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THE INDEPENDENT CLUB FOR SLOT-CAR ENTHUSIASTS

The Full Monte

If "Bloody Daft Idea Animal" were to suggest a Formula One race round the streets of Monaco today nobody would fall for it. The whole thing is inherently stupid - too narrow, too dangerous, no pit garages and way too expensive. Fortunately though Mr Elf and Mr Safety weren't around when the first race was run and it remains to this day as one of those races on everybody's 'bucket list'.

As an actual race it is nothing special - it was virtually impossible to overtake in the 1950s let alone today but, as a place to witness the supreme skills of a Grand Prix driver in action, it is beyond compare. Nowhere else can you get so close to an F1 car in full flight and the engine noise bouncing off the high rise buildings makes you think you have died and gone to motorsport heaven.

It is often stated that only the really great drivers win at Monaco and this is true to a large extent - a check through the list reveals that all the usual suspects appear, often several times, in the top spot. Strangely though, Jim Clark never won there and several lesser lights have popped up in the hall of fame - Ricardo Patrese, Olivier Panis, Carlos Reutemann, Jean Pierre Beltoise, David Coulthard - hardly top drawer talent!

This year, of course, a certain Lewis Hamilton has joined the illustrious ranks. Only time will tell if he is up there with the immortals but one thing is for sure - he had 'champion's luck' at Monaco. Everybody saw him just get away with his little indiscretion early in the race but few will have noticed that he suffered a second puncture - on the slowing down lap! One lap earlier and he would have been toast - now that is the sort of good fortune that wins World Championships.

I do seem to be developing Jeremy Clarkson tendencies these days - another of my editorial ramblings nearly finished and no mention of the main subject of this magazine, toy plastic cars. Better make an effort then - I've just received my Scalextric Club Hamilton McLaren and very good it is too. I wonder which cost more - the purchase of the Corgi brand or the helmet licence?

Till next month
Brian



Apologies for a short article this month but I have been busy with work and finalising details for our SCX NSCC Club car.

Let's kick off with some great news (for classic rally fans); SCX have announced that they will be releasing a new livery for the Ford Escort MK2. As per the original release the car will be a UK exclusive edition, this time limited to 3000 cars. The new livery is the Eaton Yale car from the 1971 RAC Rally driven and won by Hannu Mikkola. There will be two versions of the car, 2000 will be released in the clean livery (start line) and a further 1000 in a dirty version (muddy). Reference numbers for the cars are as follows; Clean SCX 63550; Dirty SCX 63560. Delivery is expected around October of this year, but it may be sooner.

The model will feature the pale blue wheels that could often be found on Escorts from this era and thanks to Steve at AEC I now know why they were blue. Most of the teams at the time used Minilite wheels and many used Dunlop

tyres. Wheels would be sent to Dunlop for tyres, before and during the event. However, getting the right wheels back was hit and miss so the Ford team decided to ensure they got their wheels back by painting them blue! All that said, there are plenty of photos of Escort with two blue and two silver wheels so clearly it didn't work all the time.

Based on previous demand for the Cossack livery, demand is expected to be high so best get your pre-orders in asap.

On a more modern note the two latest release WTCC have arrived in the UK. BMW 320i Ref 63120 and Seat Leon ETC Ref 63100. Look out on the Spanish Web site for info on the recent Tecnitoys sponsored Seat Leon performance and race info.

UK SCX distributor AEC have begun a series of SCX Nascar racing events. These events will be held at local slot race clubs throughout the UK. Several events have recently been held, more details to follow as venues and dates are confirmed. ■





I finally got my hands on a copy of this year's Ninco catalogue - number 15. As with their previous catalogues from recent years, it is beautifully produced with thirty-two full colour pages including the cover which is of a thicker gauge paper and even glossier than the pages housed within. It is in keeping with their new "darker" image and features pictures of the new-look packaging of their sets and accessories. The N-Digital system is described in more detail than before and includes some great pictures which convey the action that can be had with this quite different concept of slot-racing.

The all important part numbers accompany mini-pictures of the various track sections available in three different surfaces. No mention is given to the special track sets such as Dune, Snow and Chicane Curve, although the Asphalt Extension Kit remains. The car section outlines all the benefits that Ninco cars offer throughout the four categories of cars currently available; GT, Raid, Rally and Classic. Pictures of the full-size cars that new releases are based on span a full four pages. However, there are some cars that have been, and will be released, which do not feature within these pages...

The ProRace and Racing components such as gears, axles, wheels and tyres are all listed with good clear pictures: an excellent reference for choosing the best parts to race-tune your car.

Ninco's UK distributor, A.B.Gee, kindly gave me a few copies of this catalogue which I will be happy to send out to any member who can tell me about their favourite Ninco product (car, set or accessory) and why. Entries by e-mail only to ninconews@nsc.co.uk, closing date 20th July.

Any time, any place, anywhere...

One of the cars not listed in the catalogue is the "Martini" Porsche 934 (50485). This is a simple but effective livery, instantly recognisable, harking back to the 70s and 80s when the Martini backed Porsche works teams dominated GT racing. I have been unable to find any information on the full-size car this model is based on and it is questionable whether the 934 actually competed in this livery. This does not detract from the fact that it is a very striking livery and will, I'm sure, find its place within the wide variety of 911/934 liveries already available.

New Lamborghinis?

The web site shows some quick flashes of a new range of Gallardos. Available in four different colours - blue, yellow, orange and red - these look like they will be released in a similar style to the series of Porsche 997s earlier this year. Look out for more information about these beautiful and ever-so-quick Lambos next month.

TrackMapPlus

The latest version of Ninco's own track design software has just been released under the name of *TrackMap Plus*. This allows you to design your own circuit or build pre-designed tracks of up to 8-lanes. As with the previous version, it is possible to select analogue or N-Digital sections to design your desired layout and will enable you to keep an account of all your stock track sections and list those required to make up any given design. The software is accompanied by ➡

a general instruction booklet which outlines the installation process and gives information on the drop-down menu headings you can expect to find once operational. The opening statement reads *"The default program language is the same as that of the computer operating system"*. Unfortunately, this does not apply to the installation screens. If you have installed software before then you will probably be able to load it successfully. If not, don't despair as you only need to click "Aceptar" and then click the button containing a picture of a computer. Once loaded, track design can begin. For those of you familiar with the previous version this one is not very different. Subtle changes to the title screens are noticeable but operating the program is identical.

Looking at each of the drop-down function menus, the first one, "Circuit" is where to start. From this menu a new design can be started or an existing layout can be opened. There are a staggering 153 pre-designed track plans to choose from covering a variety of configurations which include some based on actual race circuits from around the world such as Le Mans, Monte Carlo, Nurburgring and Spa. The designs cater for limited space (2m x 0.9m) where a two lane, 14-section layout will do, right up to the more adventurous layouts designed to take up an exhibition hall! The largest of the designs shows half of the 16-lane circuit used during the 2006 Ninco World Cup. This is represented by two 8-lane mirror-image circuits, each covering 15m x 6m, and making use of over 600 track sections *each!* This menu also offers the choice of 2, 4, 6 or 8 lanes in either analogue or digital designs. On completion of your circuit, a track name can be allocated to the design before being saved.

The next menu, "Sections", shows virtually all of the individual track pieces available from Ninco. (I use the term "virtually" as I was unable to find some pieces such as the Asphalt and Snow curve chicanes and the Raid power straight). Each track section can be selected and added to the screen by a simple click of the mouse. To cycle through different "surfaces", change direction of curves or change the type of N-Digital piece, again all that is required is an

effortless click. An option to add borders can be selected to automatically fit these around the circuit as it is designed.

The "Content" menu lists all sections used and is a useful tool to discover all the parts required to build a layout. The "Inventory" menu allows you to update your own stock of track sections and updates itself when building a circuit, keeping you informed exactly how many pieces of each section you have left to use.

The "Move" menu allows your design to be positioned anywhere on the screen, zooming in and out to accommodate the overall size as it develops. The design can also be rotated, essential if you are trying to get a 'best-fit' into a pre-determined area. A useful measuring tool enables overall dimensions or point-to-point distances to be checked.

Some new icons appear within the "Icons" menu where you can decorate your design with throttles, cars, marshalling position and warning signs. Outlines can also be drawn - useful for checking you stay within baseboard dimensions.

Finally, a "Preferences" menu allows background colours to be changed and x-y co-ordinates to be tracked. In addition, the overall dimensions can be monitored with x-y axis showing dimensions as the layout is designed.

