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On a Narrow Track in Construction Fever

Building Vollmer Houses
On traXS! 2023 in Utrecht

Introduction

Dear Readers,

Each of us is captivated by the sight of a special model railway layout. Even when the rolling stock comes to a standstill, our eyes continue to wander purposefully over the exhibits.

Of course, it is mostly the outstanding realisation of the miniature world with all its modern aids, but sometimes it is the small peripheral phenomena that we only notice at a second or even third glance.

This is exactly where we would like to focus our **Trainini®** annual theme for 2023. It is precisely the supposed “little things” that turn a model railway layout into an almost unique work of art, whereby metering and positioning are the highest art.

Just with the well-considered placement of miniature figures, lively scenes can be developed. In the landscape design, a well-dosed confusion brings about the chaotic character of the model: the nature that surrounds us. Various decorations in the right places create further dense atmospheres.

Such unique impressions can also be achieved when building a house. With the first part in this issue, Holger Späing really brings us to “life” with the construction of Vollmer’s “little workshop”. A complete interior with appealing lighting that follows the period depicted amazes the observer, even if it is only an appearance.

In the second part of his 3.0 mm narrow gauge project, Reinder Rutgers shows the many possibilities, but also the feasibility of building the appropriate rolling stock. His declared intention is to also make our readers “want less,” whereby this expression only refers to the distance between the two track insides.

If he can inspire more Zetties for his idea, it will probably not only please him. We, too, would be thrilled to be able to report on many new models and creative realisations!

Two reports on the model railway exhibitions that have now started again round off this issue. Stephan Fuchs visited the Faszination Modellbahn 2023 in Mannheim for us and reports on his impressions from the venue.

A little later, part of the **Trainini®** editorial team visited the On traXS! 2023 in Utrecht, especially for the reason that the Gauge Z layout “Boisschot Statie” by Pieter Willems and Jan van Casteren was there.

Another reason was of course that it is also the exhibition with the highest requirement profile in Europe. You can read all about it in the report in this issue. And, so, I hope you enjoy reading and leafing through this issue.

Sin-Z-erely,

Holger Späing



Dirk Kuhlmann
Editor

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We thank Reinder Rutgers for his contribution.

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Cover photo:

The modern diesel locomotive shows us typical sixties small railway operation with its PmG as it crosses the bridge. On the model railway this looks like an almost perfect idyll, but such narrow-gauge railways had long been a discontinued model at that time. Photo: Reinder Rutgers

Only 3.0 instead of 6.5 mm gauge (part 2)

In Do-it-yourself Construction, the Path is the Goal!

After our reader Reinder Rutgers from the Netherlands presented his narrow-gauge project in March, the promised continuation now follows. While the first part dealt with the special challenges and the variety of models achieved, today he tells us how the beauties shown can be achieved by hand and what challenges await those interested in rebuilding them.

By Reinder Rutgers. A chronology of the building process or its detailed description would be probably too boring for many. Instead, I'm going to explain a few things today, not just in the narrow-gauge area can be useful and hopefully not known to most.



For the sparse freight traffic on the narrow-gauge railway, a dedicated goods train is often not worthwhile. The diesel railcar, therefore, has a covered freight wagon in tow as it approaches the stop.

Common tools such as needle files, miniature forceps, tweezers, etc., do not require further explanation. I would therefore like to mention here only a few working materials that are important to me and perhaps less known to third parties. In my opinion, the most important 'insider tips' are the following tools:

- A flat, 10 mm thick steel plate to be able to glue or assemble parts accurately,
- MEK (methyl ethyl ketone) for bonding,
- a series of rectangular brass blocks with coordinated dimensions,
- laboratory-grade single sided razor blades,
- three types of toothpicks, each with its own possibilities,

- a pin in a pin block and a strong, yet sharp and hard, conical steel needle in such a holder,
- miniature precision angle with and without stop, and
- a mechanical miniature calliper (length 70 mm).



This photo shows some tools and aids typical of our author's method of working.

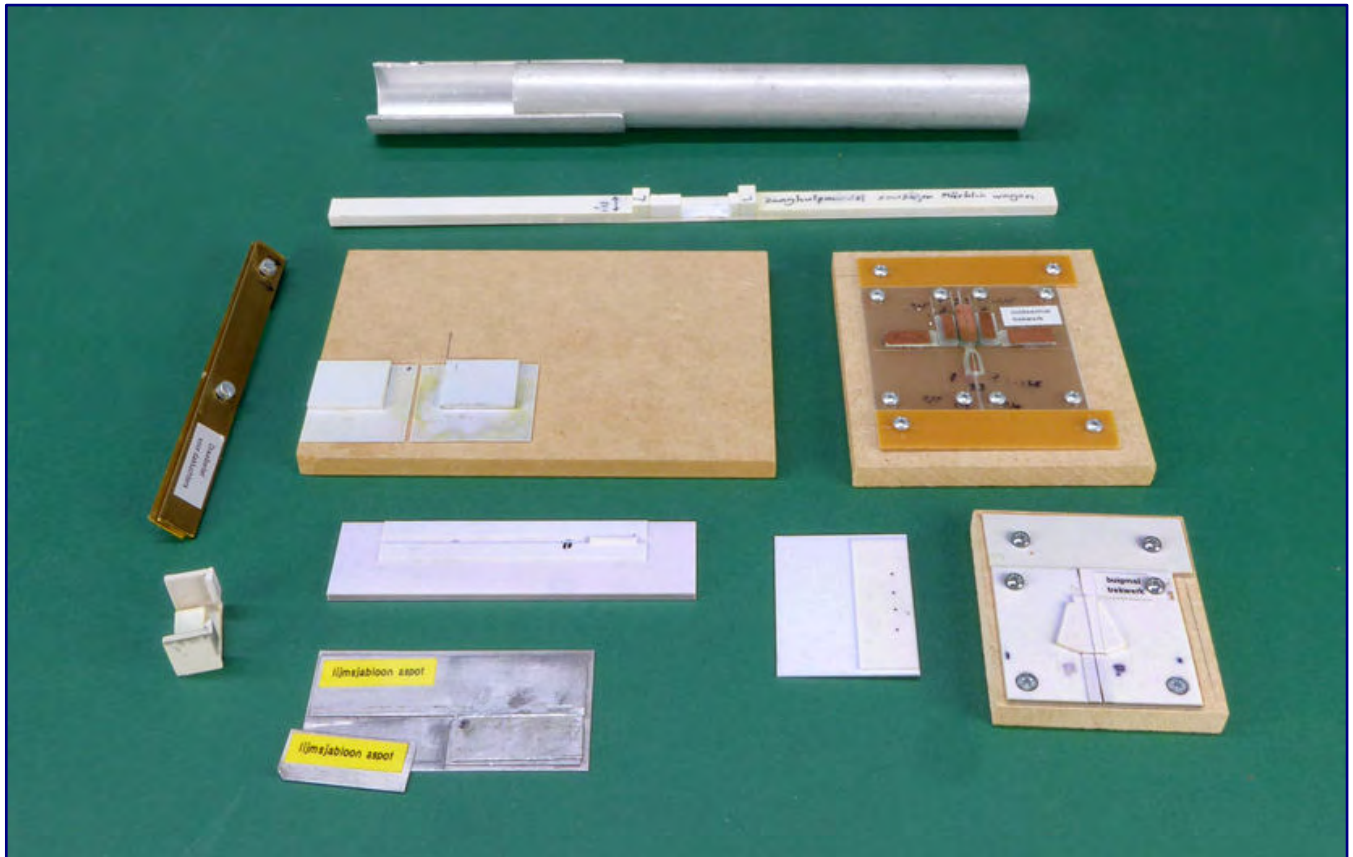
The brass blocks are among my most important tools. I have about 50 blocks ranging in size from 20 x 20 x 10 mm to 2.4 kg blocks of 60 x 60 x 80 mm. There are endless possibilities to use them in model making.

Brass simply has the advantage that it is heavy (higher specific mass than steel) and, in contrast, does not need painting. It is expensive, but I have had my blocks for 40 years now, so they were a good investment. Besides that, I also use several small brass and aluminium strips as aids.

The razor blades from the laboratory sector are much thinner than the finest knife. This means that they really enable fine work, as was always required here in my project. Not 'secret,' but still important: commercially available polystyrene glue and very fine tweezers of high quality are further indispensable aids.

But perhaps the most important tool of all is the eye. The human eye is capable of perceiving differences of a hundredth of a millimetre. In my experience, I can measure what I want. But, if the eye says that something is crooked or unequal, then it likely is.

Those who are well acquainted with human vision may now want to object that the eye, or more accurately the brain, can also be tricked into perceiving. You are absolutely right, but if it is taken into account when building models and landscapes, this ensures the only correct perception!



This small selection gives an overview of the gauges as they are used in large numbers in do-it-yourself construction.

Nevertheless, gauges are and remain a special category. They are simply essential for some work in order to achieve correct and reproducible results or to be able to manufacture a part at all. I have made over twenty such tools for the production of my Ze gauge rolling stock. Often, they are simple in principle, the difficult thing is always the required accuracy.

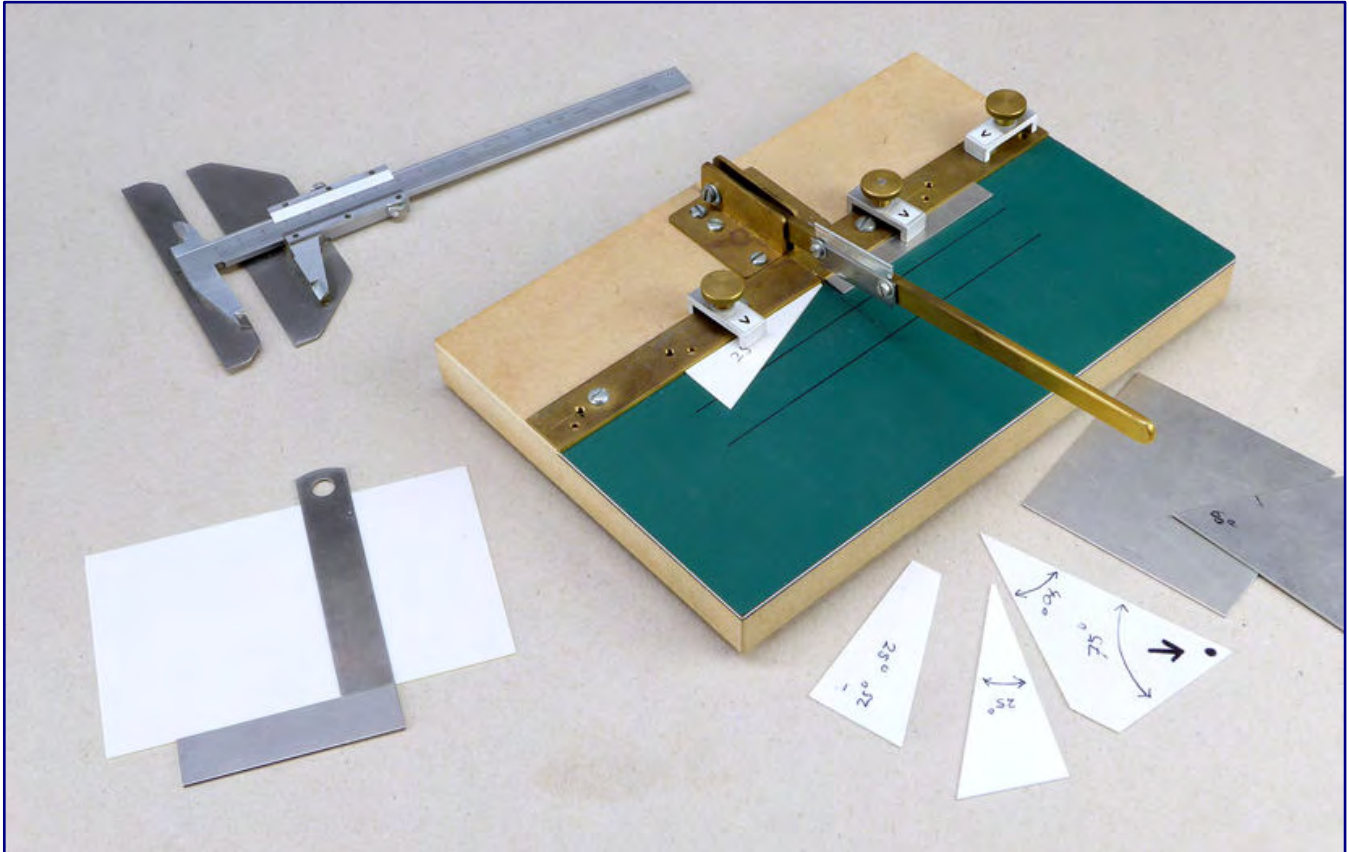
Self-designed tools

Over the years I have built several devices myself because they were not available commercially. For the production of parts with high precision and/or the same size, a fine trimming device is almost indispensable.

When I built mine many years ago, there was nothing comparable in the market. My own construction allows a very good view of the blade, which is ideal for precision work. For example, I have cut discs only 0.3 mm thick from polystyrene round profiles and other parts are only 2 x 2 mm in size with this device.

I constructed a parallel calliper myself from an ordinary one and a steel ruler. It makes it much easier to draw or cut exactly parallel lines. A flat angle that I built myself is only 0.5 mm thick. It was constructed

from three small steel rulers with the help of a precision angle. It is extremely practical in model making when working with panels and shortening strips at right angles.



Here you can see three of the special tools made by the author, which have served very well in the construction of the narrow gauge models.

Perhaps readers are familiar with the following, but to be on the safe side, I don't want to omit it: Indispensable method for my construction is gluing with methyl ethyl ketone (MEK, also called butanone). MEK is used in industry to remove plastic residues in machines.

It is cheap if it can be bought in litre bottles. In model shops it is also offered in small bottles. But care must be taken when handling this hazardous substance: The vapours are toxic and also explosive, it is imperative to ensure good ventilation!

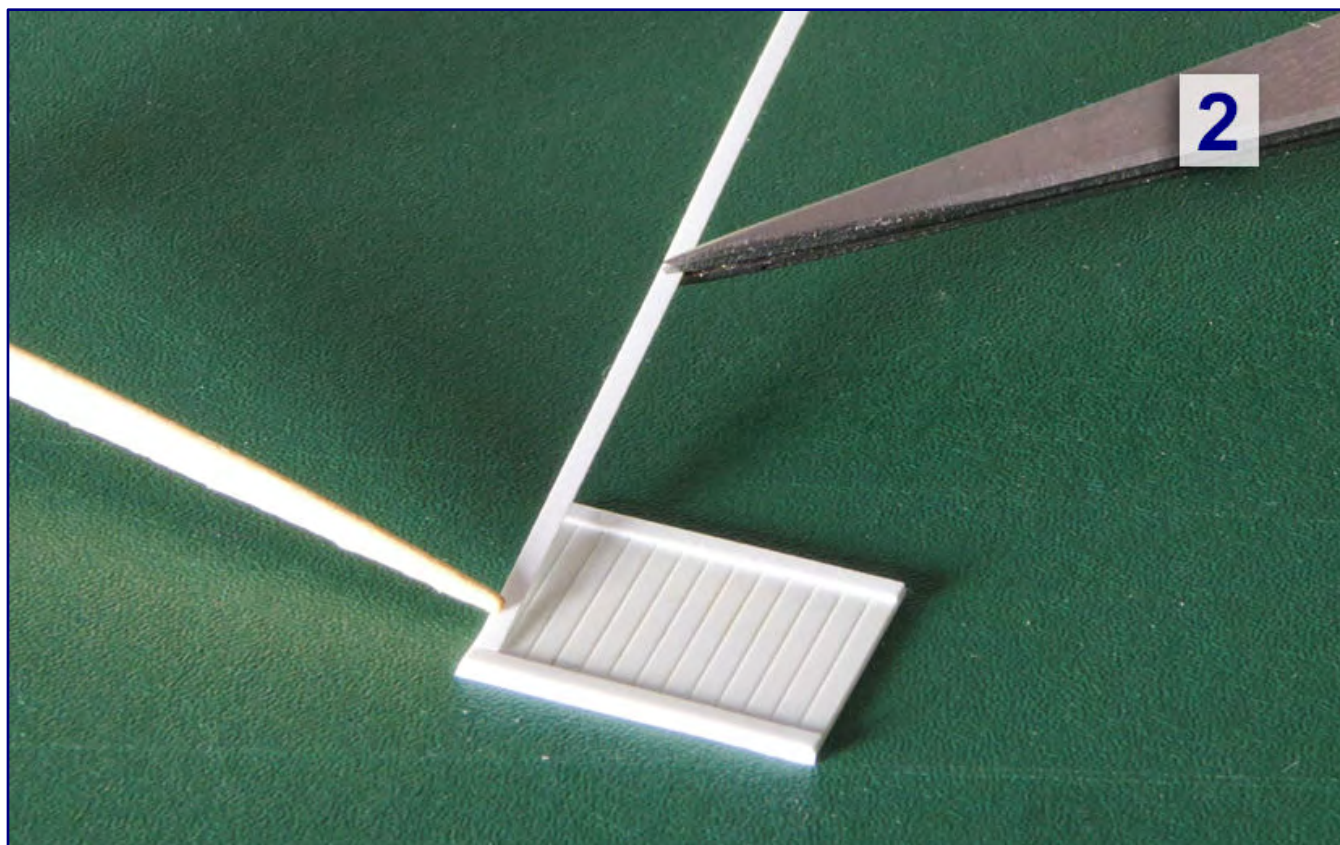
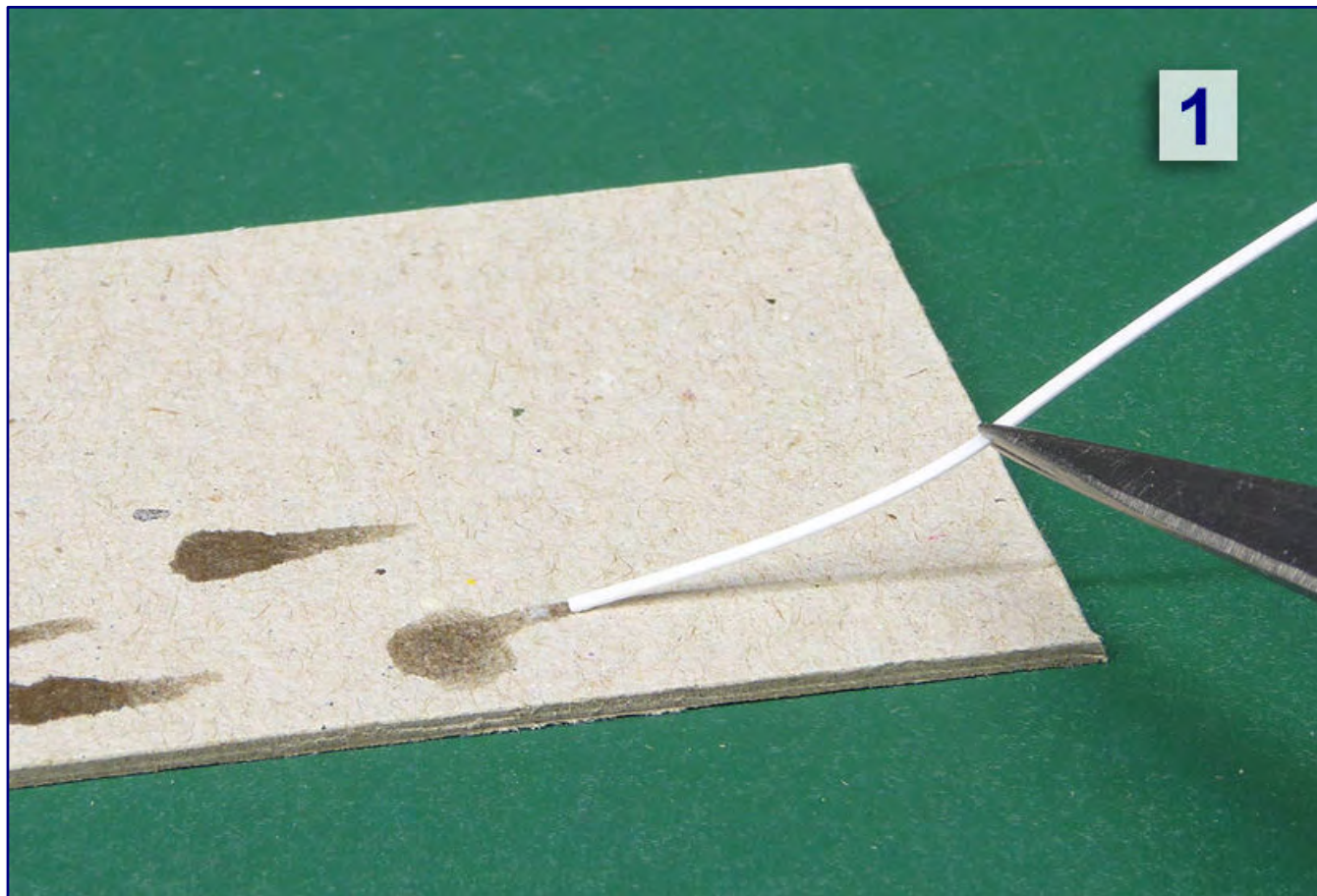
Personally, I always use "Slater's MEK-PAK," a liquid that smells less strong than butanone but, according to my impressions so far, sticks just as well. In addition, it should be mentioned that a re-evaluation of this substance has been underway in the EU since 2018 with regard to the dangers it poses.

