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THE INDEPENDENT CLUB FOR SLOT-CAR ENTHUSIASTS

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Epsom tales - the prologue

No prizes for guessing the dominant feature of this month's issue. Once again the Gareth Jex, Scott Brownlee and Toyota combination served up an absolute cracker! I thought they couldn't top last year's 25th Anniversary event but Slot Rally GB was even better. I don't believe so many slot tracks, from all scales and disciplines, have ever been gathered together under one roof before.

There have been the inevitable calls to make this an annual event but, much as I would like to see it happen, I really don't think it is a realistic proposition. Bear in mind that Toyota lend us their building and staff totally free of charge - if we had to pay commercial rates of hire for such facilities the cost would be way beyond the means of a small club such as the NSCC. We are also extremely fortunate that Gareth has been prepared to donate his time so willingly - organising exhibitions might be his day job but he normally has a team of skilled employees to back him up and, once again, you really don't want to know how much he would charge for his services on a commercial basis!

I cannot praise Gareth's efforts highly enough - since joining the committee he has single handedly raised the profile of the club in dramatic fashion. The rest of us get roped in to help but everything stems from his drive and determination to get the show on the road. He is now going to take a well-earned break and set aside some time for himself and his family so, if you want another event, then someone else has to step forward and take on the workload. Any volunteers?

And Finally - Rallying is not really my cup of tea so I foresaw no problems in manning the NSCC stand full time at the show. That was before I discovered the Woking Slot Car Club's superb routed wooden race track in the basement! Twice, during the weekend, I had to be forcibly dragged away from it by my fellow committee members. Far be it from me to mention that I set fastest lap of the day on Sunday!

Till next month

Brian



by
Rob Smith



MESSAGES FROM MARGATE

There has been a huge number of new releases this month with many A1GP liveries, some great American muscle and the brand new Seat Leon.

C2704 Seat Leon WTCC J. Gené No9

Let's start with a brand new model – the Seat Leon. It's great to see a touring car back in the Scalextric range and as the Seat races in most of the national championships in identical form we should see plenty of them. This first release is the Gené version from last year's WTCC championship. Finished in the always popular Red Bull colours the Seat looks great and should be a good seller everywhere, especially Spain. Look out for the BTCC version of Jason Plato soon too.

C2712DW/C2713DW Nissan 350Z

On a similar vein are two more unique SSD cars. This time they are both Nissan 350Zs from set C1186 Digital Ignition. C2712DW is blue and C2713DW is orange. These SSD cars are even more fun if the two little screws preventing the 360° spinning are removed and there are cars going in all directions.

A1GP

C2741 A1 Grand Prix Team New Zealand
C2743 A1 Grand Prix Team Australia
C2744 A1 Grand Prix Team USA
C2745 A1 Grand Prix Team Italy
C2746 A1 Grand Prix Team Germany
C2706D A1 Grand Prix Team Great Britain
C2707D A1 Grand Prix Team France

The range is nearly complete with just the Dutch and Canadian entries still missing. With

such a wide range of liveries on identical chassis it is easy to choose an attractive livery. The A1 GP cars look even better when many are racing against each other in Digital racing. Hornby have released two versions, Team Great Britain and Team France in ready to race SSD format but it is easy to either chip the others yourself or swap the bodies between the SSD chassis.



C2754DW/C2765DW Porsche Boxster

I mentioned last month about exclusive cars within a new Argos set. These cars are both Porsche Boxsters with plain colours and two large silver stripes. C2754DW is the yellow car and C2765DW is the white one.

C2759 Camaro Stubber

Historic Touring No31

C2740 Chevrolet Camaro

Behrens Racing No74

C2760 Ford Mustang 1971

"Dan Furey" No61

The Scalextric range of 60s and 70s American muscle has proved extremely popular for Scalextric-USA so it is not surprising that ➡➡



new liveries continue to be released and two new Camaros and a Mustang can be added to your collection. The Stubber Camaro is bright yellow with black stripes but the Behrens Camaro is an unusual shade of red with yellow stripes which is a very attractive combination. The Mustang is yellow with black detailing making it very similar to the road version, C2574 released some time ago. There should be a new Corvette along soon too.

C2723 Renault F1 2006 No1

C2724 Renault F1 2006 No2

Whilst the 2006 F1 battle between Schumacher and Alonso is a very close thing the race to release their respective Scalextric cars has been won hands-down by Renault as Hornby have the latest pair of Renaults out already. However these are reliveries of last year's car and are almost identical in every way except the racing numbers.

C2756 Mercedes-Benz SLR McLaren F1 Safety Car

The SLR safety car will appeal to many kids as it has orange flashing lights on the roof and, due to the use of clever electronics, alternately flashing headlights. These are extremely bright and white. Who will be first to control their SSD race with a safety car?



C2758 Aston Martin DBR9 No58

The Aston Martin DBR9 has been one of the most popular Scalextric cars for some years and

now there is a second version. This has the red nose and window detailing as raced at Sebring last year.

C2731 Porsche 911 GT3R Flying Lizard No44

Originally C2731 was released in the Porsche Super Tuned set but now is available through the UK Collectors' Centres as a solo release. To date this is the only solo release that uses the Sport+ Tuning parts as it has the yellow 20K motor. Surprisingly there is absolutely nothing on the packaging to say this – surely a marketing opportunity missed. The Collectors' Centre version is a limited edition of just 1100 pieces.

A Sneak Preview

At the recent Slot Rally GB event Hornby showcased some future releases just to get the crowds drooling. The stars were definitely Lauda's Ferrari and Hunt's McLaren from the 1976 F1 championship battle. Both feature amazing details with the gearbox moulding cleverly shaped to hide the contrate gear extremely effectively. The helmets are fully detailed and Lauda's even has the distinctive shape he tried that year to get some extra ventilation. Look out for the twin pack of these cars at Christmas. They are certain to be extremely popular. Next on show was the new Subaru Impreza WRC. This has front wheel drive with a rubber band taking traction to the rear wheels. Apparently this format proved very popular on the Peugeot 307 as it gives good rally car handling. Also on show was the hand decorated version of the Jaguar XK8 raced in the American Trans- Am series and which won the manufacturer's title in 2005. Looking great in green and silver this looks mid way between a Super GT or Le Mans GT1 and a NASCAR. Finally we saw an early version of Button's Honda. The detailing looks great but don't all modern F1 cars look the same without their liveries? See page 25 for colour shots of these cars.

Stop Press: There is a new Toys-R-Us set with unique cars. More details next month. ■



With the summer quiet spell well and truly over, this month brings much to report...

It's Here! (Finally!)

The most exciting news of the month has to be the release of Ninco's long awaited N-Digital system. The first showing of this equipment in the UK was mid-September at the Hobby Co in Milton Keynes. I was lucky enough to be invited to experience the finished system and learn more about it during a series of seminars conducted by Ninco there.

N-Digital is clearly aimed at those who are already familiar with slot racing, bringing a whole new dimension to the hobby. One of the key features of the N-Digital system is that it is totally compatible with all existing Ninco track, whatever the surface. The quality of the components required to move into the digital era is as high as we have come to expect from Ninco; the lane-change track sections fit seamlessly together with standard track and

have the same robust feel and appearance. The throttles fit comfortably in the hand and have a trigger to regulate power to the car and a "lane-change" button that is reasonably easy to operate with the thumb or indeed a thumb or finger from the opposite hand. The main control unit is of a compact, modern design which complements the race position tower and hand throttles. The control unit will connect up to eight throttles, two transformers and includes an input for accessories as well as an output for connection to a PC. There are seven modes of play that can be selected from the control unit offering race formats such as Grand Prix, Rally, Endurance and Timed modes. Included in this control software is a "Pitstop Strategy" mode. In conjunction with one of the accessory packs - Pit Lane Kit - a race can be held involving the necessity to stop in the pit lane to take on more fuel. Once in the pitstop, the racer determines how much fuel is taken on by the length of time the lane change button is held down. The signal to pit is given by a vibration in the throttle. This vibrating feature can also indicate last lap or fastest lap depending on the race mode selected.

Another great feature of this system is the ease of which cars can be converted to run on N-Digital. A small circuit board or "chip" can be fitted to the chassis by placing the motor wires into the board using small plastic plugs that resemble the connectors used to secure the leads to the guide brushes. Two wires from the circuit board are then connected to the guide in the usual way. No soldering, no cutting, no drilling, no gluing... Fantastic! These chips can be ➡



secured to the chassis with a sticky pad but future Ninco chassis will include a moulded pin for the boards to clip on to. There is also a facility to connect lights to this board – something we can expect more of from Ninco in future.

On Sale, Now!

A digital Master Track set (N40101) is offered which, aside from over 12 metres of track, includes the control unit, transformer, two pairs of lane changers, three throttles and three chips. For those who already have enough track, a conversion set (N40202) consisting of the minimum components required to start racing in digital is also available (this is everything in the Master set but without the standard track). Additional sets such as Pit Lane, Multilane Kit and Race Control Tower as well as Lane Change track sections are also released this month.

Keeping Track

Ninco allowed the NSCC to showcase the N-Digital components at the recent Toyota Slot Rally GB. These parts were added to a standard Master Track System and made available for the public to try out exclusively at this event. Whilst this was a fantastic opportunity to show-off N-Digital, I must admit, we hadn't thought it through fully... I had already committed to run a Special Stage during this event and inspired by the "17th Race of Champions" event staged in the Stade de France last year, I designed the layout using the Ninco TrackMap software. Now, I know I should have checked earlier but the first time this circuit was fully assembled was the night before Slot Rally GB. Once the boards were laid out, assembly began and the track connected together perfectly! The original design included Raid track on the "infield" section but on the night I was concerned that not all the cars would be able to cope with the rough terrain and so built this using only asphalt



N-Digital control tower and pit lane



N-Digital control unit

track. However, at the eleventh hour (quite literally) I was persuaded to go with “Plan A” and so swapped the entire infield section to Raid. Thanks to those who persevered with me that night, (you know who you are) - but when the track was completed with all the borders, barriers and stone walls, we all agreed, it was the right choice!

As we finished, Gareth reminded me that the N-Digital system was waiting for me to assemble it! A quick sprint over to where this was to be displayed, I found a pile of cardboard boxes. After opening them all, I had the Master Track, Control Unit, Control Tower, Throttles, Cars and Pit Lane. The one thing I didn't have was any instructions! So from a picture of the Digital Master Track layout, assembly began. A few minor changes to enable the inclusion of all the digital parts and the set-up was complete. All we had to do now was connect the European style plug to a power supply and... oh-oh... European style plug, mmm. Already into the small hours of Saturday, we decided to leave it until the morning. Overnight the ‘Power Fairies’ had found an adaptor plug and installed power to the track. All I had to do was programme the cars and away we go! Thank goodness I had attended the N-Digital seminar at the Hobby Co earlier in the month as I remembered the simple instruction of how to program the cars. “Place the desired car on the track, press the button and await confirmation from the control unit... Simple.”

Due to the tight and twisty layout, it was going to be tricky just to drive the cars around, let alone change lanes, so I decided to set up the system using just two of the three cars.

If you attended Slot Rally GB, I hope you had a chance to give it a try. I did try to stay with the system throughout the whole weekend but inevitably I had to leave it on occasion. I was able to meet many of you over the weekend and those who tried it whilst I was there were complimentary of the system but as mentioned, it was probably too twisty to fully appreciate the benefits of N-Digital.

