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THE INDEPENDENT CLUB FOR SLOT-CAR ENTHUSIASTS

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## Build it and they will come!

I must confess that when Gareth Jex first suggested the idea of the 25th Anniversary event I was firmly convinced that he had been visited by Bloody Daft Idea Animal! I didn't doubt his abilities in the sphere but I was worried that such an enterprise was simply beyond the scope of a small club like our own.

How wrong can you be? It succeeded big time - without doubt this was the most successful slot-car event ever held in the UK. I know Gareth is embarrassed by the praise that has been heaped on him but without his drive and determination, not to mention 18 months' hard work, the event would never have come to fruition and the NSCC owes him a massive vote of thanks.

Let us also not forget the generosity of Toyota GB who loaned us their superb facilities - their team could not have been more helpful and a major part of the success is down to them. Thanks guys and I hope the F1 team has a maiden win this season.

There was so much going on at the weekend that is difficult to pick out the highlights but I have two abiding memories. Firstly, as the time approached midnight on the Friday and we were nearing the end of the mammoth set-up task I wandered over to the cafeteria and found my good lady helping Peter Solari set up the Ninco championship track - it was that sort of an evening - everybody helped with whatever needed doing.

Secondly, during a rare break from manning the NSCC stand, I went for a ride on the vintage bus which was giving tours round the Epsom Downs. Also on board was a family with two small children and I listened with great pleasure to the following conversation: "Are you enjoying the show son?". "Oh yes dad." Shall we buy a racing set to take home?" "Yes, please!" I don't think Mum was quite so keen but perhaps we have a future member of the club here ready for the 50th anniversary!

**And Finally** - I know you don't want to do another one Gareth but I have had this really good idea about next year!

*Till next month*  
*Brian*



by  
**Rob Smith**



# MESSAGES FROM MARGATE

## It's All Happening In Spain

### Mini Auto Slot

You need to be Spanish to benefit from a raft of exciting new items this month. First off is a new version of the Classic Grand Prix Maserati. This is the #10 car driven by Paco Godia in the Monza race in 1957. To get this car you need to subscribe to the Spanish magazine Mini Auto Slot. You can subscribe internationally from their web site at [www.revistasprofesionales.com](http://www.revistasprofesionales.com) but it doesn't mention the Maserati – it does in the magazine itself. This is a full Sport version with the MAS logo displayed prominently on the packaging.

### Super Club Superslot

Also new for Spain is the Super Club Superslot. At the time of writing details are very thin on the ground but rumours suggest there will be a number of unique cars available to members. Initial suggestions are a Pedro de la Rosa McLaren and a Sete Gibernau Honda MotoGP. By signing up new members you can score points which are redeemable against other special items too. The bad news is that you have to be a Spanish resident to join. Thank goodness for a little sister now living in Barcelona. More news next month when my welcome pack arrives.

## New Releases

### C2560(A) and C2561(A) Peugeot 307 WRC Works 2004 No's 5 and 16

The most exciting release this month has been

the new Peugeot 307 WRC cars. Both are available in Sport and standard crystal case versions. Interestingly they feature a front mounted sidewinder motor driving the front wheels with a belt drive to the rear. As Matt Tucker wrote last month this works really well.



The C2561 #16 car also features a muddy finish which looks really good. Let me know if you like it and if you think Hornby should produce other weathered cars.

### C2657 Tuscan 400R "Synergy" No89

This is a beautiful relivery of the TVR with a really eye catching metallic blue livery.

### C2619 Subaru Impreza Plain White

There is quite an interesting story behind this car. Last year a couple of examples of a plain white Subaru surfaced although Hornby were reluctant to provide more information. Back in April, after months of persistent sleuthing it was discovered that a limited edition of just 500 ➡➡

cars had been ordered by an event management company on behalf of a UK sportscar manufacturer. Along with some plain white Indy cars and GT40s these were to be used to promote a holiday resort in Spain. Each car was to be decorated individually by some die-cut stickers and sent to a number of wealthy prospective clients. For one reason or another the project was stopped and the white cars became available for purchase on masse. See the advert elsewhere in the Journal to buy one.

**C2658 Lister Storm LMP Le Mans  
2004 No20 and C2660 MG Lola Le  
Mans 2004 RML No25**

On the Le Mans Prototype front we have two new liveries. The Lister C2658 is red and white and represents the car as it ran at Le Mans last year. The Lola C2660 is red, white and blue and carries the MG logo. I wonder if we will see that again on a modern racing car.

## Coming Soon

### On Show at Epsom

Several forthcoming releases were displayed by Hornby at the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event in Epsom. The most spectacular was the new Ferrari 156. Now complete with driver and a stunning red paint job this car looks absolutely fantastic. Everyone voted it the car of the show. Roll on to its release in September. Also looking extremely good was a black and silver Chevrolet Camaro. This was C2654, the Collectors Centre car for this year. In the UK the car will be limited to 1000 units and only sold through Hornby's Collectors Centres. Elsewhere in the world this will be a general release.

Also in the cabinet were the McLarens of Raikkonen and Montoya to be released later in the year. Next to them was the blue and white Maserati MC12 looking quite different to the FIA GT racing car.





## **Australia**

The Australian market for Scalextric cars must be doing well as there are five new cars just for them to enjoy soon. There are three new Ford Falcons and a Holden Commodore and a Chevrolet Camaro as driven by Bob Jane in 1972.

## **Hornby In the News**

The British Toy and Hobby Association (BTHA), the toy industry body in the UK, has awarded Scalextric Sport Digital one of its prestigious awards. At yesterday's MAX IT awards (Marketing Awards for Excellence in Toys), Scalextric Sport Digital scooped the top prize for Best New Toy Design 2004. Judges indicated that the unanimous decision reflected the way the Scalextric Sport Digital system had revolutionized an already extremely popular and successful product.

## **Good and Bad News**

### **NSCC Minis**

The NSCC Minis are now sold out. Over 400 pairs have found their new owners and the rest are in our utility room. Lorraine would be delighted for the rest to go too as soon as possible. If you haven't got yours yet please contact me urgently to arrange collection. Only as a last resort - postage is £4.50 per car

### **Lost and Found**

At the NSCC party at Epsom I was delighted to be given back the missing NSCC/Hornby weekend car. A very sheepish gentleman had ended up packing two cars with his selection of goodies and only just got around to unpacking them. I won't cause further embarrassment by naming him but I am very pleased to be able to send the car onto its rightful owner.

However, will the person who helped themselves to the large Scalextric banner on the lawn at Epsom please give it back. If we expect Hornby to support the club as well as they do we can't nick their stuff. I'm sure it wasn't an NSCC member – was it? ■



**B**efore we get on to the new releases for June, I have to say how proud Ninco and The Hobby Co. were to be associated with the NSCC 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Event and Race Championship. The weekend was a huge success and a very big thank you goes out to all those who made it possible, especially our very own Gareth Jex and Toyota (GB) Plc.

The Ninco Championship Track proved to be very popular with competitors and ran faultlessly (*as expected!*) throughout the weekend. The four BMW M3 GTR cars were run "out of the box" with only their body colour changed to help the drivers identify their race car. For every one of the forty heats, the track, controllers and cars performed well and in between each heat, the public were invited to race their own cars or the otherwise redundant spare BMWs.

The four-lane circuit combined some long straights with a twisty infield section that really tested each racer. With each championship heat being "crash and burn" (*or "if you're off, you're out!"*), racers had to balance speed and handling, taking their car up to its limit knowing that if it was exceeded, valuable points would be lost. Inevitably, some races finished after only 5 laps but a large proportion of the heats went to the line (*10 laps*) and full credit to those racers who pushed to the end, not just settling for 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup>.

The Ninco track also played host to the final race of the day which determined the runner-up positions in the championship. Many visitors complimented us on the layout and racers commented that the Ninco track was the closest to a club circuit and certainly the fastest track at the event.

