



No.239 FEBRUARY 2002

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Contents

Swapmeets.....	3
Membership Update.....	4
Diary Dates.....	5
Factory Focus.....	7
Competition Results.....	9
Members Moments.....	10
Book Review.....	12
Westcountry Rambles.....	14
Bits And Pieces.....	15
Letters.....	17
News Update.....	22
Wheelspin.....	24
Roger's book.....	27
Gina The Leaner.....	31
Ebay And The NSCC.....	35
SlotStox.....	37
Mole.....	38
A Rant.....	39
Members Ads.....	41

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The independent club for slot-car enthusiasts

Milton Keynes - gateway to paradise?

By the time this issue drops onto your doormat the first swapmeet of the year will either be imminent or just past. The Milton Keynes event is the most successful of the club meetings by a long way but I often wonder why this is so.

It is held in a drab, dark and cold building in one of the least prepossessing towns in England; it is virtually impossible to obtain any refreshments and the place is so crowded that I am amazed anybody ever gets near enough to a stall to purchase anything! I am, by no means, knocking the organisation of the event - Nigel Copcutt runs it superbly - but I don't understand why other swapmeets attract significantly fewer members.

Bishop's Stortford, for example, is equally well organised; Brian Walters always puts on some good demonstrations; the venue contains a bar which serves excellent food; the auction is one of the highspots of the year and the location is much nearer for the majority of the membership. Similarly with Evesham, my favourite, Steve Pitts runs an extremely entertaining event. The "full brekkie" is legendary and there is plenty of room to move around the stalls and stop for a chat if you want. Yet Milton Keynes has a larger attendance than both of them added together - why?

The reason for these musings? Well, the committee has received a proposal to hold a further swapmeet in Newark and we would be interested to hear your views on the idea. Are enough potential stallholders interested? How many people are likely to attend? Are there enough swapmeets already? What do you want to see there apart from the stalls? Please write in - I may even find a prize for the best letter on the subject.

And Finally - as the sun sinks slowly in the West, we say farewell to downtown Milton Keynes and set sail for that jewel of the Midlands, Loughborough and the joys of the AGM!

Thanks for your input this month; I haven't got room for everything but all contributions will appear in due course.

Till next month

Brian



No fairy stories this month! As promised, here is a listing of all the new goodies Scalextric has in its product range for this year. First up, as this is a big step forward, is the announcement of a new track system.

Hornby Hobbies are so positive about the new track that all new sets will have it. Don't worry, there is a converter track piece so you can still use the, now old, track. Three main elements about the new system hit you straight away. The track now has a smoother surface; the pieces push-fit together and there are some wicked specialised bits. There are side-swipe chicanes and off-set chicane curves, there's a cross-over ON A BEND and Outer-Outer curves - so now eight lane tracks are possible again!

The old track will be referred to as 'Classic' and the new system has the label of 'Sport', as does the new range of cars with higher specification components than the standard range. New buildings are also included in the range, as well as the long-awaited PC Interactive system. You'll also find the Pacer and Lap-timing pieces which are suitable for both track systems. This new product range really does represent a positive drive forward against the opposition.

Track

This is the new 'Sport' track system:

Straights

- C8222 Converter half straight (new track to old)
- C8236 Short 'A'
- C8200 Quarter 'B'
- C8207 Half 'C'
- C8205 Full 'D'
- C8246 Full, Side swipe chicane (pair)

C8210 Full, offset cross roads

C8211 Half. Flying Leap 2 pieces : ramp up and ramp down

Curves

C8202 Inner 45

C8201 Inner 90 chicane

C8206 Std, 45

C8234 Std, 22.5

C8203 Std, 90 Cross over

C8204 Outer, 22.5

C8235 Outer, outer, 22.5

Curves are denoted as Radius 1, 2, 3 & 4 - R1 being 'Inner' thru to R4 as 'Outer-Outer' The old track now known as 'Classic', remains unchanged.

Cars

The new cars introduced to the range are:

C2262 McLaren MP4/16 Mika #3 silver

C2262A McLaren MP4/16 sport specification

C2263 McLaren MP4/16 David #4 silver

C2263A McLaren MP4/16 sport specification.

Also in set C1101

C2334 Williams BMW FW23 Schumacher #5

C2334A Williams BMW FW23 sport spec.

Also in set C1101

C2335 Williams BMW FW23 Montoya #6

C2335A Williams BMW FW23 sport spec.

C2338 Porsche 911GT3R Seikel #83 black

also in set C1082

C2339 Porsche 911 GT3R White Lightning #31 white/yellow/red

also in set C1082

C2340 Cadillac Northstar DAMS #6 silver/black

C2362 Subaru Impreza Works 2001 #6 blue

C2364 Mitsubishi Lancer EVO7 #1red =>

C2364A Mitsubishi Lancer EVO7 sport spec.
 C2365 Mitsubishi Lancer EVO7 #2 red
 C2365A Mitsubishi Lancer EVO7 sport spec.
 C2399 Chevrolet Camaro Penske Sunoco #6
 C2399A Chevrolet Camaro Penske sport spec.
 C2400 Chevrolet Camaro Penske Sunoco #9
 C2400A Chevrolet Camaro Penske sport spec.
 C2401 Ford Mustang Boss 302 Bud Moore #15
 blk/red/wht
 C2401A Ford Mustang Boss 302 sport spec.
 C2402 Ford Mustang Boss 302 Bud Moore #16
 blk/red/wht
 C2402A Ford Mustang Boss 302 sport spec.
 C2427W Subaru Impreza #6 blue Set C1080
 C2428W Mitsubishi Lancer EVO7 #7
 Set C1080
 C2429W Opel Astra V8 Opel Motorsport #7
 white Set C1081
 C2430W Opel Astra V8 Sport Bild #3 red
 Set C1081
 C2433W Ford Taurus Robo Racer black Set
 C1077
 C2434W Ford Taurus Test Track silver Set
 C1077
 C2449 Porsche 911 GT1 Club 2002 yellow
 C2459/W Team Supernova #1 black Also in set
 C1079
 C2460/W Team Petrobras #3 ylw/grn/blue
 Also in set C1079

There we are then, thirty-three new cars to the range plus more additions to the range (I suspect) and more 'specials' which will probably double that figure by the end of this year!

The weakest link

It's always interesting to look at what isn't in the new line-up. What have Scalextric dropped from the range? Which cars aren't firing on all cylinders? Which car is a lap short of a Grand Prix? Which car is the weakest link? (I really must cut down watching TV!) The New Beetle is now considered an 'Old' Beetle and doesn't make the cut. There are no Touring cars apart from the DTM Astra V8s. Corollas are finally rolled away. Well, clumsy Corollas, feeble Beetles and boring Touring cars. You are the weakest links. Goodbye!

Survivors

And which cars survive for another year? NASCARS, as you would expect, showing that Hornby are still pushing hard at the US market and world-wide NASCAR following. The C2115 Ferrari 643 F1 now looks very dated not having benefited from the production and design improvements over the past three years. The C2126 Jordan F197, Caterhams, Cadillacs, Mercedes CLKs and TVRs all keep a hand in to complement the predominantly F1, GT and NASCAR presence in the range, with Rally and DTM taking a close supporting role.

My feeling is that Scalextric has had a strong product base line over the last three to five years. If they needed a good launch-pad with which to make a bold leap into the unknown of releasing a new track system and a 'Sport' range then there is no better time than now. Having briefly tested the track and new F1 cars, I am confident that you will enjoy them too and sure also, that this new range will do no harm to Hornby Hobbies either. Enjoy the 'Sport'. ■

McLaren Sports Racing Cars

by Dave Friedman, MBI
Publishing Company.

I often wonder how many of us look on slot cars as souvenirs of the real thing - indoor reminders of windswept days at Donington and thunderstorms at Thruxton, and for how many Scalextric IS the real thing, and are faintly surprised to find that full-sized cars do actually thrash round racetracks in front of huddled groups of sociopaths every weekend.

The second lot, with all respect, are going to find the following a waste of space in their favourite magazine. But the choice between spending the odd thirty quid on the latest Fly masterpiece or a glossy photo-album of a real racing legend may not be an easy one for some. Let me try and persuade you. Like slot-cars, motor-racing books on the market today are just getting better and better, and the subjects are so diverse and evocative, that, well, thank heavens for public libraries. Browsing around Chaters, my local motor sport bookshop, is as much fun as any slot shop, and needs just as tight a rein on the wallet hand.

McLaren Sports Racing Cars, by Dave Friedman, is a volume I've had my eye on for some time. Friedman is a renowned motor-sport photographer, and he's been around these cars and their drivers all his working life. From the briefest glimpse of the book, you know that this is a man who was there and saw it all, and is still on a mission to convey the thrill to those of us who weren't. I really am a die-hard Can-Am fan myself, from the days I used to read the race reports in my uncle's 'Motoring News', and when nobody got into the winners circle at any slot club without a Champion McLaren M8A body shell draped over their hand-built chassis. My little home track was and is always full of Chaparrals, Lolas, and McLarens. Bruce McLaren was my first hero. He raced the cars, and designed and built them too, and on top of that seemed the most easy-going bloke on the planet. He was doing for real what us oiks were

Book Review



By John Dilworth

doing in the shed, when we should have been out chasing women if we'd had the nerve. My greatest frustration these days, having eventually found the nerve to chase women, and paid the price for it in full (reaped the bountiful rewards, I mean, dearest), is that none of Bruce's masterpieces are readily available in 1/32nd; the only McLarens in any catalogue are the GP cars built long after his death. A case of toys reflecting life; in this book, the author's preface immediately brought a tickle to the tear-ducts; he quotes Gordon Murray as saying that most of the people who work at the McLaren factory today have not only no idea who Bruce was, but don't even realise that the modern Grand Prix legend is built on the success of his mighty sports cars. What do they teach kids in school these days?

