

Editor

Brian Rogers

No.215

NSCC

The independent club for everyone interested in all aspects of 'scalextric' type cars in all scales.

February 2000

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MILLENNIUM BUG STRIKES NSCC!

Well the computer didn't expire on the first day of the new year but your editor was struck down by the dreaded flu and spent the first part of January feeling very poorly indeed. However I am now fully recovered and looking forward to meeting some of you at Milton Keynes.

I would be grateful if you could send any contributions for next month's issue as early as possible because the Swopmeet coincides with copy weekend and I would like to get the journal finished on the Saturday. I shall not be a happy bunny if everything comes in at the last minute and I have to work till 2am to get it finished.

It seems I managed to stir a few people into action regarding the Christmas competition - the final entry total was almost respectable. Archie has sifted through them all and three members should shortly be receiving a worthwhile addition to their collections. You will find the answers and winners on page thirteen. I wish you were as keen to write some articles as you are to win Scalextric goodies!

Bob has finally got his computer to talk to mine so the membership page returns this month - just in time as I have run out of crossword puzzles to fill the space. A warm welcome to all the new recruits, I hope you enjoy your membership.

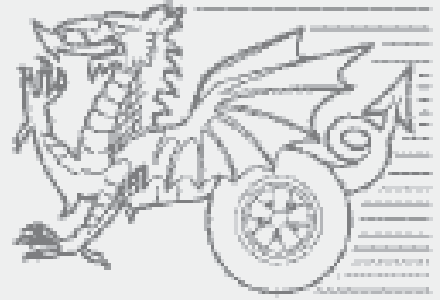
There is plenty to read in this month's issue; Phil Egart has contributed his usual Swopmeet review as well as an informative guide to Mexican cars; Factory Lines contains a complete list of this year's cars from Hornby and there is an excellent article on kit conversions from David Lawson. I never realised there were so many ways to build slotcars, I am even tempted to have a go myself.

Till next month,

Brian

TOP GUIDE

By Richard Davies



ANATOMY OF A FANATICAL COLLECTOR

We live in a world of cars. Go just about anywhere in the civilised world and cars have been there before you, are there at the same time and will be there after you leave. Cars are a way of life. In Japan cars are used for that greatest of all sports, getting the car to move in the indescribable traffic. You wake up, walk to where your car is helplessly stuck in a queue, roll it forward an inch (or if you're really lucky, two inches) and then lock the car and walk to work. If by some chance you wake up one day and find you can move your car a whole foot forward you party as if you've won the lottery. One day Japan may realise that this a sport to rate with bonsai mountain growing and Grand Prix continental drift, but until then we can enjoy this amazing spectator sport.

Anyway, with so many cars about and 6 billion people on the planet, it's more or less inevitable that some of them will choose slot cars to fixate upon. Here's how to recognise the slot car fanatic.

1. His knowledge of any and all model cars is unparalleled. Ask what the designer of the Renault Laguna model's aunt's cousin had for breakfast on the 12th of June 1983 and not only will he know what he ate, but he'll know what time he ate it. The main problem when dealing with such a person is getting a word in edgeways, as he enjoys showing off his vast wisdom.

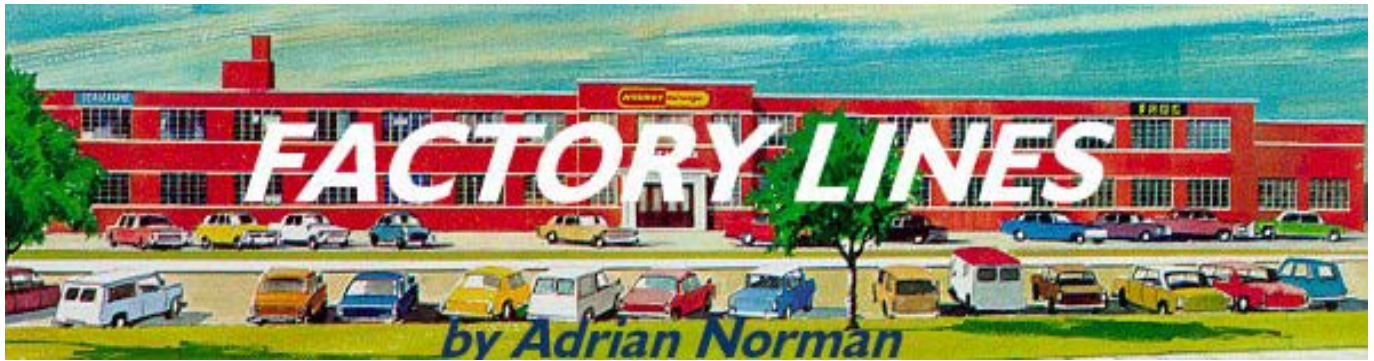
2. There is not a room in the entire house that doesn't have a slot car in it. The bathroom has a display cabinet. The bedroom has a display cabinet. The dining room has two display cabinets and the living room has five. Expect to see lots of screwdrivers scattered around and several cars in pieces all over whatever surface happened to be convenient when he was struck by an idea.

3. It is a common belief that such a fanatic eats off a piece of scalextric track with a screwdriver but this is totally untrue. No true fanatic would be so disrespectful to the track, preferring instead to buy a plate, painting it to look like a piece of track and disguising his fork.

4. He enjoys a happy friendship with the postman, greeting him with delirious joy whenever he arrives with a package. If the postman is female, they're probably living together.

5. He dreams of slot cars. A dream of a slot car being wantonly destroyed by the unenlightened will have him waking up in a cold sweat and unable to sleep for the rest of the night. He is also totally impervious to that which attracts most men, turning off Baywatch despite Pamela Anderson in a skimpy swimsuit to watch a programme about the latest model of the AC Cobra. This will have him glued to the screen, drooling.

You may be wondering how I know all this, but the answer to that is simple. I've known a slot car fanatic for 17 years. He's my father.



COUNTDOWN.

And you thought the countdown to the millennium had finished. No. For us the countdown relates to that moment when we see for the first time what Hornby Hobbies PLC. is releasing for the New Year. Last month, then, was the calm before the storm! So this month, if there is enough room in this publication, I can report to you what is in the new catalogue. Since this year is a significant number, I'll continue this wordy numbers game theme.

FIVE VOWELS AND FOUR CONSONANTS, PLEASE.

Yes, Richard, I've got 'Catalogue'. As with last years landscape format publication this year's follows the same style of glossy pages throughout with 'Edition 41' and '2000' printed on the yellow spine which holds together the 52 colour pages (including cover and as was last years). Two Mercedes CLK cars grace the front and rear covers in typical good action shots. The website address is included now on the front cover along with the Scalextric logo. That's it, plain and simple. Focused! Except that there is no Ford Focus in the catalogue. But never fear, it is due to be released in a month or two. Having seen a production test car I can tell you that the Ford should heighten interest in the rally car section of the product range and give the excellent Impreza some good competition.

POSITIVE ADDITION

Of the cars in the catalogue I think the most visually appealing are the Mercedes CLK, NASCAR, Masterfit Vectra, Belgacom Impreza and the silver and red, road trim, Caterham 7. The NASCAR and Beetle pages certainly evoke a strong and attractive racing theme. I won't describe them; you need to see 'em.

THREE NUMBERS FROM THE TOP, CAROL.....

Question: If Racer Robert has n cars in 1999, how many more cars will he have at the end of 2000?

Answer: $n + 3$, as it stands at the moment!

Disappointing for the racer. There were hopes for a Honda Accord for BTCC fans but nothing transpired there. Some of Hornby Hobbies Ltd. competitors have recently produced F1 offerings with some success leading us to think that Scalextric would respond. However, there are no new F1 cars or substantially new liveries. Unless, of course, there is something in the pipeline! The rest of the range is pretty strong for racers with the excellent Porsche 911 GT1 and the Mercedes CLK cars, the Impreza from the rally stable and the Audi and Laguna touring cars. There is no sight in the catalogue of any more new cars for the range but the factory tells me that there are plans afoot and certainly the Ford Focus will be very welcome.

..... AND N NUMBERS FROM ANYWHERE ELSE, PLEASE, CAROL.

Question 2: If Collector Charlie has n cars in 1999, how many more cars will he have at the end of 2000?