Ninco reign supreme

As you will no doubt find plenty of other articles in this month's Journal relating to the Epsom weekend, all I would like to add is, “Take a look at the results... Ninco cars feature highly, winning standard classes on both days (*I always said they are the best race car straight from the box!*). In the modified class another first place on Saturday but only second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth on Sunday!!

Thanks again to all the volunteers who helped over the weekend, particularly those of you who helped me assemble the Race of Champions and Digital demo circuits, even if you did just add a barrier or two(!) and a special thanks to Conor Spark and my daughter Daniella, for manning the Special Stage during the weekend.

Going, going, almost gone!

Finally, the NSCC club cars are almost all sold. Many have waited until it appeared in the flesh and have promptly purchased one. It was good to meet many of you at Milton Keynes and I wish I could have met you all at Epsom but as you can see, I was mainly in attendance at the N-Digital display. By the time this issue is circulated, the final few collections will be made at the Dudley swapmeet. For those who are awaiting cars to be sent, please be patient, all will be posted at the end of the month. ■



FLY *On the Wall*

BY *SIMON MOSS*



New models are beginning to filter through after the summer break and, just when I thought this was going to be a small report, Fly go and announce their release schedule to the end of the year. There are 22 in total, two of which form part of the latest historical team set and there are two brand new models, including a surprise new evo racer!

Recent Releases

BMW M3 E30 "Warsteiner" #2 (A1703), DTM 1987 championship winning car, driven by Eric Van de Poele. Painted in white with three diagonal stripes in light blue, blue and red going across the car from the front driver's wheel arch

to the opposite side rear wheel arch and finished off with gold wheels.

Ferrari 250 GTO, blue #24 (A1802), 12hr Sebring 1963. Driven to 4th place by Roger Penske and Augie Pabst after completing 203 laps. This is the third GTO released by Fly to date and is decorated in a rather nice metallic blue with a broad white stripe down the centre.

Ford GT40, white #130 (A187), Targa Florio 1967. After completing 10 laps this "Ford France" sponsored car driven by Henry Greden and Jean-Michel Giorgi, managed to finish in 5th place. It is mainly white with a blue stripe flanked by red pinstripes down the centre and along each lower sill. ➡➔





Ferrari 512 CL, red #5 (A2006), The sixth model in the anniversary collection, which is a re-issue of the 1970 Le Mans entry, previously released as catalogue ref. C27. Driven by Jacky Ickx and Peter Schetty, the car posted a “DNF” due to an accident on lap 143. As usual with this series the anniversary logo is printed on the left hand front wing in silver. One visual difference is that the original version has black side window frames with silver rivets tampoed onto the clear plastic, whereas the re-issue has just plain clear plastic side windows.

New Announcements

Fly has announced the models they will be producing from October through December. In no particular order, they are as follows: -

Dodge Viper GTS-R “Khalifa” (A211).
 BMW M3 E30 “Jägermeister” (A1704).
 Ferrari 250 GTO, red (A1803).
 Renault 5 Turbo “Elf” (A1207).
 Buggyra MK002/B “Cepsa” (Truck 75).
 Chevrolet Corvette C5R “Valeo” (A133).
 Lola T70 Mk.IIIB, white (C96).
 Porsche 917 LH “Gulf” (A1405).
 Porsche Carrera 6, white (A1605).
 Porsche 911 GT1 evo, white (A521).
 Audi Quattro A2, white “Audi” (A1901).

Audi Quattro A2, “Funkberater” (E1901) – Limited Edition.

Ecurie Francorchamps (Team 14) containing a Ferrari 250 GTO and Ferrari 365 GTB/4.

Chevrolet Corvette C5R “Goodwrench” (A2008), Anniversary edition.

Lister Storm “Datasonix” (A2009), Anniversary edition.

Dodge Viper GTS-R “Playstation” (A2010), Anniversary edition.

Porsche 911 SC “Danone” (Fly 134), evo racing.

Saleen S7R, silver (Fly 12), evo racing.

Alfa 156 Racing (Fly 152).

Porsche 911 GT1 98 “Martini” (Fly 115), evo racing.

Sisu Truck, white (Fly 200), evo racing.

Both the Audi Quattros are listed on the December schedule, so may not be available in time for Christmas. The surprise here is the announcement that Fly are expanding their evo racing series into the Trucks and could prove to be very interesting. Also, there is a continuing trend for Fly to produce exclusive authentic liveries on the evo racing range. The above list has two additions to this, being the silver Saleen (Le Mans 2006) and the relatively new “Rally Racing” Porsche 911 SC decorated in the “Danone” livery. This model also has a full compliment of spotlights on the bonnet. ■





Racer have now released pictures of their next two models, which should prove to be very popular due to their colour/livery. Both are re-liveries of existing models and boast unique features: -

RCR29 – Porsche 935 K3 - Jägermeister #2
DRM championship 1980 – Axel Plankenhorn.

The Ferrari 250 LM on the other hand is modelled on the privateer “Vestey Racing” car that took part in the 1968 Le Mans endurance race but failed to finish due to gearbox failure after completing 99 laps. The model itself is similar to the David Piper wide bodied car but has two sculptured panels/flaps moulded into the bonnet and the addition of two red lights on



RCR30 – Ferrari 250 LM- Vestey Racing
#19 Le Mans 1968 – Paul Vestey/Roy Pike

Beginning with the Porsche 935 - the difference compared to the two previous models released is in the rear of the car; much bigger side fins on the rear wing, taller fins which run from the rear window towards the wing and a different position for the NACA duct below the wing. This model, like many other “Jägermeister” models you see around, is painted in orange and very stunning indeed.

the roof. The colour of this car is a strange dark blue/violet, which Racer inform me is proving very difficult to reproduce. The story of how the real car colour scheme came about is very strange indeed. Apparently, the owner originally painted it in red, but the result did not satisfy him and subsequently decided to paint it again in blue whilst the varnish was still fresh. The overall result was to end up with this unique dark colour. The photographs that Racer has released of this model are of a pre-production version which is very beautiful indeed. ➡➡

The colour does suit this car nicely and, at the time of writing, they are still looking for the right colour mix. I suppose the only answer would be to paint all the models in red and then blue whilst they are still wet – only a suggestion!

The Porsche is currently scheduled for release around late September/early October, whilst the Ferrari is scheduled for November.

Future Developments

Looking further down the production schedule is the Ferrari 312P. A very early resin test shot was shown at this year's Nuremberg Toy Fair and a much advanced prototype decorated with decals of the first livery was shown at the "Slotlandia" Toy Fair in Milan recently.

Both the Vestey 250LM and 312P prototype attracted much attention. Racer informs me that this model has been the most difficult to reproduce to-date. The very flat shape of the car has forced them to spend many hours in finding the correct positioning of the full interior in relation to the engine, gears and guide. In fact the curves of the body have also proved to be difficult to get right, even more difficult than the Ferrari P4. Despite these problems Racer are

hoping to release the first model in December. A new feature of this model is that the small winglets on all models will be made of plastic to reduce the risk of breakage and to allow the possibility of replacing them. The first two liveries planned are as follows: -

NART – Daytona 24hrs 1970 – Piper/Parkes
NART (bubble roof) – Sebring 12hrs 1970
– Chinetti Jr/Adamowicz

The other new model in development is the Chaparral 2E. A prototype should be available to show at next year's Nuremberg Toy Fair.

"Top Racer"

Also at this year's Milan show was the 4th "Top Racer" event. This is a one-off race where winners of the various Italian championships are invited to compete with a specially prepared car supplied by Racer. This year the car was a racing version of the Porsche 935. There were eight in total, all painted in different colours, with Racer stickers applied. All the cars ran very well with the first three drivers all finishing on the same lap. The winner, by the way, went home with a brand new Racer car for his efforts – very nice! ■





By the time you read this it could well be that Jacques Villeneuve is a Nascar driver. Whatever the reasons or politics behind his removal from the BMW F1 team, his departure could be NASCAR's gain. If you are a supporter of the outspoken Canadian and an H:O slot car enthusiast then you stand to gain too. The same goes for Juan Pablo Montoya whom we already know is stock-car bound. The chances of being able to drive the Nextel car of either JPM or JV sometime in the next year is, I would say, good to excellent.

When Lifelike produced a couple of generically liveried Dodge Chargers last year, the NASCAR slot community were pleased but assumed that they were cars due to be released in any case prior to the sale of the company to model train giant Walthers. Given that Walthers were keen to acquire the LL train line, a fair assumption but one proved wrong by the release of more Dodges and followed, last month, with the release of several authentic models of Ford's 2006 stock car, the Fusion. There is now optimism that there will be continued new releases, including the most anticipated stock car for many years, the Toyota Camry. Which is where the former Colombian and Canadian F1 winners come in. Given that it is very likely that NASCAR itself helps its teams increase their stature, it is not hard to see that they push hard to bring in sponsors, drivers and makes that increase the 'draw' of the series and any toy company with the appropriate licensing deal is likely to be very keen to tap into that. So a Montoya #42 Dodge stocker seems a safe bet,

but for now Walthers is enjoying good sales with its more recent releases after previous designs had been heavily criticized for being too blob like and top heavy with ride heights more akin to a 4WD than a racing car. The Dodge body seemed to return them to former glories and this year has seen the release of the best one yet, the Number 22 David Blaney Caterpillar Charger. The low Dodge body, allied to the vibrant yellow, black and red scheme looks especially mean and purposeful.



The Ford Fusion, whilst not quite as sharp looking, is a big improvement over the previous Taurus, and it is impressive that Walthers had these for sale within a few months of the real cars going public. For my money the DeWalt car seems more striking than the Office World car, although the latter has the better nose. The silver grill takes a bit of getting used to, but this is true of the full size cars, and overall the Fusion is a big success. In addition to the two cars pictured there will be the Greg Biffle 'National Guard', Jamie McMurray 'Irwin', Dale Jarrett 'UPS', and Elliot Sadler 'M&M' Fusions.

Aside from the Cat car, the Dodges are coming thick and fast with 2006 releases ➤➤



including the Scott Riggs 'Valvoline' car (which looks gorgeous). Then there are no less than four Dodge Dealers cars, two versions of Kasey Kahne's #9 car in red/white and white with red stripes and two of the Jeremy Mayfield #19 car (both red and black but quite different in design). Finally there is the Scott Riggs #10 Stanley car, another fantastic looking item strikingly decked in black and yellow. The Lifelike Chevy Monte Carlo continues to be the runt of the litter, one can only hope that the rumoured Impala switch happens in 2008 and that Walthers follows suit. The 2004 colour schemes have all been updated but the same hunched, overly high looking shell remains. Nonetheless, to complain too much in the face of so much prolificacy seems churlish so for now we have to make do with tweaks of the Tide, Army, Lowes, Home Depot and Interstate cars with the Tony Stewart and JJ Yeley car being the best of the bunch.

