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BY SUBSCRIPTION ONLY

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The NSCC

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The independent club for slot-car enthusiasts

NSCC 2 - the sequel?

I was extremely flattered this month to receive an email from the Editor of another club newsletter requesting some assistance with desktop publishing. Although I am strictly an amateur, I am as vain as the next man and it really does the ego a power of good when somebody else thinks your efforts are worth seeking advice on.

However, the name of the club asking for help really cracked me up - The NSCC! It is no secret that, although I am very enthusiastic about our hobby, I do find the idea of grown men playing with toy plastic cars more than a little amusing. What then to make of the National Subbuteo Collectors Club? Grown men playing with toy plastic footballers.....!

I can see it now - pitch test of the latest Manchester United strip; the never ending search for the 'Holy Subbuteo Grail' of the 1930 Blackpool team with a cardboard Stanley Mathews; the rip-off prices being charged for limited edition David Beckhams! Perhaps we ought to combine the two clubs and have inter-discipline challenges; we could beat them at slot-racing and they could wallop us 27- 0 at tabletop football. Mind you, if I was in the team we would probably lose both events.

Enough of this frivolity; as soon as I have finished this editorial I am off to indulge in the serious hobby of coarse angling. Consider - get up before dawn; sit beside a lake in all weathers; throw several pounds worth of bait into the water and stare at a plastic float for hours on end. Eventually, if I am skilful enough, I shall hook a fish; play it for several minutes; steer it into the landing net and then..... Put it back into the water! Perhaps toy plastic cars and footballers are not quite so silly as I thought. After all there is the Airline Sick Bag (unused) Collectors Society available for the seriously sad. No, I didn't make that one up either!

And Finally - please note the early deadline for next month; I really don't want to be compiling this thing over the bank holiday weekend!

Till next month
Brian

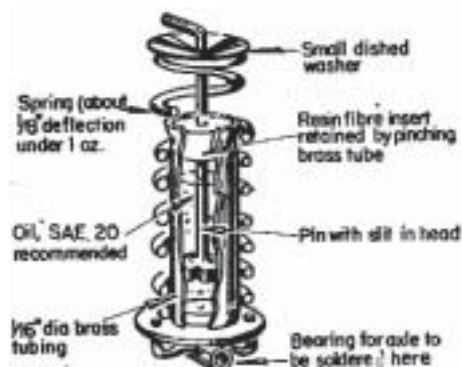
Westcountry rambles

BY VINE FENNEL

Another snippet in Brian's editorial in May put me on to something else in the 'old' mags. The bit about Fly introducing working suspension et al jogged a memory of a couple of bits I had seen in Dave's magazines regarding suspension. Hopefully the pictures will be clear enough for you to make them out. The original picture quality isn't that good so they might not reproduce very well. The first item dates from May 1960 and is entitled:

1/32 oil-damped telescopic shock absorbers

These units are fitted on a Vanwall, giving softish but controlled suspension and really good road adhesion, especially with no front springing (or very firm springing) to minimise roll. Each damper requires a piece of 1/16in. i.d. brass tube, a pin with a head with is a good slide fit in the tube, a brass disc, a dished washer, a fibre washer, the spring, and a scrap of wire or pin to take the axle bearing. Solder the disc to the bottom of the tube and add the wire stirrup for the axle bearing. File a tiny nick in the pin head with a knife-edge needle file. Fit the fibre washer to the pin; the original used a scrap of 1/16in, fibre drilled to slide on the pin, the fibre then being filed to a tight push fit in the tube. The tube is 3/4-filled with S.A.E. 20 motor oil, the pin and fibre inserted, and the top of the tube squeezed to hold the fibre. The spring is slipped on and the dished washer soldered on, the pin end being bent at right angles for the top anchorage. A 1/4in. drill end (wrong end) can be tapped on a piece of shim brass or copper and the resulting dish cut out for the dished



washer; a small rove or aircraft cup washer should be suitable. The spring should be such a strength and length as to give 1/8in. deflection under 1oz load.

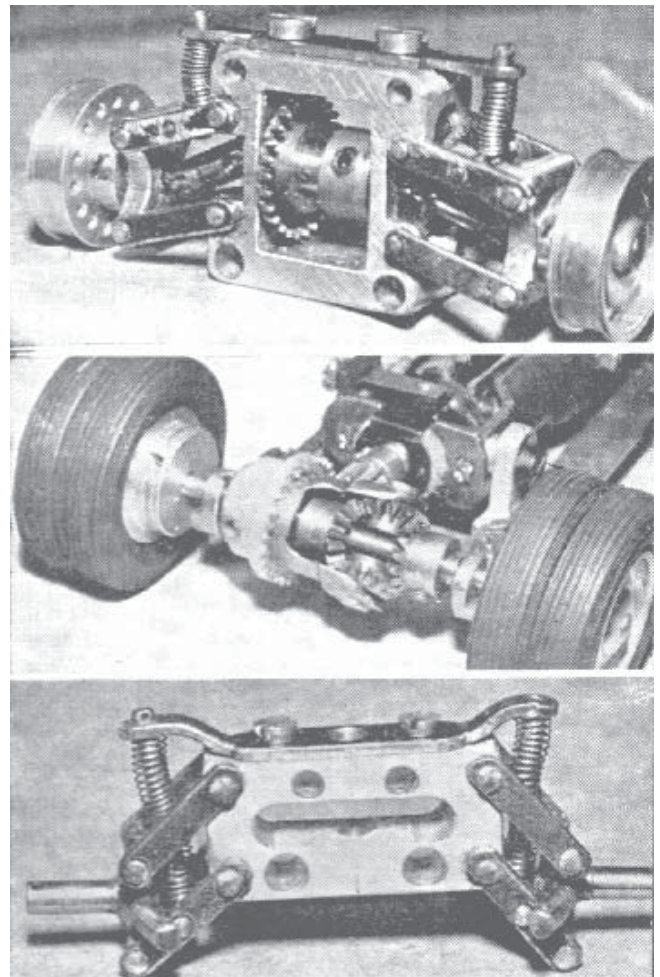
The second picture dates from April 1964 and is captioned:

Clever experimental pieces for 1/32 scale cars

Top: Independently sprung driving wheels.

Centre: Twin wheeled rear end plus a "proper" gearbox of bevels.

Bottom: Independent front spring.



Don't we have it easy? None of this glue all the bits in and slosh a bit of oil in it and slap it on the track!

You have to marvel at the engineering skills of the pioneers of the hobby don't you? And they didn't use magnets!

Stay tuned for more interesting (hopefully!) gems from the early days of the game. ■

*Adrian Norman reports on current news
from the Scalextric Headquarters in*

FACTORY FOCUS



Lots of specimens released into the wild this month. So, without further ado, let's get straight into the facts and figures.

Game Hunting

Not so fast, there's something to explain which is going to test even the most seasoned Scalextric hunter's prowess. The 'C' numbering system has adopted some camouflage which will test your powers of observation. Various sets have been observed in the 'zoos' bearing the same C number tag, although the cars in the 'cages' are different.

Zoos

Herded together and put on display you'll find the following specimens.

Toys R Us - The toy store has a C1096L rally set. The set contains two predominantly white Ford Focus cars loosely liveried on the

Ford Ka rally car. The cars have the word Scalextric printed on them with a figure of eight track design on their flanks. C2405 is the blue skirted car, and C2406 the red skirted livery.

Argos - The summer releases include a C1092K Speed Extreme set. I understand this is in the style of the 'High Speed Challenge' generic box lid from last year. The Argos set contains two Ford Focus cars, C2427, white, racing number 31, and C2428, red, racing number 32. This can lead to confusion because the Index stores also have a set C1092N Speed Extreme but these contain two Porsche GT1 cars.