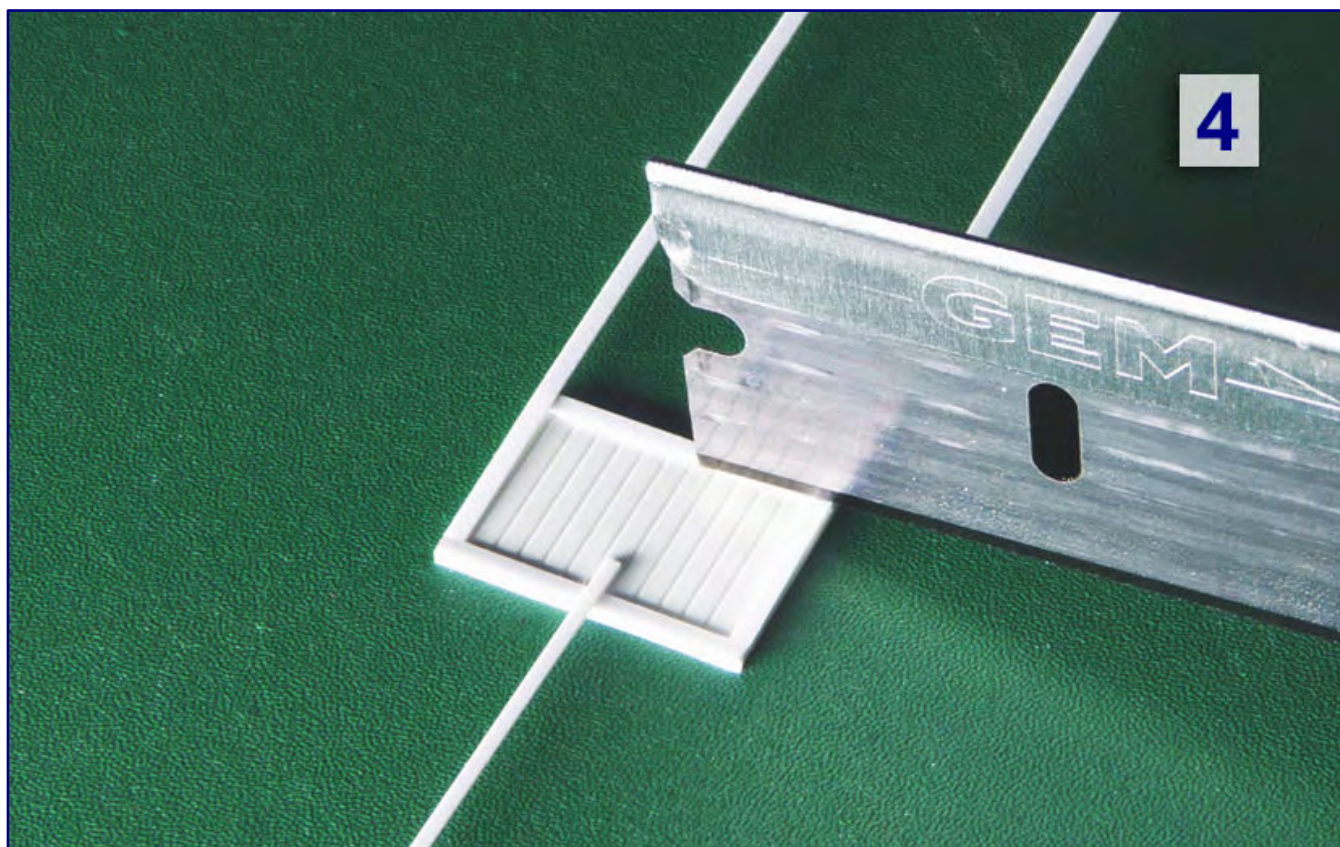
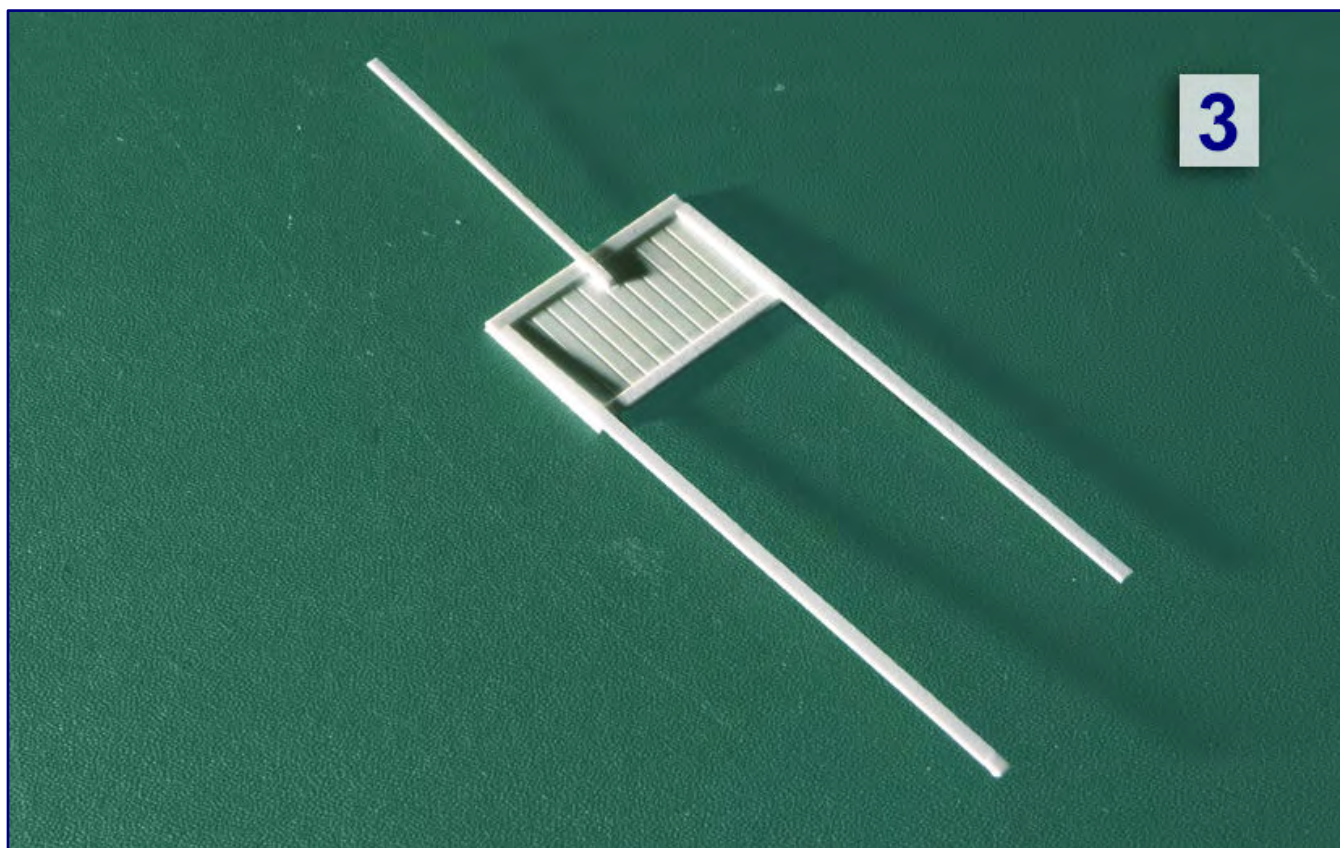
Bonding with MEK is done as follows: We press the parts together and brush some of the chemical over the seam with the brush. The liquid is absorbed by capillary action and fuses the part.

Residues are invisible on the model because the liquid evaporates immediately. Consequently, one drop too much does not ruin the model. Smallest parts can therefore be glued invisibly. Through practice, develop a feeling for how much liquid can be used without parts deforming or melting completely. It is also important to press the parts together, because even the smallest gap will not work.

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Photo gallery for assembling the smallest parts







Explaining the assembly steps in a two-step method:

A droplet of polystyrene adhesive is placed on a slightly absorbent substrate (paper or cardboard). The end of the part to be assembled is pulled through it with its underside and then wiped off (step 1). The prepared part is still much larger than it needs to be in the end. This makes it easier to handle (step 2).

The part is now placed on the workpiece; in this case it is a car door on which the side stripes are already attached (step 3). A sufficient drying pause must now be allowed. Only then the part is cut to size. A single-edged razor knife makes this possible with precision (step 4). This method of working can greatly simplify the production of exactly fitting parts. A razor knife is also a valuable tool for parts that are to be mounted freely, because the unavoidable cut in the substrate becomes invisible after painting. Finally, the part is fully glued with MEK (step 5).

MEK initially dries very quickly, much faster than polystyrene glue. So we must work quickly. However, curing also takes quite a long time. If the joint is critical, it is not a bad idea to wait a day before loading the joint.

In addition, I would like to introduce a two-step method for mounting small parts (see picture sequence): A drop of polystyrene glue is applied to a slightly absorbent surface (paper or cardboard).

The end of the part is dipped in it and wiped off. The future part is much larger than it will and must be in the end; this makes it easy to handle. Then this part is placed on the workpiece, in my example case a car door on which the side strips are already present.

Only after it has dried through the strip that is too long is cut to size. A single-edged razor knife is the tool of choice here. This method of working can make it much easier to produce precisely fitting parts. It is also a good method for parts to be assembled freely, because the probably unavoidable cut in the substrate is invisible after painting. Finally, the part is glued in place with MEK.

Probably important to know: The butanone is invisible, but it affects the surface properties of the material. I have tried three different brands of acrylic lacquer and primer, but in my experience it covers less well on the areas treated with it.

This can be remedied by lightly roughening with sandpaper or a fibreglass brush. By the way, classic enamel paints such as Humbrol or Revell show this problem less or not at all.

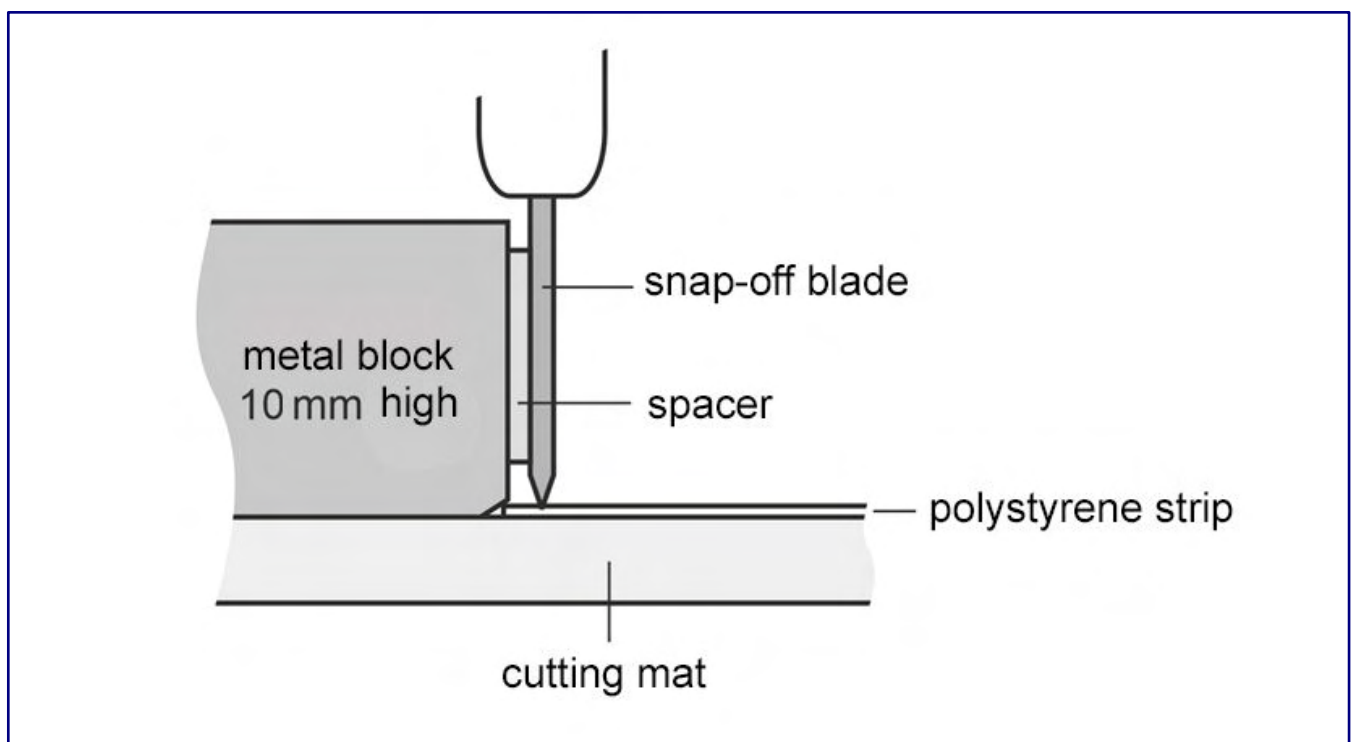
Inscriptions and superstructures

I designed the locomotive and wagon inscriptions myself. On the one hand, this was necessary because there are hardly any for narrow-gauge vehicles in the market and the ones offered are limited to very narrowly defined prototypes.

This made it possible for me to give each wagon its own individual inscription. Following my drawings, wet sliding patterns were made as a special production. They are not as sharp as Märklin pad prints, but they were still better than expected. The smallest letters are only about 0.25 mm high and are still recognisable as such. Larger ones are also legible.

The foil base of the decals is still noticeable despite the extra thin foil, special adhesives and softeners. A material thickness of only 0.07 mm still corresponds to 1.5 cm on the prototype.

Therefore, with a few exceptions, I have refrained from using push-off pictures for passenger coaches with smooth walls, because it could look disturbing. It is probably also acceptable for NBE small railways, as historical photos prove: sometimes railcars and passenger coaches in the sixties did not carry any conspicuous inscriptions.

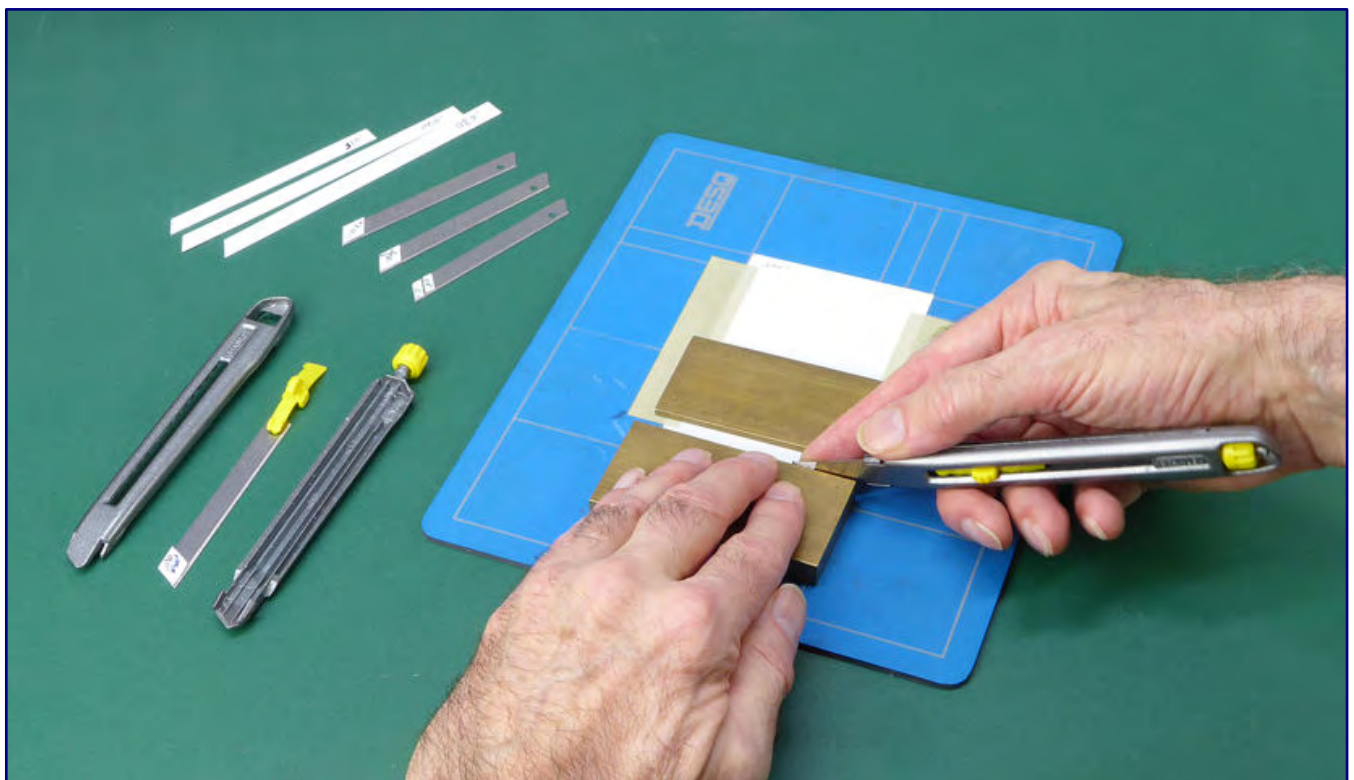


This illustration clarifies the principle of cutting very fine polystyrene strips. Particular attention should be paid to the small opening on the underside of the metal block.

Polystyrene strips are fundamental building blocks for finely detailed plastic models. Evergreen (distributed by Faller) offers them in dimensions down to 0.25 x 0.5 mm. That means 55 x 110 mm in prototype size, which is sometimes too coarse. I therefore make my own smaller strips from 0.13 mm polystyrene sheets from this supplier.

This process is as follows: A polystyrene sheet about 70 mm wide is fixed to a cutting mat with adhesive tape. On one of the sides (without adhesive tape) I place a rectangular metal block 10 mm high. It is important that the block has a slightly bevelled or rounded edge so that the 0.13 mm plate is held exactly at its end (see diagram).

A 9 mm break-off blade is prepared by gluing on a small piece of polystyrene as a spacer. The width of the polystyrene strips cut off thus depends largely on the thickness of the spacer!



This is how the cutting process shown on page 11 works in reality. On the left are the dismantlable blade holders and the snap-off blades with different spacers for different sized strips.

If the blade of the knife is pressed against the metal block while cutting, we get strips of always the same width. It takes a little sensitivity and practice to do this well. It takes some experience not to press too hard horizontally and vertically and not too lightly on the knife.