Now that the fab Maxi-Models M6A happily exists, I am fully confident of a flood of Can-Am models from Fly and Pro-Slot and the like. These full-on cars were the best and most beautiful; the most exciting to see and hear full size, and to hammer round a track in miniature. The optician-worrying colour schemes, the wild aerodynamic shapes, the glittering carburettor stacks- and the wings! Sheer two-hundred mile an hour sculpture. Apart from the golden-orange of the McLaren team themselves, glinting in the setting sun at Mosport Park, how about the extravagantly striped metallic green

and blue Mk.II of Masten Gregory, or of course Mark Donohue's yellow-pinstriped M6A, or the brilliant red and yellow Bondurant M8E?

This fantastic book has them all. It begins with a sweet shot of Bruce working on his first Austin 7, moves to the story of his breakthrough ex-Roger Penske Zerex special (a beautiful Charlie Fitzpatrick model which used to be featured in the Classic bodyshells catalogue, I think), and most importantly covers all the Can-Am models. It ends with an epilogue dealing briefly with the development and race history of the Le Mans and double world GT championship winning F1, familiar through the Ninco model in all its variations. All types are thoroughly covered in crisp and evocative black and white photos, with colour pages at the end of each chapter. It seems as if Friedman still recalls each click of the shutter, as many gripping race photos are accompanied by a full description of the moment and the mood. The text itself is fairly minimal, apart from the extended captions to each picture, but these are often direct quotes from the drivers and team members, full of insight and detail. Some are enjoyably frank- not all private entrants were impressed with their last-year's model McLarens, and the European drivers were a little taken aback by the bumper-car tactics of some American drivers. Nerfing is a skill not confined to the slot-track. Parnelli Jones gives some stick, and takes it, too. All the great names from Dan Gurney to Chris Amon and of course Denny 'the Bear' Hulme, are quoted freely and at length. All the cars of whatever marque are identified from race number and driver, and it's sometimes surprising to see the variety of types in one shot- sometimes Cobras and Corvettes are snapped while being snapped up not just by McLarens, but by Ferraris, Lolas, and some very interesting one-offs; interesting line-ups for slot-races, or themes for collections.

Pretty much all the cars in this book (aside from the Austin 7 ?) can be built from Betta and Classic shells, or from Mike Patto's huge range. There's even a good looking injection-moulded M8D advertised on NCP hobbies site, but it always seems to be out of stock when I try to

order. Paint 'em up, and drop 'em onto your favourite chassis.

So whatever you're into, enjoy this book. Whether it's to get the detail right so that you can customise your precious Maxi-Models kit, or scratchbuild your own M8, or find inspiration for track landscaping, or just to pore over page after page of petrol-head poetry; those downhill corkscrew turns at Laguna Seca with four 7-litre tail-sliding scooters in paint-scratching proximity, or even thundering, smoking four-abreast starts snaking into single file for the first turn at Bridgehampton- lay off that umpteenth colour variation of the same Fly model, and get yourself a good book instead.

And when you've got this one, get Pete Lyons' definitive volume on the Can-Am too; it won't disappoint. Then send a copy of each to the Fly factory, Pro-Slot, Ninco, Scalextric- see if anyone takes the hint. ■

Westcountry rambles

BY VINE FENNEL.

All hail the Great God magnatraction! Who needs skill when you've got magnets? Yes, I've got a bee in my bonnet and I suppose I'm going to upset quite a few people. Due to an enforced relocation from wood to plexi, last year's championship wasn't all that much fun.

When people start measuring the strength of their magnets so that they fit the strongest, it all starts to get a bit sad. Coupled to the fact that the owner of the track wouldn't recognise 'standard' if it leapt off the track and smacked him straight between the eyes and you begin to get the picture. Lightened, balanced, timed and rewound motors - bodysells ground to the thickness of a Betta blob - lightweight glass and interiors "that must have come loose" says it all.

One quote sticks in the mind - "If you fit a strong enough magnet and a powerful enough motor, it doesn't matter what tyres you fit".

I tried to organise the East Devon Championship to run on above circuit again this year but without magnets to be greeted by cries of "what? - modify standard cars?" See above. Basically told them to go forth and multiply, I don't know why I bother with you ungrateful people (mild version).

Added to the majority apathy of getting our old club up and running again - 'When are we (you) going to get something sorted out' (don't take it personally Mark) - has led me to decide to hang up my controller for a while and retire from serious racing. That is until I do what the wife says and clear out the garage and build a track in there - just to keep my finger in, figuratively speaking.

Never mind eh. Just think, if Scalextric had built cars that handled in the first place we wouldn't have to put up with bloody magnets. I will add though, that these are my views (probably shared by a few others - at least locally). I expect Ed will put in the usual "not all views" disclaimer.

No he won't - I'm with you all the way!



Spotted this on E-bay a while back. If you can't make out the writing, it is 1/32. It went above my limit. Well, not my limit, but certainly the limit above which I can't go without losing the use of various reproductive items!

So, now for the next instalment of the Fly listing.

PORSCHE 911 GT1.

- A 31. White. Mobil. #25 Le Mans 1996.
- A 32. Carbon Fibre. #26 Le Mans 1996 Test Car.
- A 33. Silver. #16 Silverstone 1997.
- A 34. Red. #22 Suzuka 1997.
- A 35. White. Mobil. #26 Le Mans 1996.
- A 36. Yellow. #16 Spa 1997.
- A 37. Blue. Blue Coral. #30 Zhuhai 1997.
- A 38. White. FAT Turbo. #00 Daytona 1998.

LIMITED EDITION.

- E 31. Yellow. # 2 Guia Slot Racing.

PORSCHE 911 GT1 EVOLUTION.

- A 51. White. #26 Sebring 1997.
- A 52. White/Red/Yellow/Blue. #01 Daytona 1998.
- A 53. White. STP. #38 Daytona 1998.
- A 54. Carbon Fibre. #25 Le Mans Test 1997.
- A 55. Black. Playstation. #48 Le Mans 1998.
- A 56. Yellow. Penzoil. #6 British GT Championship.
- A 57. Silver. #00 Daytona 2000 Test Car.

LIMITED EDITION.

- E 51. Yellow/Black. Borussia Dortmund FC.
- E 52. Black/Blue. Knockout (?)
- E 53. Red/Silver. S.Oliver (?)

PORSCHE 911 GT1 '98.

- A 71. White/Red. Mobil. #26 Le Mans 1998 (1st).
- A 72. White/Red. Mobil #27 Le Mans 1998 (2nd).
- A 73. Carbon Fibre. # 1 Test Car.
- A 74. Red/White/Green. Zakspeed. # 6 Silverstone 1998.
- A 75. White/Red. Zakspeed. # 5 Oschersleben 1998.
- A 76. Red/White/Green. Zakspeed. # 5 Donington 1998.

LIMITED EDITION.

- E 71. Silver Road Car.
- E 72. Maroon. #69 Gaugemaster.
- E 73. Chrome. Spanish Shops.
- E 74. Blue. French Distributor.

TELEFONICA.

- T 1. Yellow. Telefonica # 1. 100 for Senior Management.
- T 2. Yellow. Telefonica. #11. 1000 for Staff.

Couldn't decide whether to add GB Track Porsches as well. Decided not to. There, that's this month's old waffle. I do hope I haven't upset too many people with my little rant but magnatraction really has spoiled my enjoyment of the game. ■

BITS AND PIECES

MAXIMODELS News

The McLaren M6D is now sold out but Max Winter has informed me that the next release will be the Team Surtees T160, Can-Am '68, Edmonton followed by the "Silent Sam" Paxton Turbine, Indianapolis '67. It is also planned to offer 1/32 detailing packs including, drivers, engines, cockpit stuff and wheels and tyres. If you would like more information contact Max on maxwinter@waitrose.com

Journal prize update

This month sees the last Scale Models prize car awarded and I would like to thank Mark and Julie for their generosity over the last six months.

Hornby Hobbies have provided the prizes for the next few months and some of them are very special indeed. Therefore the competition will change slightly; up to now the prize has been awarded to my favourite contribution each month - this will now change to my favourite Scalextric orientated article. This does not mean that you have to write endless words of uncritical praise - constructive criticism is always welcome - but a review of your favourite FLY car is unlikely to win!

More prizes

Robert Learmouth of Westwood Models has kindly donated some signed copies of Roger Gillham's fifth edition but, as yet, I can't think of a suitable competition so I will give the first one away to the member who provides the best suggestion for one. Drop me a line at the address on page one; closing date Thursday 21st March.

New Slot-car magazine

Colette Clark has sent me a copy of a new American magazine "Model Car Racing" which appears to be a bi-monthly publication. The editor is Robert Schleicher, author of "Racing and Collecting Slot cars"; suffice to say that this is the magazine that the hobby has been lacking all these years - a full colour, high quality publication. It is very good indeed and puts the amateurish UK commercial publications to shame; if I had the budget and time available this is the quality I would aim at for the Journal!

Price is \$6.95 in America but I don't know how much it will cost to obtain it over here; get in touch with Colette at Monarch Lines if you would like more information.



