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German Magazine for Z Gauge



Radio-controlled digital Operation

Märklin Days in Göppingen
Abandoned Places

Introduction

Dear Readers,

Before we know where we are, summer is gone. Rain, fog, and falling leaves are images that we now deal with every day. What we are just as familiar with, without attributing any particular significance to them, are abandoned places.

No building decays from one day to the next, no track field becomes a “botanical garden” overnight. Such processes proceed over years, and we are rarely aware of them.

And yet they have special attractions that have triggered a trend, make people curious and somehow challenge them. This is exactly what we can do on the model railway if we do it consciously and thoughtfully.

This is what my editorial colleague Dirk Kuhlmann explains to us today. The ability to make models is something everyone should have, so it is rather the personal perspective and a little courage to approach such a topic. That is why this topic is a perfect continuation of our theme of the year, “layout details”.

A complete contradiction to this were the Märklin Days in September: lively, colourful, well attended, and full of exhibits, as prototypes or layouts, in excellent shape. Once again, Z gauge proved how vibrant and multifaceted it is.

And this also found favour in the trade press outside of our scale. That is praise and recognition at the same time. That is why we would like to treat you with a detailed report. If you have not been there, you can experience three exciting days, at least virtually. This will, of course, also include a new episode of **Trainini TV**, which our colleague Ralf Junius is currently preparing.

Questions will certainly have been addressed to Märklin in Göppingen about the V 320. Our test models were also there for repair. The contact partners provided us with detailed information that we do not want to withhold from our readers.

We also have a new product from Märklin. The Mobile Station WLAN was not designed for our scale, but it is suitable. It could prove this in our test, and its results have also been included in this edition.

As (almost) always at this point, I will conclude my tour of the topics with a look at the news and new product reports that we have placed in the dialogue together with the letters we have received from readers.

Not to be forgotten are the two literature reviews, which are also a long-standing tradition. They are exciting and helpful as well, but this time they are not directly related to another report in the current edition. Nevertheless, they provide ideas for new models! Therefore, my colleagues and I hope you enjoy reading them.

Sin-Z-erely,

Holger Späing



Holger Späing
Editor-in-chief

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We thank our reader Jan Szymkowiak for his impressive photo support.

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Cover photo:

In October, the 78 235, which is capable of reversible traction, is allowed to support the test of Märklin's new Mobile Station 2. This only succeeds after a few pitfalls have been avoided, but then it reveals a considerable fun factor. Our conclusion is clear.

Reworking the V 320

Successfully modified

When the V 320 was announced by Märklin, it was well received and met with great enthusiasm. Our test was correspondingly sobering, revealing some shortcomings and accompanied by a product recall. Four months later, it is time to revise our first impression in important points, because the manufacturer has heard the concerns of its customers.

In **Trainini**® 6/2023 we tested the newly released V 320 001 (item no. 88320). The criticism we clearly expressed also applied in the same way to the Wiebe version (from 81320), which was delivered almost at the same time. Nevertheless, we liked the locomotive overall and have nominated it for the new releases of the year 2023 in the category locomotives.

We explicitly described this as a leap of faith and made it clear that we trust in Märklin's competence and expertise when it comes to the points of criticism. The company has also responded to this and has spoken to us about what is currently possible and about prospects. The reworking of our models coincided with a product recall for safety reasons.



320 001-1, the former V 320 001 in service with Wiebe, is back from rework and now presents itself again with an intact handlebar below the front windows of driver's cab 1.

Therefore, today we also want to report on the results achieved, present corrections and also give some help in case one of the problems observed with us should temporarily show up with our readers, as well.

We start our results report with the Wiebe locomotive 320 001-1: On the review sample we noticed that on the front of driver's cab 1, the handle bar running horizontally under the windows had paint damage. It should be painted in the yellow of the locomotive body, but, in this case, it was partially bare.

