



No. 430 JANUARY 2018

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Diana Francis - Honorary Life Time President Another Year But The Same Problems

Welcome all to the 1st copy of the Journal for 2018, and if your reading this, I assume you have renewed your membership? If not then you could be relying on the benevolence of Andy Smith, who has let you all have the first Journal “on the house”, as the membership renewal forms went out only last month by moi and we appeared to have some internet issues during the Christmas period which could have hampered the renewal process on line.

Of course straight in to the new year and we have the excellent Swindon swapmeet followed by Club's own event at Milton Keynes on the 18th February, both of which give those more forgetful the chance to renew their Club membership for another year. We also do have some tables remaining for the MK swapmeet, if you wish to attend as a trader, so please do contact me in the first instance if you are interested.

Already 2018 could be showing signs of where the slotcar market is heading and it is not perhaps good news? Scalextric of course have delayed releasing information on their new range as part of their revised marketing strategy and of some concern perhaps is the 2018 catalogue is only detailing new releases up to a mid year point at the minute? There is of course almost daily news of board changes etc. at Hornby, with of course various profit warnings and other news to digest, so is this a sign of the future for Scalextric? Also it would appear that Fly Slot could again be in trouble, to the point they may or already may have ceased trading and if so where does this leave their sister company of Slotwings and their planned new releases for 2018?

Of course all the above is a shame, and I hope both companies remain in the market place for the foreseeable future, we have already lost Ninco and SCX as two of the major players, but I think the next twelve months could prove tricky trading for those in the slotcar market, with numerous economic factors to consider both here and abroad, let's hope I'm wrong!

Until next month.

Jeremy



MESSAGES FROM MARGATE



email: factory@nscg.co.uk

By Pete Simpson

Last month I closed Messages with the comment that at least Hornby employees had mastered signature files: oops, a misinterpretation on my part. Since then mails appear to have gone into a black hole. One of my contacts failed to reply to the first two mails and then replied with an out of office, and another, who only ever responded automatically to proclaim her unavailability, has departed. Shame, I never even got to meet her. However, Ricky Black is back on the scene and has responded to some, just not yet to me!

I've posed a few questions raised by members but am still awaiting a response. However, the site details for the Ultimate Rivals set has been revised to state Super Resistant cars, although the price hasn't been reduced to reflect this. Just in case members doubted the claim that the cars are SR, here's the evidence.

In the News

Once again Hornby have taken steps to perfect their management team with more changes to its board, as reported in the financial press. The group said that, as previously announced, interim Chairman David Adams planned to step down to take up another appointment and it has now been agreed that he would formally step down on 31st December. The group said Chief Executive Lyndon Davies would become interim Executive Chairman and CEO while the search for an independent Non-Executive Chairman continued.

Chief Financial Officer and Company Secretary David Mulligan was expected to step down from the board on 31st December and be succeeded by Kirstie Gould, moving from her current role as a consultant in the finance department. The board also said it intended to



appoint John Stansfield as an independent Non-Executive Director. He is described as: “a qualified accountant and spent 31 years with the group, completing 12 years as group Finance Director. John helped deliver some of the group’s most profitable years and has a wealth of experience in the toy and hobby sectors.” Hopefully this further change will absolutely ensure a return to profitability.

During the last month share prices have been bouncing along at or about an all-time low but statements are still buoyant about the capability of the current team to implement the claims of previous managers. Presumably each successive board identifies where its predecessors failed and addresses matters accordingly, in a manner that is not always obvious to us shareholders. The latest proclamations include ceasing discounting items to bulk purchasers and a reduction in the range: one publication quoted the figure of 40% as the amount by which products would be culled. How this was to be achieved wasn’t proposed but the comment that “Airfix and Scalextric enthusiasts might not be too pleased” is certainly open to many interpretations: a reduction in the ranges or a reduction in the Hornby brands?

It should be remembered that speculation has a habit of being inversely proportional to available, plausible, information so, with data being limited to corporate announcements, the contents of press reports should be no surprise.

2018 Releases

Sorry, apart from the BTCC cars and the pair of E-Type Jags announced in November, I had no revelations prior to the year end. The sole item to be announced is the next catalogue which will only cover January to June. The cover photo has not been revealed, presumably because it shows something new to 2018. However, we do know that C8182 will cost £5 plus £4.98 postage, and can reasonably be expected before 23rd January, the date of the first trade fair of the year. I have asked if the following catalogue will be the same price or if a voucher will be included with the first issue: as you’ve already guessed, I’m still waiting for a



reply. By the time this Journal is circulated, there’s a chance that it won’t yet be available. Never mind, there are still eleven months of the year to go.

Animated Mystery

It seems that the intermittent appearance of the Goodsmile Mercedes AMG GT3, C3852, may be resolved. Rumour has it that the model was withdrawn pending issues over a licencing agreement. Presumably this has now all been fixed as the model is once again available and listed on the Scalextric website. Here’s one that was delivered earlier.



Finally

In the absence of information from Hornby, my thanks this month go to the members that provided evidence of Scalextric’s releases. Hopefully Scalextric will spring back to life now we’re in a new year and again provide us with the information we crave and interact once again with the NSCC, but then again who knows? ■



Welcome to the January 2018 Carrera Corner. Happy new year to all. No new Carrera cars this month but there are certainly some new and exciting models on the way. This month we again look at some of the many sets available from Carrera and in particular the F1 sets featuring Hamilton's Mercedes and Vettel's Ferrari.

At the end of November 2017 Auto Express gave a very positive review of all the new Carrera sets and on 22nd December they did a group test to find the best slot cars sets for 2018.

In the group test they featured seven sets from various manufacturers, including the Carrera Digital 132 Night Contest set, which we mentioned here last month. They gave the set a four-star rating and said: "This has to be the ultimate expression of slot car supremacy: a massive set, with wide, sweeping track sections, beautifully detailed F1 cars and all the benefits of Carrera's Digital system, including multi-car racing, ghost cars (so you can race another car when you're on your own) and great wireless controllers. The delicate connectors mean that this track suits a more permanent set-up, as



repeated unpacking and packing will do it no favours. But when it's laid out, this set is hard to beat and justifies its high price."

A reminder that the Carrera DIGITAL 1:32 "Night Contest" set pits Lewis Hamilton in his Mercedes F1 W05 Hybrid against Sebastian Vettel in the Ferrari SF 15-T. There's something special about night-time Formula 1 Grand Prix's and the spectacular scenes they produce, as in Singapore. Of course, the cars are very detailed and there is full helmet livery. "Night Contest," reference CA30189, should cost around £250:00.

Carrera has the exclusive worldwide Ferrari reproduction licence for slot racing. Carrera cars are compatible with all leading slot track





systems. You can download circuit plans for major circuits worldwide via the Carrera website. You may require additional track to build these circuits.

As mentioned last month there are currently some 14 different sets available from Carrera to suit all ages. I found out at Christmas that my three-year-old granddaughter is a very skilful and patient racer! If you want to race Hamilton against Vettel and your pockets are not so deep, then there is a Carrera Go!! set number CA62428 “CHAMPIONS LAP” with 4.3 metres of track making a figure of eight circuit and featuring the smaller, 1:43, versions of Hamilton’s Mercedes and Vettel’s Ferrari or



alternatively an Evolution set with 5.3 meters of track and 1:32 scale versions of the cars as raced by Hamilton, number 44 and Vettel, number 5.

The Hobby Company are the official UK distributors for Carrera slot racing sets, cars and accessories. “Carrera UK Slot Racing” Facebook pages provides information on all UK releases including Go!!! Evolution, and Digital 143, 132 and 124 as well as news concerning Carrera. For further information or to find your nearest retailer go to: www.hobbyco.net or go to: www.carrera-toys.com. I hope to have more news from Carrera next month. ■

Ciao everyone and welcome to this month's edition of Forza Slot.it and the start of 2018. I expect you have heard this many times already but "Happy New Year!" and I hope Santa dropped off a few Slot.it or slot related goodies in your Santa Sack this Christmas. Me, well I did get a couple of things, but not much from Slot.it, so probably best not to go down that route as I may write some drivel on other makers cars which I do not cover! Not too much going on in the last few weeks but I did get some interesting news from Terry this week about a future Slot.it release that will probably please quite a few of us. More on that in a moment.



What to report first then? Not much really because, as I mentioned above, several of the other manufacturers have banged out lots of new models to the dealers in time for Christmas but Slot.it seem to have been left behind. With the lack of Slot.it cars for Santa to supply me with then I was kinda forced to go down the SICA333b Audi R8 LMP route which, as I mentioned last month, was not really one I was keen to yawn down but there you go! To be fair, there is nothing, well almost, wrong with the model as Slot.it have done an excellent job of the ever collectable Gulf livery and, almost



(there I go again), everything is perfect in respect to the fit, finish and general detail of the car but with the following exceptions.

Now the first thing to bear in mind is that when you look with your normal eyes at the model in your actually physical hand in front of you then it all look great with regards to the helmet design of Stefan Johansson. When you zoom in (as in these pictures) it all looks a bit dodgy and fuzzy at the edges but that is not what I took these snaps for. Look again and you should see that the helmet is just not fitting snugly all the way down but perched just a little, well a lot really, above where it should be on his head! This is not what I expect with regards to quality control from Slot.it. This normally just does not happen which, to me, makes it stand out all the more and maybe fall into the (almost) unacceptable box for me. When I pointed this out to Darren (my friendly dealer at 'Top slots 'n' Trains for this one) he immediately offered to





replace it but to me it is too much effort to do as it should have been checked before it left the factory and wasn't Darren's fault in any way. In the meantime I have had a little fiddle to see if it will either come off or squash down to the correct fitting but no joy yet. Maybe it will become a special collector's item at some point because of this defect? Who knows?