Dear Editor,

I had occasion the other day to enter my name into a search engine on the Internet and up popped an article in the September 2000 edition of your club magazine by Norman Wheatley about the early days of your publication.

I was the chap who, all those years ago, compiled the first computerised list of all Scalextric cars ever produced. I used to send it out to anyone who was interested, by modem if required, because it made organising your collection easier and let you know what cars you had and didn't have etc. In those days it was relatively straightforward but now there seem to be thousands of cars and variants that I suspect it would take a lot longer to compile and keep up to date.

Anyway, I just wanted to say thank you to him for mentioning me and to say that I still display my collection, even though I have long since given up actively collecting the cars, having moved on to live steam.

Regards,
Nigel Fraser Ker

.....
Dear Brian,

First and foremost a very happy New Year to you and to all the members of the Club. Congratulations to Kevin Myler for this year's Journal cover. It's as superb as last year's and would well deserve a prize too.

In the October 2001 issue, Adrian wrote about a Hornby Helpline. Is this service reserved to UK residents or can it take calls from customers from abroad, provided they speak a little English? Could Adrian let us know of this "precious" phone number? I suppose Hornby wouldn't mind having it published in the Journal, would they?

Last but not least, it's high time I made amends to Peter Novani whom I criticised for criticising so-called "approximate" contributions to the Journal more than one year ago. As the French saying goes: "Criticising is easy but doing something is much harder". I spoke much too soon. He did do it! Peter's articles are a pleasure to read especially for me, a "know-nothing", a philistine about motorsports and its history as my answers in the second part of the Christmas competition would tend to show. I've been revelling for more than a year now in Peter's reviews, may they be about cars, accessories or other aspects of our favourite hobby/fad/passion/addiction/mania/obsession (pick your own). It taught me a lesson; it's good to be wrong when it turns out to be for the good of the Journal and everyone in the Club. So, sorry Peter, and please keep us enlightened about all that as long as you wish. Cheers!

A would-be anorak
Pierre Collange.



Dear Brian

Greetings from a suitably chastised member. I do hope that I am not the only member who responds to your plea for e-mail addresses. Through membership of the NSCC I have been able to learn about your advertisers and their web sites. Through their web sites I have discovered that there are many more exciting cars on the market than my local shops stock. I have also discovered the many useful links which you and your advertisers promote. I had no idea so many people all over the world shared the passion for slot racing.

I would definitely welcome more web based material. Certainly it would be great to see those images in full colour. I must also take this opportunity to thank you for producing a consistently interesting and entertaining journal.

Like quite a few other members, I began my interest in slot racing as a young teenager during the heady days of the mid sixties. University, unemployment, work, marriage and many other excuses meant that my interest in the hobby remained dormant for many years. As marriage led to family I had an excuse to start again with my young son - at an age when he was probably far too young to appreciate the gift I was passing on to him! Now he is too old for daddy's "toy cars" (what an insult) and I am back where I started again.

However, thanks to the NSCC I have discovered that I am not alone. And how could anyone describe a Fly Corvette or Lister Storm as a "toy car"? Although I no longer have that VIP set that my parents bought me all those years ago (and how disappointed I was at the time that it wasn't a Scalextric set - of course if I'd known how valuable the VIP set would be today) I do have some of the cars that I bought and built during the sixties. Growing up in Toronto, I had access to an excellent hobby shop with a great track. I built a home track with my Dad's help and shared many happy hours with friends. I hope to put back my old Monogram/Revell etc. cars back to their original form having modified them and replaced the original bodies with what we used to know as 'clear plastic' versions.

One day I hope to build a more permanent home track and maybe I will find some other enthusiasts in the Sevenoaks area to share the fun with me.

Best wishes
Graham Wiffen

Dear Brian,

I would like, through the pages of the Journal, to ask for advice, assistance etc. on the reconditioning of my C75 Mercedes 190. Mine came to me at Christmas 1966, and over the course of the years has probably covered about a million Statute miles! I would be grateful for any information on the following:-

1) The original tyres have perished, and I'm having trouble finding replacements. I am not looking to replace the originals, as I would like to use the car, so any modern ones would be adequate. Does anybody have any ideas?

2) On the Triang RX motor, how do you remove the armature? Does the drive pinion have to be removed first; if so, how?

3) On reassembling the same motor, how can I get the plate holding the front (i.e. non-drive) end of the armature fixed solid? Mine rattles about.

Moving on, I have lots of copies of the Journal, which I would like to keep neat and tidy, and Sonia is fed up of tripping over them. Are binders available? Also, is a Membership Listing available? Members might like to meet up at times other than Race Meetings or Swapmeets. For all I know, there are half a dozen members living in my village.

I Look forward to hearing from someone.

Regards,

Paul Horner

I can't help with the technical queries Paul but I am sure someone can. Binders were produced a few years ago by Scale Models but they took a very long time to sell so the experiment has not been repeated; they are occasionally available at swapmeets. Bob Bott is currently working on a membership list and we hope to be sending it out in the near future.

.....

Dear Brian,

I wonder if you would be kind enough to print my letter in the newsletter. I was thinking of a suitable heading and this is what I came up with - "Body Builder would like to meet Drag Artist from Lincoln!"

It's to the point and it says what I am looking for. Maybe a bit racy for this kind of magazine though. It's a family journal and, if it's before the watershed, the young ones might be trying to read it. I digress; this is really an appeal for someone to contact me because I am terrible at remembering names - probably part of the ageing process. A half-century at Cricket is considered a good effort but to us mortals it brings a lot of things we never thought would happen to us.

We regain a second childhood, which includes a burning desire to collect, and race small plastic cars at prices we can't really afford. Apart from the failing hearing and the weakening eyesight, I also want to find out who keeps filling my plughole with hair every time I have a bath. Then there's nasal hair; what's that all about. They don't tell you about that in the brochure.

It's because of this I find myself writing this letter via the Editor asking someone to contact me. The person I would like to contact me was at the unmissable John Jude Leeds swapmeet and we had a couple of chats about my A.A.Bodies and the very smart Dragster Chassis he had with him. I am sure he belongs to a racing club and lives in Lincolnshire. It would be nice to regain contact and talk some more on the subjects. My phone number is 01296 875262.

Regards

David Yerbury



Dear Brian,
with reference to David Lawson's Track Test article.

David was given 3 cars, the only difference between them being that one is 4 wheel drive, all have the same engine and magnet which will give you virtually the same performance regardless of car. There will be no significant difference between an Audi TT, CLK DTM or the CLK GT car he tested them against, a fact he stated in his article. Most racers in the country remove the magnets and there the differences become apparent. The CLK is far and away the quickest car and handles a lot better. The CLK DTM is a very good car but really should be raced against the other DTM cars Ninco have produced ie: Alfa Romeo, Calibra and Mercedes "C" Klasse and consequently the engine needs downgrading to an NC1, easily done with 2 adaptor brackets.

I have not tested the Audi TT but believe that the aforementioned would also apply. As for the Golf, take the magnet out of that, put an NC1 in it, and it will only be good to race against Méganes and Clios etc. Don't get me wrong here, I think Ninco make some of the best cars for racers we have ever had but I feel putting an NC2 motor in everything is a big mistake.

In conclusion, I feel David's report, although fair in an "out of the box" situation, did not delve into the cars enough to be a racer's point of view.

Regards
Graeme Thoburn

.....

Dear Brian,
I received a copy of Roger Gilham's 5th edition for Christmas and I must say it is the best so far.

Can anybody help me with the following questions:

*Page 59 shows a C86 Porsche fitted with early Formula Junior (C66/7) wheels and tyres. Is this rare or were some cars produced with these?

*I also have a "Power and Glory" Vanwall and BRM packaged in plastic bags with a white stick-on label stating "special unboxed car code SC K265 Vanwall and code SC K266 BRM.

I have never seen any others so I would be grateful if anybody could supply any information on them, either by phone or through the letters page.

Thanks
Ray Chambers
(01797 361250)

NEWS UPDATE

Scalextric 2002 Range

This year sees the launch of a new 'Sports Specification Limited Edition' range. These cars will be race prepared, ground axles, brass bearings and self-centring guide blades all presented in an excellent box. Numbers available in this format will be limited, and are designed to celebrate the launch of new models; the price will be £28 each. The cars will also be available subsequently in standard packaging with standard axles etc, at the standard £25.99 each - The sports spares will also be made available to allow for cars to be upgraded. Due to the limited numbers planned for the 'Sports Specification' we recommend that you place your pre orders sooner rather than later.

Models planned for the New Sports Specification include: -

The new shape F1s McLaren and Williams. Muscle Cars -Chevrolet Camaro and Ford Boss 302 Mustang, GT40s, Lancia - EVO7, & MG Lolas.

We also saw some very impressive repaints, on the GT3 and Opel. That's an amazing 7 new moulds with the promise of at least one more F1 before the end of the year.

Sports Track

At first glance the track did not look that much different, but on closer inspection we have to say we are very impressed.

The surface is a smoother, refined racing one; bullet connection on the rails provides a positive track linkage ensuring superior electrical contact. Very easy to put together - even Julie could do it! Apparently assembly takes 1/3rd of the time of the classic track. The slot is deeper, and the metal runner does not actually go all the way to the bottom of the slot. The hand throttles are three wires, so you get brakes (at last!) The adaptor for the classic track is very well priced at £2 per pair And ingeniously used with the boxed electronic sections. These come with one end classic the other sports, and one adaptor - very clever.