Answer: Sorry, Richard. I don't know. Over to you Carol.

Carols answer: Well Richard, If Charlie has deep pockets and where x = the yet unpublished releases, r = the Racer club specials and c = Collector Centre specials, etc.), it will be $n + x + r + c + 36$.

Simple, really! From the point of view of those of us who like to collect different body styles then the Ford Focus and the two Beetle variants will be your only additions. If you collect everything then there will be three dozen cars to collect at the very least.

**MORE MATHEMATICS: 52 IN TO 2000,
DOESN'T GO!**

Having studied all the new releases it hits me just how much there is in the Scalextric range. There are 36 new cars or liveries from a product range of 70 cars. There are 24 different body moulds. And how many car/car liveries have been dropped? It's surprising. There are 52 that will not be seeing the Millennium.

**MULTIPLICATION: MINI 850 X 40YRS
GIVES A TRUCKLOAD OF FIGURES.**

This is where you get a very long number and multiply it by another very long number. The answer will be large, very large. It measures the number of Minis made by Scalextric. It also measures the fondness the public had for the real car and probably not for the Scalextric versions drivability (not to be unkind). The Mini Cooper served Scalextric well and it will always be remembered by anybody casting their mind back to when they were first introduced to the world of Scalextric. Love them or hate them, you can now look back at the 40th Anniversary Mini as the last of the line. Our Chairman will be sorry to hear it, being an avid Mini collector. Alas, this old friend has now disappeared from the range along with the Leyland Truck that celebrates almost 20 years of service for Scalextric. Some folk who, it seems, will see most of it are the Scalextric figures. Surely the profits from the Mini can provide the pension for these old timers! These figures remain unchanged and must surely be due for retirement from the range soon in favour of new blood!

**Long Division: 849, 998, (etc.,etc. in to 2000
doesn't, go either!**

No, no more trucks in the range and, perhaps thankfully, no chance of a 'head forward' Demon Tweaks version. Another surprise is no Touring Car set. Also, making their exit from the bottom of the range are the DTM touring cars (I heard that! Careful, there may be children present!). Sadly, say goodbye to BMW touring cars, the Lamborghini Diablo, Jaguar XJ220 and Ferrari F40 (except Football specials) sports cars and the Escort Cosworth and Renault Megane from the rally scene. Two oddities I note are that there are no further Mercedes CLK liveries and the C2179/80 Williams FW20 No5 & 6 (in

1999 catalogue) was never unveiled.

**SUBTRACTION: TAKE AWAY A 100+ 55
FROM 1999.**

The passing of 1999 shows up short life cycles for some cars too. Who would have thought that the Ford Mondeo No.55 would be dropped? This was probably the most attractive Mondeo livery the factory had released. Other touring cars that haven't survived are: Audi A4 Engen, TNT Vectra, Blend37 Laguna (C2166) and the two BMW Castrol & Fina cars. Sports cars that didn't see the new decade are the Diablo SV and Diablo Valvoline, the Porsche 911 GT1 Playstation and 100+, and rally cars Subaru Impreza Stomil, C2178 Corolla and Escort works cars.

COMMERCIAL INTERLUDE.

Have a cup of tea and ponder this conundrum.
MARLON DROVE CAR

MORE NUMBERS

I have listed the cars in the order they appear in the catalogue. An '*' in the second column indicates a new car or new livery addition to the range in the 41st catalogue edition but wasn't in edition 40. Yes, a car listed as new may have been available during 1999 (e.g. some of the NASCAR models).

Set Cars

C2319W * Team Shell red Droop nose.

Set C1047 Grand Prix

C2318W * Team Firestone silver/black high nose. Set C1047 Grand Prix

C2240W Subaru Impreza No.3 blue

Set C1033 Rally Racing

C2241W Toyota Corolla No.5 white

Set C1033 Rally Racing

C2299W * Volkswagen Beetle green

Set C1051 Beetle Cup

C2300W * Volkswagen Beetle yellow

Set C1051 Beetle Cup

C2211W Caterham No.98 blue

Set C1034 Caterham Cup

C2212W Caterham No.99 yellow

Set C1034 Caterham Cup

C2220W Jordan Honda Hornet No.9 yellow

Set C1035 Formula One

C2161W Williams Mecachrome FW20 No.1

Set C1035 Formula One

C2081W Mercedes CLK GT1 No.1 silver
Set C1050 Le Mans 24 hr.
C2082W Mercedes CLK GT1 No.2 silver
Set C1050 Le Mans 24 hr.
C2217W * Ford Taurus Exide pink/black
Set C1041T Speedway
C2219W * Ford Taurus Valvoline blue/white
Set C1041T Speedway
C2208W * Ford Taurus Rusty blue/white
Set C1056T Super Speedway
C2143W * Ford Taurus Mobil 1 blue/white
Set C1056T Super Speedway
C2185W * Pontiac G.P. Home Depot red
Set C1042T Super Speedway
C2226W * Pontiac G.P. Interstate green
Set C1042T Super Speedway
Separate Boxed cars
C2255 * Ford Taurus John Deere green
C2217 * Ford Taurus Exide Batteries pink/black
C2219 * Ford Taurus Valvoline blue/white
C2218 * Ford Taurus McDonald's red
C2208 * Ford Taurus Wallace blue/white
C2143 * Ford Taurus Mobil 1 blue/white
C2260 * McLaren MP4/10 Mika silver/black
C2261 * McLaren MP4/10 David silver/black
C2126 Jordan Honda Hornet No.9 yellow
C2127 Jordan Honda Hornet No.10 Yellow
C2161 Williams Mecachrome FW20 No.1 red
C2162 Williams Mecachrome FW20 No.2
C2115 Ferrari 643 No.6 red
C2187 Benetton B193 Playlife No.10 blue
C2112 * Team Agip yellow/black
C2095 Team Bridgestone blue
C2096 Team Minolta red
C2113 Team Avon Tyres white
C2081 Mercedes CLK GT1 No.1 silver
C2082 Mercedes CLK GT1 No.2 silver
C2188 * Porsche 911 GT1 Champion white
C2229 Porsche 911 GT1 Paragon blue
C2190 Porsche 911 GT1 IBM white
C2189 * TVR Speed 12 Esso Ultron white
C2209 * TVR Speed 12 Demon Tweaks red
C2185 TVR Speed 12 Works No.12 black
C2194 TVR Speed 12 Road trim purple
C2145 * Renault Laguna Blend 37 No.5 green
C2167 Renault Laguna D C Cook No.21 white
C2131 * Audi A4 Euro Jever No.14 green
C2107 Audi A4 silver

C2203 * Vauxhall Vectra Masterfit red/white
C2144 * Vauxhall Vectra Westminster black
C2172 * Ford Mondeo Rapid Fit blue/yellow
C2255 * Subaru Impreza Works 99 blue
C2256 * Subaru Impreza Belgacom light blue
C2118 Subaru Impreza WRC No.3 blue
C2173 * Toyota Corolla Works 99 No.3 white
C2184 * Toyota Corolla Privateer red/white
C2119 Toyota Corolla WRC No.5 white
C2273 * Subaru Impreza Police Car white
C2120 Opel Vectra Police Car white
C2121 BMW 328i Police Car white/green
C2233 * VW Beetle Pirelli No.3 red
C2234 * VW Beetle Mobil 1 No.14 green
C2214 * VW Beetle Cabriolet silver
C2215 * VW Beetle Cabriolet blue
C2269 * Lotus 7 No.5 blue
C2270 * Lotus 7 No.8 yellow
C2200 Lotus 7 red
C2230 Lotus 7 green
C2271 * Caterham 7 Road trim silver/red
C2272 * Caterham 7 Road trim green/yellow
C2201 Caterham 7 Coldstream No.27 blue/red
C2231 Caterham 7 Comma No.28 orange
C2117 Audi A4 (Protec) silver
C2116 Vauxhall Vectra white
C2150 Ferrari F40 Liverpool red
C2151 Ferrari F40 Arsenal white/red
C2153 Ferrari F40 Spurs white/blue
C2252 Ferrari F40 Chelsea blue/white
C2149 Ferrari F40 Newcastle black/white
C2148 Ferrari F40 Rangers blue/white
C2147 Ferrari F40 Celtic green/white

MICRO SCALEXTRIC

BACK IN THE CATALOGUE THIS YEAR.
NOTHING NEW. DETAILS NEXT MONTH.

