



No. 301 APRIL 2007



THE INDEPENDENT CLUB FOR SLOT-CAR ENTHUSIASTS

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## Work days never go this quick

**A**mazing how time flies when you are having fun. I have long held the theory that the rich people buy up all your good times and leave you with the interminable drudgery of work days and, sure enough, the annual NSCC/Hornby Ramsgate Weekend passed in the blink of an eye.

Once again the event was organised superbly by Rob Smith and all the usual traditions were observed - the racing was chaotic at times, the quiz was nigh on bloody impossible and the auction prices for coloured bits of plastic made my eyes water! I also stayed up way too late and drank more alcohol than was good for me. We had a significant number of new attendees this year and, as far as I can tell, they all enjoyed themselves immensely. I share Rob's puzzlement as to why more members don't want to go. 70 odd applications from nearly 1000 members is not large by any standards.

The racing was very interesting this year, taking place on a club sized Sport Digital track and, although my experience of the system is still very limited, I am warming to it. I have finally worked out the difference between the brake button and the lane change thingy, so who knows, in another few years I may even get hooked. I understand from Adrian Norman that digital sets outsold analogue ones at Christmas so it would definitely seem to be the shape of things to come. Now if they could just get the cars to go as fast as their analogue cousins.....!

Our thanks go to Adrian and all at Hornby for their unstinting support of the event. Here's to the next one.

**And Finally** - might I draw your attention to the fact that your editor was part of the victorious white team, despite our usual desperate attempts to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory! Mrs Editor also amazed me by coming second in the ladies race - mind you I had placed her with our main rivals in the expectation that she would do badly and lose them some laps! You can't trust anybody these days.

*Till next month*  
*Brian*



BY **ROB SMITH**



## **MESSAGES** FROM MARGATE

**W**ell, the new range releases got off to a great start last month and then immediately stalled with only one brand new general release.

### **C2805 Mini Cooper Road Car Blue**

This nice metallic blue Mini Cooper has twin white stripes from front to rear and is the first release of the new low detail version. This means that it has a one piece body shell with no windows or lights. The windows are cleverly done with black frames and dark grey window glass which looks much better than other cars

with no interior such as the Aussie V8s. I asked Hornby if this was a modification of the original mould but was told that it was, in fact, a brand new moulding. The body details are identical to the standard releases which they would be as it is the CAD data that has been modified to remove all the bits which normally break off. The chassis is identical to previous releases and does not feature the new Digital Plug fitments.

One point of interest is that these low detail versions are made in a completely different factory to their high detailed counterparts.



## **C2815B Ford GT NSCC 2007 C2816 Ford GT Scalextric Club 2007**

The Hornby/NSCC Weekend car and the Scalextric 'Racer' Club's car have a lot in common with each other and C2815, the 2007 Range Presentation car described last month. All three are blue Ford GTs with yellow stripes, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary laurels on the roof and Scalextric logos front, rear and either side. On the top of each wing and the sills our car has the NSCC script and 2007 and the Racer club car has Racer 2007.



## **Coming Soon**

Several of the 2007 new releases are nearing completion. Firstly I have been playing with the new Police Range Rover. There will be two versions of this as the set car has a drift chassis and the solo car has the normal guide blade arrangement. The body detail is great and it dwarfs many other cars as it should. I wonder if the Chancellor will raise the tax on slot 4x4s too! Disappointingly the Police version has no interior and therefore has black windows. Although all of the electronics for the flashing lights are low down, the siren has a huge speaker underneath the roof. Personally I would remove this annoying device and put in a driver platform from the road going version. On the track the Range Rover handles well given its great height. The huge wheels and sidewinder arrangement dictates a large contrate gear and therefore the overall speed is reduced.

The Porsche RS Spyder LMP2 car has reached a running prototype stage. Interestingly the early version is without all of the finer

bodywork details of wings and ducts as these will be added later when the basic shape is approved. Being quite wide and low this is bound to be blisteringly fast.

Several people have asked me about the forthcoming Ferrari 375. The version in the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ferrari twin pack will have a tinfoil body and the solo car will have a plastic body. Both have the same plastic chassis and decoration. It is not intended to be identical to the very first Scalextric release in 1957 and models a completely different car.

## **Down Under**

Early information about this year's Australian only cars is circulating. These will include:

**C2775 Allan Moffat Trans Am Mustang 1969 limited edition of 2500.**

In 1969 a little known Canadian, Allan Moffat, entered the Australian Touring Car Championship in the bright red corporate colours of big time sponsor Coca Cola. From 1969 to 1974 Moffat won a staggering 101 races from 151 starts in this amazing Mustang.

**C2829 Ford Falcon 2007 V8 driven by Craig Lowndes limited edition of 1500.**

**C2830 Ford Falcon 2007 V8 driven by Steve Richards limited edition of 1500.**

There may be a pair of Holden Commodores too.

## **Design a Set Competition**

Thank you to all of you who took the trouble to enter Hornby's design a set competition. Some of you must have just too much time on your hands as the quality of many of the entries was superb. My special mentions go to Ken Bailey whose Land Rover set with off-road obstacles must have taken weeks of work to put together, Dave Chang with a set comprising of classic curves from various circuits around the world, Paul Blows with an Escort Mk1 drift set and Mark Hatton with an Ultimate Rally Rampage set where you choose your own cars.

However, the winner as chosen by Hornby is Alan Murrell with his Mini Madness set. This is a three car SportDigital set with three drifting Mini Coopers and two crossovers.

⇒⇒



Hornby will be setting up a demonstration track (with digital drift Nissans) to test the feasibility and get feedback from the sales department whilst considering whether to put it into production. Congratulations to Alan and a SportDigital set will be on its way to you shortly.

## **Hornby/NSCC Weekend 2007**

By the time you read this the 2007 event will be over and there will be a write-up elsewhere in this edition of the Journal. I thought I should add a note about the selection process and how it all works. This year was no different from the previous three events that I have organised and was oversubscribed with 72 people applying for 47 places. Why 47? Well, Hornby give us two cases of cars as a gift. Each case contains four trays of six cars each and one car is kept by the NSCC for the archives. Incidentally there are also two Quality Assurance cars which are retained by Hornby for their own archive.

Of the 47 available applications, eight places go the Committee Members who are attending. 24 places were then allocated to

members who had never attended a weekend before and a further nine places to members who had only ever attended once before. This left just six places to be allocated by lottery from the remaining applications. Of course it is never quite that simple as there have been a couple of cancellations and shoe-horning everyone into the available hotel rooms is always a challenge.

I hate turning anyone away and I am sorry if you were unsuccessful this year. Assuming we hold the weekend next year please try again and if you have never applied – please do!

## **New Email Address**

Please note that I have a new email address for club communications:

**factory@nscc.co.uk**

The old liaison@ address will continue to function for a while but will eventually be defunct so please change the entry in your address book now. Experience has shown that the spelling of the old one has proved somewhat challenging(!) for several people and mail has been going astray, leading to applications for the Hornby weekend being lost in cyberspace. ■





Whilst I am no clearer this month as to how involved Tomy is in the slot car products that bear its name, I have made a very useful contact within Racemasters (the US distributor) and some exciting products have been announced.

Racemasters announced a slew of new cars on February 19<sup>th</sup>, the main theme being a multi-year deal with OWRS, the body that runs Champcar (formerly CART) racing. The initial product line will consist of four cars and a set, Long Beach Grand Prix (afx9949), which will retail at \$150 approx and contain the four cars, as well as a new curve with an 18" radius. There will be five of these in each set which, together with the price tag, suggests the set will be quite large by H:O standards. Several online retailers already have the cars, and two "Shelby" GT40s, listed. EAHORC is putting together a deal to buy direct so UK racers should try us first - (eahorc.com). There is also an all-new police car, this time an NYPD version, in the works. Please note all the images printed here are of pre-production versions, the items themselves will be released in June/July.



The deal between Racemasters and OWRS is ongoing so I guess there will be up to four cars released each year. For now the concentration is understandably on the four best known drivers, Paul Tracy, Will Power, Justin Wilson and multiple champion Sebastian Bourdais. The series is, of course, not as high profile as it was before the split with the also diminished Indycar racers, so it is hoped that new stars emerge this year or defections occur from other series rather than to, as has become the norm. ⇨⇨



The GT40s - the #1 black car of Bruce McLaren and the #2 of Ken Miles - will be on SRT chassis, and the OWRS cars will be fitted to SG+ chassis. The latter has received a boost due to a re-tooling of the moulds which has resulted in a new material being used, the end result being a much better product, more accurate to the original spec and also stronger and more durable. Consideration is currently being given to dumping the strange wheel and tyre design of the SG+ for the SRT equivalent, which should make the car considerably quicker out of the box.

