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THE INDEPENDENT CLUB FOR SLOT-CAR ENTHUSIASTS

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What's it worth mister?

I occasionally get emails from members of the public seeking advice on slot car items they have found in their attic. Inevitably they end with the usual question, "Has it any value?". I try to help with an honest opinion but I am sure that most of them don't believe me when I tell them that their dog-eared Formula Junior set is worth the best part of bugger all!

The myth that old Scalextric cars sold on eBay are a short cut to retirement continues to pervade their thoughts but mostly they just have run of the mill stuff with very limited value. No, I have never been offered a James Bond set at a knockdown price - but I live in hope!

In fact, with a few notable exceptions, most 60s/70s Scalextric items have appreciated very little in recent years and people who have acquired them for investment purposes would have made more profit in the stock market. Many have even dropped in value as the contents of people's lofts have flooded onto the market.

By way of contrast a lot of readily available modern stuff can fetch silly money, with the current NSCC Méganes being a case in point. The club still has a few left for sale at the normal price of £28 but three of them have appeared on eBay in recent weeks and have fetched between £118 and £151! I have my own (unprintable) thoughts about people who sell club cars at the earliest opportunity simply to turn a quick profit but, thankfully, the vast majority of NSCC members appreciate the effort that goes into producing these cars and keep them in their collection.

It does puzzle me though why non-members should be willing to pay such stupid prices for them when they could join the club and acquire them for a third of the price. Is an NSCC Mégane really worth the same as three mint boxed 60s cars? Funny old world isn't it?

And Finally - what's a Scalextric Bugatti worth? Have a look at 'Bits & Pieces' this month on page 38 - you may get a bit of a surprise.

Till next year
Brian



by
Rob Smith



MESSAGES FROM MARGATE

Err....not much to say this month as there has been just one release since my last report. So I have written a definitive list of Sport cars instead – see elsewhere this month.

C2711 Jaguar XKRS Rocketsports No1

There might only be one release this month but it's a good one. The TransAm Jaguar XKRS looks stunning in silver and green with the leaping cat on the sides and plenty of sponsors logos too.



What really sets this car apart is the amount of interior detail as the steeply raked front and rear screens allow for plenty of electrical and mechanical components on top of the dash and rear shelf. Many of these are individually painted parts and this must make the car one of the most complex and therefore expensive to manufacture in China. There is great moulding detail outside too and even tiny things like the bonnet retaining clips seem sharper than we have seen before. Just like the real car the front lights are printed on – like a NASCAR, but the rear lights are red translucent plastic partly shrouded.

The version modelled was raced by Paul Gentilozzi to overall victory in the 2005 TransAm championship having also clinched the top place in 2004. I found it difficult to locate much information about the real car on the web. If you find a good site, please let me know.

Coming Soon

Fortunately we have lots of new releases to look forward to before the end of the year. Firstly we have C2715 and C2716, the Hondas of Button and Barrichello. Undecorated F1s all look so similar but when decorated they take on their own characters. The finish and detail look great too. Then we have the second Jaguar XKRS, this time in yellow and silver with the bold CYTOMAX logos.



Finally we have the Ferrari P4 Sport twin pack, C770A. From Hornby's pre-release photos this looks gorgeous in red packaging with a black and white photo inside the box lid of Monza 1967. Surely a must have for all Scalextric collectors out there. ■





A few UK releases and several Spain only this month.

Ref 62130 Volvo S60 #7 'Robert Dahlgreen'

Much to the delight of Derek Cooper this SCX model is based on a very obscure car entered in the Swedish Touring Car Championship during 2006. Mainly white with a blue bonnet and 'Volvo Original' diagonal strips down either side. Looking at the few on-line pictures of the real car, SCX seem to have done a very accurate job in the livery and paint scheme.

Ref 62330 Audi Quattro 'Lombard RAC Rally'

The origins of this edition are a little vague. I understand the original order for these came from the German SCX distributor as a special edition for Germany. The cars are now available worldwide as SCX and, as far as I can tell, are a limited edition of approx 2000. This is not a new model but based on the original Exin moulds. The model is released to celebrate Tecnitoy's 21st Anniversary.

Ref 80810 SCX C3 'Tuning Set'

Back at the 2006 London Toy Fair I was told about plans for a new car with replaceable body kits, neon lights and an MP3 player. At the time I thought this was a bit of optimistic publicity, but I was wrong! This new set features two different cars loosely based on Toyota Celicas. There are also 15 interchangeable body parts to personalise your car. Neon lighting effect, as you would expect. Sadly the MP3 player is not

actually in the car but is located on a bridge with traffic lights. I'll stop now as I'm sure this will do well with the kids at Christmas, but just not my thing.

That's all for the UK, but once again Spain is blessed with some choice offerings.

Poly Model Shop

Several slot car manufactures are helping the Barcelona based toy shop Poly celebrate its birthday with several special editions. First is **Ref 6236 Seat 1430**, bright red with black bonnet and yellow race numbers '06'. Also available, but not featuring any unique cars is a set containing a rally pit tent and a Citroën C2 JWRC. Look out for a Fly limited edition also.

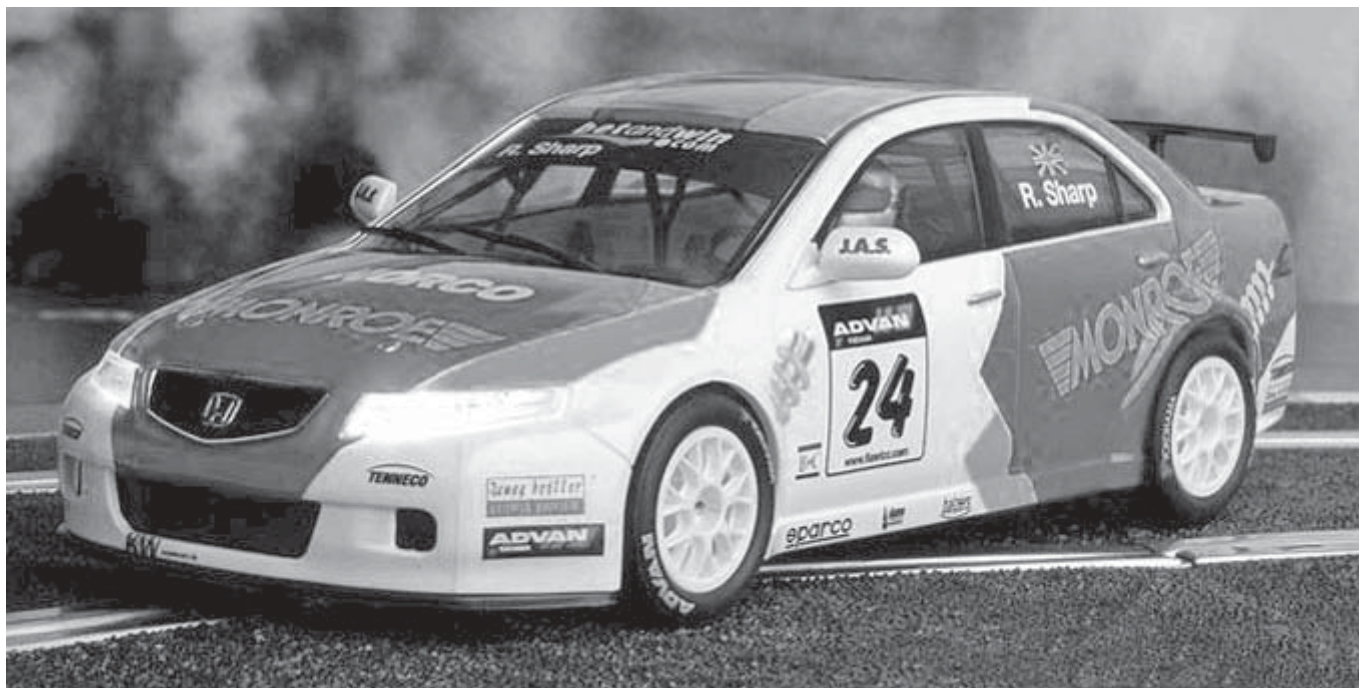


Ref 6239 Seat Cupra GT 'X-Box'

This is a special edition sold in Spain in a set and not available separately. Stunning livery in black with red skirt and large Xbox logo in green.

Ref 6237 Seat Leon

This is a model of the car that Tecnitoy's sponsor in the Spanish touring car championship. Bright red with Scalextric logos everywhere. ➡➡



Ref 6217 Honda Accord WTCC 'R.Sharp'

Once again I fail to fully understand the thoughts of our friends in Spain, but I'm sure they know best. Great looking WTCC car as driven by Scot 'Ryan Sharp' (who has since

dropped out of the series). The car is white with large blue and yellow patches. RX42 motor, lights, normal spec. This is the second UK driver/team car that Tecnitoys have released in Spain only – the mind boggles.

Seasons greetings and happy holidays to you all, see you in the new year. ■



There appears to be a theme this month. With eight new models to report on, three of them have rather colourful interiors. Also, a small conversion task which I undertook out of curiosity and a sneak peek into 2007.

Recent Releases

BMW M3 E30 "Jagermeister" #39 (A1704)

Driven by Mario Ketterer competing in the 1988 DTM series. Decorated in the usual orange, which goes hand in hand with the sponsor, and finished off with black wire wheels. An unusual feature of this car is that it has a light blue interior.

Ferrari 250 GTO, red #19 (A1803), Le Mans 1962

Driven by Jean Guichet and Pierre Noblet, finishing in second place after completing 326 laps. The second red 250 GTO to come from Fly, but this one differs from the previously released A1801 car in that it has a red, white and blue stripe running down the centre along its entire length.



Renault 5 Turbo "Elf" #28 (A1207) European Cup 1981

The second road racing R5 from Fly decorated in the traditional blue associated with "Elf". A contrasting feature of this model is that it has a red interior.

Dodge Viper GTS-R "Khalifa" #11 (A211), FIA GT Jarama 2002

Driven by Paul Belmondo, Claude and Yves Gosselin finishing in 5th position. A colourful model decorated in blue, yellow and silver.

Alfa Romeo 156 GTA "Drifting" (A753)

This is not a race spec car as the name might suggest, but a fully detailed standard release. It is decorated in light orange, with a black bonnet and roof, black BBS wheels and finished off with Japanese writing symbols down both sides and bonnet. The interior is dark orange and has a NOS bottle inside.

Buggyra MK002/B "Cepsa" #3 (Truck 75)

Decorated in red and is almost an exact replica of the previously released Truck 71. Both driven by Antonio Albacete and same race numbers, but from different circuits. This particular version is taking part at Albacete in 2003.

Chevrolet Corvette C5R "Goodwrench" (A2008).

This is the eighth model in the 10th anniversary series decorated in silver and black and is a re-issue of A121 (ALMS Laguna Seca 1999). The anniversary logo is once again printed on the left hand front wing in blue.

⇒

Limited Edition of 1

Another new model released recently is the **Porsche 911 SC “Danone” #4 (Fly 134), evo racing**. Following on from the previously released white, yellow and red plain Jane versions are the first and probably not the last of a fully decorated race liveried series. As with previous models, this has the full race spec evo chassis etc. Modelled on the car that took part in the XXI Rally Internacional 2000 Viratjes, driven by Josep Maria Fernandez and Joan Aymami and decorated in red with white bumpers. As these cars are bristling with the same exterior detail and finish as their standard version counterparts it gave me an idea for a simple, but not cheap, conversion.

First was the Porsche 911 GT1 98, then the Saleen S7R, both of which have had genuine liveries produced in race spec guise. The Porsche 911 SC is the latest to get this treatment and, as I am collecting Fly rally cars, I thought this would be a good opportunity to see if I could convert this into a convincing looking standard edition with full interior detail compliment.

Once I received the said model I proceeded to scan through my collection for a suitable candidate and a subsequent search of the internet for a donor car identified the “Boss” (A934) car as a good donor and within 24 hours one was sitting on my desk at work.

The conversion proved to be very simple indeed. The respective interiors and spotlamp assemblies were prised out/off with a small screwdriver by scraping away the melted plastic around each fixing post. Once the spotlamp assemblies are removed, each of the four lenses and the cover from the respective spotlamp housings can be removed in the same fashion. This is necessary as according to the picture on the flyer the spotlamps on the “Danone” car are black (as supplied) but not covered. The spotlamp lenses and cover can then be re-welded onto the opposing housings and re-attached to their respective bonnets. Likewise, the interiors were welded in the same fashion. The welding was done with a screwdriver heated over the gas stove which enables you to melt the remaining plastic together. Luckily the drivers’ heads were

not glued into the bodies and just simply lifted out and refitted into the opposing body. The chassis is a straight swap as the screw posts line up exactly. The only other thing I did was to change the wheels on the “Danone” car as they did not match the ones on the car pictured on the flyer. Apart from having a unique car for the collection you also have a unique fully race spec “Boss” car to thrash around the track.