And the crucial conundrum is.....

GLUE A COAT

Now the countdown has finished, we can all go
about planning our year.

Happy racing and collecting.

What a sad lot you are. Jeff Davies tries to tempt barmaids to look at his slotcars and now Adrian admits to being an avid watcher of Countdown. Maybe I should start a "True Confessions" page. Better phone a friend on that one.

SWAPMEET REVIEWS – END OF THE CENTURY!!!

BY PHIL ETGART

As we enter the third millennium (such an over used word already!) it is an appropriate time to wrap up the swapmeet reviews from 1999 and to reflect upon where our hobby has been and to where it is heading

It has been normal practice to review each swapmeet individually. However, with the increasing number of events it is impractical to continue in that manner. Therefore, I propose to adopt the monthly column approach and include points of interest from swapmeets within that format.

Those of you who keep an eye upon such things will be aware that the last swapmeet review was of the Evesham event at the end of September. The first task in hand therefore, is to try and remember the salient points from the SLN-Utrecht, Leeds, Bishops Stortford, Mini Classics-Barcelona and Slotswap-Milton Keynes events. From the post New Year celebrations haze this might not be so easy to do!

The first thing is to dispense with the new release info, a) because there's so much of it that it could fill the newsletter on its own and b) most, if not all, of it has already been covered in the newsletter.

The key items are the limited editions and special commissioned runs that have arrived during that period and, whilst this is not a comprehensive review (difficult as everything is called 'Limited Edition' these days), it is intended to cover the important item that any self respecting 'Scalextric' collector should not be without.

The first of these surfaced at the S.L.N. swapmeet. In commemoration of 5 years of the

club, Hornby Hobbies produced a limited edition TVR. Manufactured in an edition of only 168, C-2302 was finished in British Racing Green with tasteful gold Tampo printing on all panels and on the rear aerofoil. The car also came with a certificate, so in the very unlikely situation that one of these lovely cars comes up for sale ensure that it has its certificate with it!

Bishops Stortford also saw a new limited edition surface. This was a little surprising as it was totally unknown previously and to date no one is clear for whom it was produced!!!

The car in question C-2160 Toyota Corolla – Silver is a numbered Limited Edition, believed to be 1000 cars (My own is No. 0773). The story goes that the cars were produced for "a concession store" whatever that means! In any event whilst by Hornby's own admission the car is not the most accurate model they have ever produced it does look good in silver and it is difficult to track down.

The same weekend saw the first C-2249 'Beatties' 40th Anniversary Minis surface. They were finished in maroon with smart gold Tampo printing and all the trim in gold chrome. Again a limited edition of 1000. However they seem to be in incredibly short supply and rumours suggest that a large proportion of the cars were damaged prior to sale and that in fact there are only around 500 in circulation. It's certainly true to say that the branches in the South East that I have visited were sold out prior to Christmas. Around the same time the Toys-R-Us limited edition Mini also appeared. They are similar to the 'Beatties' Limited Edition in as far as they have the same 40th Anniversary logo on the roof, but are finished in British Racing Green and all the trim is in the more usual silver chrome. The big problem in obtaining this car is that you have to buy an £85 set to obtain it as a free gift and as the set is the bog standard Mini Cooper set it makes it an expensive car to obtain. Watch the classifieds for sets for sale!!!

The 'Mini Classics International Club' swapmeet in Barcelona also saw the production of a commemorative limited edition. As with their previous limited edition, the highly

collectable Pink-Kar Bugatti Type 59 in yellow, this issue was strictly limited to one per member. This model was also based upon a Pink-Kar mould, the Auto Union Type C, which had previously been issued for general release in yellow. This particular issue was moulded in red (a totally exclusive colour, unlike the yellow Bug which was the same colour as one of the 1983 Hornby reissues arranged by Steve DeHaviland) and produced in a numbered Limited Edition of 184, each of which bore the name of the member to whom it was issued. Very few of these models were offered for sale on the day and I believe that only around 12 came into the UK (a number of which have left the country already!). These models are already commanding a fairly hefty premium.

The last Limited Edition that tied into these events was the gold Jaguar XJ220. The car came in a large box with the official Jaguar and XJ220 logos embossed upon it and the car itself was plinth mounted and decorated with black logos commemorating 40 years of Scalextric. The box had a certificate/label attached and was produced in an edition of only 70. Again whilst not seriously expensive this car is already difficult to find (as with the previous 'Slotswap' Limited Edition Maestros).

The S.L.N. swapmeet was a busy affair as usual with collectors and traders in attendance from most parts of Europe. Very rare Scalextric items were in short supply (as seems to be the case most of the time recently), and the main finds were consequently other manufacturers' product. The swapmeet did however produce a very nice medium green C-69 Ferrari 250GT Berlinetta and a heavily restored, but liveable yellow C-68 Aston Martin DB GT.

The NSCC swapmeet in Leeds was its usual interesting affair with a smaller number of both stallholders and attendees than some of the Southern events. However this was more than compensated for as usual by the enthusiasm of those collectors in attendance. For this reason Leeds remains well worth the 400 mile round trip for me! The event itself produced a number of interesting Airfix items including the rarer

type 2 (Keyhole guide) versions of both the Maserati GP and the Mercedes W.125, not to mention a handful of mid 60s hand carved and fibreglass bodied cars including a delightful balsa bodied Ferrari 'Bread Van'.

Bishops Stortford remains one of the most important events on the swapmeet calendar for 'Scalextric' collectors. The highlight of this year's event was probably 'Brian's Auction', which saw a number of lots including framed artwork, Spanish decal sheets including unissued liveries and boxes of car bodies all go under the hammer. There were some incredible bargains with sets going for as little as £1!!! As is customary at Stortford there was a fine display of ultra rarities from David Wells's collection and a track layout on display. Amongst the rarities that changed hands on the day was one of the Monogram 'Thingies', the Assassin in the rarely seen green/gold colour scheme (This doesn't even exist according to the recently published Philippe de Lespinay 'Vintage Slot Cars' book, which coincidentally is well worth obtaining even for those not interested in American Slot Cars). My year was made complete through the acquisition of the black and the white Electras and finally getting my hands on the prototype articulated Tipper Truck that Peter Morley had beaten me to many years before and that I had then lost to Mark Scale when we split up Peter's collection earlier in 1999.

I have to be honest and say that at 'Slotswap 2' I was a little too busy to see what was being offered for sale in any detail, but talking to regular traders and visitors the consensus of opinion was that there was far more early Scalextric to buy than has been normal at most swapmeets this year. As this was also the broad opinion that was voiced of the first event at Uxbridge back in June of 1999 I can only assume that the original objective of trying to set up an event that was a little more focused on collecting obsolete Scalextric (rather than just being a cheap place to buy new product) is working. The next 'Slotswap' event is pencilled in for late Spring/early Summer 2000.

So albeit in slightly condensed and slightly blurred form, that is a brief overview of my perspective of the last key swapmeets of the Second Millennium (hate that word!).

Looking back at the history of our hobby from its modest beginnings through its first 'Golden Age' in the mid/late 1960s, through the dark days of the 1970s, the formalisation of the collecting side of the hobby in the 1980s and the second 'Golden Age' of the late 1990s, it begins to come into focus that, as with every other aspect of life, our hobby is cyclical. Even if we go through a short period of consolidation due to the sheer volume of manufacturers and product that is currently available my belief is that Scalextric has a long and healthy future in front of it. There are two main reasons for this;-

firstly the Internet is finally doing what years of attempts with various overseas distributors could not and opening up those markets to Scalextric. This is particularly evident in America where Slot Car Collectors are beginning to explore the vast array of Scalextric models produced over the years.

Secondly, unlike many 'Collectable' toys, Scalextric is still purchased for and played with by children. As our nostalgia for bygone playthings bought us back to the fold, so it will for the future generations of Collectors currently indulging in bedroom Grand Prix.

Looking forward, my belief is that our hobby has a long and healthy future in front of it and I can hardly wait to see what the 21st century will deliver us.

Happy Collecting!!!!!!