Index - Be careful here as this set can be confused with the Argos version. C1092N Speed Extreme contains C2421 Porsche GT1, red, no.2 and C2422, yellow, no.3. The box lid is the same as the Argos Speed Extreme box lid, but the contents differ! ⇒



In the wild

5000 wildebeest glide majestically across the Serengeti! Well, 4400 actually! I can confirm that the limited edition of Camaro is of 4400 units as per the label on the box and not 5000 as per catalogue information. Thanks to one of our fellow trackers for spotting this one.

Cages and the problems of releasing in to the wild

The labelling for Sport and non-Sport cars has caused some confusion. In a nutshell, cars in perspex boxes are non-Sport and cardboard boxed cars are Sport versions. Many retailers aren't Scalextric enthusiasts and probably wouldn't appreciate the different packaging denoting a different spec car inside. Therefore, the factory will be changing the labelling in the future to make a clear distinction between the spec types.

Endangered species

A fellow enthusiast contacted me to ask whether the budget F3000 (ie Sally Ferris shape) droop-nose car had been dropped. Well, as you may have noticed over the past year or more, only the high-nose version has been used for re-liveries. The droop nose car has not been dropped, just simply not chosen. It's as simple as that!



Exotic species

Modelzone will have a C2470 Porsche GT3R in a dark metallic blue with the Modelzone logos to replace the TVR from last year.

Racer magazine cars due shortly are C2349 Mitsubishi Lancer and C2351 Ford Focus. Colours, livery and release date not yet known.

C2411 Ford Focus was first reported to be a 'dirty' rally livery. This will now not be the case and the car released as a standard 'straight-out-of-the-car-wash' livery.

Extinct species

Extremely well preserved remains of C688 Blow Out have been found on the North Downs of Kent. The discoverer soon realized that this set was out of the ordinary in that the labelling was overprinted with C688 and contained an Austin Maestro and Ford Escort instead of two Austin Metros. A Scalextric over-label on the top of the box lid also specified that the contents were a Maestro and Escort. Another one for Roger Gillham's 'Origin of the Species' book.

The almost perfectly preserved remains of another rare find were presented to my local collectors shop in July. To the shopkeeper's amazement, a chap brought in a James Bond set. All complete and barely run-in. The lucky finder, not a Scalextric collector, was clearing a loft and the house owner gave him the long unwanted Scalextric set for free! Neither of them knew of the potential value of the item until he had it valued at my local collectors shop.

Catalogues

Unlike last year, there will not be a mid-year 2nd issue of the Scalextric catalogue. Instead 'Edition 43, 2002 New Releases' has been issued. It is in the same format as the catalogue but only has cars and sets detailed. All the cars are listed as new, 38 of them, although some (Camaro, Mustang, Mitsubishi) have just been released over the last couple of months. The sets shown are the previously released standard range.

The fold out 'Race for Real' pamphlet is updated too, with the entire range including tracks and accessories.

Happy hunting and remember, it's a jungle out there! Or, perhaps..... there's a loft out there! ■

Slot-tech Porsche Open Round 3 (Wolverhampton)

BY JAMES BROWN

The 3rd round of the Porsche open was held at Wolverhampton slot car club on 7th July 2002. This is an excellent venue within the Strykers bowling alley, with 140ft 6-lane Ninco track.

Numbers were slightly down on the previous two meetings as the date clashed with the NEC swapmeet and summer holidays, the Phoenix club also had other commitments in Plymouth with the Carlton TV series. Nevertheless 26 drivers from 4 different clubs turned up with all manner of Porsches to put their skills to the test.

Saturday 6th was a practice day for visiting drivers and I arrived to find the London trio of Don Stanley, Roland Brooks and William Oxley hard at work fettling their cars and putting in some quick lap times, along with Steve Rigg and Pete Murphy from the Pendle club. As it transpired this was a wise decision from these five drivers. (Practice makes perfect)

On Sunday morning all the competitors signed in and declared which type of Porsche they were using along with motor choice and their home club. Each car was given a quick inspection and a race number. All the information was then fed into the computer. The race was divided into 26 randomly generated heats of 15-lap duration, with each driver running on all 6 lanes. It was then over to our host for the day, Malcolm Scotto, to give a quick driver briefing and welcome everyone to the event.

Racing got under way at 11.00am. Heat 1 was a nervous race as the drivers got used to the starting light sequence; a jump-start would cost you a full lap! There was a long delay before heat two as the computer developed a glitch! Malcolm finally persuaded it to play ball and it ran faultlessly for the rest of the meeting. After

heat 13 we had a break for lunch. Refreshments were provided courtesy of my good lady wife and hardened "slot-widow" Bernadette. It was also perfect timing for the start of the British G.P. Just as the rain started to fall at Silverstone and things were getting exciting it was time to get back to the 2nd half of the heats. (Sorry chaps!) After the 26th and final heat the computer printed off the results, with the top 12 senior drivers qualifying for the semi-finals. As only 5 juniors had entered the event they all qualified for the 15-lap junior final and lane choice was allocated on finishing positions in the heats.

Junior final

All the seniors surrounded the track and the junior final got under way with top qualifier and favourite Matty taking an early lead followed by Jimmy and Paul, then disaster for Matty, as he came to the end of the main straight, his car deslotted and hit the barrier hard! The car was quickly replaced and he got under way again but three corners later the body came off and his lead was gone, he tried in vain to keep going by replacing the body each time it fell off but was fighting a losing battle and had to retire. This left the way clear for Jimmy and Paul to battle it out for the win. Jimmy managed to keep his car in front and took the win followed by Paul. Chris Lyon from North Staffs drove a steady race and picked up 3rd.

Seniors

The top 12 qualifiers were split up alternately between the 2 semi-finals and given lane choice according to their qualifying positions. The top 3 finishers from each semi would progress to the final.

Lane choice for the final was allocated by fastest race times in the semis. The 6 finalists =>

all checked their machinery and carried out last minute adjustments in readiness for the 25 lap final.

You could sense the tension from the drivers rostrum as the starting lights sequence counted down, 5 lights, 4,3,2,1 GO! It was a clean start with all drivers getting away with no jump start penalties. Don Stanley went into an early lead and held off the fast charging William, until half way through lap 2 when William forced Don into an error and took the lead for the remaining 24 laps and posted the fastest lap of the day of 12.279 seconds. Meanwhile Nick and Mac were having their own battle for 3rd place, Nick kept cool under the pressure and Mac pushed a little too hard and deslotted.

Terry and Steve were having their own personal "Wood Green" club race in 5th & 6th with Steve stealing the 5th place by less than ½ lap. At the end of the final all 6 cars were collected from the track and opened up for

public scrutineering, as is usual in this event the 6 cars were left opened on the track for anyone to examine. Needless to say that all 6 conformed to the rules of the event.

The prize giving took place at 5.00pm with Malcolm thanking everyone for a thoroughly enjoyable and friendly event. The top 3 juniors and seniors all received their trophies along with Pete Murphy who won the best engineered/ most innovative car prize for his "Ninco A4/ Hornby GT1 a strange combination! Sean of Pendle Slot Racing had donated a framed photo of 2 Scalextric Cadillacs that was presented to Malcolm Scotto for his excellent running of race control throughout the day.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members of Wolverhampton S.C.C, and all the drivers and sponsors for supporting this event. If you would like to take part in the next round at Pendle Scalextric Club on the 8th September please contact Sean Fothersgill. ■



Dear Brian,

Just a quick comment on Neil Dunham's article on Scalextric Coopers.