A simple and quick conversion which looks very convincing once a label had been printed and stuck to the plinth. This demonstrates just how well detailed and finished these evo racing cars are.

Snippets

The forthcoming Audi Quattro will be a new dimension for Fly. It will be fitted with a 4WD system via double drive shafts and pinions both ends of the in-line motor, and will feature a drop down guide blade attached to a small arm.

News is filtering through that in 2007 Fly will be launching a new club. It will cost around 60 euros a year and will include a special edition car, T-shirt and 6 magazines. Further info can be found on www.flycarmodel.com/autoslotfly. Although there are options to view the site in English and Spanish, it currently only works in Spanish. If you watch carefully you will get a sneak peek of something in the offing for next year! I am reliably informed that the magazine will also be available in English. Further details on this and other new releases as they are announced next year.

Here's to another great year for Fly for 2007! ■





As the year draws to a close, this last edition for 2006 brings news of some great new releases on the horizon. Don't expect them all before Christmas as some will need to be saved for us to spend our money on in the New Year!

Perfect form

Following the successful launch of the Ferrari 360 kits, the next car to be released in kit form is the Ferrari F-50 "Red" (50415). This model was first introduced by Ninco as a ready-to-race slot car in 1996, available in red and in yellow. Two years later it was re-released in the blue and white "Racing R?" livery and was again offered during 2000 in the red and black "Sponsors" livery. The F-50 was an important model for Ninco as it was designed using actual plans of the full size car, provided to Ninco by the Maranello legend. The result was a perfect 1/32nd scale reproduction with a truly fast and stable characteristic which helped lead the field in GT and Endurance races.



Bright styling

In order of reference numbers, the next on the list of new releases is the Nissan 350Z "Tuning Style" (50419). This now completes the set of Tuning versions of the current Ninco JGTC cars. Finished in a bright yellow body with matching yellow racing hubs, it will certainly stand out from the crowd.



(Note: In the current Ninco catalogue, both of the above reference numbers refer to, as yet, un-released Champ cars. Unconfirmed reports state these Champ cars have been cancelled.)

Big 3000

A classic car is always a welcome addition to the Ninco range. The sporty Austin Healey (50424) is set for release based on that driven by Dutch trio Jaap Sinke, Rinus Sinke and Hans Van De Kerkhof during this year's Classic Le Mans. The three managed to bring their yellow car home as the highest placed Healey 3000 of the seven entered.

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Finnish start

Perhaps one of the most eagerly awaited Rally cars from Ninco is the new Ford Focus (50425). A totally new body and chassis with full all-round ProShock-2 suspension will see a new vehicle to rival the Peugeot 307, Mitsubishi Lancer and latest Subaru Impreza. The Ford Rally Team started this year's championship by enlisting two of Finland's top drivers; Marcus Grönholm and Mikko Hirvonen. This makes the Rally of Finland a fitting choice for Ninco to launch their Ford Focus RS WRC car.

Champion choice

The Mégane Trophy will soon be available in the familiar blue and yellow colours of Renault Sport. A well-liked livery, similar to that recently seen on the Clio S1600, this "World Champion" (50429) version celebrates the French car manufacturer winning the 2006 F1 constructor's title. With beautiful lines and the powerful NC5 Speeder motor mounted in the angle-winder position, the Mégane GT has proved to be a highly popular choice for collectors and racers alike.



Rally Porsche

The last on the list of cars due for release in the coming months is a re-liveried Porsche 911 "Danone" (50432). The red and white colours and covered four-light cluster mounted on the bonnet replicate that of the rally car piloted by Spaniards, Juan Fernandez and Joan Aymami. ProShock suspension will allow this car to handle the rough rally surfaces, such as Ninco's Raid track, with ease.



Club Mégane

By now, all those who had ordered the Ninco Mégane "NSCC" for collection or delivery should be in possession of their beautiful cars. I clearly remember the first discussions with Ninco about the possibility of making another special edition car for the NSCC. At the time, cars were being produced for the Club's 25th Anniversary so we decided on 2006 as the year of launch. Ninco's first limited edition slot car was made for the NSCC back in 1994 – *a yellow Renault Clio with self adhesive "NSCC" decals and a signed and numbered label on the box.*

Late last year, I met with Juanma and Albert to set out plans for the NSCC 2006 Club Car. The Mégane had not yet been released and during the meeting a prototype of the model was shown to me. Even in its raw form, this car was stunning. Initial tests had proved very successful with regard to the handling and I felt the opportunity to have a brand new model for the club car was too good to miss. My main objective was to have an exclusive livery as well as a car that would more than hold its own on the track. A metallic colour was suggested as a good choice for the body colour to show off the lines and detail of the car with yellow chosen as a nod of recognition to the Clio built for the club in '94.

Following the Nuremberg Toyfair, Ninco set about designing the livery and a colour drawing was duly sent for approval. I was amazed at what was proposed; the level of print detail was more than I expected and the flag on the roof and side-skirts was a really nice touch. With the final specification agreed, the green light was given to start production and a target set to have all 500 cars ready by the summer. Order forms were sent out with the May edition of the Journal and



within a week, I had received orders for over a hundred cars! Everything went according to plan and the cars arrived at The Hobby Co before the well known Spanish summer shut down. To make the cars that little bit more special, I arranged to have some numbered plastic cards made to certify the car as one of a limited edition of 500. A quick internet search turned up "The Plastic Card Shop" as a possible source for such an item and I contacted them to discuss the options. I spoke in general terms with a chap called Matt, explaining that the cards were to be sequentially numbered and would accompany a limited edition slot-car. For interest, I e-mailed a picture of the Club Car and was amazed during our next conversation when he said, "You didn't tell me it was a Mégane Trophy.. I've just bought one of them – a real one!" It turned out he's a bit of a motorsport enthusiast and, no doubt, another potential new member of the NSCC!!

The first batch of cars was distributed at the Milton Keynes swapmeet and this gave me the chance to meet many club members. The reaction to the Club Mégane was fantastic... it even managed to attract a few new members for the chance to own one of these very special models! The following week, Slot Rally GB gave the second chance for members to collect. Again, many joined or rejoined the NSCC just for the opportunity to own this beautiful car. Due to other commitments at the event over that weekend (such as running a rally stage and looking after the Ninco Digital demonstration track), I was unable to meet many of those who collected their cars... apologies, but please feel free to contact me via post/e-mail if you have any views or comments regarding any of the Ninco products. It was a pleasure to see Pete from the Hobby Co at this event and I know he was very happy to receive his NSCC Mégane! The last opportunity to personally collect the car was at this year's Dudley swapmeet and again it was good to put some faces to names that I had only seen on the order forms. Finally, in October I had the opportunity to present Ninco with their NSCC 2006 Club Car which I know has a place reserved in their showroom.



Juanma Muraday of Ninco receives Mégane Number 500

My focus now turned to posting out some one-hundred-and-fifty cars to locations all around the globe and to be perfectly honest, this was the task I was least looking forward to. Fortunately, an expert (*not just in the field of shipping to locations around the world, but more importantly, shipping slot-cars to locations all over the world*) was there to lend a hand. Ladies and gentlemen, I present the world's greatest slot-car shipping expert:- Gary at MRE! In fact, it turned out that I lent *him* a hand in the packing, labelling and shipping of cars ordered for delivery by post. Gary, I am truly grateful for giving up your time to help with this task and I am certain that what we achieved in a day would have taken me at least three weeks worth of evenings surrounded by cardboard boxes, bubble-wrap, polystyrene chips, tape, labels and postage forms - not to mention countless trips to the post office!

There are just a handful of last minute orders to be completed and by the time this edition of the Journal arrives on your mats, they will have been sent. To anyone else who hasn't yet ordered or indeed, any new members to the club, a few cars remain... and at around £30, it's much, much cheaper than buying from any on-line source!

So, until 2007, on behalf of Ninco, The Hobby Co and from me too; "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!" ■

Kits 'N' Bobs

A round up of recent kit and resin releases

By Phil Insull

This month I bring you news of not one but two new names to the world of slot racing. First up is Penelope Pitlane who are based (handily for me) in Wolverhampton. Brainchild of two local guys Rob is a top class engineer who is producing an excellent range of precision brass chassis, while his colleague Steve is a superb model builder and is producing some beautiful classic kits complete with white metal fittings. The adjustable chassis will be available in five forms. The FJ1 is a slim line chassis designed to take the Scalextric Moto GP motor, the FJ1S for shorter wheelbase cars and an SM1, which will have a minimal rear end suitable for sixties 1.5 litre G.P. models. The SF1 will be a Formula One chassis similar to the FJ1

but will be able to accept a standard Mabuchi type motor, with an SF2 short wheel base version.

I was kindly given one of the first FJ1 chassis to build up and try out. Duly fitted with TRRC wheels, Moto GP motor, Slot.It axles, gear and guide, and a set of Ortmann tyres I took it to Wolverhampton. Once I had added about 10g of self-adhesive lead, just behind the guide to keep the flag firmly in the slot it absolutely flew round the routed track with really sweet and predictable handling to boot, a great first impression.

On the body kit side first up will be the RB1, which is an Aston Martin DBR4/250, 1959 F1 car, and the RB2 Bugatti 251 F1 car from 1956.



The Penelope Pitlane Aston Martin and Bugatti mounted on the new FJ1 Chassis



I was fortunate enough to see the pre-production bodies at the Dudley Swapmeet and they really are fabulous looking. Cast in fine polyurethane resin with body posts pre cast for the Penelope Pitlane Chassis, the production versions will come with appropriate white metal parts and decals to finish them off. If that wasn't enough to get you scratch builders drooling, they are also going to be doing a classic range of turned aluminium wheels with white metal inserts for various fifties and sixties F1 cars. Hopefully I can bring you full reviews of these products in the near future.

Also new this month is a new maker of limited edition resin cars called Exkaz. Produced and sold by Phil Smith scale slot racing, these are great looking, hand made ready to run cars truly limited as Exkaz will make just ten of each. The first releases include the '68 Howmet TX, '67 Mirage M1, '66 Ferrari P3, '64 Mecom Lola GT, '61 Mercedes Corvette Pomona, '57 Maserati 450S Costin, and two versions of the Maserati 420M Eldorado specials. Due to the very low numbers these will sell out quickly, but keep your eyes posted for more releases from Exkaz in 2007.



TRRC Bugatti and 1934 Alfa Romeo P3 Streamliner, with painted Auto Union Body

Tetre Rouge Racing Cars have followed up on their beautiful Embiricos Bentley kit, with resin kits of the Alfa Romeo P3 Streamliner and Auto Union A Type long tail, both from the 1934 Avus Rennen. Again a full review should be possible as soon as I have built the kits. News also reaches me that French manufacturer MMK have produced two new cars this month,

these being an interesting metallic green AC Cobra Daytona Coupé and an Aston Martin Project 214. Following on from last month's news of the five new OCAR/World Classics cars, I have been busy and have built up the Lola, 250GT SWB, Scimitar, Porsche 550 and the earlier Ferrari 250LM and have pictured them here. While OCAR/World Classics didn't have any new kits to report this month they have introduced a new range of classic alloy wheel rims and inserts available either as a pair of complete front and rear axles or just the rims, inserts and tyres.



EJ's Classic 1/24th Lotus & BRM F1's and the completed Midget

From over the pond I have received the EJ's 1/24th scale kits of the 1962 BRM and Lotus Formula one cars. These come complete and include what appear to be boxed original Pitman motors. I have also finished the Offenhauser Midget and have to say it runs wonderfully well on the Wolves routed track. Back in Europe Team Slot bring us new liveries for the Audi Quattro with a Stig Blomquist Swedish rally version, and for the Lancia Stratos the fabulous looking black Le Point livery. Spirit have introduced their all new Peugeot 406 Coupe with the first two liveries being a red and silver JAG version from the Green Flag series and the yellow and blue version from the AA/TOCA tour championship. After slight delays NSR's Gulf liveried Mosler should be with us, along with Slot.It's Martini Lancia, AEG Sauber and Hydro Aluminium Porsche, with a chance of both the long tail McLaren F1 GTR and two kit version of the Ferrari 312PB being available, hopefully, by Christmas. ➡➡



Ocar kits and Protoslot Aston V8



Slot Classic Lancia Aurelia B20 and Team Slot Le Point Stratos

Proto Slot's much anticipated Aston Martin V8 GTP has now arrived along with a new 1/24th release from Auto Art in the form of either red or yellow Ford GT06s, while in 1/32nd they bring us the Bugatti Veyron in three road car liveries. More good news is that the eagerly awaited Slot Classic Lancia Aurelia B20 has arrived and it really is fantastic looking as you can see. The bad news however is that the limited run of 400 have all sold out. A late announcement by Revell/Monogram is the pending release early in 2007 of a limited edition dark blue Mark Donohue Mustang 350GT and a limited edition white, red and blue David Hobbs BMW 320i.