Exciting new sections include a set of Crossover bends, Side Swipe, a Leap, and crossroads, even outer-outer curves. We are told that this is just for starters and that the range of track will continue to increase.

Affordable buildings- these are a brilliant idea, made from hard card, (similar to good quality

Railway Buildings) that are simple to cut out and assemble; they look really good, and are very well priced at £9.99 each

Other excellent features are the introduction of track clips and track fasteners, for those of us with permanent layouts; this finally does away with the 6" nails.

Good news also is that the new format border/rumble strip/ barrier range has been extended to include lots more of the radii and the straights.

Race Management System (R.M.S)

This is really impressive, and has a huge variety of functions: - You basically connect your Scalextric Set to your PC, and then you can race, practice, and qualify; run a championship series; design circuits; detail your own pit garage, pit lane and race briefing.

We saw the system extensively demonstrated, and were amazed at how smoothly it works, and the variety of things that you can undertake. It matches the long established play value of the Scalextric Set with the wonderful modern computer game market. The price will be £39.99, which seems amazing when we consider the hundreds of pounds that the currently available software costs.

Hornby have to be congratulated on this excellent product, which has to be the way forward for so many of us.

Scalextric Now In

C2346	Ford Taurus Tide 2001
C2348	Ford Taurus Mobil 1 2001
C2347	Ford Taurus McDonalds 2001
C2372	Ford Taurus De Walt 2001
C2376	Pontiac GP Consecro 2001
C2342	Ford Focus Works 2001

Due Soon

Sports Formula 1 cars in limited edition boxes featuring - self-centring guide blades; super soft tyres; metal bearings and ground axles.

C2334A	Williams F1 #5 New shape
C2335A	Williams F1 #6 New Shape
C2262A	McLaren MP4/16 #3 New Shape
C2263A	McLaren MP4/16 #4 New Shape

NEW CARS

Formula 1

C2415	McLaren F1 2002 No.1	3rd qtr
C2416	McLaren F1 2002 No.2	3rd qtr
C2417	Williams F1 2002 No.1	3rd qtr
C2418	Williams F1 2002 No.2	3rd qtr

NEW MODELS

Touring Cars

C2409	Opel V8 Coupe SAT1	1st qtr
C2410	Opel V8 Coupe OASE	1st qtr

Endurance

C2338	Porsche 911 GT3R Siekel	1st qtr
C2339	Porsche 911 GT3R Whi/ Light	1st qtr
C2366a	MG Lola No.1	3rd qtr
C2367a	MG Lola No.2	3rd qtr

American Classics

C2399a	Chevrolet Camaro No.6	2nd qtr
C2400a	Chevrolet Camaro No.9	2nd qtr
C2401a	Ford Boss Mustang No.15	2nd qtr
C2402a	Ford Boss Mustang No.16	2nd qtr
C2403a	Ford GT40 No.1	4th qtr
C2404a	Ford GT40 No.2	4th qtr

Road & Rally

C2364a	Mitsubishi Lancer No.1	2nd qtr
C2365a	Mitsubishi Lancer No.2	2nd qtr
C2411	Ford Focus Works 2002	3rd qtr
C2412	Subaru Impreza Works 2002	3rd qtr
C2414	Subaru Impreza Privateer	3rd qtr

Sport Track

C8200	Quarter Straight 87mm (2)	1st qtr
C8201	Radius 1 Hairpin Curve 90°	1st qtr
C8202	Radius 1 Curve 45° (2)	1st qtr
C8203	Radius 2 Racing Curve 90°	1st qtr
C8204	Radius 3 Curve 22.5° (2)	1st qtr
C8205	Standard Straight 350mm (2)	1st qtr
C8206	Radius 2 Curve 45° (2)	1st qtr
C8207	Half Straight 175mm (2)	1st qtr
C8210	Crossover	1st qtr
C8211	Leap	1st qtr
C8212	Barriers & Clips	1st qtr
C8215	Lap Counter/Timer	1st qtr
C8217	Power & Control power base	2nd qtr
C8216	Pacer	2nd qtr
C8222	Converter Straight 175mm (2)	1st qtr
C8223	Half Straight Border/Barrier	1st qtr
C8224	Radius 3 Outer Border/Barrier	1st qtr
C8225	Radius 2 Inner Border/Barrier	1st qtr
C8226	Track Supports	1st qtr
C8227	Race Tuned Accessory Pack	1st qtr
C8228	Radius 2 Outer Border/Barrier	1st qtr
C8232	Track Fixing Clips (50)	1st qtr
C8233	Lead in Lead out Border Barrier	1st qtr
C8234	Radius 2 Curve 22.5° (2)	1st qtr
C8235	Radius 4 Curve 22.5° (2)	1st qtr
C8236	Short Straight 78mm (2)	1st qtr
C8238	Radius 4 Outer Border/Barrier	1st qtr
C8239	Radius 2 Outer Border/Barrier	1st qtr
C8240	Radius 1 Outer Border/Barrier	1st qtr
C8241	P & C Multi Lane Extension	1st qtr

C8242	Track Extension Pack A	1st qtr
C8243	Track Extension Pack B	1st qtr
C8244	Track Extension Pack C	1st qtr
C8246	Side Swipes 350mm	1st qtr

Scalextric PC Interactive

C8143	RMS PC Interactive	1st qtr
C8147	RMS Multi Lane Extension	1st qtr

Sport Buildings

C8149	Track support bridge	1st qtr
C8150	Pit Garage	1st qtr
C8151	Control Tower	1st qtr
C8152	Grandstand	1st qtr

Power & Control

C8229	Sport Hand Throttle Yellow	3rd qtr
C8230	Sport Hand Throttle Purple	3rd qtr
C8247	Sport Extension Cables	1st qtr
C8248	Sport Booster Cables	2nd qtr

Fly

Due Soon

A141	Ford Capri Zolder 1979 Sachs
A125	Chevrolet Corvette Le Mans 2001
A125L	Chevrolet Corvette With Lights
C92	Lola T70 Sebring 1969
A28	Marcos Repsol Spanish GT
P1	Mario Andretti Driver
P2	Jacky Ickx Driver
P3	Nelson Piquet

Now In

A144L	Ford Capri with lights
A144	Ford Capri
A101	Lister Storm Datasonic LM 95
A203	Dodge Viper Le Mans 2001
A221	Panoz LMP-1 Coca Cola
PA6	Venturi LM400
A124	Corvette 2001

GB Tracks

Now In

Truck1	Sisu Truck (Livery 1) Black
Truck2	Sisu Truck (Livery 2) White
GB74	Porsche Evo ROHR
GB31	Lancia Beta
GB32	Red/White Lancia Beta

Due Soon

Truck3	Sisu Truck (3rd Livery)
GB33	Lancia Beta Monte Carlo Mugella

SCX, NINCO and FLY

New releases for 2002 will be announced at Toy Fair in early February.

WHEELSPIN

GB TRACK (GB34) LANCIA BETA MONTECARLO REVIEWED BY PETER NOVANI

Whether you agree with it or not, there seems to be a growing trend amongst model manufacturers to concentrate their efforts on race cars from a bygone era. Quite possibly they are trying to circumvent costly licensing agreements. However, in my opinion, they are merely acceding to the wishes of their customers.

Motor sport pioneer

And lest we forget, the Lancia marque is steeped in motor sport tradition. Founded in 1906, by racing driver Vincenzo Lancia, the company was an early convert to motor sport, with huge cars bearing the names Beta, Gamma and Corsa. Thereafter, names such as Lambda, Aprilia and Astura became synonymous with competition events.

After World War II, the beautiful Lancia Aurelia B10 coupé helped to reaffirm the company's commitment to racing and rallying with a class win at Le Mans and an incredible outright victory on the 1952 Targa Florio. Purpose built sports racing car soon followed, including the D20-25 series of cars and subsequent outright successes on the 1953-54 Targa Florio and the Mille Miglia road race in 1954. Ascari, Fangio, Maglioli, Taruffi and Villosesi were just some of the legendary drivers who raced for Scuderia Lancia. Yet that sports car programme eventually gave way to Lancia's Grand Prix racing aspirations and its distinctive D50 single-seater.

Following the untimely death of Lancia's number one driver, Alberto Ascari, and with their finances in a parlous state, the Italian concern abruptly withdrawal from all forms of motor sport. Their redundant D50 race cars were duly passed on to Enzo Ferrari's Scuderia

Ferrari team who campaigned them as Lancia-Ferraris. By the mid-sixties Lancia re-established its sporting heritage with a successful return to rallying and the occasional racing event with its nimble yet robust two seater front-engined Fulvia coupé.

The following decade Lancia stunned the rallying world with the introduction of its mid-engined two-seater Stratos supercar, powered by a Dino (Ferrari) 2.4-litre V6. Even privateer Group 5 racing versions of the Stratos were developed. But, not until 1979 did Lancia seriously consider a return to circuit racing.

The full Monte

Although based on the mid-engined road going two seater Beta Montecarlo sports car, predictably the Group 5 racing version was a very different proposition. Developed under the guidance of competitions director, Cesare Florio, the Lancia Corse racing team, based in Abate, near Turin in Italy, the car was aimed specifically at the under 2-litre class of the 1979 World Championship for Makes (WCM).

Designed by Gianpaulo Dallara and powered by a transversely mounted 1.4-litre straight-four engine fitted with fuel injection and a single KKK turbocharger, the race car produced an impressive 370bhp. The unusually large 16 inch diameter wheels and ultra low profile Pirelli tyres necessitated the use of huge wheel arch extensions.