Members letters



Brian

I would like to give a big welcome to the new race circuit Monaco1/32nd Racing Club. This new venture now brings slot car racing to the Southend area. For years we have had to travel to London or even further to have the chance to race on a large circuit.

Southend, till now had only had Southend Scalextric Club which closed in 97 after 7 of it's members, (including myself) were suspected of cheating. This, in my case and I believe the others, was totally untrue.

Now, once again, Southend has a large 6-lane circuit that is being run in a friendly relaxed atmosphere with true competitive racing. Graeme Thoburn has been hard at work over the last 2 years constructing this track which has been eagerly awaited by those in the Southeast who want to race.

It has been built with Ninco track, which is wider than the Scalextric track so overtaking, even on bends, is possible. It is very smooth and based on the shape of Monaco. It is computer controlled and is fitted with light gantry, braking, jump start etc.

The first meeting had its problems but the following meeting was great. The atmosphere was relaxed and friendly, as I said before and racing was of a very good standard. I'm sure Graeme himself will tell you more, (if he gets the time) so I will leave the details to him. A lot of time and money has been spent on this project so support and participation are needed or this club may end up like its predecessor. A big welcome and thank you from all at Brands Hatch.

Doug Graver

.....

Dear Brian,

I read with interest Don Siegel's article 'Peaceful Coexistence' and I would like to add my own view. Having raced slot cars since I was a child using all manner of cars from standard HO to modified 1/24 BSCRA type cars over the last forty years I'm of the opinion it's all one hobby, and recently running the Ninco Challenge has really brought home to me how much all slot car racers, whatever cars they race, have in common, the same passion for our hobby. I've noticed over recent years a move in almost all the BSCRA clubs to run at least one class of standard cars so in the future I see the different elements of our hobby moving closer together. This is why I feel that it's so important to have shared events between the NSCC, BSCC and the BSCRA. It's also hard to draw rigid lines between the different kinds of slot car racing, as most people's racing overlaps these artificial boundaries.

Yours sincerely,

Jeff Davies

Members letters



Dear Brian

After a forced absence AA bodies are back in production with an exciting range of high quality vacformed plastic shells. They all fit either Ninco or Parma Excalibur chassis'.

Unfortunately cottage industries like mine are at a bit of a disadvantage when it comes to costs such as advertising so I am looking for a like minded trade partner to help me market them. If anybody is interested could they give me a ring on 01254 722276.

Regards

Dave Yerbury

Dear Brian

As February is our first anniversary we have arranged to have an open day at our club rooms. There will be a club meeting on Saturday 19th at 6:30pm followed by the open day on Sunday 20th between 11am and 4:30pm. The club is located at 8 Invercraig Place, Charleston, Dundee.

Directions:- Travel on the A90 through Dundee until you come to the Myrekirk roundabout..From the Edinburgh direction turn right and follow road to mini roundabout; turn left; go past B&Q and take the first left. Our rooms are opposite the Post Office in the Charleston Resource Centre. From Aberdeen turn left at the Myrekirk roundabout then follow the previous instructions.

Everybody is invited to come along - bring your cars and try them on our track. There will not be any official racing although you may like to challenge somebody. We look forward to welcoming you to our club.

Roy Butchart

(Dundee Slot Car ---Collector And Racer Club)

Dear Brian

In response to the article in the Nov. newsletter (Members Letters) from Adrian Norman, I enclose the following copies from The Scalextric Association from the early 60's.

In the second catalog (4th edition, 1963) I received there was a small announcement about The Scalextric Association. I sent in an inquiry about it and received a nice letter with all the details about forming a Scalextric Association. As you can see, after 36 years I still have the letter, envelope and all! Since i was only ten years old, putting together a Scalextric Association was a little difficult, especially since I was the only one I knew who had a Scalextric set!

I received my first Scalextric set when I was nine years old in 1962. My fourteen year old son and I still race my two original cars, a Lister Jaguar & an Aston DBR, both with lights.

Our collection has grown over the years and we now have two hundred plus cars and all the buildings, track, and accessories. I must say when my son and I race, we still both grab the Lister Jaguar & Aston DBR, or the Lotus 16 & BRM first. We both like the old cars best!

I really look forward to the newsletter each month. Keep up the good work.

Sincerely,

Tedd Zamjahn

The letter that Tedd enclosed was similar to that published in November but with the addition of an extra section on racing club rules which I will include in a later edition. The best bit, though, is the envelope it came in. I have tried to reproduce it on page 28 - Airmail to America- 2/6 in real money. I wonder what the present cost is?

Dear Brian

Wolverhampton Model Car Club is keen to make contact with any group of enthusiasts or clubs with a view to exploring opportunities to visit each others tracks. The idea is for a Sunday visit and the first suggestion is for a four hour Enduro Race for teams of four, at Wolverhampton, before Easter.

The Club held a four hour Enduro Race for Children in Need, raising over £600, which was enjoyed by all those participating and has prompted us to do it again. The Club track is four lane, 110ft long on Ninco track, with Slotmaster Control and is sponsored by Scale Models.

Anyone interested? Give me a call on 01902 497270.

Power to your elbow!

Yours sincerely

Malcolm Scotto

Dear Brian,

As a “part time trader” I sell Scalextric at commercial toy-fairs as well as the NSCC events. This gives me the opportunity to meet lots of Scalextric enthusiasts who are not members of the NSCC. The majority of these are under 20s with a handful of cars and a temporary home circuit. Those who show an interest usually either belong to, or have heard, of, the Racer club. When I suggest they should join the NSCC, the most common reaction is why?

Now don't get me wrong, I feel the NSCC is not in competition with Racer, however to a youngster with maybe 5 or 6 cars in his/her collection, the promise of a free car when they join Racer is a great temptation – no match for the NSCC's membership badge and car sticker. This leads me to the obvious suggestion, why can't the NSCC encourage new members through the offer of a free car upon joining.

I feel this would be a very cost effective way of encouraging new members. The promise of an extra car will appeal most to enthusiasts with fewer cars ie. with faint symptoms of the Scalextric bug. Are these not the people we are trying to encourage?

There are many details which I haven't addressed e.g.. what about existing members, how will the cars be funded etc. because this is only a SUGGESTION – please don't jump down my throat.

Regards

James Penton

GDay Brian

Re The “Racer” Limited Edition Caterhams.

I wonder how many other Racer Members have missed out on the Caterhams ? I wager a majority of these would be overseas members. I sent off the application a day after I received the magazine, anticipating there may be a reasonable demand for the models. The great distances involved have won out this time, it takes around five days to get a letter to the UK. I guess I can't complain, they are at least sending me the Gold Caterham.

To give you a bit of an insight on what's happening out here in Oz, allow me to have a little whine about the current pricing and supply problems. At the moment we are paying on average \$75 dollars for a standard release Scalextric Model, this equates to about £30 per Car. We were hoping for a reduction in pricing now that the production has moved to China but the new stuff is still around the \$75 mark

Strangely the new SCX Cars are selling for \$40 this equates to around £16. Also the Proslot Product is selling for about \$45 each, which is around £18. Out here in Oz you win on some and lose out big time on others.

Supply problems, don't ask me about supply problems. I am still waiting on the rest of my Senna Collection Models. These are also selling for around \$75.

Sean McCreery

SLOT MASTER FUEL MANAGEMENT

BY ADRIAN NORMAN

At Viking Slot Car Club we have been using the SlotMaster computerised race control system for three years now and have seen many enhancements to the system. The latest is worth reporting on because it opens up a new way of staging races and replicates full size race strategies. The new feature is fuel management. This means that you can now run a Grand Prix, an endurance or NASCAR race and simulate the strategies of fuel consumption. Drive smoothly and get the most out of a tank of fuel but perhaps sacrificing wild acceleration and knife-edge lap times. Perhaps you may decide to go for it at full throttle and hope that a quick splash-and-dash near the end of the race will get you across the line first!

The Slot Master fuel management package has been introduced for the internal PC version of the system. It has been incorporated into an user friendly windows environment that is packed with enhanced features. The system measures the hand throttle voltage for each car, since there is a relationship between the power used by the car's motor and the voltage applied. It also has the advantage of allowing existing customers to easily upgrade to the new system simply by swapping the internal ISA module, without changing any system wiring. The new module uses the false start detect wires to measure the hand throttle voltage.