The sheer number of new releases would perhaps suggest that Walthers have a substantial and comprehensive licensing deal with Nascar

and one can only hope this is the case. Most, if not all, of the cars mentioned in this article will receive 'real world' graphic tweaks in the off season, there are a dozen better known cars that have not been done at all so far. Many teams may switch manufacturer this winter. The Montoya Texaco or Target car is an obvious one to watch out for, but the really big news in NASCAR is the Toyota program starting next year. If Walthers really do have a sweet deal in place we could be driving H:O Camrys in a year from now! Watch this space.... ■



Kits 'N' Bobs

A round up of recent kit and resin releases

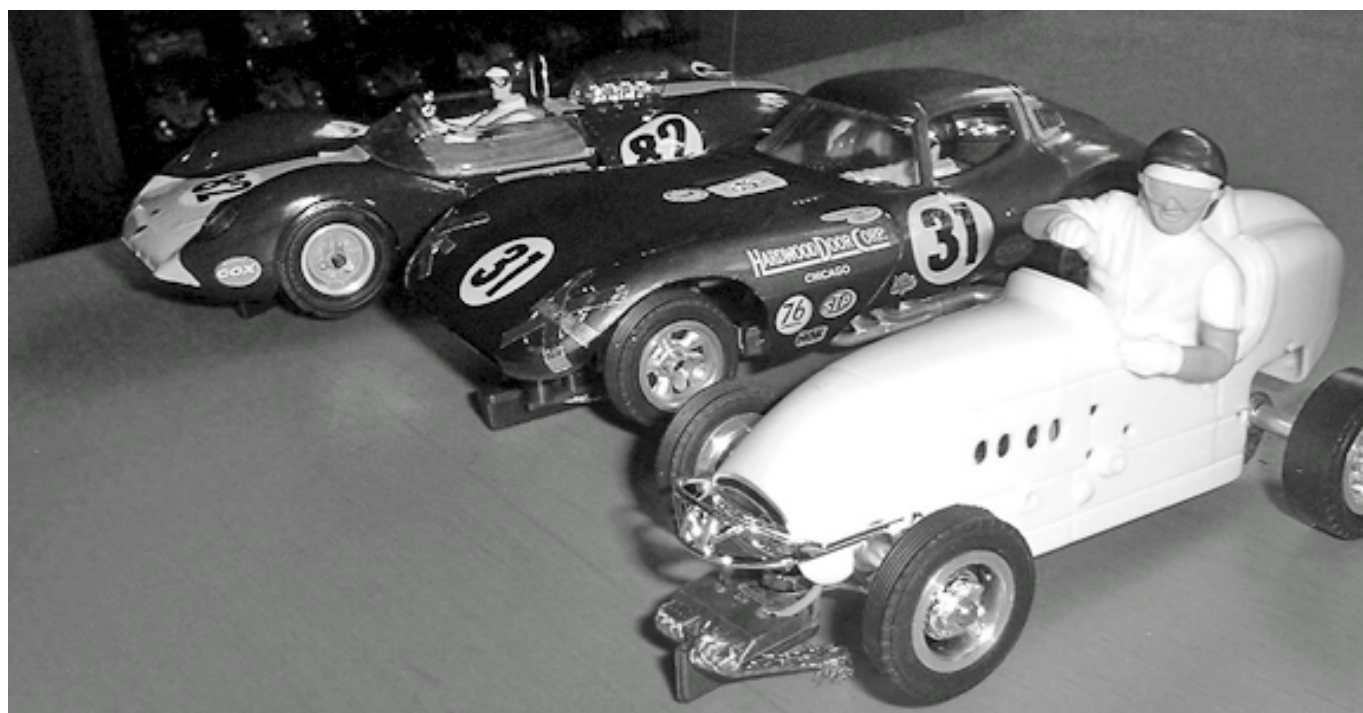
By Phil Insull

Apologies this month for any new releases I've missed in late September as my wife and I have been sunning ourselves at the Rally of Cyprus.

Last month I mentioned that E.J.'s Hobbies have released their 1/24th sixties Strombecker kits including the Cheetah, Lotus 30 and Midget dirt racer, and promised a picture of the finished articles, with decals for the Lotus and Cheetah from MRE. Well I didn't quite make it but I did get the Cheetah and Lotus finished, with the Midget just awaiting painting and detailing so here's a picture of the almost finished trio. Ed is also listing a 1/24th Strombecker Chaparral 2C, and 1/24th Revell Porsche RS60 and early 60s BRM and Lotus F1 cars. These are great body kits mated to Ed's superb brass chassis and, in most cases, a powerful Fox motor although I was lucky enough to get a Lotus with a big 36d motor. I believe Ed only has limited supplies of these. Staying Stateside for a moment Reinecke Motorsports have now released the 1980 Oldsmobile Omega and Pontiac Ventura kits

but I just haven't had time to build mine yet so you'll have to wait until next month for a picture. The hot news is that they intend to follow these two releases with two more Busch Grand National cars from the same year, these being the Chevrolet Nova and the Buick Apollo. In addition to these actual cars, Reinecke have released a generic Craftsman Series Truck, which lends itself to a number of highly colourful liveries.

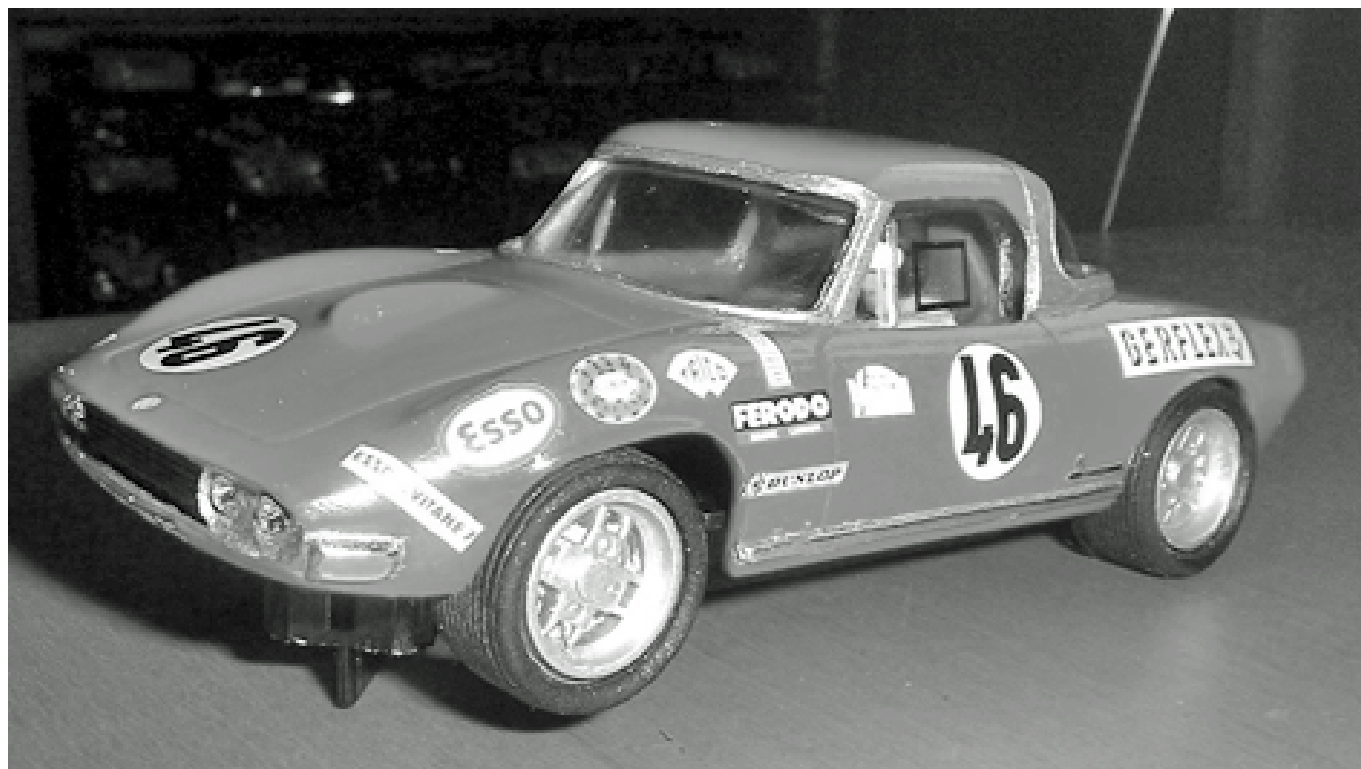
French manufacturers MMK have their new Ferrari 612 Can-Am, and a 1960 DB HBR4 Coupe, which has unusual "bread van" styling and I believe finished 18th at Le Mans that year, winning the Index of Performance in the hands of Laureau and Armagnac. Staying in France, following the release of their beautiful Jaguar XJR5 kit, Protoslot have news of an Alfa Romeo TZ2 LM65 and a stunning looking Aston Martin V8 LM 1979, both available in kit form. GOM have some nice new liveries of their Alfa Romeo Alfetta GTV6 with a particularly nice rendition of the Carlos Sainz and Jesus ➡➤



E.J.'s 1/24th scale Cheetah, Lotus 30 and Midget dirt racer

Diez entry in the 1985 500Kms of Jarama available from Pendle Slot Racing. While on the subject of re-liveries Sloters have the Clay Regazzoni version of the 1972 Ferrari 312PB and the Claude Beaumont version of the Lola T290 due out by early October.

OCAR or World Classics bodied car. Gareth Jex has also offered a prize for the highest finishing NSCC member, so remember to bring your membership card to the event. I am also delighted to announce that our good friends at MRE and World Classics Limited have agreed



OCAR Fiat Dino LM 1968

I can bring you a picture of the new OCAR Fiat Dino built on the PCS32 chassis and complete with my own little touch of four jewelled headlights in place of the kit ones. As an aside, Classic Slot Limited/World Classics displayed one or two of my own humble efforts at the Toyota NSCC Slot Rally GB, which almost makes up for me missing it due to the Cyprus trip, but those of you lucky enough to get to Epsom should have a great time. Classic Slot / World Classics are also our title sponsors for the upcoming Trans-am and touring car event at Wolverhampton on October 15th and are offering a special prize for the highest placed

to sponsor our two historic events for 2007, these being the MRE Le Mans Classic on Sunday May 13th 2007, and the World Classics Trans-am and Saloon Event on Sunday October 14th 2007.

Finally this month, the much anticipated Maxi Models Ferrari 612P Can-Am car is now available in several kit formats and as a hand built ready to run car. These are exquisitely crafted and I have ordered my kit from MRE but sadly don't have time to build it for this month's piece. Hopefully the finished article will be available for you to see next month along with a short review. ■





The Visitor's Tale

By Paul Strange

There was a marvellous moment as my girlfriend and I strolled up the futuristic covered walkway of Toyota's HQ on the Sunday afternoon. A happy family – some girls, a boy and a proud mum and dad – were coming towards us, bearing Scalextric goodies, including a large SCX set. It seemed to set the tone of the event: a fun day out for the family, with plenty to see and do, and with every chance of adding new and younger members to the NSCC in the years to come.

Once out of the walkway, the event's rally theme was brought sharply into focus as we surveyed a glorious display of rally cars, including one of my all-time favourites, the

Lancia 037. What a joy it was to see this neat, slick and purposeful rally car in real life. It all boded well for the event.

The emphasis was certainly different from last year's impressive 25th anniversary two-dayer. Less about trade stalls and celebrating the club's history, this event was firmly rooted around the myriad of special rally stages spread about the venue. You could simply watch the competition in full swing (although at times quite what was actually happening was a bit bewildering), but, best of all, you were strongly encouraged to have a go yourself, especially on the public tracks, or the stages when they weren't being used for the competition.

