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THE INDEPENDENT CLUB FOR SLOT-CAR ENTHUSIASTS

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Gong but not forgotten

Nothing much has happened to spark off an editorial this month so I shall have to rely on that age old page filler - the awards list. Here we go with the editor's choice of 2003:

Slot-car of the Year - Revell Cobra Daytona Coupé. I don't know how it performs on the track - my good lady took one look at it and said, "You are not playing with that, it's far too pretty"!

Spirit of Gilles Villeneuve Award - Juan Pablo Montoya. A true 'racer' and the first Formula 1 driver since Ayrton Senna that I would pay to watch.

Missed Opportunity Award - Vanquish MG - their Can-Am cars could have been great. If only they had ditched the differential and made the things to a sensible scale.

Stupid Limited Edition Award - Fly - only they could have the gall to charge a fortune for four identical chromed cars in a fancy box.

Longest Pregnancy Award - Fly again. How long did we wait for their GT40? Was it really worth it? An honourable mention to Scalextric also - The Renault F1 was still known as a Benetton when it was first announced!

Organiser of the Year Award - Rob Smith for the best Ramsgate weekend yet.

Business Man of the Year Award - Frank Martin C.E.O. of Hornby Hobbies. Not only has he continued to drive the firm to yet more success but he has managed to get his picture in The Daily Telegraph business section more often than any other 'Captain of Industry'.

Quote of the Year Award - Graeme Thoburn. "It's only a bit of fun".

And Finally - Don't forget your Christmas competition entries; Archie, the editorial cat of the year, has an awful lot of prizes to give away.

Till next month
Brian





Immediately before Christmas many new releases flooded the shops to make ideal last minute presents. The last boat from China must have been overloaded with new products from Hornby. Hopefully some of these new cars will have made it into your Christmas stocking.

New Items

C2394 Dallara Indy "Red Bull" #52

C2498 Dallara Indy "Delphi" #8

C2517 Dallara Indy "Gulf" #4

Three more versions of this excellent single seater. C2394 is only available in the UK at the Hornby Collectors Centres although it is available elsewhere in the world as a more general release. It is limited to a small run of only 1000 pieces. These first two cars are real Indy Championship liveries and carry an official logo sticker on the box. The third is C2517 in the fictitious Gulf livery. With a retail price of under £20 Hornby report that these single seaters are selling very well all over the world.

C2503/C2503A Chevrolet Corvette L88 1972 #48

The second Corvette L88 with a full livery is available in both Sport and Standard versions. The Sport version is a limited edition of 10,000 pieces. The standard version of C2502A is also now available.

C2508 Chevrolet Camaro 1970 "Joe Chamberlain" #76

A fairly bland and anonymous livery to me but I'm sure that aficionados of TransAm racing will appreciate this new Camaro release.

C2494 Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution 7 WRC #32

The latest release of the Evo7 is the McRae/Senior car in red and silver. This is the New Zealand rally livery.

C2397A Renault R23 F1 "Jarno Trulli" #7

Working with the F1 teams must be a nightmare. The Renault F1 was first in the price lists in 2002 as a Benetton and it has taken until now to bring this model to market.

This is the first single seater to use the new guide system as originally seen on the new TVR. Please let me know how this performs and I'll pass your feedback on to Hornby.





C2591/1 Ford GT MkII NSCC 2003 Special Weekend

And finally the best has been saved until last. The car kindly produced by Hornby for the 6th annual NSCC Hornby weekend is the stunning yellow GT40. Only 48 of these cars has been made and each one comes with an individually named and numbered certificate. Only available to attendees of the weekend.

Coming Soon

News about this year's releases is slowly surfacing and pictures of the black and yellow Indy Car that is the 2004 Scalextric Enthusiasts Club car can be found on their web site.

Look out also for Porsche Boxters and Audi TTs in road trim both as solo cars and in gift packs with track pieces. The new Starsky and Hutch film will be celebrated too with a Ford Torino in the well known red and white colours of the original 1970s' TV show. The first Challenger and the Australian V8 are also out there but have yet to arrive in my collection. ■



C2482 MG Lola "Intersport Racing" #37 C2483 MG Lola "Dyson Racing" #16

Two more versions of the very rapid MG Lola as run in the ALMS series for Le Mans type cars in the US.

Margate Extra

Planned Scalextric releases 2004

New Cars

Formula 1

C2551	Maserati F1 1953 No.32
C2552	Vanwall F1 1961 No.30
C2554(a)	McLaren Mercedes 2004
C2555(a)	McLaren Mercedes 2004

Sports/GT

C2521(a)	Lister Storm LMP 900
C2522(a)	Dodge Viper
C2523(a)	Dodge Viper
C2504(a)	Maserati Trofeo Coupé Cambicorsa
C2505(a)	Maserati Trofeo Coupé Cambicorsa

Saloons

C2592(a)	Audi A4 Works Team 2004
C2593(a)	Audi A4 Works Team 2004

Rally

C2486(a)	Skoda Fabia WRC Works 2003
C2487(a)	Skoda Fabia WRC Works 2003
C2560(a)	Peugeot 307 WRC Works 2004
C2561(a)	Peugeot 307 WRC Works 2004

Assorted

C2506	Audi Coupé TT (Budget Range)
C2507	Audi Coupé TT (Budget Range)
C2478	Porsche Boxter (Budget Range)
C2479	Porsche Boxter (Budget Range)
C2553(a)	Ford Gran Torino 1976 Starsky & Hutch car.
C2566	Corvette L88 1969 #1 open top
C2570(a)	Ford GT 2003

Reliveries

Formula 1

C2581	Renault F1 2004
C2582	Renault F1 2004
C2583	Williams F1 BMW No.3
C2584	Williams F1 BMW No.4

IRL

C2571	Dallara Dreyer & Rainball Racing
C2572	Dallara Andretti Green Racing

Sports/GT

C2578(a)	Ford GT40 1966 #59
C2579	Porsche 911 GT3R Freisinger Motorsport
C2580	Porsche 911 GT3R Seikel Motorsport
C2589	Caterham 7
C2590	TVR Tuscan CDL Racing
C2591	TVR Tuscan JCB

Saloons

C2567	AMG Mercedes CLK Express Service
C2569	Opel Astra Coupé Team Holzer #8

Minis

C2562	BMW Mini Cooper John Cooper Challenge
C2563	BMW Mini Cooper John Cooper Challenge
C2564	BMW Mini Cooper John Cooper Challenge
C2565	BMW Mini Cooper John Cooper Challenge

ASCAR

C2585 Ascar Team Territorial Army #84
C2586 Ascar Unity Racing #48

Rally

C2550 Subaru Impreza 'The Sun'
C2587 Subaru Impreza Works 2004

C2588 Mitsubishi Lancer Evo 7 Privateer

American Muscle Cars

C2573 Chevrolet Camaro 1969
C2577 Chevrolet Camaro 1969 #72

C2574 Mustang 1969 Street Version
C2576 Mustang 1969 #1

C2575 Corvette 1969 Street Car

Moto GP Bikes

C6000 Honda Repsol Valentino Rossi
2003

C6001 Honda Camel Max Biaggi
2003

C6002 Honda Camel Makoto Tamada
2004

C6003 Honda Telefonica Sete Gibernau
2003

C6004 Yamaha Gauloises Alex Barros
2004

C6005 Yamaha Gauloises Valentino Rossi
2004

C6006 Yamaha Fortuna Carlos Checa
2004

C6007 Honda Telefonica Colin Edwards
2004

C6008 Ducati Marlboro Loris Capirossi
2003

C6009 Ducati Marlboro Troy Bayliss
2004

C6010 Aprillia Alica Shane Byrne
2004

C6011 Aprillia Alica Jeremy McWilliams
2004

C6012 Ducati D'Antin Neil Hodgson
2004

C6013 Ducati D'Antin Ruben Xaus
2004

C6014 Suzuki GP Team John Hopkins
2004

C6015 Suzuki GP Team Kenny Roberts Jr
2004

Wow! If this lot comes to fruition it will surely be the greatest year ever for Scalextric - 14 totally new moulds and a grand total of 50 cars (66 if you include Sport and ordinary versions) altogether.

I would have thought that the world supply of Dodge Vipers was actually quite sufficient for the moment but I fear that the editorial wallet is going to be severely depleted by some of the other releases.