## Prepared for Speed

Two new CART cars are released this month in the liveries of "Target" (50374) and "Havoline" (50375). Both are Lola type Champ Cars with front and rear aerofoils set for minimum drag as used on the oval circuits in full size competition. The front spoiler is noticeably smaller and does not have the three levels of wing and large side pieces as found on the earlier releases. These cars have the same power source as the rest of the current Champ Car grid (*the NC-5 Speeder motor*) as well as front wheel steering and wide slick rear tyres.

## Hard-Top

A totally new release for 2005 is the hard-top Corvette. With the body following the same lines as the previous "Sebring '56" model, this Corvette comes in shiny red paintwork with a white convex section along each side bordered in silver. Bright chrome wheels, bumper, grille and trim really add to the Classic look. With an NC-5 firmly fitted in the chassis, you can be sure that this old-timer won't be short of power!

## Twist and Slide

At the start of the year, Ninco announced new track sections for their range. Three new curves and a 20cm "snow" straight are now released to allow tighter and more complex layouts to be made. The standard and inner curves are now available as "half sections", sweeping only 22.5° rather than the standard 45°. The inner curve is now produced in the "snow" track type to allow even more opportunities to slide around Ice-Rally circuits.





## More JGTC

In addition to the two new Toyota Supras released in May, a third is due for release, this time in the red on white “Denso” (50382) livery. Seeing Supras race around the Ninco track at the Anniversary Weekend, I can tell you they are

*FAST!* With the NC-5 motor in the angle winder configuration and wide, low-profile tyres, they are on a level footing with the Honda NSX. Just as well, because another NSX is also out this month. The popular blue and white “Raybrig” (50373) livery is sure to be a popular choice.■







I guess the subject of the month will be the NSCC 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, and why not? It was a great success and from my point of view, as a stallholder, the main thing I noticed was all the new faces.

I had several conversations with people who were either new to the hobby or returning to it. That's good news for all of us. I thought all the trade stands were of high quality and with all the different circuits set up we presented ourselves extremely well.

Just by pure coincidence our stall was directly opposite the Carrera stand and I must say a big thank you to all the team at Nikko who worked tirelessly all weekend, manning their Pro-X and Go!! Layouts. From a promotional point I'm sure it was worth the effort, as they never seemed to be without a crowd.

Thanks to Holli from Nikko for this great aerial shot of the Pro-X track. I just hope her parachute opened in time!

⇒⇒



## Beam me up Scotty

In last month's article I promised you news of groundbreaking proportions and hot off the email system this morning it's here.

Carrera have announced their very latest development: wireless slot-car racing. No, that wasn't a misprint. You will now be able to choose your own vantage point around the circuit from which to race. In fact, you could even move around as you race. This news is so hot I'm wearing oven gloves while I'm typing.

Obviously I haven't seen it in action yet as the release is scheduled for late summer so I'll quote from Jon Burcham at Nikko:

"Finally independent! Unlimited freedom at the race track.

There are two sets that are available, one for Evolution / Exclusiv and one for Pro X. Our initial stock will be of the Evolution / Exclusiv system (10101). The set consists of two infra-red speed controllers, 1 receiver / Mobil tower, 1 connecting section and two neck strings for safe



keeping of the hand controllers. Up to four cars can be controlled at the same time and the range of the hand throttles is approximately 3m from the tower. For very large tracks, you can add more towers. Each hand throttle contains three transmitters, which ensures a large transmission angle. There is no perceptible time delay in the system, so it is as smooth and responsive as using a standard speed controller."

I think the pictures show quite clearly that this has been given a lot of thought and that the Carrera R&D guys have come up with the goods. The downside of this brilliant idea is that you won't be able to pull out your opponent's plug just as the lights turn green. Damn!



However, picture this. It's 2006 and the slot-car club have spent last year's profit on a new Carrera Pro-X circuit with Wireless upgrade. So instead of six lanes of routed MDF, you've now got two lanes of Exclusiv track, running six cars, all trying not to crash into each other, with six sweaty blokes all running around the track trying to get the best vantage point and not crash into each other. Well it was funny in my mind's eye!

Seriously though, I think this has great potential and is another positive step to cure the spaghetti bolognaise that is slot-car circuit wiring.

## Ice, Ice, Baby

After something so hot, now to something so cool I've put it on Clarkson's Sub Zero Wall.

It's competition time again and as it's summer and all our little brats, I mean darlings, will be on six weeks holidays, they'll be bored before the end of day one. Consequently, the Carrera Summer Competition is aimed purely at them. So, if you're a hulking great forty two year old slot-car fanatic/racer then now is the time to let the kids read your Journal.

Nikko have been very kind indeed and are offering to send the winner one of the latest Go!! Sets. This set has just been released for 2005 and has two cars, 5.7metres of track, including a loop and two crossovers, and all the connections of course.

I said it was cool. It is the Marvel Heroes "Fantastic Four" set and is worth £40. Please enter this as it was intended and give the kids a chance!!

## Ten Marvellous Questions

1. Name the four members of The Fantastic Four?
2. Who are Ben Grimm and Johnny Storm better known as?
3. Who's the odd one out? Dr.Doom. Dr.Strange. Dr.Who, or Dr. Octopus?
4. What is the green rock called that makes Superman weak and lose power?
5. In the X-Men, one of the characters always wears dark glasses. Why?

6. Which Marvel character does Dr David Banner become?
7. His ultimate aim is to destroy the Fantastic Four. Who is he?
8. Which one of the X-Men can create weather?
9. What is Daredevil's weapon?
10. How fast can Professor-X run?

These questions were set with the help of Conor, my eleven year old son, so blame him.

Entries need to be with me by 20th July, for the winner to be announced in the August issue.

Please email your entries to:

colin.spark@btinternet.com, or post them to:

Colin Spark  
Carrera Summer Competition  
Hens Roost  
Rhododendron Avenue  
Culverstone  
Kent. DA13 0TU.

For a change I've got more to write about than there's room for, so I'll leave my report on racing a Dodge until later. With a bit of luck Pro-X sets might be out by next month and I'll hopefully get the chance to test one properly. ■



**A**s I write, I am still buzzing following the fantastic 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary event held at Toyota's stunning building in Surrey. It was a hectic and tiring two days, but well worth getting involved with and a great chance to 'sell' the H:O scene. I would like to thank the NSCC committee (with special praise for Gareth Jex) and the Facilities and Catering guys from Toyota (the latter putting up with our demo track actually being in their cafeteria) for making the whole thing possible.

## Racing at home

Our demo track was actually lifted (in two pieces) from the garage of long-time slot-car enthusiast/nutcase John Ovens. It must be one of the best home layouts out there, unless some of my club's other racers have mini-Fioranos tucked away that they keep very quiet about! The track was ninety feet long and featured every type of corner track piece available and straights of varying length. A challenging circuit and one that H:O cars seem designed for. ➡➔



The EAHORC demo track. The grey blur at the bottom is an H:O car!