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Welcome to the show



Drive the logo

The vast effort that had gone into producing some of the landscaped tracks was breathtaking, the hill climb being of particular note. Having seen the photos and read about it in the Journal, I just had to have a go. The track was truly magnificent, looked even better in the flesh, was incredibly difficult to drive, and although I deslotted quite a bit, it was a great thrill to have completed the stage. The other landscaped tracks that took my fancy were the water splash (with its ingenious use of distilled water), a snowscape (complete with a skier) and a farmland circuit.

The public tracks were terrific too. I had lots of fun on the Scalextric digital circuit, but was bowled over by the enormous Woking Slot Car wooden track. The largest circuit at the venue, it was a very smooth run, was beautifully designed and well marshalled. I'm pleased to say that in my 20-lap race I came second with a best lap time of 10.53 seconds, although that time pales into insignificance compared to the hot lap of 8.14 seconds put in by our Editor.

Best of all, there was much more room around the venue. Last year's event was over two floors, and often felt uncomfortably tight. The Slot Rally GB had more room, was spread out over three floors and the venue felt far less claustrophobic, which my girlfriend and I appreciated.

There were many cars built specially for the event and the effort from all the modellers was immense, but the moment of the day was when Derek Cooper proudly showed us his scratch-built 1962 Volvo P544. Hand-carved out of balsa, beautifully finished in dark red, and using

an Atlas motor, Monogram wheels and a Strombecker chassis from the mid-60s, Derek had taken many weeks to carefully build the model, and it really showed. The real car had run in the Monte Carlo rally that year and the attention to detail was awesome, right down to the little maps held by the co-driver, the tool kit and pliers on the rear window shelf and the car's radiator grille made out of a tea strainer and a paper clip! Derek proudly told us that the car had done well on the rally stages the day before, had even blasted down the drag strip in a record time, but he'd had problems on the hill climb due to a thicker slot guide. He'd finished 45th overall and, although there were plenty of expensive prizes up for grabs, all Derek had to show for his huge creative effort was a cuddly toy for the highest placed Volvo model at the event. That didn't seem right to us, although Derek was commendably philosophical about it all.



Derek Cooper's Volvo

If I had a small niggle about the Slot Rally GB, it seemed there was just a little something missing – perhaps a little less buzz around the venue compared to last year, a slight feeling of been there, done that, and a sense that maybe it was too large an event too soon after our impressive 25th anniversary celebrations. But that being said, like last year's event, there was a great family atmosphere with plenty for the kids to do, and there were lots of wives and girlfriends in attendance. Fantastic, and just the sort of thing that the club needs to do more of in the future.

So, all in all, another very good event at the Toyota HQ. Congratulations to Gareth Jex and his hard-working team. A tremendous effort. ■



Scrapbook

Photos supplied by Peter Emery, Gareth Jex, David Lawson, Brian Rogers and Peter Solari



Miniature Gareth and Scott on marshalling duties - yes, they have found the Toyota girls again



Slot Rally GB champion Jacob Wright collects a huge haul of prizes from Gareth



Adrian and Jenson Leggett try out the SlotFire track



Some very special visitors from The Children's Trust



Above - Peter Solari (left) and Peter Binger (Hobby Co) admire the NSCC Mégane



A study in concentration by a young competitor



Above - Scale Models' giant stand
Below - Assorted Rally Marshals - Join the NSCC, you know it makes sense



Scalextric prototypes on show



Above - James Hunt's McLaren M23
Below - new Subaru



Jenson Button's BAR/Honda



New Jaguar (above) Lauda Ferrari 312T (below)





Above - A Fiat tackles the snow stage

Below- The magnificent Woking club track





Above - The infamous water splash

Below - Hell's grannies race down the hillclimb stage





Special Stage Assortment





The Racer's Tale

By Matt Tucker

Rallying is my favourite form of racing which is borne out by my slot car habits. 35% of all my slot cars are rally and I have a permanent, hand built, rally track in my cellar. So when Gareth announced the GB Slot Rally event I was quick off the mark with my entry.

I firmly believe in the 5 Ps. Poor preparation equals piss poor performance. This means getting the car set-up to handle the best for the given track and surface. Well, with the concept of over 20 different stages all with their own different characteristics, I could never achieve the ideal set-up for each track. I therefore decided to go with cars from different classes that handled my own rally track happily. The main criteria was stable cars as I know a steady race with minimal de-slots is more likely to win than an out and out speed machine that is a real handful and likely to de-slot far too often.

With this in mind I chose my beasts. I had entered both days and wanted to race a tad of variety so I chose a Ninco Austin Healey for the Classic category – to make it more driveable I put an NC-1 in it and some MRRC Cobra front tyres on the rear, and with a tad of weight it handled very nicely. The second car was a Team Slot, Rothmans liveried, Vatanen Ford Escort MKII. This took a fair bit of work including lowering the body, changing the rear axle to an SCX version and swapping the guide to a Ninco sprung guide – after much truing the car handled sweetly.

I got lazy after this and entered a Ninco Peugeot and Mitsubishi both with Pro-race parts and NC-6 motors – comparing them to Jacob Wright's Mitsubishi and Bill Charter's Peugeot there honestly was not a lot of difference with the standard model and my upgraded versions

on the wide variety of tracks – probably my driving skills weren't up to getting the most out of them.

My secret weapon was a chassis I'd had for a while, sourced from sunny Spain and made by PKS. A purpose built rally chassis with the ability to alter the motor height, sponge brakes, alter guide height and front axle height and vertical movement. I attached this to an SCX Celica and decided to try racing it with a front wheel drive with bands providing power to the rear wheels. In the many months of practice this set-up worked brilliantly giving a really easy to drive car that was immensely forgiving.

I found Ninco Pro-race tyres worked well on most surfaces so the cars were shod with these. I packed all my racing gear in a box only to end up using some spit and my finger which luckily I carry round with me at all times.

On arriving at 09.30 on Saturday, with my Christmas Eve butterflies racing round my tummy I paid my dues and wandered round the light and spacious Toyota building. There were tracks everywhere including the spectacular hill climb, a rather impressive Ninco Raid stage (not many cars liked it though!) and my personal favourite a super special stage (a Slick Slot Racing creation) which I have just got to recreate.

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Drivers' briefing



Game on

All the drivers gathered and checked in our cars, being told we were not allowed to fettle with them again – if you were faced with a catastrophic failure you needed to see the headmaster Mr Jex, and if you failed to finish a stage you were given a 200 second time penalty.

We spilt into groups of five on both days and we instantly formed a really friendly bunch of racers. My personal thanks to all of them as

their camaraderie and support made the event even more enjoyable. It was also good to see such a wide array of cars and I was lucky to race with Jacob Wright (undisputed winner), Clive Mills with his stunningly beautiful Toyota 800S and Peter ‘race through the pain’ Emery (he had more excuses for poor times than I’ve ever heard) with his excellent Toyota Toyopet Crown 1500s (obscure, yes, but they were apparently Toyota’s first competing rally car)

Anyway, my first three stages were a bit of a mixed bag – my Escort and Peugeot were going great guns but my lovingly prepared Celica went about one metre on each of the first three stages and then would not budge. The mantra of the five P’s came flooding back to me. One of my rear wheels had slipped on to the 4wd pulley and was snarling up the band. Once diagnosed I wiggled the offending rim out on the axle thereby curing it – faultless performance from then on but now I was only competing for pride.



Toyota Toyopet Crown 1500s by Pete Emery - Sunday's 'Spirit of the Event' winner



Toyota 800S by Clive Mills - Saturday's 'Spirit of the Event' winner

The racing took all day even though the actual stage time was 7 ½- 8 mins . You never knew how well you were doing overall but actually that did not matter as it was about you and the stage - slot racing at its elemental best! I loved the hill climb although, as it had no wired brakes, if your car was a free runner (as was my Ninco Healey), you basically had to free wheel down the climb in order not to come off on the hairpin. I also perversely enjoyed the H:O racing and drag strip which were about as far removed from tail sliding round corners as you can get – it was good to see Peter's Porsche finally get a chance to stretch its legs and bury itself like a missile in the foam catcher.

There were a few nightmare tracks, either because of the horrible standard controllers, or the fact that you had no borders and with the twisty nature of the tracks you just had to keep the throttle on half way – however it was the same for everyone.

As racing on Saturday did not finish till 18.30 the number of tracks were cut down on Sunday from 20 to 17, taking about two minutes off the overall times. My Celica was hastily changed to become a 4wd without belts – it handled faultlessly all day other than a couple of lapses in concentration when I sent it flying over a hump back bridge and watched it less than gracefully collide with the barriers.

I had immense fun and that was down to the, cannot be applauded enough, Mr Jex and all the organisers, the superb hosts and, on the day, the excellent company of my fellow racers who all took the event in the spirit it was intended – to have fun.

Please note that the obscene amount of prizes I accumulated had no bearing on my enjoyment of the event – honest guv, although the Waldegard signed Celica did and does bring a big Cheshire cat grin out of me. ■



The Volunteer's Tale

By Andy Smith

Sunday afternoon, 4.30 pm, Mr Editor asks me how the weekend has gone in my role as a 'volunteer', to which I reply my feet are very tired and my bank account a lot lighter!

So, how did I get myself into this situation? Whilst browsing the August issue of the Journal, I noted that Gareth was asking for volunteers to help out at the weekend, even if only for a couple of hours. Not being a racer, but wanting to attend the event anyway, I thought this would be a way of putting a little something back into the NSCC, particularly as myself and my partner Trish had been fortunate enough to attend the Hornby weekend in Ramsgate earlier on in the year.

We travelled down on the Friday afternoon expecting a two and a half hour trip from Loughborough but nobody told us that the M25 had been converted into a car park and, five and half hours later, we arrived at the hotel, stressed out, and therefore had to take a glass or two of wine to help us unwind!

Bright and early on Saturday morning at the splendid Toyota headquarters we were allocated our tasks by Gareth. Trish was to be on the door with Mrs Editor and Mrs Secretary, who between them admitted some 1,100 people over the weekend and commented on how nice the general public were, and very supportive of The Children's Trust charity. Gareth asked me if I would be a track marshal, and when I said yes, asked again to make sure! Not being a racer, surely a track marshal just puts the cars back on the track when they crash?

How wrong I was! After attending the drivers briefing I was given a master time sheet for the three tracks I would be marshalling, where I would need to record each racer's time, and then put this on their individual timesheet

and sign it. This was after running the actual races as two of the three digital timers were not working, and therefore having to manually time the laps with a stop watch. Thankfully, Alec Edge had also volunteered his services, and between us, we got everybody through by 4.30pm which didn't leave much time for spending cash on building up the collection. However, I am pleased to report that the mission was well and truly accomplished with the shelves at home somewhat heavier and my wallet lighter. There were some real good bargains to be had if you were after new cars. How about an SCX Mercedes CLK for £11.50? Amazing!

After the event had closed for the day, racers, helpers and traders were invited to stay on for a fish and chip supper and a glass or two of wine, the chance to play on the tracks, and for everyone to have a good chat. A very pleasant end to the day.

Sunday was very much a similar format but with Alec not attending, I was pleased that the bumpy Ninco circuit had been withdrawn leaving me with just two tracks to marshal.