At the beginning of a race a simulated amount of fuel is given to each car. When the race starts, the system samples the hand throttle voltage at a regular rate and deducts a small amount of fuel in proportion to the voltage applied. The more power sent to the car, the more fuel is used. The amount of fuel left is displayed on the screen and is updated on each lap. When the car runs out of fuel the car's power is turned off and that driver's race is

terminated. Each driver is also able to make pit stops and take on fuel. If the driver stops the car directly after the track lap sensor, then a pit stop will be implemented and the car will be refuelled. The driver can watch the tank level rise as the fuel is pumped in. The pit stop can be aborted any time simply by applying the power to the car. Two warning levels have been introduced, a blue level (yellow was not very visible) and a red level. These levels are a programmable option within the software and are indicated by appropriate colour changes of the fuel level numbers. The external leader board LED's can also be programmed to flash on and off when these warning levels have been reached, if the driver cannot see the computer screen.

At the end of a race it is also possible for each driver to see the amount of fuel he has used besides the amount of fuel left in the tank. Many options exist for setting up the fuel management parameters. These consist of the following: -

The size of the fuel tank in litres together with the initial fuel load.

The time of the pit stop refuelling window.

The burn rate in litres per (volt/10) per second

Burn rate additions to compensate for the tank level going down and getting lighter.

An exponent value to the throttle voltage measured. This method is used to provide a non-linearity in the fuel consumption to reflect real cars usage

Red and Blue warning levels in litres.

Warning level at which leader lights will flash.

Leader light flash rate.

Pit stop refuel rate in litres per second.

Sample rate to compensate for slow speed PCs

One bonus feature that has been implemented is the ability to record and store all the captured throttle voltage readings for one lap. This data is stored in a format suitable for direct transfer into Microsoft Excel or equivalent. The data will consist of the time stamp in seconds plus the voltage read for each driver. In this way drivers can compare their throttle settings using graphs to understand how and where the best drivers achieve the most speed.

The data can be very useful for comparing your throttle usage against an opponent or if you are comparing different set ups you may be making to your car. When you use the graph you'll recognize the moment when the car is at

13 volts full throttle and the driver suddenly released the throttle and the voltage dropped to zero volts. This would usually represent the braking zone before a corner. You can then determine whether the driver is braking too early or late. Additionally, you can determine whether your tyres are not gripping when the voltage is higher than the other lanes at a given point but your graph line is losing time against the other lanes. Therefore you can experiment with changing tyres, slowing down or just accepting that you are beaten!

So, whether you need to discover why, when and how you are being left behind or how you can stay ahead on the track this performance graph is a real help.

PORSCHE GT2 TUILES

BY JEFF DAVIES

I refuse to call this car the Porno Porsche, a title I have seen many times in the journal as I'm sure it was not entered at Le Mans under this name. This is the second of the two shapes of Proslot Porsche GT2s, having a slightly different bodyshell to the Finacor and Chereau, which I prefer, with different front and rear spoilers. Mechanically it is identical to the earlier Porsche GT2s, apart from the fact it has an EVO-1 engine.

The sample car I received from Monarch Lines arrived just in time to go in my Christmas stocking as my wife had totally refused to buy me one more car, and I did open the parcel on Christmas day. I have a problem with this one. On the one hand, it's very cleverly tampo printed over the entire length of the body with row after

row of boobs (I can't believe I just wrote that) along with a series of tacky little pictures, printed on the bonnet, the roof, either door and the rear spoiler, but, on the other hand I feel this is a subject best left off car artwork. Having said that, the work involved in tampo printing this design must have been immense and these at some point are going to be incredibly rare. Several people have already asked me where they can buy one. I also believe it's unlikely that another car will be tampo printed in this sort of design, so you pay your money and take your choice, but it's not personally to my own taste. I'm really glad I didn't have to drive this car around Le Mans, I'd have died of embarrassment.

Yes Jeff, but what did the barmaid think of it?

WHOOOPS! DEPARTMENT

There was a small hiccup in last month's issue. The article by Don Siegel entitled "Peaceful Coexistence" was originally published in an American magazine called Slot Car Enthusiast. I meant to print the usual copyright acknowledgement of this, but I failed to notice that the computer had thrown a wobbly and dumped it off the bottom of the page. Apologies to all concerned.

AN INSIGHT INTO MEXICAN SCALEXTRIC

BY PHIL ETGART

The intention of this article is to provide a degree of insight into the Scalextric models manufactured by the Mexican subsidiary of Exin.

The company traded as Exin-Mex and the factory itself was Bajeco at San Lorenzo Tlalteniango. Actually documenting this history of Mexican productions definitively is difficult and the article is put together from reliable lists of cars in collections, other items known to exist, general information gathered from people exposed to the Mexican factory and comments from one ex employee.

It is reasonable to assume that the article will omit information and may contain inaccuracies, but hopefully it will provide a degree of insight into the Scalextric output of the Exin-Mex factory.

The precise date that production began is unclear, but based on the fact that Mexican cars were largely produced using Spanish tooling, it is reasonable to assume that they entered production there after production in Spain. As the earliest Spanish cars produced in Mexico were from the late 60s early 70s Spanish range (E-Type, 917 / 330GT etc) it is reasonable to assume production didn't commence until at least 1969 (i.e. after the introduction of the Spanish swivel guide versions of the Cooper & Ferrari 156). The Mexican numbering was identical to the Spanish, but the 4000 series was prefixed by a 5 instead (4053 Renault 2000 became 5053 for the Mexican market). The use of this numbering system supports the introduction of the Mexican range around 1973, the point at which C numbers ceased to be used in Spain. However one early catalogue lists cars as car 001 to 021, and therefore a slightly earlier beginning is possible.

Mexican cars generally turn up in fairly poor condition. Partly the product of poor quality manufacturing, whilst some cars have just been used and abused.

It is difficult to say why Mexican Scalextric is still relatively scarce, but I have a theory which suggests three possible reasons. Firstly Mexico (and South America in general) has a fairly unstable economy. A bi-product of this is extreme financial polarisation (i.e. either you're very rich or more likely chronically poor). A consequence of this is that the people who could afford Scalextric probably had no need to realise it's residual value after finishing playing with it. Therefore it's likely that much of the surviving product may not find its way to the market. Secondly Mexico is subject to fairly severe earthquakes, and it is probable that a great deal of models made did not survive. Finally with the politics of South America as they are, it is unlikely that prior to the event of the internet there would be an awareness of Scalextric collectability, and those people with it would not necessarily have the ability to establish contacts and export any items found. Until the mid 1990s the only significant source of Mexican cars was Spain. This is believed to be due to the fact that the tooling and remaining stock were shipped back to Spain when the Mexican factory closed. Some models have appeared direct from Mexico since an NSCC member established contacts there, and more recently via the net.

The Mexican factory produced sets, individually boxed cars, accessories and a small number of catalogues. Early sets were sold in wooden boxes. However why wooden boxes were used in the early days, rather than the familiar card ones, is unclear.

It is extremely difficult to provide a definitive list or which sets do and don't exist, but a number of sets have surfaced over the years. These include one containing two Lancia Stratos, one containing a pair of Cooper Climax G.P cars, another containing a pair of Minis, one with a pair of Dragsters and a four lane set containing two Stratos and two Brabham BT46.

The Scalextric pages in an Exin-Mex catalogue show two sets. Set 50550 'Exin Premio 055' which contains two Renault 5's, and set 50210 'Gran Premio 021' which is a figure of 8 track containing the unlikely pairing of a Renault 5 and a Brabham BT46.

The cars themselves came in a similar box to the mid 70s UK cars (C52/126 etc). The plastic domed top box which was slightly different to the UK version with additional ribbing on the base of some and a cut out in the lid of others to accommodate the nose of the Corvette!. Cars came fitted with either the RX (X04) type motor, or with a 'Johnson' can motor (using special mounting brackets). Whilst most cars were manufactured using identical tooling to the Spanish cars the early GP cars (C39 Ferrari 156. C38 Cooper Climax) came fitted with a silver chrome rear aerofoil similar to design to the wing fitted to power sledge cars in the UK but with wider spacing on the legs. Naturally this is one of the parts that is often missing from these cars. The only car that appears to have had the tooling specially manufactured is the Porsche 935. The underpan of the Spanish version is too long to fit the body of the Mexican cars, although this could just be attributable to different shrinkage rates during cooling.