All-in-all, this is a nice, inexpensive piece of software. It covers just about everything required for designing a layout and gives some important information such as the length of each lane and overall space required to accommodate the design. In my opinion there are a few shortcomings, particularly with the missing track sections. If you already own the previous version, upgrading will be a luxury as I feel it does not offer any significant changes but with a price comparable to a set of wheels and tyres, at least it's an affordable luxury!

Ninco World Cup - Update

The Ninco World Cup 2008 gets underway this month with the first of the qualifying rounds being held at Wye Valley on 14th and 15th June (Happy Father's Day!) followed by the Wolverhampton round two weeks later on 28th and 29th June. *See you there!* ■



BY **ROB SMITH**

MESSAGES

FROM MARGATE



Last month it seemed that the 2008 release schedule was getting into full stride but it now appears to have stalled again with only two releases to describe this month.

C2937 Ford Escort RS 1600 Mexico

Once or twice a year Hornby produce an exclusive model for their Collector's Centres. These are the bigger retailers and franchises that, in theory, specialise in selling Scalextric. The first model for 2008 is an excellent Ford Escort Mexico. This is finished in the stunning road car colours of orange with twin black stripes.

This release is limited to just 1500 examples in the UK, most sold out immediately and some cars are fetching high prices on eBay. Delivery seems to have been a bit haphazard for this car with just a few examples hitting the market early in April and the rest not reaching the shops until the end of the month.

C2882 Stillen Ford GT No 907

This latest release of the Ford GT is the same stunning shade of orange with twin silver stripes as the real car pictured in the 2008 Scalextric Catalogue but now it is complete with a racing livery. ➡





Stillen are an American tuning house offering a range of go-faster parts for a variety of cars including the Ford GT. More information can be found at www.stillen.com.

Set Car reference Numbers

The reference numbers for the set exclusives are now known. These are as follows:

C2861W and C2862W Lamborghini Gallardos from C1224 Street Sliderz

C2930A Aston Martin DBS from C2922A Detailed

C2930W Aston Martin DBS from C1220 Super resistant

C2930DW Aston Martin DBS from C1222 Super resistant

C2931AW Mini Cooper red, C2932AW white and C2933AW blue - all from C2921A "Italian Job" set.

C2961W Porsche 997 Super resistant in C1223 Triple Cup Set

C2963A Alfa Romeo 159 from C2992A

C2963DW Alfa Romeo 159 from C1222 Super resistant

C2963W Alfa Romeo 159 from C1220 Super resistant

The digital James Bond set cars are the same as the analogue versions but will have the DPR chip factory fitted. When I learnt that the James Bond cars had the same reference numbers as the set cars I was initially horrified as detailed cars are much more interesting than one piece bodyshells. Hornby assure me that the limited edition Sport cars are fully detailed and will be superb. Apparently the super resistant versions will have separate black windows but the same main body shell. I await the results with interest!

Catalogue Additions

There have been a couple of additions to the catalogue announced. Most importantly is C2962 Ford Focus WRC Latvala as there are so few rally cars in the Hornby range. A digital version of the red nosed Aston C2758D will be available in Q3. A twin pack of Digital super resistant Mini Coopers is C2949. They have both been set cars in the past. Likewise C2955 Drift Twinpack contains the orange and green Nissans previously available as set cars.

C2897 Peugeot 908 HDI FAP which is the eagerly awaited LMP car will have the 2008 livery and not last year's as described in the catalogue. ■





After a slightly elongated pit stop last month Carrera Corner is back and there's sooo much to mention.

Now that the initial teething hiccups of getting the stock into the UK is sorted out and with the distribution within the UK now up and running, the new cars are literally racing through customs and onto the shelves.

I have always liked Carrera due to their ability to produce cars that other manufacturers don't and with some exceptional engineering behind the models. There were a few issues about the build quality in the past but, during the last few years the standard of build of the cars has increased dramatically and so now not only do they run superbly from the box, but they also look amazing as they go around the track.....and in terms of cost, they are now so competitively priced that they are cheaper to buy in the UK than from the USA!!

This month's latest available cars are a bumper crop of 6 cars – and I want them all!!

First of all a very limited edition 2004 Olivier Panis Toyota TF104 – a bit of a blast from the past but an excellent driver in this team.



Next up for Endurance racing fans is the Peugeot 908 HDi Diesel Le Mans. Driven by Marc Gene, Pedro Lamy, S. Sarrazin and N. Minassian, this car won the Le Mans series in Valencia and Monza last year.



A welcome addition to your Endurance car collection

Another Endurance class car – but unusual amongst slot car makers is the BMW Z4 Coupé Schubert. This car has raced at a 24 hour race at Silverstone, and as far as I know is only available from Carrera in this scale. ➡➡



Superb to race and has bright lights both front and rear

Now we come to what I call the “fun” cars...where Carrera “push the envelope”. First is the outrageous looking Opel Commodore Pan-Am.



This car looks like a Group 4/5 car and with the scooped “snow plough” front air dam and huge rear wing is a car that you just have to love... This version of the Commodore was called the “jumbo”....I wonder why. Again this car has bright working lights and two sets of magnets to adjust to any driver capabilities.

I have just got mine and will be reviewing for next month’s Journal and am salivating at the thought of watching this car go through its paces.

Next we have two cars from the Carrera Hot Rod stable – and officially available in the UK for the first time.

First up is the bright yellow Willys Coupé High Performance car with working front and rear lights which just sums up the blown engine, and hot rodding of the early 60s in the USA.



Next is the 1932 Ford which has been given the cut down roof and wide wheel treatment. In a stunning grey – with excellent tampo printed artwork, and chrome engine. Another car to look forward to reviewing.

All Carrera cars have dual magnets to allow tuning to match your track and racing style, as well as a reversible switch to let you go the other way round the track.

Other Carrera related news

Sir Stirling Moss drove a Jaguar D Type through Bradford recently to mark the opening of the UK’s first purpose built motoring themed conference centre.



A Jaguar C Type that took part in the famous Mille Miglia in 1953 was also driven by James Hanson, the Managing Director of Speedmaster, who has developed the whole project and is a successful racing driver.

More than 150 guests welcomed Sir Stirling and the cars when they arrived at the conference centre which is also the site of the Speedmaster collector and race car showroom where several millions pounds worth of classic motor cars were on show. Part of the new conference centre will include a large Carrera circuit and Speedmaster will also be a local distributor for the Carrera range.

Does anyone need any other excuse to go and see some spectacular cars? ■



KITS 'N' BOBS

by PHIL INSULL

A busy old month with the MRE Classic in May has left me little time for building, so apologies for the kits I promised to have finished and failed to do. These include TRRC's gorgeous Auto Union and Mercedes streamliners, which Marlon had on display at the MRE classic, Traffic Models Transit Diesel MKI, and E.J. Hobbies Ferrari 365P2. The latter is the Strombecker body with a new E.J.'s brass chassis, Fox motor, etc and is a steal at \$55 for the complete kit.

One company who have been busy this month is MMK who have released the long tailed version of the Maserati Tipo 61 'Birdcage' as raced at Le Mans in 1960 by the Camoradi team. Sadly for drivers Lloyd "Lucky" Casner and Jim Jeffords, the car retired from the race in the 11th hour with sand in the gearbox. The second release from MMK is the 1962/3 rear engine Scarab as it appeared in Reventlow's colours at Road America, the real car going on to score success at the Nassau speed week events under John Mecom Racing Team colours driven by AJ Foyt.



**MMK's long tail Maserati Tipo 61
and rear engine Scarab**



Penelope Pitlane's new Gordini T32

On display at the MRE Classic was the first OCAR / World Classics Chevette HS and I am told that the production kits are just days away from being available. The display one looked even better than I had hoped for and it was in Pentti Arikkala colours to boot. I have managed to finish the new Penelope Pitlane Gordini T32 and have included a photograph, the etched grille and white metal exhausts setting it off particularly well along with the PP wire wheels. The PP website shows pictures of the pre-production Napier-Railton as raced by John Cobb at Brooklands, and hopefully Steve can be persuaded to produce the Utah record breaking version with stub exhausts and special starter system. Who knows they could even do a parachute testing version, as the car was used by GQ parachutes up to 1954, or the long tail version as the car appeared in the film, "Pandora and the flying Dutchman".