Not to be outdone, the Australian distributor for Tomy AFX, Toy Trader Pty, have started selling new versions of the much-loved Tomy "Electronic Control Station" complete with new packaging showing a pair of standard Cobras. Crazy prices are already being seen on eBay but if you shop around you can get them for £40 including shipping to the UK. The station can rightly be considered the jewel of the range back in the days when their track and cars ruled the roost. There are many more timing and lap counting solutions available to both home racers and clubs than there used to be but, in H:O at least, stand alone units are used pretty much everywhere even today. Having a good, proven device that cannot be held ransom by Bill Gates has proven a big draw and the ECS does



everything you could need. It has even woven its way into the fabric of club racing, making it possible to be penalized by one lap for jumping the start. The unit is very 'vocal' about this, much to the amusement of everyone except the jumpee, reminding me of our esteemed editor's comment in a past editorial that everything nowadays beeps at us. In addition to timing to 0.01seconds and counting both timed and lap races, the unit beeps once every minute, with 10 seconds of the race remaining, makes a triumphant little tune at the end of the race, beeps every time a faster lap is set, and has both a sound and visual start countdown. If this all sounds a bit much it actually works like a charm and adds a layer of professionalism to the racing, especially as the units can be plugged into each other for 4,6,8 and even 10 lane scoring. ■





A fairly quiet month, with six releases to report on. At the time of writing there are four other models available in Spain, but I will report on them next month as I don't have any photos. Despite this, there are two special editions this month and some collectable /desirable liveries. Also, Fly has now released details of their release schedule up to June.

### Recent Releases

**Audi Quattro A2 "Audi Sport" #3 (88245)**  
 RAC Rally 1983, driven to victory by Stig Blomqvist with co-driver Bjorn Cederberg. Decorated in white with red/grey/black stripes.

A very similar livery to the previously released A1901 car, driven by Hannu Mikkola.

**Renault 5 Turbo "Marlboro" #5 (88246)**  
 Rally du Var 1982, driven by Alain Prost with co-driver Jean Marc Andrie. Supplied with this model are five decals taped to the underside of the base which, when applied, enable you to display the car in its full tobacco sponsored guise. This model is presented with a colourful backing card which displays a picture of the Renault 5 and a Renault F1 car that Alain Prost drove in 1982.

⇒



**Porsche 908/2 “Playboy” #12 (88248)**  
12hr Barcelona 1969. Not to be confused with the forthcoming Playboy collection, this is a genuine livery and is a standalone standard model. The car is white overall with “Lo de hoy Playboy” sponsorship with the Playboy bunny and drink bottle graphics. The car was driven by Alex Soler-Roig and Jorge de Bagration to 7<sup>th</sup> place.

**Ferrari 365 GTB/4 “Castrol GTX” #18 (88251)** 6hr Watkins Glen 1972.

Driven by Tony Di Lorenzo and Charles Reynolds to 13<sup>th</sup> place. This car is also mainly white, but has two parallel stripes in green and red running off-centre down the driver’s side. There are also some red stripes running along the door sills and around the wheel arches.

**Porsche 911RS green/orange #9 (99018)**  
This is a limited edition of 1200 units produced for the German importer “HandT”, with small quantities available to other Fly importers. Gaugemaster, the UK importers, have been

allocated 90 for example. It is decorated in an attractive livery of orange with green swirly stripes and is virtually identical in pattern to the yellow/red Porsche 911R (88242) detailed last month. The real car won the GT class at Hockenheim in 1972 driven by Wolfgang Gross and Reinhardt Stenzel. The model comes complete with a numbered picture backing card.

### Historic Rally

**Lancia 037 “Martini” #00 (99040).** IV Rally Costa Brava Historic 2007. Following in the footsteps of the two previously released red Porsche 911s (E931 and E932) comes a Lancia 037 decorated in the popular “Martini” livery as part of the rallyclassics.org series. Like the two Porsches, this too is limited to 500 units and not generally available in any shop. Produced exclusively for the historic event, this model is presented in the usual crystal case and comes complete with a colourful numbered backing card. The car was driven in the event by Markku Alén with co-driver Ilkka Kivimaki.







## Announcements

Fly have announced their production schedule from April to June. This includes one extra model that has been added to the March schedule not listed in last month's Journal.

In catalogue reference number order, they are as follows: -

88255 – Porsche Carrera 6 – Nurburgring 1968 1000km (March)

88256 – March 761 – Italy GP 1976 (April)

88257 – Lancia 037 – Rally Costa Brava 1985 (April)

88258 – Audi Quattro A2 – Safari Rally 1984 (May)

88259 – Alfa Romeo 147 GTA – Valencia 2004 (May)

88260 – Saleen S7R – 1000km Spa (May)

88261 – Porsche 911S – Rally Montecarlo 1980 (May)

88262 – Ford Capri RS Turbo – Racing kit with extra accessories (May)

88263 – Ferrari 250 GTO – Nurburgring 1963 1000km (June)

88264 – March 761 – Germany GP 1977 (June)

88265 – Lister Storm – Albacete 2001 (June)

88266 – BMW M3 GTR – Laguna Seca 2006 (June)

88267 – BMW M3 GTR – Laguna Seca 2006 – Racing kit with extra accessories (June)

99023 – Lister Storm “Playboy” (May)

99026 – Chevrolet Corvette C5R – World design winner (April)

99034 – Lister Storm “Playboy” (May)

99035 – Porsche 908/2 “Live Fast Die Young” with DVD (April)

99036 – Ferrari 250 GTO “Cobra Ferrari Wars” with DVD (June)

99042 – March 761 – British GP 1976 limited edition (April)

99045 – BMW M3 E30 (X2) - CET 1993 team set (April)

99046 – Porsche 917K/Ford GT40 – Gulf edition set (May)

99047 – Ford GT40 “Playboy” (June)

99048 – Ford GT40 “Playboy” (June)

99061 – Dodge Viper GTS-R – Nogaro 2005 - Alain Prost (June)

08050 – Buggyra Truck – Racing (May) ■

# Kits 'N' Bobs

## A round up of recent kit and resin releases

By Phil Insull

Starting off this month are pictures of the Ortmann 1/24<sup>th</sup> scale Lotus 38, BRM P261, and F512, these are the complete kit versions with the Scholer chassis, Fox Motor and Ortmann wheels and tyres. I have written a full review, which hopefully should also appear in this issue.

New from MMK this month are the Ford GT40 LM in 1/32, and a static resin Lago Talbot type T26GS in 1/24<sup>th</sup> scale. Sticking with the Lago Talbot T26GS, Dave Yerbury of AA bodies has produced a fine 1/32 version of this for his fibreglass body range. Also new this month from AA bodies is the Stirling Moss ➡



Ortmann's 1/24<sup>th</sup> Lotus 38, F1512, and BRM P261 (above)  
Iberia Slot's Citroën DS Paris Dakar and Lancia Stratos Bertone (below, right)

Last month I mentioned the Slot Iberia resin kits, well I have now managed to complete the Lancia Stratos Bertone show car and the Citroën DS Paris-Dakar, both required a fair bit of work and, without instructions, the rather basic pictures on the box have meant that some of the decals may not be correct but they both look quite reasonable. In performance terms the resin chassis makes them both a bit pedestrian and the Citroën is very top heavy.





Maserati 300S from 1956, details of which can be found at [WWW.Slotcarportal.com](http://WWW.Slotcarportal.com) and a full review of both will be included in a future issue. Another new issue is from Reinecke Motor Sport who have just released their 1965 Plymouth Fury body kit. As with a number of their previous issues this is designed to fit onto a slightly modified Carrera NASCAR Chassis. Sticking with over the pond, the Beardog Eagle has landed here in the UK courtesy of AB Slot Racing although my understanding is that the kit has already sold out.



**Beardog's Eagle and Maxi Model's McLeagle**

Talking of sold out cars, the new Ferrari 250 TR 1960 Le Mans winner is now issued by Slot Classic of Spain but, in spite of the increase to a 500 production run, these highly desirable models are all gone. More readily available from OCAR / World Classics are the new Mercedes 300 SLR and Pegaso Z102 kits, both designed to fit the PCS32 chassis. I am in the process of building these two and should have pictures ready next month. Similarly in mid production on my cluttered workbench are three new kits from Proto Slot. These are the new Spyker C8 Spyder GT2R LM2005, Alpine Renault A220, and Porsche 917/30 "Sunoco Panzer" although the latter is available exclusively through Electric Dreams in the USA. Again I hope to have all three built up and photographed for next month. Proto Slot are also expecting to release their 1967 Paxton STP Turbine kit and a new metal chassis to go with it, and also an Alfa Romeo 33/3 LM70 kit by the end of next month.