The day flew by and it was time yet again to go and give those nice dealers yet more money in exchange for just that last car I need to keep the collection up to date!

Overall, a great but tiring weekend, would I be a marshal again now that I know what it actually involves? Very probably. It was good to have the opportunity to speak with so many people who clearly enjoy their hobby. Even my good lady Trish is starting to enjoy, rather than tolerate it.

No repeat of Slot Rally next year according to Gareth, but we will be there for the next event, and a little wiser for it, after a great weekend. ■





The Organiser's tale

By Gareth Jex

Well we did it and in my opinion (however biased) we did it well! I just had to check back on the PC to see when we officially announced that the NSCC and Toyota would hold this event and 'computer says' 17th November 2005 - 11 months ago! That was after Scott Brownlee and I had competed in the Wales Slot Rally event and thought, "that was fun, we should do something similar."

The event took thousands of man hours to organise and set up. First we needed to find out from Toyota when we could hold the event at their headquarters, then convince the slot manufacturers to exhibit, sign up traders to book tables and finally build, borrow, buy or steal rally tracks.

Toyota were, as always, excellent and offered us several dates, some of which were just too quick and didn't give me enough time to arrange everything. Other dates clashed with slot, sporting or my work events. So September 23rd/24th was picked and confirmed, Carrera, Scalextric and SCX all signed up at the London Toy Fair. Ninco signed up the following week, Fly, Revell soon followed suit and Teamslot (via ClassicSlot Ltd) gave their full backing.

Traders were given a heads up at Phil Smith's Orpington event and then tables went on sale at Milton Keynes. We sold out very quickly and this allowed us to press on and start to spend some cash! Unlike the 25th Anniversary event we had to build some proper rally tracks and I can tell you now that this takes time, effort, cash and a lot of hard work.

The project was given a great opportunity after Scott, Jim Moyes and I returned with a good haul of prizes from the Wolverhampton club rally and we got talking about how we could promote the event. Toyota exhibiting at

the Goodwood Festival Of Speed seemed an ideal opportunity and we initially thought about a small track and several photo opportunities. By the time we had reached home the idea had got slightly enlarged and a hill climb rally track seemed like a good idea at the time. I won't go on about this, but most would agree the final result was bigger, better and a lot heavier than originally planned.

With support from several members, First Four exhibitions and Ninco (The Hobby Co) the track was built and ran perfectly at Goodwood providing us with excellent exposure. All we needed to do now was build the rest of the tracks! Back to Uxbridge for another four weekends of track building and we had four complete tracks and the same number of base boards ready. At this point I must give thanks to all those who came down to help, gave us track, figures, scenic material, buildings and advice.

Mark Sanderson volunteered (OK arm twisted) to design and run the Slot Rally website and we began to write rules, take pictures, design logos, forms, etc, for the event. Entries began to trickle in and hundreds of questions were asked. The website was an invaluable tool and Mark has done a fantastic job.

The competition was just one part of the event, but it did inevitably take the most time and effort to organise. I originally thought that we would get about 50 entries each day, I was wrong, and we hit our maximum number of 100 three days before the event. There was some confusion about rules, but I think there always is. Most seemed to understand what I wrote, but not all and the biggest area of misunderstanding – MAGNETS! Personally I think they should be banned in all slot cars and if I never see one again it will be too soon.

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I will jump several months of phone calls, emails, building, collecting, delivering, chasing, sweating, worrying, panicking and cut to the weeks prior to the event. In my original planning I always wanted to have a display of slot rally cars so visitors could see exactly how many variations were out there to collect, what I had not banked on was:

a) just how many I had and

b) just how many I didn't! Lots of cars were purchased to fill gaps (well that's my justification and I'm sticking to it!) and I very quickly made the decision to stop collecting anything non rally. Most of my cars are in display cabinets with the boxes in the loft, so I needed to individually wrap each one for transport. What a mess - my house already resembled a slot car shop with tracks, building materials, paperwork, posters, tools and stuff everywhere. My wife finally broke and said enough was enough, she wanted the dining room back! So I had to ask the committee for permission to rent a lock-up! They agreed, not that they had much choice really, and I filled it! Space created at home was quickly replaced with the collection of rally cars, Wendy was not impressed!

So there I was, two weeks before the event, lock-up full, collection boxed up, more tracks in storage at First Four, Toyota and my office. Anyone I knew had some involvement with the event, knew about it, helped out, stored something or worked on some aspect. All I needed to do now was set it up.

Friday 22nd September, D-Day

Early start. Meet up with First Four to empty the store, not everything fitted in! Loaded as much as I could into the car and headed to Toyota via Rob Smith's house. Dropped my car at Toyota and borrowed a van to collect everything else. Back to the lock-up to load final bits, back home for more, then to the office to clean that out. Great weather for loading - it chucked it down and Rob and I were soaked to the skin. Dropped Rob off at home and headed to Toyota with a very full van. It normally takes me 45 minutes

to get to Epsom from Farnham. It would appear I upset someone upstairs, the M25 and generally all the home counties appeared to have come to a standstill and it took me 2 ½ hours to get to Toyota. Great start - I was late for my own event! Some early bird traders had already arrived, tables were stacked in front of the doors and Toyota staff were just leaving for the weekend. Thankfully lots of volunteers turned up to help, the same friendly faces greeted me to help set up, most of whom had either helped build the tracks, run Goodwood or foolishly promised to help.

Toyota staff removed the cars from the display area and we were in! The build up was, as expected, very hard work. NSCC display, 20 rally tracks, three public tracks, 62 trade/charity tables, three manufacturers' exhibits, signage, electrics, showcases, model railway display, real WRC cars, security walling, barriers, with approximately 100 people all eager to set up. Hurry up and wait is the best way I can describe the night. I was not the only one to be caught in traffic. The two lorries from First Four with all the tracks, walls, showcases etc were stuck in traffic and didn't arrive until about 7 - it took them over three hours to cover less than 30 miles! Not everything went exactly as planned - sorry Woking Slot Car Club, but I must have had a blonde moment when I checked if your track would fit, we re-arranged downstairs three times before it all fitted. Not all the tracks worked first time out and a Herculean effort from all ensured they would. Mad, mad panic and lots and lots of hard work and we were just about ready. I started putting cars into the cabinets at about 1am and finally got into bed at 3am.

Saturday 23rd September

Opening day. Another early start, up at 5am to put the traffic signs up and then straight to the venue to open up. Many traders arrived on Saturday morning to set up their tables and I have to admit that I had to move some of them around to fit them in, last minute cancellations and alterations caused some minor headaches,



but generally speaking all was OK. So there I was at 0900 with a full, very full, venue, drivers arriving for their briefing, early visitors waiting in the entrance lobby, ladies on the reception, NSCC committee members manning our stand, tracks being tested, traders engaging in early pre show deals, coffee on the go, PA sound system being checked, score sheets being produced. Better let it start.

I have no idea who the first person in was, I was elsewhere and, to be honest, I disappeared to the drivers' briefing room to check how the scrutineering was going. Hectic is the best description I can think of. Jim Moyes agreed to help out, but I don't think he had banked on being on his own! Where are the Farnham club members when you need them? Ah, here they are, queuing to check their cars in, forget that guys, go and help Jim can you? Proceedings speed up and I started welcoming and giving competitors the low down.

We had approx 100 cars entered into the Saturday rally and I knew that time would be tight so I wanted to get the first batch of competitors out as quickly as possible. Rules explained, stages explained, format explained, off they went. Track marshals were instantly hit with competitors rightly expecting that more would be explained on each stage, of course it would not be like that, I had not really given enough thought to the track marshals, most had never done anything like this before and this baptism of fire was pushing my luck to the maximum. Vaguely organised chaos, but it did work and by about 11.30 most drivers were well underway, making their way around the tracks.

At 11.00 the general public were admitted and the event started to fill, not a mad rush, but a steady trickle. The café was open and people started to enjoy themselves. Where was I? I was collecting money from the traders and checking with the exhibitors and track owners to see if all was OK. Generally yes was the answer, a few minor problems, but people sorted themselves out. Time flew and an announcement over the PA alerted me to the fact that it was lunchtime and the local fish and chip shop needed to know

the food order for that night. Off I went again to invite people to the evening do. Numbers confirmed and Richard and I popped off to Asda to buy the drink! Back to the show and the first batch of drivers had completed all the stages bar the last – the water splash!

Adrian Leggett had tested the track in the morning so I knew it worked (this was the first time it had been tested!) more water was applied and the power turned on. What a laugh, the splash itself was not too difficult, but the rest of the track soon became wet and very slippery. Many struggled but, as far as I know, all attempted the stage and all completed it, even if they needed the odd push or three.

The show closed at 5pm, but we were nowhere near finishing the competition. I think we got the last batch of results around 6pm. Richard Winter did a sterling job inputting the times and collating the results. We announced the results on the balcony and awarded the numerous prizes. Half way through I realised the food needed collecting and thankfully Scott's step son Michael and Julian agreed to collect the food. We had lots and lots of prizes and awards to give and the whole process took about ¾ hour. Massive congratulations to Jacob Wright who came first, Paul Darby 2nd and Jim Moyes 3rd. Various class awards were also given out. Clive Mills won the Spirit of the Event with his superb Toyota S800 (which is described in another article this month). I think everyone enjoyed themselves and was pleased with their prizes.

Party Time

All the drivers left for the day and the party started. Typically I had short ordered on the food and needed to dash out for more, but other than that, it was a relaxed evening with guests able to enjoy the tracks at their leisure and generally chat to each other, something which is, in my opinion, sadly missing from other events. We shut the party at about 10 and after I had drained the splash I returned to the hotel for a well earned drink. Steve and Jill from AEC (SCX) greeted me in the bar and we discussed⇒

bits and bobs. I had every intention of going straight to bed, but the bar was pretty full of familiar faces and inevitably a few more drinks were consumed and slot chat ensued. I gave up at about 11 and crashed out very quickly.

Sunday 24th September

Last day! I had a lie in until 6am, checked no-one had 'borrowed' any signage and arrived at Toyota to tidy up, re-group, and plan the day. I felt much more relaxed Sunday morning and had already discussed the night before to drop some stages. We had a delivery of two more stages from Wales on Saturday evening and I really wanted to mix things up for Sunday. In the end we dropped six of the original stages and added three more in. 17 was a far more realistic number. Again early bird traders began to arrive and competitors made their way to the briefing room. Many of the drivers had competed on the previous day, so knew the format, which helped a lot. Briefing was swift and competitors were on their way quickly. The marshals were much better prepared and the competition ran very smoothly. Again a steady trickle of visitors arrived from around 11am and continued all day.

Around lunchtime we had several VIP visits. The most important was a visit by four children from The Children's Trust with their families and carers. Christine (Mrs Editor) gave them a guided tour of the stands and tracks and they enjoyed themselves blasting down the drag strip. We gave them a Teamslot Toyota and SCX generously donated some T-shirts. I must admit to feeling very humbled by the whole experience and any notion of my hard work paled into insignificance when I think of the effort and hard work done by the charity for these children. They were the most important visitors to the whole weekend and were most welcome. Also a visit by my wife and daughter lifted my spirits no end and Lottie was proudly introduced to her first slot car event. Next to visit was my godson Rory and his brother Dominic, thanks to Scott for lending me the keys to the Supra, they loved sitting in the car and had a whale of a time

racing on the tracks. You will be pleased to know that they both have slot car sets and are well supplied at Christmas and Birthdays!