Last bit this month is information regarding the Wolverhampton Classic meetings in 2007,

the MRE Le Mans event on Sunday May 13th will be for 1/32nd Sports Cars and Prototypes based on the period 1960 to 1968 inclusive. The World Classics event on Sunday October 14th will be for 1/32nd four seat European Saloon cars (not group 5) pre 1980. Full details of rules can be supplied upon request; entries will only be confirmed on receipt of pre-payment of fees, which will be £7 for each event. Over half of the forty-five places for each event have already been paid for so please book as soon as possible for a place at these popular events. (Entry fee cheques should be payable to Wolverhampton Slot Car Club and be sent care of myself at 372 Himley Road, Gornal, Dudley, West Midlands, DY3 2QA). ■





I think it is fair to say that most of us have little experience of H:O cars without traction magnets. ISRA type cars run without them and 1/32nd scale 'Scalextric' can be with/without but the 'perceived wisdom' is that H:O cars are magnet cars to the core. In fact there is a distinct time line which shows that there was actually a gradual change and 'real' magnet cars were not with us until 1983.

The earliest H:O cars were very crude, using an oscillating reed which turned a small crown gear mounted on the rear axle. The bodies were road cars, meant merely as a train set accessory. You wouldn't believe the name this design was given and I won't repeat it here. By 1963 these had given way to cars with vertically-shafted motors and top plate gears as re-done on the Autoworld and Johnny Lightning cars mentioned in previous columns.

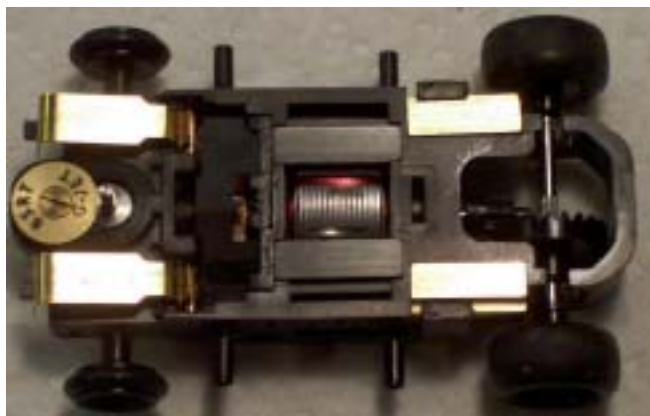
The idea of exposing the rear motor magnet to give extra grip came much, much later (1975). The following year a more sensible chassis came along with an in-line motor arrangement needing only two gears. Traction from magnets increased as a result, but only as a by-product of the new layout. Not until the early 80s did the cars have dedicated traction magnets, but since that time these items have become stronger, culminating in the use by Marchon in the early 90s of Neodymium magnets with huge grip levels. Other manufacturers followed suit. Only the most rabid H:O fan would refuse to concede that such cars, when placed in small sets, could lead to low satisfaction for the end-user. This is why I always implore the manufacturers to

supply more straights with a set and even then I don't believe a neo H:O car is a real challenge unless raced at club level.

The massive nostalgia scene in the USA, which I have covered in the past, very much taps into this feeling that less is more. Earlier this year, US distributor REH announced it had finally sold off all of the new/old stock of 60-70s chassis. OK, the cars will now trickle on through the hobby shops but you might think that the end, especially with the ever-increasing move toward e-commerce, is near for these older designs. I think, however, that the early copy chassis made via 'the China syndrome' (the re-tooling of older designs via Asian factories) a few years back will quickly become upgraded to classic status! In a bold move US cottage-industry giant (a relative term of course) ScaleAuto is launching its own chassis without traction magnets, known as the G-jet. Based on its own G3 design, in turn a re-working of the Tomy SG+ with engineering tolerances built in as opposed to toy ones, G-jet is a thorough attempt to re-invent the wheel that may fail due to one flaw. I'll come back to that later.

Even the earlier 'magnetless' cars suffered from instability issues as they had little mass. They would struggle to transmit their power to the track even in a straight line. Very quickly a secondary industry for car tuning sprung up worth many millions of dollars (no mean feat in the late sixties!), centred mainly around adding mass whilst improving the centre of gravity, rather like adding weights to 1/32nd scale cars as is common today.

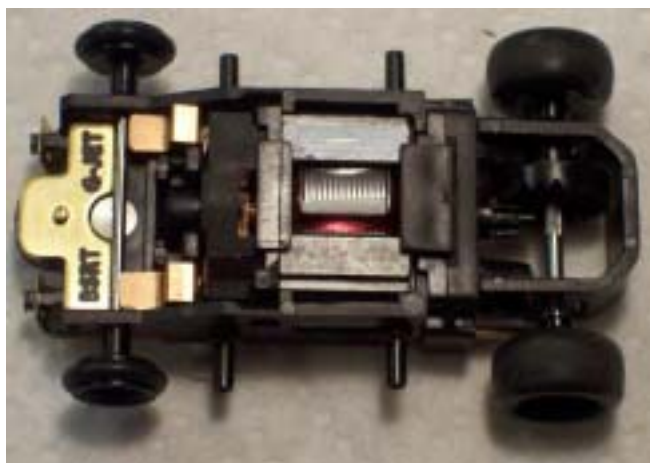
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BSRT G-Jet chassis, the future of H:O ?

12 Volts

The G-jet addresses this issue very neatly by the copying of the traction magnets in a non-magnetic material (in this case lead), which also means that the original G3 chassis design remains without losing (he says in his best Star Trek voice) structural integrity. There is also an additional bespoke nose weight, but the changes do not stop there. The armature has a resistance of 9 ohm, meaning the car, when run at the suggested 12 volts, will not go straight to the scene of the accident (©M.Brundle) at every turn.



Overhead shot clearly show large handling weight in front of guide pin

Then too the car has special tyres. Not silicone or rubber slip-ons but sponge tyres machine coated with a super-thin layer of silicone. These give great grip and turn magnet cars into virtual rocket ships. The thinking must be to turn the handling over to part of the vehicle that gives a more realistic look and feel. ScaleAuto have a good track record when it



Complete G-Jet with body featuring full driver and engine detail

comes to delivering the speed and feel that they set out for. Adapting an existing chassis as opposed to bringing out an all-new design may seem a cop out but it is much less fraught. The only snag seems to be the 12V requirement. It seems a lot to ask racers to put aside their normal cars and switch to something else, unless they meet once a week and the new cars will race now and again. Then there is the hassle of changing the output at clubs that have adjustable power units or having to buy them at clubs that don't. I think it would have been better to fit an armature that allowed the cars to run at sensible speeds on normal power. Time will tell if I am correct, although I hope not to be as the venture as a whole is to be applauded.

Power units

I did manage to locate a power unit, for UK use, that manages to get around this situation. The Skytronic 660190 (www.skytronic.co.uk) kicks out a maximum 1.2A and can be set to 12, 14, 16 and 18V. What is more it is a 'proper' regulated unit meaning none of the irritating ac 'ripple' which, over time, can kill armatures. The unit costs £12.00 + shipping but that still means a outlay of just a tad over £50 to be able to run these cars at club level. The silver lining is that this unit is considerably better than the wall units supplied by most slot car companies whilst costing less than a dedicated PSU. A full review of both the 660190 and the BSRT G-Jet design will follow next year. Merry Christmas to you all. ■



Well this report makes it a year doing this column. I did wonder when I started if I would last the year and still be able to find a few different things to write about each month. I think I have done fairly well and, with no adverse comments that I am aware of, and some encouraging support, I will carry on in 2007 unless there is anyone out there who desperately wants to take up the mantle! I would be more than willing to assist and remember, this is not an elected post and I would not want to stop any budding reporters out there from developing their careers!

We end the year at the time of writing with over 7000 listings in the auction format on the UK site and many more in the shops format. It is interesting to note the way how eBay has grown significantly this year in terms of volume of slot car listings alone which have, as far as I recall, been above 4000 for most months now even when there has been no incentive of the cheap listing day. However, even within the slot car category there are many types of seller developing their particular selling strategies. This is from the big sellers with many listings of mainly auction format to others who use it as a web store for their products. As I have said before, always check the completed listings before bidding on items from the big sellers to try to make sure you do not pay over the odds. (Sometimes I wish I followed my own advice more rigidly!) This is important particularly with the cheap listing days, of which there was another this month, as sellers gear up more for these days now I feel, and often list things at higher prices waiting for the one person to bid on their auction so they get a really good price for a very small listing fee. Incidentally the 10p listing day by my reckoning saw over 4000 new listings to around 9000 plus, not counting the shop listings. Another variation on the listing theme, but not quite as popular, was a 5p fee for

offering free postage but sellers did not seem to take up that offer with as much zest. A “no brainer” I would have thought just sticking a bit more on the listing price to cover P&P!

There have been several listings of items throughout the year for one off or very limited production items. This month there were some chrome trophy items from Ninco as well as Pink-Kar LE editions from Spanish seller Slotzone, all be it at fairly high prices. (Perhaps Spain’s answer to Geronimo but not quite as highly priced.) The seller did have some spares like 25 mint bagged SCX TT buggy shells at €30 each so could be worth checking out with the higher prices that the TT range seem to have been getting lately. With the introduction of the new Raid track sets from SCX, as more cars become available, will there be more renewed interest in the first raid releases? Time will tell.

Birthday!

An announcement from eBay this month reminded me that the auction site celebrated 10 years of business recently and listed some of the early sellers who still remain and have moved on to become power sellers on the site. They have been promised some goodies by eBay, so maybe some of the early slot sellers out there may be getting something? However, despite being relatively mature in terms of web site age, the site continually changes and this month saw an announcement that the identities of bidders may only be shown as bidder 1, bidder 2 etc rather than the real eBay name on some listings. For collectors who may have a gentleman’s agreement not to bid against one another on certain items, this will obviously make it difficult to see who is bidding on what. Admittedly the “sniper” bidder will still be in the background waiting but, as a buyer, I think I would rather see who is bidding on what, when making my decision. Apparently the seller can still see the ➡➡

actual name of the bidder and, at time of writing, most listings still show bidder identities but I think we will have to follow this line up next year and see how these changes may affect bidding.

Motorbikes continue to be found in large quantities though it seems prices are firming up a little as we near Christmas and more buyers are looking for their bargains. You are less likely to pick up a boxed bike for less than a tenner including P&P, unlike a few months back. Incidentally a few Scalextric cars have appeared in some of the large discount stores and I am sure people are then putting them on eBay to catch the Christmas shopper. I picked up a brand new Moto GP 3 set for £26 a couple of months back, whereas they are generally fetching double that now in the discount shops and eBay. Speaking of motorbikes, if you are a collector of these boxed models, I have personally found the C6008 Ducati ridden by Capirossi the most difficult and expensive to track down in boxed form, though it is more widely available as part of ex set twin packs. Don't forget it also comes in the first packaging square box as well as the newer crystal case with weighted guide wings.

So to sum up (and check out Slotforum if you want further discussion and views on the eBay scene other than yours truly), it seems as though prices are remaining fairly low for run of the mill items but the Christmas buying season has pushed up prices a bit, particularly for sets, including those from the 80s and 90s as well. However, for the very best collectable and rarely seen older items, not those just those with "rare" in the description, generally prices seem to be holding up.

On to prices then as listed and spelt on UK eBay unless stated, with the time and auction ending day:

Policar ATS F1 Scalextric Comp Slot car new boxed £50 (in yellow Sun night)

1970's Scalextric C136 Ferrari 312 T3. mint and boxed. £51.50 (Sun night)

Vintage James Bond boxed set 1960 £1290 (Played with set, couple of small bits missing but nothing that you collectors out there could not

sort out. Ended on a Friday night)

Scalextric, EXIN, Seat Fiat TC600, C-31, C-99, rare, boxed! £513.29 (All original virtually unused in red and boxed. Dutch seller. Sun night. White example exactly a week later from same seller £250.85)

NSCC\Hornby Hobbies GT40 2003 £365.55 (MB of course, ended on Mon night)

Lamborghini Diablo 1\48 NSCC limited edition 1999 £161.78 (early Mon night. Same seller and night NSCC TVR 2000 £165.07)

Rare official Ninco trophy Mc Laren F1 GTR chrome (Spanish seller with £337 starting price did not attract a bid. Similarly priced Porsche 356 chrome and slightly lower priced £270 Jaguar, Porsche, Megane and Clio from same seller also unsold. Look up seller "slotzone" if you are interested in limited editions from Spain like Pink Kar Leather box (5th Ann DEALERS GIFT) Gold Cars at £680 again no bidders though)

Ninco Renault Megane NSCC Ltd Ed 1 of 500 NEW Boxed £118 (Why didn't people just join the club and buy the car you wonder? Sat night) Scalextric "Barry Potter" Crystal Classics Jaguar XJ220 £142.07 (free worldwide postage Sat Night)

Rover 3500 - Unique Prototype bodyshell in Blue £83.11 (Tues night)

Scalextric C2394 Dallara Red Bull Indy car rare £47.56 (Mon night. Result for the seller there!)