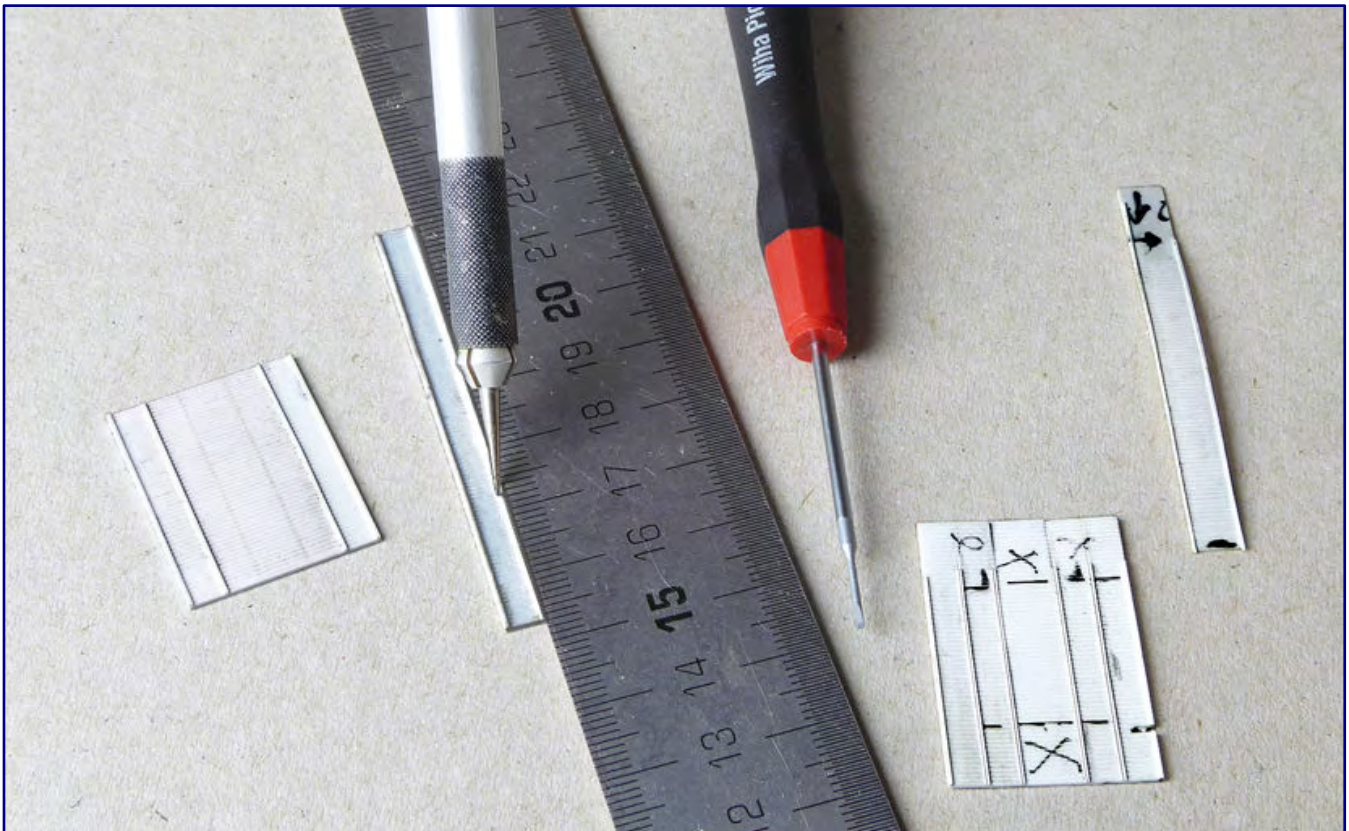
Good observation is also important to stop immediately when a strip comes loose. Then there are slightly curved strips of identical width. A strong curvature, on the other hand, indicates too much pressure during cutting.

Of course, the process only works with a fresh, very sharp blade. I recommend a holder from Stanley, because it clamps the blade securely and I can also replace blades with a glued-on spacer here.

Another tip for those who want to copy: Evergreen offers polystyrene round profiles from diameters of 0.5 mm. Even that is rather thick for my purposes. Slaters, on the other hand, also offers profiles with a diameter of only 0.25 mm. I have fallen back on this very often.

In reality, there were also wooden box struts on narrow-gauge freight wagons, for example on the Rügen small railways. Mostly, however, steel U-profiles were used. I am reproducing these, as I will describe in the following.

Polystyrene strips of 0.13 x 0.6 mm are fused to the substrate using MEK. It is important that they are properly glued! However, too much glue dissolves them, so the right sensitivity is required.



The individual stages of side wall construction: On the left is a prepared side wall panel with strips. The scribing is shown in the middle. Finished side wall panels with the surfaces crossed out as unusable can be seen on the right (top right: door panel). About 50 % of the processed surfaces were suitable for further use - so it takes a lot of practice!

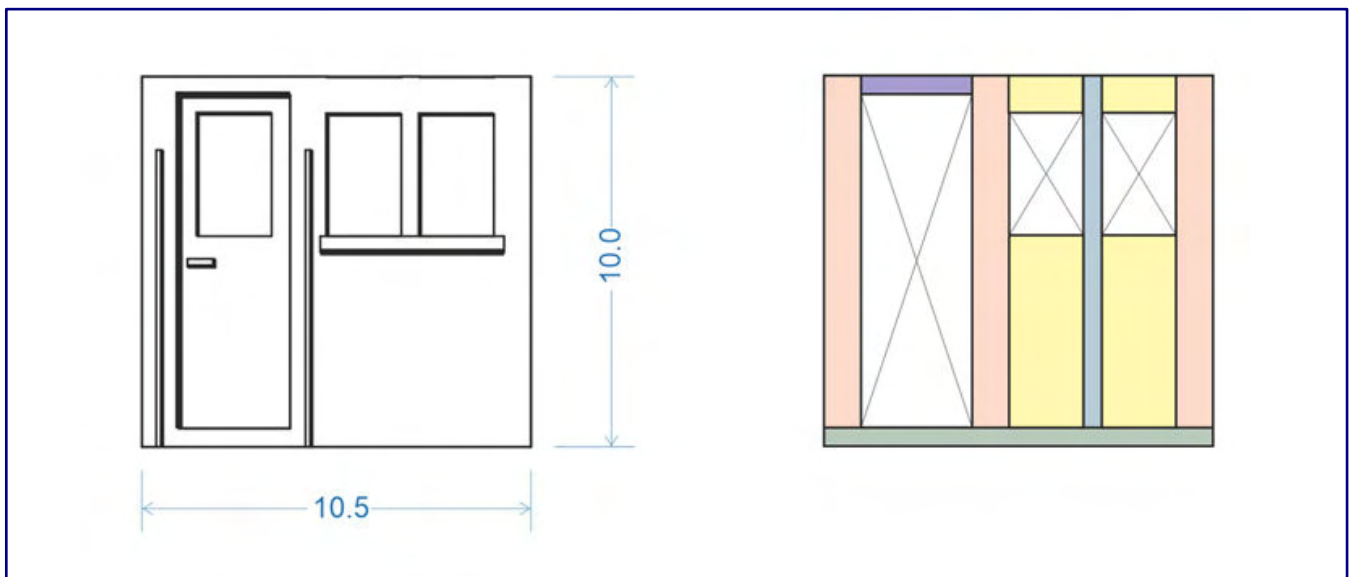
After thorough drying, a steel ruler is placed against the side of a strip. With a sharp needle, I first carefully scribe a groove in the middle of the strip. Then it deepened carefully several times. Here, too, care must be taken never to apply too much pressure. Patience is needed.

Finally, the "channel" can be reworked with a sharpened mini-screwdriver or brass rod. A perfectly rectangular finishing is not recommended, because then the part would be too vulnerable. Mostly a shadow falls into the U-profile anyway and from a normal observer's distance its shape cannot be perceived correctly at all.



This is how the two-axle freight wagon looks with the mounted side walls including the box struts made of U-profiles after painting and labelling.

In 1:220 scale it is also quite difficult to make precise openings in polystyrene walls – windows are meant to be here. Therefore, I turn the matter around, so to speak: a wall is built up around these openings using parts. Thanks to MEK, the strips can be fused so well that there are no visible joints afterwards.



On the left is the construction drawing for the housing wall of a gauge Ze diesel locomotive. It is converted into a drawing with wall parts (right): crosses are openings. The same colours represent the same width. All parts should have the same thickness, here 0.4 mm.

Two things are also important here: The parts must be precisely manufactured. The fine trimming tool mentioned above is the tool of choice for this. Secondly, the strips to be glued must be joined together on a flat surface so that they lie absolutely flat.

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Picture texts for page 15:

The parts of the enclosure wall are glued together on a steel plate (photo above). Heavy, right-angled brass blocks fix the parts in position, the low ones allow a good view of the workpiece. The drill stand was modified with fine height adjustment and locking facility to obtain a (only limitedly stable) device for milling micro-grooves (photo below).

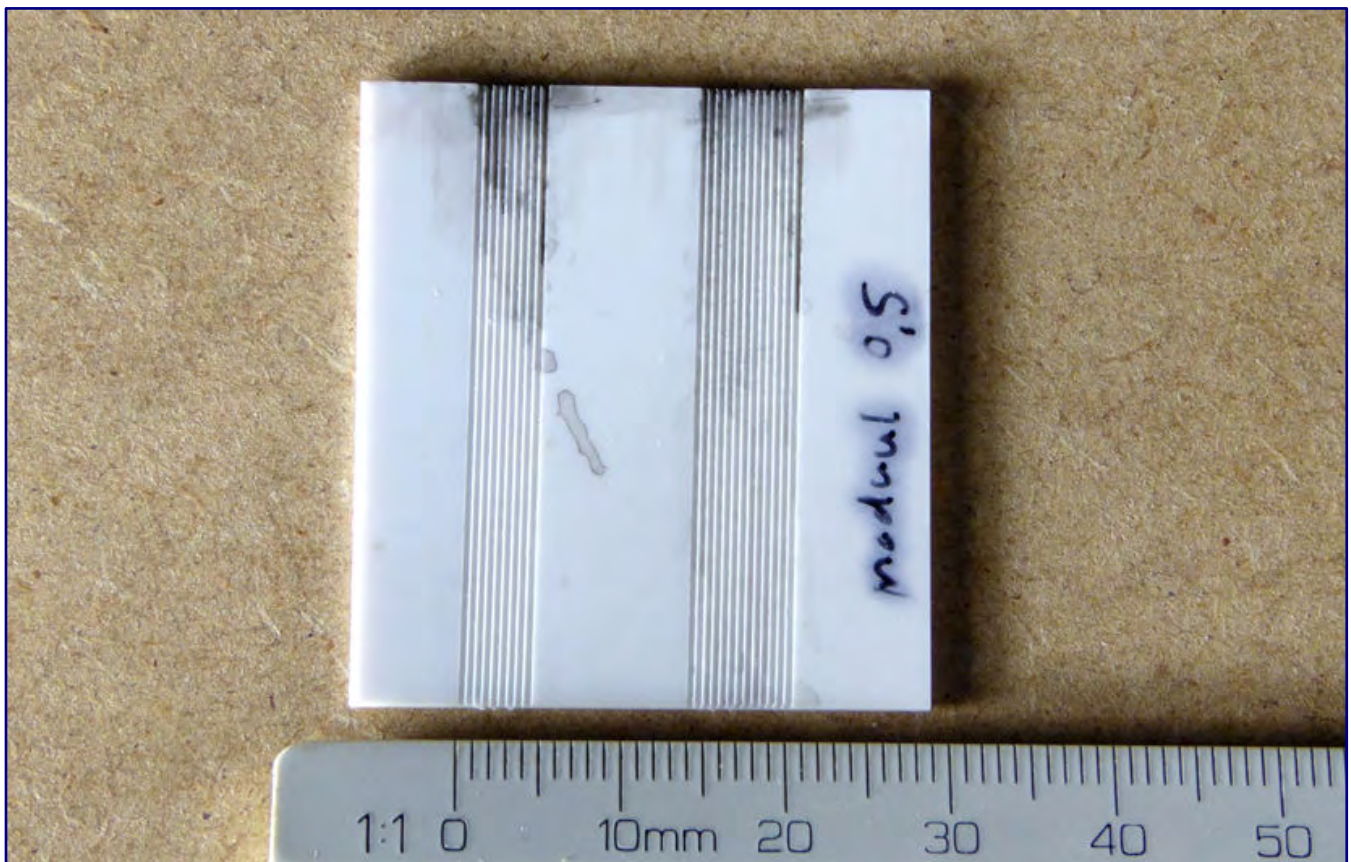
I use a 10 mm thick steel plate for this. On the one hand, this ensures that there are no height differences, and, on the other hand, I protect against the unavoidable excess of glue. Polystyrene and glue (almost) do not stick to the metal, so the finished part can be easily removed from the surface.

Difficult: Construction of gratings

Grills and rust plates are often found on diesel and electric locomotives or in the ventilation openings of wagons. I have therefore tried out several methods to be able to recreate this in Z gauge in a believable way, preferably as simple as possible.

It works best when I mill grooves in polystyrene with very thin miniature saw blades. I found paper-thin saw blades of only 0.12 mm on offer from Proxxon. I prevented the feared melting of the plastic under the influence of heat by not sawing too deeply, and a circular saw blade also generates considerably less heat than a router.

If this still does not work, cooling with a drop of washing-up liquid is advisable. The smallest grates I make have a module of 0.35 mm. So, I can't get around special tools like a mini drill-milling machine, drill stand, and cross table.



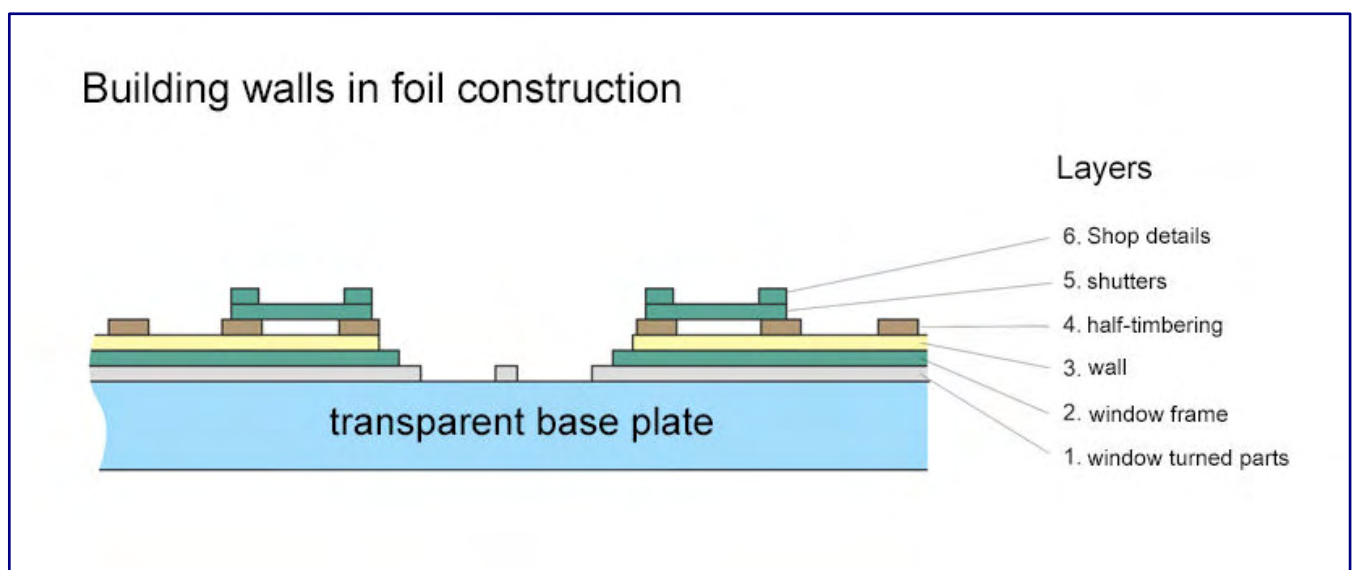
Here you can see a milled grate plate in module 0.5.

The side walls of railcars and passenger coaches, on the other hand, are made of self-adhesive film on transparent polystyrene. Foil has some advantages in the N or Z sizes. The result looks filigree because the foils are thin.

DC foils, for example, only have a material thickness of 0.1 mm. This corresponds to 2.2 cm for the prototype, which is quite realistic for wagon side walls, but also nice for building windows. Windows made of cardboard (laser-cut kits) or polystyrene often look much too thick.

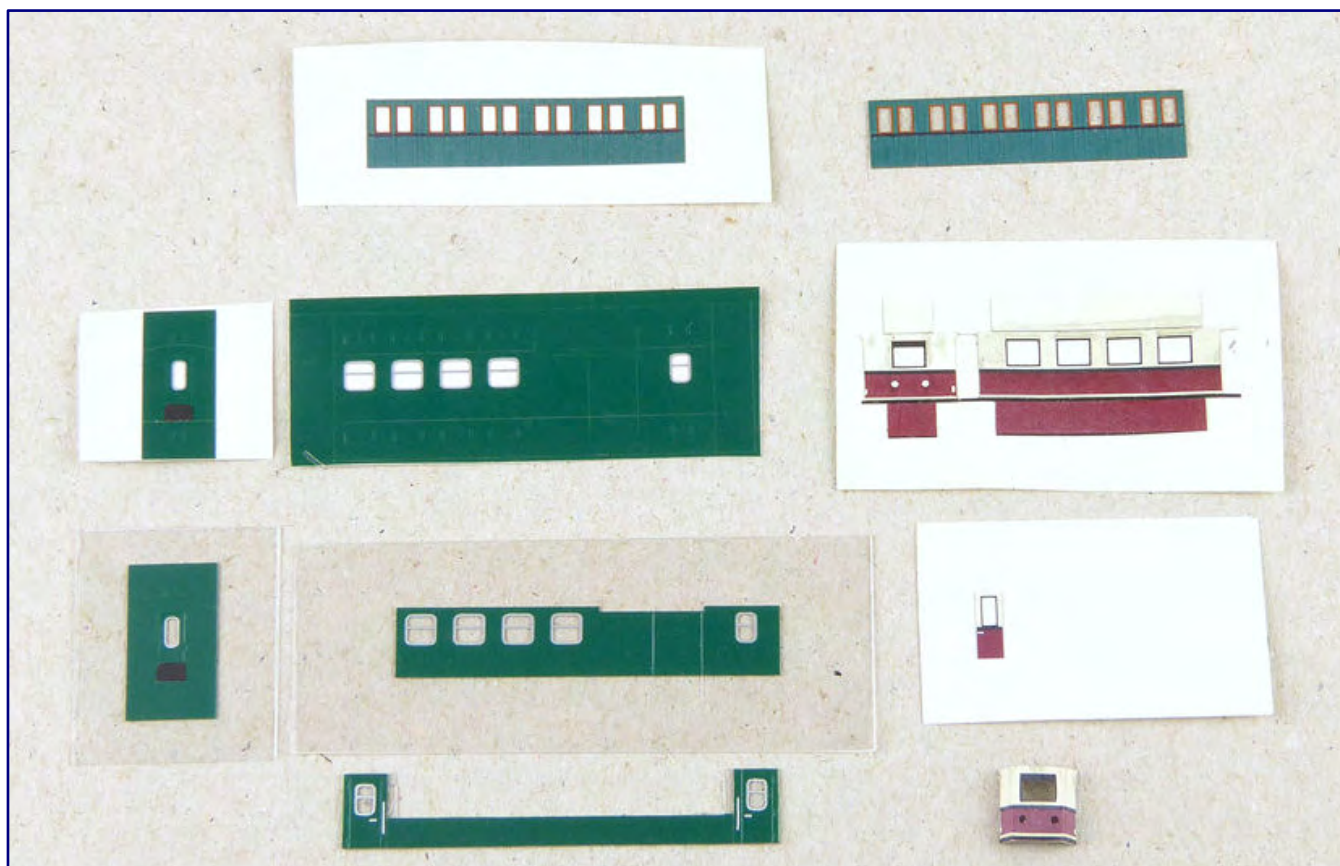


The self-made lay-on plates on the small Silhouette CNC cutting plotter make it possible to make changes to the foil package during a break in the cutting process.