It was clearly visible that the applied paint had sheared off over a large area, but not completely. The paint application was originally present, but had suffered clearly visible damage on the way from the factory to us.

Märklin has remedied this by completely replacing the locomotive housing. Whether the faulty one can be reworked by hand and reused, is beyond our knowledge. We assume that other affected customers will be helped in a similar way.

The manufacturer also looked into the cause of this paint damage and found that this does not occur on the other model, where the same bar is painted purple. On the Wiebe model, however, it does not seem to have been an isolated case.



The cause of the paint damage was found to be the deep-drawing insert, which was a bit too tight in the area of the handlebar. The red version of the locomotive was not affected by this.

The deep mould insert was identified as the cause of the damage, and a new one was manufactured. The model was returned to us accordingly with a new packing insert. Hard to see, but in the absence of new damage, it is pleasing to note that this rod was given minimally more space in the critical area.

This means that the model is no longer exposed to any contact with the thermoformed insert at this critical point when it is inserted (even at the factory) and each time it is removed, and it also corresponds to the Insider model, where this phenomenon did not occur. There were no indications of faulty surface treatment or reduced paint adhesion.

Security risk eliminated

The product recall for both delivered variants took place due to identical electronic equipment inside. Heat development with destruction of the model or even a fire hazard could not be ruled out.

In the meantime, the editorial staff also had photos of a model where heat-related warping in the roof area above the affected parts was clearly visible. According to our research, the problem only occurred when using the brown transformer “electronic08” (6701).

To our knowledge, this was the only one from Märklin to use pulse width modulation (PWM). The “electronic05” unit, which was only sold in starter sets at the same time, differs from this, even though it looks identical on the outside.

With the help of PWM technology, it was possible to achieve a smoother start-up of the old generation of engines. Thus, the catalogues of the eighties already promised a “smooth slow speed.” “Extremely smooth start-up” was also highlighted as a quality feature only on this model.

The bell-type armature motors installed today no longer need this electronic starting aid due to the lack of cogging torque. They heat up more when a mixed voltage is applied than with pure direct current, which is why such traction devices are usually not recommended.



In order to eliminate the source of danger that led to the product recall, a varistor has now been soldered onto the circuit board between diodes D2 and D3, as shown in the enlarged section.

In the case of the V 320, however, the heat generation apparently affected not only the motor, but much more strongly components on the main circuit board. The constructional weak point could be localized in the area of four diodes in series.

This is exactly where Märklin's rework has now started. According to our comparison, no fundamental changes have been made to the PCB. Instead, an additional component was added to the existing circuit boards. We now find this as an electrical connection between the diodes D2 and D3.

This is a varistor: The term was created by joining the English words “variable resistor” and refers to a variable, voltage-dependent resistor. Such a resistor is often abbreviated as VDR (Voltage Dependent Resistor).

This electrical component has the characteristic that its resistance depends on the applied voltage, but in contrast to diodes not on their polarity and also not on the current intensity. Above a defined threshold voltage – here, when reaching a largely pure DC voltage at the “electronic08” – the differential resistance abruptly becomes smaller.

This is a very simple and easy to install remedy, which at the same time effectively eliminates the cause of the heat source. It seems to us to be sustainably suitable for permanently eliminating the originally observed problem and its dangers.

Self help on the coupling

No changes can and will be made to the two versions already available with regard to the phenomenon of the buffer pads being too high. Future editions will be examined to see whether design changes are possible so that the housing slides lower on the chassis and remedies this shortcoming, which is visible from the side

We have attested the Märklin new product a largely good and very exact adherence to the prototype dimensions. We noted that the wheel diameters were 0.2 mm too large, which is not visible to the naked eye anyway, and that the overall height was 0.3 mm too large.