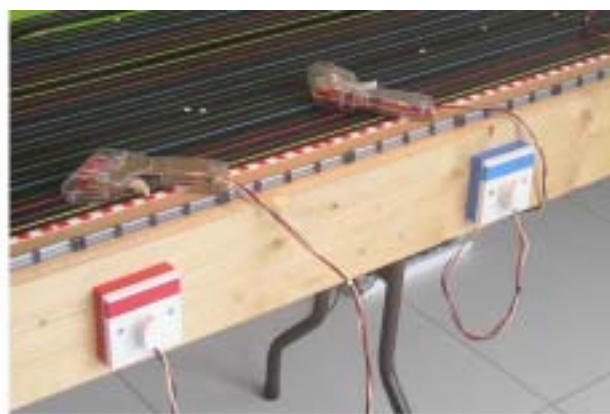
Whilst the track does not compare with a typical EAHORC club track (nothing would give you that sensation without sampling the real thing!) it did showcase perfectly the potential in even the cheapest H:O chassis once you put something worthwhile together as your layout. It also has the hallmark of all good tracks, being easy and fun to drive around but hard and challenging to lap really quickly. If you decide that you want something similar in your own home, you will need to get up early and hit those boot fairs. Get out there and hunt round for Tomy AFX sets on the cheap and you will soon have a good selection of track to get started with. Once you have done that and become more familiar with the different track pieces you can look on eBay and one or two specialist shops for specific pieces to give your layout the bespoke touch. Should you come across Tyco track, I would suggest you buy it if there is a fair bit of it and it is dirt cheap. You can then buy adapters to join it to AFX (contact me for details) and use the saved cash to get specific curves you want to give your set-up more interest. Avoid other makes once your AFX hoard is well under way as they cannot easily be joined. Your layout specifics will depend how much space you have for it. John Ovens' garage track takes up 'only' 5' x 14' and is housed in a specific room. If you don't have that luxury, simplify the layout and mount it on a standard, lightweight house door. If you can go for a permanent layout use High or Medium Density Fibreboard and think about mounting the track on a wall (use good hinges though, we don't want your track layout to lay you out!). If you don't want the hassle of having to mount the track to the boards (AFX track pieces have pin holes for the purpose) stand the setup on trestles or tables. If you are worried about it bowing brace the underside with 1" x 1" sawn timbers, all timber yards and home improvement stores sell this cheaply. Once the track is laid out and in position you can get into juicing it up.

For home tracks the standard 16 volt powerpacks are fine but you should use one per lane. Install your layout with one terminal track for every lane it has and connect one power



**A typical track like this (on a door) can be built in 2-3 hours**

pack to each terminal piece. Connect one controller per terminal, making sure they connect to each lane by placing them to the left or right of the powerpack connection as required. Taking this step will prevent a surge of power throwing your car off track each time the other car de-slots. If you wish to get Parma or other after-market controllers, connect up AFX plugs from spare or broken controllers obtained on boot fair sorties so they can be used on your track. Better yet, many shops such as Pendle's (01282 864666) will fit 2-amp plugs to your controllers, making them compatible with every major club in the country. You can then add suitable sockets ([www.tlc-direct.co.uk](http://www.tlc-direct.co.uk), Part number GU3070) to your home layout as per the picture below.



Once you have the basics up and running you can tinker with the strength and construction of your base/door or the track layout itself, you can spruce things up with paint or add any level of scenery you wish. The sky is the limit but it is fairly simple and inexpensive to get something worthwhile up and running if you are prepared to put the effort in. If you have





Micro Scalextric cars from the Batman Begins set

scoured the boot sales this will mean you have acquired several cars in varying states of repair. You should look to have one reliable, fast car per lane, decorated in some way so that it is only used on the lane it is most suited to. (Although it is hard work you really need to colour code the lanes, and then the cars can be colour coded to match). All the other cars can be broken up for spares. In time, with the help of clubs like mine or a google search you can find a wealth of aftermarket tune up parts. Spending £10 per car will transform them dramatically but be warned you may not like the end result, you could end up with cars that are not challenging to drive on your layout. Better to hot the cars gradually and in mild stages. I would suggest you change the slip-on tyres immediately though. Not only are aftermarket tyres better made, they have lower outside diameters which improve the magnetic downforce of your chassis. Slotcarsdirect.com sell a good selection.

Some cars you will be able to race soon are the two new ones from the Micro Scalextric tie-in with the new Batman film, "Batman Begins" starring Christian Bale (chillingly memorable in American Psycho) in the title role. I haven't been a fan of Hornby's more gimmicky offerings in

the past, even if I understand the reasoning behind them, but I have to say I like the look of these and admire the way they have converted a very difficult vehicle so nicely. I should have a full review of these cars in an upcoming column.

I end this month's column as it began, with the wonderful NSCC Anniversary event. I'd like to thank all the people who took part in our challenge event on the second day and helped raise £36 for charity. The challenge involved driving for one minute around our demo track with prizes awarded for most laps and fastest lap. It was great fun to see the youngsters, some of whom could barely see the track, complete 4 laps or more (no mean feat, I only managed 5 laps!) and there were some very fast attempts despite the fact most of the 'punters' had not driven an H:O car before. In the end Peter Day got the best score (6.57 laps), and son Jamie made it a double celebration by winning the under 14s prize with 6.07 laps. Fastest lap went to David Lazell. Your prizes are on the way to you guys! I would like to thank Adrian Norman, Gareth Jex and Victor Trophies for donating prizes and all the people, some known to me and others not, who helped with marshalling when the challenge runs were taking place. ■

**W**elcome to the ever-changing world that is eBay. Prices seem to be dropping and the once hostile last second bidding is limited to the very old or very rare. As you will see from the examples below there are traders able to sell brand new stock for nearly half the price of your local toyshop. As I don't deal in slot-cars I wouldn't be sure of the discount traders are getting for bulk purchases. I can only guess whether or not they make a profit. The offers seem to be in plentiful supply, this is great for the collectors.

C2330	Hamleys Jaguar XJ220	MB	£31.00
C2392A	Mercedes CLK AMG	MB	£16.01
C2137	Jaguar NSCC 200th	MB	£21.00
C2228	Jaguar range presentation		
		MB	£77.75
C2593A	Opel Astra V8	MB	£17.50
C2484A	Mini Cooper	MB	£13.56
C2484A	Mini Cooper	MB	£11.00
Triang	Vanwall	GB	£56.57

090155	French Scalextric Porsche 911 silver		
		MB	£38.78
Carrera	Panoz roadster LMP	MB	£15.01
SCX 61470	Ford Focus Monte Carlo		
		MB	£14.99
SCX 61390	Audi TT DTM	MB	£8.50

## Premier Division Results

*Stephen Langford* has been checking out the prices of the Scalextric F40 'football' team cars in recent eBay auctions:

Arsenal	£38.88
Liverpool	£31.99
Chelsea	£31.50
Tottenham	£30.00
Newcastle	£21.00

Prices tended to rise towards the end of the month which may explain Chelsea's lowly 3rd place - the price quoted was a mid-month sale. In the Scottish Premiership Rangers were the winners at £20 with Celtic only managing £11.50. ■

# The BIG one!

## The NSCC 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Weekend

by Gareth Jex

**I**t's Sunday night, nearly everything is packed away into the vans and at last we can breathe a sigh of relief before sitting down to watch Top Gear. Ah that's finished! Well, almost, "Don't forget I want lots of pictures and your article by Friday, young man." Our esteemed editor reminded me that, although the guests had left, our work was far from over!

Anyone unlucky enough to know me over the last 18 months or so, will probably have been party to too much information about the club's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event; manufacturers will no doubt have cursed every email I sent them reminding them to come; traders will have been sick of me bugging them to book a table or two; racers complaining that there was too much paperwork; the NSCC committee concerned that I was spending all the club funds on some personal whim; work colleagues moaning that the printers were full of NSCC flyers and that we had run out of paper again; last but not least my wife wondering exactly when all the DIY would be finished!

It took a long time, lots of trust, hard work and every favour I could cash in, but thankfully definitely worth it! Those of you who came along hopefully saw a smooth event with lots to do and see, but behind the scenes there was a lot going on and we thought we should give you a little taste of how the event came together.

As you might know, 18 months ago we discussed the idea of a large event to celebrate our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The type of event we wanted was pretty clear but a major stumbling block was finding a suitable venue. We wanted something special and memorable preferably in London or Birmingham. After lengthy research I came to the conclusion that we would have to lower our sights and settle for a cheaper option. At this point step forward Scott from Toyota GB. Scott and I race at a couple of local slot

clubs and he mentioned that we might be able to use his office as our venue. Now when someone says 'office' you don't really think of it as an ideal event venue, but to be fair I had never been to Scott's office and I was in for a very pleasant surprise! I made several trips to Toyota GB at Epsom to check out the venue and it really was ideal for our needs, large open space, motorsport theme, café, fantastic facilities and most of all very friendly and obliging people working there. Venue sorted.