Scalextric Trophy set Triang £102 (Mint on card still. Mon night)

Slot car Scalextric Jaguar range car 1999 boxed £56.51 (Relative bargain on Tues night)

FLY E- 2 Viper 1996 Indy Pace Car! NMIBNR Scalextric \$610 (On US site Sun night)

PINK-KAR MCIC Edition 1999 Rare NMIB NR Scalextric FLY \$92.70 (on US site same time and seller as Viper. Red Mini Classics club car)

I would like to say thanks to Brian for his continued patience waiting for me to deliver my reports, and all those who have corresponded with me this year. Don't forget my email address:stevelangford66@googlemail.com if you need to contact me and finally - Seasons Greetings to you all. ■





Slot Drag Racing

By Robin Clark



**So what has Drag Racing got to do with the festive season?
...answer at bottom of page**

As many of you will by now be aware, if you saw the Medway Rod and Custom dragstrip at the Slot Rally GB event in September, there is more to drag racing than meets the eye. Clearly, the term 'scale' drag racing could lend itself to not only slot car racing but also the likes of radio control pursuits etc; however, I'm going to be concentrating on the former. But before that, a history lesson...

Full-size drag racing has of course been with us for many decades and originated in the USA, when many a duel took place on the State Highways using little more than street cars with mildly souped-up engines, much to the disgust

of the police and residents alike. From this came the truly high-octane motor sport we see today. The UK's first exposure to the real thing came via what can best be described as a 'circus' that descended upon us from the States in 1963, consisting of a number of top US dragsters parading and racing up and down airfields across the country. However, the purists would have you believe that the very first 'drag-race', involving two cars racing side by side, took place at Long Marston airfield (now known as Avon Park) in 1959.

The first purpose built dragstrip, Santa Pod, opened in 1966 and has continued to flourish through good times and bad, with other strips around the country such as York Raceway and Blackbushe providing an important supporting role along the way. With more money being made available over the years via sponsorship etc, the top teams now run nitro-methane burning beasts boasting up to 7000bhp from a V8 7-8 litre lump! To give you an idea of the performance that equates to, it will launch a car to 100mph in less than a second. At the recent European Finals in September this year, a Top Fuel dragster ran the ¼ mile from a standing start in 4.747 seconds, with a terminal speed of 318.95 mph - a new FIA European Record. OK, they are going even faster in the States, but I'd still like to see Michael Schumacher match that!

So for those that have never seen Drag Racing, then how does it all work? In essence it (generally) involves two cars that will line up behind a start-line, then:

⇒⇒



Early morning shakedown at Epsom

Answer: Christmas Trees of course!



Wallace & Grommit v The A Team

- 1) Commence a burnout to lay rubber strips across the startline
- 2) Reverse back up again behind the startline
- 3) Be 'treated' to some 'glue' (for the tyres, not the driver, obviously!)
- 4) Be required to 'Stage' the cars up to the line until the yellow (pre-stage / stage) lights come on
- 5) Watch for the amber lights
- 6) Go on the green light (or if you're too quick, trigger the red light in your lane for instant disqualification!)

The first car across the line (1/4 mile away) is the winner. There, simple isn't it, and seems so straight forward?

There are many classes involved, from the more popular Top Fuel dragsters and Funny cars that we are more familiar with, through Pro-Modified and Pro-Stock, to the more seemingly 'ordinary' classes such as Street Eliminator, Super Gas, Super Comp and Sportsman, to name but a few – and that's just the cars...don't forget the bikes!!

However, that's enough about the full-size history. Here are some more links if you're interested:

<http://www.santapod.co.uk/>
<http://www.eurodragster.com/>
<http://www.absolute-drag-racing.com/>

So what about the small relations in the wonderful world of scale drag racing?

Well, the approach is pretty much along the same lines as the real monsters. From Lexan bodied Dragsters and Funny Cars running open class motors capable of scale 1/4 mile times of under a second, through to hard-bodied cars running Group 20 and other C and D can motor configurations, plus cars built for Bracket Racing, whereby each driver states his nominal Elapsed Time (ET) and the difference between the two cars' ET is 'dialled-in' by the Race Director, creating a staggered start for the cars – the amount totalling the difference between the two stated ETs. i.e., one car states say a 3 sec ET, the other, a 2 sec ET. So there will be a staggered start of 1 sec between both cars. In

theory, both cars will reach the finish line at the same time; if one car goes faster than their stated ET though, they are eliminated. Often though, one of the cars may run slower than expected, allowing the other past the line first – either that, or one over exuberant driver takes off too quickly (marginally before the green light) and consequently ‘red-lights’ and is eliminated. There, not a problem...an absolute doddle I hear you say. A bit boring though, eh?!?

OK, I accept that circuit racing can be extremely challenging and require high levels of concentration for minutes at a time. Drag Racing is different, but no less exhilarating – trust me. Typical times being run over the weekend on the shortened scale 1/8th mile strip at Epsom for the 1/24 club cars were around 1.2 seconds @ 30mph (real speed). Scalextric cars



Serious money at stake as traders fight to the death

were typically running between 2-4 seconds at around 15-20mph. A fully prepared (glued) strip would have seen even faster times (and a few standard Scalextric cars ‘stuck in the mud’ due to too much ‘grip-juice’!).

Now I have to admit that the whole Slot Rally GB weekend was all a bit of a treat for all of us looking after the strip at Epsom, because it was the first time we’d met face-to-face...ever. We’d talked for months via the Scale Drag Racing Forum and plans, plus contingency plans had been put in place, but it’s only when the day comes and you see the track there, ready to use, that you pinch yourself to make sure it’s actually happened! So here we were; we’d actually got a meeting (well of sorts) together, with a professional strip and some fine cars to race, it was like being in Drag Heaven (without the cross-dressing, before anyone mentions it!).

We had a fantastic time all weekend. Some memorable moments including a grudge match between two of the ‘Strip Marshals’, Jon and Steve, who both having purchased a brand new Carrera muscle car at a bargain price, set them up on the strip for a side by side shakedown. Imagine the scene...

Both cars commence their burnout to heat the tyres.

Car 1 pre-stages, closely followed by car 2

Full stage lights illuminate

-1st amber light.....2nd amber light.....3rd amber light.....

Green light....GOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO

With which they both proceeded at a lightning pace.....BACKWARDS!

Yep, they’d both forgotten to check the polarity switch.

We even have photographic evidence of a couple of rogue (sorry, renowned) traders with their pedals firmly to the metal, plus the last bloke you’d ever expect to see drag racingblow me, it’s Mr Jex!

With any luck our esteemed Editor will have seen fit to include some of the pics, mainly taken at Slot Rally GB. I hope you enjoy them.

As for the general public at the Epsom event. Well, we continued to hear comments in the background along the lines of “...so what’s the ➡➡



(Above) Gareth - alias Austin Powers - takes on his Godson in the Monkeymobile

(Below) Custom built rod from Austria

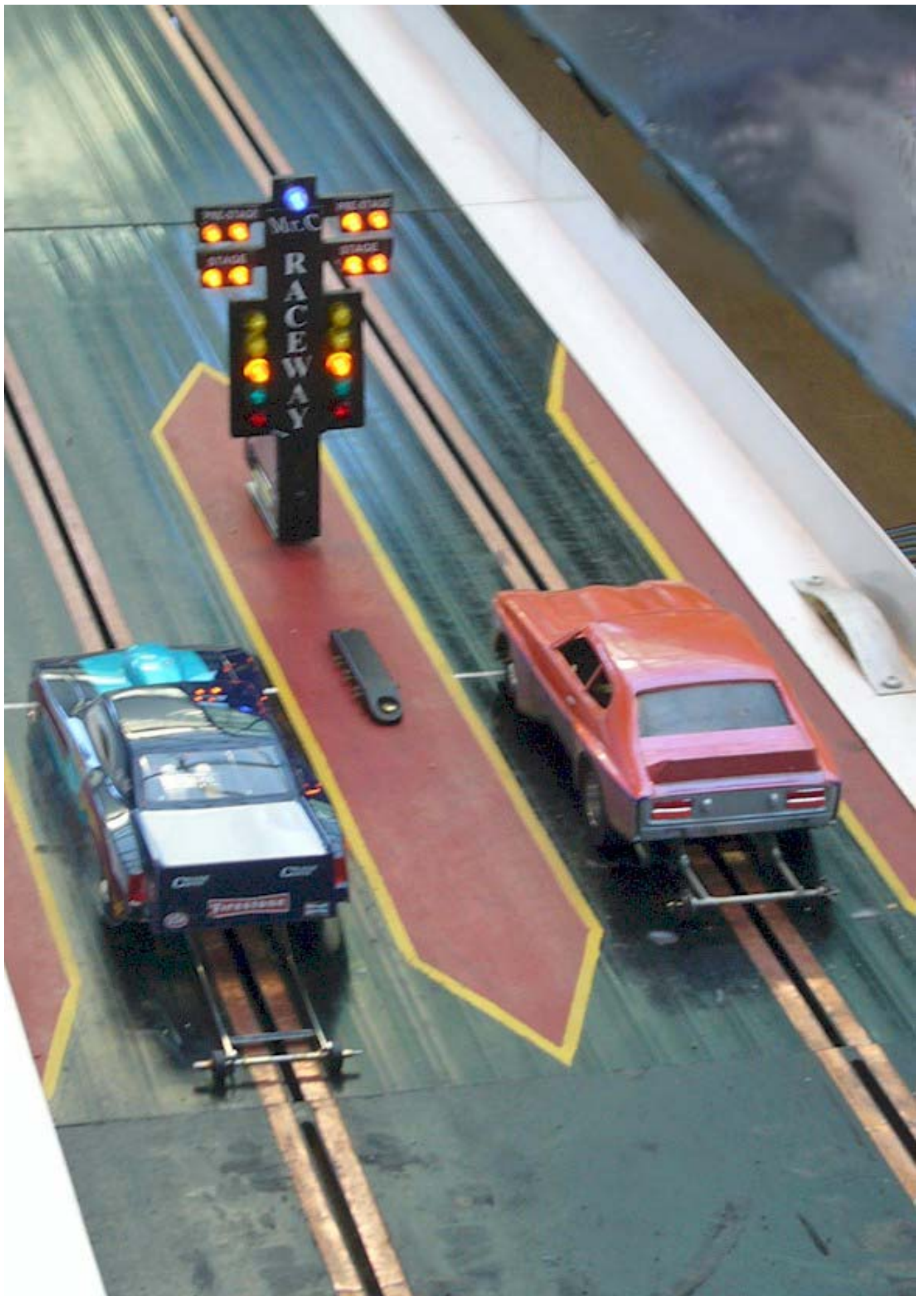
point of racing two cars along a straight bit of track? That's no fun and there's certainly no skill involved...

Mmmm. What was even more interesting was hearing those same people after they'd had a go (or three) saying how exciting it was and that they hadn't realised there was so much to it. In fact the number of children (and adults come to think of it) who walked away saying, "Can we have one of them at home?", made me chuckle somewhat.

If you're interested in pursuing this avenue of motorsport some more, then there are organisations already set-up with comprehensive rules:

The Scale Drag Racing Association (SDRA) has all the rules and regulations in detail at: www.slotcar.com/pdf_files/sdrarule2005.PDF. However, whilst we in the UK are considering aligning to those rules, it is very early days for the relatively few of us who have realised this renewed interest in the sport; so for now, we are content to meet when and where we can, just for a bit of fun. It also has to be said that the SDRA rules are based on 1/24 and 1/25 scale racing. Obviously this creates problems with finding places big enough to house a 1/24 scale ¼ mile





Long live the Capri



Dragsters at Sunset

strip which would equate to 80+ feet, including shutdown (braking) area). Even at 1/32 scale you'll be needing over 60 feet of track. Which is where HODRA (H:ODrag Racing Association) is worthy of a mention, which accommodates 1/64 and 1/76 scale cars, making the sport much more accessible, with track lengths of approx 30 feet much more realistic to erect in a hall or house. Read more about them at:

www.slotcars.org/hodra/main.htm.

Personally, as it is fair to say that the UK slot-racing scene is predominantly 1/32 based, I would like to see more cars of this scale, but that is just my preference. The majority of people I have spoken to seem to want to pursue the 1/24th scale route, which is understandable as there are more easily attained parts available for that scale. It is also interesting to speak to other slot drag racers around Europe, including Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Malta, Finland and France. Many of them seem quite keen to develop some European rules which are less

stringent and provide the opportunity for individuals to race without breaking the bank – I mean, have you seen the price of some of the drag racing machinery – take a look on eBay, plus some of the specialist Internet sites (especially in the US).

So, what next? Well, we need some drag strips available for use in the UK. There used to be quite a number, but they all seem to have disappeared. Then we need venues; they'll need to be big if we're gonna run the bigger beasts, but where there's a will, there's a way. Finally of course, we need YOU!