Sadly my little rant and moan does not quite finish there as for some unknown reason Slot.it decided to skip any real driver dashboard detail as well! Why? I have no idea. The funny thing is that all the enclosed Le Mans cockpit cars that Slot.it have done that I can think of have excellent dashboard detail that is almost impossible to appreciate but in there it certainly is. Here we have an open cockpit to really show off this excellent detailing and all you get is a washed out rev counter! Now I could be out of order here as maybe that is all the real car has and Slot.it are spot on? However, I strongly suspect that there is more to see and either way Slot.it could have done a bit more to make it a little visual masterpiece especially as the rest of the driver overall detailing and helmet is marvellous and clearly on display. OK, see above, and the helmet is coming off from the

wind pressure along the Mulsanne straight 'cause good old "Steve" forgot to do up his chin strap but this is not what I/we normally expect from Slot.it. Anyway minor rant over and it is (apart from the above!) a very nice and well executed model, just a dull Le Mans Audi racer.

Scheduled for release on the 18th December 2017 (so too late to make it into Santa's sack for me!) is the next DTM (Deutsche Tourenwagen Meisterschaft) Opel Calibra V6 SICA36b. Please note that in 1995 DTM changed its name to ITC (International Touring Car Championship) but really everyone still remembers it as DTM. This model is in the vibrant Team Zakspeed #17 yellow ProMarkt livery as driven by Klaus Ludwig (finished 7th spot that season) to victory at the Norisring in 1996. Just take a look at the pictures supplied and the second livery will certainly be very popular I believe. I must say it looks an absolute stunner to me with all the various sponsor logo's and the very distinctive step in the sill area bodywork between the wheels. From memory, and a quick look on the web for any real pictures of the car, then there was a green panel area/diagonal line at some point over the rear wheel arch area but, for me, this does not detract from the model as there are way more pictures without the green bit than with it!



The pictures of the new model just look spot on and I especially like the rear aspect of the car as this is probably what many competitors saw in 1996 as Opel won the drivers (Manuel Reuter on 218 v second placed Bernd Schneider driving for Mercedes-AMG) and constructor's championship



(349 vs second spot Alfa on 340) titles that year. You may recall that I reviewed the first Opel some time ago and that, along with the Alfa, proved to be an excellent track weapon with or preferably without any form of magnet installed. I see no reason for this version to be any different as the formula has not changed. Now all we need is for Slot.it to produce some more Alfa and Calibra liveries as well as the Mercedes-AMG car from that period and that will suit me down to the ground! Will I be getting one, you bet and it is already ordered and “on the shelf” for me already but probably not till sometime after new year because of the release date, post blah and I doubt if it will be in the sales!

Now I have not reported on Policar for a little while but now Terry has reliably informed me that the next car for release will be the long awaited and highly desirable (certainly by me!) March 701 Elf liveried car in January. This car was driven to 1st place at Jarama (Spanish circuit north of Madrid if anybody was not sure) on the 19th April 1970 by the splendid and highly talented Jackie Stewart. I have written a couple of reviews of these Policar F1 cars in the past and they are absolute little gems to throw, not literally of course! around a circuit with perfect poise and balance and enough speed to please everyone. I see this one being no different but with the driver in question and the stunningly simple blue Elf livery just puts this model right up there for me. When it is released I will certainly be testing my little plastic friend again. ➡➡



The Ref. No. is CAR04b and the current RRP is approx. £55 but you should be able to pick one up for about £44ish when they are released.



Next up and also due for release in January 2018 is the fourth Lotus 72 in another one of those iconic liveries that is the Lucky Strike liveried CAR02e. Yet again this is another deceptively simple yet highly desirable livery even if the driver, one Dave Charlton, is not that well known. Dave was born in Brotton in Yorkshire but raced for South Africa. He competed in 13 rounds of F1 races between 1965 and 1975 but scored no F1 championship points in that period. However, Dave was much more successful in many non-World Championship Formula One races, winning the South African Formula One Championship six times in succession from 1970 to 1975. Back to the model and the #29 Lucky Strike Racing car, as driven at Brands Hatch in 1972, looks superb in the elegant red and white Lucky Strike colours with limited sponsor logos, normal for the time don't forget, that really shows off the classic Lotus 72 lines. The icing on the cake is the exposed Ford-Cosworth DFV V8 engine in all its glory at the rear that Polycar have done such an excellent job

on this particular detail and the whole car in general. Order one now or probably be disappointed later, just as with Jackie's March 701 I would suspect.



OK, so I have probably kept the best news to last, for a change! As I have mentioned in a couple of previous articles and, in the earlier text of this one, what I (and I suspect "many" other people out there) wanted to race alongside Slot.it's fab DTM Alfa and Calibre cars is the Mercedes-AMG from the same era. Guess what? Yep, Slot.it are going to produce the later Mercedes-AMG 190E 2.5-16 Evolution II car which competed in the DTM series from 1990 to 1993. Hopefully, just like Slot.it are doing with the current Alfa, they will produce different body variations that appeared later but, for now, I am just really pleased that we are gonna get a Merc! From the pictures supplied by Terry you can see a couple of rendered shots as well as the internal driver cabin detail. There are also a couple of CAD generated images as well to show you how much work that Slot.it have been doing to produce the model.

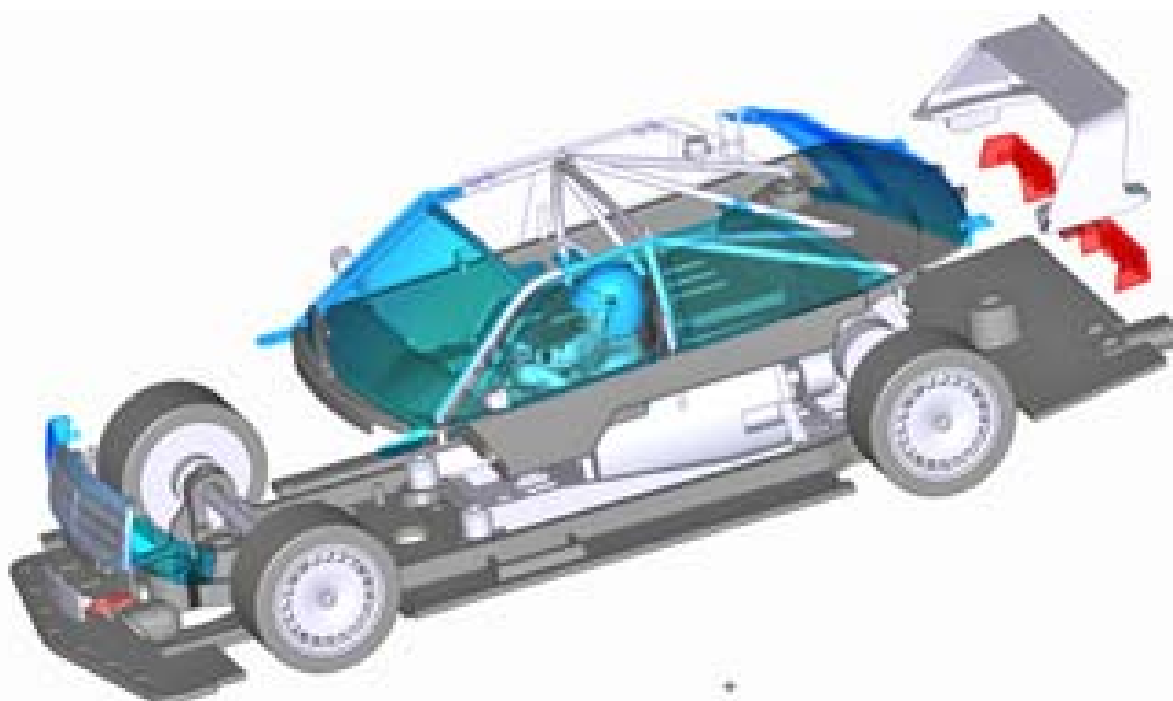
Liveries, well there are quite a few to choose





from! How about the grey/black Sonax livery or the nearly all yellow Camel car? I know, too dull for you? What about the gorgeous Ferrari red Old Spice car (remember those TV adverts!) or the red/white West liveried car? I suspect that the Sonax version driven by Klaus Ludwig to deliver the first Mercedes DTM championship victory in 1992 is probably very high on the list that will be produced but there are so many more to choose from. Just have a quick look on the web to see what is available and we have a lot to look forward to! Ahh, now for the not so good news. We will probably not see the first production model till the end of 2018! Mind you, maybe the Gaydon Festival in May will have some pre-production samples for us to look at? Time will tell I guess?

Well, that's all for this year, so far! And I hope you do not go too mad in any January sales for slot stuff like I may do with my Christmas pennies? My continued thanks to Terry at Gaugemaster for his superb support of the NSCC and to Slot.it/Polcar for any additional news. Ciao and arrivederci till next month. ■





I hope that you all had a good Christmas and a happy New Year. Congratulations on renewing your membership as we look forward to 2018 and what it has in store. By the time you read this the Swindon Swapmeet will have taken place. It once again promises to be a great event and a welcome change after all the Christmas festivities. Overall, I think it is going to be an interesting year as we look forward to adding more cars to our collection and taking part in this wonderful hobby of ours.

Last December I attended the UK Festive Slot Car Market in Coventry for the first time having missed the previous two events due to other commitments. It was certainly a busy and vibrant Swapmeet with lots of goodies for sale. There was also a large visitor turn out which together with the great venue and lots of tables made for a super Swapmeet.

The new NSCC merchandising was available at our Club stand which proved very popular throughout the day. I managed to get very quick look around the museum whilst I was there and I was very impressed by the range of vehicles in the collection and the way in which they were all presented. It is a much bigger museum than I thought, and I think it is certainly on a par with if not a little better than Gaydon.

Whilst at Coventry I managed to catch up with Martin Price and Chris Leck from Magnetic Racing who had a table selling some of their

ever increasing range of 1/32 and 1/43 buildings for scenic slot tracks. Having purchased a number of their building myself I have to say I think they are excellent. They do need assembling but once put together they look terrific. Some of those that re-imagine the original Scalextric building such as the First Aid Hut and the Entrance Building pay homage to the originals but then take the realism to another level. Currently in the works is a tribute to a large Scalextric kit building (need I say more) which I am really looking forward to seeing when ready.