The competition was going extremely well and the reduction in stages and generally more experience of the format ensured that we were ready to open the water splash at 3pm. Scott was one of the first to compete and insisted on deeper water - much deeper water! Why not? It seemed to go down well and produced some fantastic photo opportunities and fun. All the competitors completed the stages and Richard once again compiled the results. We held the prize giving ceremony at 4.45 just as people began to pack up. Once again young Jacob Wright was the overall winner and crown champion, picking up another set of great prizes, Phil Field 2nd, Paul Darby 3rd and Matt Tucker won the modified class. With all the prizes awarded we began the pull down.

Time To Go Home

Pulling out a show is always quicker than set up and with help from our great volunteers, Toyota and First Four we were loaded, packed and out by 9.30pm.

We had around 1100 visitors to the event over the weekend, down on the 25th Anniversary event, but still good and actually exactly as budgeted. We don't know the actual amount raised yet, Bob is still counting as I write, but with entrance money, Teamslot Toyota sales, raffle, Rally entries and traders' table fees I'm confident we will be making a sizeable donation to The Children's Trust. Many members and visitors paid more than they were asked to, which was very generous of them. I have also placed a Teamslot limited edition event car on eBay and, as we go to press, it is already standing at £210 so it should provide a healthy sum for the charity.

By the time you read this the final full results of the competition will be on the web site (www.slotrally.co.uk) along with more pictures.■



This has been a busy month with swapmeets at MK and Epsom but this seems to have little effect on eBay numbers particularly in the UK, where listings doubled overnight to 6000+ during the month thanks to a cheap 5p listing day at the beginning of the month and remained buoyant with a 5p BIN listing day towards the end of the month. Whilst there have been plenty of bargains around, there are signs that prices are firming up as we head towards the colder months which traditionally see more interest in the hobby.

Spellings!

Brian has asked me to point out that the descriptions I use in this column to illustrate the prices are how I find them spelt on eBay and are not due to poor checking by either of us! These often lead to an odd bargain. For instance this month on Slot Rally GB Epsom Saturday, three "Scalextrix" catalogues numbers 7, 10 and 19 in reasonable condition fetched just 20p more than my silly bid price of £4.20.

It never ceases to amaze me how people do not bother to check websites before bidding on eBay. This month has seen the new Scalextric collector centre Flying Lizard Porsche fetching up to £36 when the very same seller has them available on their web site for £28! Many Scalextric ex set packs still have been appearing but are starting to appear at higher prices now though it was still possible to pick up the Batman twin sets for £15 plus P&P.

As I have mentioned before, it is always interesting looking at newly listed items. One such item making a brief appearance was a Scalextric Eddie Stobart liveried Roadtrain lorry, a supposedly one off factory special. However, the listing was ended early and enquiries subsequently have suggested this was not a factory produced item.

Top prices mainly with a Scalextric bias for this month:

Scalextric Very Rare C70 Original blue Bugatti !! VG £2250 (small repair to steering)

Scalextric Very Rare De Havilland C70 Bugatti in green and yellow @ £450 each failed to attract bids from same seller.

RARE 1960s Scalextric James Bond 007 Set Box £230 (Worn box only)

1/32 SCALEXTRIC C2402A Ford Boss 302 Mustang 1969 \$232.50 (sister ship no 15 fetched \$228.50)

1/32 SCALEXTRIC C2401A Ford Boss 302 Mustang \$122.50

Scalextric Triang Bentley MM/ C64 - Boxed £230 (Green excellent condition)

60's Bentley Spare Parts All Original 50+ Parts £52 (50+ various parts including repro bits)

Scalextric Williams FW20 Plain red & white – New £62 (car made up from plain white shell and red wings)

Scalextric C453 Ultra Rare Brabham Team Dodger Car £6 (VGB – guess no one took the ultra rare bait on this car!)

Vintage Scalextric Brochures-magazines Triang 1960'S £70.25 (number 1,2 and 6 catalogues in VG condition)

2x Scalextric Jaguar XJ220 NSCC bodies rare £16 (just green shells on their own!)

Rare Goodwood 1960S Pits £13 (Goodwood chicane, 2 pit buildings, 20 odd figures and 2 Le mans cars needing repair. No my low bid did not win this but someone did fairly well here!)

VERY RARE Scalextric Mercedes D2 phone cover NO RESERVE £16.20 (Nokia 3310/30 phone cover tampered by Scalextric factory with reportedly five made)

SCX matchbox ferrari F1 resin prototype *rare 1 of 6* £51(Matchbox version)

Lastly, Turtles seem to be in demand again with MB examples fetching from £12.50 to £26. ■



Sir,

I would really like to thank you for the very generous hospitality you gave our group from The Children's Trust at the Slot Rally event.

The four boys really enjoyed themselves and to watch their concentration and skills being used was brilliant for the staff. It was a truly exciting outing, which we all enjoyed. Please thank all the track owners for their patience and particularly to Christine who showed us round.

I am, yours etc

Rosemaire Gilthero

(The Children's Trust)

.....
Sir,

I'm sure you'll have many similar comments, but many thanks (again!) for the NSCC Rally. Sam and I could only come on the Saturday, but were very impressed by the stages, the volunteers, and the friendly atmosphere of the whole day.

We'd never done anything like this before and I was a bit worried how others would take an 11 year old with little experience, but he was accepted, offered help (as was I) and we never felt anything other than welcome. Are there other rally events? I fear I have been bitten by the bug.

Finally, from talking to people through the day, it seems that some of the routed stages were constructed for the event: would anyone be prepared to do an article in the magazine on this? I am not very practical, but with a guide, I think I could make a simple stage for home use.

We are, yours etc,

Chris and Sam Dulledge

Sir,

Words cannot even begin to thank Gareth Jex enough for his superhuman efforts in making the recent Slot Rally GB event the resounding success that it was; however, I am writing to express my own very sincere and heartfelt thanks to him for creating such an enjoyable and marvellous weekend.

There was something for everybody and I even managed to shock Gareth by the sight of seeing me – a notorious non-racer – try the fantastic Woking Club routed track, recording a first and second in two races. Thank you also to the clubs who brought their tracks with them, the competitors, and the manufacturers/ traders who attended. The racers all seemed to enjoy themselves on the variety of interesting and challenging rally stages, and I didn't hear a cross word anywhere, all of them were friendly and enjoyed themselves. They were even patient with me when I ran one of the stages for a while (first time I've ever done that, and it was very enjoyable). Most of the traders reported a reasonable amount of business and there were some interesting old Scalextric items to be found – I spent more than I should have on these.

Finally thanks have to go to Toyota and particularly Scott Brownlee for enabling the event to go ahead, and to the magnificent work of Christine, Sandi and Trish, who greeted visitors at the reception desk and managed to sign up no less than 20 new members. Thank you to all who contributed and supported the event, but most of all to Gareth.

I am, yours etc,

Stephen Barber, NSCC Secretary



Sir,

I know a list of names must be exceedingly boring but I cannot let the Slot Rally event pass without thanking everyone involved for their tremendous efforts in getting the show up and running. Apologies if I have missed someone out but I have done my best so here we go:

2LK Design Ltd, ABC hire, AEC Models, Lawrence Atrill, Audi, Steve Baker, Steve Barber, Steve Beard, Beck Interiors, Shaun Bennett, Pete Binger (Hobby Co.), BMW, Bob Bott, Matt Brice, Scott Brownlee, BSDRA, Carrera, Paul Chandler, Chris Yates, Citroën, Robin Clark, Classic Slot Ltd, Jamie Coles, Croydon Model Railway Society, Richard D'Cruze, Alec Edge, Peter Emery, Face Media, Farnham Scalextric Association, David Farrow, Ferrari, First 4 Exhibitions, Fly, Reuben Forrester, Gaugemaster, EAHORC, David Jex, Wendy Jex, Jill, Sandi Harris, John Haywood, Stephen Langford, Adrian Leggett, Martin, Martini, Dan Mason, Ian McKay, MHSC, Mitsubishi, Monarch Lines, Simon Moss, Jim Moyes, MRRC, Ninco, Adrian Norman, Paul Yates, Peugeot, Ali Pope, Quorn Slot Car Club, Racer, Renault, Revell, Brian Rogers, Philip Salisbury, Sam Publications, Mark Sanderson, Tony Sandom, Scale Models, Scalextric, SCX, SEAT, Phil Shearsby, Slick Slot Racing, Slot 32, SlotFire, Slot Forum, Slowly Sideways, Andy Smith, Lorraine Smith, Rob Smith, Daniella Solari, Peter Solari, Phil Stringer, Subaru, Teamslot, Toyota, Toyota Celica GT4 Owners Club, Matt Tucker, Phil Upton, Volvo, VW, Christine Wakefield, Deane Walpole, Ken Webb, Steve Westby, Phil White, Richard Winter, Woking Slot Car club, Wolverhampton Slot Car Club, Trish Woolley, Steve Wright.

As you can see from the list of names above I don't do this all on my own, but there are several individuals who deserve special praise:

- Scott Brownlee. I blame Scott for the whole thing; without him it would never have got off the ground. He staked both his and Toyota's name on our ability to run this event and that is a huge undertaking for which we all owe our massive thanks.

- Paul and Chris Yates and Steve Baker. When I asked for help building the tracks many people came along to help the first weekend. Over the following weekends people dropped out for good reasons, but Paul, Chris and Steve were always there, on one occasion I had to leave them to it. All three of them have been superstars - not only helping build the tracks, but they were the first to arrive and last to leave over the weekend, working tirelessly without reward, we all owe them our thanks.

- The NSCC committee. All of us are unpaid and all have real jobs, I convinced them this was a good idea and they backed me all the way, approving expenditure and helping in any way they could on top of their normal club functions, thanks.

- Last, but not least, my family. Wendy and Lottie have had to put up with me not being at home over weekends for the best part of six months, our house being full of crap all the time, people ringing the house at all hours. My Father David Jex brought along the Tramlink Model Railway display, provided the PA sound and sorted the raffle and Teamslot sales, it was his voice you heard most of the day.

Both Brian and myself have received so many letters of thanks that it would fill an entire issue of the Journal if we published them all so a small sample will have to suffice.

Many of you said, "When is the next one?" The general answer I gave was, "I don't know, are you volunteering to organise it?" I have stated before and will say again that I will not be organising an event next year and have no plans to do so in the immediate future. I am sure there is both scope and demand for an annual event of this nature and I would love someone to step forward and organise another one. I will gladly offer any advice and the NSCC will help in any way it can, but I wish to spend some quality time with my family and finally get round to building my own track at home.