**Auto Art's Bugatti Veyron and the David Jones' bodied Lotus 25**

On to ready to run slot cars and this month sees three new releases from Revell hit the UK shelves with the Simca 1000 Rallye, Porsche 904GTS, and Chaparral 2C. Also now actually available from UK stockists are the Auto Art Bugatti Veyron and Bugatti Chiron, and the new Slot.It McLaren F1GTR long tail street version should be available by the time you read this.

I must mention that Wolverhampton Slot Car Club are running a fourth classic meeting this year called the "Half Tonner" Grand Prix for 1.5 Litre GP. cars from 1961-65. This will take place on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2007 and will feature cars like the David Jones bodied / Penelope Pitlane chassis Lotus 25. Entry is by pre-paid booking only and we are already over half full, anyone wishing further details please contact me at [jt004b2112@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:jt004b2112@blueyonder.co.uk). I am also pleased to announce that we now have a full entry list for the upcoming MRE Le Mans Classic meeting in May, and just a few spaces available for the World Classic historic Euro Saloons meeting in October. Finally for anyone who missed this year's Early Bird 50 meeting, Wolverhampton have commissioned a DVD of event highlights and some interesting interviews with well known slot celebrities; again please email me for further details. ■





**I**t's been a busy few weeks. The Committee ballots were counted on the day before the Milton Keynes swapmeet for which I'd booked a table. I set off at 6:30 but within five minutes I'd, ahem, de-slotted. Once the car had been recovered to the mender's, I had a very nice drive up in our "toy" but that was never designed for lugging much of anything so I was not only two and a half hours late but also totally stock-less. Still, it did mean I could meet and chat to many people which is always enjoyable and it was nice to relax a bit at a swapmeet.

Vic is a lovely place about an hour and a half from Barcelona and used to host one or two swapmeets every year. I'd been there several years ago after which they rather faded away. I was delighted to see that they'd organised another this year and when I discovered I could fly there from Bournemouth (barely 30 miles from home) I immediately booked my tickets. The Bournemouth part of the trip was a mistake; its "International Airport" manages to combine high charges with facilities that would shame many third-world countries. I won't use that again in a hurry.

Vic was worth it though. The swapmeet was in the main square - I'd guess about 60m x 80m. Tables were arranged in two rows along two sides. There we were, buying and selling cars, with pavement cafés and bars to keep us fuelled through the day, in the open air, in March. Not surprisingly there were plenty of Spanish

dealers including many old friends. The UK was well represented with some Frenchmen too. There was way too much choice but I did spot some Scalex and Startex cars in goodish condition but mostly short of steering wheels.



Aside from all the slot cars, the organisers had arranged for anyone bringing an old car to park it in the square itself. Around 20 people brought a variety including a Seat 500, Mini, Mk 2 E-type coupé, Mk2 Jaguar saloon, Rolls Royce, MGA, Abarth, M3, etc. This was really the icing on the cake and the whole event was quite brilliant. It was a close call though; it hammered down on Monday and rain like ➡➡



that would have put a serious damper on things. I hope they do this again next year, perhaps a little later in Spring. If they do, think about going yourself – and if you have an old car, try to go in that. I can't see how anyone could be disappointed (unless you fly from Bournemouth).

A week after Vic, it was time for the Hornby weekend at Ramsgate. I'm writing this the day after so we haven't looked at the feedback yet but most people seemed to have enjoyed themselves; I know I did. We raced in teams on a club-sized digital circuit. Everything worked very well, which was a tribute to the product as well as the organisation by Rob Smith for the Club and Adrian Norman for Hornby. Andy Carmichael and Jon Hewitt pitched the quiz at just the right level. We raised around £3000 for charity from the raffle, sales of racing spares and the auction, which saw some heroic bids for rare pre-production pieces. If you've not been yet, do try to go when you can - it's great fun. It would be easy to get used to Rob's good organisation of this event and take it for granted. This year's was particularly good given the distraction of his election and the calls on his time from his family. Well done Rob.

So, aside from pranging m'car, it's been a good few weeks. In between Milton Keynes and Vic, some urgent Club affairs that needed swift attention were followed by my first Committee meeting. This was a good, constructive session. Apart from the inevitable routine and how we might bring the Club's constitution up to date, we started to look at ways to improve the Club. It is here that I would like to hear from members. We need ideas; we have some but I'm sure that nearly 1000 members can think of many more ways for the Club to add to your enjoyment of the hobby. All our contact details are in the Journal so let us know what we could do. We don't have a bottomless pit of resources, time or money but if it's a good idea and we can do it (or try it) we will. Nothing can happen unless someone has the idea first, so do let us know.



The best slot car shop in the world - probably

While I was in Spain, I was taken to a new shop. Many have heard of Palau in Barcelona or Cric-Crac just outside but I think this one is even better. It's not the largest emporium but it is stuffed to the rafters with a wide stock of just about all the contemporary brands and the biggest selection of deleted and collectable cars, etc. that I've ever seen in one place. I reckon it's probably the best slot car shop in the world. As a small inducement to come and enjoy a swapmeet, if you're interested in finding out more about this shop, I'll tell you all about it when I see you!

Finally, I must thank all the members who took the trouble to vote in the election. The Club is important to me and it is gratifying to all the Committee that so many of the members demonstrated its importance to them. It is up to us now to develop and run the Club so that it continues to help all members enjoy the hobby. Talk to us; let us know what you want and we'll do what we can. ■



# NSCC/Hornby Weekend 2007

By Paul Atkins

A dark and wet Ramsgate harbour isn't the most glamorous of places to find yourself late on a Friday evening after a journey lasting just over three hours but, after entering the bar (where else?), at the Kent International Hotel I was greeted as if I had just arrived home. This time however, I had a new attendee with me, nervous of the reception he might receive being an outsider. He needn't have worried as he was immediately greeted by friendly faces, recognisable from slot meets and the like, and soon the conversations flowed from the latest eBay success, to whether England will ever win a football match again.

One great story told was of a guy going into his local model shop to find last year's Maserati Range Presentation car on the shelf with the standard cars. After a quick glance round he found his luck was in, as only the shop assistant was present, so asked how much this car was. "Oh the same as all the rest - £28", came the reply. "OK I'll have that one", he replied in a shaky voice. "Well don't forget there is 40% off all the cars as we are closing down". £16.80 has never come out of someone's pocket so fast.

Next morning anticipation for the racing spreads through the breakfast room as fast as the smell of sausage and bacon. What form will the racing take, what cars will we be using, will I complete a lap without crashing? - no bloody chance. 10:00 arrives and all eyes are on the display cabinets arranged with this year's new releases in prototype form, God, the Ferrari 375 (all be it in plastic) looks superb. Then the serious business begins and the chatter subsides as the rules of the race event are read out. Rule one - Rob Smith's rules are right. Rule two - refer to rule one. I know the racing is covered elsewhere but just to say it is carried out in a light hearted manner and confusion reigns as ever.



After the crashing, I mean racing, has finished for the day Mike Walters, Hornby's technical director, has kindly taken time to come to the event to take and ask questions. If you have ever wanted to know why your favourite three wheeler has never been made then this is ➡➡



Q&A time with Mike Walters



the time to find out, it also gives you a good insight to what other people think is important in the hobby. Some people would like to see more specialist track pieces while others want front wheel steering. Hornby would like to know what we think would make good products for them. There is even a suggestion that if the members can decide on a new GT car to go with the Aston Martin and it is produced, the NSCC would be given credit in future publications.

During the evening meal the traditional quiz had been set by Andy Carmichael and Jon Hewitt. Not only was the quiz hard because I didn't know the answers, in most cases I didn't even understand the question! But, in the spirit of the whole weekend, this is a team event and with the not so little help from Rob Smith, Adrian Leggett, and Paul Chandler, Scalextric's Brand Manager, and others around our table we scored a creditable 3<sup>rd</sup>. As the conversations continued throughout the evening I must have spoken to everyone and learnt something from each of them and, before I knew it, it was time to reset our watches which meant I was going to be late for breakfast again.