Slot Classic has now released their Jaguar MKII 3.8. This stunning car is in road livery with a chauffeur and milady in the back returning from a shopping spree complete with hat box. I make no apology for including two ➡➡



“Jeeves drive faster please there’s a divine hat at Harrod’s I simply must have”

pictures of this excellent slot car as just about everyone who has seen it thinks it is perfect. The proportions look absolutely spot on and the detailed exterior trim includes the leaping cat on the bonnet and perfect photo etched mirrors, wipers, etc. As I said before, these cars are limited to 500 per production run and pre-sell out well before production starts, such is the quality of Slot Classic workmanship. If you want any future ones you need to pre-order as soon as they announce them.



“Yes Milady, one will put one’s foot down straight away”

Slot.It have announced their next few releases, these being a Mercedes C9 Le Mans 3 car limited edition set, and the “Hawaiian Tropic” sponsored Porsche 956 that finished second in the 1984 Le Mans. Distributors A B Gee now have stock of the new Audi Premium line cars with sidewinder motors, along with the new Flat 6 and Boxer 2 motors, new angle winder conversion kits, in line pinions, angle winder crowns and new P5 compound slick F1 tyres. M B Slot have their new Dodo 23,000 rpm high magnetic motor and DS Products introduce their new mini car bench for testing and setting up on the go. Finally this month, Tarn Model Foundry now have some road side barrier sets, ideal for police road blocks or turning your track into the M25 by reducing it down to one lane, and SlotCity have some nice new MR dioramas with a mountain road and a snow rally - ideal for showing off your prized slot cars on. ■

Carp Valley Raceway

By Robert Rushmer

It all began some four years ago - my loft had been a no go area, apart from the odd mouse or two, so my son-in-law suggested we board it out and build a slot car track up there.

If you are going to do the job you might as well do the whole scenic bit so all the usual basics were acquired - chicken wire, papier maché, balsa wood, cardboard, paints etc - and we set to work. The results of our labours can be seen in the accompanying pictures; we probably went a bit over the top with some of the scenic items but that is the great thing about “toy plastic car world”, it’s your own fantasy race track.

The track covers approximately 17ft x 10ft, is ‘L’ shaped and is fully fitted with lighting for night races. The layout contains a harbour complete with boats, a church with a wedding taking place, even a fairground with a big wheel,

chairplanes, sideshows, bowling alley and a mechanical organ that actually works! There is also a snow covered wooded area with a frozen pond complete with skaters and a snow clearing gang working nearby. Other features include a working cornfield and a derelict church. ➡➡



Overhead view of the fairground end



The large paddock area



Exiting 'La Racasse' - the harbour is on the right



The busy pit lane



Hurry up with the wedding vicar, I'm in the next race!



The Auto Union frightens the life out of the farm workers



I told him to take care through the forest!

On the 'racing side' all the usual items are there - entrance building, pit lane, refreshment kiosk, Dunlop bridge, crash scene etc - 95% of the items are scratchbuilt. I am currently constructing a mechanised cycle track complete with working cyclists.



Tail sliding past the ruined church



Roll up, roll up - all the fun of the fair

I must say how much membership of the NSCC has helped with all this - I have acquired so many bits and pieces at swapmeets and the track articles in the Journal have been very helpful.

The name - Carp Valley Raceway? Well, there was originally a fishing lake (as at Mallory Park) on the site presently occupied by the fairground! I hope you like my track, I have certainly enjoyed building it. ■



Top of the bill this month is the brand new Ferrari F40, which I've devoted more than half my report to. It's been a bit like waiting for a bus, where you wait for ages and then four come along at once. Also, there's news of some special editions, the new Poly series cars and the return of the pit lane accessories.

Ferrari F40

After a delay of what seemed like an eternity, Fly's Ferrari F40 is finally upon us. Was it worth the wait? - Prancing horse or seaside donkey? - read on!

The Ferrari F40 is a mid-engine super car produced between 1987 and 1992, replacing the 288 GTO. It is powered by a V8 2.9 litre twin-turbo engine and constructed of Kevlar, carbon fibre and aluminium. Designed by Pininfarina it was to be the last car commissioned by Enzo Ferrari before his death in 1988. At the time of Enzo's death, Ferrari's dominance in international motorsport had faded somewhat. Enzo himself was aware he wasn't going to be around much longer and wanted to remind the world of Ferrari's capabilities as a manufacturer. With the company's impending 40th anniversary, this provided an ideal opportunity, and so the F40 ➡



was born. It is a no-frills super car that could be described as a racing car for the road and was the first road legal production car to break the 200 mph (322 km/h) barrier. No-frills meant no carpet, radio or door handles, but did include air-conditioning. To reduce weight further the car was fitted with fixed plastic windows, but later models had windows which could be rolled down. Aerodynamics on this car helped to give it more power, as it has a reduced frontal area and good downforce from its rear wing. Initially, it was intended not to race the F40, but in 1989 it made its debut at Laguna Seca which formed part of the IMSA championship. Driven by Jean Alesi, the car finished third in the GTO category behind the two faster spaceframed Audi 90s, but beat a host of other factory spaceframed entrants. The car soon became a popular choice for privateers competing in various domestic GT series. The F40 was developed further into GTE and LM versions and raced up to 1996, when it eventually became uncompetitive against the McLaren F1 GTR and was subsequently withdrawn from GT racing.

The two standard models available from Fly to-date are in kit form and require a small amount of simple, but fiddly assembly. The whole package is presented in a window card box, containing a crystal display case, a 90% complete bodyshell, chassis and various parts to build into a fully working model. The easy part is assembling the chassis, which can be done in less than five minutes, simple things like clipping in the magnet, motor, axles and guide assembly. The fiddly part is fitting the few remaining exterior detail parts to the bodyshell. This includes tow-hook, front and rear photo-etched grilles, rear light assemblies and aerial. Once the tow-hook is superglued to the front grille, the complete assembly can be slotted into the aperture in the body. As I was only displaying my cars I found the grille held firmly in the slots provided, but if you intend to race them, then superglue is the order of the day. The rear grille is assembled slightly differently in that it slides under a vertical strut down the centre of the aperture and over the body mouldings designed to secure the lights. The only light I superglued



here was the red rectangular fog light. The other four circular ones were sealed on via a heated screwdriver by melting the posts that protrude through to the inside of the car. This then secures the lights and rear grille to the car without the need for gluing. Before the lights are fixed though, a photo-etched circular silver disc fits between the coloured lense and black grille. After the aerial is attached, the completed model screws onto a red base with the instruction sheet which, when folded, forms the backing card.

My opinion of the car is that it looks fantastic and Fly have really managed to capture its aggressive stance. Detailing is of the usual high standard with a full interior, made possible by the sidewinder motor configuration. The wheels deserve a special mention too, as they enhance the model further and give some degree of realism. The rear louvred window reveals the engine and exhaust detail, which can also be seen through the rear grille. My only gripe is it comes as a kit, which may put some people off, but at least there's no painting involved. From now on all replica Ferraris produced by Fly will be in kit form and carry the official Ferrari logo. The four available models at the time of writing are: -

(88283) "Art Sports" #40, IMSA 2hr Topeka 1990, driven by Jean-Louis Schlesser and Jean-Pierre Jabouille. Despite the car suffering with engine problems it was classified in 25th position. It is predominantly red in colour with blue sponsor graphics and silver wheels.

(88284) "Pilot" #34, 24hr Le Mans 1995, classified in 12th position, driven by Carlos Palau, Michel Ferté and Olivier Thevenin. The car is decorated in a medium shade of blue and fitted with white wheels

(99069) "Time" #59. This is a limited edition racing kit fitted with an evo3 racing motor and chassis. The bodyshell is fully detailed like the above standard releases and requires the same level of DIY modelling work, but differs in that it has a lightweight Lexan interior. It is modelled on the car that took part at the 24hr Le Mans

race in 1996, driven by Robin Donovan, Tetsuya Oota and Piero Nappi, although it failed to finish due to problems with the clutch. The model is kitted out to the usual evo3 specification, which includes a red gliss guide, adjustable sprung mounted motor mount and racing motor. One further point of note with this particular release is there is no crystal case and plinth supplied, but Fly have included a backing card in case you wish to display your model using a donor box.

(99066) "Gaugemaster" #69. Continuing this iconic series produced for the Fly UK distributor "Gaugemaster". Once again it is decorated in metallic maroon and adorned with their train icon, together with the usual race #69. Presented in a crystal case mounted on a white plinth with picture backing card. It is limited to 500 units worldwide and a must for any collector of this unique series.