Let's see - six current F1 cars, two historic Grand Prix cars plus a couple of ASCARS - looking expensive already! The Lister LMP, with all its trick upgrades is going to be a must for racing. Then there is the 'Starsky and Hutch' Torino - got to have that one - wonder if the driver will be wearing a cardigan?

Quite apart from the cars there are also several additional track pieces (the banked curve returns!) and even new figures in the shape of 'pit team crews'.

All in all I am just grateful that I have no interest in motorbikes - but for those who do - cast your eyes over the next column; it's going to be an expensive year lads!

Brian

Trader's travels

by Robert Learmouth
(Westwood Models)

After the whirlwind that was November (Stuttgart, Utrecht and Ashford swapmeets), December proved a lot quieter. Leeds and Worthing fell on the same day early in the month but, with the exception of the NEC general toy fair the weekend after which a number of NSCC traders attended, we now have a welcome break until Milton Keynes in February.

Yes, even I think there has been a lot of swapmeets and no doubt there will be a lot of head-scratching going on during the winter break evaluating whether all the new ones have worked. Certainly it feels to me we are now running at saturation point and from a personal point of view I simply wouldn't want to commit further time to anything else new other than what we already know about for 2004 (i.e. Slough and Orpington). Karen reliably informs me I have a family, though it does seem to have been sometime since I last saw them... My personal view is that some of the current crop will not survive unless they carve out a new niche. In one significant respect Brian Walters got Ashford right by taking the event to the people at a location where a well-established car-boot sale is held in purpose-built market premises. This was reflected in the 200 (paying) visitors who came in which is double what most slot swapmeets achieve currently. We shall see, natural selection will prevail, though as we know this is not always kind.

Fascinating news breaks from Ebay this month with an answer for the age-old quest to rid our 1960s cars of brown marks. One seller confidently reported that it was alright his car being sold with brown marks because if on purchase of said vehicle you locked it in a dark cupboard for one month the aforementioned marks would disappear. I'll let you know next month how this works out, as my car hasn't quite clocked up the requisite month in solitary yet...

Ebay bargain of the month would appear to be a 1960s Rubber Track Paddock. Thankfully all complete as the buyer parted with £220 for it. I shall have to get my mint-boxed example up and that should be the summer holiday paid for! Again, two Bond Sets up for auction although at least one of them looked familiar from a previous attempt to sell. The blurb for this particular auction reminded us of the fate that befell many of the sets during the original release period. This was an expensive item, difficult to sell and it was quite common for shopkeepers to break the set up for the cars only in an attempt to recoup their initial outlay. Guess where the boxes went. This story is certainly true as validated by our local model shop who recently related an identical story to me quite unsolicited. Other interesting items this month included a boxed Super 124 Figure Set that fetched a mighty £280 but then it is a very rare beast. More surprising was the K1 Go Kart, albeit boxed and near mint which fetched a whopping £240. Inflated transfer prices have also spread from Stamford Bridge onto Ebay where the Chelsea F40 now changes hands reliably at £60 plus.

Back to the future

With crystal ball firmly in hand I shall put my head on the block with some predictions for this year. 2004 will start sorting the men from the boys both amongst manufacturers and dealers. Hornby had a relatively quiet 2003 compared with what 2004 is likely to bring and the internet message boards are awash with rumours of 10 new moulds. We already know about the motorbikes but one senses further surprises seem probable. Carrera made a lot of new friends in 2003 and careful growth of the range in 2004 ought to see them push on further. But please guys, lose those see-through packing crates and put the cars in something smaller! ⇨⇨

Rumours persist of Fly's demise though this talk has already proved premature. But you can't help feeling they need to change tack rapidly in 2004 to get back the considerable ground they've already lost. Just don't change your boxes chaps, now we do like them! Ninco seem content with evolution, rather than revolution and that's okay. But it would be nice to see them bring something out that would get people talking again, I kinda like Ninco and as a collectable I think it's undervalued (mind you, try getting a Gulf McLaren F1 for under 75 quid these days).

Dealer wise someone is going to feel the pinch sooner or later with new stuff getting sold for little over trade in some quarters. I was asked to beat £22 for a new release Carrera car the other day, which I was informed was the regular postage inclusive price from another 'dealer'. Er NO. We need to make a profit on our stuff as it helps to bring you all those things you don't otherwise get like choice and advice. The regular NSCC dealers are all a bit too canny to get sucked in but there's going to be plenty who are here today and gone tomorrow when they get their fingers burnt.

NSCC Promotional/Social Weekend and Slough Swapmeet

As you may already be aware, Gareth Jex (of SCX liaison fame) joined the NSCC committee as Promotions man during December. Gareth's first task was to look at staging a major NSCC led occasion open to all in the world of slot-cars. This event will be something quite different for visitors and a superb opportunity to promote the NSCC. Gareth has some spectacular ideas lined up and will no doubt want to share these with you himself in the coming months. However, after careful consideration the committee felt that with an already cramped calendar during 2004 and the anticipated effort required to bring such an event to fruition, it would be best to fix a date in 2005. I'm sure some of you will be disappointed it can't be sooner but from what Gareth has presented to us it will be worth the wait.

Meanwhile, the club still wishes to promote itself in new ways during 2004 and Slough swapmeet on 16 May provides an excellent opportunity to do this. This event is open to all slot-car enthusiasts and is being organised by myself and Steve Cannon. We already planned to do something quite different with this event and are looking to bring in several circuits, manufacturers/distributors, exhibition and display material etc on a considerably larger scale than attempted before. There will also be children's activities to make this more of a family event.

We have two halls booked. The main (large school) hall will contain a traditional swapmeet where we hope to have 60 plus tables. The exhibition (full size gym) hall will contain the other attractions. Steve and myself have offered the exhibition hall to the NSCC in order to carry out promotional activity. Gareth has kindly agreed to co-ordinate all activity in this hall though I have promised him that the committee, and all NSCC members come to that, will be encouraged to help out and suggest attractions. The Haymill Centre is a super venue for such an event and Slough is in an excellent location for access from much of the country and for overseas participants.

There is a new generation of slot-car enthusiasts out there who perhaps don't know what awaits them beyond Ebay. This is everyone's opportunity in the NSCC to promote their pet interest and, in turn, show the rest of the slot-car world what they're missing out on by not being an NSCC member. If you've wanted to show it off before (whatever it is) then this is your opportunity to do it. There is no charge for having a presence in the hall, even if your attraction has a commercial aspect to it. Just keep it slot related and don't ask for space if all you really have is a table full of swapmeet stuff.

Please contact Gareth for exhibition hall bookings and myself for swapmeet bookings. There are some further details of the event on www.westwoodmodels.com. We have various original avenues identified to advertise this event including a feature in April's Racer magazine. ■

One day.....

by Steve Westby

When we bought our previous house, the sellers assured us that the parts of the missing bannister were up in the loft. Of course, they weren't. I made a mental note to do something about it, one day.

Some time later, my brother visited with his family and my nephew proved that, if you were determined enough, it was indeed possible to fall off the stairs and land on your head in the hall. I decided I must definitely do something about it. So right away, well, after only a few months, I went out with my father-in-law and bought all the rails and spindles and knobs that we would need.

The next job was to work out how to cut all the spindles at the right angle and length. Luckily at the time I was doing a job where no one was quite sure what I was supposed to be doing, including me. So I had plenty of time to sit and plan the job out and how to draw up the templates that would be needed for the cutting. By the end of the day I was confident that within a few weeks, provided I could get round to actually doing the templates, I would have worked out exactly how to fit the new bannister.

I got home that night to find that my father-in-law had done the whole thing by eye and just had the last few spindles to slot into place.

I'm a bit like that with slot-cars. I have no trouble thinking of projects, models of cars driven by my racing heroes, that I'd like to have. Or perhaps I see a static model that suggests an idea, or a new slot-car is released and I see the possibilities for different liveries.

In many cases, I even buy some or all of the bits I need. Though I have to admit that in most cases, it is only *some* of the bits. I'm usually missing the right wheels or tyres, or can't find the right shade of paint.

So the bits get put together in a plastic bag and I put it on the shelf in my office along with all my other projects. Eventually the projects shelf gets so overloaded that I can't find anything, so I decide I must get my act together.