Day two started where day one left off, with a quandary - what was a black Aston Martin DB4 Marshal's car doing with a removable sunroof as displayed in the showcase? We left still unsure of an answer - the closest we came was perhaps that it may have been around the factory when they were prototyping the removable sunroof and chopped it up, perhaps someone knows different. Quote of the weekend from Adrian Norman, "What's so special about that Marshal's car then?"

With the boys' racing finished it was the turn of the ladies to have a go (yes, girls are allowed) with their cars adorned with pink stickers of shellfish, seaweed, and plastic fish - courtesy of Mrs Editor and Mrs Secretary. Where else could you see a flying fish doing laps on top of an Audi TT with added somersaults?



**I'd like to be.....under the sea**

Now with all the racing finished it was time to draw the raffle which had some great prizes including complete sets, test shot plain bodies, clothing, and some nice logo stickers all donated by Hornby.

The final item was the auction which Adrian Leggett covers elsewhere - I suggest wives and girlfriends are prevented from reading this part of the Journal!

All too soon it was time to go home but, before you are allowed to leave, you must collect your free car, only available at the event and worth the cost of the weekend alone in my opinion.

It was great to see some faces from overseas as they travelled from as far as the South of France and Switzerland, I still can't understand how Rob gets less than 100 applications each year. I hate to say it because it means I have less chance of going next year, but if you have ever thought of going to this event and have, for whatever reason, decided not to go there are more than double the amount of reasons to go.

And finally my thanks have to go out to Hornby, Adrian Norman, Rob Smith, the NSCC Committee and the other 40 members that listen and make me feel welcome every time we meet. ■

# Auction Report

By Adrian Leggett

Firstly an apology to the attendees of the weekend, regarding the total raised for Hornby's Cancer Care Charity. The amount of approximately £5600 announced immediately following the auction was incorrect due to my error with the spreadsheet I used to record the items. I managed to include a sub total of £2600 which was hidden from my view in the amount column. The actual total was £2920.50 which is still a very good achievement from only sixty people. Add £550 from the proceeds of the raffle and a further £60 from the sale of Scalextric Sport + spares used to improve the cars during the racing, means we have a very healthy sum for the charity.

Highlights of the auction included a first running sample of a BSB Superbike in blue and creamy white – a colour never used for the production version. This achieved an amazing £410 after some very careful and considered bidding. Another first running sample, this time the recent Ford Taurus NASCAR, in black with a plain underpan, fetched £310. A McLaren MP4/16, also in black with a grey stereo

lithography base and standard spoilers had the gavel, well mallet, fall at £300.

Some interesting body shells raised some good prices too with the paint approval sample of the Racer/Range Presentation/NSCC weekend Ford GT reaching £120 and an orange Holden Commodore obtain £90.

Another oddity was a Sport World Digital 6 car power base with blue plastic covers. Adrian Norman from Hornby considered this to be the high spot of the auction so, considering its rarity, it was surprising to see it only reach £115. Something of a bargain I think. There were also many display boards, some of which were test pieces used to try out car combinations or colours for the set box designs of future sets.

Finally, from a total of 60 lots, some of the cars used during the weekend were sold off and three of the Audi TTs used and decorated in a tropical fish tank theme(!) by the ladies, for the ladies race, sold for £80.

Thank you to all the bidders and winners of the auction and raffle items, for giving so generously. I'm sure the total will be well received by Hornby's charity. ■



Tense bidding for the Superbike prototype



# Ramsgate





# Scrapbook



(Above) The victorious white team

(Below) The weekend car



# NSCC/Hornby Weekend: The Racing

By Dave Chang

I arrived on the Friday night for my first NSCC/Hornby weekend having only a vague idea of what to expect. I understood that the aim was to provide feedback to Scalextric on their current and future products, so I guess I imagined that there would be electrodes attached to us as we were sent in to be experimented upon.

Despite not arriving until midnight, there were still a few members chatting in the hotel bar and I was able to get a bit more of an idea about the proceedings. It turned out that our responses would be analysed by conducting an endurance tournament over the two days – you could think of the whole thing as a weekend for racing!

We all convened in the hotel's conference room at 10am the next morning to see a large digital layout, and to receive colour coded name badges. We had been divided randomly into six teams of eight or nine, and the colour of our badge denoted which team we were in.

Apparently in past years, the racing had scored on individuals instead of teams but, since some of the attendees were seasoned racers, others were keen collectors and some were home racers or people quite new to Scalextric, the top racers got very competitive and the rest felt like they had no chance. Randomly selected teams helped spread the skills around, and also helped people socialise with each other, especially good for those of us new to these meetings.

Once we had managed to sort ourselves into our teams (I was in red team), each team was to pick a captain and the captains were sent off to race control (Adrian Norman from Hornby/Scalextric) for the briefing. I should note here that the following account inevitably is written from the perspective of a member of the red team, and I have not been able to cover all the dramas, laughs and tears that other teams undoubtedly experienced.



Wake up at the back - drivers' briefing



## The rules

The main aspect that Hornby wanted to find out was how might Digital work in a club racing environment, and how we thought it might be better adapted or developed for that application. The weekend racing was to be divided into four similar digital endurance sessions plus a ladies' race. Laps for each team would be added together to give the final result. Laps would be added for quiz results, good questions and suggestions in the Q&A session and other things, they would be deducted as penalties as necessary.

The layout was Scalextric Sport Digital. It was powered by the six-car powerbase, with the auxiliary port connected to a computer running non-Scalextric race management software 'PC Lap Counter' written by an independent enthusiast Guy Langenakens. It provided a live race board which was projected onto a screen. The 35 metre circuit was mainly a two lane layout featuring about three of the straight |X| lane change pieces, a pit lane with pit bays for each team and a section after the start which

split into five lanes. These all converged back to two lanes again – offering a scary possibility of extreme carnage.

The sessions were to last for an hour or two, depending how much time there was between the start and the next thing on the agenda (lunch, the Q&A or whatever). The team members should drive in strict rotation, so everyone had equal track time irrespective of skill or experience. Each driver of the team was to race for two minutes, then drive the car into the appropriate pit bay and hand the controller to the next driver of the team. Laps would be deducted for incorrect pitting.

Each racing session would have a different class of car, box standard. We could buy upgrades to the car from the Sport+ range of tune up parts, but we would have to install the upgrades during the race, so we would have to carefully evaluate whether we thought the time to install the upgrade would be worth the extra performance we would gain. Money that we spent on upgrades was donated to charity. ➡➡



The complex pitlane



## The racing

The first session was using the 'super resistant' Porsche Boxters which were one of the models provided with the first digital sets. These are the cars with a one-piece body shell, with the windows and lights painted on. Not only are they robust, having no parts to break or fall off, these are also cheaper than standard Scalextric (super-detailed) cars and have a reputation for being fast and fun to drive.

The colours of the cars were matched up to team colours as much as possible, but there were less liveries than teams, so some cars were distinguished by having coloured stickers on the windshields. This resulted in one of our drivers watching the incorrect car for part of his stint, and thus not getting the optimum lap times.

All the teams seemed to be managing their rotas and driver changeovers smoothly, with the six drivers racing and the next six lined up behind them ready to take over. Not all the teams managed to get their cars into the pit bays for the driver changes, so Adrian was kept busy

applying penalty laps as appropriate.

The first observation that many of us found was that the cars were quite slow compared to what we might be used to at a club. Part of the problem in the first race was that the powerbase was designed to be powered by two transformers when racing six cars, but one of the plugs had fallen out. Considering the system was not being properly supplied, it performed remarkably well.

The next issue was that the cars did not perform the same as each other. This is not unusual with box standard cars, and in an analogue race you would also expect this. With digital, there would often be a 'train' of three or even four cars driving nose to tail up and down the long straights, held up by the slowest car. This was most noticeable during the first racing session, so I would guess that it was partly caused by many of the racers not being used to digital or lane changing. As we all gained more experience during the weekend, perhaps we all got better at overtaking and avoiding the slower cars.



Giant scoreboard

The other phenomenon we found was that if we were stuck on the tail of a slow car and pressed the lane change button – the car in front would also change. The solution was simple but not intuitive – if you want to overtake a slow car, drop back a bit and then take the lane change.

Some people have thought that digital racing would lead to lots of uncontrollable crashes spoiling the fun and flow of the racing. There were crashes, and there were fast cars ploughing slow cars off the track by driving straight through them. But marshalling was very quick since you did not have to worry about which lane to put the car back in. Any additional crashes did not seem to reduce the fun of racing at all, and the more we raced, the more control we gained over the events on the track.