Outrageous zebra like 'dayglo' orange swirls adorned the otherwise plain black unsponsored 1979 car. A less than impressive début at the Silverstone 6 Hours only served to increase Lancia's resolve. In time, the team got its act together and went on to secure their first WCM championship. Buoyed by their success, a two

car assault was readied for the 1980 season. Although one car was painted red and the other blue, both cars featured distinctive white coloured swirls. Now running massive 19 inch diameter rear wheels with 14 inches wide treads, the uprated cars now produced an impressive 410bhp.

By scoring three outright victories and achieving a 100 per cent record of class wins in the championship, Lancia easily secured the WCM title, ably assisted by a third privateer version, run by the Italian Jolly Club team. Another privateer Montecarlo appeared in the German 'Deutsche Rennsport Meisterschaft' Group 5 Championship. Driven by Hans Heyer, this 'Fruit of the Loom' sponsored car surprisingly vanquished the impressive Porsche and Ford opposition to take the DRM title.

Not wishing to rest on their laurels, a further assault on the newly titled World Endurance Championship for Makes (WEC) series was undertaken in 1981. Lancia often ran three cars, with either 1.4-litre engines or an uprated 1.7-litre version delivering 500bhp. The cars were now painted white, in deference to new sponsors, Martini (the drinks firm) and would again dominate the class, scoring four class wins, including one at the Le Mans 24 Hours plus an outright victory at the Watkins Glen 6 Hours in America, thus completing a hat-trick of championship titles in the process.

In 1982, Lancia discarded their Group 5 programme in favour of Group C racing with their svelte LC1 spyder sports/prototype. Initially powered by the Montecarlo engine, subsequent coupé derivatives were Ferrari powered. In addition, the marque ventured back into the world of rallying with their successful Rallye 037 and Delta Group B cars.

The slot-car

My thanks go to Pendle Slot Racing for kindly providing me with the #65 Martini sponsored Lancia Beta Montecarlo review car. Marketed as a 'GB Track by Fly' product, this version raced at the Le Mans 24 Hours in 1981. Lancia Corse had an impressive line-up of Montecarlos that year for the Group 5 under 2.0 litre class. Three

Martini cars, #65, #66 & #67, were augmented by the Jolly Club team's white #68 Lubrifilm sponsored version. Following the demise of the #66 and #67 cars, Lancia's honour was upheld by the Eddie Cheever, Michele Alboreto and Carlo Facetti Martini car, which finished in eighth place (second in Group 5 and first in class) and the fifteenth placed Jolly Club version (fourth in Group 5, second in class). And just for the record, the 1981 Le Mans event was won by a Porsche 936/81 prototype, with a Porsche 935 K3 eventually taking the Group 5 class.

Underpinnings include a sidewinder Mabuchi motor, front stub-axles, cylindrical magnet and brass wheel bearings. Wheels and tyres dimensions are identical to those found on Fly's Capri. However, the Lancia wheels are moulded with a realistic satin black finish and include an accurate five spoked plastic wheel design. That said, the team ran smaller diameter wheels, which were also narrower, for the high speed (pre-chicane) Le Mans circuit. Each Martini car had coloured identification markings just above the 'passenger' door and on the front air dam – the designated colour for the #65 car being light blue.

Arguably, the Lancia is visually more appealing than Fly's recent Ford Capri – except for those horrid door mirrors that is. Not only do they lack finesse, but, in most instances they were mounted directly onto the side window quarter-lights, not the bodywork as depicted. Omissions include the four headlight units, the combined front side light/indicator glazing found on either side of the front bonnet, the yellow front tow hook, the twin front metal air dam supports, various bodywork securing pins, the exterior safety cutout switch and the Pirelli logos underneath the headlights.

The numerous bodywork intake apertures lack photo-etched parts as GB Track rely on plated plastic or the chassis' black underpan to complete the effect. In addition, the small vents on top of the bonnet are merely inscribed rather than hollow. On a rather more positive note, the silver feature to the front of the vertical rear wing supports represents the transparent 'netting' used by the team, in all probability, to⇒

circumvent regulations which restricted the use of solid aerodynamic devices in that area. Other detailing nuances include the intricate rear window moulding, rivets to the rear of the tail section, a single rear fog light and the rear exiting white exhaust pipes which, for added realism, would benefit from the application of black paint to the insides.

I also admired the way GB Track have extended the front of the chassis slightly to replicate the race car's additional front lip spoiler. And the half open side windows are a novel touch. In terms of interior detailing, (the late Michele Alboreto is depicted at the wheel), the cockpit is devoid of any reference to a safety roll-cage or even a gear lever! And have you noticed that all Fly/GB Track slot-cars lack interior rear view mirrors?

On track impressions

Having been mildly disappointed with the handling of Fly's Capri (NSCC Journal, December 2001), I had high expectations for this sidewinder Lancia. And given that GT cars with that particular motor configuration are currently the quickest around my 35ft four lane Scalextric layout, nothing less than a 'stonking' performance from the Lancia would do!

The Lancia's fastest lap (out-of-the-box) was 4.1451 seconds with 20 laps completed in 1 minute 27.5406 seconds. That compares with Fly's (A145) Zakspeed Ford Capri times of 4.1771 seconds and 1 minute 30.1006 seconds respectively. As with the Capri, the new square shouldered rear tyres, wide rear track and narrower front track, combine to limit the Lancia's overall performance in the handling stakes. In fact, both Group 5 cars were not as quick as Fly's (sub-4 second) Porsche GT1 or Marcos around my twisty layout. They were also prone to de-slotting on a regular basis.

However, rounding off the edges of the rear tyres, loosening the chassis screws and lubricating the appropriate parts should see them competing with the other extremely quick Fly cars in my collection. A collection which should see the addition of Fly's forthcoming

BMW 3.5 CSL, Ford GT40, Ford Mustang and Ferrari 512L slot-cars.

Other Montecarlo releases

(GB31) Lancia Montecarlo – Day' 1980

This white #4 Jolly Club entered version was Lancia's sole representative at the 1980 Daytona 24 Hour Pepsi Challenge, as driven by Facetti, Finotto and Ricci. The latter driver did his utmost to destroy the car during practice. Yet the hard pressed team managed to repair it for the race, where it eventually finished in a creditable tenth place overall.

(GB32) Lancia Montecarlo – Brands 1980

Disregard what GB Track state on the plinth/box. This red and white #53 car is actually the Patrese/Röhrl driven 1980 Silverstone 6 Hours car, which retired after losing a rear wheel. The similar liveried #19 Montecarlo, also driven by Patrese/Röhrl, won the race shortened (due to a fatal accident) 1980 Brands Hatch 6 Hours.

(Team01) Lancia Montecarlo – LM 1981

A treat for collectors who must have everything. This superb limited edition boxed presentation set includes a brace of team Martini cars (#66 & #67) with space enough for the #65 version should you wish to complete the trio.

Conclusion

The Lancia is a welcome addition to Fly/GB Track's burgeoning range of slot-cars charting sport car racing's illustrious history. Yet, poor research often undermines their best intentions. And from a purist's perspective, it's a pity that Fly, along with other slot-car manufacturers, are unable to modify a mould to represent the subtle detailing differences found on race cars that enjoyed a career spanning several seasons.

But, unlike specialist companies who produce handbuilt static models, slot-car manufacturers have to make certain compromises during the production process. So, if you can bring yourself to accept such shortcomings, then this is surely another must-have purchase. And for once, we have here an Italian racing car that doesn't bear the name Ferrari. Cheers! ■

Roger's book - the debate continues

Last month's comments from Mark Scale and Phil Smith produced quite a large response, so here is a further selection of views on the subject, starting with a reply from Roger:

'Any author welcomes constructive criticism and notes of any errors - I certainly do not profess to know everything about Scalextric, nor I dare to suggest do 'traders'. Many collectors specialise in various aspects of our hobby and I value greatly their expertise.

As the editor mentioned on two occasions I requested new information and any errors found in the previous editions. Many collectors provided useful information but nothing from the 'trade' - except Sean Fothergill who kindly offered to look at the rarity factors for me.

Did anyone notice that C57 Aston Martin was omitted entirely from the 4th edition? I must also point out that it is not often realised that with specialist books authors have quite a number of restraints. The books do not sell in vast quantities and economics plays a large part.

For example:- - The new edition, even with more content/lists etc. had to have fewer pages than previously. This was because with colour and better quality paper the print and design costs are significantly higher. - I was only allocated a certain number of days for photography as a professional photographer is expensive. Ideally I would have liked to have found every car in mint condition but this would have meant visiting possibly dozens of collectors all over the UK. Therefore I had to select a few collectors who I knew between them would have all the models.

Another headache, not connected with the publishers was being sure that all cars selected for colour were correct in every detail. The pictures in previous books came from my own collection and then after having sold this the new cars were kindly lent by Steve de Havilland from his sale stock, I was 99% sure that the cars were correct.

When the publishers asked me to present them in colour I had to rely on the cars being correct - there were rather a lot to photograph and I think that to have only half a dozen not quite 100% is not bad considering.

The good news is that I have persuaded the publishers when they do a reprint later this year to substitute the few cars that are missing wing mirrors, alter some text and one or two captions (especially making it clear that the green roof on the Mercedes 250SL Coupe is a later repro fitting!)