I am, yours etc,
Gareth Jex

Scratch Built Front Wheel Drive Rally Toyota

By Clive Mills

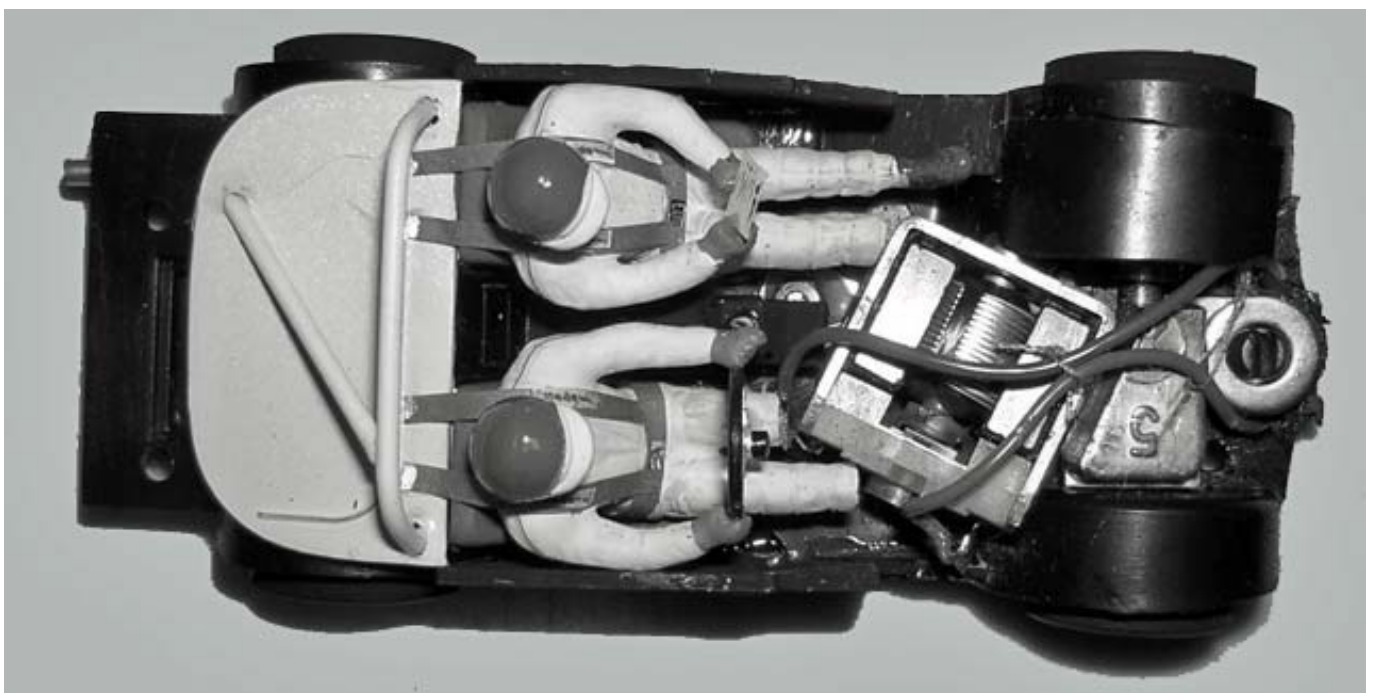
When the idea for the Slot Rally GB competition came out, I thought about what I should build. I wanted a Toyota so a search started for a 1/32 kit. I decided on the Toyota 800S made by Imai. Did it ever take part in a rally? Yes, one was entered by Shuji Kawasaki in the Targa Tasmania in 2004.

I wanted to build it as a front wheel drive, as I felt that it would be a challenge to get all the running gear in the front and still have room for a full cockpit with driver and navigator. Also I felt that front wheel drive would possibly handle better with no magnets to stick it to the track.

The first problem was that the car has small wheels (SCX Fiat 600 rims and tyres) so requires an angle winder configuration. The motor I used is from a Tomy H:O scale car as these are quite powerful but very compact. The first thing was to mount the axles. I used the chassis from the kit and made up brass bearings from tube and araldited the rear axle into the position for the original. The front of the chassis was cut

away to allow room for a Slot.It gear and the drive end of the motor to lie at the correct angle. Two short bearings were made and carefully aligned in the front before gluing in position. Unfortunately this meant that a lot of the strength had been taken from the front end, so braces were made from the floor pan to the front wheel arches. The motor was also used to brace the front with small brass brackets glued to the motor sides and fixed to the chassis with screws and nuts. At this stage I thought to myself, Clive you must be very keen or stupid. This thing will never work. Where are you going to fit a guide? The one I chose is a Ninco sprung type. It was fitted between the wheels straight through the chassis with a piece of strengthening metal on top of the chassis. After two weeks of swearing and cursing, I now had a black piece of plastic with a motor and wheels attached.

Test time. The chassis did actually run (My God it works). After a couple of laps the Tomy pinion stripped (bugger!). Another was fitted, three laps later this stripped (double bugger!).



What now? Into the spares box and no pinions would fit the small shaft of the Tomy motor, until I found a Scalextric motorcycle motor and the pinion from this fits, the mesh is perfect. Back on the track and the chassis was soon running lap after lap with the tail hanging out around the bends. (Bloody Great!)

The body was then made to fit the chassis with mount post at the front and rear so that it could be removed. The cockpit was built onto the chassis and a pair of Fly drivers were modified to fit, the poor driver had both feet amputated and the navigator lost one as the motor is in the way. The navigator had his arms bent and a clipboard put in his hands. After the body had been fitted and the car tested, the body was painted the same colour as the original and all logos applied. The Targa Tasmania logos I made myself by downloading the image from a photograph, resizing and printing onto decal paper. The cockpit was detailed, a roll bar fitted and seat belts were made for the occupants and fitted to the rear panel. The finished car is just about the same as the original (except Mr. Kawasaki rolled the real car on the second day of the event).

The building of this car took quite a long time with a lot of frustration at times. Now that



it is finished, I am very pleased with it. It is not anywhere near as fast as most modern slot cars and it gets a lot of wheel spin when accelerating, even with a weight over the front axle. But it is great fun to drive and very forgiving in tight corners as the tail hangs out well but it has to be driven very hard to make it deslot.

It was entered in the Slot Rally GB event at Epsom, so by the time you are reading this we will know if a front wheel drive classic rally car works (OR NOT). Personally it does not matter. It looks good, I enjoyed building it and surely that is what our hobby is all about. Enjoyment and not coming first in every race. ■



Presto Park Reborn

By Mike Harvey

My love for Scalextric started when I was twelve years old. My first set was a basic figure of eight with two Cooper Formula 1 cars, one British Racing Green and the other pale blue. I can still remember my excitement when I unwrapped the box on Christmas morning 1961.

In the 1960s Norwich had three shops that sold Scalextric, the main one being Pilch in the city centre. The manager of the shop at the time was called John Watson and seeing how obsessed I was with Scalextric he invited me to the local club with my Dad.

It was called Presto Park and was situated above a coffee shop called The Presto Bar, hence its name. At that time club members were modifying their cars with Pittman five pole motors and fitting the extra wide Vanwall axles

with MRRC soft diamond tyres. The guide pin was also moved further forward and a piece of lead placed in the hole. This enhanced the handling on the rubber Scalextric track. I remember feeling frustrated that I could not join the club as it was for adults only and I was only twelve years old.

The club stayed in that location for a short time and in 1964 moved above another café in the city and completely revamped the track with the new Scalextric Plexitrac as it was called then. The circuit was built with six lanes and was 85 feet to the lap. It was about this time that VIP cars were produced by Victory Industries Products and they took our club by storm with five pole motors and chassis with Ackermann steering. Wow! It was at this time I attended every Monday night as a visitor with my Dad.



Presto Park circa 1964
(reprinted from an article in the Eastern Daily Press)



They used to run a visitors' race each evening and I won every one. As I was really, really keen on joining I asked John if I could be considered for membership. My application had to go before the committee and, in September 1965, I became the first kid to be a member. Was I chuffed or what? I think the others thought I was a smartarse as I regularly beat them, which didn't go down too well with the hotshots and as a result that year I received the 'Driver of the Year' award. We had some great drivers in those days and I remember one member in particular who I received a great deal of help from, his name was Sid Denney. He worked for Anglia Television in Norwich as an electronics engineer. His cars were always fast and immaculate and I bought my first MRRC powered Lola T70 GT from him.

As time went by in the late 1960s, wooden tracks became popular so a new Presto Park circuit was constructed. It was 160ft long, six lanes with a main straight of 40ft. What a track that was. Technology started to take off then and most cars were powered by Ks, Ricochet Mabuchi cans or MRRC motors using Cox, Airfix, Atlas and Monogram shells. Then, in 1967, I discovered girls and quietly left the hobby as so many youngsters do.

Presto Park continued for several years, the 160 foot track being broken up as it was far too large for most rooms that were available and to rent. A new wooden track was constructed and located above a pub in Beccles, Norfolk but I was not aware of this move as I had, by this time, relocated to Cambridgeshire. I understand the track was dismantled and stored in a garden shed from there on.

In 2003, my cousin sent me a feature from the local Eastern Daily Press which showed the club in 1964. This rekindled my interest and I subsequently joined the Mussel Bay Raceway at King's Lynn. Strangely enough I had helped build part of their track many years ago and it was in fact the old Presto Park track that had been at Beccles. I had many happy times at Mussel Bay and lots of great races with Brian Rogers, our Editor. In 2005 I moved back to my roots in Norfolk and found that it was too far to

travel from where I lived on the poor roads to King's Lynn so I decided to resurrect the Presto Park club.

My wife Averil and I searched for weeks to find a site where the track could be permanently laid and eventually, by chance, stumbled across what is now the new club room located in a school that has now closed in Aylsham, Norfolk.

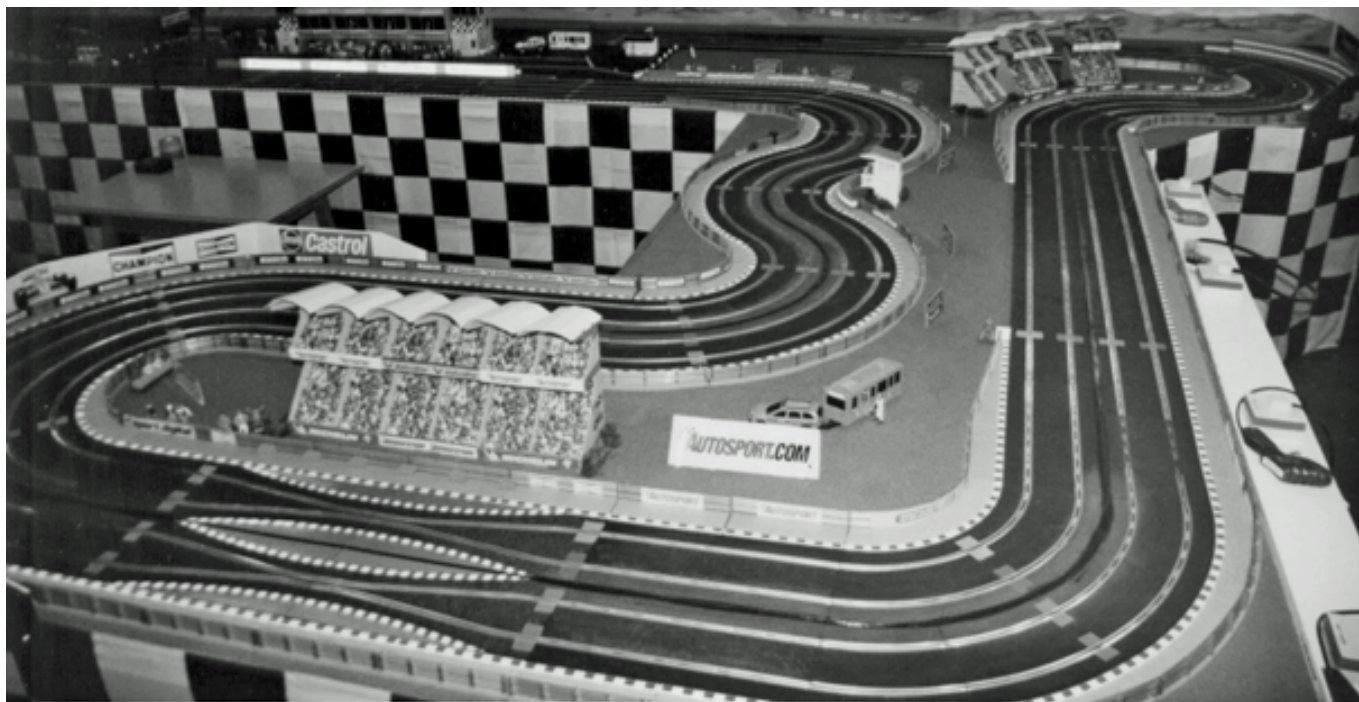
I decided that I would use the existing benches to support the track as the room had been a science laboratory for some years and the cupboards and bench units were very sturdy and offered an excellent base. The baseboard was constructed using sheets of chipboard screwed to a battening frame. This in turn was screwed into the tops of the bench units. I wanted to achieve the largest track I could in the space available to me.