The good news is that Martin and Chris are planning to bring their buildings to the Milton Keynes and Leeds Swapmeets this year. So, do check them out. If you cannot wait until then have a look at their web site: <http://www.magneticracing.com>.

Also, during December I received a very interesting request. Some of you will have seen my daughter Natalie who occasionally looks after the door at the Leeds and Milton Keynes Swapmeets. Natalie (who has a slotcar collection of her own) is turning into quite an enthusiast herself and is currently helping me to catalogue my collection. She has started working as an Activities Coordinator at a local Independent Living and Retirement development here in Bingley.

She recently asked the residents what they would like to see at future events and apparently the top of the list (amongst the male residents) was Scalextric. Needless to say, I was soon recruited and took the opportunity to promote the hobby and the NSCC by putting on a display of cars, buildings and accessories covering the history of Scalextric. Many thanks to Steve Langford who kindly lent me a display cabinet in which to place a selection of cars from my collection. Members of the public were also invited to come along. A small track was put together and I gave a short presentation on the history of Scalextric followed by the opportunity for people to have a go themselves. Many who came along had very fond memories of playing with Scalextric and some of them had been very active in the hobby. One gentleman had raced Formula Ford in his youth and although he was



now in wheel chair couldn't wait to get his hand on the throttle. The ladies all had a go on the track and really enjoyed the session. Needless to say, I too had a good time sharing my passion with them and it just goes to show that you are never too old to enjoy playing with Scalextric.



One of the goodies that I managed to get my hands on over Christmas was a Blue Ray of the new film 'Ferrari: Race to Immortality'. A wonderful documentary covering the story of Mike Hawthorn, Peter Collins and Enzo Ferrari during the 1950's. Other Ferrari drivers of the period are also covered in the film including Luigi Musso, Alfonso de Portago and Eugenio Castellotti. The story of Mike Hawthorn and Peter Collins was one that I thought I knew well but the film (using colour film of the period and interviews) gave a much greater insight into the story of all five drivers during that amazing decade. Four of them were killed racing for Ferrari and the fifth Mike Hawthorn was tragically killed shortly after becoming Britain's first Formula One world champion.

If you get chance to see the film do check it out as I am sure that you will enjoy it. In the meantime, I look forward to seeing you all at Milton Keynes next month. That's all for now until next time. ■

An interview with Ron Beresford 1960s Scalextric Designer - Part 1 Meet Ron

By Robert Learmouth

From its invention in 1956 through to 1971, Scalextric was made in Havant by Minimodels. I am now into my 4th year of seeking out and recording the memories of former employees. This period has encompassed the Heritage Lottery Fund project where I temporarily handed over the reins to The Spring in Havant and Millstream Productions who produced a documentary and book on a professional footing. My decision to do this was originally a leap of faith but the right one given the superb resulting legacy from the project. It was at the premiere of the documentary in May 2017 at The Spring that I met Ron Beresford. Too late for the documentary and book but conveniently so for me as it meant I got to conduct the interview first-hand which I hadn't done for some time due to the HLF project taking over this responsibility. Furthermore Ron was the most insightful former employee yet.

Ron joined the Experimental Department

as it was known (aka R&D) in the mid '60s as a designer. However, as we shall find out he held several key roles over the years which meant he was privy to some of the innermost workings of Minimodels.

For our get together we returned to The Spring in Havant, having both attended the Fred Francis Close turf cutting ceremony earlier in the day on Monday, 16th October 2017. My first surprise of the day came that morning at the ceremony, when I discovered that Ron opened The Spring some years before as Mayor of Havant! Accompanied by Paul Atkins we found a quiet corner and set the tape recorder running so as not to miss a word.

I start by asking Ron how he had come to work at Minimodels, "It was rather unusual the way I came to work for Tri-ang. At the time, I was manager of Havant Camera Shop, which was closing down. One of my customers, who I had sold an expensive camera to, turned out to be Bill Langley and he offered me a job. Bill used to come in quite often and chat about film and things. I said yes and that's how I went to work for Minimodels."

Bill Langley was Minimodel's chief designer and Experimental Department supremo. If Fred Francis was the birth father of Scalextric then Bill Langley was the adoptive father who saw it through from toddler to teenager before finally leaving home. Bill Langley and Graeme Lines (of Lines Bros fame) were the two figures at the centre of the take-on of Minimodels from Fred Francis in 1958, yes Fred really did only produce Scalextric for about 18 months. Bill, under the sponsorship and alongside the experience of



Graeme Lines, re-engineered Scalextric from tinsplate to plastic and was at the centre of anything and everything that was developed through to the end of the Havant years in 1971. We rightly celebrate Fred Francis as the inventor of Scalextric but without the financial might of Tri-ang, stewardship of Graeme and the master model making and imagination of Bill we wouldn't have the product we know and love today.

I remind Ron from our previous chat in May that Bill Langley is still alive and well. He's an elusive man to engage in the history work however as although now in his 90s, he's still very busy including writing his own book on the many roles he held across most of the big British toy companies from the 1940s to 1980s. I'm intrigued that a highly experienced model maker like Bill wanted Ron, with no industry experience or training to come and work for him as a designer. I suggest he must have taken a shine to Ron!, "Whether he took a shine to me, I'm not sure. But, I think he thought that I was, you know, artistic and had something to offer. My experience with the camera came in very handy afterwards because we used to go to places like Beaulieu (to study the real cars)." I put Bill's appointment of Ron down to a sixth



Bill Langley's 1989 commission of the "Brown Car" by Brown Brothers. Simply stunning. By a bizarre coincidence I rode as a passenger in this car circa 1980. Brown Brothers was based in my home town Swindon and the father of one of my best friends was a senior manager. He was allowed to bring the car home one day and took us all for a drive.

sense emanating from his art as a master model maker (just look at that veteran car commission in the photo) picking up on Ron's natural but at that point, untapped talent. It was an inspired and well rewarded move as we shall find out.

Ron continues to discuss Beaulieu, "I never forget going to Beaulieu to study the Bugatti. I'll never forget doing that! It was quite something. And I got to drive, only a few feet, the Bentley - 'the' 4½ litre Bentley. Have you ever tried driving one, the model?" Ron asks. I confess that because I collect I wouldn't dream of putting any of my cars on the track! We all have a good laugh, "Yeah, the model didn't drive that well, put it that way but they were still very popular. And the motorcycle and sidecar, that was another disaster!" Ron laughs but I assure him they are anything but a disaster in collector terms and that the vintage cars and motorcycle and sidecars are amongst the most loved of all Scalextric items.

Now quite why Ron was photographing these cars I don't know because they were introduced by Minimodels before his time. But before I get to ask, Ron revealed the first of his significant design contributions, "I did the Mercedes 190SL, from the model through to the drawing. It was always difficult making the plastic mould for a model but very interesting." I'm intrigued by the process and ask Ron to explain, "What we used to do was make a wooden model. The wooden model was pretty accurate. Then you took a sheet of plastic and⇒⇒



Ron gave us the C75 Mercedes 190SL.

heated it up. As it heated up you would start pulling it down over the wooden model. You ended up with a sort of prehistoric thing! Then of course you cut all the hanging bits off and started to make it to the proper shape from the drawings that you had.”

Part 2 – Life at Minimodels

Ron knows from the former employee memories I’ve already collected that I love little anecdotes. He’s come very prepared with notes which he now starts to bring alive.

“Here’s a lovely story for you. The assembly lines faced on either side toward a long central aisle. In the Experimental when I was new, I got caught. Someone said can you pop down to the spares section and get some paint, you were given a plastic cup. I didn’t realise, and neither apparently did all those that had gone before me, that it melted the plastic and you got half way back up the assembly line when the bottom fell out of your cup and the contents ran out! And you had several hundred girls screaming with laughter at you!” Rather you than me Ron. I’ve met many of these ladies and they might be in their 60s, 70s and 80s now but they still like a good laugh and I can imagine they were pretty merciless back then!

Ron continues with another story, “That reminds me talking of the shop floor. The hoppers on the moulding machines were fed by bags of plastic granules. If the girls didn’t do it right, molten plastic showered out and you’d hear the screams. Luckily it didn’t happen very often.” I explain to Ron that we’ve heard of a few assembly line accidents, fingers being cut off even. But I’d never heard that particular one before. 1960s health and safety wasn’t non-existent but it certainly wasn’t what it is now.

“Christmas was quite interesting because every year a memo went out to all staff that there will be ‘no, I repeat, no food (to be brought in)’. The factory closed at lunchtime on Christmas Eve and by the time that came round these tables all laden with food had appeared (between the production lines). How they ever got it in

through security is beyond me. I don’t know why they (the management) bothered (with the memo).”

Ron now turns to a somewhat more serious story, “The other thing used to be that Minimodels used to get toys that disappeared and we knew that it went over the back fence at the bottom of Fulflood road (during working hours). Then they picked them up afterwards, despite the security.”

I explain that stories of theft are very common to hear from former employees. It ranges from small items to industrial theft on a grand scale. One funny story I heard, was that a gentleman’s mother who worked there on the assembly line when he was a boy, smuggled the cars out in kit form in her bra, knowing that the security guards wouldn’t check there. After a few days she would have enough pieces to build whole cars for him!

I ask Ron where Experimental were in the factory. I always imagined them to be on a first floor mezzanine at the front of the factory. This was the arrangement in the Margate factory.