Now, coming to the specific comments made about some individual models. I always suggest that one should never be too dogmatic about detail on Scalextric cars, especially the older models - changes did and do occur and as the factory did not keep records one can never be entirely sure what is right. There are new 'finds' coming out even now. I suggest do not jump to conclusions. Mark mentions that the blue 'race tuned' Bugatti is incorrect as it has been 'detailed' - all three Bugattis shown in the book were originally mine and I confirm that the one in question was given to me by the factory - and was prepared by them.

The race tuned version was made later than the pin guide versions and as pointed out the radiator was cut by hand to accommodate the blade type guide. This car was probably prepared for a toy fair and the extra detail finish could well have been incorporated in a production version had it reached that stage. After all C 64 Alfa Romeo driver had a coloured helmet, yellow scarf and white hands - why not the Bugatti?

Phil Smith commented on C48 Tyrrell 002; I agree this is misleading and the text will in future be altered. What actually occurred was that some cars did come from Spain (as I saw one in a UK Box correctly labelled) intended for UK sale. What possibly occurred was that at this time Ken Tyrrell's son Bob had started to organise licences for many of the race teams⇒⇒

to receive royalties on any model produced. It is likely that, whilst they could not stop Spanish sales, permission had not been received by Scalextric to market the model in the UK. Later of course permission was granted and other Tyrrell models followed. Remember something similar occurred with the recent issue Spanish C462 McLaren which was withdrawn from sale again possibly because of licensing problems.

Mention was also made of Henk Pijpers lists. Henk kindly contacted me and advised that his list is compiled from my books! - he does add more detail of minor changes etc. which may be of special interest to collectors.

Finally I must mention that I included at the end of this new edition contact details of our 'trader friends' - this should help them attract more business. I received no thanks for this which would have been courteous in the circumstances.

PS - isn't the catalogue exciting, shame though the new Sport track is not a bit wider.

PPS - since writing this piece Mark Scales has kindly offered to do a check to see if there are any other anomalies prior to a future reprint."

Roger Gillham

I must admit to being slightly surprised at the response of Mark and Phil to the latest issue of Roger Gillham's book. I feel that they have taken a very narrow and negative view. Firstly, I must say that there are still errors and omissions in the book which would go largely unnoticed by most enthusiasts and collectors; in my view it is only a very small percentage of collectors who would have the desire, not to mention the means to collect every single variation of a model.

I don't agree with Phil's comments about Henk Pijpers listings, surely the two cannot be compared as they are very different in their appeal. Henk's booklet is excellent if you are looking for a very precise and in depth listing of all Scalextric releases including running gear, mould and print variations etc. Roger's book takes a much wider view and looks at the history behind the development of Scalextric from

Scalex and tinfoil to early plastic cars of the 60s and 70s with features on Bond Cars, You-Steer, Kit cars & 1/24th to present day cars, sets, accessories and special editions, not to mention Spanish, French, Mexican, SRS, STS & TT. Need I go on?

I met Roger at last year's rail race meeting in Abergavenny, where he had been invited by Jeff Davies to take part. At this stage he was still gathering information to be included in the new edition. I was keen to offer some of my own thoughts and ideas of what would be good to see included in the new book. I was pleased to accept his invitation to review his listings of cars and rarity values. Roger made it clear that he wanted to include a chapter on rare colours, prototype cars etc. which would be kept separate from the main listings. I had always had my own reservations on how accurate a rarity guide can be as there are so many conditions which can determine the scarcity of a particular model. It is a very subjective matter; a car's rarity can vary depending in which county you live let alone country. Passage of time is also a big factor; In recent years I have known cars, particularly ex-set cars which have been really difficult to obtain; sometime later they are easily acquired from swapmeets and traders. In recent years production runs have become smaller and cars have much shorter shelf lives, being replaced with updated liveries at regular intervals. What may seem reasonably accurate now may be a little misleading in a few years time. However, I received Roger's listings and was able to return them to him having updated the rarity values and included a number of additional releases I felt worthy of inclusion.

Also at the rail race was Peter Zivanovic who has an enviable knowledge of the STS and TT range; he was able to help with a brief guide as to what is available in this fantastic range. This is just one example of the many new features that have been included in the book and one which has been made available from a collector. I believe Adrian Norman also had a large influence on Roger and many of the superb colour photos are of his collection. Roger has tried to appeal to the masses by navigating his

way from the forerunners of Scalextric through the decades to the present day. I am sure that you could take every single chapter and write a book on each one, ending up with a twenty volume encyclopedia of Scalextric.

Not all traders have the same view and I'm sure that many of them will have a copy handy for reference. I am sure that Roger's intentions are to take Scalextric to the wider audience and help the collector/enthusiast/home racer develop their knowledge and interest in the hobby. Those that have already been there, seen it and bought the t-shirt probably don't need the book anyway!

*Sean Fothergill
Pendle Slot Racing.*

Reading Mark Scale and Phil Smith's trader's view of the Gillham book gave me more than red ears. After sleeping it over I now have the courage to step forward and admit, that two years ago I did in fact resend a mint boxed Ferrari C124 to Phil Smith including a letter, stating: "Dear Mr. Smith. No way I can accept this car as in MB condition, please take a look in the splendid book of Mr. Gillham (4th edition) on page 108 and see what I want!"

After a few telephone calls and e-mails Phil was able to convince me, that I was completely wrong in this case and shamefully I received the car back. Whoever paid the postage for this I honestly can't remember, but I hope the fifty or so cars I have bought from Phil since that incident have more than made it up to him.

What is my point? I really don't know, but, as a Scandinavian collector not all that familiar with the real Scalextric world, I at that time took anything in Roger's book for granted. Since then I have been able to collect every single Scalextric catalogue including No. #1 but they don't tell the truth either, do they?

So the trader's have got a point here, no question; on the other hand I still find Roger's book(s) splendid. I wouldn't miss them as references. Rod Green's book is good too, but for a real collector no match for our "Gillham bible".

Just to lighten my bad conscience. I did

respond to one of Roger's letters in the journal. On page 154 in the 5th edition I was able to correct some confusion concerning the Danish company Heljan, and the French company Heller, as stated on page 168 in the 4th edition.

Keep up the good work, Roger. And to Mark and Phil: Please continue with your magnificent offers of rare and obsolete cars.

*Holger Thor Nielsen
Denmark*

I was fortunate to get Roger's 5th edition book from Santa and spent many an hour reading it over Christmas during the short breaks between eating and drinking....The photos are great and its well over 99% factually correct....a must for the Scalextric enthusiast.

But hang on, I'm not really qualified to make judgement; having specialised and collected just Scalextric products since joining the NSCC in 1981, what do I know? (with reference to trader Phil Smith's slagging of collectors in the January Journal - the expression 'don't bite the hand that feeds you' springs to mind).

I'd like to identify one 'H' number correction in the Superslot section (page 126) that maybe even the trader 'experts' are unaware of; the lovely looking white Hisinsa Jaguar XJ220 with blue and much rarer gold front logo versions, actually have individual 'H' numbers of H2024 (blue logo) and H2025 (gold logo). I only point this out coz it took a large swallow (or swap actually) for me to cough up for the megga rare gold label version! I'm told, but its not verified, that only one gold logo car was given to each Superslot dealer in Spain, with around 100 made; can anyone confirm?

Tony Frewin

Probably time to call a halt on this one I think, but please send information on any errors direct to Roger so the next edition can be improved in everybody's interest.

Just one thought on the Ferrari 312T; could this be a self perpetuating error? My own car carries Airfix decals as a direct result of seeing it in the 1st edition. It greatly improves the original; perhaps the owner of the car featured in the 5th edition did likewise! ■

Mama Mia!

BY TONY SECCHI

My old friend Nick, who used to race with me at our slot-car club in the mid sixties had just returned from last year's Le Mans and invited me over to his place for a few drinks and a first hand account of this (for him) annual pilgrimage. After hearing his dissertation and viewing his photographs we settled down to finish off his 10 year old malt whiskey and, as is usual on these occasions, got to talking about the "old times" and in particular the days at real racing tracks and the nights at our slot- car track.

Out of the blue, he came up with a question that brought back a flood of memories. "Do you remember 'Gina the Leaner'? Whatever happened to her?" Now, to put the events in order I must digress for a few lines.

Some time ago I wrote a reasonably well received Article for the Journal titled "The Italian Job" which featured my good friend Luciano, unfortunately now deceased. Those of you who read and remembered that piece will recall that at that time he and I 'conveyed' racing parts for the many English, Italian and French "young bloods" who were competing in Formula 3 single seaters on the Continent.

One of the best chassis in that formula was made by Tecnokart S.V.S. - sezione vetture sportive and simply known as Tecno (not Techno as I have seen). Some of the most famous F3 drivers to use these Chassis were Ronnie Petersen, Francois Cévert and a particular friend of mine, Chris Craft.

At the time of telling, I was in my last year at the Club, 1970, and there was a terrific International Championship for single seater Formula 2 cars in progress supplementing Formula 1. The F3 engines were limited to 1000cc - F1 to 3500 cc and the more competitive F2 to 1600 cc. The highlight of this championship was that it was truly all encompassing with cars from Cooper, Lotus, Brabham, Lola, Chevron, March, Ferrari, and Matra being driven by the likes of Jochen Rindt,

Jackie Oliver, Jean Pierre Beltoise, Henri Pescarolo, Frank Williams (yes, he), Derek Bell, Brian Redman, Peter Gethin, Pedro Rodriguez, Graham Hill, Brian Hart, Jackie Stewart, Chris Craft, Jacky Ickx, Piers Courage, Ronnie Peterson, René Wisell, Tim Schenkin, Carlos Reutemann, Jack Brabham, John Watson, Emerson Fittipaldi, Howden Ganley, John Surtees, Francois Cévert and Clay Regazzoni (with both of whom I was on good talking terms).