The reason they don't have any great value is they are pretty common, there are a couple of reasons for that: one is that they are very simple and have basically no fragile parts so most of them have survived intact. Also they were in the basic, e.g. most common, sets so were produced in large numbers. Saying that a good yellow one can be pretty hard to find.

Is the list of colours slightly mixed up? I thought dark red & lemon yellow were Spanish colour variations. The great thing about the Mexican Coopers is the massive Hecho en Mexico label - this fills the circle in the base where the round pin guide used to be. That and the funky colours of course.

Not a lot of people know this but the blue swivel guide (Spanish version with suspension) is one of the hardest to find Spanish cars (up there with the white BRM).

And finally there is a reason that the Lionel Cooper is so similar to the Scalextric one. Initially Lionel distributed Scalextric in the States (selling imported sets with Lionel stickers on the boxes), and when Lionel made their own cars they simply copied the shape of the Scalextric one - they made the Cooper T51 & BRM P25, both of which are remarkably similar except the chrome parts are simply moulded into the body of the US version, and the mechanical side (pick-up, wheels etc.) is of much lower quality.

Hope that wasn't too boring.

Cheers

Peter Morley

.....
Dear members,

The 3rd Marconi Charity Proxy Race will be held at the Marconi Automotive Museum in Tustin, CA., USA, on the 5th and 6th of October, 2002. All proceeds from this event are donated to the Marconi Foundation for Underprivileged Kids, for which the first two events raised in excess of \$4,000.

The Marconi Charity Proxy Race is for 1/32nd SCALE model electric slot cars, with concours d'élégance and the quality of construction of the cars counting for 50% of the points and the actual race results counting for the other 50%. This does not necessarily mean that the cars are "low tech".

Last year's event attracted 76 entries from the USA, Canada, France, Australia, United Kingdom, Netherlands, and the United Arab Emirates. The proxy drivers included well known personalities such as Greg Gilbert (multiple USRA Eurosport champion), John Cukras (yes, the legendary John "The Jet"), IMCA Model World's finalist Chris Radisich, Paul Sterett, Larry Shephard, Duran Trujillo, John "Torre" Anderson, Milt Surratt, Howie Ursaner, Rod McPherson, Gil Rivera and Dennis "Foamy" Hill. For full details including rules and regulations, please see: <http://www.geocities.com/marconiproxy2002/P2002-HOME.htm>

Regards

Russell Sheldon

Dear Brian,

I recently visited a model shop in my vicinity which had a fantastic stock of all makes of slot-cars and whilst I was browsing was approached by the proprietor who asked if I would like any help. When I said I was just looking he asked me if I knew that all his cars would work on Scalextric track; I said yes and that I was member of the NSCC whereupon he immediately offered me 10% off. He then wondered if we had any posters that we could let him have to promote the club and also the discount he was prepared to give to members. My question is do we have any promotional material that I can give to him in the way of posters etc. ? By the way I bought the NINCO Porsche 911 GTR3 "Interviu" 50259 for £22.50 A bargain ! Almost forgot. The name of the shop is Cove Models based in North Camp Farnborough Hampshire.

One final thing I have recently inherited a load of Scalextric track that is basically in good condition, but the "rails" need cleaning. What is the best way of doing this? they are very discoloured and in some places there is a little rust, but it is very flat and all the contacts are intact. Any help/advice greatly received.

Many thanks and keep up the good work
Graham Smith (The other one)

We don't have any posters but there is an A5 information leaflet and application form available from Bob Bott. He is usually glad to get rid of some. Mind you when shops find out that our advertisers sell stuff cheaper than them they seem strangely reluctant to display them!

Regarding track - the general consensus of opinion is that the best place for rusty items is in the bin. No matter how many times you remove the rust it always returns.

A firm called Plebys Hardware Sales sells track cleaning blocks and fluid via eBay and mail order. They have recently sent me some samples so I will try them out and report on their effectiveness in next month's issue.

If anyone wishes to learn more about them the firm can be found at:

54 Standard Road

Enfield

Middlesex

EN3 6DP

Tel:- 0774 7861809

email:- wiggler@supanet.com

.....
Dear Brian,

Is this the simplest trackside accessory ever?

You take one standard size can of Pepsi (the blue variety), pull the ring and consume the contents; it might be wise to tidy up the top of the can by cutting out a disc and gluing it in position to hide the hole.

Then you place it alongside the track, behind the catch fencing and alongside a grandstand. I did say it was simple! You don't believe it exists? I can assure you it does; sometimes it is not the main subject of a photograph that is most useful but the background. The Pepsi can modelled can be seen on page 157 of Autosport, December 2001, it is at Nazareth speedway, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

Happy motor racing
Ray Harper

Scalextric - 'Coches Míticos' - Solo España (& Portugal)

BY STEVE BARNETT

I recently visited a slot meeting in Madrid and witnessed a deal between an English and a Spanish dealer, (sounds like a joke coming on here).

The Spaniard had a few of the Coches Míticos series assembled, and proudly presented them to the English dealer to buy. Like many of his profession, the English dealer appeared to show very little interest, yet through the corner of his eye the cars did not leave his sight. After a short time, and with the gathering of other parties anxious to touch the cars, the English dealer promptly bought his requirement.

The remaining cars were whisked to a trader from the UK who snapped them up, and how those got handled, being a careful collector,

I cringe. In a matter of a few minutes, those cars, about 20 in all, changed hands and not another Coche Míticos was to be seen. Why am I telling you this? It made me think that perhaps some collectors know little about this series. On this occasion, these cars were sold without the magazines etc, and when initially released at newsagents, they sold quickly, leaving many people without a chance to acquire them, so here's a little information I hope is of some help.

Altaya

In September 2001, Ediciones Altaya SA in Barcelona released the introduction brochure to a unique collection of 12 cars. A Limited Edition of Scalextric cars with a series of



magazines, known as 'Coches Miticos', translated; 'mythical cars'. 'Solo España' - 'Only in Spain' yet also promoted in Portugal, known there as 'Carros Miticos'.

Each car comprised of 4 weekly parts, each sealed with a numbered magazine. The first issue of every car included the car body, magazine, numbered certificate and the large promotional display card. There followed the underpan, wheels and finally the motor, all separately sealed in a hard plastic bubble with the respective magazine. Thereby having the choice of collecting all parts in original sealed packing or building the cars for display or to use. Its worth noting that the very first issue #1, in September 2001 included the promotion brochure detailing the 12 cars to be released, a certificate of guarantee 'Exclusive for Scalextric' a small bottle of Scalextric Pro oil, magazine #1, the Tyrrell P34 body and its numbered certificate.

Sold out

Predominantly marketed on the principle of buying a slot-car by instalments. The marketing strategy was very successful, as each week all magazines were sold quickly with the odd exception of a motor or wheels. Altaya freely admit they underestimated the popularity and only a small percentage of magazines were ever returned from newsagents unsold throughout Spain and Portugal. Of the few returned, mainly motors or wheels, of which I was told, the magazines were sent for recycling and the parts sold by weight value.

There have been a few odd numbered weekly parts available from time to time, mostly unwanted chassis or wheels. Some of the bodies were bought solely for the parts alone, which have significant value; especially the Jaguar E-Type and Merc 250 sl, for the superb chrome trim etc, and likewise with the screen and clear air ducts on the Ferrari 156, the 917 body for its chrome engine, rear spoilers, caps and underpan with its rear lights and frame struts. I'm surprised that some motors were returned, as they appeared good value.