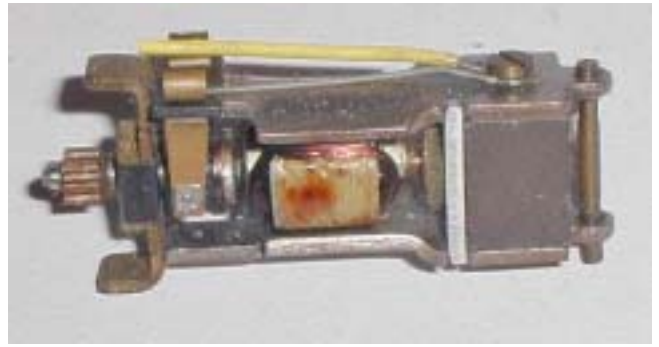
“Yes, well they did actually put another floor in at Fulflood Road at one point because they just didn’t have enough room. And Experimental moved from where they were, up onto this first floor. It covered about half of the factory floor. As I remember, it was probably bigger than the



The only known photo of Fulflood Road showing the entire factory and frontage. Fulflood Road itself can be seen bottom right. Once through the entrance gates we can see the security hut and to the right of that the main entrance that Ron describes. So Experimental and perhaps Ron himself on the day the photo was taken are behind those four windows in the centre bottom.

original footprint of the building (the building expanded considerably over the years) and you could look down on to the factory floor. But originally, as you looked up Fulflood Road you saw the entrance and security and to the left was Experimental with all the blacked out windows (to prevent spying – industrial espionage was a serious threat).”

Ron wraps up this instalment with a technical tip, “When you go home, have you got a spare RX motor?” I reply to Ron and tell him that I do indeed, “Right, put two leads onto it, so that it’s running and take the whole darn thing and put it in water and you’ll find, believe it or not it’ll run, under water.” I express my surprise at that but Paul explains he was told this years ago and while he



The RX motor, just add water.

thought initially it wasn’t possible, he tried it and it does work! I ask Ron how they came to find that out. He has no idea! But Paul confirms it’s supposed to bed the brushes in a lot quicker. ■

Something Different

By Mark Hatton

Ciao everyone and welcome to this edition of Forza Slot.it – oopps, sorry, wrong column! Anyway, I got to thinking that there is plenty of information out there in the www slot world about how to paint figures, build kit cars, scenery and so forth, so I thought I would try something a little different. To digress for a moment, ever since I was small and had my first Scalextric set (as well as playing with my dad's TT trains!) I always wanted a full scenic layout. To be honest, my own Hornby 'OO' trains took over from Scalextric in my early teens but I came back to the slot and narrow in my late 20s (probably like many of you out there!) when current wife V1.0 bought me a Scalextric set for my birthday (C888 World Championship, lucky me but pity our then front room/lounge was barely big enough to build the track!) after I expressed a latent interest. Anyway, back to the near present then and Dave and Guy from Slot Track Scenics produce excellent products, of which I have many! They have gave me lots of inspiration, as well as trawling the web and looking at many fabulous full scenic layouts out there that I wish I owned! Figures, well I've painted a few (100s!) as well as dabbling in a few kits here and there that needed a bit of extra work but eventually I decided I wanted some F1 pit trucks to go on my layout. Finally I get to the point eh!

With this in mind I thought I would consult the web again for F1 pit truck pictures and it was a bit harder than I thought, or maybe I am just not that good at search strings! Eventually, after quite a lot of frustration I managed to find several team trucks but quite a few looked beyond my starting skills so I settled on a Team Lotus Renault all black truck from several years back, how could I go wrong with all black? OK, truck selected, how and what shall I build it from? Well for some time I have had some die cast trucks with a plastic trailer that are definitely

not 1/32nd scale, maybe 1/35th, but they have been sat at the back of my current pits for a while and would do for starters. Now, I thought, I have a base so I will just build a Plasticard box, spray paint, add a few decals, slap it over the donor truck base and that will do nicely! If only it was that simple?

There was a Dungeons and Dragons model shop (now closed) round the corner from my house so I went down there to see what Plasticard and other plastic products were available for my build. Well, not cheap is what I would say for any fancy bits but A4 size Plasticard was about £1.50ish a sheet depending on the thickness so I invested in a few sheets of various thickness and then went to B&Q to see what kind of plastic stuff I could find that would be of any use. No sign of suitable plastic sheet but I settled on some 12mmx12mm right angle profile that would be ideal to use for support inside the truck box shell.

Out with scissors, knife etc. measure the donor truck, cut out Plasticard to fit snugly over the top and glue together using the right angle plastic from B&Q to strengthen it. I had also invested in some "Perfect Plastic" putty to fill in the seams/joins. When that was done/dry, just sand down a bit, undercoat (x3) then topcoat (x3) leaving enough time to dry thoroughly in between coats. Black oblong box complete, fits a treat over the donor truck now all I need to do is slap on some decals.

Now the fun really begins. In my case it involved a lot of looking for suitable pictures that I could copy, shrink or expand to a suitable size to maintain clarity and then create a document I could print out. Test print out to check, resize things again until satisfied which I find takes a long time. Now to source some suitable inkjet decal paper. Again nothing in local shops so on to the internet and order but don't forget you need to "fix" the decal printed paper before you

can use it. Again, got some spray glaze fix from the same place as the paper. Plenty of advice on the web how to do all this so how hard can it be? Now wait a couple of days for the stuff to turn up in the post. Great, now all good to go, print out decals, spray (x3) cut out, stick in water and watch as the decal print dissolve in the water or on my fingers when I try to put it on the black box structure, ah not so good/easy then!

At this point I could drone on and on at all my efforts to find the correct combination of fix spray, how many coats to do, how long to leave in the water and so on. Suffice it to say I have had a lot of wasted time, effort, wadded through various products complete with plenty of colourful language in-between! Eventually, with perseverance and some lucky finds on the way I seem to have it sussed! Well, in most cases, my current decal creation “process” works for me but I am still refining things and learning on the job as I try to improve it more.



So after many trials and tribulations I had my first Lotus F1 pit truck. I was pleased and thought it looked pretty good so I decided to do another one. Having now created a couple of bodies and used some of my donor trucks I got to thinking “I could do better...” I decided I wanted to have an F1 car unloading so I moved onto constructing my own oblong box. This



involved using more right angle plastic to strengthen things as my originals were fine but bowed in the middle until you put them over the donor truck body. The original glue I used was not as good as I thought either and proved to be a bit brittle after time. Again, I ended up experimenting with several glues over to find the one that seemed to do the best job. Superglue – no way as you need to move/ slide things around in most cases so something that does not fix immediately is ideal. Eventually, I have (currently) settled on something called Evo-Stik Timebond which seems to work and last OK so far for me for strength and the ability to move/ slide things around initially when sticking bits together.

This time I went for an old Benetton Renault F1 truck as I could find a suitable spray paint colour, logo's etc. I figured out what I wanted to do but only decided to do the inside detail of the last third of the truck and then a “lift” at the back. The body took longer as I needed to create the sides and roof together but keep a separate floor as I had created the inside of the truck with very basic workbenches. To make the lift easy, I just extended the workbench top out the back. The inside of the truck sides and roof were sprayed white and then I added a few decals. The sides and roof were then assembled and the outside sprayed a single colour and decals applied. At the same time I did the same with the separate item workbenches and inside base of the truck. Now I had three sides of the truck as one structure, assembled workbenches and lift as another and a separate base that needed to be assembled. Fit the benches inside first and then the base, add some “wheels” (I just used an off-cut, and made it a three wheel layout, painted black and stuck inside) and some bits of right angle plastic at the





the other end to keep things level and hey presto another F1 truck! Once again, I was quite pleased with my efforts but my son commented on the short inside of the truck and so it encouraged (or should I say annoyed!) me to go for a full interior.



For the next couple of trucks I got a bit carried away and did a full interior and some doors along the sides! You would think adding doors is simple but it added quite a bit to the build and paint time as well as figuring out where to put them before cutting the plasticard so that it did not interfere with the decals! I settled on a Ferrari as it was a very simple colour and decal scheme (and I like Ferrari!) and another Lotus truck as my first one had suffered a bit as I kept looking at it (for construction reminders, measuring, blah...) by taking it off the donor truck, dropping it etc.! This is partly



how I found out the original glue was too brittle, not enough strength in the basic shell and so on. Mind you, dropping it (twice!) didn't help either! However, I have managed to fix it (twice!), glue, fill in cracks, mask and spray again and now I just leave it alone sitting happily on a shelf.

These next trucks worked out well so now I thought I would create a Bernie's pit mobile home. To date, still a WIP as I had no problem finding pictures but trying to create the decals to get a good match of the original is proving very



difficult. I suspect I will have to compromise a little and do what I can. However, again because of my son, who mentioned I should have a curved end at the truck end I created a curved end. It was not as hard as I expected really. Some additional strength/support at the end, build with scrap/ off-cut bits of plastic, an end plate that is a couple of mm wider than normal and then plenty of glue and masking tape to hold in place. Leave at least 24hrs, pull off masking tape and then trim the edges. Cut/ fudge a piece of plasticard in the top curved space, fill and rub down. To be fair to my son, it looks much better with a rounded end!



Of course, now that I have mastered the rounded end it is time to do some more F1 trucks with them! This does require a bit more thought but, just like the first truck I did an interior for, you need to put a fake end a centimeter or two in from the inside to hide the mess that is the curved end, but easy enough to do. I decided not to have any side panel doors this time but instead go for a different height lift at the rear. The next logical step, curved end, doors and a mid-lift I guess! Over time my trucks have grown a bit longer and wider and I have even found the original donor truck tractor units



which I have now put my own Ferrari and Red Bull logos on them as they were just plain red and blue but the colours fitted in very nicely for my Ferrari and Red Bull trucks. They look OK but are perhaps a bit too narrow to be a good fit directly up against the F1 trailers I have made. Now that I had moved to a mid-lift position I noticed that when putting a car on the “lift” that it started to bend, not good! In the original position, because I had not cut the lip of the plastic, as this acted as the lip/top of the internal workbenches, then there was enough strength for the lift to stay level sticking out the back without any support. I had always intended to put “something” in but now I had no choice! I settled on the smallest chain link that I could find at B&Q. To put this in then I used paper clips which I cut and bent into “U” shapes, drilled holes in the body and lift for the U shape ends and then cut the chain to length. Put a U through one end of a piece of chain and super glue in place. Give it a minute to dry and then do the same at the lift end, just try not to glue your fingers in place as well as it is a bit fiddly to do! I believe the chain is too large for the scale but I think it is also quite effective and stops the lift sagging!