As you can see that is quite a list featuring six World F1 champions. The events were more frequent and the fields larger than F1 accounting for the many entrants.

Luciano, with his frequent visits to Italy and France and his gift for languages, was on good (business) terms with almost everybody in F2/F3 and knew the owner of TECNO (Gianfranco Pederzani) and his family very well, having spent several visits with them in Bologna.

He had told me that the family was coming over to Crystal Palace for the International Trophy F2 race in May. Practice was on the Saturday with the race on the Monday Bank Holiday. Luciano was obligated to Signor Pederzani as an interpreter and go-between; he was going to spend all day at Saturday practice and would be travelling with the drivers and mechanics on Monday for an early start.

He asked me if I would pick up Mrs. Pederzani from her hotel and drive her to the Palace. He furnished me with tickets and passes and, of course, I agreed. I was driving a MK 2 3.4 Jaguar at that time so I think that may have had some influence on his request. Anyway, as I stated in my previous article, Luciano liked a joke and was always up to something.

Early on Monday morning I presented myself at the hotel reception and asked for Mrs. Pederzani. The clerk phoned up then said "The Pederzani party will be down immediately" - the Pederzani party? I was expecting just one, but I was pleasantly surprised to see, when the →

'party' arrived there were only two - Mrs. Pederzani and her daughter Gina. I had briefly met Gina in Milan some five years ago when she was studying Architecture. I was a structural engineer so we had a bit in common and although older, got to know her reasonably well whilst Luciano and her father were wrapped up in business.

At the time I was 38 and she was 17 and I had not seen her since then until the Monday. She was sensational! She was now 22 and a partner in an interior design firm. Both her parents were average looking but her looks were mind boggling - Face, hair, figure, she had it all. She was simply stunning and she spoke perfect English.

I drove to the track, delivered Gina and her mother safely to Signor Pederzani and then made my way to see Luciano in the paddock. He was laughing all over his face! "I wasn't sure that you would make it up here without bending the Jag", he said, and added, "Did she sit next to you?" "Sure", I replied, "and I lost my way five times!"

The racing was great that day, Crystal Palace being a demanding circuit at F2 level. The main entrants were Rindt, Bell, Stewart, Hill, Fittipaldi, Reutemann, Watson, Petersen with Cévert and Regazzoni in the two works Tecnos.

Jackie Stewart won the first heat from Cévert with Carlos Reutemann third and Hill fourth, while Rindt took the honours in heat 2 from Regazzoni and Fittipaldi. The final was a Palace special with Rindt leading from Regga and Stewart, but after a couple of laps Rindt's engine failed and Stewart (who had a climactic battle with Regga to pass) won with Fittipaldi third.

On a more serious note, just four months after that race when Luciano and I went to Monza, Jochen was killed in practice for the Italian Grand Prix driving Colin Chapman's Gold Leaf Team Lotus 72. He was subsequently named posthumously as F1 world champion for 1970 - a great loss to the sport.

After the Meeting, Signor Pederzani hosted a huge, noisy and enjoyable dinner at the hotel

including the drivers, sponsors, mechanics etc. (and my good self). Luciano thanked me for my efforts and upon leaving, he asked me if I was going to the club on Wednesday evening. I replied in the affirmative and he said that he might come up to watch (as he often did).

That particular Wednesday evening was a quiet one at our club. We were inbetween championships with one class coming to an end and another about to start so most members were trying out their cars for the following week. The club opened at 7.30 pm and by about 8.15 pm there were six or seven of the regular 'old hands' in attendance. Luciano duly arrived, but not alone - Gina was with him. We had never had a female in our club before, let alone a Sophia Loren lookalike ! Naturally, I greeted Gina and introduced her to the rest of the guys, who by this time had eyes like saucers and bottom jaws around the level of their knees.

It turned out that her parents had returned home on Tuesday but she had spent a couple of days shopping with Luciano's wife and daughter. She was going home on a midnight flight from Heathrow and Luciano was taking her to the airport. After an early dinner, he had suggested that she might like to see (and try), some slot-car racing, hence her presence at the club.

By now the guys were back to normal and I had never seen them so vocal and animated. Once they realised that she could speak English they surrounded her and bombarded her with questions. At one time, I thought that they were going to ask for her autograph.

Unlike Luciano, she had not come that evening just to watch. She wanted to participate and she had no lack of choice when it came to cars to use. Everybody was offering her their cars along with tips and advice. She finally made a choice and had a few runs. At first, of course, she was abysmal, but after about half an hour of serious practice, she was completing groups of laps on all four lanes. Along with her drop-dead looks, she seemed to be a natural slot-racer. Either that or the guys were taking it easy with her - time would tell.

A friendly event was proposed with two races on each of four lanes and Gina agreed.

She was to race on all lanes and the other three drivers were to be rotated between the rest of us, all subversively agreeing to take it easy and not race flat out. Therefore, with her brief introductory practice over, Gina embarked on her first ever competitive event.

The races started and it quickly became apparent that Gina had lots of concentration, a fair modicum of natural talent and a 'physical' way of racing that was somewhat off-putting. In short, she leaned! As she negotiated each bend, she leaned into it. A right hander and she leaned to the right; a left hander, left. The effect was astounding to the guys on either side. As she leaned, she leaned on them and they wilted. They slowed down, they lost concentration and they deslotted. On our famous, long banked left hander, the guy who was on her left found her across his controller arm and almost in his lap!

There were eight races and, although Gina did not win one of them, she finished second on many occasions and the competitors either side

of her deslotted practically every time! If I hadn't known that she came from Bologna, I could have sworn that her hometown was Pisa. In all my present and past time in slot car racing I have never seen anyone lean as much as "Gina the Leaner" (as she came to be known). I like to think it was completely natural and that she did not do it on purpose, but what I am not sure of is whether Luciano put her up to it. He never admitted doing so but neither did he deny it and I for one would not have put it past him.

Whatever the reason, the memory of that night had lain dormant until Nick spoke of it. Luciano is dead now and I have no idea of the whereabouts of Gina and her family. I hope that she is well and if by chance, she is still racing I am sure that there will be a lot of deslotted but happy male competitors about.

As we Italians say in the vernacular: "Ho riconoscere la notte de Gina the Leaner" (I remember the night of Gina the Leaner). ■



A long overdue prize for one of the most popular contributors to the Journal; I just love your tales from the sixties Tony. The Scale Models SCX Minardi F1 may be a bit modern for you but I am sure you will give it a good home!



Ebay and the NSCC

BY NEIL DUNHAM

I have just come fresh from a fantastic buy on eBay. There are bargains to be had, as well as killings and busts. Ebay, for those who do not know already, is an Internet version of a worldwide car-boot sale crossed with the local auction house, loads of junk from people's lofts with a few gems thrown in. But, as there are over 5 million items for sale at any one time the number of gems is more than the odd bit of rusty track. Currently there are over 700 Scalextric items alone.

I have been a practising eBay for 2 years, both buying and selling with varying degrees of success. I would say that the auctions are probably the most fun you can have on the Internet with your clothes on. Prices are varied, with some bargains but also some bids so big that they make you concerned about the buyer's welfare. This inconsistency helps the fun along and can help make sellers a lot of money. And therein lies a problem for the NSCC - profit. I have sold most of my excess items on eBay and recouped a rather large slice of my outlay, thank you very much. This is all stuff that would have looked very nice in the NSCC Journal's 'For sale' page. Not so bad I hear you say, I've only ever advertised there once anyway. But, I have to admit to also looking at and buying items at NSCC swappies with an eye to sell on eBay, not very many I would like to point out, but I'm still guilty. Probably not a problem in itself, that's what the dealers are doing themselves, buy cheap sell for a profit. It is the accumulation of several small factors that makes worrying reading for the club:

* Excess items are now sold off on eBay rather than through the club, meaning fewer Ads. I think I am right in saying that the Ads are/were the first part of the journal that many people turn to (I do read the rest later, honest!)

* Dealers no longer appearing at the swappies as their stock is sold on-line, and to be frank, a dealer is there to make profit not friends.

* The 'going rate' for cars and especially buildings and accessories has shot up due to the

worldwide demand for slot-cars currently. I have been trying to light my layout with track and pit lights for the last four years and a mint boxed set has gone up from £30ish to £65+ in that time. I have seen one sell for £180 once, but the silver lining is that I have also seen a set sell for £15.

* Dealers and other members buy up the bargain items at swappies to sell on using eBay. Again, that is what dealing is all about. More noteworthy is that at least one 'wanted' Ad in the journal in last year's issues was for items to sell on eBay.

I would like to point out at this stage that I do not believe that any of these people are doing anything wrong, nor am I criticising what they (we) are doing. This is just to raise the issue for discussion and find out other members opinions. There is no doubt in my mind that the current situation is having a negative impact on the club.

So, what am I doing about my guilty conscience? Well the first thing is to recommend the NSCC to my buyers in the hope that a percentage will join. Secondly, I am attempting to write some (vaguely) interesting articles on scenery building and whatever else I know. Thirdly, and probably stupidly, I am listing my better items in the Journal first before putting them on eBay.