Production

I cannot obtain the exact production numbers, it seems to be low, and I have been told that no record was kept, they simply came in, were distributed and any returns sold as scrap by weight. The certificates give no indication, and vary. An example; AA1234 or AC0123 or AB0789. I have a Tyrrell with AD9520 which is impossible to obtain now, and they sold more or less in a few days of release, with little major national marketing. The only conclusion, based on current available information and known prefix references of AA, AB, AC, & AD, reference numbers reaching the 9500 mark, with 12 cars equates to an approximate production run of 3,000 per model. That's a logical figure in terms of a financial return, and bearing in mind that many people obtained more than one full set, hence the shortage of supply, and now higher resale value. Does that make sense? I think so... Incidentally, for interest, I do have a Cooper Climax with certificate #0000.

The series

Listed below are the cars in order as released, all supplied with the Technitoys RX-4 motor, underpans moulded with the script; 'Made in China' and the screens where applicable have 'Scalextric' tampo in left corner. All cars are factory painted and fitted with a swivel guide. I can't go into the exact comparison with earlier production cars from the same mould, I'll leave that to the experienced.

Tyrrell P-34 6 wheel: Blue with Elf tampo, #3 Scheckter. Mags #1,2,3,4. A particularly well detailed example, chrome engine, grey plastic exhausts, Scalextric tampo on tyres. Underpan reads Tyrrell P-34. Note the common fault that the rear spoiler comes apart from chrome support in packaging, easily re-glued.

Ferrari GT 330: Red, #27. Mags #5,6,7,8. Excellent tampo detail and driver, chrome wheels, grey plastic rear panels, superb in bright red. The underpan reads Ferrari GT330 Ref C-41 ⇒



Jaguar E Type: Light blue metallic, #12. Mags #9,10,11,12. Excellent chrome bumpers, exhaust & wheels. Well detailed example with black window frames. Underpan reads Jaguar E Ref C-34.

Lancia Stratos: White with Alitalia tampo, #1. Mags #13,14,15,16. Well detailed tampo, yellow / lemon wheels. Underpan reads Lancia Stratos.

Cooper Climax: Black with white stripe, #16. Mags #17,18,19,20. Chrome wheels with grey plastic suspension arms & petrol caps. Excellent driver detail. Underpan reads Cooper.

Porsche 917: Pale blue & orange 'Gulf' livery, #22. Mags; 21,22,23,24. Excellent tampo and well detailed, chrome engine, fan, caps & rear spoilers, black wheels. Nice example. Underpan reads Porsche 917 Ref C-46.

Mercedes 250 SL: Dark green with black roof,

#12. Mags #25,26,27,28. Excellent chrome bumpers, wheels, light bezels & grill. Well detailed with white interior. Underpan reads Mercedes 250SL Ref C-32. Note; production problem with alignment of one wheel on rear axle, as explained in magazine #27, can be rectified.

Ford GT-40: Blue (deep RAF), yellow front, #6. Mags #29,30,31,32. Chrome engine, wiper, cap & rear panel. Gold painted wheels. Underpan reads Ford GT Ref C-35.

Ferrari 156 F-1: Red, #4. Mags #33,34,35,36. Chrome wheels, grey plastic suspension arms and exhausts, excellent driver detail and tampo, particularly good looking car in bright red. Underpan reads Ferrari 156 F-1.

Mini Cooper: Bright red with plain white roof, #177. Mags #37,38,39,40. Excellent chrome bumpers, light bezels & front grille with 4 yellow spots. Attractive car. Underpan reads Mini Cooper.

Mercedes Wankel C-111: Silver, #22. Mags #41,42,43,44. Black wheels, underpan & mirrors. Grey rear bumper. Ugly car but one to be collected ! Underpan reads Mercedes C-111 Ref C-44.

Renault 5 Copa: Yellow with black bonnet, #22. Mags #45,46,47,48. Chrome wheels with black bumpers & mirror. At the time of writing we await the release of this final car which will bring the series to a close by mid August 2002.

Binders: 2 Scalextric Coches Miticos binders were provided on appropriate occasions, bright blue with superb front graphics and plastic divider sections inside to store the magazines.

Storage Case: Finally, there is the option to send for a special carrying / storage box which holds all 12 cars.

Quality

This series of cars were produced in China, and quite frankly I have a slightly mixed view on the quality. The plastic used is a cheaper, hard plastic, with little weight and tends to give an impression of lower cost value. However, on the other hand, the superb detail, tampo quality and overall finish is impressive with all the models, especially outstanding in my mind are: Ferrari 330 & 156, Jaguar E Type, Porsche 917, Mercedes 250 and the well detailed Tyrrell P-34. All in all, a worthy collection to compliment my other Scalextric and earlier slot-car examples. A point worth noting is that the car bodies were originally supplied in a hard plastic sealed bubble; some minor damage occurred in transit from the factory/supplier, resulting in light scratches on the roofs, or broken parts.

Magazines

Each magazine contains 5 main categories, which can be filed accordingly in the binder:

*Trucos - How the actual car is assembled , with tips on tuning and maintenance etc.

*Coches de Coleccion - The Scalextric collection cars, with detail of specifications, colours, dimensions etc. other cars included are

Ferrari 250, Aston Martin DB4GT, Merc 190sl, Ferrari F40 & 156, Lotus 21, Merc trucks, Chaparral, 959, Seat TC-600, Honda F1 and many others.

*Historia de la Competicion - The history of actual race cars.

*Coches de Competicion - Competition Cars Formula 1, Rally cars etc, characteristics, history, technical info.

*Avances Technicos - Technical advances of production road cars.

Although the magazines are in Spanish, the content is superb and predominantly pictorial, all colour with easy to follow text. They are full of information which may not easily be found elsewhere. The binders, when completed, make a superb reference and are worthy of collection in themselves. The 12 promotional display cards are interesting, more storage space taken, but not many people bothered with these so they have some value and make the set complete.

Conclusion

Was it worth the weekly visit to my distant newsagent to obtain each issue? YES, at times in anxiety of seeing the next slot body released, other times a task knowing it only to be the 4th weeks issue - a motor, and then that ugly Mercedes C-111. Or was it the attractive young lady at the newsagent, which made those occasions so worthwhile?

Will there be another 'Limited Edition' to follow....

According to inside information, the owners of Altaya have a possible meeting in September, at the table will be discussed a couple of options; this is not for sure, but it was stated that the first series was a success. So there may be plans for a few more interesting cars.....

I've kept a few extra duplicate issues as spare parts for the future, Merc chrome bumpers, Ferrari 156 parts etc. I do have a few spare magazines, promotion cards, and sets if anyone is interested or have missing items.

Hope this has been of interest, if you haven't seen any of these cars, it's worth having a look. ■

Off your trolley

BY JOHN DILWORTH

Well the surprise new Scalextric offering is obviously and unashamedly a bid by the old firm for the last market demographic; wives and girlfriends. In the great tradition of Go-Karts, Motorbikes, Horses and of course, Ninja Turtles, comes the new Supermarket Sweep range.

High-powered supermarket trolleys racing round Shopping Mall tracks in the style of the late lamented daytime TV show will have the whole family enthralled. And yes- you high-minded purists and racers too. These are serious bits of kit.

