challenge to a middle aged man who has only recently learned to wire a three pin plug reliably. The tail lights don't go together as the front lights do either- they connect positive to negative, whereas the fronts are linked negative to negative. Don't ask me why. Just follow instructions. You need a fine tipped soldering iron and a steady hand. What I found is that I could drill out the back of the headlight housings on the Ferrari so that the bulbs would sit snugly in place. Then I drilled a further two holes in the inner wheel arch to guide the stiff wire connectors through. These are actually

long enough that I could solder the appropriate front light leadwires directly together without using the flexible insulated wire supplied for the purpose. This made the whole set up rigid and firmly set in place. Then I used a bit of double sided tape to fix the circuit board to the underside of the bonnet, and fed the tail light wires to the back. The red bulbs fitted neatly in the holes in the shell for the original Scalextric dummy lights, with a bit of deft filling and some clear acrylic pieces to fit in the space left for the reversing lights. The tail light wires were again soldered directly to one another, and a bit of insulating tape kept them in place in the boot and allowed me to run the return wires back over without shorting the whole system. Once the resistor got soldered in, all the serious stuff was in place in the body shell. I connected the wires to a battery to make sure I'd done right, and was rewarded by a searing white light that made me empathise briefly with a rabbit on the M25. Systems are go!

To tidy up the front lights I epoxied the original metal rims back in, sawed down the original lenses, which are quite deep mouldings, to discs of about 1mm thickness, which I then polished up to a decent level of clarity. These were inserted with the aid of clear epoxy to seal the little Xenon bulbs finally in place.

The beauty of the 250 shell is that the headlights are mounted in discrete housings in the front wings and there is no need to mask the back of the lights. In another car it might be necessary to plug the back of the light housings with filler to avoid the light leaking out inappropriately. It looked great. Now the only thing to address is connecting the lighting system to the motor.

The instructions tell you to solder the wires to the motor leads, but I'm wary of this. It means that the bodyshell is permanently connected to (or at least, not easily detached from) the chassis, which makes maintenance a bit of a trick. And my cars seem to need a lot of maintenance. The answer I came up with was simply to solder the lighting wires to a pair of copper guide shoe connectors, and solder little clips, like the tabs on the SCX motors, to the motor leads to make

little push fit joiners so that the chassis and body can be separated.

On the track it looks spectacular. Really good. I wasn't really prepared for the full effect. Bright white beams that fall on the road in those long parabolic arcs that real headlights give. In the twilight of my attic room they really do sweep around the course and illuminate not just the track, but whatever they fall on. And there's no leakage around the lens, no ethereal glow around the front wheel wells, just a full on beam cutting through the night. It's a great toy! The car looked so smart I had to bring all the neighbours round. And, you know what, I was so impatient to track test the lights that I forgot to put a magnet in the car, and now I've rediscovered the joys of non-ground effects driving, drifting the tail round the corners and watching the headlights sweep the infield. Wait

a mo! Who put those little plastic people there? Those kids again... what do they think this is, a model railway layout? Actually, they look rather good. I could put a few more over there later...

Xenon lights may well have changed my life. Gone is the big motor/big magnet speed freak. Welcome the gentler, aesthetically inclined landscape modeller, oversteering his Le Mans replica past a dodgy cardboard grandstand peopled by splodgy faced spectators. I'm now backtracking through my cars to see what I can illuminate next, and actually there's a whole lot of them... my MRRC Ferraris and Porsche 904, my Slot Classic Aston Martin Zagato, my converted Airfix E-type, my long delayed scratchbuild of a Porsche Carrera 6... Indeed, it might well become my policy not to build anything in future without a Xenon light kit. ■

Alfa Romeo 158/159

BY DAVE YERBURY

Domination by one make in motor racing is not new. Ferrari have been doing it recently and McLaren managed 15 out of 16 with Senna and Prost. McLaren also did it in the Can-Am 1969 season taking 11 out of 11 in one season. But this car is a freak.

Starting life in 1937, born out of the Italian despair at Germany's total domination in the late thirties, the 158 started with just 1.5 litres and 8 cylinders. The unit came from virtually one half of the Tipo 316 V16 unit. From the middle of 1946 to halfway through 1951 the Alfa 158/159 did not manage to lose a race and, just to top it off, during 1950, of 11 races entered all were won, also coming either 2nd or 3rd at the same time. I wonder what Bernie would have done in that situation?