If you're at all remotely interested in pursuing this strain of slot car racing some more and are willing to invest some time into it, then please make yourself known and come and have a chat on the Scale Drag Racing forum:

www.ukslotdragracingclub.forumup.co.uk

We'd love to see you.

Merry Christmas (Trees!)



A Brief Collectors' Guide - Scalextric Sport Range

By Rob Smith

It is common for collectors to theme their collections and the choice for that theme is entirely personal. I have friends who only collect F1 cars, or Rally cars, or Porsches, or Ferraris. Others collect them by era, i.e., all Scalextric cars from the year 2000 or from reference number C2000.

Another popular theme is to collect the Scalextric Sport range of cars and, as these are no longer in the range, this is an ideal time to review what has been available.

The definition of Sport cars is those with a photo etched "limited" plaque on their chassis. Normally these were supplied in glossy blue hinged display boxes with A suffixes to the reference numbers.

The story of the Sport versions begins back in the autumn of 1997 when the packaging

changed from the black cardboard box with cellophane window that had been used for many years to the rigid perspex box we now know.

The first few cars in this new style of box had a limited edition cardboard sleeve decorated in team colours and unique to that car. The high demand for these particular versions made Hornby sit up and take more notice of the collector market and the Sport versions were conceived.

New for 2002 were Sport versions aimed at collectors. The Sport versions came in attractive blue cardboard display boxes which hinged from the rear to display the car beautifully. The inside of the box lid contains some information about the real car too. Around each box was a thin sleeve to keep it closed and again each were individual with an image and the reference number. Under the tray containing the car ➡





the theme. The second is a Goodwood Sport box used for the Classic Grand Prix range in Green with the Goodwood logo.

A visit to any swapmeet will provide plenty of Sports releases, especially the more recent ones. Many of the older releases are very hard to find as demand outstripped supply and many retailers did not receive their full quotas from Hornby when they were released. However, the limited editions were not small and in many cases exceed that of ordinary versions!

Why have Sport releases ended? There are two main reasons. Firstly, although the packaging is very nicely done it was difficult for both

collectors and retailers to display. Secondly the concept of fitting tuning parts to a collectors edition was rather at odds as most of these cars have never been run on the track.

It isn't quite all over yet either as there are two more Sport twin packs due before the end of 2006 – the Ferrari P4 pack and the Classic 1976 Grand Prix pack.

The associated table shows all of the Sport releases to date. Please let me know if there are any errors or omissions in this.

Nor is it the end of collectors editions from Hornby and they are hard at work planning a new concept for the future. Watch this space! ➡➡

Ref	Description	Approx Date	Edition Size
C2262A	McLaren MP4/16 Mika No3	Mar-02	5000
C2263A	McLaren MP4/16 David No4	Mar-02	5000
C2334A	Williams BMW FW23 Schumacher No5	Mar-02	5000
C2335A	Williams BMW FW23 Montoya No6	Mar-02	5000
C2364A	Mitsubishi Lancer EVO7 No8	Jul-02	3000
C2365A	Mitsubishi Lancer EVO7 No7	Jul-02	3000
C2366A	MG Sport & Racing MG Lola EX257 Le Mans 2001 "No33"	Dec-02	5000
C2367A	Knighthawk MG Lola EX257 Le Mans 2001 "No30"	Dec-02	5000
C2391A	AMG Mercedes CLK DTM "Vodafone" No1	Apr-03	6000
C2392A	Mercedes CLK DTM "AMG" No2	Jun-03	7000
C2397A	Renault R23 F1 "Jarno Trulli" No7	Dec-03	7000
C2398A	Renault R23 F1 "Fernando Alonso" No8	Dec-03	7000
C2399A	Chevrolet Camaro Penske Sunoco No6	Jul-02	4400
C2400A	Chevrolet Camaro Penske Sunoco No9	Jul-02	4400
C2401A	Ford Mustang Boss '69 No15	Jun-02	4400
C2402A	Ford Mustang Boss '69 No16	Jun-02	4400
C2403A	Ford GT40 JW Automotive Gulf No9	Sep-02	4000
C2404A	Ford GT40 JW Automotive Gulf No6	Sep-02	4000
C2436A	Ford Boss Mustang No15	Dec-02	5000
C2437A	Ford Boss Mustang No16	Dec-02	5000
C2453A	TVR Tuscan 400R "DeWalt" No91	Dec-03	7000
C2454A	TVR Tuscan 400R Eclipse Motorsport No 69	Nov-03	8000
C2455A	Toyota F1 TF102 No24	Dec-02	4000
C2456A	Toyota F1 TF102 No25	Dec-02	4000
C2463A	Ford GT40 MkII Shelby American No2	Oct-02	4000
C2463AWD	First Ford GT40 427 MkII Amon / McLaren Only available in C2529A	Jul-03	10000
C2464A	Ford GT40 MkII No1	Oct-02	4000
C2464AWD	Second Ford GT40 427 MkII Miles / Hulme Only available in C2529A	Jul-03	10000
C2465A	Ford GT40 MkII No5	Oct-02	4000
C2465AWD	Third Ford GT40 427 MkII Bucknum / Hutcherson Only available in C2529A	Jul-03	10000
C2474A	Opel V8 Coupe "Opel Team Phoenix" No7	Jun-03	5000
C2475A	Opel V8 Coupe "TV Today" No8	Jun-03	6000
C2484A	Mini Cooper "John Cooper Challenge" No5	Aug-03	10000
C2485A	Mini Cooper "John Cooper Challenge" No6	Jul-03	10000
C2486A	Skoda Fabia WRC Works 2003 No15	Nov-04	4000
C2487A	Skoda Fabia WRC Works 2003 No14	Nov-04	4000
C2502A	Chevrolet Corvette L88 1972 No57	Oct-03	10000
C2503A	Chevrolet Corvette L88 1972 No48	Dec-03	10000
C2504A	Maserati Coupe Cambicorsa Maserati Trofeo 2003 No42	Mar-05	5000
C2505A	Maserati Coupe Cambicorsa Maserati Trofeo 2003 No41	Mar-05	5000
C2509A	Ford GT MKII 1966 Le Mans "No3"	Apr-03	8000
C2521A	Lister Storm LMP Le Mans 2003 No20	Apr-04	10000
C2522A	Dodge Viper Competition Coupe 3-R Racing No22	Dec-04	6000
C2523A	Dodge Viper Competition Coupe McCann No82	Dec-04	6000
C2529A	Goodwood Festival Of Speed 2003 Le Mans 1966 Triple pack	Jul-03	10000



Ref	Description	Approx Date	Edition Size
C2534A	Ford GT40 1969 "Kelleners / Joest" No68 Germany only. Box text in German	Nov-03	2000
C2538A	Mini Cooper "The Italian Job" Red Only available as Sport version	Dec-03	7500
C2539A	Mini Cooper "The Italian Job" Blue Only available as Sport version	Oct-03	7500
C2540A	Mini Cooper "The Italian Job" White Only available as Sport version	Oct-03	7500
C2551A	Maserati 250F 1957 No1 Goodwood box	Sep-04	6000
C2552A	Vanwall F1 1957 No10 Goodwood box	Sep-04	6000
C2553A	Ford Gran Torino 1976 In C2603A	Jun-04	6000
C2560A	Peugeot 307 WRC Works 2004 No5	May-05	4000
C2561A	Peugeot 307 WRC Works 2004 No16	May-05	4000
C2570A	Ford GT 2003 Road Version	Dec-04	6000
C2578A	Ford GT40 "Le Mans 1966" No59	Apr-04	5000
C2581A	Renault R24 F1 Team Spirit No7	Dec-04	4000
C2582A	Renault R24 F1 team Spirit No8	Dec-04	4000
C2583A	BMW Williams F1 FW26 No3	Dec-04	4000
C2584A	BMW Williams F1 FW26 No4	Dec-04	4000
C2592A	Opel Vectra GTS V8 DTM Manuel Reuter	Aug-05	5000
C2596A	Mini Cooper S NSCC 25th Anniversary NSCC only. Only available as Sport version	Mar-05	500
C2599A	Mini Cooper S NSCC 25th Anniversary NSCC only. Only available as Sport version	Mar-05	500
C2602A	Chevrolet Corvette 1969 In C2603A	Jun-04	6000
C2603A	Starsky & Hutch / Limited Edition Twin pack	Jun-04	6000
C2630A	Maserati MC12 No33	Mar-05	5000
C2632A	Mercedes Benz SLR McLaren Road Car	Dec-05	4000
C2635A	Batmobile In C2669A	Aug-05	5000
C2636A	Gotham City Police Car In C2669A	Aug-05	5000
C2639A	Cooper Climax T53 1960 "Jack Brabham"	Oct-05	5000
C2640A	Ferrari 156 F1 1961 "Phil Hill" Goodwood box	Sep-05	5000
C2641A	Ferrari 330 P4 Le Mans 1967 Scarfiotti-Parkes No21 Goodwood box	Dec-05	6000
C2669A	Batman Begins / Limited Edition Twin pack	Aug-05	5000
C2676A	Ferrari F2004 No1	Oct-05	5000
H2681A	Maserati 250F 1957 No10 MiniAuto Slot subscription only. Only available as Sport version	Jun-05	1500
C2683A	Ford GT MkII 1966 Le Mans No8 Germany only. Box text in German	Jul-05	2000
H2703A	Ferrari 156 F1 1961 Giancarlo Baghetti MiniAuto Slot subscription only. Only available as Sport version	Jun-06	1500



Total Traction Returns

SCX Offroaders

By Chris Galton

I have always been a fan of the old SCX TT 4x4 system and was very disappointed when it stopped being made in the early 90s. So I was quite pleased when I heard that Ninco were going to bring out an off road system a few years ago. The Ninco system is great and they have made a fantastic range of vehicles but I can't help thinking they missed the whole point of 'Off Road'. I know a little about the company history of Ninco in that it was formed by some of the old Exin staff and assumed the off road cars would have the same obstacle beating ability as the TT ones. Alas this was not the case.

I fully understand why Ninco make their system the way they have. With the short drop arm, powerful magnet and strong raider motor, the Ninco cars are good performers on standard track as well as their Raid track. Also the track itself is a compromise meaning that almost any car can be used on it, including some F1 cars! Don't get me wrong, I love the Ninco system - just ask Jason from Swaton Raceway how much of it I've bought. I hope the Missus doesn't read this! But a little space inside me that desired proper off road ability remained unsatisfied. Then, at the London Toyfair in January, a faint glimmer of hope. After spending a bit of time

talking to one of the Spanish guys on the SCX stand, I mentioned I was a big fan and collector of the old off road system. A vague smile appeared on his face and he said, "Wait and see". I asked the question outright, "Are you going to make the TT system again?"

He just smiled and said, "Maybe". Then whilst browsing through the Nuremberg Toyfair photos from only a week later there it was on the SCX stand. A different colour track but unmistakably the old TT system with one of the old Peugeot 405 cars running around on it. Ever since that moment I have been waiting for the set to come out. After many delays (in fact as I write the sets are only just now making their way to the dealers) I finally got my hands on one.

Ashford

In the run up to the Ashford Slot Car show I had been phoning Jason and Jenny from Swaton Raceway to see if the SCX set had arrived. Alas a dock strike in Spain had put paid to the set arriving in time for the show but at least I knew it would arrive soon. Determined to whet visitors appetites to the Ashford meet with some info, I emailed Steve Wright at AEC who are the UK importers of SCX. I had spoken to him ➡➡



Old....



...and new





at the NSCC bash in Epsom in September (what a fantastic event that was, well done NSCC!) and he mentioned he had some good photos from SCX of the cars and track that he could send me. He very kindly sent me the required photos and I emailed him back thanking him for them and explaining I would make a little display up. He then informed me he had a set I could borrow for the weekend and to let him know as soon as possible if I wanted it. The trouble is I didn't read this email until around midnight when I got in from work! Arghhh! What if I'd missed my chance? It was late Wednesday - Daddy's back! I set it up at the show between a small SCX TT layout and a Ninco Raid set as these would be the systems people would want to compare it to. On the Saturday everyone commented on how good the set looked and were impressed watching the cars go over the obstacles with the oasis section of track drawing particular adulation.

This boded well as the Saturday at Ashford has always been aimed at the public rather than the collector and, if the public like it, it should sell well and if it sells well they will continue to make it and I will be a very happy man. The public loved it and I loved the look of it but it wasn't until the show closed on Saturday evening that I got a chance to have a serious look at it. How would it compare to the old system and the Ninco Raid?

Looks

All three look great to me and all are well made but it has to go to the new SCX Off Road set.

The set is filled with interesting pieces of track, The cars are well made and the working lights just finish the cars nicely. In my opinion the 'play value' and great looks of the set will ensure that this one is still being used long after Christmas is over and other slot car sets have taken up residence in the loft.