This winter, I really will make an effort to get some of these projects completed, the next swapmeet I go to I will actually remember to take the list of the spare parts I need. So I sort through all the bags on the project shelf and whittle them down to a manageable number of ones that I should be able to complete. The rest of my projects go into a box and out in the garage, along with the ones that I put out there last year. I will get around to them, one day.

Unfortunately, by now I've exhausted my time, patience and enthusiasm and got behind on the office paperwork, so I decide I won't actually start on any of the projects until next week, or perhaps the week after.

My natural tendency to procrastinate is increased because since my first childhood I seem to have grown another nine thumbs. As a teenager I got fairly adept at putting together Airfix models. Sometimes I even managed to make myself wait until the paint was dry, before gluing the parts together! Later on I graduated to metal models of Grand Prix cars as well as Dungeons & Dragons figures with sophisticated paint effects.

However when I returned to Scalextric twenty-five years later, I discovered that I had become totally incapable of picking up any small part without dropping it at least three times. In consequence, when I do actually get around to working on my projects, 90% of my time is spent crawling around the carpet, looking for the wing mirror or pinion or body screw that has just rolled under the desk. Indeed, when I got restarted on Scalextric and found that Magnatraxion had been added since my youth, I was convinced for some time that it actually meant the magnetic attraction between dark recesses full of carpet fluff and any small or newly painted parts.

So another barrier to progress is my inability to accept anything less than perfection in my models. While my aspirations are to Fabergé like precision and beauty, the superfluity of ➤➤

thumbs tends to make my results look more like something by Tracy Emin. Though without the bodily fluids..... well, if you ignore the odd bit of dribble. As a result I never get round to actually doing any of the tricky bits. Because as long as it remains in component form, it still has the potential to become the perfect, gleaming and unique car that I envisage. Rather than the mobile (if I'm lucky!), furry gumball, with bits dropping off, that I'm more likely to end up with.

But this winter is going to be different. I sorted out my project shelf a couple of months ago. Although, looking at it now, it seems to have filled up again. Anyway, I will definitely get down to completing them, well, some of them. Now let's see, next weekend I've got to take my wife somewhere, then next there's a toy fair, the hedges need thinning out and we said we'd do a trip to France before Christmas. Do you think the Spring is a better time for doing projects?

By the way, this article is an excerpt from the book I'm going to write, one day. ■

FITS AND PIECES

Flogged It?

I've just watched (or is it endured?) yet another auction rip-off telly programme called 'Flog It.'

Some guy brought along his collection of 18 1960s' Scalextric cars to have valued and sold at an auction in Nottingham. Amongst the cars I noticed a black Bentley, Lister Jag, Porsche Spyder (in green), Lotus 16, Typhoon and Hurricane motorbikes and many more. Some idiot of a woman who was supposed to be an expert on toys valued them at an average of £10 each! Luckily for the seller the lot fetched £760, still a bargain for some lucky collector. I wonder if it was a NSCC member? If anyone is looking for a valuer in the future, I suggest you stay away from Jan Squires because she may be on the telly, but she obviously hasn't got a clue about Scalextric.

Mel Turbutt

Leeds swapmeet raffle

Would the holders of raffle tickets #23 and #35 please contact John Jude to arrange collection of their prize cars.

Track pins

I am building a test track at home using the Sport track clips. I scoured many DIY and ironmongers shops for suitable pins with no success; not a fast moving item so I'm not surprised. Ordinary panel pins slip through the holes.



The answer can be found in the Hornby Train catalogue - Ref. No. R207 Track Pins (see picture).

Roger Gillham

Christmas competition update

Not a huge mass of entries received as yet - however, I am writing this on December 27th so, by the time you receive this issue, perhaps the floodgates will have opened and the postman will be struggling to my door with enormous sacks of mail!

Mind you I have received Graham Smith's entry - did I say that I wouldn't have to read his annual essay on alternative answers? Wrong again! Thanks for the Christmas cards Graham and, in response to your suggestion that the Electra should be allowed,..... Who's Queen? The best bit about being editor is that I can make up any rules I like - ah the power of the press!

There has also been a fair bit of rule bending - Steve McQueen Porsche a real race car? Some of you seem to have difficulty separating the big screen from reality! No matter - it's a stunning car so I will allow it. Likewise the CK1 Cobra - ready to run? Well alright then - just allowable. However I draw the line at the Rover Marshal's car in the saloon category - apart from the fact that it is an invented livery I have never seen one take part in the actual race!

Mel Turbutt should also be named and shamed for nominating a C52 Escort Mexico as a saloon car - as a rally fanatic he really ought to know better. Turtles of various types are heading the list for "worst slot product" but there is also support for banked curves and rough terrain track - who said it had to be a vehicle?

On the prize front, the list continues to grow; latest additions are a "John Cooper Mini Challenge" set courtesy of Hornby and a selection of Maxi-Models goodies from Max Winter. Without doubt there has never been an NSCC competition with as many prizes on offer as this one so get your entries in now!

Sorry about the cock-up with the entry form last month - if you haven't received one yet then get in touch.



Sir,

You may know this already but if not may find it a bit interesting.

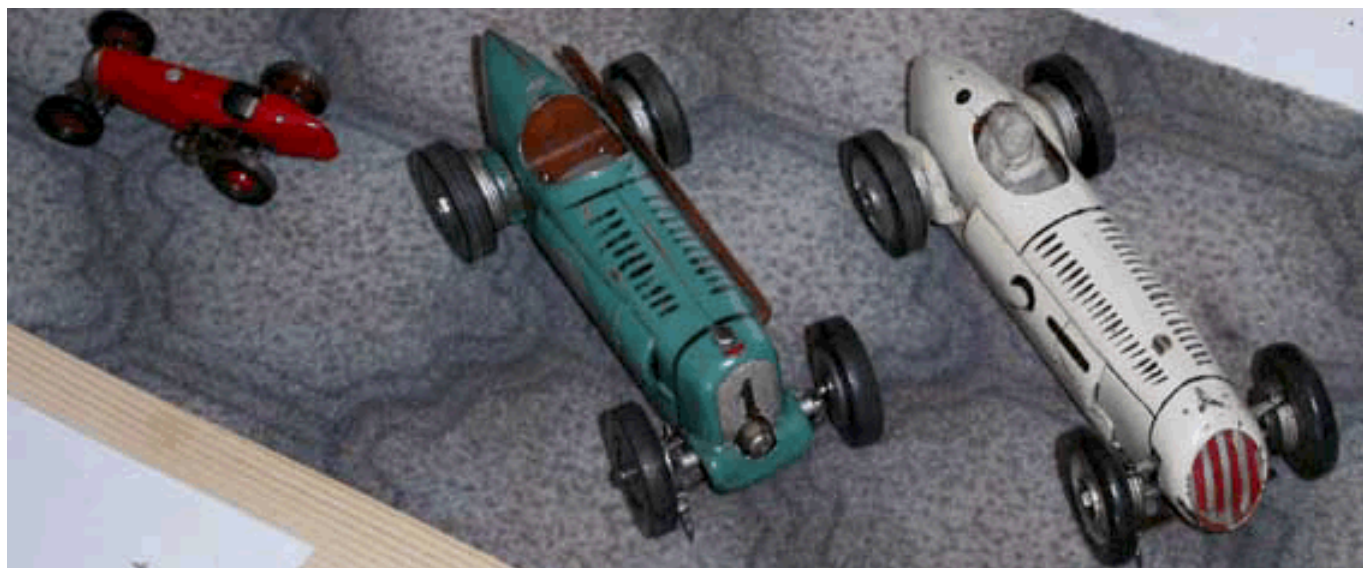
It came about as a group of aeromodellers - the Essex Flying Group - to which a couple of my friends belong invited me on a trip recently to see Wing Commander Ken Wallis' autogyro collection at Reymersham near Norwich. I think that because I edit the Shuttleworth magazine and am vaguely known to some of the in-crowd they treat me as a sort of mascot.

Anyway, the autogyros were very interesting and Ken, who's well over eighty, gave us a spirited flying display but it seems he's always been a modeller and inventor. Among his collection were four slot cars (see photos). The small ones were built during the war and the large ones just after. He got the electric motors from various aircraft equipment and made the bodies from perspex. All the cars have steering and are guided by a pin on the offside of the steering unit rather than in the centre.