I was quite fortunate as a local toy shop was selling off new Classic track very cheaply and, coupled with a response to an advert I placed in the same shop, I purchased everything needed at a good price. The circuit was laid giving four lanes with a lap length of 82ft and a main straight of some 20ft. After searching around for buildings I was able to buy lots of the card Scalextric ones at a bargain price and these added to the authenticity on the layout. Averil painted the scenery and flocked the grass areas in and around the track which looks very realistic.

The power to the circuit is by Scalextric transformers, one for each lane, wired to a 2 amp 3 pin plug – the usual BSCRA design.

It was decided from the outset that the club would run just three classes of box standard Scalextric cars with a few modifications to make them run and handle better (see John Watts' feature, NSCC Journal July 2003) these being NASCAR, Sports GT and Saloons. At the present time we do not run F1 and Indy cars due to the high accident damage sustained to this class of car.

Our main objective is to attract members from fourteen year olds upwards that can race and be competitive on a relatively small budget, hence box standard classes. I have seen so many people coming into slot racing and departing ➡➡



soon afterwards as they are disillusioned with being constantly beaten by more wealthy members who seem to have a bottomless cheque book enabling them to buy hot motors and the latest chassis for their cars. By running these classes it was felt by our founder members that it would be more of a level playing field and people who joined would be more likely to stay.

We meet every Wednesday with track time from 7-30 to 10-30pm. The club is located on the outskirts of Aylsham, Norfolk, in the grounds of a private country estate overlooking fields and paddocks. All NSCC members and Scalextric enthusiasts are most welcome to pay us a visit, please telephone Mike on 01603 754319 for directions. ■

A Tantalising Mystery

By Paul Strange

So there I was, driving up London's New Kent Road at about 8.15am one Sunday morning in early August, about to approach the fearsome Elephant and Castle Shopping Centre roundabout, when I saw it....

...A metallic green people carrier, just in front of me, piled high with boxes. Lots of boxes. So many boxes it was unlikely that the driver could use the rear-view mirror. "Look at that," I said to my girlfriend. "They can't possibly see out of the back." "Mmmm," she said, looking at the A-Z, and not paying the people carrier much attention. Gradually - from a distance of about 15ft - I began to recognise one of the smaller boxes. "That's a Think Tank!" I shrieked. "A what?" said my girlfriend. "Oooh, quite a rare little unit, one of the early 80s Scalextric electronic gismos, that along with the Sound Track and Fuel Tank added more realism to your circuit," I said. "The C452 Think Tank was, in fact, the master unit, allowing you to control both cars on a two-lane circuit in a practice or race session, recording the number of laps, the fastest lap time and speed, average race speed and total race time. The other two units could link to it, and provide extra information." "Oh . . ." she said, glancing at the A-Z again. I was not to be perturbed. "I believe that people carrier to be stuffed full of historic Scalextric items!" I announced in determined Churchillian mode. "Perhaps there's even earlier stuff there, perhaps some rare 60s stuff, perhaps all the stuff's for sale, perhaps they're going to a car boot to sell it all for next to nothing. I could probably pick up a hell of a bargain by offering them money for the whole lot, right here and now." "What on earth are you going to do?" she asked. "Head them off at the Metropolitan Tabernacle?" "Mmmmm," I said, and prepared for evasive action. Then sense prevailed. We were running a tad late for a wedding of very good friends in north London, and that obviously had to take precedent. And how would I get the people carrier to stop? Flash

my lights at them? Unlikely to work quickly with that amount of stuff piled up in the back. Accelerate sharply past and slam my car sideways into them in true Sweeney style? Foolish, expensive and likely to end in tears, expensive garage repairs, and a possible visit to the local hospital followed by a chat with the boys in blue. No, I had to be sensible, and sadly there was nothing I could do.

At the Elephant roundabout, the people carrier, stuffed full of vintage Scalextric as far as I was concerned, took a sharp left, and headed off towards Vauxhall, while we continued in a straight line towards Waterloo. So now I'll never know what was actually in that people carrier, and what it was all about. It could be the stock of a toy fair dealer, of course, but somehow I suspect the whole episode will remain a tantalising mystery. Unless you know otherwise, of course . . . ■



MRRC/Scaleauto Toyota GT-One

By Phil Insull

A few years ago there was a slot car brand called Proslot, they made some fast, and very lightweight, slot cars. For a spell, before first the Fly “racing” series, and then later the Slot.It range took over they had a car that was one of the best GT cars a club racer could buy, this was the Toyota GT-One. However when sales began to decline the parent company stopped making slot cars and, so I’m told, went back to making shoes, which had been its business for many years prior to getting its toes into the slot car scene. Few of us ever thought we’d see the much-loved GT-One again, what we didn’t know was that MRRC/Scaleauto had acquired the rights to start making these cars again. Furthermore Scaleauto had plans not just to reproduce the car but also to totally redevelop it for the highly competitive European slot racing market.



The ScaleAuto (nearest camera) and Proslot Toyota GT-Ones

Having both the old version from Proslot and having been sent a nice shiny new Scaleauto one courtesy of U.K. stockists Pendle Slot Racing, I thought it would be interesting to carry out a back-to-back test for this review. First then the packaging; the old ones came in a large square crystal display box, which it has to be said took up far too much storage space, the new Scaleauto version has no such problems coming in a plastic and card blister pack, held in place

by a single screw. As most people buying this car will be racers, they’ll probably store it in their race boxes, but it does mean a collector would probably need to buy a display box for it. Next I took the cars apart and, apart from the lighter moulded lexan cockpit on the Scaleauto version, they are absolutely identical and can easily be swapped between the two chassis if required, the livery on the Scaleauto one is the Marlboro car of Katayama, Suzuki, and Tsuchiya that finished second overall behind the BMW V12LM, won the GT1 Category and in the hands of Katayama set the fastest race lap at Le Mans in 1999.

Now the serious bit, the chassis and running gear, the old Proslot car had a very light flexible chassis with a strangely shaped in-line motor holder allowed to flex on a rubber widget. The motors were versions of the Mabuchi small can, with a plastic pinion, and gear, a ferrous rear axle turning in plastic bearings. The stub axles at the front were just push in plastic pins, with plastic rims all round, and excellent sticky slick tyres. Completing the set up was a specially shaped 6.5gramme lead weight just behind the front axle line, and a push fit guide with short copper braids.

The new Scaleauto car retains the same basic chassis shape, but it has additional longitudinal ribbing to add rigidity, with an L-shaped motor pod held in by four adjustable screws to allow some rear end flexibility. The motor itself is a powerful Scaleauto boxer, held into the motor pod by a covering strap and two screws either side of the pod. The rear pinion is still plastic, with a Slot.It type nylon and bronze rear gear. There are calibrated steel axles front and rear, with the rears running in what appears to be encased roller bearings, while the front axle has two top and bottom grub screws allowing the front axle height and travel to be adjusted. ➤➤



There are alloy hubs all round, held in place with grub screws, and reasonably soft slick tyres. The weight is no longer provided, but a space is available in the front of the motor pod to fit magnatraxion, and the guide is longer, with screw type fitting and what appear to be soft Slot.It copper racing braids. On paper this should be a no contest, the improved car has what appears to be all the right changes to make it a superior racer. As has been said before though, races are not held on paper.



The new chassis with boxer motor, new guide and alloy hubs (on the left)

Off to Wolves for a first session with both cars on the wooden copper taped track. I'd left the old Proslot warhorse exactly how I'd last raced it some three years ago with an additional 10 grammes of weight to the standard 6.5 grammes. Using my trusty MRRC 35 Ohm controller I managed to lap in 8.1 seconds with the old timer, some way off the pace of one of our regulars with a well sorted NSR Mosler, but then I'm no real racer these days and I'm sure the quick boys could easily knock a second off my lap times. The best comparison is always same track, controller and driver so I turned to the new Scaleauto Toyota. It felt much better to drive, smoother, easier, looked quicker too until I checked the lap times, 8.4 seconds I couldn't quite believe it. I added some weight, swapped the rear tyres for Slot It ones, and went again. Better this time at 7.9 seconds but still not as marked an improvement as I would have thought, made less impressive by me swapping back to the old car and also getting down to 7.9 with this one. Opening up the new car I noticed that the rear pinion had started to wear badly and the teeth were not meshing smoothly. I decided to change the rear gear for a slightly

smaller Slot It one, and to change the pinion to a brass Slot It one while I was at it. Now came a problem, the motor shaft appears to be slightly bulged towards the end, to allow the plastic pinion a tight push on fit, but the brass pinion has to be mounted further back along the motor shaft, and by so doing it is no longer held by the bulge and simply spins free on the shaft. The solution was finally a Scalextric plastic pinion run at low revs for an hour or so with constant lubrication until a smooth mesh was achieved.

The modifications took me about two weeks (working between other projects) to sort out, but finally I was ready to try again. With 7.5 grammes of weight, and after playing with the front axle height and switching the new Scaleauto car onto Proslot rear tyres, I managed to lap consistently down in the 7.4s occasionally dipping into the 7.2 bracket. This was the improvement I'd been expecting all along, it had just taken more effort than I thought it would. The new car still looks good just as the Proslot one did a few years ago, and with a little perseverance the performance is a marked improvement on its predecessor. Some may argue that a car redesigned with such emphasis on racing should maybe not need so much effort to make it competitive, but I would say this, we were looking at just one track type, and all slot cars need setting up for the specific track to get the best from them. In fact I had to change tyres again and do some more tinkering before I could really push on the Slotfire track, and by comparison a really fast HRS chassis car at Wolves was rubbish at Pendle just two days later simply down to the differences in surfaces. Yes, the wearing pinion was a bit annoying but a plastic Scalextric replacement is only pennies so it won't break the bank, and with the Scaleauto Toyota you do get lots of quality parts for your money and plenty of scope for development. I have seen the NSR Mosler go quicker at Wolves, but this car is more expensive than the Toyota and still needed a lot more doing to it to make it quick. With the right driver and a bit of dialling in I'm convinced that ScaleAuto's new improved version could see Toyotas back as the GT racecar of choice. ■