Where am I up to now? Well so far I have my original Lotus truck, a modified McLaren (it was going to sit over a body but I went back and strengthened it and added wheels) and the same goes for a Ferrari truck. To strengthen them then I just added an L shaped length of plastic along the length of the bottom of the body and “T” shaped structures to go inside to stop the body sides bowing in without the donor truck inside. With the Ferrari I also added an upstairs as many of the modern F1 trucks have a little trick of turning into a double decker so I have done that too. I still need to create some stairs for this one. That has been followed by two Red Bulls and a multicolour Benetton Renault F1 truck as, yet again! my son has pointed out that all the trucks so far have just been one colour – kids eh! It looks OK from a distance but the masking tape I used allowed some bleed over so the lines are not as crisp as I would like. I still need some more practice/ better masking tape product I⇒⇒



guess! Will be trying out something called “Frogtape” soon which I mentioned in a recent Forza Slot article.

So, what have I learned so far then? Patience! I have had many other challenges to overcome such as just as you get used to a suitable spray to fix the decals and clear coat the trucks when fully painted and decaled, then there is none for months due to supply issues and then B&Q change their supplier! Back to trial and error again or trying to source the same product from a different shop. The local Hobbycraft chain of shops currently has the same make, well when it is in stock! Same goes for the coloured spray paint as this changed at B&Q as well. Not much good when half way through and need the same colour again! I know I could resort to the web but not much good sometimes when you want something NOW to finish off a job!



What other problems have I had? Well creating the decals takes a long time and with all the chops and changes of clear spray I have found that what worked OK before does not with a different type of spray! Your decals typically start to dissolve again in water! Another example, when changing from one clear type spray to another to seal everything in, I sprayed as normal and then found the paint started to bubble and turn into a crazy paving effect! Not good! One piece seemed to calm down and was just about OK to use but the other was a mess and discarded, happened more than once as well! I think the main problem is me trying to do too thick a first coat but different paint products react in different ways at different times? Sometimes, due to humidity, cold and maybe things just take a lot longer to dry so try to avoid getting finger prints on your bodies. On a safety note, always wear a suitable mask, goggles and gloves when spray painting! Plus, make sure the



space is well ventilated and as dust free as possible. I use my garage which works well most of the time but plenty of things now have various colours on them such as my son's bike!

Other things to note. For me, it was not possible to do a 100% accurate copy when trying to create an F1 truck so you have to compromise and do something within your skill set and what looks right. Take your time and only work on your project when you are in the mood. Occasionally I have not been and then you end up making a mistake or ruining something you have done already that took many hours to do so far – duh!

Now possible for the best bit? So, my first couple of three trucks fitted OK in the pit space area on my track because the original donor truck bodies fitted OK. Then, one day after my son asked me if the new ones would fit, I thought it might be a good idea to actually try! I had already figured out I had too many as there would only be room for three to four max but guess what, the majority of the trucks are too long to fit in the space – duhhhhh! OK no problem, I will just build another track but being





as it has taken me years to get to the stage I am at now (with my current efforts) and when wife V1.0 heard me mention this to my son her reply was not very positive shall we say! Ah well, I will think of something!

For information, my waterslide decal process in a nutshell: I get my decal paper (clear and white) from www.craftycomputerpaper.co.uk in packs of ten, and I use Plasticote clear sealer (gloss or satin) with three coats doing each coat at 90° to the previous one. Then, when applying the decals I just get the back wet (try not to get the front wet at all) by literally dropping small decals on the water and then taking out and larger ones I just drag across the surface to get wet. Really small, drop of water on my finger. I then put Humbrol decal fix on the surface, slap the decal on and then more Humbrol decal fix on top and then wait for it to dry thoroughly. Occasionally I have to do a second application of decal fix, wait for that to dry, and then just dab your finger in water and rub over the decal(s) and dry with a paper napkin to get rid of any residual water drying type marks. Things to watch out for, quite often the decals may peel off or look a bit wrinkly when applying but just leave it alone and the decal fix just pulls it all down and it eventually stays nice and flat and just moulds itself over creases, bumps, curves and into cracks, more relevant for painted figures as the truck sides are flat. I still sometimes have “bits” dissolving and really large decals are definitely tricky especially long thin ones as they can tend to stretch a little. For the Lotus truck I started by printing long gold stripes on the clear paper but found that when you put them on the black body then you could hardly see the gold as the black body showed through. Next gold lines on white decal paper. Now it was very hard to cut and you ended up with wobbly lines and

white bits! Solution? Use white paper but print the gold line on a black background! Now your lines are straight (unless the decal stretches!) and it is easier to cut with no white bits. I have used this method for other deals I have created as well. Main problem with this method is to match the printed background colour with the body colour of the truck or whatever it is you are printing the decal for.

What materials have/do I use? Obviously glue, and generally 1mm thick plasticard as this can be easily cut with scissors. I now get this from the internet in larger sizes which is great for creating different body lengths in one piece. Spray paint generally either B&Q's own current make or Valspar or from Hobbycraft with the PlastiKote range, that B&Q used to sell! Other plastic items being the L shaped stuff in 12mmx12mm or 7mmx7mm or 16mmx5mm (plastic lipping moulding) in 2,400mm lengths as well as the chain (sold by the metre) and other odd bits from B&Q which is relatively cheap. Some stuff I just have lying around from whatever or I see “something” from packaging that I keep and think will come in useful one day! Decal paper I have already mentioned. I have no plans that I worked from, as originally I just used a donor truck that I had, but the general size of the truck is 70mm - 72mm wide, 90mm high (with a 15mm step at the trailer end) and between 320mm - 440mm long. The “lift” section is about 120mm - 130mm long. Basically, I can slide/roll Scalextric/Carrera F1 (and most other makes and models) cars inside along the bench top with a little room to spare and they fit on the lift at the back. In one of the pictures you should see a Carrera Red Bull DTM car to give you an idea.

So, I hope this has given a few of you a bit of inspiration to go out and do your own scenery, building, pit truck or whatever to give your layout a bit more life. Now back to painting a few more figures, more trucks (maybe) and planning a new self-build pit complex to fit on my layout that will allow my trucks to fit! Rather than the current SCX pit buildings. Marvellous as they are I think I can do better! Ciao and arrivederci till next time, opps, wrong column again! ■



2017 Festive Slot Car Market Report

By **Graham Pritchard**

With the event now in its third year of existence then I think the smiling faces of Julie and Janice sum it up quite well, don't you, as the event has grown more and more as each year has passed, and this has made the organisers rather happy as you can imagine.



It was really great to catch up with my good mate “Scrap Yard Paul” Blows and his wife Carin once again, with Paul back up to his usual “wheeling and dealing”, so maybe that’s where I get it from then, eh Paul?

Also there were Nick and Andrew from Pendle Slot Racing although this photo may



well get excluded from the “official press photos” if we can’t think of a good caption or is anyone any good at photo-shopping rather than internet shopping reading this at all maybe as we could do with “Sooty” being superimposed just in the centre of the photo above the cars, as at the moment he is totally naked, and we can’t really have that, can we, in case any children are reading this, but if it’s just for the adults, then just think of it as childish humour instead (see, I told you we’d do our best to use it Andrew!).

No wonder Nick is laughing, it’s just a pity that Sooty had decided to go AWOL the moment that I pressed the button on the camera.

Whilst Roger Barker was patiently waiting for one of his customers to find the right change for him, and that’s why we call it a “Swapmeet” you see, as you “swap your money for slot cars” when you are there.



Andy Smith, Martin Baines and Shaun Bennett of the NSCC Committee were also there opposite Julie and Janice on the way into the event, and so was Nigel Roberts and Jeremy, but I never quite got to take his photo as we spent too long chatting about the Journal to be honest.



For this year's event I had managed to persuade Angelo Amato of "Amato Slot Car Chassis Design" to let me share his table with him as he has recently launched his 3D Printed Chassis venture upon us.



We've very quickly realised that this guy is a genius as his ethos of trying to bring the older Scalextric models from the 1970s and '80s bang



up to date by the use of the very well known and respected "Slot.It Motor Mount Pods" is going down really well it seems. And I've got to include this one of three of the Bearwood lads who thoroughly enjoyed seeing Angelo's stuff amongst the many other things there for certain.

The fact that Angelo has a background in CAD design has a large amount to do with it also, but when you are using the very latest technology as well then it really is a great way to bring those older slot cars to life as several of us have already found out.

Amongst the cars that have had the "Amato treatment" are the Metro, Mini Clubman, Mini Cooper, Datsun 260Z, Porsche 911 and the TR7 to name but a few and then there's also the Renault RS-01 and the Ligier F1 cars, and it doesn't stop there as the list is even longer than that, and boy do they transform the original cars beyond belief!

They're now everything that they should have been, and not exactly expensive to do either with chassis ranging from £7 upwards generally, and various other bits and pieces like wheel inserts, wider wheel arches and mirrors from £1 upwards and inspired by Angelo's Mini that is fitted out with a set of his widest wheel arches I ended up doing my own and then making a few resin ones, of which one then became a van version and seemed quite popular on the day with the visitors as well.

As soon as the doors opened then the swapmeet area was flooded with so many visitors that you couldn't see the other side of the room, and lots of familiar faces were spotted at the dealers tables, which is exactly how it should be and hopefully made all of the regular traders like Mark Scale, Pendle Slot Racing, Roger Barker Slots, Phil Smith and the rest of those present very happy.

Dave and Guy Jessett of Slot Track Scenics together with a few helpers such as Ian, had also got their excellent Silverstone layout there once again and were providing some great fun for the older, almost adult like, "big-kids" as well as the younger kids, so there really was something there for everybody I'd say, oh, and there was



also a car Museum to look at as well, but I never had time for that at all, so if you want to see the various 1:1 cars that are also there then you'll have to go and look for yourself, and it's actually FREE to get into the Museum, so that's got to be worth visiting then, hasn't it?