During the last month before the event an enormous amount of work went into the publicity of the event with press releases, photos and conversations with various publications, papers, web sites, enthusiasts' clubs, TV and radio. Toyota very kindly put their weight behind the PR drive and their efforts resulted in national and trade press coverage. You can never be entirely sure about the effectiveness of PR, but judging by the calls and emails I received after each new article was printed it seemed to work.

### Don't Panic!

So with just a week to go the panic really set in that I had to deliver what I had promised. Cue trip to favoured exhibition supplier 'First 4 Exhibitions' in Uxbridge. The owner Steve said that he would sort out what we needed, all I had to do was ask - he hadn't really seen what we needed! Toyota's building is their headquarters and as such we could hardly have hundreds of visitors roaming around the place looking into desks and generally making a mess. We needed to secure the office areas in some way. Result? – just over 40 running metres of 2.5 metre high walling and supports. Not the sort of thing most people have lying around, especially when I asked for specific colours. Add to this 4 MDF track base boards 5 x 6 metres each, trade ➡➡



stands for the manufacturers, plasma screens, any spare display cases you have in storage, furniture, barriers and, last but not least, all that stuff you stored for the NSCC over the last year or so!

As well as the physical requirements for the event we needed to help people find the place. Quick call to 'Graphic Express' and twenty or so signs and a big banner delivered!

So Thursday comes and I think we are just about ready - paperwork, files, race cars, walkie talkies, office supplies, brochures, giveaways, etc all loaded into a borrowed van (along with 700 white Scalextric cars). Rob Smith is set up to arrive at my house at 0800 ready for the off. Cue last minute phone call, "Hi, it's BBC local radio, could you come for an interview at 0800 on Friday morning?" - "Erm, sorry a little busy Friday, can I call you back?" - "Rob, forget coming to my house, pack a small set and get yourself to Guildford for 0800, you are going on air live at 0830." Good man!

So while Rob was having his half hour of fame I was fighting the M25. I heard the interview as did a number of people who turned up at the weekend, so well done Rob, it worked. Arriving at Epsom earlier than I expected I was greeted by Simon and Martin from Toyota and informed that Carlos Sainz's Toyota Corolla had just arrived from Germany and was being unloaded! They had also laid on a van for me to borrow to collect the second load. Straight back to Farnham, load up, meet Rob and return to Epsom around 2pm for the long wait. With this being an office we had to wait until at least 5.30pm for staff to leave. That didn't stop the deliveries, 90 tables, display cabinets, tracks, exhibition displays, walls all started to clog up the loading bay but the security staff were very understanding.

Happy helpers also started to arrive along with some of the exhibitors and traders. So the long night started. We started unloading and setting up at about 6pm. Brian, Richard, Adrian, Shaun and Rob all following orders setting up stands, tables, etc with me trying to ensure all were in the right place, panicking when I realised I hadn't ordered enough tables

for the tracks! Trying to guide traders and exhibitors into Epsom from Germany and a little closer to home and then organising the building of the race tracks; Scott, Jim, Martin and Steve from Farnham helped out with these. Dad, sister and family turn up to help with the NSCC stand. Pizzas arrived about 9pm and a quick break was appreciated by all. We were nearly there by about midnight, but finishing touches would be required in the morning. I left Security looking after Colette from Monarch Lines who was still assembling her stand at 1.30am and said I would be back in the morning to carry on. Quick drive to the hotel, collect my key, try not to wake my wife, failed, try to sleep, failed.

5am Saturday, this is it! Quick shower, jump in the van, back to Toyota for an hour or so of quiet time to get some of those setting up jobs done. "Morning Gareth," says the friendly security guard, "Everything OK?" - "Yes fine, anyone tried to set up yet?" - "No not yet, but Colette is about to go home" - "Blimey she got here early" - "No, she's been here all night!" And I thought I was tired.

I drove off to put up some signage. As the last one goes up I see Phil Smith and Derek Cooper turning into the car park. Back to the venue and greeted by the better halves of the committee getting ready to run the front door.

Traders, exhibitors, racers all start to arrive along with more happy helpers. After the traders have been put in the right place and are up and running I turn my attention to the race championship. All the racers arrived on time, unlike me, who wasn't really ready. Quick briefing to explain how we hoped it would go, explanation of the complex race system, issued race numbers, re-issued race numbers, answered most of their questions then pretty much left them to it in the capable hands of Adrian on Scalextric, Shaun on SCX, Bob and Dave (from Croydon Model Railway Club) on Carrera, Peter Solari on Ninco and Jamie Coles on Slotfire. We started the racing heats at 15 minute intervals but after a quick chat at lunchtime changed this to every ten minutes.





Above - Maurizio Ferrari with the latest Slot.It products



Above - a pair of happy traders



Bargains galore - and yes, that is a Lexus suspended from the ceiling!





Little and Large - The Toyota F1 simulator and its Scalextric counterpart



Best in show - the prototype Ferrari 156



The championship racers celebrate





Peter Solari running the Ninco championship track



Ready for the "off" - competitors on the Carrera circuit - SlotFire track in background





Above - Michael Thomson race championship winner with his trophy

Below - The massive Scalextric display







Adrian Norman entertaining our VIP guests from the Childrens Trust charity



Dad! Dad! can we have a Scalextric set please?





Happy 25th Anniversary NSCC - 150 members enjoy the meal and Geoff Spencer cuts the cake



Your carriage awaits - London Transport RT 604 ready to ferry the revellers to their hotels  
(Sad but true - the editor was once a bus spotter!)



Two of the auction items - Police car donated by the Jersey Police (above) and prototype Maxi-Models McLaren donated by Peter Novani (below). Both fetched in the region of £200







Part of the NSCC stand and rally circuit



SCX championship track - Gareth is about to come last with the help of his coach, Scott Brownlee



So, with the racing underway I next turned my attention to the exhibitors and traders, "Everything OK?" - "Bit slow," was the general reply at 10.30, but things were about to change!

Wind forward Saturday, NSCC members collecting their club Minis from the stand, rally track in full use, Brian smiling at kids!, countless cars trashed on the free to play tracks, café in full swing, FA Cup on the plasma screens, traders offering some seriously impressive bargains, championship racers running between tracks, lovely ladies taking money on the door, vintage bus giving tours around the Downs and Epsom race course, kids playing on the F1 Simulator, lots of people saying thanks and wait for it.....

## **850 People through the door!**

Now that's about twice what I thought we would get for the day and I thought Sunday would be the busiest day. It got a bit warm! (sorry to the traders by the windows, a computer system thought it was too cold so started the heaters!).

During the afternoon we had some very special visitors from the Children's Trust to whom we gave a VIP tour, visiting all the stands and racing on the tracks. Thanks to all the manufacturers for making them feel special. It was great to see them enjoy themselves.

The day whizzed by and I must admit when we announced the close of the show I could not believe it. Neither could those watching the football! I didn't get a chance to look round at all, I had raced twice, came last twice and not spent any money.

## **And now we needed to get ready for the party!**

Clear the venue and start putting out the cutlery, well in fact I didn't have to do this, the great team at Toyota had set up everything ready for us. All we had to do was unpack 140 Scalextric IRLs, place some free brochures out, sort out the auction and raffle prizes, and get changed into something less smelly than a t-shirt! 7.00pm and the reception area was pretty full, quick speech about the night and then corral the

troops downstairs for dinner.

Now I have to be honest at this point, I think I oversold the tickets! The room looked pretty full to me and the bus still hadn't arrived! I think we actually had about 150 on the night, but we all fitted in somehow. Clive from Toyota did a great job in hushing the crowd to explain the eating arrangements and the feeding began. I downed several glasses of red to calm the nerves and started to sell raffle tickets. We had a huge number of prizes for the raffle, probably too many, but who cares. Everyone was very generous and bought way too many tickets – thanks. We also handed out the quiz questions (written by Steve Baker), this was quite tricky and included questions on all the sponsors of the event not just Scalextric.