Off Road Ability

Again the new set wins hands down. The old TT cars can go over all the obstacles but if you stop them on the steep incline they sometimes just wheel spin when you try to move off again. The addition of a magnet gives the new cars just enough grip to simply drive away. The Ninco cars, as good as they are, can't negotiate the raised bridge section of track due to the too short drop arm and if you go too slowly their powerful magnet sticks the cars fast to the metal rails of the track on the brow of the incline sections of track. The new SCX cars don't slide the rear out on bends like you could do with the old ones but I'm sure they would with the magnet removed.



On Road Performance

All the off road cars will run on normal track (I ran them on the 20' by 8' Catalunya Scalextric Sport track) but in this test the Ninco Raid cars win hands down. The excellent raider motor means they have a good turn of speed that the new SCX off road cars and the old TT cars cannot match. In fact the new SCX and TT cars are quite pedestrian in comparison. But to



♪ Midnight at the oasis ♪

me that's the whole point. Yes I accept the general public will want to use and race their cars on standard track but these are specialist off road vehicles and, as in real life, off roaders are designed for the rough stuff and not for speed alone. To me if a 4x4 can't cope with the rough stuff then what's the point?

Build, Reliability and Durability

Once again all three systems are well made. Obviously the Ninco and new SCX cars are better detailed than the old TT cars due to modern technology but I think that the original TT cars were quite a bit ahead of their time. In the durability and reliability stakes though again it's the new SCX off roaders that steal the show. On its very first inevitable visit to the floor my Ninco Touareg spat its interior out through the rear, popped its motor out (a common fault with Raid cars), dislocated its axle and the glazing parted company with the roof. At the end of the

day it needed a complete rebuild for use the following day. The Ninco power base also failed early on leaving only one lane in use for the majority of the day and a replacement needed for the Sunday. This did not surprise me too much as I've had three other Ninco power bases let me down in the past. The new SCX off roaders ran faultlessly both days needing only replacement pick ups when worn out. The Ninco Raid stuff is fantastic but, as a true off road system, the young pretender in my opinion fails to deliver. But that's okay because the Daddy is back! The SCX system offers real off road ability and with a retail price of £99.99 also offers the best value for money. In short the new SCX off road set is the best slot 4x4 system so far. Many thanks to Steve from AEC for allowing me the privilege, nay honour, of being the first to show the set to the UK public and also to the traders and visitors at the Ashford Slot Car Show. ■

GOODYEAR BITS & PIECES

Expensive pit stop maybe?

Well it's not strictly eBay but this pit stop picture was sent to me out of the blue this month to share with you avid collectors out there.



In the picture are three original Bugattis that belong to three different owners, namely the photographer and his two friends. What is interesting is how they arrived with their present owners. One was bought off eBay earlier this year for a substantial amount, and another from a dealer a few years earlier for big money. However the third one turned up this year (yes this year) at a boot sale along with five other cars including an Aston Martin Marshal's car and C65 Alfa. Question is, would you have snapped the seller's arm off straight away at the £1 paid for each car, or would you have dared haggle them down to a fiver for the lot! Most of us dream of these finds but someone had their "slot dream" come true. Can you spot the bargain? (The last one actually.) Thank you to the member who shared this great find with us.

Steve Langford

Milton Keynes swapmeet is moving.....

...but don't worry, only a 100 yards!

As of February next year it will be held in Sports Hall 1. This is located on the same site, to the back of the Theatre/Swimming Pool/Recreation Centre block. Why have we moved? Because:

- 1) The toilets are immaculate!
- 2) Hard standing parking for stallholders.
- 3) It's in the same building as the bar and cash machine.
- 4) Customers can park in exactly the same place as usual.
- 5) Hopefully, stallholders entry time will be brought forward.
- 6) Access to the event will be by doors only used by us.
- 7) Disabled access ramps are in place.

I gave out many location maps at the September show, but if anyone would like one, showing the old hall, new hall, parking, and access roads, please send an SAE to me, at 9 The Comfrey, Aylesbury, HP19 0FL.

See you there!

Nigel Copcutt

Racer slot car news

There has been a delay in the release of the RCR29 "Jagermeister" Porsche 935 K3. This was due to a problem with the decals they received, which were not up to the standard expected. A re-print was then ordered so therefore production time was lost. Although Racer are working very hard to catch up with the schedule, they have been forced to work and fulfil each order in turn. Despite this, the model should be available in early December.

This delay has had a knock-on effect and inadvertently delayed production of the RCR30 "Vestey" Ferrari 250LM. Production has already started on this model and should be available around the same time as the Porsche.

Those of you who have purchased the Racer Ferrari 330 P4 will know that the chassis (which is made of resin) is not its best feature and is quite soft and often protrudes beneath the sill line. With Racer's ever-growing improvement in quality they now have ready a brand new plastic chassis. This new chassis will be lighter, stronger, more durable and, of course, reliably flatter. It is fully compatible with all the existing P4 bodies and will be available as a spare part if you wish to replace yours. All future P4 models will have this new chassis fitted as standard.

Simon Moss

Racing Grannies

Carrera have tied up with UK retailer Next with shop branded slot car sets in their 1:43 scale range. Also look out for Next branded slot car racing grannies as featured at Slot Rally GB! The cheapest place to buy the Granny set is Maplins who list them at £9.99 each.



On the cheapo bargain front it is worth an occasional visit to TK Maxx who often have slot car stuff at hugely discounted prices. They were recently offering Scalextric Bikes at £12.99 each.

Gareth Jex

Right hand meet left hand

Following Alan Slade's letter in the November issue and the continuing debate over the new Scalextric Ford Escort's driving position *Roger Gillham* and *Phil Nichols* have provided the following photos.



I trust we can now accept that the actual car was normal right hand drive and the windscreen wipers on the model are on the wrong side.

NSCC Mégane

As was only to be expected the odd NSCC Mégane club car has surfaced on eBay and the first three realised over £100 each. If any new members of the club are tempted to pay silly money for one it may interest them to know that we still have a few left for sale at the normal price of £28.

Contact Peter Solari - PTSolari@aol.com - if you would like one.

Brian



The Quorn Rally Stage

by Alan Slade

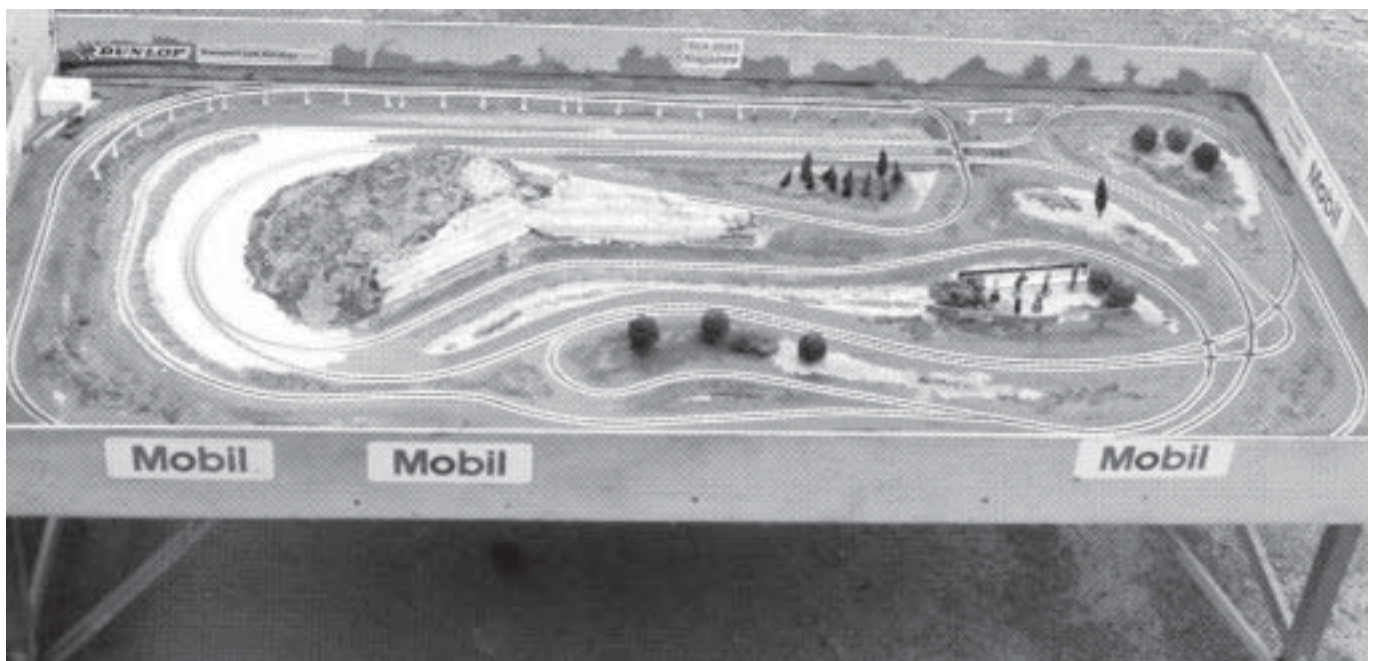
In response to the letter from Chris and Sam Dullidge in the October Journal I have sent details of the two rally tracks that I have built. This particular article was first published in the August 1991 issue of the (then) Newsletter. I must apologise for the quality of the pictures - they were scanned in from the magazine as I do not have the originals. A second article about the Angus stage will follow later.

The track is built on an 8' x 4' board using good quality chipboard with a 3" x 2" main frame with 2" x 2" braces. The board has built in folding legs, so it can be ready in minutes from putting it up. Believe it or not I planned the track layout first but did not draw it on the board. In fact when I first revealed the plans at the club AGM in January the club members thought I was joking, and now that it is built they wish I had been! The track is designed so that it is possible to make it into four different "stages" by the simple process of blocking off the slot in various places.

The track is all on one level as I thought that the extra complexity of raised sections to avoid the crossings (there are 7 crossing points) was not warranted. Anyway cars would be bound to deslot underneath the bridges where they could not be marshalled easily.

As the track is very tight I cut all the straights with a circular saw, and used a radius gauge to rout out the corners to keep the track flowing as evenly as possible. There are only three places where I finished off parts by hand as it was not possible to get the gauge on the board. I also made the 'natural' hazards, in the form of big water filled holes, at this point.

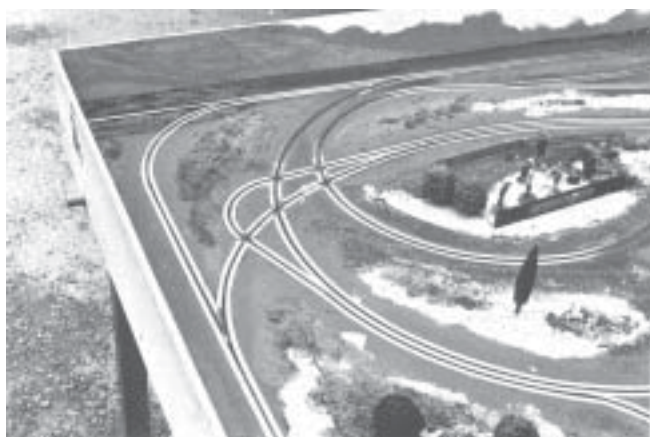
Having built quite a few tracks I prefer to paint the track surface before laying the copper tape as it saves me having to mask everything out afterwards. This was very nearly my undoing. The track is supposedly set in a disused chalk quarry and for the chalk surface I used various tins of white and not so white car paint that I just happened to have lying around. No problem - except that the Evostick did not take to the



An overall view of the Quorn stage

cellulose very readily and it was a right b*****d trying to lay the tapes round the sharp corners. A few tiny panel pins saved the day (and my sanity) though.

The tapes are in long lengths to avoid joins so you can guess the fun I had by looking at the pictures, but it all worked out OK in the end. By the time that I had finished I had used around 150 feet of tape which, allowing for the “double track” in places, means that the track is between 80 and 90 feet in total. I cannot give an accurate lap length because as I said there are four possible circuits on the board.



Which way now? A navigator's nightmare - there are some interesting changes of radius in the corners

Wiring was next, “*Should be simple with a single lane track*” thinks I, but with multiple crossovers, ‘points’ and tracks going two ways, not so. It took quite a bit of careful thought not to get any wires crossed but the effort was worth it (well I think so). I put brass 6BA countersunk screws through the tape and pulled them down into the board leaving a slight hollow which I then filled with solder for the electrical connections. I also used 4 amp cable for the wiring as you never know what you might want to run on the track.

The track surface and scenery were the last things to be done, and both are varied. The start is on gravel and this is very fine grit that came all the way from a Cornish beach (the things I do for Scalextric). This leads to various mud and grass surfaces (paint and sawdust in varying quantities and colours) and chalk (whitish cellulose paint). The trees and bushes are



The lap record holding Sierra having just come off the chalk and mud and going back up to the finish

ex-model railway, fencing and people (there are always spectators at a rally, even on a secret stage) are Scalextric and Airfix. The great lump of ‘chalk’ in the middle hides all the electronics and is made from many strips of wood glued and screwed to the board and each other. No idea what I do if they fail - blow it up I suppose!