Robert Campling probably once again won the award for the largest "pop up shop" that can be set up by one person, unless you want to vote



for Phil Smith maybe, as his stall can also be rather large as well generally whereas JP and his family won the "travelled the furthest to get here" award as far as I know given that they normally reside in Holland, but having been "sent to Coventry" by Roger, JP also said that they would make a bit of a short break of it whilst they were here.

Also there were Slot Car Magazine, as run by Ric Woods and Marc Abbott, but on this occasion it was Marc and his friend Martin Dixon manning the table.



One company there that I'd heard about several times, but had never actually met, were "Magnetic Racing", who as well as selling an alternative form of radio controlled slotcar racing also make these rather amazing trackside buildings that you will probably recognise instantly, but may not be aware that they are actually made from laser cut MDF, hence the slightly "burnt" look to their appearance, but



Marc Abbott of Slot Car Magazine assures me that once painted they do actually come out OK, honest!

I also spotted this rather interesting table whom I'd never heard of before to be honest,



but then again, he's probably never heard of me either, but he had some really interesting stuff displayed on there so check out that superb racing transporter for a start the quality of this stuff makes all of my stuff look like rubbish!

So, and as is always the way, when you are having a great time, then before you know it, it's time to pack up and go home once again, and we must thank the usual crew who help out with the loading and unloading process for everyone, I never got their names unfortunately,

So, all in all, a great day out for certain, and it won't be very long before the next swapmeet on the calendar is here at Swindon on Sunday 7th January 2018, and then closely followed by the NSCC's Milton Keynes Swapmeet on Sunday 18th February 2018.

Then before you know it, the next Slot Car Festival at the British Motor Museum, Gaydon, Warwickshire, which will be here once again as well, but a week later this time on the 19th and 20th of May 2018, so we'll hopefully see you all there once again then, OK. ■



BITS & PIECES

BY GRAHAM PRITCHARD



Hello and welcome, I hope you all had a good Christmas, but if you don't really do Christmas like me, then let's move swiftly on with a few "Bits & Pieces" that Jeremy couldn't quite fit into the box in the last Journal.

1/43 News



Steve Wright recently told me about these bang up to date 1/43 WRC sets that feature the very latest cars and would have made an ideal





Christmas present for those with less space in their house but still wanted to race slot cars on Christmas Day, or on any day thereafter given the timing of this article!

Chase Car News

Uuummm, not sure if Gareth has been abducted by Aliens this month for doing those UFO cars as he hasn't sent me anything, but guess he's probably snowed under with work, or even better he's too busy working on the resin Italian Job Bus to talk to me (Make sure you keep me one please Gareth)!

Whatever, I'm sure that he will be back soon, and when he is, I'll tell you more here, but he usually does the Milton Keynes Swapmeet so hopefully we'll see him there, if not here.

Real Life Hot Rods And Autocross Cars V Slot Cars

You all know that I like my slot car "Hot Rods", well having got chatting to a friend of a friend



who actually lives in Canada then he has sent me these pictures of his own 1:1 Hot Rod together with one that his friend has too, and has recently been re-sprayed in the traditional "flames" livery, so feast your eyes on these then and start drooling. Kevin has also given one on my shells the "American/Canadian" treatment in order to create this one as well, which is how they raced them in the '50s apparently.

Whereas my UK friend Mark W. decided to take the Dremel to some of his Hornby cars⇒⇒





after a couple of pints and ended up creating these cars, which then inspired some of the ones that I did for him recently as well, like this Red Escort MK1 and my XR3 Estate Banger Racer.



Kevin also sent me this picture of an ornament that he found in a local shop, which proves that slot cars and Santa are just meant for each other.

The World's Most Expensive Toys

This was a programme on the TV over Christmas, and if you didn't see it then it did actually contain a slotcar layout that had been made for a guy in the USA as he had a spare bit of space in his "games room", as you do.

However, whilst his may have cost him around \$75,000 I actually know somebody who can do them quite a bit cheaper to be honest, and they're actually based in the UK as well, so that's pretty good news then, isn't it?

So, if you are in the market for such an item, then please take a look at these that were produced just in time for Christmas by David and Guy Jessett of Slot Track Scenics.

I'm not really sure of the exact prices that were charged for these layouts, but I am quite sure that there wouldn't have been quite as many "noughts" on the end of the figures though compared to what that USA guy charges!

So, I'll hand you over to David and Guy now to tell you a bit more about the latest developments etc in their world of scenic items, but I bet that you don't do 1/32 size Christmas Puddings, do you?

"Hi Graham, At Slot Track Scenics, the run up to Christmas was the busiest period that we've ever had in the "more than ten year history" of the company, not that we are complaining though I hasten to add!

Following the usual November rush from our retailers topping up their stock for Christmas sales we then got the usual sales to individual customers of items to add to their





tracks over the Christmas period along with the December increase in the number of female customers putting in orders for their nearest and dearest etc. and asking for them to be sent in plain packaging!

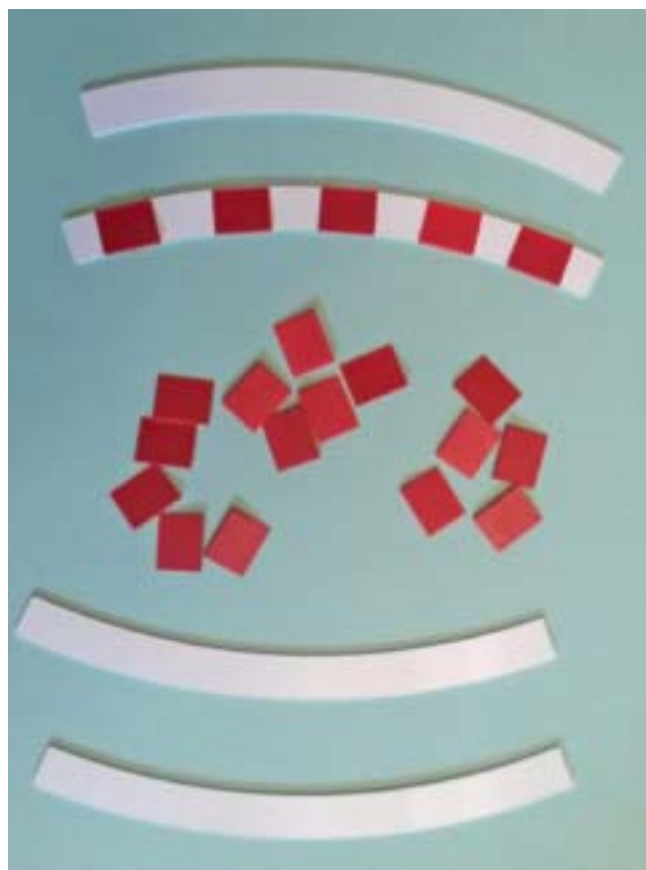
But what really made it very busy though is that in 2017 we had started to offer to make complete tracks for people, and in the end we actually had three of these that were due for delivery, and all before Christmas, of course! They were all quite different, but all still very interesting in their own way.

One was a "just under" 8' by "just over" 4' track in two panels with lots of detail and a certain amount of elevation change. The second was a 12' x 6' track in three 6x4 panels, with much less detail required, but again with enough elevation change to create a sweep down through a tunnel back to the main straight.

The final one was a 10' x 5' on one plywood board with lots of climbing round hairpins before returning to the main straight. The most challenging feature of this was that part-way through the build the customer asked if we could add lighting all round it. We have never done that before and it was certainly challenging. In the end we think it looks fine in the dark, but we now know that

we need to develop the poles and light holders further and have them injection moulded rather than 3-D printed, but there simply was not enough time for that to happen on this build unfortunately.

The real key factor in all of these three tracks though was the fact that Guy can now do the CAD designing that allows the panels to be routed out to take the track pieces himself, so that the surrounding areas are at the same level as the track surface, as in our Silverstone track and our⇒⇒





modular track panels. This makes it look just like a real race circuit or road circuit and allows us then to do all of the detailing around the track itself.

At least one customer has also said that they have had far fewer problems with connectivity now that the track is held within the panels and therefore can't move around at all, so that is an unexpected bonus for people as well then. Overall, when we look back, we have really enjoyed making the tracks, even if the last couple of weeks were rather too frantic! (Eg: Sticking fencing together at midnight was a bit unusual).

But we've certainly found that the products that we have developed over the last ten years have worked really well in detailing the tracks, and in particular we have found that some of our more recent additions such as the white lines and kerbs have really helped.

We developed these with track making in mind. The white line is in HIPS plastic and comes with self-adhesive backing in 5mm wide strips either 350mm long and straight or 5 mm wide, and in the various radiuses of the four Scalextric curves. This means that you can just choose the piece that you want and then simply peel off



the backing as you press it into place. It is so quick and easy. The kerbs too come in plain white pieces that match the 4 radiuses of Scalextric curve and they also come with small red wedge shapes that can simply be super-glued on after the white kerb parts are glued into position inside your bends or anywhere on the racing line, so there is no need for painting. As well as using these ourselves, they are also available to buy from the "Products" section of our website if you are making your own track.

As we enter 2018 we don't quite know what is to come. We may have a buyer for our Silverstone track, so in case that happens then we have already started to make plans for a replacement with a different well-known circuit.

We hope that all slotcar enthusiasts will have a very happy New Year, whether collecting, racing or track-building."

Top Tips For Anyone Who Got A Digital Scalextric For Christmas

If you're struggling with the cars at all and you are beginning to wonder if they are OK, then a very simple trick to assist in this matter is to manually push the lane changer "flipper" to the "change lanes" position rather than the "straight on" position and then simply push the car over the sensor by hand (i.e. track powered up but don't use the hand throttle to do it), and if the chip is working then you will see and hear the lane changing "flipper" move back to the "straight ahead" position on its own.