Unfortunately, as he was taking a largish group of us on a tour, I didn't get the chance to question him on track, speed control, how the cars go straight with the offset pin and a lot of other things I thought about afterwards. The photo opportunities were also lacking so please forgive the out of focus base, but it does show the two sprung power pick ups and also that, had he been so inclined, he could have invented Scalextric!

I am, yours etc,
Bill Grigg



Sir,

Slot racing is alive and well in East Devon. How come?

1. The East Devon Slot-car Club has a new home and new track in Honiton. A fast, flat MDF, 4 lane track with sandtex surface, the club is run every Friday evening with a friendly group of racers with a variety of championship classes to suit all. New members, of all abilities, are welcome, subs are £2.00 per week with no annual membership fees, how's that for value! The editor has visited and survived, so no further endorsement required.

Club chairman, secretary, track builder and very fine racer (grovel), Vince Feeney, would welcome queries from all potential members and also visitors to the area who just happen to be passing with cars and controllers in the boot, maybe on the way to holidays etc. Additionally, any clubs fancying some inter-club racing would also be welcome to make contact. If you are interested give Vince a call on 01404 814859 or E mail v.feeney@ic24.net

2. Exeter has a new dedicated slot-car shop. Pit Stop Racing is based at 15 St Davids Hill, Exeter, EX4 3RG and is run by Glynis Harding. Current lines include Ninco, Fly, SCX and, of course, Scalextric. Both sets, cars and a large range of spares are held with an ordering service for non stock items.

Further information can be found at the shop website: www.exeterpitstop.co.uk. Shop opening hours are Tuesday to Friday 10AM until 4PM, Saturday 9.30AM until 5PM. Email address is sales@exeterpitstop.co.uk

Members of the NSCC can obtain various discounts against purchases dependent on items required, Glynis will be pleased to advise on discount levels etc. (Tel No 01392 479592)

Remember, for years we members have lamented the decline in High Street outlets for our sport, give Pit Stop Racing your support and you never know others may follow.

I am, yours etc,
Ron Lane

Sir,

It's the first time I have written since I joined the club in 2002. I'm from Madrid and race every week at the "Minibolidos Chamartin" club.

The reason for my letter is to propose that the NSCC could organize a swapmeet on one weekend each year outside the UK. I'm sure that any manufacturer from Spain, Germany, etc could sponsor the meetings, including the Scalextric dealer in the chosen country. I think that the NSCC is nowadays an international "club for slot-car enthusiasts" and overseas members miss a lot of the swapmeets and the NSCC weekend. Unfortunately it's very difficult for most of us to be there.

I am, yours etc,
Ignacio Sanchez

All NSCC swapmeets are run by individual members under licence from the club, Ignacio. If you wish to organize one yourself I will gladly put you in touch with people who can advise you.

.....
Sir,

I have read that people have had running problems with Fly sidewinder models when negotiating a left-hand bend. They have found that rubbing of the tyre on the chassis causes loss of power due to side play in a standard Fly sidewinder rear axle.

I have found that trapping a very thin plastic washer, about the diameter of the bearing, on the axle between the wheel and rear bearing (the opposite end of the axle to the ring gear) will cure the problem. You may need to use a slightly thicker washer, as the amount of axle play varies with each model in the range and of course, if necessary, you can file a slight amount off the rear chassis where it goes behind the tyre if needed.

It would be a good idea if Fly fitted this as standard at the factory when a car is being assembled. A similar idea can be used if problems are faced with other brands too.

I am, yours etc,
Anthony Clayden

"American Fly Boys"

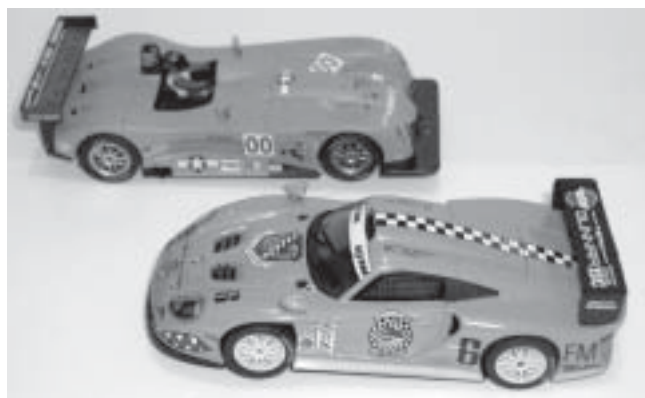
A pair of reliveries by Fly

by Scott Brownlee

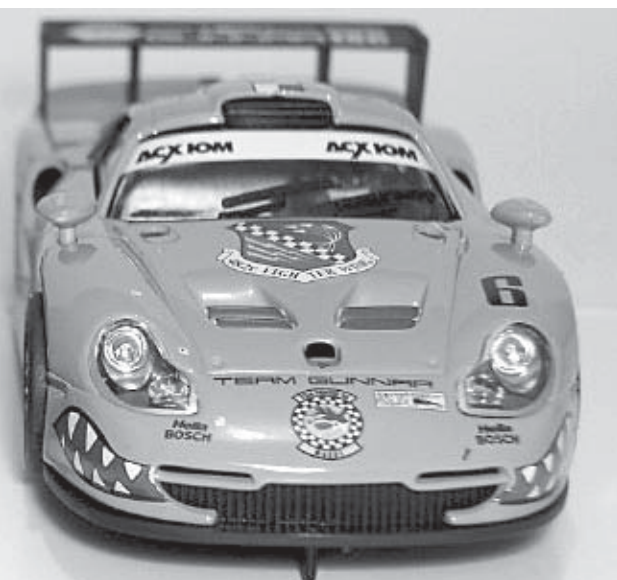
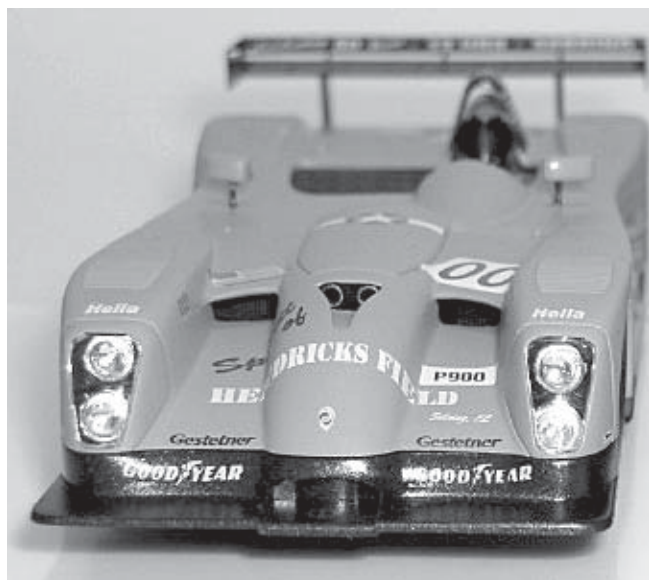
Gunnar Jeannete and Wayne Jackson are US endurance racers with a sense of fun. Either that or they are keen to tap into the massive US defence budget.

In 2002 they raced a Panoz roadster in the Sebring 12 Hours in the camouflage colours (or should I say colors?) of a Second World War B-17 bomber. For 2003 they raced a Porsche 911 GT1 EVO at Miami painted like modern F-16 fighter jets - complete with bullet holes. Both cars had aircraft insignia and markings that make these models look more at home among the model aircraft than the slot-car shelf. Asked why they chose combat aircraft paint schemes team owner and father of Gunnar, Kevin, said, "It bothers me to see race cars without anything on them. We have no sponsors so we'll have some fun and create excitement for the fans. After all, that's why we're in the racing business"

buy, despite the fact I already had a couple of others and the Porsche, with its stylised shark teeth around the nose, was equally essential, especially as I could justify it to myself on the grounds I hadn't got a 911 GT1 EVO.



The colours and fine printing on both really make them seem special. The crew names on the roof of the Porsche are so small that apart from observing they have been done in the style



Top man!

I couldn't help but smile when I saw the models and felt an immediate empathy. Here are a bunch of racers not taking themselves too seriously. I know there are strong opinions about reliveries on slot cars, especially by Fly, but to be honest I am really glad they did these. As a lapsed Airfix kit builder, the Panoz was a must

of a jet fighter crew, I can't actually read the writing, yet it is all smudge free and legible with suitable eyesight aids.