Construction of the wall of the Göppingen House in 6 layers (see page 18 below)

continues on page 20





Here the foil was cut by hand (photo above). After painting, the house was given a patina. The passenger and luggage wagons (photo below) also have the foil walls described. These were matted and tinted before cutting.

Photos on page 18

The passenger car parts are either cut directly on a transparent background or the cut walls are brought over to the transparent background using a transfer foil (photo above). The photo below shows the gable of a prototype from the Märklin town of Göppingen (H0 size). The foil is on 2 mm thick transparent polystyrene here. The house wall is shown without aging, but the foils can be excellently treated with colour and also embossed.

I described my way of working in detail seven years ago in four articles in the Dutch magazine 'Rail Magazine'. The number of articles already indicates that I cannot describe it nearly as precisely in this framework. I will mention some of the most important points here in telegram style:

- Self-adhesive foils from reliable manufacturers are sustainable. I have 30-year-old self-adhesive wagons with films that are still good.
- The surface structure of self-adhesive films can be easily changed by sanding or embossing. Embossing also lasts for a long time.
- The colour of self-adhesive foils can be influenced by spraying thinned paint over them. Normal modelling paints also adhere well in the long run.
- Beautiful results come out of multi-layered workpieces.

Narrow-gauge Ze for beginners

One of my first experiments with the Ze size was the conversion of an Uerdingen railbus. I narrowed it down to 11 mm. The width of the side is still prototypical. With this measurement, the two lower headlights have just an acceptable distance.

I used a circular saw to make two halves of 5.5 mm width from the Märklin housing. These were then also shortened in height by sawing off the black frame edges. This could also be done by hand with a fine saw and then finished with sandpaper. After gluing the halves together, the roof has a small fold, which I sanded out.



A first step into gauge Ze: the powered railcar (right) was created as a conversion from a Märklin railbus.

Next I mounted a new, upper top light on the roof in holes on both sides. These consist of a polystyrene round rod (PS) in a drilled out PS tube of slightly larger diameter. If you want it to be easier, use only one round rod. The third top light can also be omitted if the layout is set in epoch IIIa.

If disturbing glued seams are visible, there is no way around filling. At the ends, however, a buffer bar may also be able to hide seams. However, it is best to keep the seams as clean as possible. Then the builder also saves a new windscreen! By the way, a two-part windscreen is quite prototypical.

The next step is to fit the new housing to the transparent body of the T-gauge driving unit using PS strips. A trick to fit this housing without it sitting too low or too high is to glue a transparent 3 mm polystyrene strip on top of it. It exactly fills the distance from the top of the part to the railcar body. Because it is transparent, it will be imperceptible later.

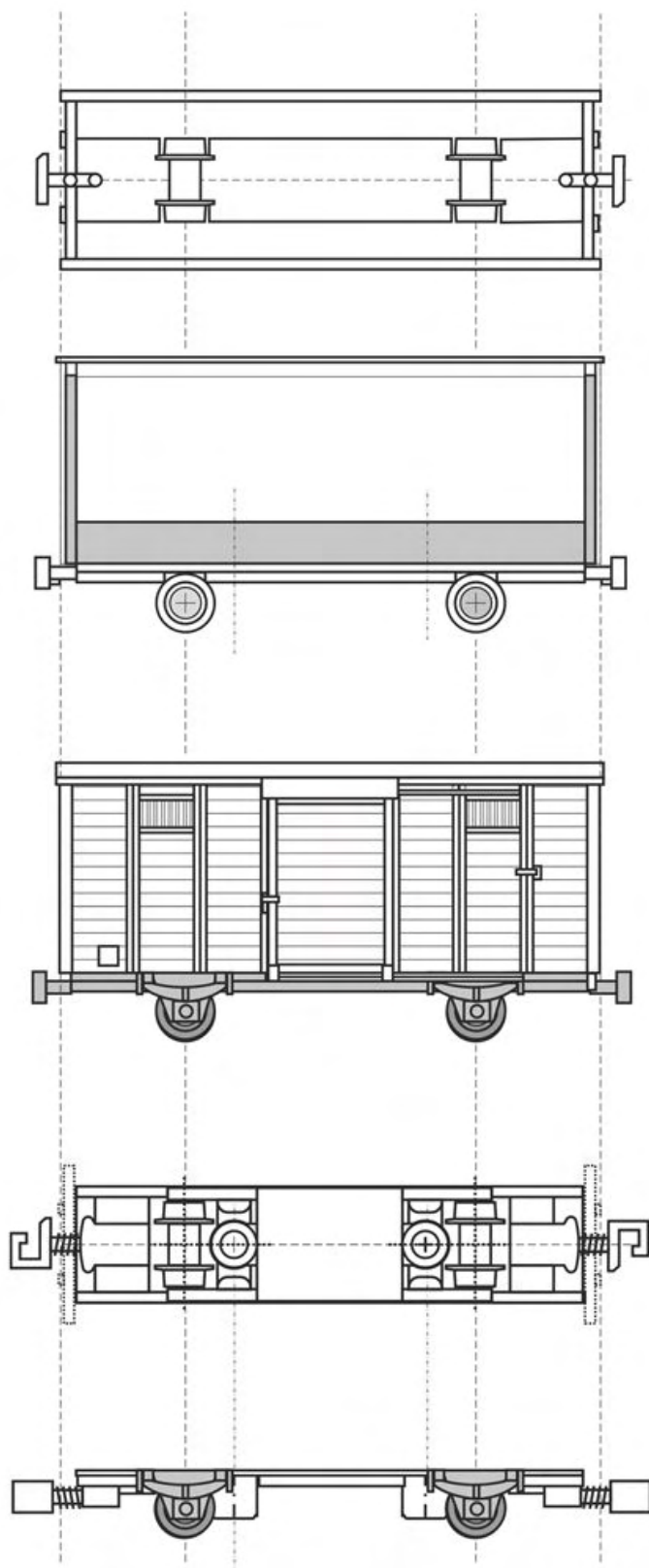


The size comparison between the light railway diesel locomotive and the V200 with passenger train illustrates once again the size differences between narrow and standard gauge in 1:220 scale.

After gluing in the drive housing, footsteps are attached to the railcar. Finally, couplings may have to be attached. Either simple eye couplings can be made or alternatively coupling holders from T-gauge bogies can be sawn off. These can then be attached to the body with two-component or super glue.

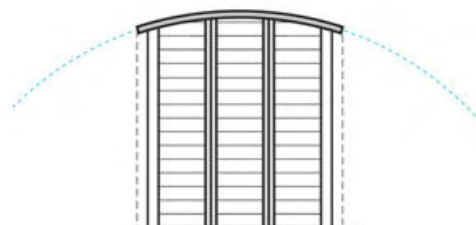
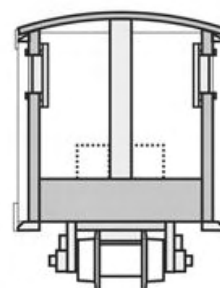
Finally, it is time to paint. This can be done only by hand around the windows, because they are firmly moulded in Märklin's rail bus. Precise covering all the windows would be a Sisyphean task. However, the roof and the lower part of the coach body can also be spray-painted.

Digression: drawings for self-construction of a boxcar



26 mm tweeasser

SCHAAL 2:1



Such a conversion could be a relatively easy introduction to the gauge Ze for everyone. After all, there were many small railways with single-drive railcars. And thanks to the holding magnets, the drive units can also run on very steep tracks on their own. Consequently, a steep or cogwheel track can be built without much effort.



These four-axle narrow gauge wagons were based on Märklin wagon bodies. If you study drawings of narrow-gauge wagons, you will notice that the side walls were often about the same height as those of standard-gauge wagons of the formation type. The open wagon was created from a low-sided wagon, the body of which resembles a high-sided wagon on narrow gauge.

It is comparatively easy to build four-axle narrow gauge freight cars from Märklin's Era I models. These were usually narrower than passenger cars, so their car bodies should also be narrowed to about 9 mm. In any case, it is important to pay attention to credible proportions.

It should also be noted that narrow-gauge wagons always stand much lower on their underframes than standard-gauge wagons. This also requires structural adjustments or consideration. It is best to look at photos and drawings of originals beforehand and to diligently try things out until the necessary "knack" develops.

All photos and drawings: Reinder Rutgers

Sources used for tools:

<https://www.conrad.de>
<https://goldschmiedebedarf.de>
<https://www.gw-werkzeuge.de>
<https://www.hbm-machines.com>

Sources of materials used:

<https://www.faller.de>
<https://slatersplastikard.com>

Sources of supply in the Netherlands:

<https://www.meijerenbleasing.nl>
<https://www.metaalwinkel.nl>

Layout details (part 1)

Innovation with inner Life

Polyplate is Viessman's name for a composite material which the manufacturer uses for its entry into the market for laser-cut kits under its Kibri and Vollmer brands. The first Z gauge release of these type of kits is a small workshop building, which allows experiencing this new material. We have tested the kit and immediately filled it with life at the start of our annual focus theme on layout details – thus equipped, it immediately takes on a leading role on the layout.

Two things that complement each other perfectly are more than just the sum of their individual parts. This also applies to the “small workshop” kit, which Viessmann recently released under its Vollmer brand (art. no. 49590).

With this and other kits for the larger scales, some of which are also offered by Kibri, the accessory manufacturer is now, as the last “house builder”, finally entering the era of laser-cut technology. For Vollmer this is completely new territory, whilst at Kibri there was at least a first attempt, when it was still an independent brand, which probably only a few will remember.



Viessmann shows innovation with its Vollmer brand and presents Z scale enthusiasts with a small workshop (art. no. 49590), which proves to be an extraordinarily good kit.

Also, the option of producing attractive kits that promise more individuality, while avoiding expensive mould costs seemed too tempting. They have this advantage because the production technology is designed for smaller quantities and allows faster model changes.

In the meantime, however, it has become difficult to impress the public with new hardboard kits. After all, this technology began to establish itself already a little more than fifteen years ago! In 2009 we gave our editorial award to a kit from this segment for the first time. Much time has passed since then.

The second generation at the helm of Viessmann also seems to be aware of this. Once having been attached to a very conservative manufacturing and product philosophy for decades, the company is now taking more and more innovative approaches. In 2023, these will finally also reach the Z gauge market, but in this case, they will also bring new products for the larger scales.

In order to create the marketing buzz needed for refreshing the partly old-fashioned brands, something new was needed that goes beyond the exterior design of the buildings. Therefore, and instead of using “simple” hard cardboard, the kits are manufactured with a new composite material.

Viessmann did not disclose any details, but our impression is that the new material makes use of liquid synthetic resins and paints, presumably acrylic-based. We were already able to get a personal impression of the feel of this “Polyplate” material at the Spielwarenmesse (International Toy Fair) in Nürnberg (Nuremberg) earlier this year: A plaster facade on the sample piece felt identical to the original. We have already summarised the most important features in issue 2/2023.



Before our workshop looks like this, there is still a lot to do. However, Viessmann has done very good preparatory work and has impressively narrowed the weakness it had with respect to the use of laser cut production methods.

To impregnate a solid-coloured hardboard with a synthetic resin (or comparable material) and thus make it even more dimensionally stable is a good idea, the advantage of which we have now been able to experience and appreciate ourselves during assembly. The fact that the new Vollmer building has a realistic matt surface is in line with expectations - anything else would have been a step backwards.

Two further arguments indicate that Viessman is experimenting with this new material: They test the market with a small kit, the cost of which remains manageable and losses would be bearable even in case of an (unexpected) failure.

Modelling habits do not need to be changed either, because both the preparation of the parts and their assembly with white glue corresponds to other laser cut kits. Viessmann also offers its own Kibri-branded polyplate glue (39997), which we will come back to later.

We start the assembly with the realisation that the kit's designers did not want to leave anything to chance, and wanted to catapult themselves as far as possible into the top field of kit suppliers. Therefore, we hope that the market will vindicate the new approach and that it will lead to more kits being released in the future.

Before we begin...

Before starting any assembly, the enclosed assembly instructions should be checked for the specificities of individual steps, the sequence of assembly, and markings of the enclosed sheets and parts.

In this context, you should also check whether everything is complete or whether parts might be missing. We did not have a problem in this respect and the well-illustrated instructions, which make do with only little text (German and English), does not contain anything unexpected.

However, some things already stand out that are worth mentioning: The appearance of the solid-coloured hardboard parts will be appealing and realistic, for their absence of any unnatural gloss. Consequently, there is no need to additional paint cover.

The half-timbered wooden framework of the shed is (as with other manufacturers) set on top of the brickwork, which does not correspond to the construction method of the prototype.

However, these parts are deliberately made of such thin cardboard that it will not be noticeable after assembly. And after all, they do not have a load-bearing function in the model.

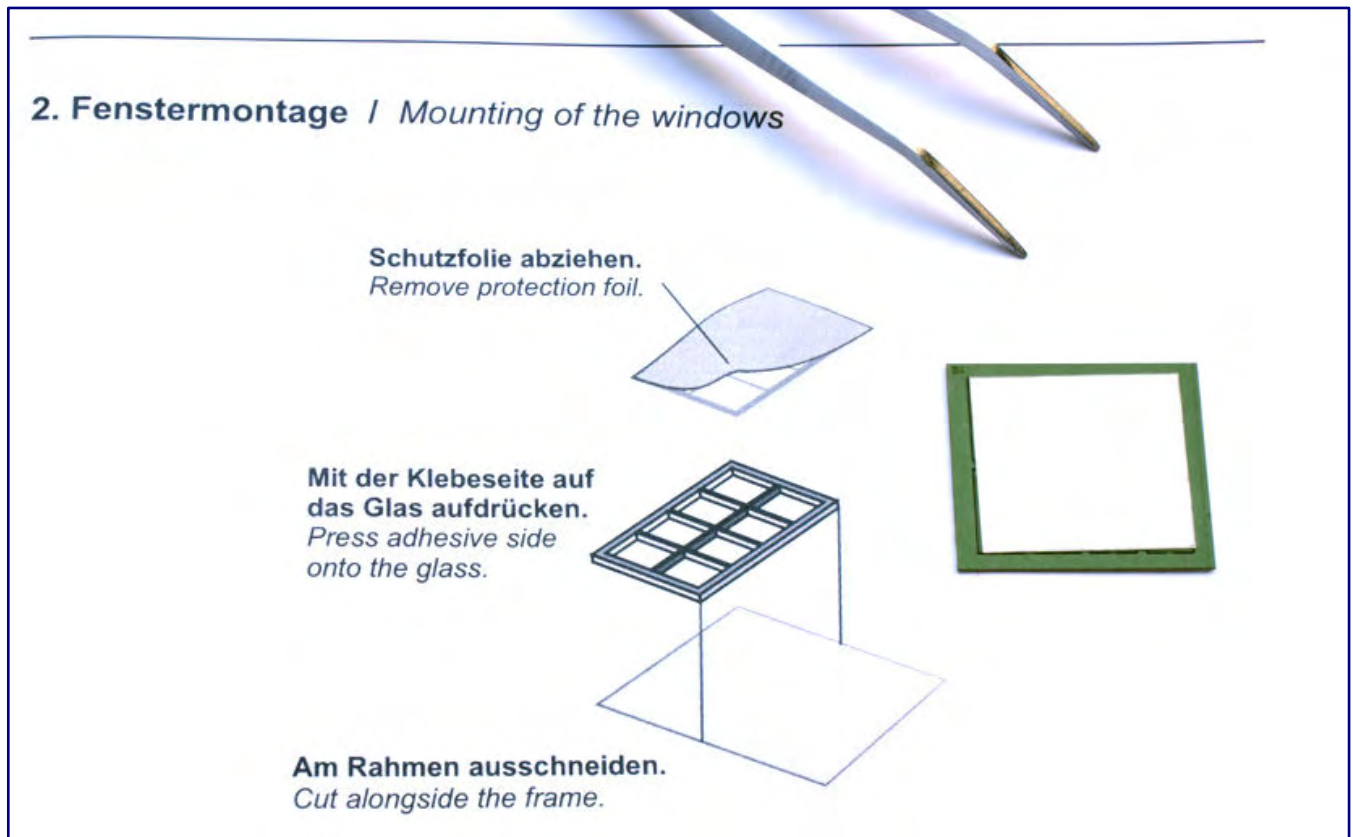
Particularly important are the following features, which make for an enormous difference to the product photo on the packaging: The engravings of the gates and plaster surfaces are considerably better and are on a par with kits from other manufacturers. Obviously, the product picture on the packaging shows a pre-production prototype.

The colours of the kit parts are slightly different: The plaster is grey instead of beige and the wooden beams are black instead of brown. We have no information about the reason for this variation, but the increased neutrality opens up considerably more combination possibilities with the half-timbered buildings already available on the market.



Before we start assembling, we check the completeness of the parts and familiarise ourselves with the instructions. In the process, we also discover possibilities for adding our own features to the kit.

And with a footprint of just 4.4 x 3.4 cm, there should be a corner on every layout where this workshop can be integrated. This also seems worthwhile because thanks to the interior division into an office and a large workshop room, it virtually invites one to detail its interior it as well.



The kit comes with some new ideas. One new approach is the use of self-adhesive window panes. We will see how this will perform in practice.

The manufacturer has obviously also thought of this, because the doors can be installed both in closed and open position. Viessmann has even taken into account an integrated lighting option and designed the kit in a way, which leaves room for the in-house floor interior lighting and further facilitates the view into the interior.

This option has also motivated us to make this report on building the small workshop the first article in a series around our annual focus theme "layout details:" After all, many enthusiasts underestimate the positive impact hidden details that reveal itself only at second look can have on viewers.

Therefore, various machines and workshop accessories from Modellbahn Union, as well as office equipment and figures from Trafofuchs, will be included in the build. We are also curious to see how the self-adhesive parts that was included in the Vollmer kit for the windows will work out in practice.

Finally: the assembly

Not all steps of the enclosed instructions need to be followed in the exact, suggested order. While prepared parts are drying, which are to be processed immediately in the following, elements for later sections can already be prepared.

This can shorten the time for assembly because as work can continue whilst the glue on some components is still setting. In total, the kit will cost us about two hours of work, including the planned interior, but only counting the placement of the necessary parts, and not their assembly and finishing and painting.



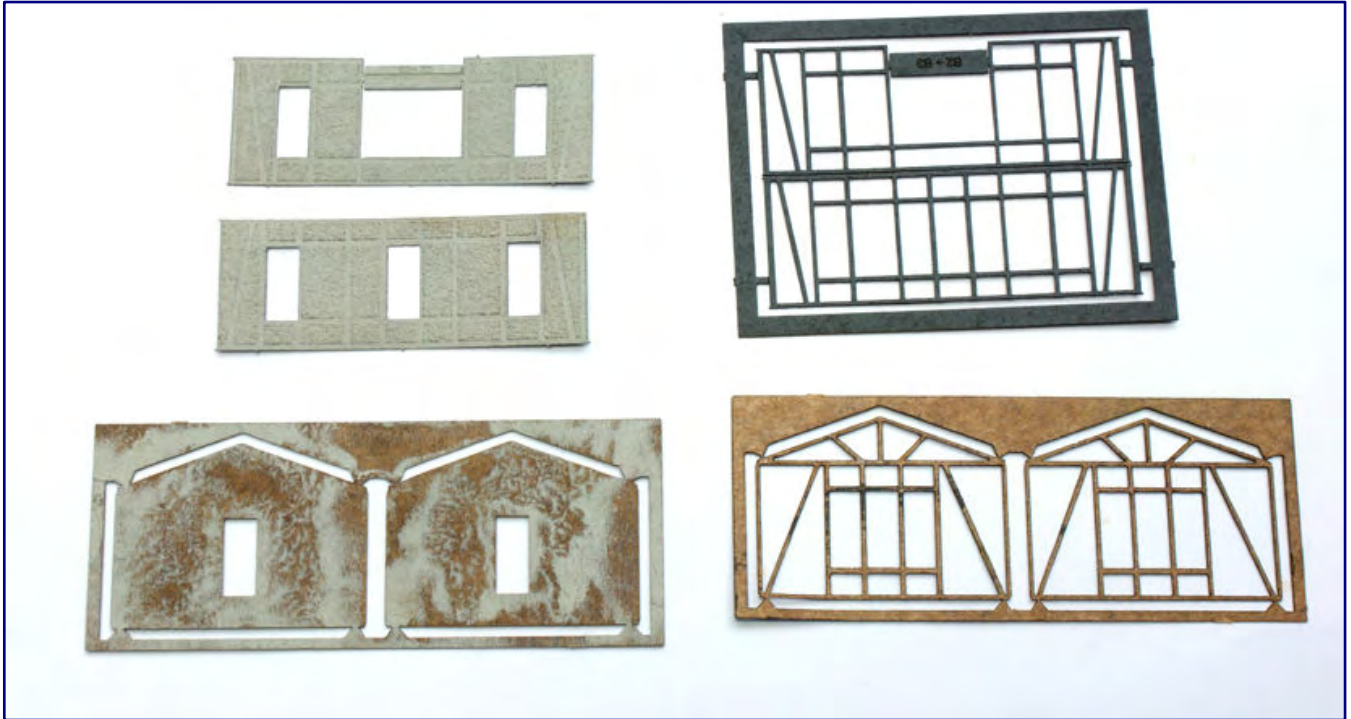
The self-adhesive parts for the windows do not work quite as expected. We, therefore, resort to the usual method and glue them in place with Uhu Kraft, which we spread thinly in the window corners with the help of a toothpick.