Some parts of the track are quite wide, others somewhat narrow with unforgiving edges like the rock and the holes. I think that this track, like a model railway, will never be finished as I keep thinking of other little bits to add to it and when I built I allowed for an extension to roughly double the track length, hence the tracks disappearing into the barrier!

Timing is electronic, and it was intended to include a count down and a jumped start indicator which would automatically add five seconds to the time so it pays not to be too keen to get away.

So there you have it, a good little fun circuit that keeps you on your toes and sorts out the cars.

Having tried many different cars I was pleasantly surprised to discover that the not quite so often used cars went surprisingly well on it. Cars like the XR3i, 6R4, TR7 and Rover. The car that I find the hardest to pedal round at any speed is the Audi Quattro.

It is never easy to describe a circuit like this, but I’ll give you the “pace notes” for the longest stage to try to give you an idea of what it is like. The numbers in brackets are the approximate distances in feet between the various parts and the number/letter combination is the next corner/hazard.

⇒



(6) gravel 90R through gate; (0.75) over two tracks grass 120R; (2.5) mud - bumpy 270L open tightening; (4) rocks on left, ditch on right rough L/R; (0.5) onto grass 270R open, rough fast; (0.5) fork L mud; (0.75) R/L flick; (0.5) 360R long open, grass/chalk fast; (4) grass/gravel fast 90L/90R CARE!!!!; (0.75) gravel 90R; (1.5) grass fork R fast; (0.5) over 3 tracks R/L/R rough, ditch on right; (4) grass/mud 245R chalk long R open (3.5) grass - bumpy! long open R fast; (6) grass rough 90R; (3.0) grass V. rough fast R onto gravel.

That is one lap and we do two for each stage. The fastest time on the first stage of our rally, using one of the longer circuits, was 27.00 seconds, set by Chris Thompson using a Toyota Corolla. I only managed 5th place with a 31.65 second run after deslotting on the back straight (poetic justice I suppose!). However, afterwards I set the unofficial fastest time of 24.44 seconds with the same Ford Sierra that I used on the stage. Yes I did say Sierra, and no it's not quite standard - the lights don't work!



A BMW just starting out on the stage, heading up to the chalk for the first time

Footnote

I wrote the original article before I left Quorn, hence the historic rally cars mentioned, and I never did build the extension to it. But I did complete two cars that worked very well on the circuit; a first series SCX Seat Ibiza fitted with a Scalextric Fiesta XR2i chassis with a Johnson 111 motor in place of the H:O motor, with a split front axle between the standard wheels, and a 4wd Ford Sierra using modified Audi Quattro axles, wheels and belt drive.

Although the track was built in 1991 I am happy to report that it is still in existence and many of you may well have played on it at Slot Rally GB. Yes, it was one of the special stages at the event! ■



Maxi-Models Ferrari 612 Can-Am

By Phil Insull

There are a handful of specialist companies offering resin 1/32nd slot cars to the world, one of the foremost is Maxi-Models based here in the UK. Maxi-Models cars are available as fantastic hand crafted ready to run versions, or in a variety of kit formats, all of which have very high levels of detail and an abundance of photo etched and white metal parts. Maxi-Models offer only highest quality products, and so they are not released until they are absolutely perfect. Their latest release, the Ferrari 612 Can-Am, was originally announced some time ago, but the waiting is now over and believe me it was well worth it.



Feel those prancing horses - the "Big Banger" Ferrari 612P Can-Am

Can-Am was one of the most exciting and lucrative series in the racing calendar back in the late 1960s. Lola were the manufacturers to beat during the first season in 1966, then followed four seasons of McLaren dominance. Maxi-Models previous releases include versions of the McLaren M6 and M6B, the "McLeagle", and Lola TS160 and like the new Ferrari they are all top notch. Trying to break the McLaren strangle hold and bag some big prize money were a number of teams and manufacturers including Lola, Chaparral, McKee, Porsche, Penske, A.A.R., and of course Ferrari. The main reason perhaps why McLaren were so successful

was not just that the cars were good, but that they were well prepared and thoroughly sorted before they arrived at the race track, Bruce's boys took the series very seriously and had the most professional approach. Ferrari on the other hand, while being one of the world's greatest sports car makers were not really interested in Can-Am, and it took considerable pressure from U.S. importer Luigi Chinetti before Ferrari cobbled together their first Can-Am challenger in 1967. The first car was simply a rebuilt N.A.R.T. 330P3/4 with an aluminium spyder type body, driven by Scarfiotti at two events with a best-placed finish of seventh. Meanwhile at Maranello, Ferrari had rebuilt two P4s as type 350 Can-Am cars with revised 4,176 c.c. motors, and fibreglass bodies and, entering the last three events of 1967 with Chris Amon and Jonathon Williams driving, these cars were little better, with Amon scoring a fifth placed best result. NART soldiered on at a few events in 1968 with the 350 cars, until at the final round in Las Vegas the new type 612P arrived with its 6,221 c.c. motor and adjustable aerofoil mounted behind the cockpit. Amon qualified a promising ninth but retired early with clogged throttle slides from dust thrown up by a multi-car collision on the first lap. Ferrari redeveloped the 612P for 1969, making it lighter and wider but the operation was still being run remotely by a small team in the States.

Enzo Ferrari thought the new fad for tall suspension mounted rear wings was dangerous but, after Amon had struggled with lack of down-force, agreed that he could have one only if he would agree to absolve Ferrari of all blame in the event of a structural failure. Amon contested rounds three and four without the rear wing, netting a third at Watkins Glen, and second at Edmonton, but it was clear they needed the tall wing to compete with the ➤➤



works McLarens. The 612 duly appeared at the next round with a Paul Lamar designed wing but lack of adequate bracing meant it had to be removed during practice. Wingless in the race Amon finished third again albeit a lap down. At Elkhart Lake the car had its new wing properly braced, with Amon harrying the McLarens when his oil pump failed. It was the same story at Bridgehampton, retiring from third after just three laps due to oil pump failure again in spite of the large aircraft spec oil coolers mounted to try and combat high oil temperatures.

At Michigan and Laguna Seca further failures during qualifying led to non-starts. For Riverside the car had a new 6,781 c.c. engine and was re-designated as the 712P but, in spite of a good qualifying time (3rd), Amon was black flagged for a push start. The final race of the season at Texas saw the new engine fail in qualifying so the older 6,221 c.c. unit was re-installed only to fail again during the race. At the end of the season the big oil cooler unit was stripped down to reveal a major manufacturing flaw had been restricting the flow of oil and had possibly led to the failures it was designed to cure. The 612P was sold into private hands for 1970 and achieved no notable result thereafter. A brand new 712P appeared briefly in 1971 driven by Mario Andretti but again Ferrari's attention was elsewhere and Maranello's brief affair with Can-Am died shortly before the series itself.

Maxi-Models first version of the Ferrari 612P is the Elkhart Lake number 16 car, with both braced rear wing and the big oil cooler unit. While I know I can't build them as well as experts like Max, I still prefer to build my own cars where possible so I chose the pre-painted Collectors series kit, which has all the parts you need, including a pre-painted body, and it comes complete with a display box to put the finished article in. The instructions are clear with a number of pictures to help you, and I would say the best advice as always is read them and follow them carefully. You will also need the right tools, a pin vice, some fine drill bits (0.3 & 0.5mm), sharp model knife and scissors, tweezers, clear epoxy, paints and fine brushes for the detail



Fine detail, the white metal wing posts are drilled with fine wire provided in the kit for the mounting pins and support bracing

painting. The kit goes together very well, however I would say that while I'm no expert I'm not a complete beginner either and because of the nature of some of the high detail parts they can be a bit fiddly, so if you are a novice make sure you get all the tools you need before you start, and take your time.

As it says in the instruction sheets, these kits are unlikely to be used as outright racers but once finished I took mine to Wolves for a spin on the club's three tracks. With a magnet in place it behaved impeccably on both the Slot Fire and Ninco circuits, with just enough down-force to keep it on, the handling is nice and predictable. On the copper tape track however it really is great fun, the big sticky tyres and weight of the car meaning you can keep it balanced in some really nice power slides through the turns. No the times aren't quick compared to the "serious" modern racers' GT cars, but that's not the point with one of Maxi-Models cars. It just looks so beautiful drifting through the turns. If you could add in the exhaust smell and the noise of that glorious V12 screaming away, you could honestly believe you were Chris Amon chasing round after the McLarens at Elkhart Lake. In summary another fantastic kit from one of the best makes around and good value for the quality product you get. I'd forgotten just how much fun Maxi-Models cars are, I'm going to dig the rest of mine out of my collection and go and have some more fun with them at the Wolves. ■



N50408 Ferrari Modena Slot Car Kit

By Dave Chang

Ferrari brought out the Pininfarina styled 360 Modena supercar in 1999. By 2003 there was an official stripped down race version, the 360 Challenge Stradale. 2004 saw the latest development in the form of the Ferrari 360 GTC, designed to compete in the FIA N-GT class. Powered by a mid engine 445 bhp V8 3.6 litre engine, this model represents the pinnacle of the 360 series.



Ninco have released a 1/32 plastic hard-body pre-painted kit of this car. There has been much speculation regarding why the model has been released in kit form instead of RTR – along the lines of ‘kits are not covered by Mattel’s exclusive Ferrari licence, and hence are cheaper and/or easy to license than RTR cars’. There is also some discontent that the retail price is higher than a Ninco RTR car – you would have thought that a cheaper licence and no assembly costs would have significantly reduced the costs.

That said, we now have access to a slot version of a highly desirable racer, available in red or yellow street livery. The kit is very nicely presented in a colourful box which includes full instructions, a nylon plastic parts box (bound to come in useful later!) and the body, chassis, interior and windows.

Building the car

The kit comprises 40 separate parts, fully painted and printed to a high standard. The step-by-step instructions have clear photographs of each stage of assembly, and start off with steps for putting together the rolling chassis.

The very first step posed the biggest problem – installing the button magnet! It seems they have made the holder too small, although the magnet can still be squeezed in by using extreme force (chassis on a solid surface and pressing down with a pair of pliers and all my body weight). This did not bode well, but turned out to be the only obstacle I encountered.

The rest of the chassis assembly involved clipping in motor, bushes and guide. The wires are already soldered to the motor and even have the eyelets threaded on the ends, ready to be inserted into the guide. The chassis and parts follow the same pattern as other Ninco cars, and present no surprises. I expect most slot racers will have done all these tasks when maintaining their RTR cars.

Assembling the interior does require some glue (not provided). I used superglue for parts which could dry away from clear parts (superglue can cause fogging on windows and lenses), and liquid-poly for other parts. Unless you are an experienced model maker, using glue can get messy. It is important to use the minimum amount of glue required. The design of the kit makes it possible to use the glue in out-of-sight areas: generally the parts are held together with a tab or pin that sticks through a hole in the second part. You can put the two parts together without glue, and then apply a drop of glue to the reverse side where the pin sticks through – thus keeping all the visible parts pristine. This makes it very good for novices.

Sometimes I have bought RTR cars and noticed that some of the parts do not fit quite right because the flashing (extra bits of plastic ➡➡





left over from when the parts were moulded) have not been trimmed off. I was looking forward to being able to ensure that all the flashing was removed before assembly; however Ninco have already done a great job – only one of the 40 parts had a small trace of flashing. The parts all fitted together perfectly – not always the case with plastic kits I have made in the past.

A benefit of getting the car in kit form was the access to the interior and engine bay. I was ready to do some extra painting and detailing before the car was assembled, and so researched pictures on the internet of the real car. Once again, Ninco were one step ahead, the engine is perfectly modelled and painted, and the real interior in some cars are often quite plain. I painted the gear stick silver anyway – after all I had already got the paintbrush out and some of the cars do have aluminium gear sticks!

I would recommend not gluing the rear wing in, but simply push it into its slots. It sits in securely, but on a crash will tend to ping out instead of breaking.

When all the glue has dried, the body top complete with windows and interior simply screws to the chassis as with any other RTR car. At this stage I found that the red pin at the back

from the car's engine was too long and sticks into the slot motor; the pin needed to be trimmed short. I suspect the car was originally designed to be assembled by Ninco, where instead of glue, they tend to melt the pins to secure the parts.

With about 20 minutes labour (plus breaks to allow time for the glue to set) you have a car that is very similar to a Ninco RTR. So, even if you have never assembled a kit before, do not be put off.

The Slot Car

The model has a good quality red finish complete with Ferrari badges. The fuel caps and bonnet catches are printed on, but look fine from a distance. The black grilles that can be seen through some of the large bodywork openings are textured black plastic; not the most meticulous approach, but effective. The wheel hubs are very nicely modelled and include detailed disc brakes.