Standard Releases

(88322) BMW M1 "VSD" #72, 24hr Le Mans 1981, driven by François Servanin, Laurent Ferrier and Pierre-François Rousselot. Unfortunately, the car failed to finish the race due to clutch and gearbox problems, this was after it had completed 212 laps. The car is very eye-catching in its appearance and although it is primarily decorated white it has rainbow stripe graphics running diagonally from the driver's front corner to the opposite rear corner.

(88324) Ferrari 250GTO "Maranello Concessionaires" #11. Tourist Trophy 1963 winner, driven by Graham Hill. Another kit presented in a Ferrari window card box, which includes a crystal display box and all the parts needed to bring the model up to full high detail specification. Like the F40 before, assembly is relatively simple, but fiddly. Chassis construction comprises a motor, guide assembly, rear axle, front stub axles and some detail parts too. These include two twin chromed exhausts and front chromed headlight assembly. The exhausts were given the heated screwdriver method to melt the protruding posts and in effect form a strong ➡➡

weld. I much prefer this to using glue as it's instantaneous and makes less mess. The headlight section was simply pushed into the locating holes, although the instructions say to use glue. I found this was unnecessary as it held very securely without. The only additions to the bodywork are the four coloured rear light lenses, which once again were given the heated screw-driver method to secure. The car is decorated red and has a blue tip to the front of the nose. A nice touch is the attention to detail like Graham Hill's helmet, which has been faithfully reproduced.

Special Editions

(99108)Alfa Romeo 156 "Alfa Corse"

Limited to 500 units and commissioned by the "Alfa Corse Club". The car is red and devoid of any decoration apart from the "Alfa Corse" logo on the bonnet. This is an evo3 racing kit and fitted with Lexan interior, stronium wheels, suspension etc. It is mounted on a red plinth with picture backing card.

(99115)Porsche 911T #1. In 1968 Vic Elford together with co-driver David Stone won the 1968 Monte Carlo Rally. This special edition celebrates their return after 40 years. It is decorated in orangey-red and almost identical to the 1968 Monte Carlo winning car previously released in the "Campeones" series (Ref. W08). The model is nicely presented in a hinged card box, which includes photographs and details about Vic and the Monte Carlo Rally.

(08052)MAN TR1400 Truck 'Cepsa' #15

Produced for El Corte Ingles, this celebrates the achievements of three times European Truck racing champion Antonio Albacete, who was victorious in consecutive years from 2005 to 2007. It is limited to 500 units and mounted on a green base with matching backing card. The truck itself is decorated red with blue and white stripes running diagonally back from behind the front wheels.

Polycars

The first of the budget range commissioned by "Poly" of Spain is now available. These are very good value for money and should prove popular with racers of all ages. They are moulded in one bright colour and have minimal sponsor logos printed on. The cars are devoid of any exterior detailing parts, although they do have headlight lenses with the Venturi also having wing mirrors as part of the moulding. The interior is made up of a driver's head and arms mounted onto a flat platform.

Fly have also swapped four of the cars' catalogue reference numbers round. Details of these and the three cars available to-date as follows: -

87000 - Venturi "Shell" #4, yellow. Originally listed as catalogue reference 87003.

87001 - Marcos "Castrol" #2, green.

87002 - Porsche GT1 "Martini" #3, white.

87003 - Joest Porsche "Momo" was originally listed as 87000 and swaps places with the Venturi.

87006 - Venturi "Momo" was originally listed as catalogue reference 87007.

87007 - Porsche GT1 "Valvoline" was originally listed as catalogue reference 87006.

No change to the other 10 models listed in the April Journal.

Pit Lane Accessories

Finally this month, Fly have re-invented their pit lane series. This includes some new items as well as re-issues of those previously released. Brand new accessories to the range are tyre barriers and a marshal cabin to add to the pit wall. The tyres are supplied in a pack of 40 and are coloured yellow, blue, white, green and red (79758). The marshal cabin (79752) is supplied as a kit and when constructed makes a nice addition to the pit wall. The other accessories have been available before, such as pit walls, pit track sections and team stands, but now come in different packaging. The other noticeable difference is that where before each accessory was available individually, now you have to buy them in packs of three. The catalogue references for these are 79753 to 79757 inclusive. ■



Firstly, I hope you understood my ramblings about search changes last month. I am still getting a mixture of old and new search layouts myself depending on where my surfing takes me, so I hope it does not confuse you as much as it does me at times. The outlook was looking rather quiet for UK eBay once the effect of a 2000 plus listing boost of another 5p listing day at the beginning of the month had worn off. However, the seller wagon was rolling again by the month end with numbers up to near the 5000 level again at time of writing, despite dipping below the 4000 level for several days. Good news, as this means there are a few bargains to highlight.

Feedback

I am sure many of you have seen your feedback numbers jump dramatically this month as I had forewarned a month or two back and, as a result, seen your “feedback star” change colour. For those non ebayers out there, as you reach certain levels of feedback your star colour changes, and the stars change to ‘shooting’ stars when the feedback goes above 10,000. Like being back at school I reckon! I am a red star now incidentally. Have I really made that many purchases?! The top star is a red shooting star for over 100,000 feedbacks and one major UK slot seller is approaching that as I write. This has all come about as a result of eBay backdating all sales and purchases from previous years to give you feedback points from every transaction, as long as they were done with the same seller/buyer in different weeks.

Bargains?

Well there are certainly bargains to be had out there for those who are patient, particularly for newer items that are in plenty of supply. Great for buyers, but obviously tough for sellers who

seem a little more exposed to some weaker prices and who are gambling a bit when starting their auctions off at lower prices. A couple of good examples were the new Scalextric Chevrolet Corvette C2889 for £20 including p&p and a Slot.It Ferrari twin pack for £46 inc p&p from one seller whilst I was happy to get a modern Scalextric Tinplate Ferrari split from the 50th set, sent in a crystal box and all delivered for £22 – thank you Carl as I know he reads this column. Another nice car I picked up was a reliveried Porsche GT3 in Jagermeister colours for £15, whilst another lucky buyer got a Warsteiner Porsche relivery for £12.60.

Rarities?

Of interest to 60s collectors, though perhaps not spotted on UK eBay, even with Triang and Scalextric in the item listing title, was a rarely seen set 40 (250249066260). It looked all complete although the box was a little worse for wear. This set included the hard to find blow out track complete with controls and two FJs and fetched £22.55 on a Saturday afternoon. Another old set attracting some interest was a Playcraft Set 1 (230252432812) in excellent condition that had a blue Ford lorry 3301 and a red and yellow Chevrolet Impala 3103. Last minute snipe bids took this up to £366. A rather nice white Scalextric Auto Union “complete with certificate”, according to the seller, made £321.69 whilst a less tidy boxed example made £310. However an excellent example at £350 BIN failed to find a home! On the other side of the pond a general seller caught my eye with a number of interesting 60s items for sale, all purporting to be unused. Buildings wise, an unmade boxed Control Tower Kit K703 made \$455, Rubber Dunlop Bridge \$88, and a boxed Strombecker pit building \$71 (260238603935). On the car side, a blister packed, blue Cox ➡➡

Ford GT made \$255 (260238602347), and a boxed 1/24 AMT Hussein went for \$255 to a newly registered eBay. A boxed 1/24 Cox Ferrari F1 made \$203 though the box had a small amount of damage (260238600932), whilst a boxed red Scalextric Hurricane medium head showing some signs of white fungus made \$222.50 (260240227056)

Slot.It

After reporting that a Newman LE went for a lowly £83 last month, other examples went for £77 and £85 this month. At time of writing however there is a live auction already at £117, showing once again that it is all about patience and timing on eBay. Next down the price scale was a Repsol Porsche that sold at £70 followed closely by a Kouros Mercedes at £68 and then several of the later Audi models at around the £50 level. The luckiest buyer must have been the one who snapped up the newer Castrol Jaguar for £14 BIN plus £2.35 p&p - maybe a mistake by the seller there but one I was not quick enough to spot!

Prices

As listed and spelt on UK eBay unless stated, with the time and auction ending day. Spot the bargains!

SCALEXTRIC CATALOGUE 9TH EDITION £0.99 (Small amount writing on front but otherwise VG. Thursday night).

Australian Scalex £26.55 (Australian catalogue supplement to English 9th catalogue on Saturday morning 360053216425).

VANQUISH BRABHAM BT 49C PIQUET #5 '81 £21.01 (MB Thursday night).

2 Scalextric K/1 Go Karts £125 (both blue. One had front wheel missing. Instructions and both boxed on Thursday night).

Formula 1 F1 Renault Scalextric Car nigel mansell £1 (Williams used blue and white complete car on Thursday night. Example with wing missing went for £5.50).