Food finished and cleared I started to give the answers to the quiz, only to very quickly realise that not many could hear me. Thanks to Dad and the crew the PA was quickly brought downstairs and normal service resumed. Inevitably there was some confusion regarding some of the answers, but we did get a winner. Well done Jim Moyes who won a prototype Scalextric Lister Storm donated by Hornby. Next up was the auction and what an auction it proved to be. I only had a few prizes before the weekend, but during the day a number of individuals, traders and manufacturers donated very generous items including Peter Novani who very kindly gave a prototype Maxi Models McLaren and associated paperwork, Richard D'Cruze supplied a Ninco set, Hornby gave another Prototype Lister and the Jersey Police Force kindly gave a certificated Scalextric Vectra Jersey Police. Bidding was pretty frantic and the Dutch did a splendid job of upping the anti. After all the items were sold we had raised more than £1000 for charity! Not bad.

Longest serving member of the NSCC Geoff Spencer (member no. 14) cut the birthday cake and just in case you are looking for someone to blame for everything, Geoff got me into slot-car racing! Several speeches of thanks and a very embarrassing thank you from all present to me (not really required, but greatly appreciated! – bought several Team Slot rally ➡➡

cars!), we were all ready to go home. Everyone filed out to collect their free cars and jump on the bus for the trip back to the hotel.

It was a great night and everyone seemed to get on, food was great, wine was plentiful and company was outstanding. I don't think I'm going too far to say, 'Perfick!'

Back to the hotel with Wendy (my wife) and a quick celebration of my birthday complete with cherry pie and more slot-cars! – thanks Wendy.

## **What! - we've got to do it all over again?**

Sunday morning arrived way too soon and I was back on site for 6.00am tidying up and letting in the traders. My expectations for Sunday were mixed, glad it was going to end, but not really sure how many people would come. We had lots to get through.

Drivers re-briefing at 9.30 all seemed well - even with my disorganised files and paperwork, finals heats booked for just after lunch, half an hour to look around the stalls and spend some money, sort the judges for the Pendle Chassis build competition, Nic, Sean, Bob and Dave – thanks. Quick lunch, compile the results with Richard, recompile the results with Richard, judge the Pendle competition and hand it over to Brian to sort the racing bit – thanks mate. 15 minute interview with a lady from the Wall Street Journal and Bloomberg News, then back up to the drivers briefing to check some scores. We had seven finalists and needed six, nothing for it, but a quick head to head between John Watts and Michael Thomson, important result! Michael won and with Frederic Fisch, James Cleave, Adam Le Maiste, Paul Darby and Jacob Wright they went through to finals held on the fantastic Slotfire track with the Vanquish MG cars. All the competitors watched and there was quite a crowd gathered round the track, each driver raced on each lane and in the end we had a clear winner. Congratulations to Michael Thomson who was crowned NSCC 2004-2005 International Slot-Car Champion at the awards presentation.

With the racing and the other competitions finished, the NSCC committee members, racers and sponsors gathered on the balcony for the presentations. Each racer received a Special Edition Scalextric Subaru courtesy of the NSCC and a race motor from MRRC, the top three racers received prizes from all our sponsors, Carrera, Fly, Scalextric, SCX, Ninco and Monarch Lines and our winner received a gold plated trophy. Sean from Pendle awarded prizes to the joint winners of the chassis build competition - well done to Phil Smith with his TR3a and to Clive Mills with his Aston DBR. I handed over to Brian to award the prize for the fastest lap competition (Jamie Kelly) and to Richard for a few more words.

With everything completed it was left to my Dad to officially close the show and ask the public to leave. The traders left quickly, followed by the manufacturers and, after the tracks had been dismantled, everything was down and packed by 8pm. Once again my thanks to all those who helped pack up. I was about to leave when Scott suggested we sit down to watch Top Gear and have a pizza, good call! I think it was only the second time I sat down all weekend and my feet were killing me! On the way home I removed all the signs and picked off the logos with Scott from their main entrance sign!

Needless to say I slept very well Sunday night, before returning the vans, borrowed AV equipment and taking stock of the special edition white Scalextric cars me and Rob (my Mum/wife) were selling. I put all my cars back in the showcases at home and totted up the new items bought over the weekend – too many.

To sum up, I loved every minute of the weekend with the possible exception of 1.30am Saturday morning. We raised over £3,000 for the Children's Trust charity and had a further 750 people through the doors on Sunday. 1600 visitors - not bad. Let's hope they all enjoyed it and go on to join the NSCC.

I want to thank every single person who helped in any way, the committee for backing the idea and working so hard on the day, the manufacturers for supporting the event and

supplying so many prizes and tracks, the traders who booked tables, Toyota for lending us their building and facilities team, the catering staff, my family for helping out, First 4 Exhibitions for all their hard work and last but by no means least YOU for coming!

Thanks for all your letters of thanks and suggestions for next year! I can confirm that I will not be organising this as an annual event, but you never know, the 30<sup>th</sup> Birthday is not too far away.

### **Championship results:**

- 1 Michael Thomson
- 2 Adam Le Maiste
- 3 Paul Derby
- 4 James Cleave
- 4 Jacob Wright
- 6 Frederic Fisch
- 7 John Watts
- 8 Jorg Schaeffeler
- 9 Brian Eldridge
- 10 Keith Fishenden
- 11 Bill Charters
- 11 Philip Shearsby
- 13 Neil Lucas

- 13 Scott Brownlee
- 15 James Turley
- 15 Ian Thompson
- 15 Lee Andrews
- 15 Mark Hatton
- 19 Jamie Kelly
- 19 Gareth Ditchfield
- 19 Matt Tucker
- 22 John Kelly
- 22 Richard Welsh
- 24 David Dickson
- 25 Mike Kerr
- 26 Graeme Thoburn
- 26 Andy Crompton
- 26 Phil Walker
- 26 Tony Wheeler
- 26 Henk Pijpers
- 31 Stephen Dickson
- 31 Steve Baker
- 31 Craig Whittle
- 31 Mike Ronald
- 35 Alec Edge
- 36 Reuben Forrester
- 36 Jim Moyes
- 38 Sinclair Trotter
- 39 Simon Lawcaster

Last Gareth Jex (well I did only race twice!) ■

Photos in this article provided by Gareth Jex and David Lawson



# Our 25<sup>th</sup> – a punter's view

By Paul Strange

An amusing thought crossed my mind as I marched up the grand covered walkway and admired the impressive waterfall in front of Toyota's lavish headquarters on the Saturday morning. Back in the early 1980s, I doubt that Dale Tremble, Rob Brittain, Roger Gillham et al would have guessed that 25 years after they formed the NSCC, we would still be going strong, or that we would be celebrating our quarter century in such style.

But we're definitely in fine fettle, and thanks to Gareth Jex, the NSCC committee and Toyota, our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary weekend will go down in the club's history as a resounding success. To lift a phrase from the pop world – it rocked!

Quite unlike any NSCC event that I've ever attended, it seemed to combine everything – a swapmeet (stalls from Mark and Julie Scale, Phil Smith, Sean Fothersgill, Derek Cooper, Brian Walters, Robert Learmouth and many others), plus serious slot racing (with NSCC finals on the Scalextric, SCX, Carrera, Ninco and Slot Fire circuits), as well as some great free-to-play slot tracks, and good facilities (a café with a big-screen TV showing the Monaco Grand Prix).

And – as my girlfriend pointed out – there was plenty for the kids to do. With so many free circuits for them to try as well as the Toyota F1 simulator in the foyer, you rarely saw any child looking bored. In fact, that was one of the nicest touches at this event – the fact that it wasn't just for NSCC members, but there were many "other halves" and their children enjoying themselves. It made such a difference.