The quality of plastic used seems to be significantly poorer/weaker than in Spain, and consequently cars often suffer significant damage, either cracked, split, pieces broken out or general warpage. Some cars also appear in better quality 'Hard' plastic. There seems to be no logic to the colours in which cars were manufactured, and it seems as though cars were moulded in whatever colours the factory felt like using on the day! Most cars seem to exist in either orange or mid blue (several shades lighter than the Hong Kong TR 4A), but beyond that it is hard to be sure which colour cars were manufactured in. Often colours exist a shade or two apart but this is believed to be poor quality control rather than deliberate colour variations.

The list at the end of this article attempts to document cars and colours that are known to exist, but it is unlikely that it is comprehensive.

I have used UK/Spanish reference numbers for ease of documentation. The Mexican numbers noted are where I have been able to track them.

It is worth noting that the roofs (C32/45) appear to have been totally interchangeable. Therefore the C32 Mercedes Coupe and C45 Mini Cooper appeared with a variety of different colour combinations (my favourite Mini being orange with a yellow roof).

In common with Spain it appears cars were also available as individual components. In addition to the range of Spanish accessories included, the Grande Bridge appears (the tooling for which presumably found it's way to Mexico after the Exin factory in Barcelona had finished with it, having borrowed it from Havant originally). This seems to be the only piece of UK tooling that ended up in Mexico. The unusual thing about the Grande Bridge is that rather than the normal UK/French/Spanish beige and grey colour it was moulded in red!!

The only models from the Spanish tooling for cars manufactured between 1968 and 1983 that haven't surfaced yet from Mexico are the CF31 Seat TC600, the 4059 Lotus MKIV. Whilst it is by no means definite, it would seem reasonable to assume that for some reason, these cars were not manufactured in Mexico.

Whilst it is difficult to establish a starting point for Mexican Scalextric (possibly around 1973 once the Barcelona factory had ceased manufacturing for the UK E-Type 917 / 330 GT / 250 SL / Honda / BRM / McLaren etc). It seems likely from the small number of colours that have surfaced, that the last few Mexican cars were not in production for long, and thus an end date around 1983/4 seems likely.

The information in this article has been gathered over the course of many months. The help of Peter Morley, David Harkin, Roger Petri, Naseem Mahoney, Brian Walters and the documentation in previous newsletters of Mexican finds have been of great help. If you have any additional information to contribute please get in contact, as this is the only way we will build an understanding of the output of Exin-Mex and those unusual Scalextric cars 'Hecho En Mexico'!

KNOWN MEXICAN CARS

UK/ Spanish Ref	Mexican Ref	Name	Colours								
			Red	Blue	Green	White	Silver	Orange	Yellow	Black	Others
C34	CAR 001	Jaguar E Type	✓	✓	✓	✓					
C35	CAR 002	GT 40	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		
C36	CAR 003	Honda F1	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
C37	CAR 004	BRM F1	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		
C40	CAR 005	Chaparral	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		
C41	CAR 006	Ferrari 330 GT	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		Beige
C43	CAR 007	McLaren F1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
C44	CAR 008	Mercedes W 111	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		
C45	CAR 009	Mini Cooper	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
C46	CAR 010	Porsche 917 K	✓	Mid & Lt	✓	✓		✓	✓		
C47	CAR 011	Sigma	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Gold
C48	CAR 012	Tyrell Ford	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	
4049	CAR 013/5049	Mustang	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		
4050	CAR 014/5049	Corvette	✓	Mid	✓				✓		
4051	CAR 015/5049	Porsche	✓	Mid	✓	✓		✓	✓		
4052	CAR 016/5049	Ferrari B3 F1	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	Purple
4053	CAR 017/5049	Alpine Renault 2000 Turbo	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		
4054	CAR 018/5049	Tyrell P34	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
C42	CAR 019	Fiat Abarth TC 850	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		
C32	CAR 020	Mercedes 250SL Coupe	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			
C33	CAR 021	Mercedes 250SL	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			
4055	5055	Lancia Stratos	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		
4056	5056	Brabham BT46	✓			✓			✓		
4057	5057	Ford Fiesta	✓						✓		
4058	5058	Renault 5	✓						✓		
4067	5067	Porsche 935 (Flatnose)		✓					✓		
4068	5068	Williams FW07		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	
C38	5538	Climax Cooper	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
C39	5539	Ferrari 156	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		



SCALEXTRIC FRANKED ENVELOPE FROM 1965

See letter on page 20

RACING AND REMINISCING

BY DAVID NUNN

During the Christmas break some friends joined me for some slot racing on my home circuit. This consisted of 44 feet of Ninco track with borders almost everywhere. The great advantage of this set up is that you can run 1/24th scale cars and Scalextric lorries as well as an assortment of cars from most stables.

The 1/24th Porsche GTI and Panoz from Carrera are a joy to watch as well as race. They are well matched and very stable with a handling similar to Ninco 1/32nd models. When pushed too hard they tend to jackknife and lock rather than de-slot but this helps prevent damage to the bodywork.

We ran rather than raced the old Leyland trucks which are extremely top heavy. If not for the track borders the trailers would have tipped as the rear wheels trail unfaithfully when cornering on the inside lane. How anyone managed to run these on Scalextric track is beyond me.

The new Lotus 7 runs extremely well despite the tyres being rather thin in comparison with most other modern cars. Its light weight and low centre of gravity coupled with a fairly strong magnet give it good handling characteristics. The manufacturing quality is excellent and it is a pretty car.

SCX have produced the fastest car I have ever used. It is the Telefonica Minardi F1 and is quite handsome in blue and silver with black wheels. The magnet is small but immensely strong giving the car an absolutely superb turn of speed that even the Fly cars could not compete with. The double braids and 2 centimetre guide blade make this car unbeatable. The only drawback is that nothing can match it!

Those club members who run 1960s cars such as the Aston Martin GT and D type Jaguar should definitely convert to Ninco track. Fellow club member and old friend Paul Strange

brought along a selection of his favourites and was able to run an Aston for at least 10 laps without de-slotting or spinning out. This was never possible on my old Scalextric circuit and we found that even old hard tyres had much better traction on this track. An added bonus is that the black plastic sleeve inside the track slot gives a virtually seamless ride for the car with no clicks, bumps or dips on the straight section.

Paul also runs Airfix cars which I have always found hard to use due to their hard skinny tyres. With a little care, however, they purred around the track quite majestically. The Ford Zephyr and Sunbeam Rapier looked particularly nice and very British. I ought to warn Airfix fans at this juncture that the guides need to be gently filed to a lesser width in order to accommodate Ninco track. Likewise the guides on Fleischmann and Marklin models need some work but it is worth the effort.

My old Monogram, Revell and Aurora cars ran reasonably well and could be raced against each other but their poor old tyres rather let them down. Getting replacements for some older models can be a real headache but I suppose we should be grateful that our hobby has undergone a renaissance in the last decade.

I retain a high degree of loyalty and respect for the Scalextric company as they pioneered slot car racing and battled through the mid 70s when sales dropped through the floor. Nevertheless they have used the same track design for 30 years and should beware of resting on their laurels as did IBM and Gestetner.

It seems a pity to end on such a downbeat note but I would like to air one final thought. Many of the best examples of old and scarce cars are now disappearing overseas at an alarming rate. Collectors from around the globe have access via the internet to swipe the cream of the crop and of course these cars will almost certainly never come on to the home market again. So the next time you visit a swopmeet bear in mind that the older models may not have the glamour of a luminescent Fly Dodge Viper but they have stood the test of time and should be treasured, preserved and of course raced.

GUIDE TO PICK UPS

BY TONY SECCHI

In August last year I submitted an article on pick ups entitled 'Pins and Flags.' Since then I have had some further observations - in particular on the easy fit guide blade installed in the current range of Scalextric cars.

As we use Scalextric running gear on our competition cars this has a very significant bearing on these observations. My fellow competitors (and I) have had trouble with this configuration centring on the inconsistency of performance inherent in the design. Mind you, when they work they work well, but when they don't —

The first problem that we found was that until the braids flatten with some use they are prone to deslot the car too easily.