The wheelbase measures 81mm, length 141mm, width 62mm, height 36mm. According to specs I found on the web (2600mm, 4557mm, 2050mm, 1185mm respectively), it appears that the wheelbase is spot on, but the body is a couple of millimetres narrow and short. Nevertheless, to my eye, they have done a good job on building the car to scale. The proportions look great and they seem to have captured the curves and presence of the car very well.

The interior is slightly shallower than a full interior, but a lot deeper than a pan, giving a good impression of being all there. The dashboard has instruments tampoed on, handbrake and gear lever are modelled correctly and there is a fire extinguisher for safety.





The engine is clearly visible through the rear window, and has been modelled, painted and printed with exceptional accuracy.

My only gripe with the car as a model is the axle widths: they are too wide, making the wheels protrude from the body. On the front axle, this is marginal. On the rear axle the right hand wheel sticks out by almost 2mm. There isn't excessive axle slop, so this factor may even improve performance, but cosmetically it annoys me so I will be attending to the issue with a Dremel later!



Chassis

The chassis follows Ninco's angle winder/button magnet design, similar to those seen in their JGTC series and recent Mosler. The NC5 Speeder motor sits low in the chassis at an angle

to the rear axle, using special angled gears to transfer power to the rear wheels. Anglewinders and sidewinders have advantages over inline motors in that they present more of their weight over the rear axles, and they do not produce strong sideways rotational forces to the car under acceleration. One of the reasons anglewinders have been used instead of sidewinders is because the motor is too long to fit in a conventional sidewinder configuration.



There is some flexibility in the chassis between the motor and the rear axle, which some racers feel compromises the gear meshing. This is not so much of a problem if the body is firmly attached, since it adds rigidity.

Many racers like to loosen the body to allow body-rock to improve driving stability. The body is held on by 2 screws which is ideal – but the sides of the body on my example needed to be stretched and spring closed on the sides of the chassis, which will reduce any movement of the body even if the screws are loosened. I guess the chassis would have to be filed narrower to allow free movement.

There is a central button magnet just in front of the motor, and the guide is sprung to ensure good track contact.

Performance

The first thing I noticed was that car was surprisingly noisy – I think that the motor and gear noise is carried to the body by the way the sides clip on. Next was how good it looked on the track, even in its plain street livery (uncommon for the racing GTC version!).

It handles very well. The grippy tyres combined with the low running height enable ➡➡



it to be driven with confidence, and it was quick too. After a while of getting used to the car, and letting its motor and gears bed in a bit, it was time for some serious testing.

The tests were performed on my permanent layout – 45 foot Scalextric sport track powered by Sport World. Best lap times out of 20 were recorded of the 360 GTC against a range of GT class competitors. All cars standard, tyres trued and with standard magnets:

Ninco 360 GTC	5.97 sec
Takara Nissan 350Z	5.57 sec
Scalextric Aston Martin DB9R	5.61 sec
Takara Honda NSX	5.87 sec
Ninco Mosler	5.95 sec
Carrera Corvette C6R	6.45 sec

Particularly note the very similar times of the 360 against the Mosler – another Ninco anglewinder. These and the other JGTC cars should make very competitive race partners.

To sum up

The level of detailing on the car is not as high as some manufacturers, but it is very effective and accurate. The 360 looks eye catching on the track, and is fun and fast to drive.

Ninco's decision to use standardised chassis layouts mean that this car has a wide choice of evenly matched stable-mates, the fact that this one comes as a kit does not affect the issue. This model is essentially the same as the RTR cars, except that it isn't ready to race, you have to put it together!

By being supplied in kit form, it makes it easier for people to apply their own liveries (Ferrari 360 decals are available from some slot suppliers). The clear instructions, the ease and quickness of assembly all made the project a lot of fun. As long as you are careful with the glue, you can't go wrong.

So overall, the Ninco 360 GTC is a great car for fans of the Ferrari and for people who want something a little different to run against the other Ninco anglewinders. ■

A Christmas Gift

By John Dilworth

The Christmas Eve race meeting at West Hamley Slot Car Club was nearly over for another year. The cars were back in their pit boxes, the genial haggling over points and the merry slapping of corner marshals had receded beneath the traditional festive Carol singing led by Lil Cooper-Archer dressed, as usual, as the Christmas Tree fairy. Now Coxie Cooper-Archer was handing round the sherry and mince pies, and a general hush had fallen over the club as the members contemplated the past year, their plans for the future and how privileged they were to be members of the oldest and most famous fictional slot car club in the world.

Lil adjusted her glitter encrusted bra straps, then paused with a mince pie half way to her mouth.

She raised an eyebrow, which immediately got tangled in her tinsel halo.

"What was that?", she said.

"Hn?"

"What was that? I thought I heard a baby crying."

"Don't be silly dear", said Coxie. "There are no babies in here."

"No- not in here.... outside. Listen- there it goes again..."

"Lil, my pet. It is nearly midnight. There is six inches of snow outside. And it is still falling. There is no-one outside. The roads from Pendle have been blocked all day. It is just your imagin..."

"Hush! There it is again..."

Eric, Claudia, Sergeant Argent, Inspector Thumb and his new friend Norah Crevice, all craned their ears and exchanged anxious looks.

There was, undeniably, a sad whining noise carried on the gusts of snow- a distressing sound, a sound of pain and discomfort from the cold, cold world outside unwelcomely penetrating the

cosy club room, its insulating fug of cigar smoke and the aroma of warm mince pies, overheated Mabuchis and cheap British Sherry.

Coxie led the surge toward the door, pushing it open against the harsh wind and shielding his eyes against the glare of moonlight on the trackless snow.

"I can hear it plainly now. What a sad sound!", said Claudia. "No baby should be out on a night like this!"

"Yes- listen- where is the poor mite?", said Lil. "We must rescue the wee'un".

Inspector Thumb doused his cigar into the snow covered window sill with a sizzle. "Hmm. It is a sad sound. But it's not human."

"What do you mean?" asked Eric.

"Fairies?" asked Sergeant Argent hopefully.

"Pull yourself together man", said Thumb irritably. "Not babies, not fairies. That is the unmistakeable sound of a poorly meshed contrate. Somewhere out there is a- what would you say Coxie? Sounds like an RX motor. Brass pinion- 9 tooth I'd say. 28 tooth plastic contrate. Probably a 1961 period Scalex of some sort. Over there somewhere."

Thumb pointed to his left, a little way along the empty, snow bound street.

"But why? How? What?" The questions came thick and fast as the members of the West Hamley Slot Car Club proceeded gingerly across the path, stepping knee deep into fresh snow with every footfall. In the distance the Church bells pealed for midnight mass. An owl hooted, and the intermittent whining of a lonely slot car diminished, and stopped.

"There it is! Look! In an original box!" Bruno had appeared from the back room where he had been busy cleaning and polishing his race car before putting it away for the night.

"Good grief - an Auto Union - great heavens - mint in box! This is... marvellous!" Coxie was beside himself. "I've always wanted one of those."

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"I saw it first", said Bruno.

"Wait... wait everybody", said Norah, with a sudden seriousness. "Think. What on earth is this doing here, in the middle of a snow covered street, with no tracks of any sort leading anywhere, with no electrical connection?"

"On Christmas Eve...", added Eric.

"Yes", said Inspector Thumb. "It is indeed a mystery."

Somewhere in the distance bells tinkled, and a jolly laugh blossomed on the cold air.

An imaginative person might have heard the sound of hooves muffled by snow....

"Hark! The chimes of St Upid's tolling in the new day! 'Tis Christmumpphhh!"

Eric received a snowball right in the mush. "Hey! You could have had me eye out with that!" He scooped up a killer missile with rock-ice core and flung it back. No-one knew who started the fight, but it went on and on, sucking in every member of the WHSCC as they squabbled over the treasured vintage Auto Union. "I saw it first!" "But I HEARD it first!" "You've got one already!" "I deserve it- I won the championship this year!" "WHAT?" "On handicap..." "What handicap?" "The handicap that I can't drive, can't build cars, can't-whuummmmpf." So it went on.

One small plastic car, nestled in a dog-eared cardboard box remained at the centre of it all. Only Inspector Thumb and Norah Crevice stayed quietly, watching the melee. One eyed the other suspiciously, each knowing that something odd was afoot- something which challenged their individual detective powers. It was a matter of pride to get to the bottom of this... a valuable Scalextric car abandoned in the middle of a moonlit street, apparently able to switch itself on and off with no means of connection to a 12 volt supply.

"No foot marks, I notice", said Thumb cautiously. "And where did Bruno suddenly appear from?"

"And the club is making a right mess of the crime scene right now", added Norah.

"No snowfall on top of the car or the box either."

"Yes- I noticed that too... must have been

put there very recently." Norah was determined not to be outclassed by the Scotland Yard Slot Car Division specialist. As a private dick, she had her own professional pride.

"It would need someone airborne to drop it right there", said Thumb with a contemptuous snort.

"Well, Argent is keen on the idea of fairies", said Norah.

"Or Father Christmas...", added Thumb.

"Well, you know what they say- eliminate the impossible, and whatever is left, however unlikely, is the truth." Norah was a big fan of Holmes. 'She-lock', they used to call her at Detective College.

Both cast their eyes desperately around, searching for clues in the bitter night, while ever bigger, harder snowballs criss-crossed the air, landing with greater thuds, and louder screams.

"Wait!", shouted Thumb, realising that the whole area was gradually being scraped dry of snow in the frantic rush for ammunition. "You'll destroy all the evidence...", yelled Norah. And then the dreadful thing happened. A badly aimed ball took out the Auto Union. Sent it skedaddling across the street, the original box torn to shreds across the rough kerb stones.

The fight came to a sudden stop.

"Now you've done it", said Coxie sternly.

'Not me!', wailed Eric. "I didn't throw it- it was Gahhhh!"

Another snowball stopped him dead. And the fight broke out again with a renewed frenzy.

Meanwhile, Thumb and Crevice scoured the scene for clues, without luck. Neither was willing to admit they were baffled, and now the evidence, and the mint box of the Auto Union was almost completely destroyed.

"There had to be an electrical connection", muttered Thumb.

"From one of the street lamps?", suggested Norah.

They checked each one in the street for trailing wires or electrical taps. With no result.

"It was lying on top of six inches of snow... with no footprints near." Norah tried to clear her normally acute mind, but nothing seemed to suggest an answer, other than the odd feeling

that something supernatural might hold the answer. On Christmas morning, she suddenly thought, anything is possible- like those scarlet ribbons her father had laid out on her pillow all those years ago...

"It had to be deposited from above", said Thumb, casting an eye to the starlit heavens.

"Did you hear a helicopter overhead? Are there any traces of a parachute?", asked Norah sarcastically. "Did it fly?" She was warming to the idea that a genial old gentlemen in some sort of airborne sleigh might be responsible....

But Thumb was ahead of the game. "Fly did you say? You may be right. But there is more than one kind of fly...Harry Hobbs is keen on fishing, isn't he?"

He turned quickly on his heel on the icy pavement- a sudden movement that caught the eye of an unnoticed spectator across the snow-covered street.

Inspector Thumb was fast. He noticed the twitch of the blind in the window of Harry Hobbs' Hobby Heaven across the High Street, and ran.

In seconds he was rattling at the locked door, with Norah panting in his tracks.

"Open up, Harry- I don't know what your game is, but come out slowly, and hold that fishing rod above your head....."

Well, it all ended happily, as Harry Hobbs had hoped.

"Just my little game", he explained to the assembled club, warm, snug and laced with brandy back indoors. He gestured at his fishing rod, and the battery box attached to the spool.

"But how? Why?", clamoured the snowball-splattered club members.

"I've had that Auto Union from new in my stock room for years. Couldn't bear to sell it. Sweetest little thing Scaley ever made I reckon. But what's the good of having it hidden away. No-one else gets to enjoy it. A little Christmas offering to the club, I thought. Best cast I ever made, landing it in the middle of the street there. Did you like the Santa sound effects? An old Bing Crosby record I have. But I didn't know it would cause a fight. Shame about the original box. Loses a lot of its collectible value."

"Never mind", said Bruno. "We're racers here, not collectors..."

"Shame on you Bruno", said Coxie. "That there is an historical item, a generous gift from our local Model Shop.... and we've spoilt it. We should all hang our heads in shame."

The racers responded to Coxie's admonition and stood silently for a few moments, gazing at the perfect little plastic model in appreciation.

Just then, the sound of hooves, bells, and deep, hooting laughter echoed once more outside the clubhouse, followed by a thunderous clattering on the roof.

"It's not me this time!", yelped Harry.

A soft thud was heard on the fresh snow outside. Coxie, Thumb, Norah and the rest peered out of the window and saw, resting on the pavement outside, a neat little cardboard box with a familiar logo.

As they rushed out once more onto the snowbound West Hamley High Street, merry laughter could still be heard, echoing from afar in the starry sky. ■