I particularly liked the jolly buzz around the venue, the open, friendly nature of all the

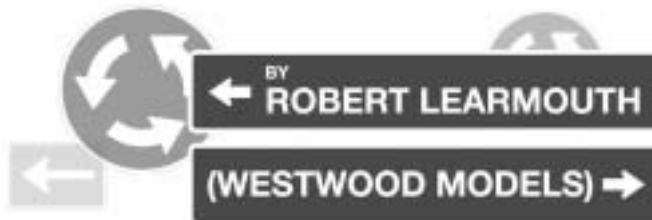
NSCC members that I chatted to, the slot tracks (especially the large four-lane Ninco circuit, and the awesomely smooth Slot Fire circuit), the stalls, the rarities cabinet and the café's banana smoothies!

And then there was digital. Like many members, it was my first chance to get to grips with it. I tried the SCX digital circuit and enjoyed it, but for me the jury's still out. I see it as a gimmick, albeit one that works well. I wasn't the only sceptic; digital was a major talking point on both days of the event, and the general consensus was that it's fine for kids, but serious club racers will never take to it. We shall see . . .

So, apart from the fact that you could barely hear the big-screen TV, and the Ninco tracks were hopelessly buried at the back of the café, it was a great weekend, and a fitting tribute to the club's humble origins and its founders. In his closing speech, organiser Gareth Jex described it as a "one-off"; it's certainly going to be a very hard act to follow in 2030.



Oh, nearly forgot . . . I posted the best time at the Ninco rally circuit on the Saturday, and won a car. It really made my weekend! ■



**W**ell, the big weekend has come and gone. It took a year to arrive and was arguably the most important date in the club's history. It promised so much but ended in utter despair. Not so much a disappointment as a disaster. But enough of my football team Southampton getting relegated from the Premiership and onto something much more satisfying! Epsom was a terrific weekend and I'm sure much will be written in this journal describing it and offering thanks to those who organised it. So I won't tread that path except to offer my own thanks to the organisers and contributors. But I would like to offer some thoughts on what we can take from the event and what it might mean to future events.

Approx 1500 people came through the doors over the two days. These numbers were swollen to this level by effective advertising, opening the doors to non-members and offering something more than swapmeet sales tables. If we want to see events of this size in the future or even anything remotely close to it then I'm convinced more than ever that these three factors must be incorporated. We have the (relative to Epsom!) success of Swindon to back this up where we saw over 400 people come through the door on just the one day. All three factors previously mentioned were also a key part of Swindon. I feel that certain of our NSCC swapmeets have bags of untapped potential which would be best realised by making these events open and following the lines trailblazed by Swindon and hit home by Epsom.

However I still think the concept of having some NSCC only events is a valid one. It's perfectly reasonable as a member to expect

something exclusive to you. And there's no way every event can be all-singing and all-dancing and neither does it need to be. If you can accept as a stall-holder that you are unlikely to line your pockets and as a visitor that the quantity of items on offer will never be the same as a bigger event then there is still plenty to be cheerful about. I feel the smaller NSCC events are okay as is and are a great occasion to catch up on the chat and to take your time looking round at what's on offer. You'll probably even find time to put the swap back into swapmeet! I also feel that bugging about with the format of something that may not want to be bugged about with is undoubtedly asking for trouble.

Do you agree or do you disagree? Write to Brian! There has never been a better time following Epsom to have a decent debate on this subject. We have had some good events this year but I fear the balance could be easily upset again so unless we understand why these events were good and cement some things in place then we could go backwards once more.

Over the next month we have Liphook and the English Church event in Madrid. If there's ever any doubt that a (very) small event can also be a highly enjoyable one then you haven't been to the latter. Not only are there only a handful of tables but it's not even just slot-cars, all types of model car are catered for. But no worries as some very enthusiastic collectors come through the doors and there is always a selection of quality items on display. And undoubtedly the opportunity to do an outside event, in a lovely little tree-line courtyard, in a part of the world with lots of sunshine also helps! ■



# Turning Japanese

By Robert Learmouth

**T**he radar has been picking up some blips from Japan this year, not a country that you'd normally associate with slot-cars. Certainly the number of collectors out there buying from Westwood Models recently has been on the increase and one of these guys mentioned the production of a new Japanese yearbook type publication. He turned out to be one of the editors and duly dispatched a copy to me. The title is "The Racing and Collecting Of Slot-cars" and it is published by San'ei Shobo Publishing.

The first thing that grabs you about the book is the quality and effort that has gone into its production. This is a lavishly illustrated book, almost entirely in colour and running to 178 pages. There are no less than 30 different slot-car ranges reviewed, principally through the inclusion of some very professional looking shots of the cars. Fly are best represented with many dozens of cars, with what looks at first glance like a comprehensive photographic catalogue from day one (right up to this March) but there are some cars missing. Other ranges, including Scalextric have a more potted, but nonetheless useful, selection of cars drawn from the last 3-5 years. In the back of the book are English (phew!) reference listings of all the ranges illustrated. In the case of Fly and some of the smaller ranges the listings do appear to be fully comprehensive from day one. The larger and longer established ranges such as Scalextric and Ninco are obviously not comprehensive, warranting, of course, books of their own.

There is not a great amount of text in the book and that is something of a relief as, of course, the principal language is Japanese. However, much of the text is also translated into very readable, if not always perfect, English. The book kicks off with a review of the Nuremberg toy fair (with English translation) and proceeds to an interview with Rafael Barrios, President of Fly. Sadly the latter is only presented in Japanese. There is also a run down

of the principal commercial circuit venues in Japan though this section is entirely in Japanese. Probably not a great deal as I can't imagine many of us will be in a position to pop down for a few laps! However the pictures of the circuits suggest that what's on offer is on a par with the UK and probably more in line with the US. Of particular interest is a description of the Japanese slot-car scene that outlines the history from the early days through to the present. From these words it's clear that something is indeed stirring in Japan and I think it's reasonable to assume that we will be hearing a lot more from this part of the world in due course.

Writing a review has been a little difficult as this book is principally about pictures and that's something never easy to put into words. But the range, quantity and quality of the pictures is superb and on a par with, or better than, any of the other cross-range publications attempted to date.

Due to the weight of the book and costs involved with procurement from Japan it's unlikely to be something that will be turning up on the shelves of every slot-car supplier just yet. But I suspect there will be further editions and I will be endeavouring to help the book in the English market and make it more accessible in the future. We do expect to have a small number spare at Slotbug and it is worth asking around elsewhere with other suppliers. The price at Slotbug is expected to be £25 plus postage but courtesy of the publishers you have a chance to win a copy. For this, I leave you in the capable hands of your quizmaster Brian Rogers...

Thanks for your generous offer Robert.

Question: What is the best F1 race result achieved by a Japanese driver? Bonus points for team/car/date/circuit.

Answers to the editor (post, fax or email) by 20th July.

Good luck.

Brian ■



Sir,  
On behalf of Hornby I would like to convey our congratulations to the NSCC for putting on such a great show for its 25th Anniversary. The show, the Championship racing, the stands, the displays were all fantastic.

Particularly, I would like to say how well the event was organised in every detail. The feedback from the huge public attendance was very good and I know most traders were very happy too!

From enquiries I made, the race competitors were also pleased as to how smoothly all the heats and finals ran. A credit to the NSCC committee and all those who helped make this event the success it was. Congratulations.

I am, yours etc,  
Adrian Norman,  
Consumer Promotions Manager - Scalextric  
.....

Sir,  
We just wanted to say thank you and well done to Gareth and the committee who worked so hard at the recent Toyota Anniversary slot car weekend. – and boy was it a big event!

From the point of view of a trader, it was a most successful event for us. It worked on so many different levels - there was something for everyone remotely interested in slot cars. The amount collected for charity was absolutely brilliant. It was great to meet so many fellow enthusiasts – public and NSCC members. Courtesy of Toyota, this was the poshest venue for a swapmeet ever!