We overcome this problem by:-

- (1) trimming the blade depth at point 'A' (by approx. 1mm)
- (2) by folding the rear braid portion backwards to give one, not two thicknesses underneath the blade platform 'B' .

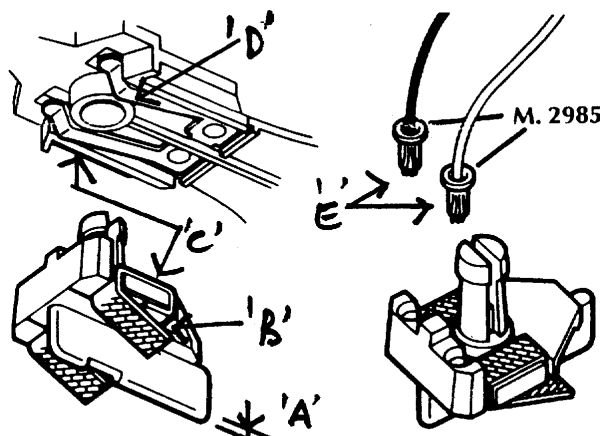
The second problem is twofold — the contact between the top of the braid and the spring contacts in the chassis 'C' can be very stiff on first usage causing the car to spin (or even catapult) out of control on the entry to tight turns.. Conversely this contact can get loose in long usage and cause poor contact and slow running.

In the first instance a little care in ensuring that the braid is flat and level on top of the blade platform and a (very) slight easing upwards of the chassis contacts 'D' can overcome this. In the second instance the wear of long usage will have flattened the braids and pushed the spring contacts further up into the chassis, changing the profile. Adjusting the position of these contacts to the original and the fitting of a new guide (or set of braids) usually cures this.

Nowadays, when purchasing a new Scalextric model you get a couple of spare easy fit guides and it is very interesting to fit these and note how performance and roadholding are affected — you could be surprised. On some models just changing the pick up can change the car out of all recognition. I have just done this with a Scalextric TVR GT Speed 12 and although it took four changes of pick up it worked and ultimately set its own fastest time on each of the Lanes by over 1.5 seconds

Of course, these pick ups can be converted to the previous standard connection by drilling out and removing the spring contacts and using the slots in the chassis/underpan alongside the pick up mounting collar. The motor wire ends are then cut off and replaced by Scalextric eyelets 'E' and passed through said slots. The top of the pick up blade has two circular recesses to accommodate connection to the braids.

Some of my friends have done this with great success, but if your club rules state that cars must be run box standard then some of the previous text maybe of interest.



AIRFIX KIT E-TYPE JAGUAR CONVERSION

BY DAVID LAWSON



Like a lot of people I get frustrated by some of my favourite cars not being available as slot racers or in some cases only available at highly collectable prices.

Although some 1/32 scale Airfix kits have been in the shops, and recently an increasing number of re-releases have become available, it is only since the excellent range of Ninco cars has provided a good source of chassis and wheels that it has become easy to build some of the classic cars that appeal to me.

Recently I have been able to convert Airfix VW Beetles, Austin Healey-Sprites and Ferrari 250LM's etc. Other good sources of donor bodysHELLS come from Revell's "easy-kit" range with their excellent Shelby Cobra, AMT's range of Nascars and Gunze Sangyo's range of classic American 1950's gas guzzlers complete with plenty of chrome and tail-fins!

In moments of madness I even motorise Tamiya 1/24 and 1/20 kits, did you know for example that a Ninco Ferrari 166 chassis with McLaren F1 GTR wheels drops into a Tamiya 1/24 Mini-Cooper kit body with minimal modification.

Taking this theme a bit further you can motorise the Tamiya Lotus 25 and the current Formula Ones complete with driver figures and drive them on the middle two lanes of a 4 lane circuit, the kit wheels and tyres don't have high levels of grip but in the Lotus 25s case this produces a very realistic level of performance.

Carrying out these conversions is not an exact science and there is quite a degree of improvisation throughout the build process as little problems occur which you have to overcome but after you've carried out a few you develop a style that makes you approach each new project in a similar way and be more able to anticipate problems and plan for them.



My method for a typical conversion is as follows:-

First choose your subject, the more passionate you feel about the real car the better as this will provide the motivation to see you through the awkward moments in the project when all you want to do is give up, swear and throw the model in the bin!

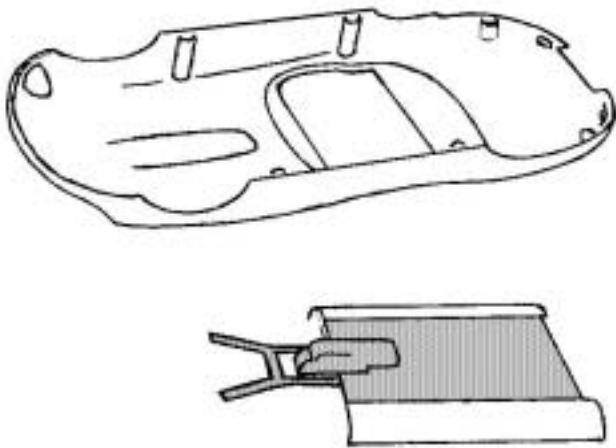
I've always loved the lightweight E-Type Jaguar from the mid 1960's GT racing and decided to have a go at converting the Airfix kit to represent the car entered for Le Mans in 1963 by Briggs Cunningham. My choice was governed by the striking colour scheme. This car finished ninth overall, completing 2372.45 miles at an average speed of 98.85mph winning the 4-litre class in the process.

For this conversion I used a Ninco Porsche 356 chassis as it gave me a suitably narrow track for the axles and the wheels bear a resemblance to the steel wheels that were used on the racing D and E-Type Jaguars.

Starting on the body you first have to prepare the upper body, bottom sections of the nose and tail and the side sections of the monocoque/sills for gluing and filling to form a one-piece body shell suitable for a slot racer.

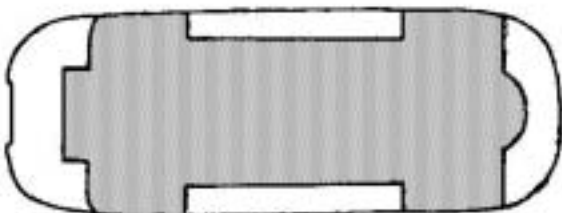


Cut away the plastic (shaded grey) from the front and rear body sections leaving just the outer body panels but don't glue them to the upper body yet.



Cut the centre section (shaded grey) out of the lower body/chassis and glue the remaining sills to the upper body with a strengthening piece of scrap plastic along the inside of the join.

The cut out areas on the front and rear underbody pieces enable the chassis and guide to fit into this very slim and shallow body. My measurements were a rectangle of 29mm x 8mm at the rear and an arc at the front with a maximum depth of 7mm



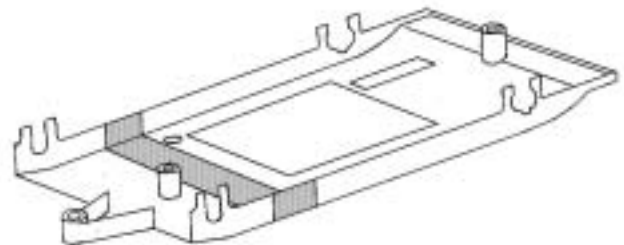
Dry fit these pieces and when you are satisfied that the chassis is positioned correctly within the body you can then glue them in place.

Once hardened, fill the seams of the body panels - I use Milliput putty but it's a personal choice and we all have our favourite materials - Leave overnight before sanding smooth with fine Wet & Dry prior to painting.

With this conversion I sanded the textured cloth effect smooth on the roof to simulate a hard top prior to painting also adding a racing fuel filler cap in the top of the boot and some ducting to the roof and boot as well but I won't detail this as it is specific to this car and you can obviously build most kit conversions "from the box".

Cut the chassis at a point between the front body mounting post and the hole for the motor mount locating screw and add a 9mm fillet of plastic sheet (shown shaded grey on the diagram below) to extend the wheelbase to 76.5mm.

Also remove all the parts of the chassis that fit the shape of the Porsche so you are left with just the central section, which measures 101mm x 28mm and looks like the diagram below.