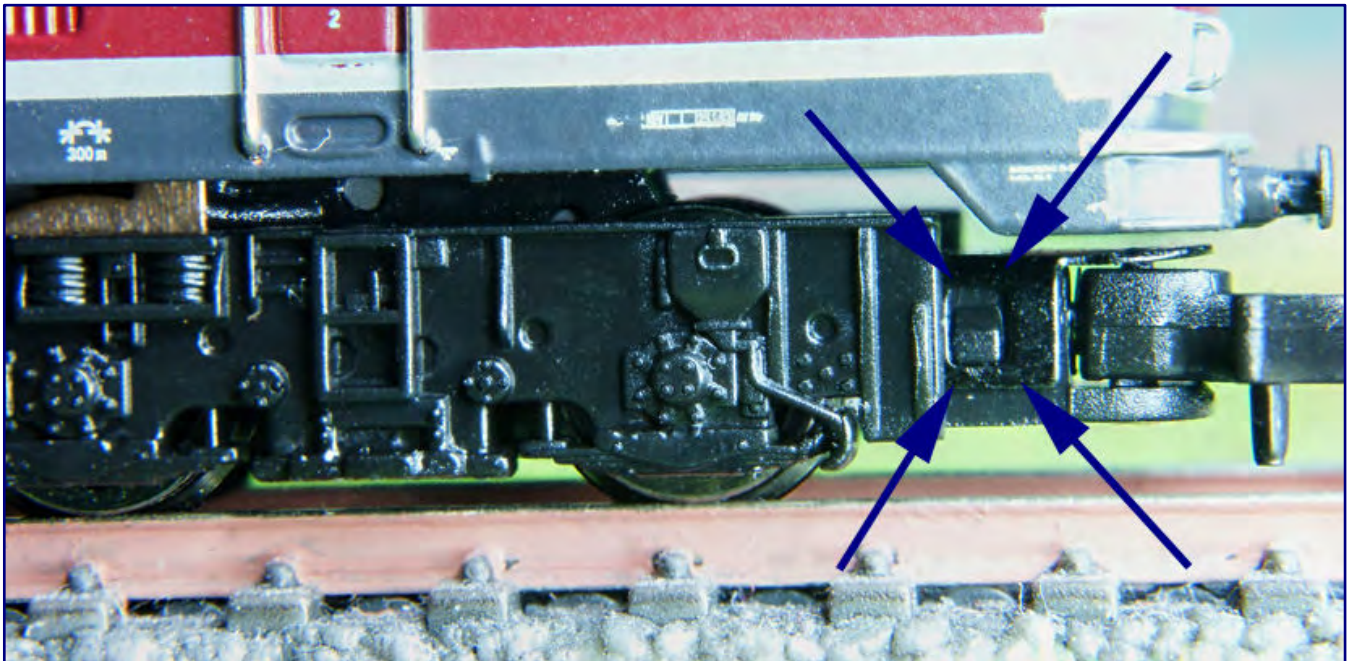


On V 320 001, the side of cab 2 was particularly affected by a coupling that was too high (see [Trainini® 6/2023](#)). This problem has now also been eliminated as the new photo proves. What remains, however, is a buffer beam that is also too high.

They alone cannot explain to us the excessively high level of the buffer beam, because the deviation should be somewhat greater here, otherwise, it would not be so noticeable. It should be all the more difficult for Märklin to achieve an improvement here.

Should it be found, it will probably also fix the model's high-legged appearance, which is made so obvious especially by the high-leading ridges of the shiny metal wheel sliders.

Easy to fix, even by the model railroader himself, is the problem of a coupling that does not grip correctly. On our test models, three of four couplers were so clearly too high that the locomotives lost their attached train after only a short distance. This observation had led us to the conclusion that the V 320 is not suitable for layouts without reworking.



The incorrectly “set” coupling height is related to a new design of the bogie frame: The coupling shaft is bounded at the top and bottom by separate parts. They only keep the system coupling in balance when the detent between them fully engages (see arrow marking). Accordingly, this can also be rectified by the customer himself if this should ever become necessary, for example after disassembly for maintenance and cleaning.