The traffic of other cars did mean that you could not get into the ‘rhythm’ that you would on an analogue track, but it was not clear whether this difference was a disadvantage of digital racing or added realism to the racing experience.

Our team upgraded to the Sport+ high grip tyres. We reasoned that it wouldn’t take too long to change the tyres, and so the improved cornering would help. By the end of the first session, our red team and the white team were pretty much neck and neck. Were these teams leading due to good drivers, good organisation or fast cars? The rest of the weekend might tell! One of the teams (sorry, I forget which) – hadn’t got the hang of the pits at all, and so were penalised on every driver change.

## Afternoon session

After a break for lunch, the next race was with Nissan drift cars. Again these had a one piece low detail body, and the drift guide was restricted so that the cars could not turn 180 degrees. The second power supply was now correctly attached to the power base, so we were expecting some fast racing. How wrong we were!

Our car could be mostly driven around with the throttle fully depressed, and blipped quickly for three of the sharper corners. The slowness of the cars evoked wry chuckles from the members. Presumably difference was due to the

extra weight of a slightly bigger body shell and drift guide mechanism, plus the different gearing on the sidewinder compared to the Porsche’s in-line transmission.

This session probably did help us learn how to use the lane changers and how to deal with slower cars better, and how to conduct the pit stops better. I should also note that whilst the speed seemed inadequate on the long club length straights, it may be plenty on a home twisty circuit. Scalextric are aware that digital would be better if it was faster and are working on the issue, and they explained (in some depth) how it was not a simple matter of plonking a bigger power supply on!

There were a few overloads where the braids of a reslotted car shorted the rails. An overload causes the power base to beep and cut power to the rails. The marshals were given the procedure of removing all the cars, checking the braids, and replacing the cars. Then the overload is cleared and racing continues. Most of the people who were not racing were surrounding the track and acting as marshals, so such occurrences were dealt with quickly, and did not interrupt the racing appreciably.

Driver stints were increased to three minutes. In the morning race some of us had felt that we were just getting to grips with the feel of the car when we were called into the pits for the next driver.

It was still a fun session, and the cars were probably still driving a lot faster than a realistic scale speed, but the driving challenge was significantly reduced. The red team were able to pull ahead and establish an eighteen lap lead over the white team.

An evening race was planned using the Audi TT, but an excellent Q&A session overran and so the race was cancelled.

## Sunday driving

A twist was added for the morning race: fuel pit stops would be added via the race management software. This was a feature that the race controller had not tried before, and seemed to result in chaos in the driver area as people were coming to terms with the new procedures ➡➡





after a night of socialising and clocks going forwards. One of the teams had not been properly entered so their laps were not being counted, it was decided to restart the race without the fuel pit stops.

This race featured the high detail GT class. The teams did not have identical cars, our team had the Dodge Viper, green had a Porsche GT3R, blue a Maserati MC12, white a Mercedes GT1, yellow an Aston Martin DBR9 and orange a BMW Mini (can't say I remember that at Le Mans!). The teams had to start without magnets and pit to install them.

Of course – the speed of a Scalextric car is not relative to the speed of their 1:1 counterparts, so orange's Mini was not necessarily a handicap. The BMW Minis are known to be a popular and fun car to drive. Sadly in this race the Mini was vastly outclassed, and on many occasions was scooped off the track by the pointy nose of a much faster GT car coming up from behind. Orange team were already at the back of the standings, and the Mini seemed to add insult to injury. Fortunately the team seemed to be taking the racing in the fun spirit that was intended and made a valiant effort in the race.

Red team were surprised to note that their eighteen lap lead had somehow evaporated overnight. It turned out that in full accordance with the rules, white team had been given a twenty lap bonus for donating a rather rare car to the charity auction. Red team were further dismayed to see their Viper spluttering slowly around the track, and took numerous pit stops to try and find the fault in the car. A few theories were explored, tyres changed, but eventually our team made the decision to buy a replacement car (our old Porsche Boxter from the first race) and continue the race with that.

Being light, the Boxter was a shade quicker than the other GTs on the field and our team was able to claw back some of our losses. Unfortunately this lightness was also its weakness for, in a collision with a heavier car, ours inevitably lost! Nevertheless we managed to claw our way back, but not enough and finished

nine laps down on the white team. There was still the ladies race to go – might that make up the difference?

The ladies were racing the Audi TT. This car normally comes in plain street colours, but for this race the cars had been given race liveries using a sticker set. Plastic sea creatures and trees were also attached with Blu-tack to aid the aerodynamics. A five minute endurance race was conducted, and although many of the entrants were not frequent racers, it was surprisingly close. Juliette Torres won for the second year in a row, with Mrs Editor taking a worthy second.

After the race, a second Q&A session had been planned, but unfortunately Frank Martin could not attend. Instead we were to have an additional half hour race session, this time using the open wheeled A1 GP cars. There were only three cars, so the leading team was combined with the trailing team, the second with the fifth, and the middle two, to form three bigger teams.

This was an interesting race for a number of reasons. It was the first race with only three cars, and to me the track looked quite empty. It's surprising how quickly you get used to seeing six cars racing on two lanes. Secondly, these cars were quick and tail happy. The first set of drivers discovered this at the first corner where all the cars came off. It was the first time in the weekend that we had something which was very challenging to drive, and sadly the challenge was a bit much for me as I crashed a lot! Red team watched the scores as white team – with the help of orange – increased their lead.

The A1 GP cars are tougher than F1 cars, but still have exposed wings. These cars survived the race really well, I did not notice any damage on them by the end.

## Race results

White	1142 laps
Red	1120 laps
Green	1105 laps
Yellow & Blue (tied)	1044 laps
Orange	1035 laps

Congratulations to the white team whose teamwork and level headed driving earned them a comfortable win after a weekend of close racing.

I thoroughly enjoyed the racing and liked the not-too-serious atmosphere. It was very well organised and, whilst the teams may not have been evenly matched, it was a good effort at making the racing competitive.

Although I have played on small digital layouts before, it was my first experience of proper racing on it which was very interesting. My preference is for super detailed fragile cars, but I would be tempted to buy the low detail resistant ones if I switched to digital, since the cars do tend to collide more. Having said that, the detailed GT cars and the A1 open wheelers came through surprisingly well.

The race management software 'PC lap-counter' performed admirably, and it has many additional features which we did not explore. Software such as this was definitely vital for an event such as this.

The marshalling went amazingly well. I would have imagined that there would be a lot of incidents where cars crashed into the back of the car a marshal was reslotting. In practice this rarely happened, marshals would whip the car out of the way if they saw another on the same lane. We were lucky enough to have a lot of marshals though!

It was interesting to see the overtaking skills develop over the weekend. Even by the end, I did find each change as an event to overcome a specific obstacle, rather than a natural part of driving. I guess I need more practice.

It was common for passing to be done by the faster car bashing the slower one off the track rather than by using the lane changes. If your cars are tough enough and you have enough marshals, this seemed to work! (best done when race controller is looking the other way though). A stricter enforcement of penalties and instructions to the teams may have eliminated this.

That is not to say that the lane changers were ignored. There was also some great overtaking, and many drivers were using the changers to follow the optimum lines of the circuit.

The big question was how would digital be in a club environment? This weekend showed areas which needed more work, especially the speeds of the cars. But overall it felt like a weekend of slot racing. The fact it was digital had not taken away the fun or changed it into a different sort of activity. Scalextric have gone away with the impression that this sort of racing can have a future in clubs as well as for home racers. ■

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# Competitions Update

All the prizes for the Christmas competition have now been posted. If any winner has not received theirs then please let me know.

## Issue 300 competition

Yes, I know the question was difficult - it was meant to be! The prize is a very good one so you have to work for it. The answer can be found in a back issue of the Journal though. Just to clarify - I am not looking for the generic bits on the Bugatti - tyres, guide, motor, gears etc.

I have received very few entries - and even fewer correct ones - closing date is 20th April so you should still have some time left to enter.

*Brian*





Firstly, just in case you were wondering about last month's prices, I spotted only one C282 motorbike at £53.95, not two as may have been implied in the column, if you read the article carefully! With that cleared up I can get into my usual ramblings for the month.

As per last month the numbers of listings continue to be steady despite only one incentive listing day, with around 5000 current listings in the UK. However, it is becoming increasingly difficult to compare numbers on a like for like basis as eBay tinkers with the rules for listings appearing or being visible in other countries' sites as well.