Let's start with the windows of the workshop, which are all the same size and made of a green painted cardboard. The enclosed self-adhesive window sheet is to be cut out along the frame. To do this, we take a sharp craft knife, align the frame and mark the end points of the cut. We then guide the blade along the steel ruler.

This needs to be repeated seven times and the measurement of the sheet seems tight, but it has been perfectly sized with it. Unfortunately, the disappointment comes when peeling off the protective film, as the sticky side underneath does not adhere at all to the window frame.

That's no big deal, because now we reach for the Uhu Kraft and glue the windows the traditional way: A tiny drop of glue applied with the tip of a toothpick in all four corners solves the problem, and maybe even another one. We don't know how Viessmann intended it. But if the glue had not simply evaporated before the frame was put on, it the window could have attracted dust, rendering the panes opaque.

The next step is to clamp the frames into the inner walls from the inside and then fix them to the edge with a little glue. Caution is advised here; any traces of glue should be wiped off immediately with a damp cloth. Afterwards, these wall parts can be placed on the base plate and glued to it and to the adjacent wall.



The plaster and truss parts are colour-treated on one side (photo above), which can only be an advantage for gluing them in place. The identical size of the two sheets is helpful when positioning the timber frame on the plaster wall surface (photo below).

This is where the first waiting time would arise, which we bridge by preparing the exterior walls. The finely engraved, black half-timbering is to be glued onto the parts with plaster reproductions. This seems almost child's play.

Both corresponding parts are pre-cut so that they can be placed congruently on top of each other and are thus, easy to position. All attention can therefore be devoted to the correct application of glue, which is applied in tiny dots to the intersecting struts so that it does not ooze out sideways.



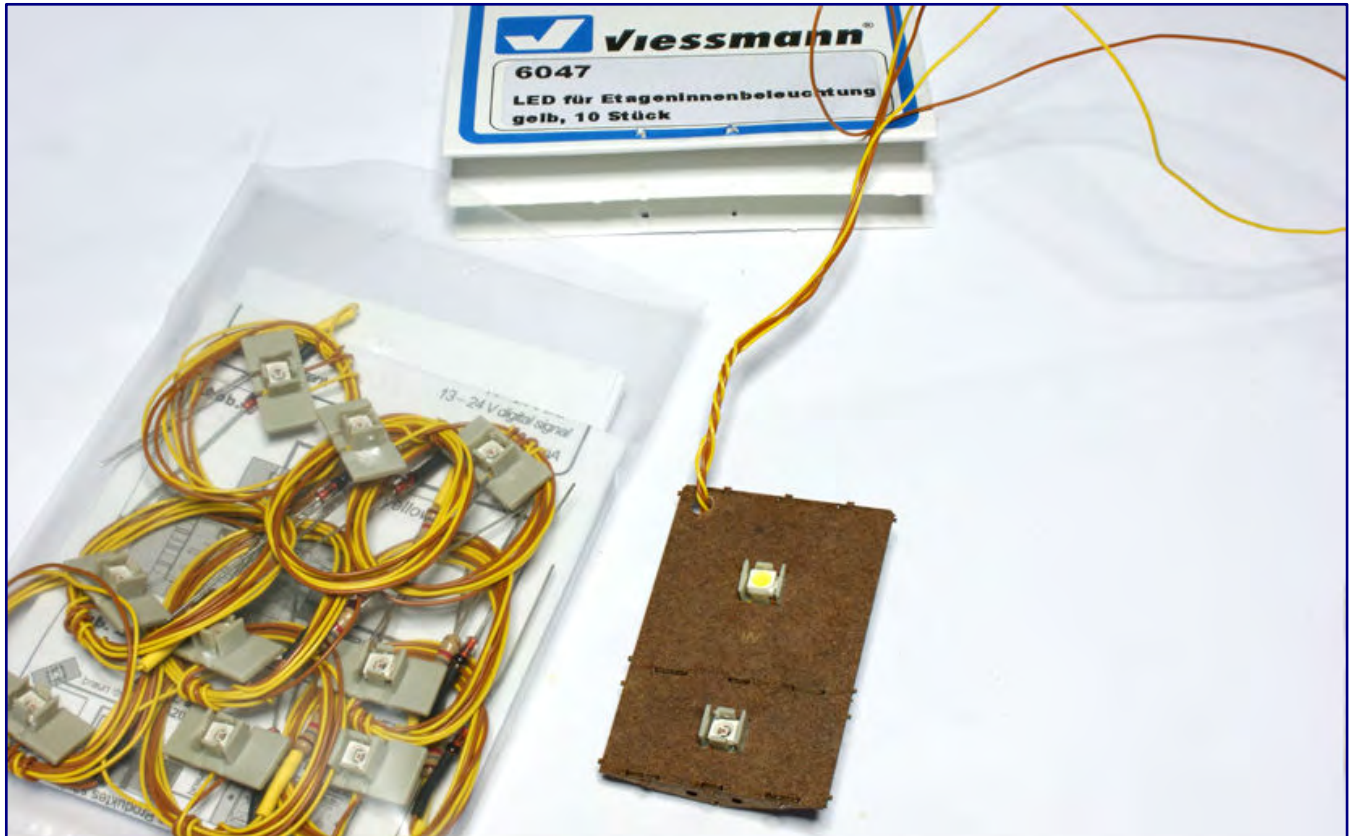
The polyplate glue from Kibri (39997) can be applied to the gluing point in very small quantities because of the fine dosing tip on the bottle and its low viscosity.

By the way, the proprietary Polyplate glue (Kibri 39997) is a great help here: We were not able to detect a difference to ordinary white glue, but its dosing tip, in combination with the high viscosity, proves to be very useful and also prevents the clogging up of drying glue in the bottle.

Once the really attractive outer walls are assembled and glued, another important step is completed. Model building clamps fix the parts to the already finished building core until the glue has set. Finally, the interior wall (with hinged door) separating workshop and office is glued in place.

As mentioned at the beginning, Viessmann has already prepared the kit for interior lighting. Therefore, we now insert the three rafters into the ceiling base plate. While these parts are drying, we already prepare the lighting elements.

The kit is designed to use Viessmann's interior floor lighting LEDs. Two LED elements can be inserted precisely and glued into the gable from the side that will not be visible later. We choose one yellow (Viessmann 6047) and one white (6048) lighting element. The cold white corresponds to the colour temperature emitted by fluorescent tubes and fits perfectly to a workshop. Yellow comes very close to the "sparkly" light of the incandescent lamp era that dominated small offices.



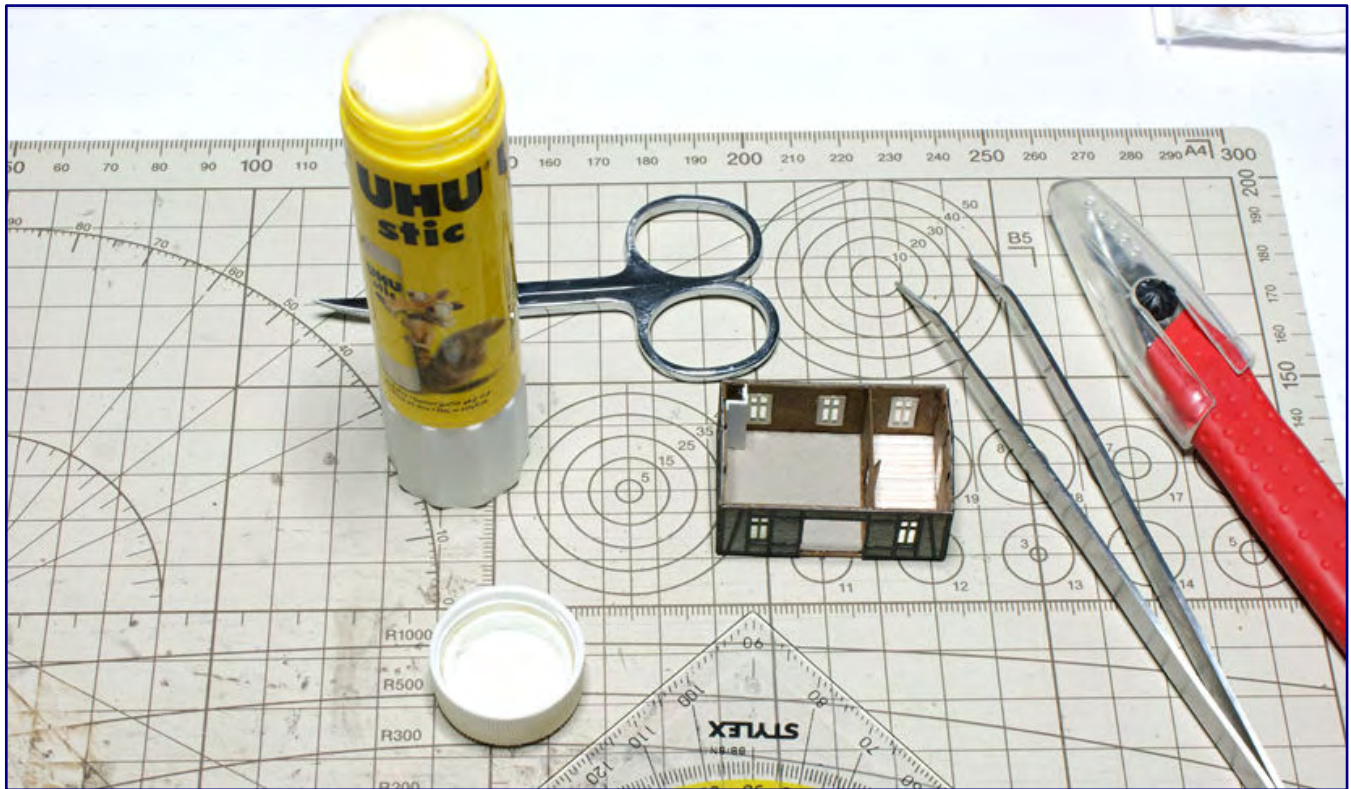
Two different light colours from Viessmann's interior floor lighting range were used for the light in the workshop and office space. The feed-through openings for the wires, diodes and resistors had to be cut out.

Now it's time for the cables to be routed to underneath the layout. The rafters as well as the ceiling and floor slabs have holes for the cables to pass through, but they are too small. If the diameter in the ceiling and floor is still sufficient for the blocking diode, it and the resistors do not fit through the holes in the rafters.

Consequently, the holes along the wires' routing have to be expanded with a round needle file. This can be done quickly and accurately. In the floor slab it is more difficult because the walls are already in place. Here we take the craft knife and create an almost square opening whilst avoiding to damage the walls.

When the work on the electrical system in the roof area is complete, we can finish the upper part. All that is missing now are the two cardboard parts to be placed on top (still connected in the sheet for production reasons), which rest on the rafters and ensure dimensional stability. The thin roof covering, an imitation of tar paper sheets, is then glued onto them.

By the way: The completed roof does not have to be glued to the building, but can be seamlessly inserted into its walls and easily clamped in place. This allows it to be removed at any time, as long as the wires for the lights are long enough to follow the movement.



Before the interior is fitted out, the floors in the workshop (made from grey photo cardboard) and in the office (wooden floorboards made from a print) get their appropriate surface. A cable shaft made of Evergreen profiles is inserted in the left backhand corner of the building.

Especially at this point the kit is very well thought out and the Vollmer brand currently has a unique selling point here. This construction is virtually predestined to give viewers a look inside! And that is exactly the challenge we will tackle now...

Important experiences

In Z gauge, windows are usually very small. Nevertheless, the view through the windows is sufficient if light falls from the building to the outside. As long as a house is placed at the edge of the layout and the view is unobstructed, the viewer can capture many angles of the interior with a slight movement of the head and in our imagination a floor plan of the room and its furnishings is created.

The camera can capture this to a limited extent only and for a fixed angle of view. The removable roof facilitates things a lot in this respect and answers questions about the areas that are not visible. Therefore, this workshop deserves furnishings in its interior, which in principle could also include the wall design, although for us these appear sufficiently neutral.

Lockers, machines, workbenches, a fire extinguisher and tools can be found in Modellbahn Union's own range: lockers (MU-Z-A00008), workshop equipment (MU-Z-A00206), lathe and workshop trolley (MU-Z-A00006) as well as a workbench (MU-Z-A00007). They are supplied as 3D printed parts that are quickly coloured. We use Oesling colours and choose reseda green as the base colour.

A trial set-up leads us to the final plan of which unit to place where in the large room so that as much of it as possible is visible without obstructing the visual axes into the interior. A drop of Uhu Kraft and a pair



The master craftsman, journeyman (not in the photo), chair and desk with typewriter were made by Trafofuchs and keep the small workshop bustling.

of tweezers will do the rest, after the workshop floor is created with matt grey paper.

A locker is used in the office, because it serves both master and journeyman as a changing room. What else is missing is supplied to us by Trafofuchs: the two custom-made craftsmen are part of their core competence anyway and are now created there via 3D printing, chair and desk (with typewriter, paper and pen) are made by Birgit Foken-Brock at the same time.

Here, too, it is essential to carry out tests to ensure that as much as possible remains visible once the roof is in place. Soon enough, the decision is made to give the office a wooden floor. Veneer is out of the question, because the floor would then be much higher than in the workshop, and we have left the door open between the two.

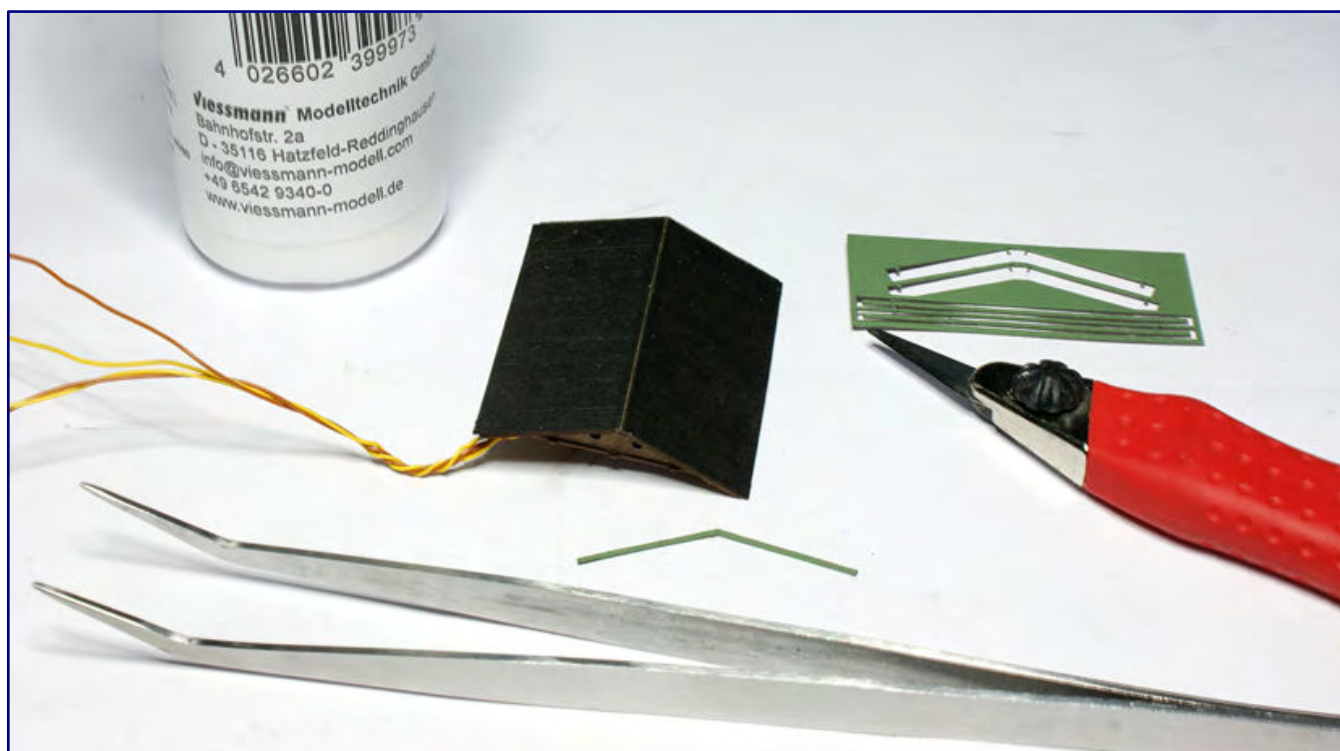
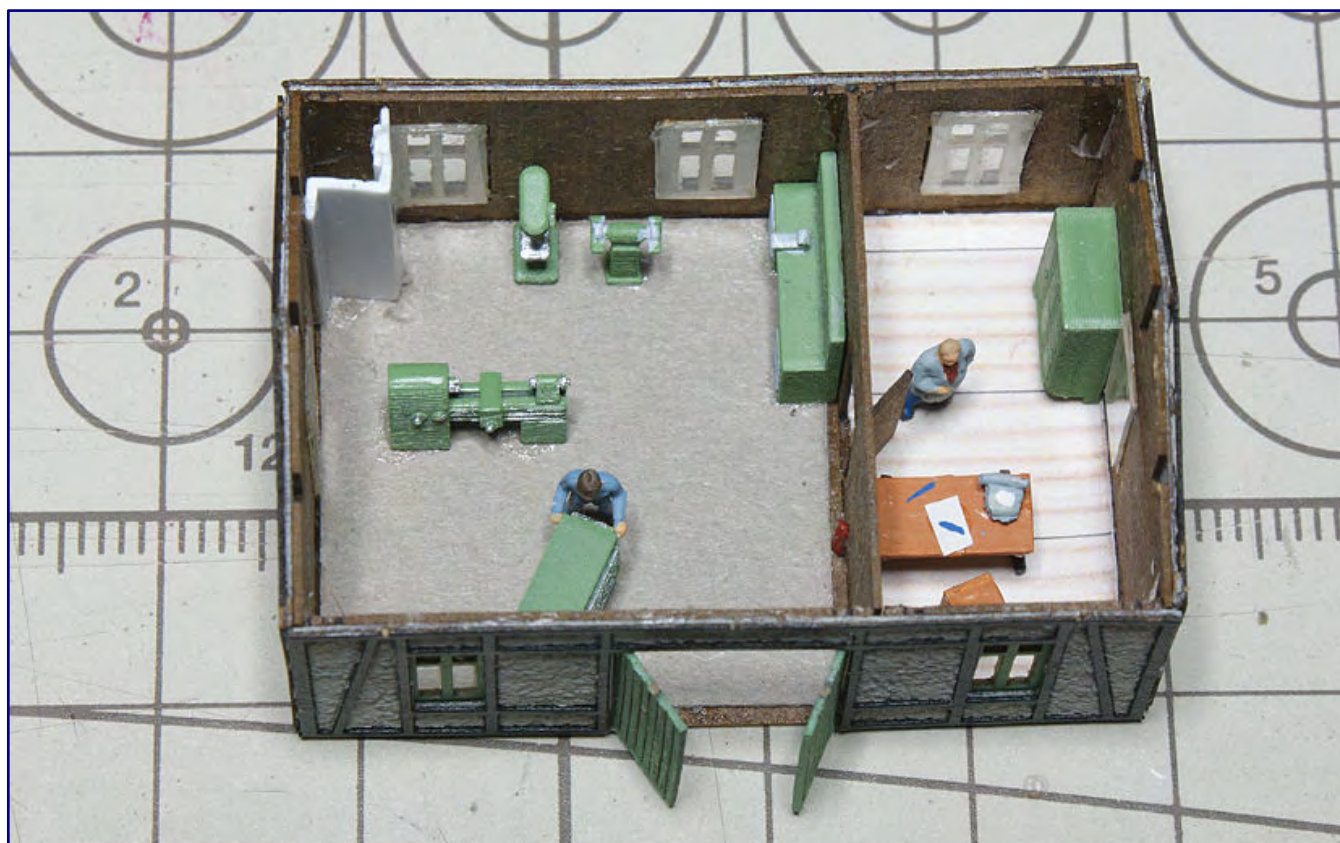
In the Viessmann self-printing decor sheets we find a curtain structure that looks very close to a parallel running floor, certainly, at least, under incandescent light. We cut them out to fit and lay them with the help of the Uhu glue stick before furniture and the master move in here.