VINTAGE SCALEXTRIC ELECTRIC BUILDING LAMPS BOXED £26.50 (Four individual boxed suction lamps, one with bits missing on Thursday night 190219175782).

VINTAGE SCALEXTRIC LARGE FENCING & GATES 1960'S £41 (Four fence pieces, two gate units and set goodwood fences on Thursday night 190219175795).

SCALEXTRIC ASTON MARTIN RACING DBR9 NO 57 DIGITAL £19.99 (MB unsold Thursday afternoon).

Slot.It CA06D Mercedes Sauber Le Mans 1988 £20.09 (MB on Sunday night plus £3.50 p&p. Cheaper than a swap meet and another went earlier in evening for £19.09 same p&p).

SLOT IT AUDI R8C WALLACE CA12A 1:32 SLOT CAR £21.15 (Saturday night).

Fly Ref A3 Dodge Viper Amirillo £12.03 (MB on Sunday night plus £3.50 p&p).

SCALEXTRIC NISSAN 350Z DRIFT C2879 £10.55 (MB on Sunday night plus £3.50 p&p).

Slot car Scalextric Revell Aston Martin Ulster slot car £52 (Matchbox kit conversion on Sunday night 250247134186).

Scalextric A/266 Power Sledge (Ex Shop) £19.51 (on card but not mint on Sunday night). Scalextric C2757 - Escort Mk1 "Colibri". BNIB £19.25 (Sunday night).

2 X scalextric nissan 305z drift 360 spin cars £6.01 (Blue and bronze set cars used on Sunday night).

Vintage Round The Pole Racer £445 (3cc engine on Tuesday night 140233383753).

Rare vintage tinsplate Austin Healey Scalextric 1950's £544 (good light blue paint broken steering wheel on Sunday afternoon 270235724862).

TRES RARE SCALEXTRIC C 55 VANWALL A GUIDE PIVOTANT 236€ (VG blue pivot guide French model on Monday lunchtime French eBay 310050024353).

Scalextric 60s James Bond Set Aston Martin instructions £24. (Yes, just instructions from 007 set for the Aston on a Sunday lunchtime. The same seller also made £22 for the Mercedes instructions and £23.34 for the set instructions.).

Lastly for all you recyclers out there was the enterprising seller cashing in on the Scalextric collector centre Escort popularity, who managed to get £3 for the six car brown outer packing box this month plus £3 p&p. (120253222815). Wonder if it was sent well wrapped?! ■



Relocation of the engine in Scalextric WRC cars

By Hub Habets

Following on from the article in the October 2007 issue of the NSCC Journal about the tuning of Scalextric “rubber band” drive rally cars, I was still not completely happy with the behaviour of these cars. With the right o-ring, the cars were faster but the front wheelspin was not completely eliminated. Coming out of the bends or driving uphill was still a weak point with this type of car. The answer seemed clear - to get good handling the engine should be in the back, in front of the rear axle. So, all front engine WRC cars should have the drive configuration of the Skoda. This car is much easier to drive, and even without the o-ring it runs fine as a rear wheel drive car.

The Scalextric Peugeot 307 WRC, Subaru WRC 2006 and also the Focus RS WRC are front wheel drive cars, with an o-ring that transmits the power to the rear wheels. The o-ring cannot compensate for the spinning of the front wheels. As in the real world of motor sports, this is always a big problem.

The solution

To improve grip, the engine should transmit the power directly to the rear wheels. Therefore the engine should be relocated as a sidewinder in front of the rear axle. This could be done by changing the existing chassis to a metal one but not everybody would like to spend their money on an expensive item like this.

I have tried to come up with a solution that is not only cheap but also achievable for everybody who has some patience. Even the ABS plastic plinth of the Scalextric box has been used for this method of preparation.

I started the relocation on a Peugeot 307 WRC. Not only the engine of this car was moved; I also exchanged the rear and the front axle. The engine was fixed in the new position on the chassis with some epoxy glue.



Peugeot 307 WRC before modification

After an inspection of the body, by rotating it 180° above the chassis, I knew there was enough space for the engine between the rear axle and the interior.

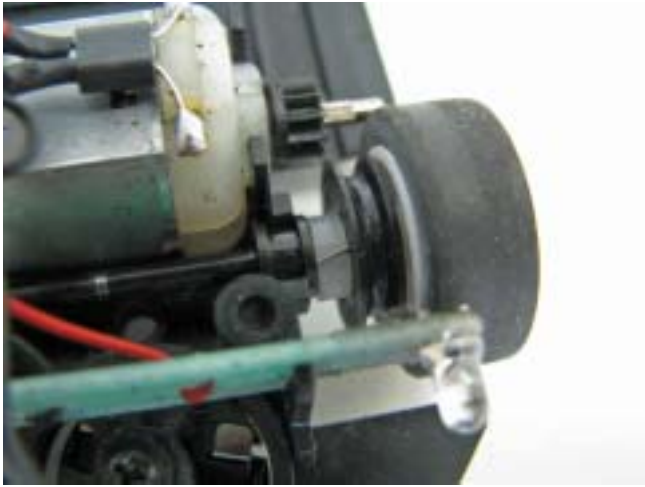
Items needing attention

- 1) The axial clearance of the rear axle, when mounted in front, is too big.
- 2) The position of the rear left bearing stud is a bit too far on the outside, to mount the front axle with the gear.
- 3) The chassis should be flattened on top, in front of the rear axle and some cooling openings should be added to the chassis for the motor.
- 4) The rear left interior stud should be relocated 2mm to the inside, to get above the left bearing of the rear axle.
- 5) The front wheels should have about 2mm vertical movement.
- 6) The front bearing studs of the body should be removed.

⇒

This is what you do

1) A 2mm nylon spacer is added between the pulley and the bearing. The ring should be cut diagonally. In this way, it is not necessary to pull off the rim from the axle to fit the ring.



2) The existing rear left bearing stud is removed. It is replaced by a new stud, made from the ABS plinth of the Scalextric box. The diameter of the bearing is $\text{Ø}4.9\text{mm}$ and is drilled in a strip cut from the plinth. After some measurement and comparing with the right bearing stud, the new bearing stud can be made to the right shape. Before gluing it on the chassis, first check that the rear axle is parallel with the front axle. Then it is glued with Loctyte epoxy glue 3450 A&B. It dries within five minutes and full strength is reached after 24 hours. During these first five minutes, the position of the stud can still be corrected.



3) With a hobby knife and some sandpaper, the top of the chassis in front of the rear axle should be flattened. The diameter of the cooling openings for the engine is about $\text{Ø}2\text{mm}$. Their shape gives also the epoxy glue some grip on the chassis. Now the engine can be moved and the longer lead wires soldered on. Put some glue on the bottom of the engine, but not over the cooling holes! During use the gear wheel inflicts upwards pressure on the motor, lifting it from the chassis, so the gluing in this area needs some extra care. During the gluing, the rear axle has to be rotated by hand, to make sure it rotates easily, but without clearance in the gear. The engine has to be positioned parallel with the rear axle within the five minutes drying time.



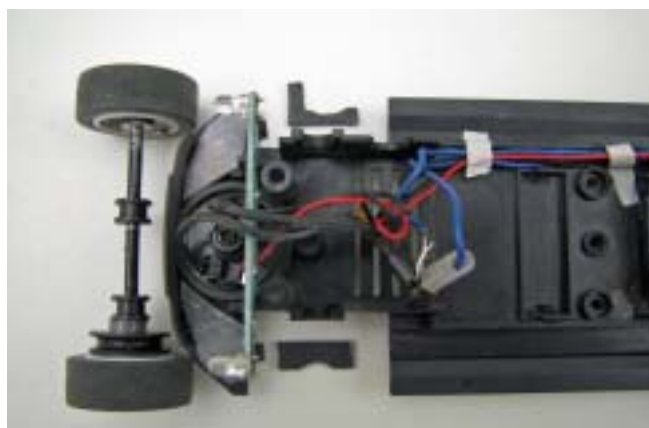
4) The rear left interior stud can also be made from the ABS plinth of the box. The easiest way is to glue the new stud onto the interior, before removing the existing one. In this way you can make it the right shape. Remove the old stud after the gluing.



The first testing can begin after 24 hours and from the start the Peugeot is about 11% faster. But it is not perfect yet. If the track is not flat, the car goes straight off into the bushes. At bends, the outer front wheel lifts the guide out of the slot and the car becomes uncontrollable.