Once past the Dale Winton packaging (and those with a sensitive constitution will want to get this out of the way as fast as possible), the model just oozes class. Produced with the latest tampo and photo-etching techniques, the trolley itself is an accurate replica of the 1998 Fischer-Diskau 34b trolley used by Sainsburys and Tesco, and featured in the original TV series (those wanting to race Asda or Morrisons versions will have to exercise a bit of customising skill to turn it into the appropriate Cooper Niedling MkII KashKart; but the information needed to do this can be found in the excellent Jaynes 'All the World's Trolleys', published by Haynes at £85. The main differences of course are in the baby/toddler seat arrangement and the pound coin deposit mechanism). The model detailing is superb; you can actually read the sell by dates on the merchandise in the basket. In fact, here lies the one serious blooper that Scalextric have uncharacteristically let slip. The dates on the miniature tub of pot-noodles are inconsistent both with the noodles and the dates of the show. Anchovy and ketchup flavour was not introduced until late '99, the trolley is a '98 model as used in the second series of the show, yet the sell-by date clearly states 02.04.97! Come on Scalextric, get a grip!

The carts are pushed by a realistic moulded plastic shopper; my review model having a shell-suited blonde with a winning smile, but a wide



range of contestants in various costumes is promised. The sheer size of the model is stunning. At 2" wide and 3" high, the trolleys are at a very accurate 1/11th scale, so the shopper is a full 5" tall, from the soles of her Nikes to the peak of her baseball cap.

As to how it goes, you're in for a shock. The lap record on my test track until recently stood at 4.85sec., held by a heavily breathed on Fly Marcos. Out of the box, my Supermarket Sweeper did 5.41. Noticing a distinct wobble down the straights and slight unpredictability in the corners, which I expected because of the high CG of the model, I spotted the offside front wheel was badly skewed. Of course I had ignored the box instructions until then, but belatedly reading them I realised that this is a deliberate feature designed to give an authentic feel to the handling of the supermarket trolley, which will of course make perfect sense to anyone who has tried to steer one through the dairy freezer chicane in real life. A true running wheel is included in the box, and once in place, lap times came down dramatically to regular 5.00s. The motor is a beaut, newly engineered by Scalextric with cobalt magnets and a trued and balanced armature. It's neatly housed in a discreet black box between the legs of the trolley, a device much like the old Turtles Skateboard, and powers the tiny wheels by a belt drive. The traction magnets are in the feet of the shopper, and they really grip!

Looking round for ways to improve performance, I loosened the mounting screws and lubed and trued things, but then made the exciting discovery that by freeing the shopper's grip slightly on the push bar of the trolley I could get enough flexibility to allow the cart to tailslide through corners, while still keeping the magnets close to the contact rails. I now have a new lap record. 4.76. What more can I say. Well, I could go on even further about performance hop-ups, but I'm keeping them under my hat for the inevitable club championships.

With exciting extras like trackside shelving and start/finish straight check-out counters in the pipeline (I shan't be going for the Dale Winton - voiced lap counter), I think this range will capture the public imagination in a way that the Turtles and the Horse n'jockey sets just failed to do. I guarantee that your better half will at last find out what this thrilling hobby is all about, and realise that you were right all along about Scalextric. And with these model shoppers

reaching scale speeds of over 200mph (a bit OTT for your average Saturday morning at Tesco, but about par for 6 o'clock on Christmas Eve), there are serious thrills for the club racer. Get used to seeing miniature Sharons push their week's supply of fish fingers past hopped up ProSlot Toyotas and Fly 908s on your club circuit. Don't let pride stand in your way, get into Supermarket Sweep today. ■

 **Yes I know it is silly - the likelihood of anybody making a slot-trolley is on a par with someone makingslot- Ninja Turtles or slot-horses on a gokart.....totally** 
ridiculous! Mind you I did read that Lotus are collaborating on an improvement to Sainsburys trolleys. I trust that in the true Colin Chapman tradition the wheels will fall off immediately after taking the chequered checkout! Anyway John, a Slot.It® Audi is yours; hope you enjoy it.

.....

Can-Am - Can do

BY TONY SECCHI

The next time that you polish your furniture (if you do) spare a thought for Johnson's Wax who were the sponsors of a Canadian/American series, started in 1966, that featured the most powerful cars of their era with no limit on engine size. Unfettered by a rulebook, it was the birthplace of wings, aerofoils, and ground effect. It was Can-Am.

I am a great admirer of the writings of Peter Novani; his combination of accurate, erudite, historical content and thorough, comprehensive testing in his reviews are one of the highlights in the Journal. His offering featuring the Maxi Models McLaren M6A (Dec. 2001) was a case in point and it inspired me to compile this article on our latest racing category.

I have mentioned in previous writings that my old club in the sixties ran a 'Formula Libre (free Formula) for 1/24 cars with very little restriction on specification. This ruling was very similar to the 1966 start of the Can-Am series, which Peter describes so completely in his review, mentioned above. I will not reiterate that here but just refer readers to this excellent article.

The catalyst for our new category came from common agreement between my friends and I, so we decided to find out what was available to race on our home track.

In the late sixties the Can-Am series (which ran on exclusively Canadian and American tracks) was replicated over here as the Interserie Championship and allowed us to visit tracks like Brands and Monza to see similar 'free formula' large American engined monsters. The racing was very dramatic, especially in the wet, and I can remember one classic day at Brands Hatch standing on the inside of the track just past the pits when a dozen or so of these 'Big Bangers' were racing. The start was awesome; I have watched racing all over Europe in the days when you could stand very close to the cars (unlike today) and had never been intimidated, but on that day, stand only a few hundred metres from the start, I practically jumped backwards as

these cars roared away from the flag.

The models that we have constructed to race in this new category are based on the Can-Am entries that we could find and the main content of this article is to describe them.

Although the formula is 'free', we do have some restrictions applicable to all the cars. As all the models were bought as shells or kits we decided that the chassis should be by Scalextric and we used surplus Porsche 962C or Jaguar XJR/9 bases as these allow cutting to fit, mounting and magnet position.

We restricted rear tyres and wheels to Fly Marcos or Venturi type because these are particularly suited to our track, have good wear, good roadholding and give a modicum of parity to driving style. We also insisted that all rear axles, including the crownwheel, were also Scalextric standard, although the choice of pinion was free. Some people (including myself) chose compatible Scalextric pinions, some others. Everything else was also free. Front wheels and tyres were all from stock and a combination of many makes; pick ups and drivers were all Scalextric, the 962/XJR9 coming to the fore again. Engines were a free choice but came to be stabilised on three makes:

1. Plafit 160 Cheetah 8631
2. Cartrix SN Pro 1163
3. Patto's Place "Little Ripper"

All these engines rev at approx. 30,000 plus so the cars are very quick, as they were in real life. Magnatraction is free and both Fly B21 super (circular) and Proslot PS 6001 (flat-oblong) were used, sometimes singular, sometimes together - one car has 3 x Ps6001 and one 2 x 6001 plus 1 x B21 !

Shells are either plastic injection moulded or vacuum formed and it is the latter that generally need more Magnatraction. Most of the bodies came from Carkits International of Southend-on-Sea who have a vast range of static kits and shells; the remainder from Sean at Pendle Slot Racing (more later).

Now to the cars; being old age pensioners on a strict fixed income we could not go to the expense of the Maxi Models 1967 McLaren M6A but Carkits do a 'Supershells' vacformed bodyshell, which is very accurate. Also from Carkits came the following bodyshells by Taylormade.

1967 Lola T160

1971 Lola T260

1970 Autocast Ti22

The T160 was the follow up to the T70 in which John Surtees won the first Can-Am championship in 1966 but it was not successful, finishing not a single race that year.

The T260 was Lola's first competitive car since the T70 and with the then current world champion Jackie Stewart at the helm was as good as any of the McLarens. Sponsored by L&M, Stewart won one race, outqualified and outran the McLarens on a number of occasions and finished third in the championship.