In the workshop we still need to camouflage the yellow and brown wires that lead from the ceiling through to the floor in the corner. They otherwise would be visible through the gate, whose wings we also glued wide open. There is potential for improvement here, which we have indicated to Viessmann / Vollmer.

Two Polyplate parts, which could be cut and added, would make a shaft in the right size, we think of the diameter of the resistors, which would cover the power supply. Unfortunately, such a shaft cannot be built from cardboard scraps, which is why we use white Evergreen profiles made of polystyrene (sold by Faller). They remain untreated in colour. This makes them stand out, but they actually look like cable ducts laid on the plaster.

Our little workshop is almost finished. Almost, because of four parts which we deliberately have left for the end of the article and where the instructions still contain an error. This has also been reported back to the manufacturer and will be corrected in the next printing.

The gables are to be covered with green lath imitations. They can be identified without doubt by comparing them with the product photo on the packaging, but in step 9 of the instructions they have a



Before the roof is put on, there is one last chance to get an overall view of the interior: In the workshop we see drill stands, grindstones, workbench with vice, lathe and workshop trolley from the Modellbahn Union (photo above). The locker has found its place in the office. The last step of the build is to glue the decorative panels to the roof section (photo below), and where the instructions contain an error.

wrong part number that does not appear in the kit at all. However, there is only one sheet left at this point anyway.



The camera can only capture a fixed perspective when looking inside. However, the macro view gives a good impression of the different light colours in the workshop and office, including the figures at work; on the left the journeyman at the workshop trolley, on the right the master craftsman who visits his desk to draw up invoices.

This also contains two other parts to be glued to the side edges of the roofs, as the small building has no gutters (and downpipes). They were completely forgotten in the construction steps. Again, a look at the product photo helps.

Marginal errors and a conclusion

Making one suggestion for improvement and pointing out two small mistakes very close to the end of this article should not be overemphasized. Viessmann gratefully received our feedback and attached great importance to getting feedback on user experiences.

The release of the kits was originally planned for autumn 2023 and was brought forward by more than half a year. This makes small mistakes comprehensible and at the same time emphasises how important innovation is to the manufacturer.

Viessmann celebrates its 35th anniversary as an accessories manufacturer in 2023, and the company's anniversary should certainly be significantly influenced by something that gives new impetus to the market in all scales. And the Polyplate product series will certainly do that. In Z gauge, it also meets the already legendary precision fit of the Vollmer kits. With this, those responsible are now opening a new chapter and we are curious to see how this story will continue.

We recognise the good idea, the almost perfect realisation and our hopes by nominating the small workshop from Vollmer (49590) for our best new releases of the year 2023 award in the accessories category.

We want to explicitly link this with the catchword “layout details” from the headline, our annual focus theme for 2023. It has been a long time since we have had a kit in our hands that cried out as much as this one to be fitted with an interior.



We take one last look at the richly textured and realistic-looking surfaces of the small workshop. The new building is literally made to be lavishly fitted out inside as well and thus draw more attention to it.

For many model railway enthusiasts, this is a peripheral phenomenon, which we have tried to formulate in an understandable way. However, when used and effectively placed on one’s own layout, the tiny building becomes a focal point for viewers, because there is truly bustles with life. And to make sure that this is also noticed, there is also illumination: “Lights on!”

Kit supplier:

<https://viessmann-modell.com>

Built-in accessories:

<https://www.faller.de>

<https://www.modellbahnunion.com>

<https://www.oeslingmodellbau.com>

<http://www.trafofuchs.de>

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Note for English readers: The literature section that follows is not translated into English because the original texts of the books involved are in the German language. The original German is left here for information purposes only.

DB-Fuhrpark 1994 bis 2022

Triebfahrzeug-Lexikon

Die Typenkompass-Reihe von Transpress begleitet uns seit deutlich mehr als zehn Jahren. Nach relativ kurzer Zeit war nun eine Aktualisierung erforderlich, zumal die letzte Auflage inzwischen auch vergriffen ist. Der Verlag nutzte das, um die Inhalte zugleich in ein neues Format zu bringen und ergänzt damit eine jüngere Buchreihe. Wir haben uns das Werk angeschaut und verglichen.

Jan Reiners
Loks und Triebwagen der Deutschen Bahn AG
seit 1994

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Autor Jan Reiners lebt und arbeitet in Bremen und zeichnet auch für die Vorgängertitel zum vorliegenden Buch verantwortlich. Er interessiert sich seit seiner Jugend für Eisen- und Straßenbahnen und hat insofern einen typischen „Werdegang“ vorzuweisen. Bekannt ist er auch aus einigen Beiträgen in der Zeitschrift „Modelleisenbahner“.

So lag es aus der Historie der Transpress-Reihen wie auch allein aus seiner fachlichen Kompetenz heraus nahe, ihn für dieses Buch als Autor heranzuziehen. Zu verwundern wusste zunächst allein der Erscheinungstermin seines neuen Werkes.

Gedacht ist es als Nachfolger des Typenkompass „Loks der DB AG“, der zuvor in mehreren Auflagen erschien. Kompakt und in jede Jackentasche passend, übersichtlich und fürs schnelle Nachschlagen geeignet, erschien dieser 2010 und 2021. Beide Auflagen haben wir in unserem Magazin vorgestellt, die letzte Besprechung liegt fast exakt zwei Jahre zurück.

Bei zuletzt elf Jahren Abstand zwischen den Aktualisierungen überrascht daher, dass es dieses Mal so schnell gehen würde. Dies wollen wir im Folgenden erläutern.

Ein Grund besteht sicher darin, dass das Format geändert worden und in eine neue Buchreihe integriert worden ist. Das kommt den Inhalten auch zu Gute, denn die Fotos werden dadurch größer abgebildet und liefern dem Leser mehr Informationen.



Gegenüber der letzten Kompass-Auflage wurden aber nur wenige Motive getauscht, eine bessere Qualität oder aktuellere Darstellung scheint in solchen Fällen den Ausschlag gegeben zu haben. Die Reproduktion der Aufnahmen ist fast ohne Ausnahmen gut gelungen und in seinen Helligkeitswerten, Sättigungen wie auch Kontrasten auf das verwendete Papier abgestimmt worden.

Unverändert geblieben ist die Konzeption, zu jeder Baureihe (oder Baureihenfamilie) mindestens ein Foto, eine Tabelle mit den wichtigsten Kenndaten und ein Kurzportrait der Lok mit ihrer Geschichte und Technik auf ein bis zwei Seiten zu präsentieren.

Das dürfte der Mehrheit an Vorbildfreunden und Modellbahnern für einen ersten Überblick reichen. Das Buch ist quasi ein Fachlexikon der Lokomotiven und Triebwagen, die bei der Deutschen Bahn AG seit ihrer Gründung zum 1. Januar 1994 im Einsatz sind oder waren. Dass auch Triebwagen und -züge zum Buchumfang gehören, war bei den früher verwendeten Titeln nicht gleich zu erkennen.

Der Zwischenstand unserer Besprechung bis zu dieser Stelle lässt aber noch nicht erkennen, warum dieses Werk empfehlenswert ist und wer als dessen Käufer überhaupt in Frage kommt. Dies wird nun klar, wenn wir den Grund des so kurzen Erneuerungsintervalls anschauen.

Der Bestand an Fahrzeugen, den die DB heute einsetzt, befindet sich unverändert in einem starken wie auch schnellen Wandel. Alte Fahrzeuge, die noch von der Bundes- oder Reichsbahn übernommen wurden, sind bis auf wenige Ausnahmen inzwischen ausgemustert.

Beschleunigt haben diesen Prozess die Ausschreibungen von ÖPNV-Leistungen, die häufig Neufahrzeuge verlangen, Experimente mit Hybrid- oder Alternativantrieben und zuletzt auch die politischen Vorgaben, mittelgroße Städte wieder ans Fernverkehrsnetz anzubinden.

Dadurch finden wir beispielsweise die Baureihe 563 („Mireo Plus H“) hier schon wieder, die als Wasserstofftriebzug erst im letzten Jahr in Dienst gestellt worden ist. Gegenüber dem letzten Typenkompass wiederaufgenommen wurden die Schmalspurdampflokomotiven aus der Baureihe 099, die 1994 für kurze Zeit in den Bestand der privatisierten Staatsbahn gelangten.

Sie waren zuletzt aus Platzgründen entfallen, die höhere Seitenzahl von 144 statt 128 hat ihre Rückkehr trotz der „Neulinge“ im Buch ermöglicht. Nicht enthalten sind unverändert – und vom Autor im Vorwort explizit auch so erwähnt – Leihlokomotiven oder DB-Maschinen, die bei Auslandstöchtern im Dienst stehen und teilweise auch Deutschland erreichen.

Ebenso fehlen in diesem Buch alle Bahndienstfahrzeuge, die für den Unterhalt der Strecken oder für Messfahrten bestimmt sind. Auch das entspricht dem gewohnten Inhalt und ist nicht neu, sollte aber erwähnt werden.

Ein wenig überraschend ist es schließlich, denn die Zahl solcher Spezialfahrzeuge ist ja eher gering und lohnt sicher kein eigenes Buch. Konzeptionell reiht es sich so aber lückenlos und ohne Widerspruch an die weiteren Bände dieser neuen Reihe an, die als Nachschlagewerk für daheim gedacht sind und dank des festen Einbands schnell aus dem Regal gezogen werden können.

Und so empfiehlt sich dieses Werk für alle diejenigen, die mit dieser Reihe eine neue Enzyklopädie an Nachschlagewerken begonnen haben oder beginnen wollen, sowie alle Leser, die ein möglichst vollständiges wie auch aktuelles Verzeichnis wünschen. Der Redaktionsschluss liegt nach unserem Eindruck sehr zeitnah zum Dezember 2022.

Preiser-Geschichtsdarstellung **Figuren mit Emotionen**

Bücher aus dem Haus Preiser sind selten. Erst zum zweiten Mal veröffentlicht der Figurenproduzent aus der Nähe von Rothenburg ob der Tauber ein eigenes Druckwerk dieser Art. Mit Blick auf die lange Geschichte des Hauses und das breite Programm über viele Spurweiten der Modellbahn haben wir uns den bunten Bildband im Nachgang zu einem runden Firmenjubiläum genau angeschaut.

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Steinsfeld 2022

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Das vorliegende Werk ist das zweite Buch aus dem Eigenverlag des Figurenherstellers Preiser. Dieser verspricht ein reichhaltig illustriertes Stück Literatur mit einem Feuerwerk an Impressionen zu den Höhepunkten aus 70 Jahren Firmengeschichte, die 2019 vollendet worden sind.

Dem Käufer soll einen Einblick in die Geschichte, die Arbeit und die Philosophie des Unternehmens erhalten. Mit Blick auf die Bezugsmöglichkeiten und die eigene Darstellung der Inhalte verstehen wir Modellbahner aller Baugrößen als Zielgruppe dieses Buches.

Wohl mehr als 90 % des Textes, den das vorliegende Buch enthält, begegnen wir gleich im ersten Kapitel. Um keine Missverständnisse aufkommen zu lassen, ergänzen wir, dass diese Zahl sich nicht auf die Menge an Seiten bezieht! Der Einstieg mit der zusammengefassten der Firmengeschichte ist – neben dem Vorwort - das einzige, das auf geschriebenen Informationen statt Fotos aufbaut. Daraus erklärt sich die sehr ungleiche Verteilung.

Im Vergleich zu den folgenden fünf Kapiteln ist es sehr ausführlich, hinterlässt beim Leser aber auch viele Fragen. In der abschließenden Tabelle wichtiger Meilensteine der Firmengeschichte ist auch die Übernahme der Marke Merten im Jahr 1996 hinterlegt. Im ausführlichen Portrait fehlt diese jedoch völlig, was die wohl größte Informationslücke ist: Hintergrund der Übernahme, deren Ziel und Auswirkungen auf die Firmenpolitik bleiben unklar.

Ebenfalls lückenhaft bleiben die Informationen im Rahmen der Generationenfolge: Der Leser erfährt viel über die familiären Hintergründe von Paul M. Preiser und die Ursprünge der Firma, die schon früh in den Kunststoffspritzguss einstieg. Horst Preiser übernahm nach dem plötzlichen Tod die Geschäftsführung und entwickelte das Unternehmen in seinem Sinne weiter. Er galt als kreativ und auch als guter Modellbauer.



Heute ist mit seinen beiden Söhnen die dritte Preiser-Generation in der Verantwortung. Ob und was sie anders machen wollen als ihr Vater sowie welche Entwicklung das Unternehmen nehmen soll, bleibt offen.

Wird der Wechsel der Figurenbemalung von Indien nach Mauritius noch erläutert, fehlt Vergleichbares für die zweite Produktionsstätte Madagaskar. Auch Elastolin mit dem eingebrachten Standort spielt im Buch keine Rolle. Hier kommt beinahe der Eindruck auf, dem Autor sei die Lust am Schreiben in diesem doch sehr interessanten und wichtigen Kapitel vergangen.

Besonders spannend ist auch das Entstehen einer Figur – zweites Kapitel des Buches. Sechs Seiten, eine ausreichende Zahl an Fotos und nur wenig Text sind dafür verwendet worden. Für einen nicht fachkundigen Kunden bleibt hier leider offen, wie der Verkleinerungsprozess vom Urmodell im Maßstab 1:10 auf den Zielmaßstab funktioniert.

Unvorstellbar ist, dass CAD-basierte Konstruktionen bis heute kein Thema sind. Genau das legen die einleitenden Ausführungen des Buches zusammen mit den Fotos dieses Kapitels aber nahe, denn Preiser sieht hier offenbar ein Alleinstellungsmerkmal.

Das folgende Kapitel ist den Preiser-Produkten im Laufe der Jahre gewidmet, die Kriterien, nach denen die Auswahl getroffen wurde, bleibt unklar: Eine strenge Chronologie ist nicht erkennbar, ebenso wenig bildet die Auswahl alle Epochen der Firmengeschichte ab.

Figuren der Spurweiten 1, TT, N und Z sowie der außerhalb der Modellbahn üblichen Maßstäbe fehlen vollständig – nur beim Vorwort zeigen sich alle Maßstäbe mit je einer Figur vergleichend abgebildet. Zusatzinformationen zum Sortiment, wie blaue und schwarze Figurenserien in der Spur H0, wären hier hilfreich. Stattdessen sind gewisse Themenschwerpunkte erkennbar.

Schön anzusehen sind die künstlerischen Fotos mit Preiser-Figuren im vierten Kapitel. Kreativ zeigen sie eine weitere Einsatzoptionen auf, beschränken sich aber fast vollkommen auf den Maßstab 1:22,5. Einen Zusatzwert hätte hier das Einbinden von Aufnahmen fremder Arbeiten wie die des Künstlers Volker Kühn sein können, denn so hätte sich die Bandbreite an Kreativität noch weiter präsentiert.

Markus Tiedtke als bekannter Modellbahnfotograf kommt im fünften Kapitel zu Ehren. Dort werden einige der schönsten Preiser-Dioramen ausdrucksstark gezeigt. Viele sind von Messen bekannt und dürften auf Horst Preiser zurückgehen, Werke der letzten Jahre sind uns hier nicht aufgefallen. Gesamtansichten der Dioramen vermissen wir.

Zum Abschluss folgen Titelseiten von Katalogen und Prospekten seit 1949. Sie zeigen in anschaulicher Weise, wie sich der Geschmack im Laufe der Zeit verändert hat und mit ihm sicher auch das Programm. Mangels begleitender Erklärungen wird nicht klar, ob es sich um eine vollständige Auflistung handelt oder sie nur mehrheitlich, aber willkürlich abgedruckt worden sind.

Zusammengefasst liegt ein bildgewaltiges und emotionsgeladenes Buch guter Wiedergabequalität vor uns. Es unterstreicht damit die Rolle, die Figuren auf einer Modellbahn spielen – und das übrigens zu einem als günstig zu bewertenden Preis.

Das Durchblättern bereitet Freude, doch allzu viele Informationen darf der Käufer leider nicht erwarten. Als großer Schwachpunkt bleiben die vielen Informationslücken, weshalb die wenigen Texte, deren Urheber nicht erkennbar ist, laienhaft wirken. Und genau das wird dem Werk eigentlich nicht gerecht.

An dieser Stelle bleibt neben dem repräsentativen Einbinden aller produzierten Maßstäbe Luft nach oben für künftige Bände, die laut Vorwort zu erwarten sind. So hoffen wir, dass ein erfahrener Autor zumindest beratend hinzugezogen wird und die aufgezeigten Schwächen dann behoben werden.

Publishing pages:
<https://www.preiserfiguren.de>

Faszination Modellbahn 2023

Second Attempt in Mannheim

Slowly, trade fair life is getting back into gear after the pandemic, although the joy is also countered by a lingering concern for one's own health. The Spring Fair in Mannheim was in particular focus, because after four years since its first edition there, it first has to establish itself sustainably.

By Stephan Fuchs and Holger Späing. From 10 to 12 March 2023, Faszination Modellbahn was finally able to open its doors again after an enforced break due to the pandemic. The venue was the Maimarkthalle in Mannheim for the second time after 2019.

After criticism about inadequate lighting and poor air supply, there was eager curiosity as to whether the hall operator would be able to address these problems at the new start. And indeed, the lighting concept had been worked on intensively — modern light-emitting diode technology made it possible.



A lot had been done in the Maimarkthalle to adapt it to the requirements of a model railway exhibition. So, the first edition after the pandemic can probably also be described as successful.

In the opinion of our local representative, the ventilation could be further improved, because the hall smelled of many people. Good ventilation also seems important to us because Corona infections have disappeared from our consciousness, but not from our lives.

Only an estimated 3 % of visitors preferred to voluntarily wear an infection protection mask in the hall to avoid the risk of taking home an unwanted "souvenir". The health-promoting distances, however, were met with what we would like to benevolently describe as an escape route concept already known from Friedrichshafen: The aisles between the stands were conspicuously wide.

Even though there were undoubtedly around 20 times as many model railway manufacturers present as at the Spielwarenmesse, which was really a washout in this respect, this speaks volumes. Apparently, the interest in exhibiting at exhibitions has clearly declined among various suppliers. When asked by absentees, we often hear that the increased stand costs could no longer be recovered, and this does not only apply to this exhibition.

The very, very wide aisles, unfortunately, also quickly give the impression that the exhibition was poorly attended. This is also due to the fact that the number of people present noticeably decreased from 15:00 onwards. Only on Sunday did the flow of visitors drop only slightly until the official closing of the fair.