Maybe the Lister team will be inspired to paint the Storm LMP in Spitfire colours which not only might frighten the Audis, but give the Hornby guys a chance to show off their tampo skills too. Tally ho! ■

Crap Racer - the story so far

by The Editor

I have received some recent enquiries about the progress, or lack of it, of my slot-racing career so an update would seem to be in order. Apologies to anyone who doesn't like reading racing articles but I will try not to bore you!

My last report ended on a high note as I managed to win my first race thanks to the Proslot Ferrari provided by Jim Brown at Slot-Tech. Progress has been more than satisfactory since then and, at the end of the season, I have two trophies sitting on the shelf! More of that later but first let us travel back in time to August and a trip to the East Devon club.....

Crap Racer on tour

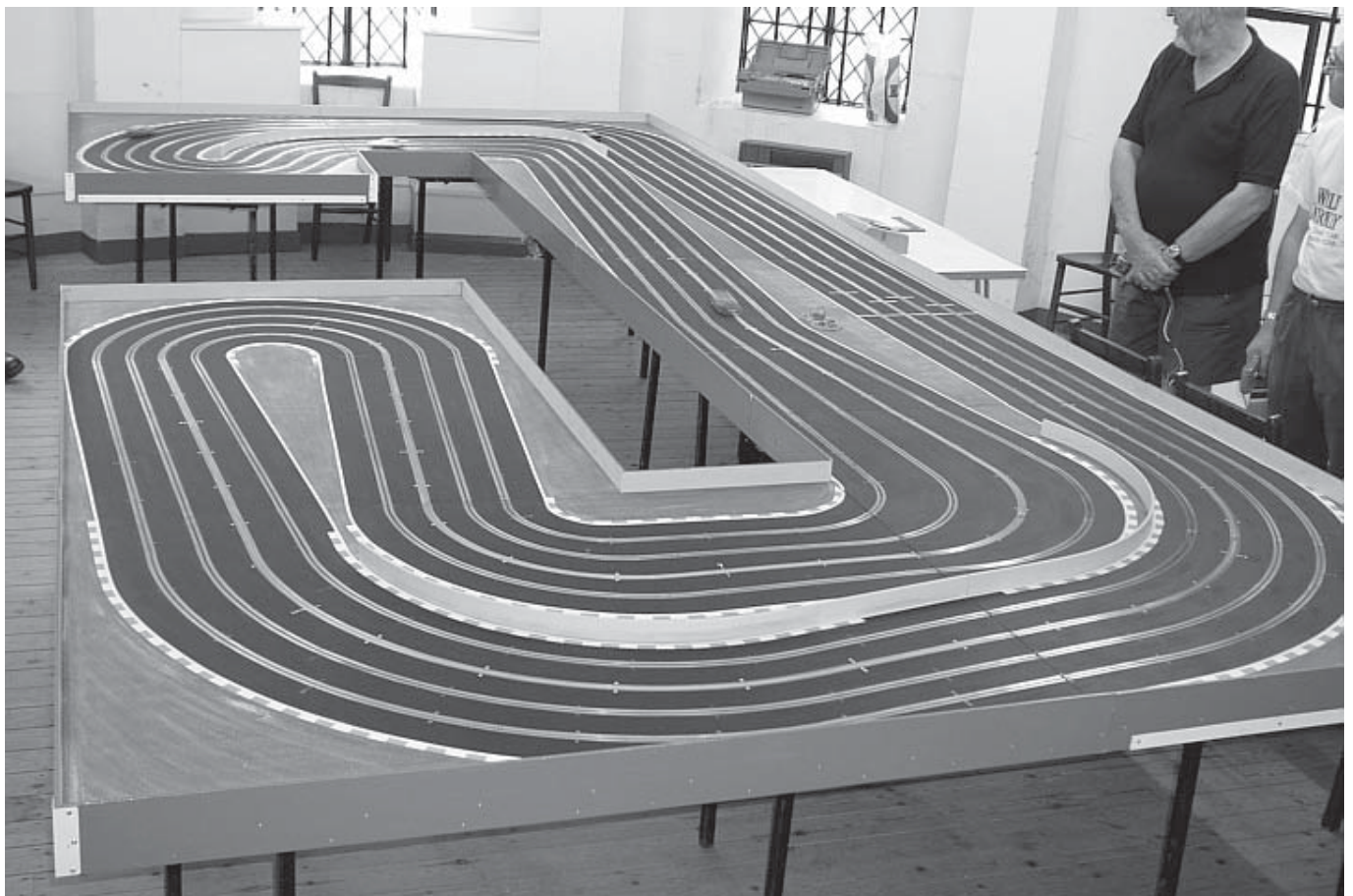
While I was on holiday in Devon Vince Feeney invited me to visit his club, located in a church crypt at Honiton. As can be seen from the photos Vince has constructed a superb wooden track with one teensy weensy drawback - the

surrounding scenery is made of rocks - mostly fibreglass but including some real ones! Even the start lights are hidden in a rock; I don't know what the other club members think of them but it certainly concentrated my mind on the perils of falling off the track.



As for the racing - suffice to say I was thrashed as usual; I am used to being lapped by John Watts at King's Lynn but in East Devon there are at least four people in the same league so it was 'lamb to the slaughter' time again folks! I had a great evening regardless of the inevitable mickey taking but, if any of that lot think they are going to win a prize in the Christmas competition.....!!

⇒⇒



Onwards and upwards

Returning to King's Lynn I discovered that Mussel Bay Raceway had moved to palatial new premises; John Kelly had negotiated the lease for half the top floor of a prestige office block. No more shivering in a draughty industrial unit - we now had centrally heated, carpeted luxury.

The main track is housed in a former conference room with separate 'pit' area close by. A small rally track has arrived in another room and there is also a well stocked shop; best of all we now have a fully equipped kitchen so that us caffeine addicts can get our regular fix on club nights!

My own racing fortunes also took a further turn for the better with the arrival of a second Slot-Tech car - a Proslot Toyota GT1, in the yellow Martin Brundle livery. This thing is just awesome - first time out I won two races with it and, by the end of the season, I had won many more and racked up enough points to finish 3rd in the GT championship (trophy no.1).

By way of illustrating just how good Jim Brown's cars are - the outright lap record is 7.9 seconds; I have done an 8.1 second lap with this car and I am at least 1/2 a second slower than the best racers in the club! I really can't praise Jim's products highly enough - and no it wasn't a freebie, I bought it with my own money! In fact I got Jamie Kelly so worried with my "Flying Banana" that he was writing urgent letters to Santa requesting a Slot-Tech car of his own.

The only real downside of running Proslot cars is that the things are so fragile. I swear I am keeping Pendle Slot Racing in business with my constant demands for spare wings and chassis!

It would have been easy to go down the Slot-Tech route in the saloon class but I decided to continue using my own Ninco Audi TT - it is very pleasing to win races with a superior car but it can give you a false idea of your own abilities. I may have improved considerably over the last six months but I know my real place in the pecking order and it is nowhere near the top.





By the end of the year I had managed to win a few saloon races as well so Stephen Drew decided that I was no longer a ‘crap racer’ and officially promoted my classification to ‘middle order’. He celebrated this by racing against me while wearing a full race suit and helmet! The ‘middle order club’ has expanded considerably over the year and there are now about ten of us at roughly the same level of ability. John Watts is still out of reach for the time being but we have some cracking races for the minor placings and I really look forward to Friday evenings at the club.

I am also the proud owner of the Mussel Bay Rally Challenge Cup (trophy no.2) - a one off event held a few weeks ago. Admittedly John Watts didn’t enter and Jamie Kelly got a time penalty for inadvertently running an illegal car (he only sulked for a few days) but a win is a win however it comes and it made a ‘middle order’ man very happy!

Lessons learnt

When I first started racing back in May last year I was unsure if it was really my thing but, here I am, eight months down the road, totally addicted. From just one saloon car my racing stable has expanded to 12 cars housed in the obligatory, sticker covered, plastic tool box; my

collection of glues and weird liquids rivals the best of them; lap times have tumbled and the days of being consistently last are but a distant memory.