Top tip also is DO NOT try sanding the car tyres on sandpaper with the car on the track as the extra drag from the sandpaper on the tyres increases the current that the motor draws and that blows the chip basically!

So if you want to sand your tyres to improve the grip then either put the tyres onto an analogue car on a totally separate power pack and do it there and then swap them back, or, if you've only got Digital, then try cleaning them with Gaffa Tape/ Duck Tape by rubbing them over the sticky side and it should improve the grip for you.

Wolverhampton Slot Car Club 2017 DTM Race

Right, and with even less mentioning of the

racing than I normally do, then here are the results from this recent event which was for (almost) standard SCX and Carrera DTM cars in the one class together with modified versions of these cars running the very latest 3D printed chassis that are available on-line etc. in the other class, and we had a great day out there and Bearwood member James Noake even managed to come away with a trophy for the “Best Visitor’s Result” on the day.

Standard Class Results:

1. Chris Aston.
2. Richy Welch.
3. Gary Skipp.
4. Matt Tucker.

Modified Class Results:

1. Ian James.
2. Ashley Evans.
3. Chris Aston.
4. Nick Wixon.

George Turner News

Having seen last month’s news, I then thought, “hang on, what’s that, a very low and widened A40”, oh damn, that sounds like another one that I will have to have then, especially as it fits in with the racing theme of the Mini that I’ve made, so perhaps I’d better stop suggesting cars to George to make then as it’s costing me a fortune, unless I only tell him about the ones that I don’t like, of course!

So, as you’ve probably already guessed, I just had to have one of those “racing A40s” and so here it is, not exactly finished I know, but at least I’ve got as far as painting it!

As it’s meant to be a racing A40 then I didn’t go to the trouble of attempting a “showroom” finish with the paint as I’d seen a picture on the www of a British Racing Green one with a white roof and gold writing that I thought that I’d use as a guide for mine, so this one is brush painted and the roof is some more of that very useful Duck Tape that I’ve used quite a bit recently, but even Maxine, my wife said “what, you’re going to ruin a George Turner car by painting it by hand rather than spraying it!” But in my defence, if it’s going to get used AND it’s meant to be a proper racing car then does it really matter as the real car would hardly have had a showroom finish on it either, would it? A bit like the Banger racers I did for Mark W., I bet they painted them by hand in some cases.

So, something different for a change now, but having got this one instead of the normal one, then I reckon I will still end up getting the road one at the forthcoming NSCC Milton Keynes Swapmeet in February as George usually has a stall there, so it would be silly not to, wouldn’t it?

I also decided to leave George alone in the run up to Christmas as he was rather busy trying to fulfil all of the orders that he had had for kits etc., so all being well we’ll have some more news off him next month, but in the meantime I’ll leave you with a few words from his website that tell us all what he’s up to at the moment, and that also sum up 2017 for him.

“I am still messing about in the workshop making my Bedford CA Van and also a little Ford Pop van. That will be enough vans for a while. I think the CA will be ➡➡





very popular, and we already have a few pre-orders for it as well, which is always a good sign. The Pop van just sort of happened, but I think it will be very pretty. Over the Christmas break we will be doing some work on the website. We will be phasing out the running gear sets. These have proved popular but very time consuming and a bit more than just the two of us here can handle effectively. What we intend to do instead, is to give each model a list of parts to finish the model and allow you to source your own and modify if you wish.



Or we can supply a code that you can give to Pendle Slot Racing who will then sort out a set of parts for you, however we still have to organise this with PSR, so please keep your eyes peeled for more news on that in the near future. We hope that this method will be more efficient as we simply cannot stock all of the parts for all of our models, whilst PSR, as a specialist in this area, can.

Trying to keep up with the correct stock was just not working. Indeed, these sets proved so popular that over the past few weeks we have sold more than the rest of year combined, and unfortunately we are just not set up to deal with those sort of volumes.

Also, when we were waiting to be re-supplied with parts, it was causing backlogs in the models that were waiting to be dispatched.

As you all know, we have a very diverse range, and this year we have made more new models than any other year, as you can see from the photos, it's a hell of a lot of new stuff! So, what's for next year then, you may ask?

I am hoping to keep the range full of diverse types of models. We still have the Chevy fire engine and three new Lister Jaguars to put on the website, but they will have to wait until the New Year though.

*So, in the meantime, I'm off for a beer or ten, but before I do, I'd like to wish you all a **Happy New Year** and say, many thanks for all of the beer!*

A New Arrival For Christmas

As George was too busy fulfilling orders in December to make any more new masters, sorry *Prototypes*, then I decided to “do my bit” for the cause, and after a bit of sawing and sanding then at long last my Mini family has now been able to welcome another addition to its clan, with the pick-up version of the W-I-D-E Clubman being born just in time for Christmas.

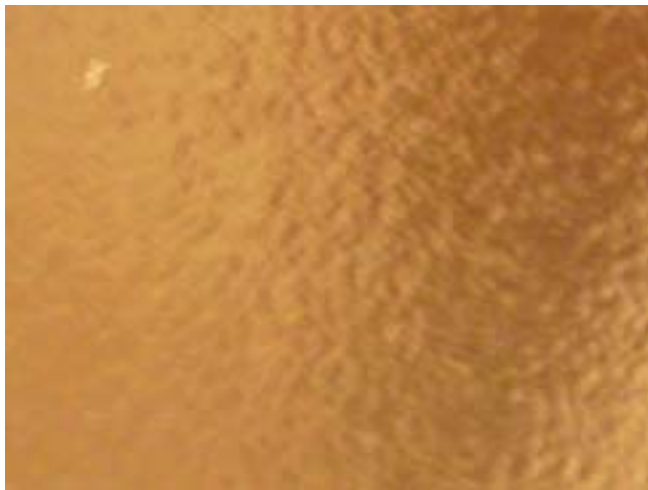


I've also found a superb way of replicating the “leather effect” that a real vinyl tonneau cover would have as the other day I re-discovered a plastic tray that I think was off a Wall's Vienetta ice cream desert that I had saved a couple of years ago for this very purpose, so once I've attached a piece of it to the pick-up then the silicone rubber will replicate the effect rather well once I get there, so proving once again, that what most people will see as rubbish, can in fact turn out to be “Really Useful” for us.



However, as the weather is currently so cold then I've decided to leave moulding and casting it until the weather picks up somewhat, so⇒





hopefully, if it does ever warm up again then I'll have a few of them for sale at the Slot Car Festival in May should anyone out there want one at all.

And Finally

If Peter Simpson can get away with pictures of Trains, Planes and Automobiles in the Journal then how about this one then, it's the SHADO Mobile from Gerry Anderson's UFO TV programme and this is a proper Dinky Toys one



from the '70s, which was very kindly sourced for me by "Scrapyard Paul" Blows as it turns out that he is also a bit of a general toy dealer as well as a slot car one.

But I wonder if Gareth is now reading this and thinking "aaahh, maybe that could be my next slotcar?" Whatever, it certainly won't be mine, as at well over 400g then it's a bit heavy to say the least!

See you all next month if all goes to plan! ■

COLLECTOR'S CORNER

BY MARTIN HEAPS



This month I thought I'd show you some interesting pre-production cars.

Some are also final production examples which are the original before mass production.

Pre-production cars are becoming hard to acquire and early examples like these will become highly collectable very soon, if they are not already!

So here are a few examples of what you can find with a bit of looking.



Securitor Tyrell And QC Approved Factory Label.



Porsche GT3R Factory Test With The Original Label Underneath.





C2354 WA Porshe GT3R UPS No.1
Note this car also has a smooth base.



MG Metro Factory Finished prototype C333W.



C188 Takefuji Porsche 926 Approved Factory,
Note Wiper To Alter.



C296 Porsche 962 Finished Assembly, 1st
Tampo Car, Note Satin Wheels This Batch Only.

⇒



C382 Jaguar, final check this one went straight into production.



C2380 and C 2381 Ford Focus both hand finished set cars ready for production.

Last up are these interesting bags of pre-production tyres, note the Chinese writing.



I hope you enjoyed looking at some of these pre production cars and tyres. It's a great side to the hobby and most of the cars are mint since they have been in their bags from approval. ■

X is for Xillion, XR-6 and XTC. Xillion started making replicas of Ferrari 328s and other mid-engined cars from Pontiac Fieros in the late 1980s.



The XR-6 was a project undertaken by Hot Rod magazine in 1964, consisting of a tubular chassis, a narrow body, cycle wings and last but not least, a Dodge 6-Cylinder engine.



While one XTC sang Making plans for Nigel, another XTC in the USA offered to turn Pontiac Fieros into customised Ferrari Testarossas. Performance was still Fiero-like though.

Y is for Yank, Yankee Clipper and Yimkin.

Yank of the USA (where else?), made a few 78mph aluminium two-seaters in 1950.

Yankee Clipper were a bit later in offering their cars, from 1953 to 1954. The price of \$3,400 was prohibitive at the time, even though the lightweight chassis had a 130bhp V8 engine and a fibreglass body.

Yimkin Engineering were tuners of BMC 'A' and 'B' series engines and in 1958 made their own clubman's sports car. The first six were successful, so two more were built for Formula Junior racing before the partnership dissolved when the two bachelor owners got married and went their separate ways, although Don Sim was later involved with the Diva GT.



Z is for Zagato, Zastava, Zédel, Zeder, Zender, Zeta, Zigclair, Zil, Zimmer, Zita and Zundapp.

Zagato are an Italian Design House and Coachbuilder, begun by Ugo Zagato in 1919, with the aim of bringing lightweight aeronautical technology to the cars of the time. Since then they have worked with Abarth, AC, Alfa Romeo, Aston Martin, BMW, Bristol, Bugatti, Cadillac, Diatto, Fiat, Honda, Jaguar, Lamborghini, Lancia, Maserati, MG, MV, Osca, OM, Rolls-Royce, Rover, Spyker, Toyota and Volvo. ➡➡



Ugo's number one son, Elio was also a successful racing driver, gaining a place on the podium 83 times in 160 races.