This month has seen the change of stopping items that are listed on the UK site from appearing in the default search results on the eBay.com site. This potentially limits the buying audience for UK sellers who normally list only on UK eBay, so is something to bear in mind for sellers if you are trying to attract a big spending US buyer. I guess this will now mean you have to make the decision whether to list on the UK site or US one for the international buyers. Strangely though, eBay is doing further testing in the next few months whereby the US or ".com" listings appear by default in a few selected categories on the UK site, though not in slot cars at present.

I guess eBay is the only potential winner here and sellers need to be on their toes to these changes. A well known "watch out" phrase springs to my mind there though! Looking at the other major sites in terms of listing numbers for slot items available worldwide, the numbers show the UK listings jump to just fewer than 10,000. This is just behind Germany who in turn is behind the US at 12,000 listings.

## Bentley

This month I thought I would look closely at the Bentley, particularly the black one having just acquired one myself, to show the differences in price achieved. At the time of the report a Spanish seller was offering an excellent example for £400 BIN (Buy It Now) in the eBay shop format on UK eBay whilst a couple of well known UK dealers outside of eBay had very good examples marked up between £175 and £225 for comparison. I found an unboxed incomplete example with missing front mudguards that fetched £68 in UK whilst in comparison a similar condition made 79€ on German eBay. A complete boxed example with two Formula Juniors and a 1966 Scalextric catalogue made £139. On Spanish eBay an excellent condition French example, but with repro parts and boxes, was listed at 600€. I will let you guess which one I went for! Still on the Bentley theme an "Extremely rare Chrome example" one of 128 made for the NSCC (according to the seller!) fetched the best part of £300. Incidentally there are still several modern Le Mans Bentleys available in Germany at cheaper prices if you are looking for one of them. Linking in with the vintage theme still, and following on from last month, the yellow Bugatti mentioned then outstripped the green one reaching £621, and a yellow Alfa in excellent boxed condition made 774€ in Germany.

Another trend that has developed this month is the splitting up of the new Scalextric Hunt/Lauda historic F1 twin sets where individual cars are fetching anything from around £20 to £25 currently. This is being done by one of the big sellers who is always splitting sets down. One lucky buyer managed to bag a Ferrari including P&P for less than £19 though,

so have a search under "C2558A" if you are just after one of these cars and look in the eBay shops section if you want a BIN price.

Incidentally the same seller is selling the empty presentation boxes as well for a fiver if you just want that! With patience I guess you could build your twin set up at a cheaper price than buying the whole thing in one go. No I have not done that – well not yet anyway!

## **This month's prices**

Prices as listed and spelt on UK eBay unless stated, with the time and auction ending day.

**RARE!!** Scalextric PORSCHE - C125 - GREY - exc condition £35.57 (Plain grey not spray painted. Monday night)

Scalextric Ford Focus RARE Silver Plated Prize Car 1/32 £48.50 (Ford dealership prize from 2004 according to listing ending Sunday daytime)

Scalextric Very Rare Colour YELLOW COOPER C81, France! £104.99 (Sunday evening)

Scalextric Very Rare Colour ORANGE LOTUS C82, France! £103.00 (Same seller and time Cooper above)

**NEW SCALEXTRIC CAR C2558A JAMES HUNT McLAREN F1 1976** £19.99 (Split from new twin pack). Several sold from this price up to £25 or so at various times during the month as well as the Ferrari in other auctions.

Scalextric EXIN TT 4x4 Racing System set 7001 NEW/ MINT £160 (Still sealed set Sunday night)

Scalextric C678 TrackBusters Set - Track Busters £29.99 (Excellent condition set Monday night. Only one bidder, a club member but not me!)

Scalextric C.380 NSCC Ltd Edition Grey Datsun 260Z mint £103.01 (Chrome bumper version with unused decal sheet Monday night)  
**SCALEXTRIC FRENCH 3RD EDITION CATALOGUE** £16.66 (very good to excellent example Tuesday night)

Scalextric Classic Rare Black Lap counter, working! £19.50 (early version of the half straight red counter Tuesday night)

**SCALEXTRIC PORSCHE 911 TURBO - FULLY CHROMED** £14.19 (rare car with 500 made according to seller Sunday night)

Scalextric Rubber Drive Belts 12MM/S186 \$51.30 (Mint bagged set of 12 belts for motorcycle US eBay Thursday night)

**ULTRA RARE SCALEXTRIC CK2 KIT PORSCHE 904 MIB** £820 (Still sealed Tuesday night)

Vintage Scalextric tri-ang, Spares kit no 100 n.i.b \$262.99 (90% complete spares set from closure of Local Hobby shop on US eBay Tuesday night)

scalextric car £24 (Black Sport GT40 barely used in box still. Sunday night)

Scalextric Vintage James Bond 007 C.97 & C.75 set £640 (reportedly an HP4 set the seller thought as he only ever had the cars and accessories but no set box. Thursday midday)

**FLY LANCIA 037 RALLY LTD EDITION TO COSTA BRAVA RALLY!!** £56.51 (new 500 made LE on Sunday afternoon.)

**FLY E2 DODGE VIPER 1996 Indy 500 Official Pace Car. M/B** £510 (Sunday night)

**SLOT CLASSIC MORGAN +4 LE MANS CAR** £241 (MB example Saturday night)

Scalextric A/269 - Flying Leap - Complete (RARE) £13.55 (Unboxed Wednesday night)

## **Addict?**

Lastly, a note for you hardened eBay addicts and "techies" out there. If you are looking for a new mobile phone why not take a look at the "3" network where you can get eBay on your mobile for free without any download costs. The service is a cut down version of your normal viewing screen, but you can access your account and place bids away from your computer. For those who may want to do this, make sure you check the 3G coverage in your area and get a phone with a good screen to get the most out of this service though. I have used the service and whilst this is slower than a broadband desk computer or laptop, it does work OK. A good idea perhaps if your work has banned internet access for personal use, and you want to make the occasional bid, but not a real substitute for a proper computer- well not yet anyway! ■







Sir,  
Having returned from the NSCC/Hornby weekend at Ramsgate this weekend I would just like to say what a terrific event it has been.

A whole heap of thanks must go to Rob Smith for organising what has been a well run, fun weekend, which obviously took a huge amount of work to organise. But, as a first timer, I would like to say a big thank you to ALL the members there this weekend for making myself and all other newbies to the event so very welcome and encouraging us in the racing etc. A nicer bunch of people you couldn't hope to meet and I trust that they all had as much fun as I did.

For anyone there who was concerned as to my welfare upon returning home after the very expensive auction purchase, I would like to assure them that I am well and unharmed and the model was appreciated after a sit down and a large G&T.

I am, yours etc.  
Richard James

.....  
Sir,  
Although I have retired from racing, there has been interest from at least three clubs as to whether or not I will be running the 24-hour race this year. I am considering this but need to plan now as work commitments are overstretching resources and time available!

If you are interested in entering a team, please let me know. The race is likely to be either the 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> October or 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> October and will most likely feature Ninco GT cars but this is not cast in stone.

There are a number of options so please either give me an indication of your preferences or let me know if you are not interested.

1. Would you like the race to be at the original venue, the Ruislip Scout Hall or at Yeading Football Club?
2. Would you like the track to be 8 or 12/16 lanes?
3. Would you be more or less interested if the race was 8-lanes N-digital?

I can be reached on 020 8868 4478 or email [brian@pitstoppromotions.co.uk](mailto:brian@pitstoppromotions.co.uk)

I am, yours etc,  
Brian Steptoe

.....

Sir,  
I was fortunate to receive a Scalextric Drift set from Santa and I have a few observations which may help other owners.

The two Nissan cars operate most effectively with the magnet in the forward position - this is fine for 180° spins but actual drifting is less easy. I tried the cars without magnets and the drifting was much improved but the guide blade then lost downforce and the cars became very jerky runners. The contact between the tiny wipers and the rings on the floor pan is critical for smooth running so I reluctantly had to replace the magnet. Has anybody found a cure for this problem?

I am, yours etc,  
Clifford Rustage



Sir,

I am writing not just on behalf of myself but, I am sure, on behalf of all of the NSCC members and their partners who were fortunate to attend the recent NSCC/Hornby Weekend. I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations and thanks to Rob Smith for having organised such an enjoyable weekend, it was the best NSCC/Hornby Weekend we've had for some years. It was great to welcome and meet so many new faces and there was a really friendly, warm atmosphere over the whole weekend. The racing was fun, the display of members' cars and accessories spanning the 50 years of the existence of Scalextric very interesting, Jon Hewitt and Andy Carmichael produced a challenging(!) quiz for the Saturday evening supper, and the Question and Answer session with Mike Walters (Hornby's Developments Director) and Adrian Norman was the most informative and engaging one that I can recall.