The main lessons I have learnt are that even the worst amongst us can become reasonably competitive; and that once you have raced on a proper wooden track you never ever want to go back to the plastic version. The thrill of driving a well sorted car down a 30ft straight at high speed and judging your braking point to perfection relegates Plexytrack/Magnatraction to the toy department.

I should spare a thought at this point for my long suffering partner, Chris. She has put up with my collecting habit for 25 years; for the last four years she has been supportive as I spend one weekend a month compiling the Journal and even proof reads the thing for me. Just when she thought it couldn’t get any worse I inflict slot racing on her as well - every Saturday morning she has to suffer a blow by blow account of the previous night’s racing and I swear she recites “best time 8.14 seconds, green lane” in her sleep!

And finally we should always remember that.....

Winning isn’t everything...

it’s just a whole lot better than coming second! Anyway, “it’s only a bit of fun”! ■

NINCO

track test

50308 Subaru "Turkey 2003"

Reviewed by Peter Solari

What have Didier Auriol, Richard Burns, Juha Kankkunen, Colin McRae, Carlos Sainz and Ari Vatanen have in common?

Apart from being highly successful rally drivers, all had their careers launched by the Subaru World Rally Team. This same team have brought us the most instantly recognisable rally car spanning the last 10 years. Whatever the year - '93, '94 or even 2003 - that metallic blue body with those curved yellow arcs and matt gold wheels will immediately tell us "It's a Subaru Impreza". Coincidentally, it made its rallying debut about the same time that Mr. Nin and Mr. Cosculluela were planning a debut of their own - the first Ninco slot-car!

Their first Subaru in this famous livery appeared in 2002 based on the Monte Carlo

Rally car of that year (50260). However, in 2003, Subaru released a new Impreza and Ninco's latest offering (50308) is modelled on this version as it raced during the Rally of Turkey 2003. For the purpose of this review, I will compare it with the earlier release.

At first glance, the two cars look the same but closer inspection reveals that the 2003 model really is a totally new car. Starting from the outside, the bodywork is superbly painted in the striking World Rally Team colours. The yellow logos around the car are nicely printed and with the exception of the "Rally of Turkey" plaque on the bonnet, all are correctly proportioned and placed - *this appeared centrally on the bonnet of the 1:1 version. (And if I'm really picky, there are no nationality flags after the drivers' names on each of the rear side windows!)*. Sponsors names and logos are



finely printed down each of the rear roof supports; even when viewed under a magnifying glass the reproduction is very sharp. As usual, the entire body is coated in a high-gloss clear coat that really enriches the metallic paint.

The air intakes on the bonnet both differ from the 2002 model as does the front spoiler. The rear spoiler is slightly deeper with a cut-away for the large diameter, single outlet exhaust. Front and rear light clusters are updated with the rear ones including a printed section. Door mirrors are also new and as before have silvered mirror faces. A roof mounted aerial is fitted and the central bulge on the roof of the Monte Carlo car is replaced with a narrower roof mounted “camera box” above the driver’s head. The most noticeable difference is the rear aerofoil as it has four additional supports within the long rectangular structure making the car look heavier at the back.

Overall dimensions are very close to scale with the 1:32nd model measuring in at 135mm long, 59mm wide and 44mm tall.

The cockpit is apparently the same in both cars and again the level of detail is superb, right down to the printed instrument cluster and navigation notes!

Removing three screws from the underside of the car enables us to take a look at the drive system. The full size car is powered by a 1994cc 16V turbocharged power plant capable of producing 300bhp at 5500rpm and 60kg-m of torque. All this power is transferred to the track by a highly sophisticated 4 wheel drive system. Ninco have chosen a slightly simpler power source – their NC-5 Speeder motor capable of



20,000rpm and 290g-cm of torque. It also offers 4-wheel drive by the less sophisticated band-driven method. Please note that when spare chassis become available, check that you are buying the right one as they are not interchangeable between versions without some minor modifications.

So, to the track. With nearly 2,000 more rpm and almost twice as much torque, I expected to see quite a performance difference. But on the circuits I tested on there seemed to be very little difference indeed. Overall a slightly quicker lap time could be achieved with the new model but the 2002 version returned more consistent lap times. The NC-5 enables later braking into corners but the NC-2 allows a more controlled ‘power-slide’ through the bends. I also expected to see a straight line advantage from the higher revving motor but even on a 6mtr straight it is hard to tell them apart. Was it me or was it the car?

I took both versions to my local club and asked some of the more experienced racers to try them out. The results there were the same, with the majority opting for the NC-2 powered unit as their preference! Again, consistency was more easily attained with the 2002 car although slightly quicker lap times (7.9s vs 8.4s) could be achieved with the 2003 model. *(It's worth mentioning that both cars were run straight from the box and the test tracks used are both quite open circuits).*

It would be interesting to see how they compare on a rally circuit with snow... mmm... I wonder if talcum powder is included in the January sales? ■



NINCO

track test

50312 Mercedes CLK GTR "Original-Teile"

Reviewed by Peter Solari

2002 saw the release of only one version of the Ninco Mercedes CLK GTR - a car that had already established itself as a popular choice in the GT class of racers - and I was the lucky person chosen to review it for our Journal. At the end of 2003, Ninco again released the only version for that year - the Original Teile 'No.12' car (50312) - and again it has fallen in my lap for review!

As usual, the car is beautifully presented in an all-round clear case enabling prospective purchasers to have a good look before parting with their hard-earned cash. Many of the Ninco cars that are re-liveried also benefit from other "upgrades" (such as a new motor) but, in this instance Ninco have stuck to their tried and

tested formula. Under the body, the trusty NC-2 motor can be found mounted in-line, just in front of the rear axle. It is also fitted with a spring-loaded guide blade to ensure that the brushes maintain contact with the rails over any undulating surfaces. A super magnet is fitted just in front of the motor in a near 'mid-position'; Personally, I think this is a good idea as it still allows the rear end to break away whilst ensuring the front has that extra bit of down-force to keep the car on the track. The front wheels are mounted on a single axle and the rear wheels take power from the motor via a 9 tooth pinion and 27 tooth crown gear which is transferred to the track through slick-tyred GT wheels.



Although it's only the bodywork that is different, boy, is it different! Clever use of multi-colour 'pad-printing' produces a fabulous "exploding engine cover" on the top rear surface of the car. This is an accurate reproduction of the real car raced in 1998 by Marcel Tierman and Jean Marc Gounon where the graphic was actually air-brushed onto the bodywork! The print detail is quite remarkable and, considering the fact that the art-work covers the rear window as well, the registry of print is spot on. Interior detail is kept to a minimum with a driver's helmet and arms figure clutching the steering wheel with gloved hands.

Not surprisingly, this car performs as good as its older brothers and sisters from '98, '99 and '02. Straight out of the box, this car runs well on Ninco track. However, for those of you who wish



to race on Scalextric track, you may need to trim the guide blade as it is designed to run on the deeper slotted Ninco track. Those of you who really want to race the car will have your own little tweaks to perform but no doubt this car will be bought to race even though it will quite happily hold its own in the display cabinet. ■

Carrera Dodge Charger 500 '69

by Julian Cotton

Probably the most famous '69 Dodge Charger, at least for those of us born in the early '70s, is the General Lee. This car, painted bright orange with a rebel flag emblazoned on the roof, starred in the hit TV show, 'The Dukes of Hazzard'. For seven seasons, from seventy-nine to eighty-five, I was glued to the TV every Saturday afternoon to watch the adventures of Bo, Luke and the delectable Daisy Duke, whose shorts have their own place in history! The shows all ran pretty much the same - the Dukes get into some sort of trouble with the local law, inevitably involving a huge car chase with lots of handbrake turns, incredible jumps and dust clouds, before they make it over the county line.



*The "star of the show" -
The 'General Lee'?*

Warner Bros. reckons to have destroyed over 300 '69 Chargers during the show's run, mainly due to the air borne antics which the car's chassis most certainly could not handle. Unlike many of the other cars in shows of its ilk, such as Knight Rider et al, the General Lee still seems rather cool today.