Removing the o-ring does not reduce the amount of understeer, even six grammes of lead on both sides, ahead of the front wheels on the chassis, does not help on the Scalextric Classic track with all its jumps and bumps. About 2mm vertical movement of the front axle is needed to cure this problem. This results in item 5:

5) The surfaces of the front wheel bearings need to be shaped flat vertically with a small file. Now the axle can move up and down, but it needs end stops on top which are also made from the Scalextric plinth. The bearing diameter is 5mm. The vertical movement is about 2mm, so from the bottom of the hole to the top, the distance is 7mm. With the front axle in place the end stops can be glued onto the existing bearing studs.



This vertical movement of the front axle immediately results in 4% faster times on the track. The Peugeot is now about 15% faster with only rear wheel drive, compared to the original configuration. With an o-ring of Ø59x1.5mm fitted and the new drive line configuration the Peugeot is 3% faster again. In total it runs 18% faster and is also much more controllable. Throw away the standard o-ring - it will only slow down your car.



The finished job



Preparing the Subaru and the Focus is virtually identical, but some parts of the interior must be removed to create enough free space for the engine in front of the rear axle. The vertical movement of the front axle was not necessary with these cars. With the Subaru, the left rear bearing stud can be unchanged, by repositioning the distance rings on the axles. This makes the preparation for this type of car much easier.

Conclusion

All you need is a 2mm spacer, epoxy glue, two pieces of wire and some patience, to get a Scalextric WRC car that is enjoyable to drive. It is very easy to handle on the limit and sounds good as well. I hope the next generation of Scalextric rally cars will have the engine back where it belongs: in front of the rear axle as a side winder or in-line. ■



Slot.It Jaguar XJR9 SICA07C

By Peter Solari

Wow, what a car! That is all that needs to be said about this model... but in the interest of keeping our Editor happy by filling some pages in our Journal (*and to ensure I'll get the opportunity to review another car in future*), I'm legally bound to elaborate on this great slot car.

The Jaguar XJR9 was a direct descendant of the XJR8 born from the stable of Tom Walkinshaw Racing (TWR). The Castrol sponsored number 60 car produced by Slot.It represents the winning car from the 1988 Daytona race driven by the multinational team of Martin Brundle (GB), Raul Boesel (BR), John Nielsen (DK) and Jan Lammers (NL). That same year brought Mr. Brundle the World Sportscar Championship with the Silk Cut Jaguar Team.

The Slot.It XJR9 is neatly presented in a compact clear case with a cardboard sleeve which, on the rear, features an official looking Jaguar sticker. There you will also find an interesting 'SSD' logo with an accompanying note stating that the model is "Convertible to Hornby SSD Digital control by retrofit of the Slot.It SSD module SISP12". The black base that holds the car is cleverly designed to hold it a few millimetres in the air to avoid deformation of the tyres which can sometimes occur when cars are held too tightly to the base, particularly when stored for long periods of time. Removing the cardboard sleeve reveals a spares bag taped to the underside of the base; this includes a pair of racing tyres, a plain black rear aerofoil and a plain engine plate to replace the engine detail that can be seen from the top of the car. These parts can be used when racing to improve grip, protect detail and reduce weight.

The car releases from the base by turning the locking pin through 90 degrees and when the car is placed on the track, it has the appearance of being sucked down under

vacuum. The stance of this car is low - *real low* - and before you can even plug your throttle in, you know it is going to be fast! The first shake down of this "Big Cat" was on the routed wooden circuit at Medway club. The car ran smoothly from the outset and in the hands of more experienced racers produced some pretty impressive lap times. Further testing took place at MHSC on their fast and flowing Ninco track. With the powerful magnet still in situ, even I looked professional, lapping in the low 7 seconds; (*by comparison, without magnet, lap times were consistently 2 seconds slower*). Everyone who took it for a spin agreed that this car was smooth, quick and handled beautifully.

Parting the body from the chassis is easily achieved by removing two screws, one from the front - *just behind the guide blade* - and one from the rear. Now, as far as I know, Carlsberg don't make slot-car chassis... but they must have had some input into this one because it's quite probably the neatest chassis in the world! The motor and rear axle assembly is housed in a sub-chassis which can be loosened within the main chassis to aid handling. The 1:1 scale car used a 7-litre V12 engine to power the car to a string of victories in 1988. The Slot.It 1/32nd scale car also uses a V12, but this is Slot.It's own 21,500rpm motor. This drives the alloy rear wheels via a 9-tooth pinion and 28-tooth crown gear with bronze insert. Personally, I am most impressed with how the silicone covered cables are neatly routed along each side of the chassis and through small openings beneath the front axle. Not only does this stop the cables fouling the axle or bodywork but it also ensures the guide centres itself, vital for replacing the car on the track following a de-slot (*and for those of you who have had the misfortune of racing with me know that can be a frequent occurrence!*). The chassis design also allows for an anglewinder configuration to be installed.





Turning our attention back to the body, the colours seem in line with reference photographs from the real car and the positioning of various sponsor logos appear to be correct. My only concern is that whilst Mr. Lammers is credited as being part of the winning Castrol team on the base, his name does not appear in print on the car... Print is relatively crisp and clear and even extends to the inside of the cabin where detail can be seen on the driver's crash-hat and race-suit as well as on the dashboard. Wing mirrors (including self-adhesive foil mirrors) are sturdily fixed to the body and seem likely to remain so in the event of a crash. A bendy aerial sits centrally on the roof and is designed to withstand the occasional accident where the car ends up on its roof. Unfortunately, this one did not survive but I suspect it was broken by handling rather than by 'natural causes'. At the rear of the car, the bodywork includes removable plates which cover the wheels. This was designed on the full-size car to reduce drag, especially when hurtling along the lengthy straights found on endurance race circuits. As the aerodynamics of this part is less relevant at 1/32nd scale, these covers can be removed by firmly sliding them



downwards to reveal the rear tyres with clearly printed 'Dunlop' and 'Denloc' on them. There is also a tiny 'Dymag' logo printed in yellow on the black wheel inserts, back and front, which also house brake discs. Running the car without these covers enables the rear wheels to be moved further out giving a wider track.

They say first impressions count and this Slot-It Jaguar has given me an excellent first impression, especially as it was run straight from the box. Although hard to believe, I'm sure it can be made to run even better with a few tweaks in the right places. So, to summarise... *Wow, What a car!* ■

MRE Classic Le Mans 2008

By Phil Insull

Incredibly, this year saw the fifth MRE sponsored classic Le Mans meeting held at Wolverhampton and even more incredible were the fifty two entrants joining us for this popular meeting. We were so oversubscribed this year I had to ask seven of the Wolves lads to run their qualifying heats with me on the Thursday evening before the event as our software can only cope with forty-eight drivers on the day.

Proceedings kicked off with a general practice session, followed by the people's vote concours competition where everyone was invited to pick out their top three. The twenty eight entrants were of such excellent standard that it was almost impossible to choose but choose we did with Bryan King's beautiful Aston Martin DB3S coming out a worthy winner, David Wisdom's Ferrari 250GT SWB second and Pete Shepherd's Allard 2J third.



The concours winners

On to the racing and with each driver running three minutes on each lane the total distances determined the finals they went into, with two sections, one for scratch built and one for ready to run cars. After qualifying, Wolves drivers Mac Pinches and Chris Tyrer dominated



Go on then you choose just three from all these





A beautiful Aston Martin Zagato poses in front of David Wisdom's period Le Mans pits diorama

the proceedings in the scratch and ready to run respectively, however qualifying top doesn't always mean finishing top in the finals. Chris drove a cool race to win the rtr A final with a Ninco Corvette prepared by his brother Andy from second placed Kane Tilley with our sponsor Gary finishing a fine third in his only event since last year.

The scratch A final was held over two four minute segmented sections with each driver having both an outside and inside lane. Following the first "half" of the final it looked like Mac was on for his win but rare mechanical problems in the second "half" saw Mac falter. MRE Classic newcomer Robbie Davies with his Ferrari TR61 become the local hero with a well earned win from the ever rapid Dick Smith and the battling Gary Skipp.