After the models have been returned, there is no longer any sign of this, as we will show by way of comparison using the example of the previously most severely affected system coupling. The cause here was not a design fault, but an assembly error, which was rectified by the repair service.

Unlike earlier coupling shafts, the two parts around the coupling and pressure spring interlock here, which is why we were not aware of any self-help. The phenomenon we observed can be remedied by carefully pressing the top and bottom of the coupling shaft together.

Suitable aids here are tweezers with a wide tip, e.g., classic stamp (collector’s) tweezers, or tweezer pliers. If the parts have been successfully pressed together, this will be evident from the reduced vertical play and lack of gap under the coupling.

However, the lateral latching lug is used primarily to check the correct fit, which can then be seen clearly and completely in the intended rectangular opening on the shaft. We also want to illustrate this with a macro shot.



After returning from the "AW Göppingen", V 320 001 provides exactly the joy in layout operation that we had promised ourselves from the beginning with this model.

Our overall conclusion of the new model, which is nominated for our new product award, has thus improved sustainably. The essential and decisive points of criticism have been eliminated. What remains are possible options for the future in the height of the buffer plank, which is not so disturbingly perceived in passing traffic, and the pointless illumination of the skylight side windows without the engine room side windows.

Manufacturer of the base model:
<https://www.maerklin.de>



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Layout details (part 5)

The Charm of abandoned Places

After a two-month break, we continue today with our annual focus topic. Dirk Kuhlmann follows a trend and tracks down abandoned and forgotten places, whose special and morbid charm also make for attractive scenes on a model railroad layout.

In this episode of our annual focus topic on “Layout details”, we want to discover abandoned places and show how to integrate them effectively into a layout. In recent years, various manufacturers have been increasingly catering to this theme and are now offering corresponding kits.

From buildings in need of renovation to ruins, everything is included to reflect the trend of so-called “Abandoned Places”. What ten years ago was more a matter for model specialists and rather frowned upon by the general community, as it departed from the norm of depicting an ideal world, has become a widespread practice today.



This is how Hall 1 of the former railway maintenance depot Opladen looked two years after it closed. Everything that could be used was shipped to East Germany. Fortunately, the hall was preserved.

Of course, Z scale hobbyists must always be aware that commercial brands mostly cater only to the H0 scale market with trending products. But I don't see this as a shortcoming at all. After all, the term model making is made up of two words, the second of which should be given a greater emphasis anyway.

continues on page 13



In former times, there was a large industrial area in Cologne-Mülheim, and the sidings all ended here near the Federal Railway's tracks. Long since cut off, this area has fallen into disrepair since the 1990s (photo above). The Leverkusen-Morsbroich signal box (photo below) has also been out of service for decades and is deteriorating. Apparently, there are plans to preserve it.

And, so, in addition to modifying standard buildings, scratch-building has become a fine art, especially in the Z gauge sector, and is no longer foreign to us. More than 50 years with far fewer off-the-shelf kits than the other scales have sharpened our skills, right? And the growing availability of laser-cut products and 3D printing solutions have inspired us all the more.

The choice of a abandoned places scene should be well matched to the era and the location of the action. While run-down and deserted streets would work well on a US-themed layout, a similar scene would look strange in a German setting; perhaps the mass shop closures in many inner cities could still be effectively depicted in Era VI, but who would want to design such a depressive theme?



In 2004, the author of these lines was allowed to visit and photograph the area and the former Hirschsprung railway station with the permission of the property owner. How long has this door been closed?

Therefore, there is once again only one effective method to explore a worthwhile scene: on-site research within the bounds of the possible. Most of the time we find that it is often only individual buildings or smaller complexes that have been abandoned for years and are slowly being reclaimed by nature.

Modelling abandoned industrial areas in their entirety is hardly feasible due to the vast footprint this would require even on a scale of 1:220. I was able to observe this very well 20 years ago at the abandoned maintenance depot of the German Federal Railway in Opladen.