A couple of issues ago our esteemed and learned editor (I'm not worthy) had the good sense to post some extra photos on the website despite the fact that only 8 or 9% of us had confirmed/admitted that we are on the net. I think that this is a big step in the right direction. I found out about the club by surfing the net, as have many others and I think a greater net presence will open the club to many more potential members. Also with digital TV companies like NTL: including the net on Television and the Government proposing to have the entire UK on-line within 3 years more existing members will have access to the site and the web in general.

Anyway, I've got to go, there are some more track lights to bid on... ■

Nerfers paradise aka Slotstox

BY DAVE EDWARDS

The comment by Steve Westby in the October 2001 Journal concerning no announcement of any BriSCA F1 and F2 stock cars in the future Scalextric range gave me the idea that I should share my recent experiences with other members. Don't bother waiting for Scalextric Steve, just build your own stock car and get nerfing.

Last year the Dunton Slot Car Club was going through a lean period with members leaving the company or being posted abroad so I placed an article in the Ford magazine publicising the club with a view to increasing membership.

Soon afterwards I received a call from a gentleman by the name of Ken Holmes who had been a member of the Dunton Slot Car Club in the 1970s and was keen to find out what had happened to the club in the interim period. Ken told me he also ran a slot car club, the Wellgate Slotstox Club based in Chadwell Heath, Essex.

This type of racing was new to me so as soon as Friday night came I made my way to the club and was immediately made welcome. Ken loaned me several of his own cars to try out and his hand controller (none of your namby - pamby 70 ohm jobbies, this was a real thumb controller (known as a Rhythm Stick) with a meaty 5 ohm resistor hung out in the breeze underneath the grip and with microswitches for full throttle and brakes).

Racing appeared fast and furious; nerfing was the name of the game. Ken explained the basic rules and then it was time for me to race. I was looking forward to this; I could legitimately lean on or "bury" other cars when the opportunity presented itself and not be subject to the verbal abuse I generally receive when employing similar tactics at the D.S.C.C.

A buzzer sounds and off we go with me leading from the white top start line. Eight laps to go (count them yourself - don't even think about cheating), into the first 180 degree turn, a

little drift, then as the turn finishes the inside three lanes close up towards the outside lane to become a chicane the full length of the straight, then it's hard on the brakes for the other turn, not too late or you de-slot, not too early or the yellow, blue or red tops hit you up the chuff and it's into the fence you go. The lanes open up to normal lane spacing as you go through the turn then you're back on the start/finish straight and into the next lap. Less than twenty seconds later it's all over, do it again twice then drive them round to the race controller for the lane change. Nine more races and your heat is over, scoring is à la real BriSCA F1 with heats, consolation races, final and a Grand National (run over 24 races).

Marshalling is, and has to be, fast for two reasons. With a lap time of around two seconds the other cars are almost coming round again as you put the cars back on, and as they weigh between 5 and 8oz. (depending on individual club regulations) it hurts and can draw blood when a car travelling at full tilt hits your hand. Marshals have to think as well - you don't just bang it back in the slot in a nanosecond as is normally expected, cars are only marshalled if they are on their wheels. If they are on their roof or side, are hooked up on another car or hooked on or through the fence they are left where they are. If another passing car knocks them back onto their wheels or frees them from the fence or another car then they can be put back on.

The race controller and corner marshals also have the responsibility to determine if a nerf is genuine or a deliberate ram. Generally if the nerfing car stays on and continues unhindered that is legitimate. No steaming down the straight T-boning the guy in the next lane and putting both of you in the fence - that would count as a deliberate ram, the penalty being removal from the track and no points for that race. Two deliberate rams in one heat result in disqualification.

Cars vary in design from club to club but →

those used at Wellgate are modified Parma Womp-Womp cars. The chassis side pans are cut away and a separate upper chassis section consisting of bumpers, main rails, nerf rails and safety guards similar to the "plumber" style of chassis is hinged around the front axle and secured by a hook at the rear allowing 1.5mm movement. Bodies are either scratchbuilt from old beer cans or lexan bodies from moulds produced by Ken himself, or Chas Keeling from SCD. Motor, guide assembly, axles, gears and front wheels are standard Womp-Womp. The rear hubs are specially made for Slotstox by Chas Keeling and have thicker rims to minimise buckling. Substantial amounts of lead weight are

added to the nearside of the chassis as low as possible. Amounts vary according to driving style - heavier cars are slower but make better nerfers and stay on better if nerfed and vice versa.

Members are encouraged to build their own cars but Ken or my fellow D.S.C.C member John English (0208 590 7304) are willing to build cars for new members.

If anyone is interested in trying Slotstox the club meets on Friday at 8:00pm in The Oaks Centre, Collier Row Road, Chadwell Heath, Romford, Essex. Contact Ken Holmes on 0208 599 7180 or mobile 07889 384064 for further details. ■



mole@nsccl.co.uk

So thirty three people complained about the Scalextric advert did they. I bet none of those were wives whose husbands regularly disappear for their fix.

The REAL complaint should have been about the slogan 'It's a boy thing'. Mole thought that under Brussels law we no longer can be gender specific in adverts, job titles and the like. Hence the proliferation of Spokespersons and Chairpersons. But wait a minute are not son and boy gender specific children, therefore should it not be Spokeperchild and Chairperchild? Which brings Mole back to the advert slogan in question. Should it not be "Scalextric. It's a child thing". And from Mole's observation of many non-gender specific 'serious' users about sums them up. And I am sure many wives would agree, Mrs. Mole does!!

Information keeps arriving at Mole Towers from Spain with pretty pictures of new car

releases and it seems that 2002 must be the 'year of the 911 GT3, with ProSlot releasing 5 more repaints (white, red, yellow, black, blue) and Mr. Norman telling us about 5 from Scalextric and promising us many more during the year. That only leaves Fly, SCX, Ninco and Carrera to announce some and the serious users can have their own 30 car 911 GT3 grids to play with.

And finally more news on sightings of R.W. Neil Watson an enthusiastic (obsessive?) Lotus Europa owner who built his Europa from a kit in 1972 says that he has since rebuilt it with some modifications from a Richard Winter at Bank Service Station, Southport. These modifications probably included a Quick-Fit guide, but Neil is not saying.

Don't forget, don't keep it to yourself - tell Mole and then the whole world (well a small bit of it anyway) will know. ■

Assorted rantings

FROM CAVEAT EMPTOR

Scalextric Sport Track; the overall idea looks promising: - overtaking bends! Hmmm, really? New chicanes! OK., so when is a chicane not a chicane? Race Management System (RMS) - design and concept looks excellent, though it only seems to be geared up to 6-lane racing, just when they simultaneously announce extending their new track design to allow 8-lane racing!

Now I'm not a born salesman and do not have my own business, but can someone please explain the sense in investing thousands, if not millions of pounds in new track and limited edition cars (oh, they also plan to release the cars in a lower specification as part of the standard range), when Ninco and Fly respectively have beaten them to it by over two years. I doubt if the average slothead will be happy paying the almost guaranteed higher prices for such items? Oh, but they do buy Fly cars at extortionate prices, so why not give it a go with Scalextric stuff - it's bound to work, isn't it?

Let's face it, Fly are already being (rightly) criticised for the escalating costs of their cars and trucks. I've certainly made the decision now, to wait until they've brought out a decent range of each car or van (or whatever they produce next), then choose from what's left after the dealers' pockets have been lined by Mr. Collect-Everything's hard-earned pennies. Remember, it's the punter (yes, you Mr. Slothead) who dictates the price at the end of the day, not the dealers and not the manufacturers. If Mr. Fly-Scale & (Nin)co can't shift their stocks of supposed collectables straight away, I guarantee they'll be a lot more bargains in the future. There's far too much stuff around at the moment for distributors to suddenly find themselves stuck with shelves full of goodies - i.e.: Carrera: OK. some dogs in the pen, but the occasional pedigree creeps out now and then (Mercedes 300SL anyone?) - Cartrix: School report would read "...making good progress, but could do better." - MRRC: Ahh good 'ol MRRC, I mean Airfix, Mmmm no MRRC, or

is it Monogram. I wish they'd stop changing their mind who they are and what they produce.

They are essentially a very good long-standing company, but generally with long-standing cars. However, the prices are very reasonable, except for the buildings, which frankly are the same moulds from the sixties. They should be able to afford to give these away free with each car purchased (hell! - was that a commercial opportunity - don't you tell anyone and I'll forget I ever mentioned it as well, OK.?) Pink-Kar: getting better all the time - excellent models, not a great range, but a good price. - Proslot: again very good models - not up to Fly standard, but is it really necessary? They are very good value for money. Reprotec: some good, some dodgy; prices a bit high, but not too bad. SCX: remember them? Everybody knocks 'em, but they are producing very fast and perfectly good cars for slot-racing. Team Slot: did a few reasonable plastic models and some very attractive resin releases, but how much? It'll take a lot to convince me I need one. Top Slot: resin based and quite expensive actually for what they are. They produce the odd gem, but get those prices down!

Indeed all power to the editor's inference last month regarding Ninco cars' affordability; do we really need Fly's level of detail and associated price-tag - I don't think so.

So Mr. Hornby bloke, I mean Sir, would you be so kind as to explain your reasoning behind the 'Sport' range. Commercially I think it'll actually go the same way as Super 124, (i.e. down the pan,) which is fine for the few people who buy the small number of cars and track plus accessories you're going to make available, 'cause it'll probably become some of the most collectable slot-stuff produced, when it appears out of peoples' lofts in another twenty years time.

Now then, where did I leave my Scalextric Arrows and Shadow - oh yes - on the start line of my Airfix track in the small back-bedroom. Back to the race. . . . ■