The E-Type is a typically narrow 1960s motor car and to fit the axles to this model you need to reduce the track to 31mm. This involves cutting the axles and also filing a little material off the inside of the wheel hubs so that they clear the bodywork and don't rub on the chassis.

To fit the body to the chassis I find Plastruct plastic tubing is ideal. Offer the body to the chassis and gauge the approximate length of the mounting posts. Cut them to size allowing a couple of millimetres extra to be safe, attach these posts to the chassis with their screws and

put the body in place. Look at the way the wheels sit in the wheel arches adjust the ride height by filing off tiny amounts of the posts until you are satisfied with the result. This can take several attempts to get it just right, but it's worth taking your time as the way a car sits on the road is a major factor in getting a model to look "right".

Put a drop of 5-minute epoxy glue on each of the posts and place the body onto the chassis, position it so that all the wheels fit correctly in the wheel arches and the body is sitting level to the ground. Now leave the model to sit for an hour or so before removing the screws and you are left with the body complete with the mounting posts in position. Put a further generous amount of epoxy around both the posts to form a strengthening "shoulder".

Cut out a thin sheet of Plastruct to blank in the interior, glue a driver figure of your choice to this, I used the Ninco figure from the Porsche, having reduced it to head and shoulders to fit.

Spray the body, fit the small details and apply the decals of your choice. After 24 hours I gave it a couple of coats of clear lacquer to protect the finish.

The car performs extremely well and is very fast on the main straight at the Southend Slot Racing Club's track.

To preserve the condition of my models I display them in Ninco Motorsport boxes having removed the original labels and applying the cars title with Letraset rub down lettering to the base.

SLOT CAR RACING AT THE 'ALLY PALLY'

A date well worth putting into your diary, if you are a classic car and/or slot car enthusiast, is the 18th & 19th March 2000. Why? Firstly, that is the date for the London Classic Motor Show at the Alexandra Palace, North London. Secondly, I shall be participating at that show with my 12' x 6' four lane slot car (Scalextric) track layout. Thirdly, those attending the show will have the chance to win some fantastic prizes and contribute to a worthwhile charitable cause. This will be the third show I have attended since the completion of my track last summer - and the first that does not clash with an NSCC swopmeet! The first show I did was a Formula One show in July, for which I organised a prize draw for those who raced on the track. A ride in a road going Ferrari plus £250 worth of prizes were up for grabs! The Ferrari prize (courtesy of Talacrest - Europe's Leading Ferrari Specialist) was won by a nine year old boy who had a half hour ride in a £150,000+ Ferrari F40 no less! The other show was the London Sports Car Show in September. Unfortunately, I had insufficient time to organise prizes for that particular show.

As all proceeds from racing at the Classic Motor Show will be donated to the 'Help a London Child' charity, I have organised a prize draw in conjunction with my track layout. This will probably be a first/second/third place format, which should provide everyone with the chance to win something, regardless of age or ability. Although a fee will be charged to race, entry into the prize draw will be free. The main prize will undoubtedly be the exclusive VIP tour of Nick Mason's Ten Tenths race and classic car collection in Central London. Nick has not only kindly donated that prize, but he will also donate and sign a copy of his 'Into the Red' book & CD for the lucky winner. The book describes the cars in his collection in both words and pictures. The accompanying CD provides the listener with the evocative sounds of the cars as they are track tested - check out that V16 BRM - glorious stuff! Access to the Ten Tenths collection is not available to the public, so I am

both delighted and honoured to be able to offer such a unique prize. For the uninitiated, Nick Mason is probably best known as the drummer in the legendary rock group Pink Floyd. However, he is also a renowned car enthusiast, historic race driver and a pre-eminent figure within the historic/classic car fraternity. He owns some very important classic racing cars, most notable of which has to be his early sixties Ferrari 250 GTO. That car alone must be worth several million pounds! The quarterly Motorsport Collector magazine featured his collection in issue six.

SHEV Design, a manufacturer of toilet seats with a theme, i.e. fishing, golfing and motoring, will hopefully design and donate a specially commissioned 'one off' motoring theme seat for the show. Don't laugh, ex-world champion Jackie Stewart was presented with a Stewart tartan version recently to celebrate his 60th birthday, he now has it mounted on a wall! So, if it is good enough for him (and it should be as standard items start at £150), then it is good enough to be included in the prize draw. Nik Curry, a motor racing artist I met at the recent London Motor Show, is donating and signing a set of his prints, and Duke Video will donate five 'Best of British' classic car and race driver videos. Scalextric author Roger Gillham has agreed to sign a copy of his 4th edition 'Scalextric - Cars and Accessories, Past and Present' book for inclusion in the prize draw.

And finally! For those enthusiasts with a rather more competitive disposition, there will be the opportunity to win the fastest race time of the day prize. Caterham Cup Scalextric sets, courtesy of Hornby Hobbies, will be offered to the 'FTD' winners on each day of the show, plus a copy of the S-Plan Slot Track Circuit Designer software, which Andy Sykes has kindly donated. So, forget about washing the car, or DIYing that weekend - come and see some great classic cars, and race for charity. The prizes can only be won by having a race on my track layout. So remember, if you don't race, you won't win. See you there!

THE NINCO CHALLENGE -

THE BSCRA STRIKES BACK

BY JEFF DAVIES

Tension was mounting in both camps after a whole flurry of excited phone calls with each side threatening to annihilate the other at the return match to be held in Abergavenny on Sunday the 18th of January. Dave Mayo was particularly confident having drafted in several serious racers from all over the country in an attempt to pull back the nine point deficit they suffered last October in the opening round. On the day both teams arrived at the Aberstone track at around 10am, with practice at 10.30. The Wye Valley team consisted of: myself, Richard Davies, Phil Barry and Andy Meredith with the BSCRA team consisting of: Dave Mayo, Nigel Barrow, Ross Barrow, Carl Dale, David Robins and David P. The tension in the air was unbelievable with more electricity being generated than was running through the track. The BSCRA knew they had to win this one or it was all over.

Ninco had very kindly supplied a considerable number of Porsche GT3s for the event and the way these were driven in practice I had serious doubts whether we would have any cars left by lunchtime as everybody seemed intent on it being a demolition derby. The racing started after a familiarisation period of five minutes with the actual race cars. The first twelve races were to be run with no magnets in the cars. Richard proceeded to set the tone for the morning races, crashing into the other three cars on the first corner. Fortunately for him, the marshals put him back on first so he won. I won the next race and if anything, the tension in the room visibly increased with the BSCRA team realising they had a difficult task on their hands. Dave Mayo was not a happy man.

After twelve of the most enjoyable and interesting races I've had for many years, in which just about everybody won a race the points were 62 to Wye Valley Racing and 57 to

the BSCRA. After an enjoyable lunch, racing resumed with the BSCRA needing to pull back 14 points to draw level. We made a fatal mistake; we put the magnets back in the cars. They were now more suited to the BSCRA racer's driving style.

As the races proceeded, it became obvious the BSCRA was gaining points hand over fist. This was largely my own fault, having come last in three consecutive races did not help my team greatly!! Despite this, Phil Barry was having a wonderful afternoon, scoring the most individual points and later on that afternoon breaking the lap record. Dave Mayo was now a very happy man. After winning one particularly close and exciting race he remarked how both team's drivers shared the same commitment, skill and enthusiasm.

I could not believe the GT3s had not been totally destroyed by this time as several had left the track at such a velocity they had cleared the tall track border and hit the floor, yet we didn't even break off a wing mirror. At the end of the 24th race Dave Mayo's team, just by the skin of their teeth and some damn good driving, managed to level the score with both teams ending on exactly the same number of points after the two rounds.

Carl Dale also happens to be the manager of the Country's biggest commercial raceway Millstream Raceway which has amazing facilities with three monster tracks. It was agreed that the deciding round of the Ninco Challenge would be held at Millstream Raceway, and to make this event a showcase for British slot car racing with the event being supported by both the BSCRA and the BSCC. We also intend to run a media competition at this final round, inviting motoring press, TV and newspapers to both cover the event and compete at this raceway in a rally style competition. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the day and the real winner was slot car racing as events between all three organisations will now take place on a regular basis. I would like to thank Glynn Pearson of Riko for his tremendous support without which this competition just wouldn't have happened.