There was some consolation for Mac as he gained the coveted MRE Trophy for highest qualifying car with scratch built body and chassis with his stunning cycle winged Maserati. The Chris Jurkowski Spirit of the meeting Trophy

was awarded by Phil Parkes to David Wisdom both for his beautiful black Mercedes and the cracking period Le Mans pit diorama he had brought with him to display his works of art on. Finally the MRE Outstanding driver of the day award went to Gary Skipp, who quite literally had completed his lightly modified car the day before the event due to heavy work and studies commitments and drove the wheels off it to finish a fine third overall. Our raffle in aid of Acorns Hospice was well supported - thanks to everyone who donated some super prizes and to everyone for digging deep to help our favourite charity. The meeting closed with prize giving by Gary who generously gave prizes down to fourth and to each finals winner and then kindly donated his own third place prize to the lowest placed Ready to Run finalist. A slight change was proposed by Gary for next year's MRE Classic with SCCA and early CAN-AM cars. Look out for the dates being announced as I'm sure the places will book up quickly. ■



C2917 FORD GT40 MKII 1966 LE MANS #7

By David Rowlett

This is one of the GT40s that Scalextric are producing this year. As we all know, there is a limited edition commissioned and exclusive to Slot City which is getting all the press, but this one is more widely available.

Now I am in my mid thirties so am not normally a fan of the classics as they were a little before my time but when I first saw this car something struck me and I just had to have it. The livery is the Alan Mann racing black and silver driven in the 1966 Le Mans by Graham Hill and Brian Muir sporting the number seven. Like many classic cars there are very few decals which I believe shows the car in a better light. Some cars have too many advertiser logos that

spoil the look of the car itself. Scalextric have produced many Ford GT40s with different liveries as they seem to be very popular among collectors. I am sure there are a few statisticians out there who will provide details of the models and their history. This car looks superb and much better than last year's model of the Gulf dark blue/orange which is the other one I own. Scalextric have again produced a highly detailed car with this model. The gold wheels with the silver hub nuts really show attention to detail and add to the overall effect and style. Even the driver has the famous moustache of Graham Hill.



Hunt the missing bit

The car comes with the the older push in style easyfit guide rather than the new round disc type, magnatraction and xenon effect headlights. The car is smaller than most with a wide rear axle and low height all providing great track handling and grip or so I thought, more details later.

Before I put the car on the track I performed the basic maintenance of running in the motor and oiled/greased the moving parts. Now at this point I must point out the worse thing about this car - the body shell. It looks great but is split in two parts which I assume allows the rear end to fit over the exhausts. I can understand why they had to do this in order to try and emulate the real car but it is a pain for a racer who performs regular maintenance inside. Also on this model there is a loose part at the rear end, again added to provide the detail. When I took the top off this part flew across the garage and it took a long while to find. After the checks and maintenance were complete it was time to put the car back together. I am not the most delicate person in the world, in fact I have the touch of a baby elephant and as such it took quite a while to get it back together.



Disaster!

My other GT40 runs well and is extremely competitive so I had high expectations that this would be a track winner. At the next race night I pushed to run a GT40 race which the others agreed to – now to really shine. I am afraid to say that I had the worse race ever, spending more time off the track than on it. In the later races I took the car around the track very slowly

and still managed to tip the car over. Needless to say the results put me in last place as the others ran lap after lap leaving me spinning on my roof like a 1980s break dancer. In fact if we had a snail on the track, I think I would still have lost. Showing the car to another racer, the small plastic lights underneath the car fell out. This seems to be a common problem with this model as they said the same had happened to them. A small spot of glue fixed them back into place so no harm done.

So what was wrong? You guessed it - the tyres were out of balance and the rear axle had a lot of play in it. Running around the track the car would jump and on tight corners would roll even at the slowest of speeds. Normally tyre truing would be part of my maintenance process in preparing the car but the tyres have grooves on and I didn't want to spoil the look. Clearly that was a mistake. So once again off came the top but this time I was prepared and did not have to go looking for that nice shiny piece of plastic. I trued the tyres, removing most of the tread pattern but this fixed the jumping effect. I also added a couple of spacers on the axle to reduce the wobble. Putting the car back together I felt confident that things would be better.

At the next race night I took out the car and ran it around the same track as before. To say it had improved was the understatement of the year. The grip was fantastic, holding the track well and zipped around the track like a bat out of hell. It was time for a rematch. However this time I could not convince the others as they don't like the GT40 as much – gutted but I will have revenge.

In summary this car looks great and with a little basic work performs well. It is a very fast little car and has now swapped places with last year's model in my racing box. You may have guessed that I like to race my cars rather than stick them on a shelf but I would not be surprised if a number of these cars will sit on collectors' shelves. The car retails at £32.50 but you can pick up some bargains if you look around. ■

A Happy Return

By Andrew Wilson

Perhaps I should say at the outset that there's nothing earth-shattering or technologically novel (or even interesting) about this article. It tells some of the story of my return to slot-racing after a gap of forty or so years, and writing it has reminded me of why this interest has so much to offer – not least FUN!

I had a slot-racing set when I was about 10 or 11 years old. It was an Airfix set, and I can recall – just about – the grey plastic track which kept coming apart in mid-race, the controllers which lacked control and, best of all, the two cars – a red Ferrari and my absolute favourite, a racing-green-with-white-stripes Cooper (as driven by my childhood hero Bruce McLaren). The funny thing is I have no recollection of what happened to it – discarded in one of the family's many army-regulated moves no doubt. But now, some forty years later (and, I have to admit, unashamedly using the grandchildren as an excuse) I have come back to the 'fold', and I have to say it has been a very happy return.

It all started with a simple and theoretically childproof 'My first Scalextric' designed to keep the small people happy a couple of Christmases ago, then there was a full-size starter set – a figure-of-eight with a couple of bombproof Boxsters, and then of course we really needed some more track to make it more fun, and then, with the track being longer, we needed some more cars to make the races more varied and interesting, and having more cars meant that we simply had to have a lap timer, and borders and crash-barriers, and to make it more realistic I just had to get some buildings... and so it went on.

Of course, by this stage, any tenuous connection with an excuse for the burgeoning collection being "for the grandchildren" was wearing distinctly thin, not least because I had to try to explain why they couldn't play 'crash-and-bash' with some of the more fragile but distinctly beautifully realistic cars that I was now

collecting (and using, I hasten to add). And that brought about a problem in itself (having lots of cars that is, not the grandchildren as such) – do all the cars need regular 'exercise'?

And then, in a fit of nostalgia (remember the cars first owned back in the 60s?), I started collecting some of the early Formula Junior models, which of course led from one C66 Cooper to deciding to get one of each colour made, then it was a matter of getting the C58s as well (one of each colour, naturally), followed by the C88 (race-tuned, no less), and of course I remembered Lotus, so that meant a C54.... Quite absorbing this little collecting offshoot; lots of the cars needed what my dad would have called "fettling", and of course the bit on my existing soldering iron was a bit too big for fiddly work, and I just had to get a new multimeter.



The collection of various Coopers – to remind me of that first Airfix Cooper

It was also a matter of deciding what to collect. Should I stick to Formula 1, or should I expand the collection to include the modern versions of the Cooper T51, Vanwall, Maserati 250F and Ferrari 156 'Classic' series? The answer was of course a resounding "Yes", and it was interesting to race the modern version of the Cooper side-by-side (albeit only momentarily on the 'grid') with the C66 (or even the C58).

And then I was given a Mini Cooper, and that triggered off the Mini collection and, as I had a couple of F1 Ferraris, it seemed logical to add the gorgeous P4 Le Mans car, to which was





If you can't find the livery you want, you could always do a re-spray – I wanted Moss driving a Rob Walker Cooper!

added the No. 24 version with the yellow stripe (and since then, the pretty yellow one). Of course, that meant getting a Ford GT to race against the Le Mans Ferraris, and so inevitably another offshoot collection began of GT and GT40s, which in turn led to other Le Mans cars, and the discovery that Fly produced lots of Le Mans cars to add to the growing Scalextric 'grid' which added to the variety as well.

As well as Formula 1, I quite liked the Indy IRL cars, and I've now managed to put together a complete set of them, and also the A1GP Scalex cars (although I'm a bit annoyed to discover that Scalextric have decided not to produce the China and South Africa liveries, as I'd left two spaces on the shelf for them to go alongside the other A1GP cars).



A few of the Ford GT and GT40 collection

And of course, all the while, there was more track to buy, and scenery and buildings to add, and NSCC to join (good decision!) and Pendle Slot Racing to discover (expensive discovery!), and then I discovered that if I wanted to add ➡➡



Some of the resin kits (these are all Aston Martin Le Mans competitors) that I've built

to the Le Mans 'grid', I could build my own from resin kits from PSR (which of course meant buying a Dremel), and so it goes on. At the moment my track is analogue, but I suppose I shall have to bite the digital bullet eventually – more expense, but (I'm reliably informed) even more FUN!