To regain prestige the Italians decided to run their own 1.5 litre races after being destroyed by Mercedes and Auto Union. They were naturally ahead of the game. The Germans were annoyed as they had no 1.5 litre cars to compete with. The 158 was the fastest car to appear in these events in 1938 although it proved unreliable and made no impression on the results.

In 1939 the 158 won every race in which it competed except for the Tripoli G.P which was won by the new Mercedes W165. The new German car was a message to the Italians that they could dominate 1.5 litre racing if they so desired.

Ironically the man who ran the Alfa works team and developed the cars for the first two years would be the man who in the end would bring about their down fall with his Ferrari Tipo 375s.

When Italy entered the war in 1940 seven 158s were hidden in lock ups at Monza, later during the German occupation they were hidden in a cheese factory at Melzo.

After the war Alfa Romeo decided to promote post war recovery by racing their old cars. In June 1946 in the Paris GP at St. Cloud both cars retired but later, at the Turin and

Milan races, they were unbeatable.

1947 saw them contest and win 4 races. The new 158/47 with its larger, low pressure, compressor raised the output to 310 bhp at 7500 rpm. With this output the engine thirst needed an additional fuel tank.

1948 saw Achille Varzi killed in practice for the Swiss GP when he rolled it in the rain. Alfa still raced, with Trossi winning from Wimille who went on to win in the French, Italian and Monza GP s with the dominant team. After scoring 13 consecutive wins Alfa withdrew in 1949 due to financial and technical demands.

Financial support from an Alfa distributor saw them return in 1950, the first season of the new Drivers World Championship with the three Fs - Farina, Fagioli and Fangio.

Fangio won in San Remo while Farina triumphed at Silverstone. Belgium saw Fangio just ahead of Ascari's Ferrari. He went on to win in Monaco, Belgium, France, GP des Nations, and at Pescara. Farina, on the other hand, took the British, Swiss, Bari, International Trophy, and Italian races and the championship. Alfa were on top of the world.

Having seen Ferrari's improvement, Alfa squeezed out another 20 bhp by increasing supercharger pressure and improving the brakes. With almost 400 bhp on tap these twin super-charged engines needed a lot of the 98% Methanol fuel to cool them by cascading it through the engine. Consumption had dropped to an unbelievable 1.6 m.p.g. with extra tanks all over the car. Even with 66 gallons they still had to stop twice in a 300 mile race. I'm sure Bernie would have been impressed by the spectacle.

1951 arrived and Alfa met Ferrari again in Switzerland; Fangio beat Taruffi who was driving the latest 4.5 litre Ferrari. At the Belgium GP Farina won from Ascari's Ferrari. This was Alfa's 27th victory in a row since 1946 (with the exception of the abandoned International trophy at Silverstone, due to rain, with Parnell leading in the Thinwall Special.



Like all good things it came to an end on the 15th July at the British GP. Gonzalez (the Pampas Bull) in the unblown Ferrari 375 won in a straight fight. I know this as I have the programme filled out by my Father who was lucky enough to witness the event. Ascari in another 375 won at Nurburgring. At Monza Farina just failed to halt Ferrari. With 3 wins apiece the Spanish GP at Barcelona's Pedrables circuit would decide the championship. Ferrari blew it by running small diameter wheels which ruined the tyres. Fangio won and with it the World Championship in the Alfa 158/159's swansong. In its final form the 159M the Alfetta's straight 8 engine was running at 42.6 psi producing 425 bhp at 9,300 rpm, about 283 bhp per litre. This figure would remain the pinnacle of GP technology for the next 25 years.

Why make a model of the 158? Well apart from it being a childhood favourite, no one else does [did]. I'm not one to build static models; that's why I use fibre glass because there is room inside for some form of chassis and in this case an Airfix steering unit. The motor was mounted as in the Lancia Ferrari in an earlier Journal. The steering unit screws into a small wooden block in the front underside of the shell.

This was also my first attempt at making a shell complete with moulded in driver and it came out quite well. The exhaust was also incorporated to save work for the potential builder. Obviously there is quite a bit of work involved in finishing off one of my body shells but after the first one it does get easier. I can offer an advice service for the first time builder.

I am always on the trail of the right info or drawings to complete a project and produce new bodies. See sales and wants at the back of the Journal for available bodies. After Vine Fennel's article in the August edition I think a Cooper 500 would be a super jape. All I need is a few good photos or preferably a drawing. Any one out there able to help? ■