Without doubt the most unknown and unsung car of the Can Am series was the Autocast Ti22. It had a full length monocoque made from Titanium, whose chemical symbol (Ti) and atomic number (22) gave the car its name. The body was a startling wedge shape. It appeared in 1969 driven by that years Le Mans winner Jackie Oliver and showed well. The next season it qualified well and often led the McLarens. It was destroyed at the St. Jovite track, rebuilt and raced by Peter Revson in 1971 where it remained as competitive as ever. Taylormade also make a 1970 Chaparral 2J "sucker" car but this is out of stock at present.

Otaki 1969 AVS Shadow Mk 1

Mitsuwa 1972 Porsche 917/10

Carkits also supplied these two motorised injection moulded kits which we converted. The Shadow (in DM4 form) won the championship in 1974 with Jackie Oliver driving, but the Mk 1 in its original form was little more than a tiny-wheeled skateboard with a huge engine and a massive rear wing - OK in theory but not in practice. The 917/10 was a development of the aged 917s entered and outclassed in the 1970

series, but its replacement was a different kettle of fish and in 1972 when turbocharging was introduced it brought to an end McLaren's domination of the series, George Follmer winning that year in the 917/10T and Mark Donohue the following year in the later 917/30 version.

1967 Chaparral 2F

Sean Fothergill of Pendle gave me a vacformed coupé version of this car which I actually saw racing to victory at Brands in the 1967 BOAC 500 and at Monza in the 1000 km where Phil Hill put it on pole and it raced nose to nose for an hour with Bandini's P4 Ferrari before retiring with suspension problems - a great shame. Jim Hall, who raced and designed the Chaparral cars was years ahead of his time. He almost could not do anything conventional and the 'no rules' Can Am series suited him well. He had no design background but was responsible for the introduction of aerofoils, ground effect, skirts, bonded honeycomb chassis, downforce and of course the fan powered sucker effect. He entered his 2J car in 1970 some eight year before Gordon Murray's F1 Brabham BT46 with which Niki Lauda won at Anderstorp. Both cars were eventually banned.

1977 Wolf Dallara

This injection moulded plastic kit was supplied by Sean via Monarch Lines and is a Barcelona Universal Models pro kit (B.U.M. slot). It was entered and run by the Canadian Walter Wolf for a young countryman called Gilles Villeneuve and later for Jody Scheckter (who had won in Walter Wolf's F1 car on its debut), It was unsuccessful and pulled out of the series.

1971 Ferrari 712M

This is the Topslot resin kit, which at the moment we do not have, examples being very thin on the ground. Sean Fothergill is hunting one down for me at present. Mario Andretti raced the car in only one event but it was a real threat to the opposition and with a bit of development it could have been a winner. But with Ferrari concentrating on F1, the Can-Am⇒

project, like so many other attempts, was one which might have succeeded rather than one which did.

So, that is it. Our series has not started yet but practice runs have been interesting and sensational not to say hairy. The cars are very fast and very stable but when they let go they let go. In my smallish spare room you have to wear body armour or be very agile to miss the flying missiles. Time, will, I am sure, overcome this and we await the competition of the coming series with relish. Most of the models are original to us as we had all finished with slot-cars just after the Can-Am series started. Also, in Europe we did not get to see most of the cars for real so they are new to us both in true and model form.

They are all very evenly matched but ironically, our practice times show the McLaren M6A and the Porsche 917/10 having the edge at present. Once again, models seem to be replicating the real cars. ■

NINCO *track test*

50261 DTM Safety Car
50263 Mercedes CLK GTR
"Sportswear"
50265 Mercedes CLK DTM
"Mika"
NC4 Motor

One of the highlights of the previous German Touring Car (DTM) series was the rolling starts behind the safety car. It involved the starter standing up, half out of the sun roof, facing backwards towards the snarling pack waving his green flag. Every week the spectators held their collective breath waiting for him to fall out!

Sadly the current incarnation of the DTM has spoilt our fun by reverting to a standing start for most races and even when using the rolling version the starter stays firmly inside the car. However the series itself is, as always, a joy to behold. Earlier this year I was privileged to watch the most amazing performance by Jean Alesi as he won both rounds at Donington Park. His car control down the awesome Craner Curves was the stuff of dreams and merely emphasised the sorry state of F1 today. This man was born to drive a Grand Prix car and I reckon that at least half the current F1 drivers are not fit to tie his racing boots.

50261 DTM Safety Car

Right, step off soapbox and on to the reviews. Ninco are currently doing a grand job of catering for the DTM fan and this month I received the ultimate accessory from the Hobby Co. - the DTM Safety Car. I might well give away most of the review cars that I receive but this one is definitely classed as editor's perks and is staying firmly in my possession!

Accuracy

The first thing we have to accept with this model is that it is totally inaccurate in body shape; the real car, like its F1 counterpart, is a beefed up road going version of the CLK not the full racing Monty. However, it would be silly to expect Ninco to go the expense of a new mould

just to produce this version so a little artistic licence is allowable. The upside is that the decoration is virtually spot on, right down to the AMG number plate.

Give us a flash

This is the first Ninco car to feature a lighting system and it is a cracker; not only do we have flashing amber and green lights on the roof but flashing headlights as well! It really does look the canine round things as it drives along.

There appears to be half a computer inside controlling the system but I suspect that bulb replacement may be a bit tricky as they are virtually moulded into the body. The only thing really missing is the ability to turn off the lights for the final pace lap; any electronic genius done that yet?

Performance

Now this is the bit that I don't really understand; as far as I am aware the real safety cars do not take part in the race - so why does this model have a floating guide blade, NC2 turbo nutter motor and a magnet strong enough to lift the Titanic? A slightly lower specification would have been more than adequate; however, if you really want to race it you can be sure it will be well up there with the rest of the DTM pack!

Buy it?

Absolutely - but take care - you can pay over the odds for it. It is currently being advertised at prices up to £40 and is certainly not worth that much. Shop around and you should find it much cheaper.

Mind you, if I were to acquire another one I would be strongly tempted to cut a hole in the roof and add a starter figure complete with green flag.....! ■

50263 Mercedes CLK GTR "Sportswear"

Reviewed by Peter Solari

When news first broke about the real Mercedes CLK GTR, it was rumoured to have a price tag of \$1m... Fortunately, the 1/32nd scale Ninco version is considerably less expensive but my first impression is that it certainly looks a million dollars.

The car is presented in the now standard but somewhat oversize Ninco box, showing as much of the car off by clever use of the slanting base.

A quick glance to the bottom-right hand corner and we see a series of icons listing key features of this particular model. To those of us "in the know" these symbols tell us the car is fitted with a spring-loaded guide blade, NC-2 motor, super magnet and of course, it is 1:32 scale. The car looks good and that's all the additional information most need before picking it off the shelf and handing over the cash (or maybe haggling a little if you're at a swapmeet!).

The looks

This is the fourth race edition CLK to be released by Ninco (apparently the Millennium edition is a "road car" – *although it is actually a race car without the sponsor logos*). It is the third silver CLK but that is hardly surprising seeing as these AMG-Mercedes cars were also known as the "Silver Arrows". However, this is the most striking of the three with a fantastic sepia graphic of a female model emblazoned across the nearside front wheel-arch. This is repeated on the driver's side between the door & rear wheel and – I assume for political correctness or sexual equality reasons – a male model appears in the same place on the opposite side. Both side pictures are complemented with the logo "CLK Sportswear for men and women". This has more than a passing resemblance to the Calvin Klein (CK) ads that appeared a few years ago but according to the Mercedes website, CLK Sportswear is a collection of styling accessories for your CLK... honest!