Zastava made Serbian farm machinery and light weaponry from 1851 until turning it's hand to making car parts. The Company assembled Chevrolet trucks, Willys Jeeps, Fiats, Polski-Fiats and finally it's own vehicles. Almost completely destroyed by NATO bombers in 1999, the factory was rebuilt after the War and continued to build pick-ups, minivans, micro buses and station wagons, as well as the Nova Rival double-cab 4x4.

Zédel moved from Switzerland to France in 1902, to get around French import duties. After making engines, the Company's first cars were made from 1906. Zédel became Donnet-Zédel, then Donnet and was sold to Simca in 1933.

Briggs Cunningham beat Fred Zeder at Watkins Glen. Briggs was driving one of his own built cars, but Fred was driving an Allard-Chrysler. Fred determined to build his own car too. Looking rather like a Ferrari, with a Bertone made aluminium body from Italy, and 260 bhp Dodge V8 engine with twin quadruple carburettors, the car was displayed at the Turin motor show and made from 1953. Just like a full-size Eldon slotcar, the Zeder came with *two* interchangeable bodies for each chassis, held on with just four bolts, one for track use, one for road use.

Conversion and Body Kit manufacturer Zender of Germany, have also offered the World a selection of prototype cars, with top speeds of 190mph plus.

Zeta assembled Alfa Romeos for the Australian market, before offering the Zeta Sports, a Michelotti designed sports version of their 1963 utility micro-car. Competition from the Mini and Sprite affected sales, and production ceased in 1966.



Zigclair made 1930's style kit cars in the UK in the late 1970s. The tubular chassis used Triumph Spitfire suspension and took an MGB engine, while the radiator looked similar to that on a Rolls-Royce!

Zil made rare beasts, Russian made Sports Cars, although were initially renowned for their Communist Party limousines. They used the same straight 8-cylinder engines from their limos in their sports cars. With 7.5 Litres and 300 bhp, the Zil sports cars had long bonnets and looked rather similar to a Ferrari Testa Rossa.



Zimmer were a caravan maker in the USA, until making their 1930's style Golden Spirit coupe from 1980. Not designed for shrinking violets, the Golden Spirit was an extravagant and outrageous car for showing off in.

The Zita ZS was a British built fibreglass body that fitted a VW Beetle floorpan. Rumour has it that further examples were built using Austin 1800 components attached to a bespoke chassis.

Zundapp took over the building of Dornier's competitor to Heinkel's bubble car, named the Janus because, like the Roman God with two faces, the Janus passenger and driver



sat with their backs together, facing in opposite directions, and had a door at each end of the car. Zundapp had previously built the large four cylinder motorcycle and sidecar combinations used by the German Army. 0-50mph (top speed) acceleration of the Janus was 35 seconds, provided only one person was aboard. 6,902 of the Zundapp Janus were built from 1957 to 1958.

Let's see how models of the above manufacturer's cars are doing on eBay:

Oh, there aren't any. Let's look at Ferrari v Pontiac v Dodge v Diva v Chevrolet v Willys v Fiat v Alfa Romeo instead then:

1. Cox 1/24 Ferrari GT £1,056.37 (192325764389). Appeared to be sold again afterwards for £505.38 so either the first deal didn't go through or the seller had two (202089859757).
2. Racer 3 Ferrari winning cars from Daytona 1967 £790.70 (222678737694).
3. Aurora HO Dodge Charger Lime Green body only £607.05 (302530364358).
4. Aurora HO Dodge Charger Sea Foam Green £560.71 (142618050122).
5. Miniamil Jona HO No.1 Set with Alfa Romeo Giulietta Norev cars adapted for slot racing £560.00 (362104161118).
6. Scalextric NSCC Vintage Alfa Romeo Red £525.00 (272921536344).



7. MMK Fiat Bartoletti Maserati Transporter £483.20 (222635378559).
8. Spanish Scalextric Fiat 600 Red £439.27 (372127793443).
9. Unicar 1/24 Alfa Romeo TZ 2 £396.23 (172862749423).
10. French Scalextric GT set with Blue Ferrari and Red Aston Martin with working lights £387.44 (122802329571).

An unsurprising win for Ferrari then, followed by Dodge with their Chargers in second place, being chased by Alfa Romeo, while one of those cheeky Fiat 600's managed to sneak in too.

Monthly Worldwide eBay Top Ten

1. Scalextric Digital Jadlam SL201 set with 6 Cars £1,499.95 (401460382310).
2. Scalextric Yellow Aston Martin DB4 GT £818.16 (382314637621).
3. Scalextric Digital Jadlam SL32 set with 4 Cars £799.95 (391047433201).
4. Slot Classic Yellow Renault 8 £755.09 (192400106908).
5. Russkit '34' (34,400 RPM) Motor £744.12 (332466429724).
6. Aurora 1/4" Scale (1/48) Model Motoring set with Yellow Bonnie & Clyde Pepper Rod and Turquoise Ford '31 Hot Rod £744.09 (191885125434).
7. Aurora HO Olive Green Datsun 510 £732.96 (253220272846).
8. AFX HO Collection with 43 cars £725.43 (253287086305).
9. Tyco HO four Stomper 4x4 Cars £706.92 (173019353713).
10. Scalextric Yellow Auto Union £699.00 (152816502113).

An interesting top ten this month, perhaps affected by the Christmas season, but the number one item was only bought on Christmas Eve, so unless Jadlam enlisted Santa and his Reindeer, I can't imagine delivery was made by Christmas Day. As for the item itself, the track layout looked like a pile of spaghetti with as much track crammed into the area as possible. Reminds me of a Spaghetti Junction layout I made in my track-on-the-carpet days.

The Aurora 1/48 scale Hot Rods look very nice, a shame perhaps, that they concentrated on the smaller HO scale in later years. I noticed Carrera "1st" HO scale sets were available in our local BM Home Bargains stores for just £19.99 and £14.99 over the Christmas period, featuring some interesting vehicles from the Cars Disney films, and a very nice Mickey Mouse Hot Rod. If only they'd been 1/32 scale, I would have snapped them up! ➡➡



It looks like the Yellow Car Collectors have been out in force yet again, but I can't really complain, as it is my favourite colour too!

Motor Magazine

Back in December 1978, Motor Magazine published a bumper edition, that included a run-down of the slotcar sets available at the time. These included Aurora AFX endorsed by James Hunt, Matchbox Powertrack, Palitoy Power Passers, Polistil, Scalextric, Ideal TCR, Airfix/MRRC, Riko, Nordic and Fitzpatrick.

The Aurora cars were the only ones with traction magnets at the time, which were criticised for preventing controlled drifting and making offs unanticipated and final, at the point the magnets let go. They also made the cars so fast it was difficult to follow them visually. The benefit of fitting a lot of track in a small space was stated, but it was pointed out that with only one radius of bend available, track design was very limited.

Matchbox Powertrack got a surprisingly high rating in comparison, due to more forgiving handling characteristics, and the fact the cars had working headlamps. This was a unique selling point Matchbox were quick to pick up on, and in the very same issue ran a full-page black and white advert demonstrating that their cars could be seen in the dark, but Scalextric cars couldn't!

Palitoy Power Passers (whatever happened to them?), were billed rather optimistically as "the greatest innovation in the history of model road racing". This innovation appears to be the lack of a slot, but also lacking was sufficient control of the cars, reliability and robustness of the track, so the magazine rated them as a failure and it does look as though they were consigned to history.

Polistil was rated below-par compared to Scalextric, despite being 1/32 scale. This was due to the fixed braid position, being chassis instead of slot guide mounted, and a lack of grip from the Polistil tyres on the track. The cars were also judged to be slow. The 1/43 Polistil cars were judged to be better performers than their 1/32 models.

Scalextric cars tested were deemed to be splendid performers, although lack of detail on the cheaper cars was mentioned, together with a recommendation to stiffen up the front suspension with a metal tube to stop the cars rolling off at the corners so often. The flexibility and trade support for 1/32 scale was also praised, together with the wide range of Scalextric track options available.



Ideal TCR was noted as being another slotless system, but judged to be more successful than the Palitoy offering. The TCR sets featured a Jam car to cause a mobile obstacle to the two racing cars in the set.

Airfix/MRRC cars were noted for their steering front wheels, and detail that surpassed both Polistil and Scalextric in their latest cars at the time. The Airfix range of scenic accessories was also praised. It was noted that Airfix/





MRRC sets were less well known and less available in the shops than their competitors though, which may have been why they were ultimately less successful.

Riko's car kits with their powerful motor, metal chassis and lexan bodyshells were mentioned as one of the next stages for enthusiasts, as were the range of Titan cars and parts available from Nordic Models, and a range of glass fibre (?) and clear plastic vac-formed bodyshells from CD Fitzpatrick.



In conclusion, the magazine noted Scalextric's domination of the £8 Million 1978 British Slot Car Market, while tipping that Matchbox Powertrack were the new kids on the block, with anticipation of their new Race 'n' Chase sets which were yet to be released.

I picked up the above magazine for £4.50 on eBay (182922880434), after finding it by searching for slotcars.

Le Mans Auctions

Meanwhile, in the world of 1/1 scale auctions, a 1970 Porsche 917K in Gulf Livery that was used in the film Le Mans starring Steve McQueen sold at Monterey in August for \$14,080,000, making it the most expensive Porsche in existence. The car had been stored in a barn for two decades before being put back together in Switzerland using original parts. One of Steve's Gulf racing suits from the film followed on, selling at an October auction at Sothebys New York for \$336,000. The seller's husband had won it in a competition back in 1971 and had repainted the helmet and used it for his motorcycle commute.

Ramsgate Haul



Finally, many thanks to our esteemed Editor, Jeremy, for organising another successful Ramsgate weekend. I was pleased to discover my team came second in the racing events, while Jeremy made a good decision putting Emma on his team, as they won the event!

A welcome addition to the weekend was the swapmeet being held at the Hornby Visitor Centre, from which I gained a great haul in consolation. ■