With this in mind, I was very happy to be given the opportunity to review the new Carrera Charger. The model produced is actually the '69 Charger 500, which was specifically produced to run in the NASCAR series in the United States. The differences between this model and the standard '69 Charger are a number of aerodynamic improvements to the front and back of the car. The '500' comes from the five hundred road examples produced to adhere to NASCAR rules. Although the 500, to a certain degree, matched Ford's new aerodynamic models of the year, it was not overwhelming. Mid-way during the season Chrysler played their trump card and evolved the 500 into the Dodge Charger Daytona, resplendent with its pointed nose and massive rear spoiler. The Daytona, however, is another story and one not to be told in this review.

When you first look at the actual model produced by Carrera, one cannot help but wonder if it is indeed one thirty second scale. To some I know this is very important indeed. So, armed with a slightly battered measuring stick and the internet I set out to find the truth. I'm happy to report that all seems well. I can't guarantee it to the last millimetre, but it is certainly 1/32 scale or very close to it.

On the track, with Carrera's two-magnet system untouched and as stock, the car handles very well. Rather too well in fact. For me, far more fun is to be had with this car by removing the rear magnet and just keeping the front sliding magnet installed. This tends to let the back end slide more controllably and give the ➡



car a little more go. This is not to say that I am against the two magnet system. In fact, I like it very much. On the recent Ferrari Enzo, or 166/212 Mille Miglia, it works superbly. Both of these cars, however, have rather more zip to them due to the 9:27 gearing ratio that for some reason Carrera have not installed on the Charger or any of the other American Classics to date. Of course, none of this really matters if you are lucky enough to race it against a friend who has another car from the series such as a Plymouth.

Cue James. He looks rather nervous as he watches me run the Charger around the circuit at full tilt, testing the car to the *n*th degree. I ask him if he wants to race and he mumbles something about pristine paintwork on his Plymouth just as I send the Charger tumbling over the barriers and into the trees. Oops! I promise to slow down a little and for a couple of laps I do as we run around pretty much side by side. This, inevitably, lasts about as long as it takes to sneeze and soon we are powering out of the bends with the tail end sliding. The overtaking is plentiful and many gasps are heard as the lead swaps to and fro more times than I can remember. Within five minutes James' car has paint from mine on one side but he doesn't seem to care too much as the racing is close and

a whole lot of fun. That, after all, is what this is all about, right? In fact 'fun' is how I would describe this car's track presence in one word.

The Charger is not the quickest of slot cars available, nor the slowest. The two-magnet system really does give you a lot of tuning options and I think you would be hard pressed not to find an option you liked. The car also runs rather well sans magnet for those who show disdain to these new, mystical traction aids.

The overall appearance of the model is quite striking with its white paint scheme and offset blue stripe. The sponsors' logos are emblazoned on the sides along with a big No. 41 in bright orange that adds into the mix well. Upon closer inspection, the detailing doesn't stand up quite so well with a couple of bits of the tampon printing being either off centre (the numbers on the front light covers) or not quite finished perfectly (the blue stripe). However, this will hardly be noticed once you are sending the car over the barriers and into the trees. Oh, I mean skilfully powering it out of every bend!

I'm certain Carrera will do very well with this and the rest of the cars in the series. Thanks to Nikko toys for supplying this review model. If you don't have any Carrera models in your stable as yet, I highly recommend trying one. ■

Bolton's little belter

1967 Chevron B6

by Dave Yerbury

The Chevron was the brain child of the likable Mancunian Derek Bennett. He started out building Austin 750 specials for friends and, in 1960, he dabbled with an unsuccessful front engined car which was sold due to financial problems.

In 1963/64 he drove an Elite. In 1964 he drove a Gemini FJ and a Brabham F3. 1965 saw the first cars to bear the name Chevron compete for the Clubmans' Formula against the Lotus 7s and Mallock U2s. One was raced by Bennett and the other by Brian Classic. The name came about when he was thumbing through the Highway Code one day, found a reference to Chevrons and that was that. The first cars were designated B1 and the successful builder was up and running. In 1966 Bennett Engineering moved into part of a Cotton Mill at 105 Chorley Old Road Bolton where a line of successful sports cars were to follow.

B6 was the designation for all production cars in 1967 regardless of engine; most cars produced had BMW power. The bodywork was now made by Specialised Mouldings, chassis frames by Arch Motors and engines direct from BMW.

The car was actually designed in 1963 and officially known as the Chevron GT but, with no category to race in, its debut was not until 1966 when appendix J regs allowed it into Group 6.

On its first outing at Oulton Park in July 1966 Digby Martland won convincingly. The rest of the season was spent setting lap records and collecting wins up and down the country. By 1967 the works cars were running BMW V8s showing 195 b.h.p. Also in 1967 the Cosworth powered cars of John Lepp and Phil Silverstone won every race entered and finished 1st and 2nd in the Motoring News GT Championship. The cars were rolling off the production line at one a week.

In 1968 the improved version the B8 now had a bonded undertray and was selling at the

remarkable price of £1800 ex-works. By November 1968 they had produced 68 B6s and B8s. By 1969 the cars regularly appeared in international events including the Daytona 24 hours. At home the Red Rose/works car won the RAC British Sports Car Championship with John Lepp. The feat was repeated next year by Trevor Twaites.

It had a basic spaceframe chassis with the frame extending over the top of the cockpit to form an effective roll cage. The body was a three piece glass fibre affair, hinged front and rear for easy access to the workings. With an all up weight of only 10 cwt it gave an outstanding power to weight ratio with the 2 litre BMW on twin choke Webbers. Fuel was carried in a 12 gallon tank behind the cockpit; for longer races a further 8 gallon tank was placed under the spare wheel.



Making a model of this car was a departure from my normal moulding technique. To mould a complete car in Glass Fibre and to cut out the windows would not only be difficult it would be very fragile with thin roof pillars.

Also in the interest of weight I decided to mould the windows and roof in a one piece clear vac-form mould. I think it came out alright so I decided to motorise the car. For this I used a Scalextric F40 underpan for the chassis. All I had to do was reduce the wheel base by about 3 mm. This was done with a small file and inserting an axle tube. At the moment it sits on a set of SCX F1 fronts on both axles till I can find the right wheels. The chassis is held in place by the usual two pillars glued in front and back. When the time comes I hope it goes as good as it looks. ■

Fun in the sun

by Gareth Jex

The last two months have been non-stop slot-car! Arrival of various Ebay collection items, deliveries from the USA of the new white cars, the excellent NSCC weekend, a trip to Barcelona, various race nights (including my first ever win at Farnham) and finally a meeting with the founder members of the European Slot Forum (a web based message board dedicated to slot-car collecting and racing).

All the above have been great fun in their own right, but of most interest to you will be my trip to Barcelona! Well known as the Mecca of slot-cars, the city is blessed with some of the best retail outlets for buying and racing slot-cars as well as some of the most interesting historic architecture in Europe. However I was not there for sight seeing! I was there to shop! With flights to Europe now being relatively cheap the cost of getting to Spain by EasyJet was actually cheaper than travelling to Manchester. Just over £50 return and this could have been cheaper if I had booked it earlier.

Arriving at the airport early on Monday morning it was just a 20-minute taxi ride to the centre and my hotel room less than 20 metres from the first of many slot-car shops and probably the most well known outside of Spain 'Palau'.

Actually there are three 'Palau' shops in Barcelona; the oldest one carries a multitude of toys and models, but still has a sizeable display of slot-cars at the rear of the shop, including all the major brands and several second hand items. The second hand section contained several cars not for sale; including signed SCX Rally cars, Palau entered racecars and several dealer presentation cars from Hornby and Ninco. The sales people were chatty (even with me not speaking any Spanish!) and several good deals were struck.

On to the next shop "Palau" again – their second one is less than five minutes walk from the first and again stocks the major brands, but no second hand material. While in this shop they mentioned the third, recently opened, one. ➡➡



Ninco Layout

This was arguably the best and most friendly! The entire shop was stocked floor to ceiling, back to front with slot-cars and radio-controlled cars. Dominating the centre of the display area was a huge six lane Ninco layout that I was invited to play on. They even provided their championship entered car for me to play with; needless to say it was beautifully made and balanced and was far too good for my fat fingers to control with any pace. The owner/manager

seemed genuinely interested to talk to us about anything slot related and knew of the NSCC. I bought way too much stuff including all those cars from Tecnitoys not available outside of Spain, most at very competitive prices!