The quality of the current models from the main manufacturers is incredible. The detail is mind-blowing on some of them, and the performance extraordinary compared to the old models that I've enjoyed restoring. I've found building the resin models (all OCAR from PSR) absorbing, and they go remarkably well (and I think that they look quite good too). In addition, I've discovered that it's possible to convert the static Airfix and Hornby kits (using the PSR32 chassis), so there's ample opportunity (time allowing) to produce models that were never made by Scalextric (or if they were, they're now unobtainable). I've also found that buying cheap 1/32nd die-cast models in crystal cases has allowed me to add some 'scenic interest' and at

the same time given me the boxes to put the built kits in (why can't Scalextric produce or supply empty crystal cases anymore?).

But with very few exceptions, I don't have any 'shelf-queens'. The hobby (or should that be obsession?), is above all meant to be fun – and whilst there is a great deal of enjoyment to be gained from collecting, building and restoring, for me the main source of enjoyment is running the cars. And there's an added bonus in that the grandchildren think that I'm really 'cool'!

My wife is incredibly tolerant – we've just moved house, and I've now been allowed a 'playroom', so I've got a permanent track. It's been quite an expensive but incredibly happy return. I've recently retired from a rather stressful job – and whilst I was still working, I found running the cars, and building them, all rather therapeutic (such a pity it's not available on the NHS as that would cut down costs considerably!); now I'm retired, and no longer need the therapy – slot cars and everything that goes with them is what it was when I was young, and still is – FUN! ■



(62810) SCX Porsche 911 GT3 Cup

By Adrian Leggett

The Porsche 911 has been in production for over 40 years now and has developed from a car that challenged the best drivers to become the mainstay of amateur and professional modern motorsport. In its current type 997 form, it continues to win endurance events and there are also many one make championships throughout the world that excite both driver and spectator alike, probably the best known being the Porsche Mobil 1 Supercup where teams of technically identical GT3 Cup cars support the F1 World Championship, mainly in Europe. Briton Richard Westbrook has won this series for the last two years and for this year these cars will have 420bhp from a 3.6 litre engine, a six speed sequential gearbox and a special exhaust system to produce something amazing in the sound department. All the racing 911s are assembled on the same production lines as the road cars at Stuttgart- Zuffenhausen. Even the engines are built on the same assembly line but with very special internals.

Along with several other manufacturers, Tecnitoy's have produced the latest 911 but, while Hornby and Ninco have gone for the ultimate road rocket in the GT3 RS, the Spanish company have made the GT3 Cup version. Visually the two Spanish cars should be similar but, when they are placed side by side, the Ninco version definitely looks "phatter". Personally, I think they've overdone it, creating a jelly mould shape instead of a muscular supercar. The SCX car on the other hand captures the classic 911 shape superbly and its GT3 Cup presentation livery looks outstanding. I do hope they make some more in proper race liveries. On the real cars the GT3 RS uses the body shell of the Carrera 4 model which has a wider rear track and a larger fuel tank while the GT3 Cup uses the standard GT3 shell, suitably strengthened for racing. Hang on; I'll just put my anorak away.

Once the initial WOW factor has subsided, there are a couple of points that jar my eyes. ➡➡



The most obvious being the left rear wheel protruding beyond the bodywork by about two millimetres. It may not sound much but it really gives it an unbalanced look. Maybe this will help it in right hand bends? The other less obvious item is the angle of the rear wing, which looks too steep but perhaps it's the high down force set up for Monaco? At least it's straight. My final comment is on the bodywork clearance given to the rear wheels which, bearing in mind this is a working toy car and SCX use a rocking motor type of chassis, I'll just have to accept. Again it looks better than the Ninco version, because the rear axle on that is way too narrow. I could lower the body onto the chassis but that would mean removing the detailed exhaust system and we can't have that now can we.

I was really impressed with its performance straight out of the box because it had good speed around the whole track and not just in a straight line. The new RX42B motor is a huge improvement over its predecessor. Of course the magnet helps around the bends but it doesn't prevent some enthusiastic cornering with nice power slides. This car is eligible in Farnham slot clubs "GT with magnet" class so I raced it against Fly Venturi and Marcos and a Hornby Aston Martin DBR9. In the four races I had,

two were cut very short by too much effort and not enough skill on my part but the other two were much better, as I could keep with the two Fly cars, even down the straights. The Aston however is so much faster and along with other Hornby magnet cars and the Fly Viper, are among the fastest GT cars we have. This was with no preparation or running in at all so for the next races I lubricated all the usual points and ground the rear tyres slightly. I managed a bit more practice before the next round of races and I immediately noticed an improvement in the drivability; I was consistently lapping under the ten second mark, which is good for an SCX car. I also managed a few laps on the wooden track at Home Farm near Liphook and again it impressed me with its performance and how easy it was to drive without the magnet. I did suffer from a lack of experience on this track as well as a lack of grip *and* talent.

Overall, I loved this car. It looks great; it's fun to drive and goes really well. It's also quite tough as the only damage the car suffered was a mirror that got knocked off but this was soon refitted with the aid of superglue. Well done Tecnitoy. Thanks to Gareth Jex and AEC Models for the review car. ■





27267 '41 Willys Coupé

By The Editor

I must confess that when Peter Binger, boss of the Hobby Co, told me that they were switching from Ninco to Carrera I did wonder whether it was a wise decision. Ninco are highly regarded by most people and, although Carrera produce some unusual and different cars, they have tended to be toylike in finish with performance levels to match. They have also never seemed remotely interested in promoting their products in this country.

Peter maintained though that Carrera had made considerable progress in recent times and were now fully committed to the UK market so, when a pair of the latest cars arrived on the doorstep, it was time to test the veracity of his opinion. I received a BMW Z4 Coupé, which I passed on to a member for a review at a later date and a bright yellow Willys Coupé Hot Rod which is the subject of this article.

Now American Hot Rods are something you either love or hate - personally I find them cute and this is a good one of the type. The exposed, fully chromed V8 sets off the bright

yellow livery and big chromed wheels a treat. The finish is excellent and much more realistic than previous Carrera cars I have come across so full marks for that. The level of interior detail is unknown as I am not remotely interested in completely dismantling a slot car just to find out whether a pack of sandwiches is hidden in the glove box! A glance through the windscreen reveals a crewcut driver dressed all in black with the obligatory dark shades - very James Dean. Quite why Carrera have seen fit to hang what looks like a banana from the rear view mirror is a bit of a mystery though!

Surprise!

On to the track then and a very big shock - the thing has tyres that actually grip! The biggest failing of most other makes is that they fit rubbish tyres and use the magnet to hide their deficiencies. Current Scalextric tyres are by far the worst in this respect and SCX ones are only marginally better so I usually replace them with Ortmanns and throw the originals in the bin. ➡➡



I plonked this car straight on the garage track and pressed the throttle - amazing - it drove round perfectly without a hint of the ice dancing behaviour I would normally expect. I took it off again and had a look at the rear tyres - even more amazing - they were so out of true that only about 15% of each tyre was actually touching the track! A quick visit to Doctor Sandpaper soon sorted that out and the grip was even better. I don't know what compound they use but I may well try some Carrera tyres on my club racing cars.

So far so good but now we move on to the area that lets the whole package down - the motor. If this were a real Hot Rod then it would be fitted with a Morris Minor engine rather than a lump of Detroit's finest iron! Bearing in mind that the chassis is also a bit on the heavy side Carrera really need to take a serious look at replacing it with something more powerful. The car was fitted with the standard Carrera guide which bears more than a passing resemblance to the rudder on the QE2 (a Scalextric type replacement is also included) and, combined with the weak motor, it proved almost impossible

to deslot on my garage track although it would perform a neat barrel roll if I didn't bother to brake for the tightest corner. As it is fitted with twin magnets I think it will prove even slower on a normal plastic track. This is a great pity as most other aspects of the car are very good.

Buy it?

Apart from the motor there is much to like about this model - it is smooth and quiet, it looks good, handles well and the lights (front and rear) are very bright although there is the usual bleed through the body, particularly at the front. It also has that often elusive 'fun' factor. Normally a review car is returned to its box quite quickly and passed on as a prize but this one is still down in the garage and I find myself giving it a few laps most evenings after work. I strongly suspect it is going to end up in the rarely used container marked "editor's perks" and that is high praise indeed. With an RRP of just £25 it is also something of a bargain and I am seriously tempted to buy its stable mate, the '32 Ford Hot Rod so it has a friend to race! ■