In the Miba private plant competition, Heinz-Ulrich Grumpe was the winner with the “Harzer Baryt-Industrie mine railway” (gauge H0e).

In this respect, we consider the 15,000 visitors mentioned in the press release at the end of the fair to be a credible figure. And these people clearly enjoyed what was on offer. However, we did not discover anything new or previously unknown for Z gauge.

The list of exhibitors and layouts was broad: 17 model railway layouts were on display, with exhibitors from Germany, France and the Netherlands. Many gauges were represented and these offered a surprising variety of themes from the tin age to the digital age.

The Miba private layout competition was also held again as a tradition. This seems particularly worth mentioning to us because this magazine celebrates its 75th anniversary in 2023. Our congratulations therefore go especially to Editor-in-Chief Martin Knaden, who represents this traditional magazine.

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Our author's favourite was the third-placed layout "In Provence around 1925" by Ronalf Kramer (photo above). The small layout "Altbach 1963" by Ronald Heijne (photo below), which had travelled from the Netherlands to Mannheim, was particularly impressive.

Eight layouts competed for the favour of the expert jury. The winner was Heinz-Ulrich Grumpe with his "Grubenbahn der Harzer Baryt-Industrie" (H0e gauge). All vehicles and buildings were discreetly aged with powder paints and pigments and the figures were painted themselves. Our local representative's personal favourite was the layout that made it to third place, because everything there looked "as it might once have actually been".

We almost overlooked the small gauge H0 layout "Altbach 1963" by Ronald Heijne. That would have been unfortunate, because it was particularly convincing in terms of the model construction on display. It was one of the absolute highlights of this exhibition. Many other layouts, on the other hand, had long been known, photographed, and no longer offered any discoveries.



"Saturday Afternoon" is the title Ulrich Günther gave to his arrangement of a metropolitan railway station, the city centre and Neuschwanstein Castle.

This risk certainly did not exist to the same extent at the ZFI stand. Here, too, we met "permanent exhibitors" such as Gerhard Maurer with his "Traumschleife" or "Dead End City" and "Nugget Gulch" by Michael Bernhard. The Railex sale by Christine Specht and Roland Kimmich is also part of the familiar, but also appreciated part.

However, the focus here was much more on the fascination of the tiny, advice and information. For example, we would like to mention the self-driving buses that Oliver Kessler demonstrated and that many friends of larger gauges could not have imagined.

The on-site expertise was also appreciated by manufacturer Märklin. It was explicitly appreciated, people with special gauge Z questions were gladly sent over, not only apart from the in-house products. This led to further visits as well as discussions and, as was to be expected, was very well received.

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Looking at the two motifs on the deep-sea port layout presented by Gotthardt Schmitt, the viewer quickly realises which port and which city provided the necessary inspiration here.

Thomas Heß certainly belongs in this category with his digital demonstration layout, which in the meantime has also been landscaped. Here, visitors to the stand who are unfamiliar with the subject can see impressively that the latest technology has long been compatible with the small models of our nominal size, even if Märklin itself does not offer anything of the kind.

Due to illness, Jürgen Walther, whose “Hirschsprung” layout in the Höllental valley would have been worth a longer journey, had to dismantle and unfortunately leave. We wish him a speedy recovery and hope to see him again soon at one of the next exhibitions.

A deep-sea harbour layout celebrated its premiere at the stand. It was refurbished by Gotthardt Schmitt and presented on site. Thematically, too, it offered plenty of variety from the usual and widespread model railway themes. This is probably why it was one of the exhibits that was explicitly mentioned in the press information before the start of the fair.



Claudius Veit's chemical plant provided variety and special accents, and Gerhard Maurer's “dream loop” can be seen behind it on the right.

Claudius Veit's chemical plant is no exception. An industrial motif of this kind and abundance can hardly be credibly realised on a larger scale and offers, in addition to the unknown, quite unique charms. Nor can it be said that this layout, which is still being worked on, is already widely known.

“Saturday Afternoon” was the motto of Ulrich Günther, who had also modified his module “Neuschwanstein Castle” during the exhibition break. No one can get past one of Germany's most famous sights, even in a model, and, consequently, also a crowd puller. The smallest guests, on the other hand, were again entertained with the “dwarf train”, on which things were certainly not as serious as with the “grown-ups”.

For the children, however, there were also other playgrounds at Märklin and Piko, but they were also enthusiastic about the layouts on display, which makes us confident. However, we still have to criticise the fact that many layouts were still so high that children and wheelchair users cannot see what is presented. The increasingly popular footsteps sometimes provide a remedy, but this does not apply to disabled people – accessibility remains a permanent task for the majority.



Z gauge seemed to be pushed to the side somewhat uncharitably by Märklin, which was represented there with a new trade fair layout and a model showcase.

Hagen von Ortloff once again proved to be a very patient contemporary. Especially the “older generation” wallowed in nostalgia at his tin tracks and vehicles.

But his exhibits were also very interesting for children, who were surprised to discover that grandpa “must have played with something like this”.

The largest stand went to market leader Märklin. We don't want to say anything special about it, because it was, as usual, displaying layouts and showcases with new products for various gauges.

This can be described as unspectacular and surprising, because almost every trade fair presentation follows the same concept. There was no special car at Faszination Modellbahn.

With this end of our tour of the fair, it is time to draw a final conclusion: The revival of the exhibition at its new location seems to have been successful.

Mannheim has established itself as the venue for this exhibition. All in all, however, the painful impression remains that interest in model railways seems to have declined again.

Let us all hope that this is due to the current rather gloomy economic outlook and lingering health worries, i.e. that it will remain temporary. For all of us readers, helpers and editors know that model railways are the most beautiful and creative hobby in the world!

All photos: Stephan Fuchs

- Selected exhibitors with gauge Z relevance:**
- <https://www.eisenbahn-kurier.de>
 - <http://www.mazero.de>
 - <https://www.noch.de>
 - <http://www.peter-post-werkzeuge.de>
 - <https://www.rokuhan.de>
 - <https://viessmann-modell.com>
 - <https://www.vgbahn.shop>
 - <https://www.z-freunde-international.de>
 - <https://z-stammtisch-bayern.de>

Reboot of On traXS! 2023 in Utrecht **Model Making at the highest Level**

The trade fair business is slowly picking up speed again, but many organisers are still struggling. Attracting commercial exhibitors and ensuring a strong flow of visitors is not a foregone conclusion. The On traXS! in Utrecht, the Netherlands, which opened its doors in mid-March, had a completely different effect and, with its tried and tested concept, met with a great response and a lot of enthusiasm.

Also, the “On traXS!” (its own spelling) in Utrecht also faced a new start this year after a forced break. We were pleased to see that the organising railway museum had resumed its cooperation with the model building collective Mitropa, a decision that undoubtedly benefits this exhibition.

In the last editions before the Corona interruption, the organiser withdrew the already almost traditional name more and more and placed the name “Modeltrein Expo” in the foreground. This means no more than “Model Railway Exhibition” and was then no more than that.



We are welcomed at the Spoorwegmuseum in Utrecht as if at a railway station for On traXS! 2023. The square in front of the historic building fills up visibly until the exhibition finally opens its doors.

The special attraction of the event in the railway museum of Utrecht had always been to be something special and for a long time also unique among the many model railway shows in Europe. Team Mitropa always attached great importance to the quality shown and had defined binding criteria for the presentation.

Above all, this included separate and uniform lighting for each exhibit and the preferred set-up in a peep-box. This did justice to the special lighting conditions at each location in the museum and also protected against disturbing light from outside. Mitropa also always applied the highest standards to the theme and landscaping.



The traditional exhibition concept of layouts and stands placed around the historic vehicles has proven its worth. So, it is always crowded here, but there is never a feeling of confinement, the photo was taken a few minutes after the ticket offices opened before the rush of visitors.

Because there are not many layouts that can meet these high demands, the selectors do not work on the basis of applications, but travel (unrecognised) through many exhibitions and select those layouts that are newly presented and meet the high exhibition requirements. Mostly unexpectedly, an invitation to On traXS! arrives at the plant owner's door, which he or she will certainly not turn down.

For reasons unknown to us, this concept was changed a few years ago when the name was changed and the cooperation with the Mitropa model building collective was suspended. Now model railway enthusiasts could freely apply to "Het Spoorwegmuseum" to participate.

The glamour of the special was thus abruptly gone, the quality of what was shown immediately and noticeably decreased. Permanent visitors to the exhibition who had internalised the previous concept and consistently built according to these standards now refused to participate. Other model railway enthusiasts saw their chance had come to participate in an exhibition with (supposed) world fame and to enhance their own work.

This was the low point in over ten successful years, the event had become interchangeable and was no longer worth travelling far from abroad. However, before it had come to this, our small scale had also reached the required level with the Gauge Z layout "Kniephaven" by Dirk Kuhlman.

Consequently, it was possible and also desirable to be discovered for On traXS! From 17 to 19 March 2023, the popular exhibition finally took place again, and at the same time with its old concept with Mitropa integration.

All visitors can now once again see in person, year after year, how model making is developing at the very highest level. And for the second time, a Z Gauge layout has also successfully passed the strict selection process.

The “Boisschot Statie” layout by Pieter Willems and Jan van Casteren, which was already on display in Belgium and Altenbeken in 2022, was on show in Utrecht. It received a good response throughout, and our editorial team was also convinced and awarded it the 2023 Prize of Honour as the best exhibit of the past year.



Thanks to the low afternoon sun, the lighting mood of an approaching thunderstorm could be conjured up on the small but fine layout based on the Belgian model.

This unique layout was built after a historical station from Belgium. The station still exists today, but here it is shown in the historically different condition of the sixties. This makes it possible to run steam locomotives in addition to the diesel traction in the form of the SNCB round noses.

As the range of models based on Belgian prototypes is extremely limited, this also allows the greatest possible choice, which at the same time ensures a varied operation for visitors.

By the way, Jan van Casteren was responsible for the buildings that are presented next to the tracks. Nothing is “off the shelf” here, creativity and skill were required, instead. The two exhibitors were able to show us a large selection of historical documents on which they based their work.

In addition to the craftsmanship, this makes the layout even more interesting. This was also the case for the many guests who inspected the many details and even took out their cameras. No one could complain about a lack of visitors; rather, they had to wait until they got a place in the front row, where they could enjoy an unobstructed view.



The layout is named "Boisschot Statie" after the depicted station. Apart from "round noses," steam traction still dominates here – we are in epoch III with the SNCB.

We will share our impressions with our readers in a new episode 12 of **Trainini TV**. In it, Pieter Willems will tell us how he received the invitation to On traXS! and give some background information about the layout. Other exhibits of the exhibition and the regular museum operations will also be portrayed.

Small tour

Of course, the journey to Utrecht was not only worthwhile because of 1:220 scale. The other gauges were also represented with great works, none of which made an exception. We can therefore only show a small selection here, but it is deliberately intended to differ from the established film sequence in order to give a more colourful photo together.

We have tried to capture a selection that is as inclusive as possible of all the nations represented. In this way, we also want to show how much a common hobby connects us across borders in the sense of the European community idea.

From Belgium came a new layout that was in great demand and dedicated to HSB motifs from the Upper Harz region with the theme "Hasselfelde". Arnold van Waes was responsible for this realisation in H0m gauge and we will certainly see it in German trade magazines soon.

A popular motif of the Utrecht presentations are always light railways in different scales. For example, we found what we were looking for at the Escadrille St. Michel (ESM) from France, for which Didier Mozer, among others, exhibited. A regular guest in Utrecht is Marcel Ackle (Switzerland), who showed his current exhibition layout "Feldbahn kreuzt!".

Leszek Lewinski from Poland was on the road in nominal size H0, albeit narrow gauge, and presented his layout Kwyzdyn. "Cold Water" offered varied contrasts. This work was dedicated to the United States of America and had its origins in the Netherlands with Gerrit Schoemaker, so in a way, a home game.



Among the eye-catchers at the On traXS! 2023 also included "Hasselfelde" by Arnold van Waes, which presented Harz HSB motifs in H0m scale. This layout is currently in great demand for reports in print magazines.

At this point we would like to dedicate an insertion to the commercial exhibitors. Many suppliers with high-quality products from the small series were represented here. For our scale, we mention Microrama from France or Artitec from the Netherlands as examples.

Even some model railway and larger accessory manufacturers were on site. In most cases, however, they were represented by third parties, presumably larger distributors or dealers. Particularly interesting for the inexperienced with a penchant for getting into the hobby were demonstrations for the visitors: before their eyes, a layout was being worked on in the large locomotive hall, the landscape of which was yet to be created.

Let's now take a leap into the Ore Mountains. There was also a layout from there whose motifs were practically on the doorstep. Jens Petermann ("De Bimmlbahner") demonstrated the Wolf connection, which can be found on Saxony's 750 mm narrow-gauge railways.

On the other hand, his stand neighbour Sebastian Schmid took us to the Selketalbahn with his layout "Strassberg." For many years, this station was the terminus of the line coming from Gernrode. The barite from a nearby mine was loaded here.

One of the longest journeys to Utrecht was certainly made by the "Cortesella" layout from Turin (Italy), which was considerably large at 5.50 x 1.50 metres. Andrea Giolo (Arcamodellismo Torino) presented here a journey on the Piedmont branch lines of the seventies. It had no exact model and was created from imagination, but technical drawings were used. This was to the benefit of the many self-built trains shown.

As a summary of our walk through the museum and the entire exhibition, we can say that no journey could have been too long to take part in this edition of On traXS! We are very pleased that it has successfully ventured a new beginning and returned to its roots.

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“Caution, light railway crosses” was the motto of Marcel Ackle (photo above), while Andrea Giolo was inspired by motifs from his homeland in Piedmont for his “Cortesella” layout (photo below).

We believe that the field is well prepared for the next few years and can only encourage our readers to use all their skills and to take the requirements for presentation form and illumination to heart, so that our scale can also earn a permanent place there.



“De Bimmlbahner” were represented by Jens Petermann in Utrecht. He demonstrated the very successful Anschluss Wolf from his home in the Erzgebirge.

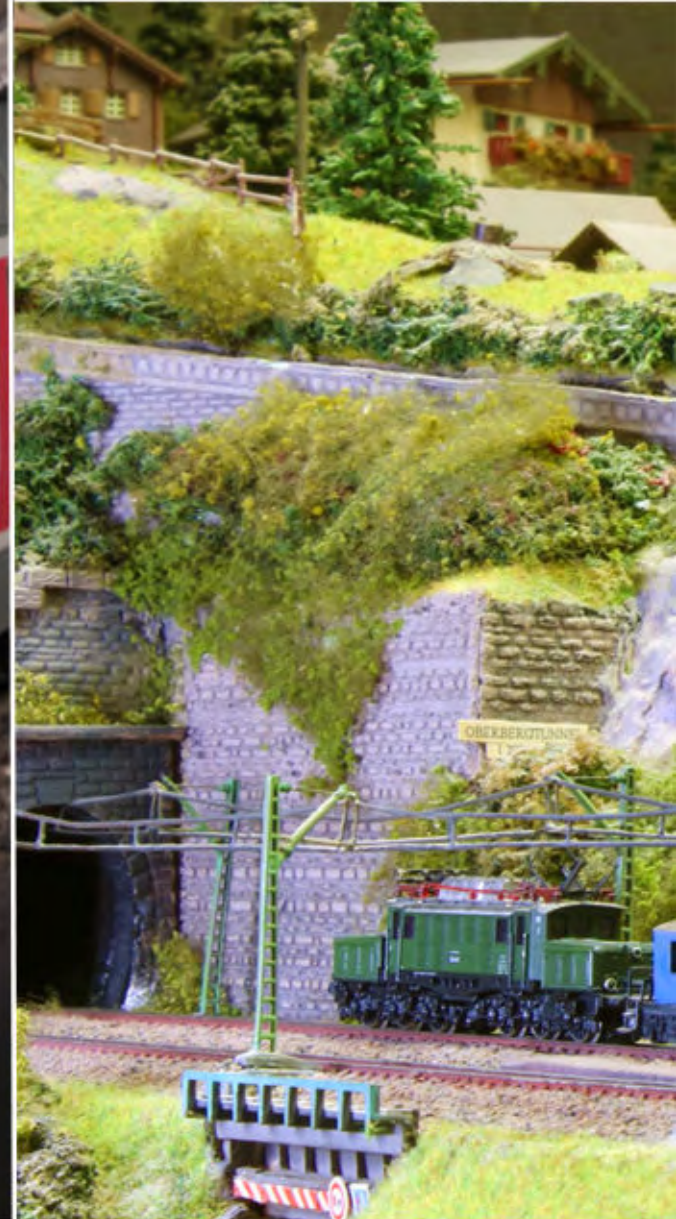
Exactly then, this great exhibition will certainly develop even more attraction on our scale and become a permanent meeting. It is worth it, because where else do so many European nations meet harmoniously and enthusiastically in the best exchange?
isch und begeistert aufeinander?



- Commercial exhibitors with gauge Z relevance:**
 - <https://artitec.nl>
 - <https://microrama.eu>
 - <https://scenery.shop>
- Selected exhibitors from this article:**
 - <https://www.arcamodellismo.eu/cortesella.html>
 - <https://www.debimmlbahner.de>
 - <https://www.feldbahn-modellbau.ch>
- Report from Trainini TV:**
 - <https://www.youtube.com/TraininiTV>

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Readers' letters and messages

Zetties and Trainini in Dialogue

Thank you for each letter to the editor and all the feedback that reaches us. Write us (contact details are in imprint) - Trainini® lives from dialogue with you! Of course, this also applies to all suppliers in Z gauge, who would like to introduce innovations here. A representative sample is our goal. Likewise, here we note any events or meetings with significance to Z gauge reference, if we are informed in time.

No connection under this number?

In one of the Trainini issues last year, you had mentioned the company CRZ (...) as a manufacturer for Z-gauge decoders. I also bought and installed their decoder in mid-2022 for the BR 132 with bell-shaped armature motor. Everything is fine, the model runs very well.

Now, I have been trying for some time to get in touch with CRZ again about a decoder for another model, but in vain. Contact requests via the portal remain unanswered, and I only ever get a voicemail on the phone. Can you tell me if this manufacturer still exists?

Peter Taubert, Schwerin

Editor's reply: Unfortunately, we have heard news like this several times. To our knowledge, the provider is still active, and we have no information to the contrary. Consequently, we cannot explain or resolve the situation described.

Error on the Herpa aircraft model?

The Douglas DC-6 N6523C "Pan American" by Herpa (Trainini 2/2023) has the flag of the United States of North America mirror-inverted on the tail unit.

Uwe Pfannenschmidt, Schluchsee



The mirror-inverted USA flag on the tail of the Douglas DC-6B from Pan Am caused irritation, but corresponds to the general prototype.

Editor's reply: This phenomenon has already been seen on other Pan Am aircraft. Up to now, we have had no reliable evidence as to whether this corresponds to the prototype or is to be regarded as an error. In the course of correspondence with our reader, he was able to provide us with pictures of the prototype which document this mirror-inverted representation on the right side of the vertical stabiliser.

Many AZL deliveries in April:

Blood red is the new ALCO PA1 of the Lehigh Valley (Item No. 64416-1 / -2), which American Z Line (<https://www.americanzline.com>) is offering this month with two different car numbers. It will be joined by Kansas City Southern's EMD E8 (62615-1 / -2), which will be released to coincide with this railway's merger with CP on 14 April 2023.



Its blood-red colour makes the Lehigh Valley's ALCO PA1 (item no. 64416-1) stand out from afar. Photo: AZL / Ztrack

The Trinity RAF carrying wagons with a length of 53 feet, which were introduced in new form last month, are now followed by semi-trailers of the same length from JB Hunt (905204-1). The yellow boxcars are lettered for TTAX. The semi-trailers can also be purchased separately as two-packs (954004-1).

The MAXI-IV boxcar units are available in four different colours. The wagons are painted brown and are used by the AOK. There is a choice of four compositions differently loaded with containers (906557-1 to -4).