Just as I was about to leave they received a delivery from Ninco with the latest Indy cars and the Rally Catalunya Ninco Fiat Punto limited edition - of course I had to have one! We discussed at some length the recently released Fly GT40 and I have to say they were not very



complimentary, understandably so when you compared it to the Hornby offering (sold as SuperSlot in Spain).

Next was a long stroll to Kit Car 43, a shop recommended by Rob Smith. Unfortunately this appeared to be shut, although it's very hard to tell if a shop is permanently shut or just closed for the siesta which seems to begin around 12 and finish sometime around 4.30 – 5.30pm. This is worth remembering when planning your day in Barcelona; either take a very long lunch or do a bit of sightseeing before continuing your search for slots! Shops tend to close around 8.30 - 9.00pm.

As you walk around it is worth stopping at every newsagent you come across. As mentioned in Adrian Leggett's article a while back nearly every shop or outlet seems to stock one of the Miticos magazines, be it Rally or Scalextric, however finding a complete car is pretty difficult. Most of the proper newsagent shops seem to keep old stock. I managed to find three parts of the BMW M1 car. But when I paid for the three the owner popped into the back room to find the missing edition! Unfortunately he wouldn't allow me to go with him to search for more! The only other car I managed to find in the news-stands was three parts of the Subaru Rally car. A word of warning for the easily offended! In your quest for Miticos magazines you will come across a ton of Porn! Every stall and shop stocks every variety, shape and size of it, so best keep the kids at home!

Walking back from the shut Kit 43, I came across a shop not on my list! El Palau del Tren on Aribau street. This was a bit of a find! Open for only two weeks the shop stocked die cast and slot-cars only. There is a small Carrera layout, all the normal brands, but best of all (as far as I was concerned) was a small stock of old Exin cars - mainly mint and boxed for reasonable prices. I snapped up Rothmans Lancias, Seven Up Ferrari GTOs, Audi 4x4s and very nearly purchased one of two red E-Type Jags they had for sale.

Not far from this shop is a more general toy/model shop called Poly. Any of you out there who collect Fly cars should know Poly, they have

a limited edition Corvette in red with the Thelma and Louise figures. I bought one for a friend for just 42 Euros! They also stocked the Mini Auto Corvettes. Purchases in here were limited, but I did find a Ninco Toyota Celica Rallye Catalunya L/E quite reasonably priced on the back shelves.

Last but by no means least was "Slot Mania" on Muntaner street. This was by far the most impressive of the shops I saw. On entering you are confronted with display cabinets holding one of the most impressive collections of Spanish cars around. Every Exin, Tyco, Tecnitoys, Fly, GB Track, Ninco, Reprotec and Miticos car you can imagine and a few you probably have never seen. Alas none are for sale! However they do sell nearly everything else! They had all the major brands, but also stock a very useful range of replacement parts for older Spanish models, including everything from wings for your 6 wheel Tyrrell to the chrome for the Honda F1 cars. All the various older Exin, Tyco and Tecnitoys motors were available as well as a vast array of racing/tuning parts from Slot. It, DS, Pink Car, Parma etc, etc. At the back of the shop was the biggest Ninco layout I have ever seen with a straight, which looked close to 10 metres long! Several spare parts were purchased along with some excellent Reprotec vintage Mercs.

I have listed below the addresses of the shops I visited; I can recommend all of them. As always, shop around - they are all so close to each other that competition forces some very good deals. All of the stores accepted credit cards. A word of warning; in several of the shops the owners/managers seemed very wary of people stealing! In fact in one shop I felt a little put out by the efforts of the owner to keep an eye on me even after spending a small fortune.

Happy shopping, and if you are thinking of going let me know, I could do with a few spares!

- El Palau del Tren, Aribau 15, 08011 Barcelona
- Slotmania, Carrier Muntaner 83
- Kit Car 43, Rossello 308
- Poly, Carrier Aribau 7
- Palau, Pelai 34, 08001 Barcelona
- Palau, Rda St. Antoni 61, 08011 Barcelona ■

Sacré blue 2 - the blue oval

by Dave Sykes

My last little diversion into prose could, I feel, be taken as somewhat derogatory towards those of a Gallic persuasion. I hope that this should put the record straight if the recent advances by Renault in the Grand Prix arena have not done so already. So all true Frenchmen stand proud and hum your National Anthem; those not so French get out the 1812 overture and think of your Emperor.

The Blue Oval tends to be synonymous today with that American automobile giant Ford but there is another, a French Marque which dominated earlier Grand Prix and sports car racing, Delage.

Louis Delage was a man who, when he believed in a cause, he ensured it was done to the limit of his finances and when he had money he spent it freely, such as his Chateau du Pecq at St Germain, and no expense was spared on the 1926-27 Grand prix Delage. The factory at Courbevoie-sur-Seine had produced a string of winning automobiles and the Laurels include 1908 G.P. des Voiturettes, 1911 light car Boulogne G.P., 1913 G.P. de France, 1914 Indianapolis 500 miles and the 1925 French and Spanish G.Ps. The previous G.P. car had been a 2lt V12 with its moving parts supported on ball and roller bearings (some 100 supporting the crankshaft, camshaft and gears) but, in 1926, a new formula was announced for 1.5 lt cars. Albert Lory who had assisted with the design for the V12 produced a remarkable supercharged straight eight. Again in a fight to reduce friction 62 roller and ball bearings were used (its big advantage is that it took another step forward in the maximum revs available). Unfortunately, most of the 600kg weight limit was taken by the engine so the chassis flexed leading to poor road holding.

1926 did not start well; the French GP was contested by only three cars, all Bugattis, after Talbot and Delage pulled out. When the cars at last ran they proved to be exceptionally fast building up a healthy lead but the 110 deg F temperatures that day showed up a fatal flaw in

the Delage design. The exhaust of the 1926 Delage travelled down the side of the car on the right, the driver's side. This led to the driver being slowly baked in the cockpit. After 10 laps all drivers had to pull in for a rest; holes were cut in the body and reserve drivers ventured out. Morel collapsed with sunburn and burnt feet, Bernoist and reserve driver Wagner needed medical treatment and Bourlier lay behind the pits while the cars stood still and the Bugatti moved ahead. Then a cooling wind sprang up and revived the team. Bourlier with reserve driver Robert Senechal snatched back second place and Wagner set fastest lap; the other Delages taking fourth and sixth.

The next race was Brooklands on a hot August day so the drivers stopped regularly to sit with their feet in bowls of water. H.O.D. Segrave wrote, "You could hear the boots hissing as they went in the water". The exhaust set fire to Wagner's car but he took over another Delage to beat a Bugatti and another Delage.

They did not contest the Italian G.P.; instead, a wind of change was blown over the cars by Lory. The engine was redesigned to take the exhaust out the other side and then offset in the chassis to lower the racing position with a new inclined radiator fitted following the example of the 1926 Talbots.

The car in this format dominated in 1927 winning five out of the six races that year. It won at Montlhery in both French G.P. and G.P. de l'Oveture and the Spanish G.P. in San Sebastian where the Delage faced stiffer opposition in the form of Emilio Materassi's Bugatti. Bernoist had an enormous duel with Materassi who eventually threw the Bugatti into a wall. Bernoist narrowly missed the car, spun and ran the wrong way around the circuit until realising his mistake he turned around and went on to win. At the G.P. de la Baule, a beach race, the Delage led until half distance, spun and was slow to restart with oiled plugs. Delage then went on to win at Monza in the rain and finally a 1, 2, 3 at Brooklands.



Short of money the cars were sold at the end of 1927. Malcolm Campbell bought one which he used to win the junior G.P. and 200 miles race at Brooklands and the Boulogne G.P. in 1928. Louis Chiron took a Delage to Indianapolis finishing seventh and Earl Howe carried on racing two Delages until 1935. Dick Seaman acquired the car and lots of spares, doing extensive alterations and painting the car black. It took on the modern ERAs and Maserati in 1936 and won several races such as the 200 miles at Donington all in quick succession. But what of Louis Delage? His company had gone bust and was taken over by Delahaye; he sold his possessions one by one and died, near destitute in 1947.

Is this not a story of plucky determination worthy of any Boys Comic Hero and part of French racing history to be proud of? If you are interested in a model of the car, please see my advert in the members section. ■