Comparing the slot-car with pictures of its full size brother, all the graphics are proportional and in the right place. However, print quality is

variable. The fine print is amazingly clear but some of the larger lettering does appear faded in places. There is also room for improvement in positioning of the picture graphics. This is most noticed on the poor male model; he seems to have been printed too far forward and so instead of his arm naturally disappearing into the rear wheel aperture, he is left looking more like Venus de Milo. All paintwork and print is sealed under a very thick but even varnish giving the car a very glossy, highly-polished look.

This car looks fast! It has the appearance of being very wide and very low. In fact, the CLK is not the widest of the Ninco GTs and measures up at just less than 64mm. The overall length is a shade over 149mm and it sits on the track with a height of 37mm. Scaling these dimensions up give real-size figures very close to that specified for the 1:1 car.

Performance

So how does the car perform? Well, first things first... Let's take it apart and oil it up. The body is fixed to the chassis by just two screws. The body houses a flat cockpit with a white 'head & shoulders' driver figure sporting red helmet and matching gloves. A detailed cockpit would be lost on this particular model, as the windows do not allow for a real view inside. Removing the body reveals a very plain but rigid chassis with a few detailed grills positioned to show through the various radiator holes in the body. The round magnet is positioned directly in front of the in-line motor that powers the rear wheels via a 9-tooth pinion and 27-tooth crown gear. Snug-fitting brass bushings support the rear axle and although the tyres are the standard "slick" type, they do feel marginally softer than those fitted to earlier models.

A few drops of oil and a quick re-assembly later, the car is ready for its first outing. (It was at this stage that I felt it best to remove the "three pointed star" from the bonnet and just to be on the safe side, I also removed the red side-mirrors). First impressions match the car's appearance – it *is* fast! Straight out of the box this car handles well. There is enough magnetic downforce to aid the car through the corners

but still allows a certain amount of “tail out”. This, I think, is due to the central positioning of the magnet.

With the help of my colleague Paul “Slot-Head” Leagas (*the nickname has nothing to do with slot-cars, it actually stems from a nasty accident with some hair clippers, but that’s another story!*), we settled down to an evening of testing. Initial lap times on the loft circuit (100ft 2-lane Scalextric track) were consistently around 11.3s with a fastest lap of 11.1s. However, as the car loosened up, precious tenths were shaved off the lap times. For comparison we ran other unmodified Ninco GT cars that are likely to have raced the CLK GTR in the full-scale world. The results are as follows:

Car	Fastest lap time
Porsche 911 GT1 (50148)	12.638s
Mercedes CLK GTR (50168)	11.221s
McLaren F1 GTR (50232)	11.031s
Mercedes CLK GTR (50263)	10.863s

There are many out there who enjoy racing without magnets and so in the name of testing (*or to put it another way, the kids were playing quietly in the bedroom and the women were busy chatting downstairs!*), we decided to remove the magnets and repeat the trials.

As one would expect, the CLK becomes much more “tail happy”. However the car can still power slide through the bends with a good deal of confidence.

Lap times with magnets removed:-

Car	Fastest lap time
Porsche 911 GT1 (50148)	15.103s
Mercedes CLK GTR (50168)	14.001s
McLaren F1 GTR (50232)	14.168s
Mercedes CLK GTR (50263)	13.649s

With the bulk of the testing over, it was now time for a few small tweaks. Firstly, I replaced the magnet and glued the motor in place; this had no effect on the handling characteristics of the car and yielded a similar fastest lap (10.9s). The next tweak was to replace the front wheels with smaller diameter GT wheels and very low-profile Pink-Kar tyres. The car felt quicker and this was supported by the lap timer recording a fastest lap of 10.488s.

Red mist test

Finally, the ultimate tweak..... the “Red Mist” test..... I believe you can always get more out of the car when you are battling it out on the track. The car consistently close throughout the night was the McLaren F1 GTR. Although both cars look very different, they are a good match for each other. The race was close and included a couple of unscheduled stops and re-starts due to either cornering a bit too quickly or not giving way at the crossovers (*Giving way? What’s that then?*) However, it seemed to have the desired effect. The McLaren achieved a fastest lap of 10.701s but the Mercedes reigned supreme, not only winning the race (by a very small margin) but also achieving the fastest lap of the night - 10.109 seconds.

So, is this the best Ninco GT since the last one? Well, it certainly has a lot going for it. The CLK is a favourite among many club racers and I’m told it can be easily “upgraded” with after market parts to make it run even smoother and no doubt, even faster! ■

50265 Ninco Mercedes CLK DTM 'Mika'

Reviewed by Sandy Noble

Smart, snazzy or what? If it were full-size it would be a serious set of sleek wheels. And if it had 'David' rather than 'Mika' as the logo, you'd expect it to be his transport of choice when off for a quick flutter at the Casino in Monte Carlo.

Like other recent Nincos, the car is sprayed to a high gloss finish rather than being body-coloured plastic. The paintwork is to a pretty good standard being in black, silver and white; there is a minute amount of bleed between the black and the silver, and the white on the bonnet (hood) has a little see-through but at any distance these are barely visible and it looks very impressive. I'd say it was Mercedes' and Ninco's latter-day interpretation of a Rolls-Royce two-tone Silver Cloud. The car is shod with very nice 18-spoke wheels and is finished off with a very pleasing matt scarlet front spoiler which has the same sort of aesthetic effect a contrasting coachline would have had on a Roller.

Mechanicals

The basic mechanics are that it has an NC-2 motor, driving in-line, and Ninco's new sprung guide as first seen on the 4wd Golf. For those of you who don't know about this guide, it's relatively softly sprung, just enough to push the guide down into the slot but not enough to push the nose of the car up. The car sits properly on the track without the terrible old Scalextric 'We're going airborne look' of many cars of the last three decades. The simplest way to describe the effectiveness of the guide is to say that at our club, Fly Capris always beat Lancia Beta Montecarlos until the latter were retrofitted with Ninco sprung and now the situation is totally reversed. The sprung guide eliminates many problems one has with weighting cars optimally, especially now that the sidewinder configuration is more common - putting too much weight at the back and causing the fronts to flip out too easily (even on the straight) giving you the new 'off' of understeer on a slot-car. Fly Lola and Beta owners take note! This is important to those of us who do not use magnets.

On the track

And how did the Merc go? I did not have high expectations having tried the club's CLKs recently and not doing very well (at the time I didn't realise that the others had already done some endurance racing with Ninco's earlier CLK offerings). The car is quite heavy, and has a relatively high centre of gravity and a narrow track compared to, for example, the Ninco GT1 CLK. It had a slight tendency to roll rather than spin on tight corners initially, though this seemed to diminish as the tyres wore in. It also has the excellent Ninco trait whereby if you overcook it into a bend, but take your finger off the throttle in time, it will punish you with no more than a gross tail-out, not an off. At my club an off is an out so this is a welcome feature. The weight distribution seems to be about 57/43 rear to front, but the sprung guide takes care of this bias. The NC-2 motor gives massive acceleration and is very smooth - I know many people don't like them especially in Ninco classics but I think a higher ohmage controller is all the heavy forefingered or thumbed need if smoothness is a problem.