So well done to all - organisers, buyers, sellers, competitors, etc - for making this a memorable event.

All organisers work hard for their own venues – which is appreciated, but this really was a special event.

Although an event of this size cannot be an annual one, can we hope to see similar events at some future date? We would most certainly support it.

We are, yours etc,  
Richard and Jackie D'Cruze  
The Wholesale Outlet/theslotoutlet  
.....

Sir,  
I am writing to see if anyone can assist with a couple of queries I have.

I picked up an orange “confederate” Ford Capri recently which appears to be in mint condition. However it came without lights even though the chassis is the type with holes to accommodate lights, is this the correct chassis? or should it have a non light chassis? Has anyone got a mint boxed one and can say which chassis it should have?

Secondly, does anyone know where I can get loop braids for some Coopers I am restoring. In the past I have successfully soldered on new braids but cannot find any suitable material to make the actual part to which the braids are soldered. Can anyone help?

I am, yours etc,  
Ian Thompson



Sir,

I recently received the two NSCC cars, they really are superb. So much so, in fact, that the pit lane babes on the museum layout abandoned the F1 car and have draped themselves around the Minis instead. It also looks like the wife of the chap with binoculars has finally twigged what he is looking at and is about to give him a clip round the ear hole.

Incidentally, readers may wonder why I normally send in partly filled in competition entries, or in the case of the Christmas one, a totally blank one. If someone goes to the trouble of devising a competition I try and show willing by entering. However, and it is a big however,

being a total nerd as far as real racing or rivet counting is concerned I invariably have no idea what most of the questions are about. In the last one I don't even understand the answers, what is a Zsolt Baumgartner for example? All I can usually manage with slot cars is to press a button and watch my projectile disappear under the sofa or make yet another dent in the skirting board. But who is complaining, if Archie continues to pick some entries at random - and he has smiled on me in the past - I will continue to send in fish paste flavoured entry forms. Long live Archie!

I am, yours etc,  
Rod Moore





# BITS & PIECES

## Get your strides on - you're nicked

"A man has been jailed for aiding the theft of a lorry-load of toys worth £75,000, which have never been found. In November 2004 Shane Fewings, 39, of Bedhampton, Hampshire, was driving Scalextric parts from Southampton docks to Hornby Hobbies in Margate, Kent. He did not arrive and the lorry was found, minus its trailer, at services on the M2 near Gillingham. Fewings, who was jailed for a year, has never said who took the toys from him. He admitted to police that the trailer was unhitched at the service station, but would not reveal what happened to the cargo afterwards, nor how much money he was paid."

*'BBC news on line' submitted by Greg Tripp*  
Bought any cheap Scalextric on eBay lately?

## Car reviewers - details needed

I need to update my list of people who review cars for the Journal. I recently upgraded the computer and various things went missing during the transfer of data, one of which was my list of reviewers.

If you have reviewed a car before and would like to receive some more in the future then you need to resend your details asap.

*Brian*

## Advert time

Scalextric don't really need to make slot-cars in order to make a profit - all they have to do is send large bills to firms like the one below for the use of their product in daft adverts!

This one was spotted by *David Barraclough*



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# **NINCO**

## *track test*

### Corvette "Sebring '56" (50347)

Reviewed by Peter Solari

In any collection or race calendar, there is always room for a classic. The Ninco offering of the Corvette raced by Ray Crawford and Max Goldman during the 1956 Sebring 12 hour endurance race, really is a beautiful example of a classic race car.

Viewing the car in its presentation box, I could quite happily display this as a static model. The paintwork is lovingly glossed and the blue double racing stripes down the centre are as crisp as ever. However, we all know that Ninco cars aren't *really* supposed to be kept in their box!

Once detached from the base, the Corvette feels very light. With the NC-5 fairly central and the magnet position just in front of it, it looks as though it will be a nicely balanced car on-track. But, before we see how it runs, let's enjoy the detail...

#### **Admire the detail**

Starting at the front, a fully chromed mouth-like grille snarls from one side to the other. At the



two front corners, chrome-rimmed headlamps protrude with tiny orange indicators positioned directly below in a tear-like fashion. Just below the centre section of the grille are two chrome driving lamps. Moving further along the car, we find two leather straps printed to simulate ➤







them keeping the bonnet secure. The passenger area of the car is fully covered with a contoured panel to aid aerodynamics and a single chrome driver's mirror sits just left of the special mini windshield. Moving further back we pass the door handles, (*did I mention they are chromed too?*) and finally as the rear sweeps down, each side has inset chromed brake lights, and three chromed bumper sections, one horizontal at the base of the boot section and two vertical, one on each of the two rear corners. Looking from the rear of the car we can see the high level of print detail in the cabin. The blue dashboard has a variety of clocks and buttons printed along it, some of which disappear into the passenger side. The driver sits comfortably in his grey race suit sporting a blue scarf, goggles and a dark blue crash-hat to match the blue sport stripes. To his right sits a gear stick – chrome, of course!

The wheels are nicely finished in a matt gold with chrome “knock-offs” and each is fitted with narrow 20 x 7mm treaded tyres. Two screws attach the body to the plain but functional chassis. Other points worth a mention are the spring loaded guide blade and the 9-tooth pinion / 27-tooth crown gear.

## Now, race it!

Taking this car around the track for the first time was a little bit daunting. With all that fine detail, will I wreck it at the first bend? Now don't be silly... of course it won't be wrecked, after all, it is a Ninco! From the start, this little car is a pleasure to drive. You can poodle around the track as if on a Sunday afternoon drive or give it some welly and go for some tail-out action. Compared with the modern GTs, the Corvette looks as if it will topple over at the mere sight of a fast corner but, rest assured, it doesn't. The skinny tyres give ample grip and the forward position of the magnet allows the rear to brake away for some stylish cornering.

In its out-of-box condition the car performs splendidly. Admittedly, I started off slowly but as my confidence grew, I really felt in control of the car at speed. And yes, it did end up with its wheels spinning in the air on occasion but, after quite a few serious sessions, I can honestly report that all chrome-work is still intact!

Overall, this model is a beautiful example of the classic era and once again Ninco have the balance between detail and raceability exactly right. ■

# Carrera

## Mercedes C-Klasse DTM Vodafone/DC Bank AMG

Reviewed by Len Hay

This is the 2004 works AMG Mercedes car as driven by the 2003 DTM champion Bernd Schneider. Bernd (or Mr DTM) has won the title four times, clocking up a total of 33 race wins, the FIA GT Championship twice and the International Touring Championship once.

The car is supplied in the standard Carrera box complete with mirrored back plate. In the rear compartment are the usual instructions and spare brushes plus the surprising addition of two spare Mercedes bonnet badges – does this mean that the DTM reputation for crashing is expected to extend to slot-car racing? On inspection the bonnet badge does seem rather fragile and clearly any minor impact would cause it to snap off – so fair play to Carrera for their forward thinking!

The car is resplendent in the Vodafone colours of silver and red and its many minor sponsors are well represented. At first glance it looks like the sponsors' printing has become

smudged but when comparing it to photographs of the real thing it looks like they are smudged too – what a pity.

The driver figure has a helmet in the correct Schneider colour scheme but the position of the figure is much too far back. Is it just me or are we expecting too much detail from slot-car manufacturers these days? Perhaps I am being too critical when they don't get it 'exactly' right!