The brown MAXI-IV carrying car units (906557-4; photo left) are discontinued at the AOK. The Baltimore & Ohio half luggage car (74010-2; photo right) is the latest form novelty. Photos: AZL / Ztrack

Shortly before the editorial deadline, news reached us about the delivery of heavy semi-baggage coaches ("Combine Coaches"). This is a new design whose prototypes were on the road with two- and three-axle bogies.

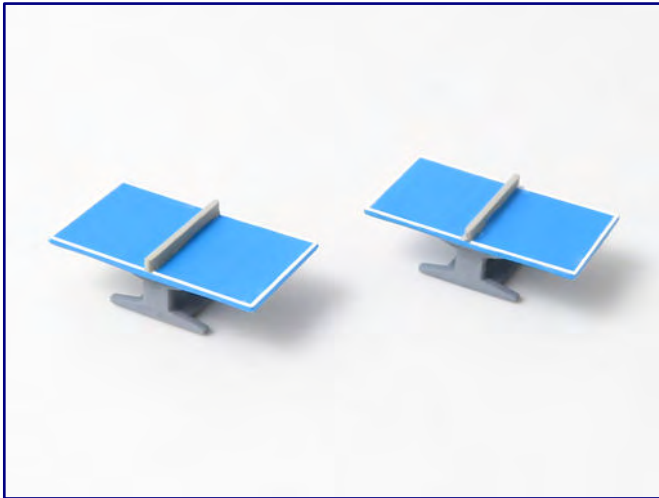
The debut in April is the appealing version of the Baltimore & Ohio, which runs on three-axle bogies. Three different road numbers (74010-1 to -3) are offered for this model.

Yellow Dwarf sets the pace again:

The models from Yellow Dwarf (<https://www.yellowdwarf.eu>) in Prague are impressive. In the meantime, we also have some prints from this production and we can confirm the good detailing and excellent quality from our own impression.

We are currently preparing some of the models from the previous programme and the following new products for installation in a diorama and for suggestions as part of our annual theme. In April, the following new products were added to the range: beer barrels in aluminium (art. no. 60013U and KEG version (60014), and concrete barriers (60236) for various uses on roads and construction sites.

A previously completely overlooked accessory for schoolyards, parks or even playgrounds are the new table tennis tables (60353). In the "Wedding Ceremony" pack (60402) we find chairs with covers for the



Both the table tennis tables (art. no. 60353; photo left) and the tents (60501; photo right) can be used in a variety of ways on the layout. Photos: Yellow Dwarf

guests, a white carpet and a decorated wedding altar for the bridal couple. The outdoor ceremony can then also be witnessed by viewers of the layout.

Perfect for excursions and campsites are the new “Tents I” (60501), which already suggest that a small series is being set up here for leisure activities.



The idea for the edition of the “Wedding” pack (60402) seems unique. In any case, it allows for special layout scenes with an eye-catching effect, as long as it is not used for crafting an original wedding gift. Photo: Yellow Dwarf

Fire brigade new products at EtchIT-Modellbau:

EtchIT-Modellbau (<http://etchit.de>) has introduced two new fire-fighting vehicles based on the Magirus Rundhaubers (round bonnets). They are supplied unchanged in the form of kits in the highest print resolution. The vehicles are constructed in individual components, which makes painting much easier. The parts are assembled after the painting has been completed.



Both the 20-metre turntable ladder (art. no. XD181dl_Z; photo left) and the water tender (XD181tlf_Z; photo right) are based on the Magirus-Deutz truck. Photos: EtchIT-Modellbau

The turntable ladder on the Magirus-Deutz chassis (item no. XD181dl_Z), whose 20-metre ladder also consists of three individual elements in the model, looks particularly impressive. This vehicle of a voluntary village fire brigade should complement the tank fire engine (XD181tlf_Z), also based on Magirus-Deutz chassis, with a large driver's cab, which offers further seating for the "bluecoats" on its rear bench.

The current Märklin deliveries:

These days, two new products for friends of the ÖBB are reaching the dealers: The "Bubikopf" is rolling out as class 64 (item no. 88745) of this railway administration in Era III condition. Technically, it is up to date, the design from 2014 is driven by means of a bell-shaped armature motor. On branch lines, the small tender steam locomotive can haul the three-part tank car pack for the Martha oil company (82320) for the same era. It consists of old two-axle tank cars with brakeman's platforms.



The class 212 (item no. 88697) was one of the locomotives that looked good in the ocean blue/ivory colour scheme.

Only a small subset arrived so far from the MHI special series from autumn 2022: The light diesel locomotive of the class 212 of the German Federal Railways (88697) in the condition of the mid-1980s wears the ocean-blue-ivory-coloured paint that was common at that time and “dresses” this locomotive type very well. The technical features include a bell-shaped armature motor and warm white-red top and tail lighting. The factory has already sold out this series, so only the confirmed and, as yet undelivered orders, of the dealers have been served.

Also, only a partial quantity of the express steam locomotive class 01.5 (88019) has been delivered as a museum locomotive of the Eisenbahnfreunde Zollernbahn (EFZ), Rottweil. In the meantime, the delivery has been stopped, as we have been informed by Märklin. The background is the correction of a prototype error.



The express steam locomotive 01 519 (88019) has been delivered in parts. In the meantime, the delivery has been stopped again. We will explain the reason in the test report in the next issue.

The prototype of the 01 519 comes from the DR stocks, but as a model from the museum locomotive series it reflects the operating condition of 2016 and is consequently to be classified in Era VI. This is a new model, which we will discuss in detail in the May issue.

Finally, those who have dedicated themselves to the Bundesbahn era around 1963 will also be considered: The train set “Deutsche Bundespost” (81341) is located in epoch III, consisting of a post office-owned V 36 in red, two covered freight cars Gmhs 53 (one with EUROP lettering) as well as a stake car Rmms 33 with brakeman’s platform. A yellow Tempo tricycle is included as a load.

Spare parts at Küpper:

In the quarterly new products letter, the cargo specialist Küpper from Aachen (<https://spur-z-ladegut.de>) reminds us that spare parts are also available for purchase there. Helmut Küpper has listed a few examples of parts that are always missing, such as pressure springs for couplings or tension springs for pantographs, in his information.

NoBa-Modelle before the summer break:

Before NoBa-Modelle (<https://www.noba-modelle.de>) begins its annual creative break until mid-October, during which new ideas are born again, this manufacturer has gathered together the new products that are still to be announced here.

The Swiss electric locomotive Ae 8/8 of the BLS, which we reported in the last issue, is now also available as a finished model (art. no. 5020RF). The Davos Monstein station (4133R), which was added to the range a little later, also belongs in these alpine realms.



With the Mercedes-Benz O6600 (6391R), NoBa-Modelle is releasing a bus from the era of the long trucks before the summer break. Photo: NoBa-Modelle



The three bottle banks (10263R) have a special history as a model. Photo: NoBa-Modelle

The Mercedes-Benz O6600 omnibus (6391R), which still belongs to the era of the Langhauber (long bonnet), can be classified in epoch III. The new products “3 old glass containers” (10263R) have a special history: A good customer from Vienna had received waste containers for better painting with the support construction not removed.

He discovered that these supports could also be painted and used as six champagne bottles. In order to be able to recycle the empties left over after the party, the 3D print provider now provided the matching collection containers.

New animal figures at Klingenhöfer Miniaturen:

Klingenhöfer Miniaturen (<https://www.klingenhoefer.com>) has introduced some new animal figures for use in human environments, in the wild, or in zoological gardens. The Kalong flying fox, one of the largest living bat animals, looks spectacular. It can also be used in scary scenes at funfairs, or in American Halloween decorations.

Ten meerkats, on the other hand, can probably only be used in a zoo, where the small predators, which seem so cute and peaceful, are often among the most popular animals with visitors. This effect is sure to create excitement on an exhibition layout as well.



The flying fox (photo left) and the pair of wild boars (photo right) couldn't be more opposite, but in their own way they enrich Z gauge model railways. Photos: Klingenhöfer Miniaturen

Since a single squirrel will hardly be noticed on a layout and these animals populate many parks and also residential areas, the manufacturer now offers these cute animals in a pack of six.

Two snow-white and beautiful Samoyed dogs now accompany their master or mistress on the model railway layout. Originally, these herding dogs were also used as sledge dogs.

New models represent sows and boars, which can now populate Central European forests on the model railway. We don't want to meet them during a walk in the woods, but it's a completely different story with the miniatures, because they bring life under the trees.



Two Samoyeds are waiting for dog-friendly model railroaders of our size. Photo: Klingenhöfer Miniaturen

Passenger coach special editions at Micro-Trains:

MTL (<https://www.micro-trains.com>) has continued the "War of the Worlds" series with wagon number 2 (art. no. 518 00 841). A motif from the literary model of 1906 again adorns a boxcar.



This Norfolk and Western passenger coach (item no. 552 00 240) was not previously in MTL's range. Photo: Micro-Trains

Three light 83-foot passenger coaches will also be added to the programme this month. The Union Pacific car with road number 5484 (552 00 011) and the PRR car with number 4231 (552 00 061) are reissues. The Norfolk and Western car (552 00 240) is completely new.

Rokuhan announcements in Japan:

For some time now, information has been leaking out that Rokuhan is planning to produce a 1:220 scale version of the Shinkansen series 0, the train that opened the high-speed era worldwide at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics.

This was recently officially confirmed to us and shortly afterwards the responsible persons presented the first samples of unpainted bodies at a Japanese exhibition. In the meantime, this can be read on the company's website and accompanied by photos (<https://www.rokuhan.com/news/2023/04/855/#>).

The choice fell on the twelve-piece original version of the bullet train, which stands out from the later modernised version not only because of its paint but also because of the small side windows.

As soon as further details, new photos or a delivery date are announced, we will provide this information in this magazine.

Interesting Wagons from Full Throttle:

WDW Full Throttle (<http://www.wdwfullthrottle.com>) has released two car packs for March and April, each differing only in their road numbers. In the past, this supplier has already produced refrigerator cars for the Pacific Fruit Express, which were lettered for either the Union Pacific or the Southern Pacific.



These ice cream refrigerator cars (Item Nos. FT/B-9026 & FT/B-9026-2) were in use for both the UP and SP as part of the Pacific Fruit Express. Photo: WDW Full Throttle

Refrigerated wagons now appear in two double packs (Item Nos. FT/B-9026 & FT/B-9026-2), bearing both logos and having transported bar ice to or from both companies. The lettering is designed accordingly. Owner William Dean Wright commented enthusiastically: "A really nifty wagon, I'm glad to finally get it for the gauge Z hobby!"

New special model from the Stammtisch Wien:

In cooperation with FR Freudenreich Feinwerktechnik, the Z-Stammtisch Wien has produced a new freight car for its club members and friends of ÖBB. Those interested in the model, which we will now present briefly, may please contact the e-mail address zspur.stammtisch@gmail.com directly.

ÖBB enthusiasts will be supplied with a two-pack of open freight cars of the Klagenfurt type (item no. 43.336.02), which come from the ÖBB stock. The models are packed in a plastic box and additionally in a nicely printed cardboard slipcase.



These two cars of the type "Klagenfurt" from the stock of the ÖBB (item no. 43.336.02) were issued by FR Freudenreich Feinwerktechnik for Z-Stammtisch Vienna. Photo: Dr. Helmut Engelbrecht

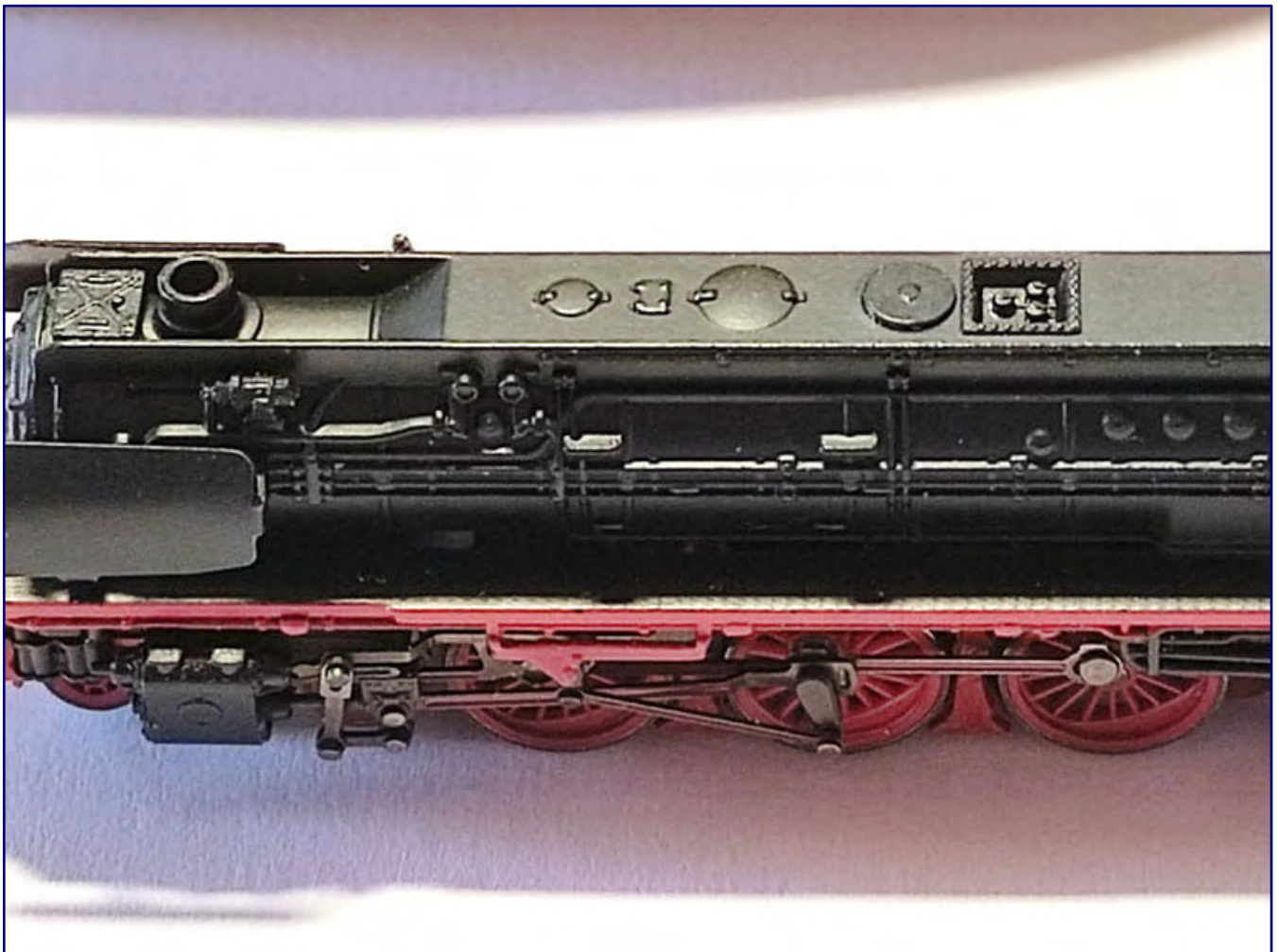
The model is the type Klagenfurt, which was procured by the Reichsbahn from 1942 onwards and was used in large numbers, mainly for military purposes. Of the approximately 23,000 cars, around 4,000 are said to have remained in Austria after the end of the Second World War.

Some of these cars were converted to other types during reconstruction, scrapped or even transferred to the Soviet Union by the Russians who had occupied eastern Austria. It was not until the 1960s that ÖBB's stock began to decline rapidly, because in the meantime there were enough wagons with modern metal bodies in service. The last representatives were later withdrawn to construction train service.

Parts from Bahl's model railways:

Unfortunately, some inconsistencies, weaknesses and missing parts spoil the pleasure of the new 01 519 from Märklin. Steam locomotive specialist Michael Bahls (Bahls Modelleisenbahnen) took up the challenge without delay and developed a kit that eliminates the most serious errors. Designed on the computer and produced by 3D printing, the small series manufacturer is ready for delivery in record time. His set of finishing parts is made up as follows:

- Replica of the missing mixer preheater box
- Reproduction of the three safety valves
- Dome cover for the housing screw (2 x in the delivery)



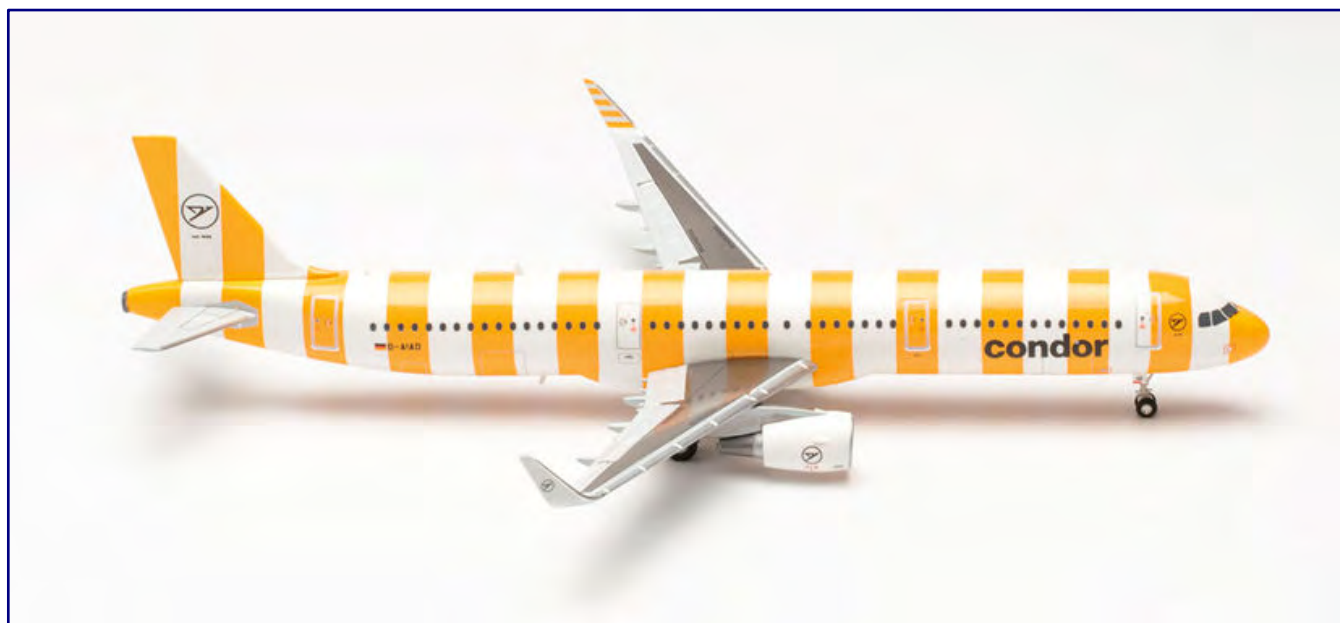
With the Bahls add-on kit the incorrectly delivered series of the class 015 by Märklin gets the missing mixing preheater box in front of the chimney (far left), replicas of the three safety valves (rectangular recess in the dome casing far right), and a cover for the housing screw (left next to the valves). Photo: Michael Bahls

The accessory kit can only be purchased from the 1zu220-Shop, which also sells the basic model and can thus prevent additional postage costs for the customer.

New products from Herpa:

Herpa is again planning new aircraft models in 1:200 scale for May and June in the high-quality Wings series (floor models with landing gear). The following models can be used on European layouts:

British Airways Airbus A321 neo (572422),
Condor Airbus A321 "Sunshine" (572576),
Air France De Havilland Canada DHC-7 (572644),
Spanish Luftwaffe Airbus T.23 / A400M "Atlas" (572729), and
Lufthansa Airbus A320 neo "Lovehansa" (572743).



Condor's current livery follows the pattern of sun awnings and is used in various colours. The version shown on this Airbus A321 is called "Sunshine" (Item No. 572576). Photo: Herpa

Appear as slightly simplified models in flight display from the Snapfit series with an overall length suitable for turbines up to a maximum of 30 cm:

Icelandair Boeing 737 Max 8 (613743),
Bulgaria Air Airbus A220-300 (613811), and
ITA Airways Airbus A350-900 (613750).

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