Anyway to cut a lot of waffle short, it goes like stink. It shot very near to the top of my automotive pantheon. I have a four-lane 90ft track with a grippy surface. On no lane was it lower than 5th equal out of over 100 cars tested. Listing the best 'Hall of Fame' cars gives you:

Lane 1	
Proslot Ferrari 355	10.27
Ninco Jordan	10.27
Merc CLK	10.38
Lane 3	
Jordan	9.94
SRS2 Jag	10.11
McLaren F1	10.27
911 GT1	10.32
Merc CLK	10.49
Lane 4	
SRS2 Jag	10.22
Jordan	10.27
TR 911	10.32
Toro Rosso F 355	10.44
Merc CLK	10.38

So, it beat all the other Ninco DTMS (haven't tried the Audi TT), the Ninco and SCX GTIs (apart from SRS2) and the Proslot saloons, any Fly or Scalextric car you care to name (though I haven't got the Cadillac Northstar). In performance terms, this car is too good to modify.

For those of you who use magnets, the magnet is placed just in front of the motor (further moving the centre of gravity to ideal) and can pick up a pair of needlenose pliers heavier than the car, and for those of you who use braking it stops on the proverbial sixpence.

Conclusions

The car is a typical Ninco product. First get the chassis and weight right, make sure the tyres and wheels are round (unlike my example of Fly's Racer Porsche 911 GT1) and THEN add the gizmos. Collectors will get it anyway, but for racers it's **RECOMMENDED**. ■

Ninco NC4 Stinger

Reviewed by Graeme Thoburn

When I received the "Stinger" I was rather hoping that it would be a direct replacement for the rather plodding NC1, but instead, it is designed to fit into NC2 powered cars using the same type of adaptor brackets that allow an NC1 to fit into a NC2 powered car. These brackets are supplied with the "Stinger".

The NC4 will fit into the NC1 type of car i.e. Calibra, Megane, but you will have to use the NC2 motor cradle and trim it slightly to accommodate the lugs that the wires are soldered onto.

I fitted the motor into Ninco's excellent Mercedes CLK as this probably the most widely used car in the UK and also the best able to handle the increased power I expected. The car was tested on a Ninco track approximately 110ft in running length and loosely based on Monaco.

We first tried the car non-magnet and concluded that it was really hard to control. Basically the car suffered from severe wheel spin and a lack of brakes and although extremely fast in a straight line, it takes a good 15ft to start picking up any real speed and after 25ft, it still hasn't reached its peak. In this test, it was no match for an NC2 or 3.

We then replaced the magnet in the CLK and found that we could only lap 4/10ths of a second quicker than with a non-magnet NC3. Using a magnet obviously made the car easier to handle but on the tighter sections of the track, it was lacking acceleration.

To sum up the motor is an obvious screamer on the right track layout, long straights and sweeping bends, but for the average club track I can't see it becoming popular and if you wish to "try this at home", I suggest liberal usage of padding around any hard surfaces.

Pros: Extremely high revving (31000 RPM @ 14.8 volts)

Cons: Lacks torque and braking capability.

Manufacturer's Specifications:

NC1 15700 RPM @ 14.8 volts

NC2 18100 RPM @ 14.8 volts

NC3 21100 RPM @ 14.8 volts ■

Oh how the mighty fall

BY DOUG GRAVER

If you remember I wrote a little while ago about the appearance of Brands Hatch on TV. The TV crew said as they left that they would send me the tape of the shoot and that it would be on web TV and Asia satellite.

I kept a close eye on the post and TVNOW web site. After a while the website stopped its video streaming. A little while after that the website stopped. A little while after that I gave up all hope of impending fame and fortune. TVNOW is now TVNOT and my hopes of an appearance on Parkie have failed. Just think the world will never hear of the greatness of Brands Hatch and how every week grown men play with toy cars. Still, it is only a toy.

Just as all hope had gone, an email flooded in. I forgot for a moment that the Brands Hatch website attracts thousands of genuine hits.

Amongst the hits was another TV company. Yes that's right, not only had Brands Hatch attracted the interest of one TV Company. It had now been seen by yet another TV company and I was to receive a personal phone call from none other than Jo Hawks of Carlton TV.

Not only was I to receive a personal invitation to Plymouth for the shooting of "Short Circuits" but she wanted to know where to get the caravans seen on the Brands Hatch website.

Brands Hatch, being the most interesting racing club in the universe, does have its advantages. Because we race the most varied racing of all time, it makes Brands Hatch shine above all the other round and around clubs. It's more than just a plank of wood with track nailed on it and cars going round and around as fast as they can. Let's face it, if "Short Circuits" were filmed on a plank of wood track who would want to watch that? Unlike other clubs, at Brands Hatch you have to have a plan of action and it's up to the computer how much random tyre wear you will receive and how long you will be kept in the pits. It has over 350 spectators every week. It has night racing. It has caravan

racing. The website holds scratch built cars **never** seen anywhere else in the world; this is what makes it so popular. It sounds so good, I want to see it again and I own it!

Dave Pearman and I set off to Plymouth for the filming. The hotel and grub were fine and the other racers were known to us both. Derek Cooper, Steve Cannon, Kevin Tombeur and Adrian all met the next day at Crownhill Fort.

John Sword with his magnificent SRA figures made the track look brilliant. It will look great on the small screen in October 2002 on the Discovery Home and Leisure channel.

We were racing on the Hockenheim replica circuit which was made up with the new Scalextric Sport track. To be frank, it was crap. Bad connections, no grip, easily parted joints, the list goes on. It's taken them a long time to come up with this poor effort. If only they had used the old style track, the filming would have taken at least 2 hours less.

We were given a room to use as a pit stop. Dave and I watched the other two teams take out their Fly Porsches and set to work on them. Gluing, chopping bodies etc. etc. Their work on the cars provided Dave and I with something to watch while we waited for the race. When we went for practice the other teams with their modified cars came off the track at remarkable speeds. On to qualifying. We raced all lanes and the best times got to choose lanes for the actual race. Dave, with his unmodified car won the first race. This was later rerun so his win wasn't allowed. After the first 2 races I was in the overall lead with my unmodified car. In the end Dave came in 5th and I, 4th.

The main race was run with Derek Cooper in pole position. The only draw back to all of this is that if you came off you weren't put back on. If the car stopped running, it was hard luck and with the state of the track it didn't come down to skill, just luck.

Steve Cannon won the race with me 2nd and Kevin Tombeur 3rd.

The first 3 places go onto the semis, July 16th.

July 16th arrives, a 600 mile round trip from Leigh-On-Sea and the track this time is Brooklands. Same format as before only this time I came last. I never have professed to anything other than crap so this was no surprise. My fame ended that day. It was good fun and I'm glad I was invited and I'm looking forward to the screening around October, November time.

Let's hope this does make it to the small screen unlike Brands Hatch's efforts and for the fact of John Sword's excellent scenic track.

Can I take this opportunity to congratulate Scalextric on their new cardboard cut out buildings and adding to the millennium feel race track. The pit stop looks great when the Scalextric Sport F1 cars turn up at them only to be greeted by a bunch of Scalextric pit stop crew in their best John Collier 1950's clothing. How

kids of today must laugh at the Scalextric figures of people's racing Grandfathers. The realism stops there. I will be investing heavily in SRA figures as soon as my royalties' cheques start rolling in.

Don't forget to checkout the Brands Hatch web site. There will be photos of the making of "Short Circuits" at Crownhill Fort along with lots of new features. You might even see yourself in the photos of people I saw at the Grand Prix in Hastings. All in the summer edition of the Brands Hatch website coming soon to a computer near you. See why it generates so much interest amongst TV companies.

Hope to see as many as possible at GT Raceways 2nd British Grand Prix in November. The most active BIG club in the whole of Essex.

Oh I must remember. It's only a toy. Do I win £5?

No - but keep trying! ■