It was also a real pleasure to have Roger Gillham present, he found himself signing many members' books and catalogues as well as, of course, 'A Race Through Time'. Our new Chairman, Peter, conducted the auction with good humour and aplomb, and managed to persuade many people to place decent bids which helped to achieve a good figure for Hornby's nominated charity, Cancer Care. He was very ably assisted by Rob, who had us all entertained by his amusing descriptions of some of the smaller items. He, Adrian Leggett and Adrian Norman were the early arrivals on the Friday afternoon and got the large and fun-to-

drive Scalextric Digital track assembled, checked and running, so that by the time Sandi and I arrived with the NSCC display cabinets later on Friday afternoon, they were all intent on racing and testing the track, and had to be dragged away from it to help assemble the display cabinets. Rob deserves everybody's special thanks because he had gone ahead and conscientiously and diligently organised the event, putting everything into it, even though we were in an election period. I hope that he will not mind me expressing special thanks to him because he has also done this whilst having been obliged to deal with some testing family circumstances. I am sure that I speak on behalf of all the attendees when I say that Rob has organised a splendid weekend, for which he deserves everybody's thanks and applause.

I am, yours etc,  
Stephen Barber, NSCC Secretary.

.....  
Sir,

Just a note to say a big thank you to the NSCC and Pendle Slot Racing for the excellent MRRC Chaparral Christmas competition car. It really is outstanding and couldn't have come at a better time since illness has prevented me from travelling to swapmeets for the last few months or so.

A real tonic - I've always said that Archie is a cat of impeccable taste and judgement.

I am, yours etc,  
Phil Lanham







## 50425 Ford Focus WRC

By Matt Tucker

In my opinion rallying is the purest form of motor sport, pitting man and machine against the road with tenths of seconds separating the best drivers over many miles of stages. The World Rally Championship (WRC) is the pinnacle of rallying and tests the driver's skill and car's resilience over a huge array of surfaces and environments. To win the driver's or manufacturer's title is no easy feat and both man and machine need to master 16 very different events, including the twisty tortuous car breaking boulder strewn roads of Cyprus, the incredible fast and flowing stages of Finland, the snow and ice of Sweden, the grippy tarmac roads of France, the slippery mud tracks of Wales and the marble gravel surfaces of Australia – do this and you might win the coveted driver's or manufacturer's championship of the world.

In 2006 Ford managed to accomplish their long held goal and won the manufacturer's world championship after a 26 year barren

period since they last won it with their infamous Escort RS1800 MkII. They won with their latest incarnation of the Focus driven by the hugely accomplished double World Champion Grönholm and the young Hirvonen. They did not win the driver's title with Grönholm missing out by 1pt to the brilliant Loeb in the Citroën Xsara – 1pt sounds extremely close but in reality Loeb missed the last two events with a broken arm. However, even if Loeb did compete in the last two events, Ford would have still have won the manufacturer's title.

Ninco have released a good range of WRC cars over the recent few years with the Subaru Impreza, Peugeot 307 and Mitsubishi Lancer all being available. They are all very quick cars and on my rally track the Peugeot and Mitsubishi hold the lap record of 13.7 seconds with the Subaru about a second off the pace. However all easily beat my SCX and Scalextric cars. How would the Focus match up?





The livery is that of the car driven by Grönholm in the 2006 Finnish rally – Ninco have captured the lines and stance of the Focus although the wheels are too small (but they provide best slot car handling). The tampo printing is crisp and accurate but there are some areas of paint fade and a couple of small patches around the exhaust that the paint missed altogether. If you are after an accurate replica for sitting on your shelf then these niggles will affect your enjoyment of the car but if the car (as it should be) is for hammering round your track then the slight defects do not affect its desirability one bit.

I did not even bother trying to run the car with the magnet in place and I removed the body to get rid of it. I noted the car has a single belt driven 4WD (I find a double belt system beneficial), NC5 motor, small Oz style wheels, sprung guide, independent suspension (hard at front; soft at rear) and well lubricated gears.

With no tuning I put the car on my rally track and set off to get used to the car – it only took a couple of laps and then I tried some timed stages. I was quickly reeling off 14.5 seconds laps and, as I got more used to the car, I managed a 14.0 seconds lap. This is with no tuning and I'm sure with gluing and truing another few tenths and the lap record will easily be found.

I tried it on my Sport track and found a quick but controllable car that handled very well, was difficult to de-slot and gave excellent drifts.

The Focus is quick and a good stable mate with the Lancer and 307 although the Impreza will struggle to keep up (just like the 2006 season was in reality!). This is a great car, it looks mean, low and aggressive and performs exceptionally well – nice one Ninco, just need an updated Impreza and the Citroën C4. ■





## Ortmann 1/24<sup>th</sup> Scale Kits

By Phil Insull

I'm not easily surprised these days, but I must admit I was surprised at this year's Early Bird 50 event. I had pitched my racing box and cars next to Colin Spark and Bob Rackham of RS Slot Racing who, along with competing, had also brought along some of their wares, including a wide selection of Ortmann tyres. RS Slot Racing is a sole importer into the UK for Michael Ortmann's huge range of slot tyres, and these little beauties are both popular and effective on the Wolverhampton routed track. What surprised, however, was the discovery that Ortmann also produce 1/24<sup>th</sup> scale slot car kits, with some examples on display at Early Bird's beautifully made up by Bob Rackham.



My works Lotus 38 not quite up to Bob Rackham's standards.

1/24<sup>th</sup> scale racing is big in Germany, with mainstream producer Carrera producing standard track wide enough for both 1/32 and 1/24 scale slot cars, and obviously Ortmann have predominantly aimed for the German market. Designed to fit onto the multi adjustable Scholer slimline steel chassis the body kits are available in the UK exclusively through RS Slot Racing and may be purchased as just body kits, or with chassis, or with MRRC/Sigma guide,

axles, bearings, gears, wheels and Ortmann tyres as a complete rolling kit. As a bonus, buyers of the complete rolling kit also get a Fox motor to power it along. There are a number of kits with the Jim Clark Indianapolis '65 winning Lotus 38, Dan Gurney's Yamaha sponsored Lotus 38, John Surtees' 64 World title winning F1512, and the 65 BRM P261.



The Scholer Chassis from underneath

I opted for the full rolling kits of the Clark Lotus, Surtees F1512 and BRM P261, and got an additional bonus along with the Fox motor. The bonus is a biggie as the Scholer chassis had been pre-assembled for me by Bob saving me what looked like a bit of a fiddly job. The reason for Bob's kind pre-assembly partly stems from the fact that Scholer don't put any spare screws, nuts, bolts or washers in the chassis kits. With typical Teutonic efficiency Scholer seem to believe that no one will drop one on the floor or accidentally chuck them out with the packaging, they clearly haven't met someone as clumsy or untidy as me! All I needed to do was simply fit the MRRC/Sigma bearings, contrate gear axles, and guide, followed by the alloy wheels and Ortmann tyres, solder on the motor wires and the chassis was ready to run.



**My BRM P261 with moustachioed Graham Hill**

Next onto the body kits, these are nicely crafted but do have quite a lot of excess flashing on them, which needs trimming off and cleaning up. The body material is incredibly light but strong, seeming more like a plastic than a resin and being big makes them very easy to work on. All three come with a driver figure, the Lotus being a three quarter length one, with a simpler head and shoulders bust for the other two. The Lotus kit also has the long tuned Indianapolis exhausts, and the inlet trumpet covers, the F1512 has a separate rear gearbox casing, and all three have appropriate wheel inserts and clear plastic windscreens.

The three bodies were given a quick rub down with P1200 wet and dry before being hand painted with Tamiya acrylic. The bodies were lightly tacked onto the chassis with a couple of spots of epoxy glue and the detail parts painted and fitted. To complete the kits I

used some Maxi Model inlet trumpets and fashioned my own roll hoops and suspension rods out of some scrap plastic. Finally the decals were applied, along with a coat of clear lacquer to protect them.