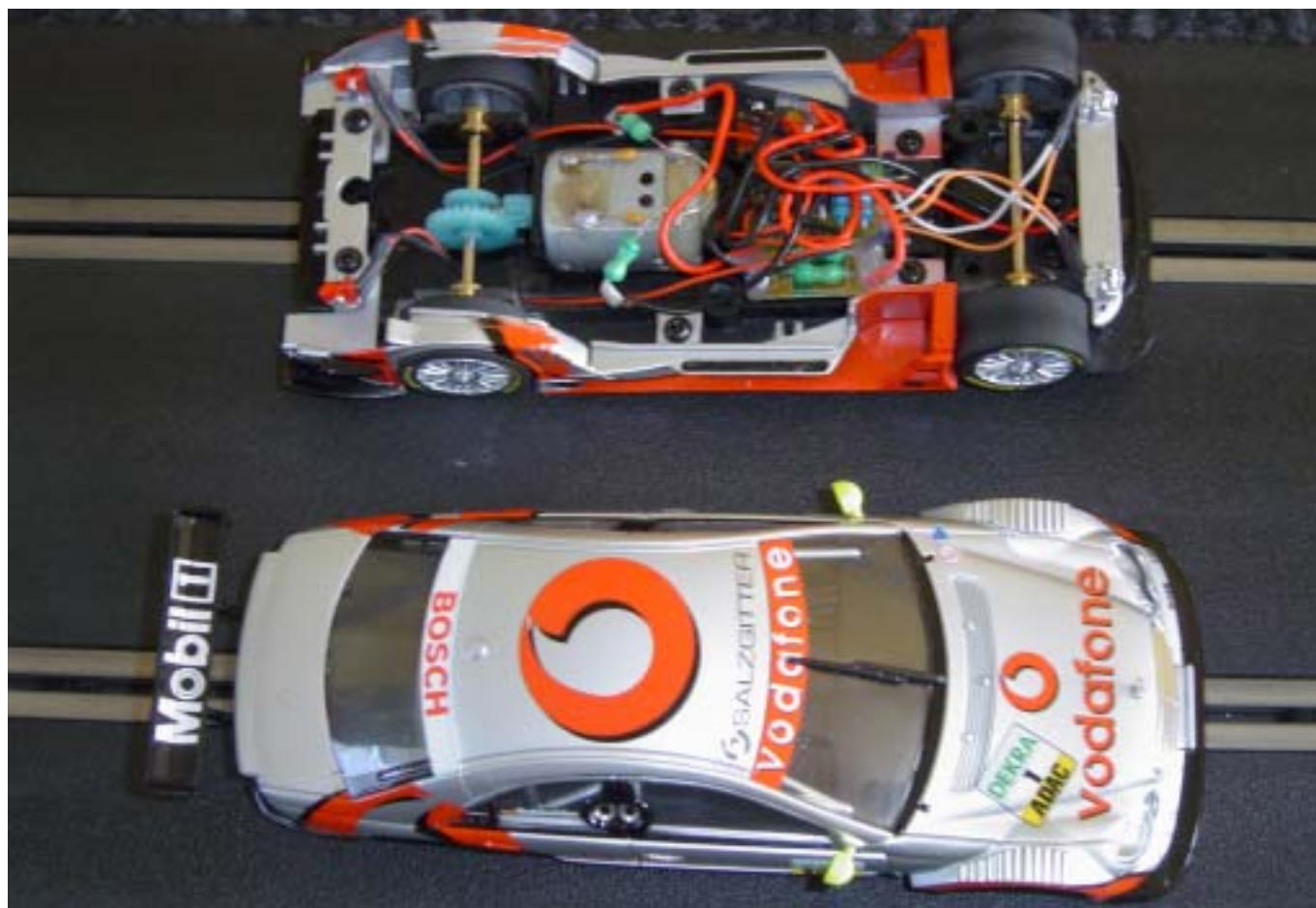
The car has very little ground clearance (which was to cause a problem when testing) and comes equipped with a switch underneath to change polarity (enabling it to run in either direction) and the now standard dual magnets. These magnets were so strong that I was able to pick up several lengths of track with the car!

I am a little puzzled as to why Carrera still use such a large guide, when all the other manufacturers use the smaller version, as it looks a little clumsy – perhaps they just have a stockpile to use up!

⇒







To detach the body you have to remove three screws and you can then reveal an intimidating mass of wires and electrical components. I did wonder how difficult it will be to change/upgrade the motor with so much in the way. Changing the rear axle assembly requires the removal of a further six screws. All of this means that the car weighs 110 grams while the average weight of a slot-car is around 90 grams.

Having reassembled the car it is now down to the serious business of testing this 'pocket rocket' on my permanent two lane, 10.97 metre long track, Boarwood, which has a variety of curves, one large flyover and four straights.

So, onto the white lane – power on – going great guns – round the corner – down the bridge – and the car starts to go backwards! I couldn't believe it – due to the low ground clearance the polarity switch got caught and moved position. I reset the switch, put the car back onto the white lane, reset the computer and away we

went – but again – same place, same thing. I tried fiddling with the track etc but no amount of coaxing could get this car down the bridge.

I had absolutely no problems with the red lane, which is slightly tighter than the white and eight laps later had a time of 55.18 seconds. After a few more practice laps the time came down to 53.36. Truing the tyres cut the time to 49.22 and oiling the gears and the brass bearings down to an amazing 45.02. Only my Spirit race prepared Reynard has ever gone quicker on this lane (42.76).

Changing the front magnet position resulted in the tail swinging out on the corners and increasing the lap times considerably.

Overall this was a very quick car which will grace any race track and if Carrera can come up with some decent grip on their tyres then that would make it even better.

For my particular track the polarity switch was the biggest issue and I would like to see it repositioned. Thanks to Nikko for supplying the car. ■



Review



## Citroen C2 JWRC

Reviewed by Graeme Thoburn

**H**ard on the wheels of the Ford Fiesta comes the Citroën C2, also in Junior World Rally guise. As several previous reviewers have commented, the car needs a degree of initiative to remove it from the base plate, surely the first “child proof” slot-car box. Who said it’s a toy?

The C2 is a very presentable little car and is approximately the same size as the new Mini. The overall appearance of the car is excellent and it is obvious that SCX are endeavouring to improve this judging by their recent efforts.

SCX have never been the most highly detailed cars but have proved over the course of time to have produced some excellent cars which all and sundry can race without the fear of breaking the smaller detailing off at the first bend. In other words, they produce extremely robust “toys” for all ages to play with and long may this continue.

This version of the C2 is finished in red with orange roof and carries the sponsorship liveries of “Total” and Citroën themselves. The tampos printing is fairly basic but of an extremely high standard and the plastic “paint finish” is more realistic than some of the other manufacturers. Wheels are multi-spoke, in white, shod with Michelin tyres. Neither of the drivers is French, unsurprisingly both are Spanish, and I haven’t heard of either of them. Perhaps both have defected from Séat. The underpan/chassis has the now obligatory and superfluous gold detailing. The C2 is a 2-wheel drive car and is powered by the RX-41 type motor. The magnet is situated to the rear, just in front of the rear axle and is, of course, removable.

The C2 has, like all new SCX releases, the quite superb “xenon” lights. These are the best of all the current lighting systems on the market

and they have been used on a club night in near darkness to great effect. There are two things I feel could improve this system:

1) A capacitor so that the lights continue to work when power is not applied.

2) A different method of connecting the lights from chassis to body top, the problem here is that, when running with a loose body, the metal contacts for the lights tend to spring the body up negating any “suspension effect” one may be trying to achieve.

## On Track

I set it to run around the club Ninco circuit at a slow speed, with magnet, for about an hour to enable the axles and tyres to bed in and also run the motor in. I then ran the car round at race pace and of course found it difficult to de-slot unless being very careless. I then removed the magnet and this totally changed the handling, as you would expect. The car became much livelier when cornering and great care was needed to prevent the car from tipping on most bends. The C2 was then compared to the Peugeot 206, which is 4-wheel drive, and was found to be approximately two seconds per lap slower so no mixing of classes there.

## Summing up

The Citroën C2, although not a match for its 4-wheel drive counterparts, is a good little performer in its class. It just has to be driven with care and may be more suited to Scalextric Sport track than the more abrasive Ninco surface I tested it on.

The car’s looks are superb and makes a nice addition to any collection and for those out there that don’t, try racing SCX cars, they are a lot better than you might think! ■