OK. So far so good but how do they run? Packing the three into my race box I headed off to Wolves to give them a shake down. I also took with me my EJ's re-issues of the sixties Revell-Monogram 1/24<sup>th</sup> scale Lotus 25 and 62 BRM to compare them against. Running on the Ninco track was not possible as the guide flags would have required trimming down, so I stuck to the wooden routed track for the test runs. First of all to set a benchmark I tried the two EJ's cars, both being equipped with a Pitman 26d. The Lotus proved to be the slightly quicker of the two at exactly twelve seconds per lap using a plunger controller with a 15ohm MRRC resistor. Next I ran the three Ortmann cars, and was ➡➡







**My F1512 in the works colours of John Surtees**

immediately running at around ten seconds per lap with all three. In spite of the Fox motor having less power than the 26ds, the Scholer chassis are nicely balanced and the Ortmann tyres clearly gave far better mechanical grip than the rubber ones fitted to the EJ's cars. I tried a set of rears on the EJ Lotus and improved by a second per lap just through the additional grip. Back to the three Ortmann cars - I cleaned the tyres and braids, re-oiled the bearings and gears and decided to go for it. The BRM and F1512 were still very closely matched getting down to 9.90 seconds per lap but the

clear winner was the Lotus 38 which I managed to hustle round in 9.75 seconds on its best lap. The reason the Lotus was quicker I have put down to the fact that I assembled the car with slightly offset suspension as per the real thing and this definitely seemed to help on some of the tighter corners.

My only criticism would be that all three cars were a bit light at the front leading to the occasional de-slotting under hard cornering, but this can be cured with a bit of lead inside the nose cones. I was particularly impressed with the resistance to impact damage having thumped the barriers nose first at high speed with all three, and managing to roll the Lotus on the Wolves Esses without any visible damage. If 1/24<sup>th</sup> scale takes your fancy then you should really try one of these; they do require a somewhat smoother driving style to 1/32<sup>nd</sup> slot cars but, once you get used to that, they really are great fun. Finally if, like me, your eyesight gets worse each year then you will find that painting a 1/24<sup>th</sup> scale car is easier than a 1/32<sup>nd</sup> and you can still see the 1/24<sup>th</sup> at the far end of your slot circuit. ■

# 100 YEAR BITS & PIECES 100 YEAR

## Bugatti update Roger confesses all

Further to last month's excellent article about the Scalextric Bugatti and regarding my supposed purchase of the red Bugatti from an ex toolmaker in Havant - this was the story I put around at the time but the Bugatti and the blue/red Auto Union were given to me by Hornby's Richard Lines. I also obtained a number of overseas catalogues at the same time which I eventually gave to Steve de Havilland. However, at the time Scalextric certainly did not want this known as they were concerned that they may start to get calls from other collectors hoping to get some nice pieces.

Your comment about the discovery of a Bugatti mould test run brought back some memories. I am not too sure whether this was actually at the time of the 1982 England v Trinidad competition, being a serious collector myself then I would have been onto the 'case' had the Bugatti been seen at the time. A more likely answer was that, as the NSCC Factory Liaison officer at the time, I usually arranged a couple of visits a year to Margate when huge discounts could be obtained in the factory shop, I think that possibly the Bugatti was seen at the time of one of these visits but it is all a long time ago and memories fade.

Regarding the competition I was the overall England Team Manager, please see the image of both the Trinidad and England teams, the final England team all seem to have come from the Molesey club. Martin O'Reilly is not pictured which was strange, he was undoubtedly the best driver around at the time. I think possibly that the Cheam and Hadlow clubs also participated and it was a knock out competition to see which club represented England.



1982 England and Trinidad teams

I do remember obtaining one of my three Bugattis from the Harrow Model Shop in Middlesex. I walked in one day and the owner advised me that a customer had brought in an unusual Scalextric car but wanted a lot of money for it. It turned out to be a race tuned version and the price required was £25 - probably the equivalent of £200? now. I have absolutely no recollection where my other Bugatti came from, it certainly did not cost a lot of money, maybe an exchange for some mint/boxed Sunbeam Tigers that I managed to obtain. The Bugattis are all in good hands now with the same owner who bought my collection many years ago.

*Roger Gillham*

## Jump Jockey Sets

As a result of several requests Roger will be including the 1970 Jump Jockey system in his 7th edition book. Has any member any sets and accessories that Roger can photograph please? Hopefully within reasonable travelling distance of Windsor, Berkshire where he now lives. Email address is: [scalextric@rogergillham.co.uk](mailto:scalextric@rogergillham.co.uk) There will be a free copy of the book and a name check for the provider of course.





# Formula Slot

By Gary Skipp

**F**ormula One - for many years the pinnacle of world motorsport. Some will still argue that this is the case today, but I am one of many who would describe it as more ridicule than pinnacle.

I enjoy many aspects of motorsport and a large part of that is a love of historic racing. The majesty of the sixties provided a fantastic array of powerful and elegant racing machines which, at my youthful age, can only imagine tearing round some of the legendary tracks now assigned to folklore. Throughout the decades until recently, there have always been something that you can consider a 'cool F1 car'. I grew up every Sunday watching Nigel Mansell and Ayrton Senna race wheel to wheel around some slightly less legendary tracks that also don't exist any more, and F1 was good.

By the time I became more involved with the slot car hobby, F1 was terrible. The only car that won was red, and piloted by you-know-who.

For this reason, I never bought any F1 slot cars. I bought what I liked at the time, sports cars and saloons. I saw a few Scalextric F1 cars with large magnets going very quickly indeed around a few tracks which impressed me for ten seconds before I decided I preferred driving slot cars without magnetic aids. Formula One in 1/32 was never given another thought...

Until. I began club racing at a decent level and part of seniors night was the F1 class. At the time three cars worked. And one broke down. This unreliable participant was the ProSlot Ferrari which I disliked immensely because it reminded me exactly of what real Formula One was like, and how it had been since the late 90s. However, choices #2 and #3 are the ever clichéd Ferrari F1/87 and McLaren MP4/4 made by whichever Scalextric brand had the moulds at the time. When ProSlot quietly disappeared and everyone's Ferraris split their last chassis, only the Scalextric offerings were left. ➡➤



Subsequently I found an F1/87 but more recently I've been thinking about Formula One in terms of slot cars. Now that I understand a bit more about the hobby, and I've the money to buy the cars I like, I've started getting hold of the older F1 cars I was captivated by as a kid. The late eighties and early nineties were well supported by Scalextric and I've acquired a fair few to turn into good cars with a bit of 'studio engineering'. I'm lucky; these cars lend their dimensions well to slot car performance. They're long, low, excessively wide. Many run like a dog out of the box but, once fixed, they're great. I thought about how cool it would be if, in 40 years time, the guys at Wolves are doing their retro events for this period of car. I'd be in F1 heaven.

However. The idea of a Formula One event, a modern one, for cars with wings and sidepods, didn't sit right in my head. It seems strange and alien. Then I realised, nobody actually runs large scale events for these cars at all. Few run it at club level. Most competition events are for sports cars, because of their high performance. I mean, nobody wants to race slow cars and, besides the aforementioned 'gruesome twosome' (Ferrari/McLaren), all F1 cars in slot form, unless scratch built by a maestro, are rubbish! Well, without the magnet.

You only need to look at modern cars to see why. They're much narrower than they used to be, and all that crazy bodywork leaves no space for a motor. Scalextric sidestepped this with the Moto GP unit which would have been a good solution if the motor was actually any good. There's no body to float either because it's clamped to the chassis around several curvy surfaces. SCX persist with steering front wheels and plain wrong wheel/tyre sizes, as did Ninco (steering, anyway). The only modern single-seater racer with potential is the IRL Indycar, but nobody likes IRL so it doesn't have enough appeal.

It seems, that in certain aspects, slot F1 follows real F1. It was good in the past, now it's a bit poo. I imagine that in 1988 racing the brand new Ferraris and McLarens was

enormous fun but I can't imagine the idea of racing near-on 20 year old cars sits well with most club racers. I love the two cars personally, they're good 'n' proper F1 cars. What I stared at on the TV screen for hours in my Babygro. But it even grates on me to see a grid of six cars which are exactly the same, starting every race with my fellow competitors praying to slot god that their pro-turbo will not fill the room with smoke on lap nine. But, with no competitive alternative and F1 cars of the 1:1 world becoming ever stranger in shape, there is little hope for the future.

Fly, are of course, releasing the March 761 as previewed at the Nuremberg Toy Fair, but it'll be a bit of a one off until a few more seventies cars are released for it to compete with. There are the Vanquish models but the over scale issue is an all too familiar one. And there's still no promise it'll run well...

So roll on 85-95 F1 fest, open rules but emphasis on scale models, and I'll be there for Friday qualifying! Cigarette advertising all round and sparks flying from those low diffusers. 1/32 tyre warmers anyone? Just kidding. Maybe... ■