Covering even just the most important buildings, a replica in Z scale would require an area of 120 x 60 cm! If it was still an active depot with trains running on it, it might perhaps be a great idea to model such a facility, but filling this amount of space with an abandoned site would be, realistically speaking, more the kind of project for a large club layout.

Targeting scenes which are feasible to build

Therefore, today we will concentrate on individual houses or smaller building complexes. Just around the corner from me is an old signal box from the 1920s. Until the 1960s, there was a level crossing of Bahnstraße (today Gustav-Heinemann-Straße) across the railway line.

The “Lmf” (signal box abbreviation for “Leverkusen-Morsbroich Fahrdienstleiter”) even had an in-house signalman, as indicated by the “f.” It can be seen on page 12 below.

This structure has already been lying dormant for decades and features the typical characteristics of an abandoned place. Therefore, it makes a good example of the features to include in the design of similar scenes:

- desolate and partly leaking roof areas,
- sloping gutters,
- dirty (and obscured) window panes, partially also broken,
- rotting wood,
- dirty facades,
- depending on the season, partially overgrown by nature, and
- chipped paint in various places.

Only a few kilometres away stood the signal box Of (“Opladen Fahrdienstleiter”) until its demolition in 2015. Only built in 1968, it also showed the typical signs of decay after its decommissioning in 2012.



Dieringhausen has often been described as a typical railway village. Unfortunately, this photo only bears witness to the decay of the old infrastructure in the Oberberg railway system.

Meanwhile, the buildings of the former track engineering yard immediately behind showed a very high degree of decay. I have to admit at this point that, apart from landscape photography, the impressions of abandoned railway facilities have been very appealing to me for decades.

Along the way, I also discovered that many people are attracted by the charm of the dilapidated. Curiosity and wondering about what used to happen in that house, factory or area, as well as the people that used to work there and their everyday life, motivated me to go on a journey of discovery.

On my many trips I have taken plenty of photos of a very similar nature. Only very special buildings bear witness to a certain region and the model should absolutely follow this. The typical façade of the former Hirschsprung station (see page 13), for example, only really comes into its own on a Black Forest layout.

Left to decay

Shifting up a gear, we now look at the buildings that are almost beyond renovation. Here, the ravages of time have gnawed at the substance to such an extent that immediate demolition would make more sense. Commonly, it could also be considered a ruin – a truly abandoned place.



This small and boarded-up building belonged for decades to the steam locomotive depot at the terminal station “Helenensiel.” A piece of track and the buffer stop still exist.

Here, the hobbyist has to dig deeper into his bag of tricks. Partially collapsed roof areas, for example, expose rooms in apartment buildings. This would call for a little interior design, right down to supposed wallpaper remnants on the walls or the toilet bowl that has already fallen one storey below.

On the outside, the former colour of the walls can only be guessed at and bare wall areas are emerging. In rural areas, we still find wooden barns whose roof has already fallen through to the ground. Here the battens, rafters, or ridge purlins should be visible, but, of course, in a complete mess.



Meanwhile, the buildings of the former track construction yard immediately behind showed a very high level of decay. I have to admit at this point that, apart from landscape photography, impressions of abandoned railway facilities have been very appealing to me for decades.

Within the railway theme I found further objects that actually no longer serve any purpose and were left to decay. The trackless platforms in the Dieringhausen or Pattscheid stations serve as prime examples. Abandoned goods ramps and sheds also are a typical consequence of the “modern railway”. Similar to the practice of the Deutsche Bahn AG, the withdrawal from servicing large areas was also a feature of the former Federal Railway – abandoned, lost, and deserted.

But sometimes a building only looks like an abandoned place in photos. In 2003, I was by chance at what was then the main station in Solingen city centre: I have never seen such a large station in such a decrepit state.

And this station remained in operation like this until 2006! I could only capture this atmosphere when no traveller crossed my lens. Later, the building was restored and became a monument, but it has not been used as a railway station since.

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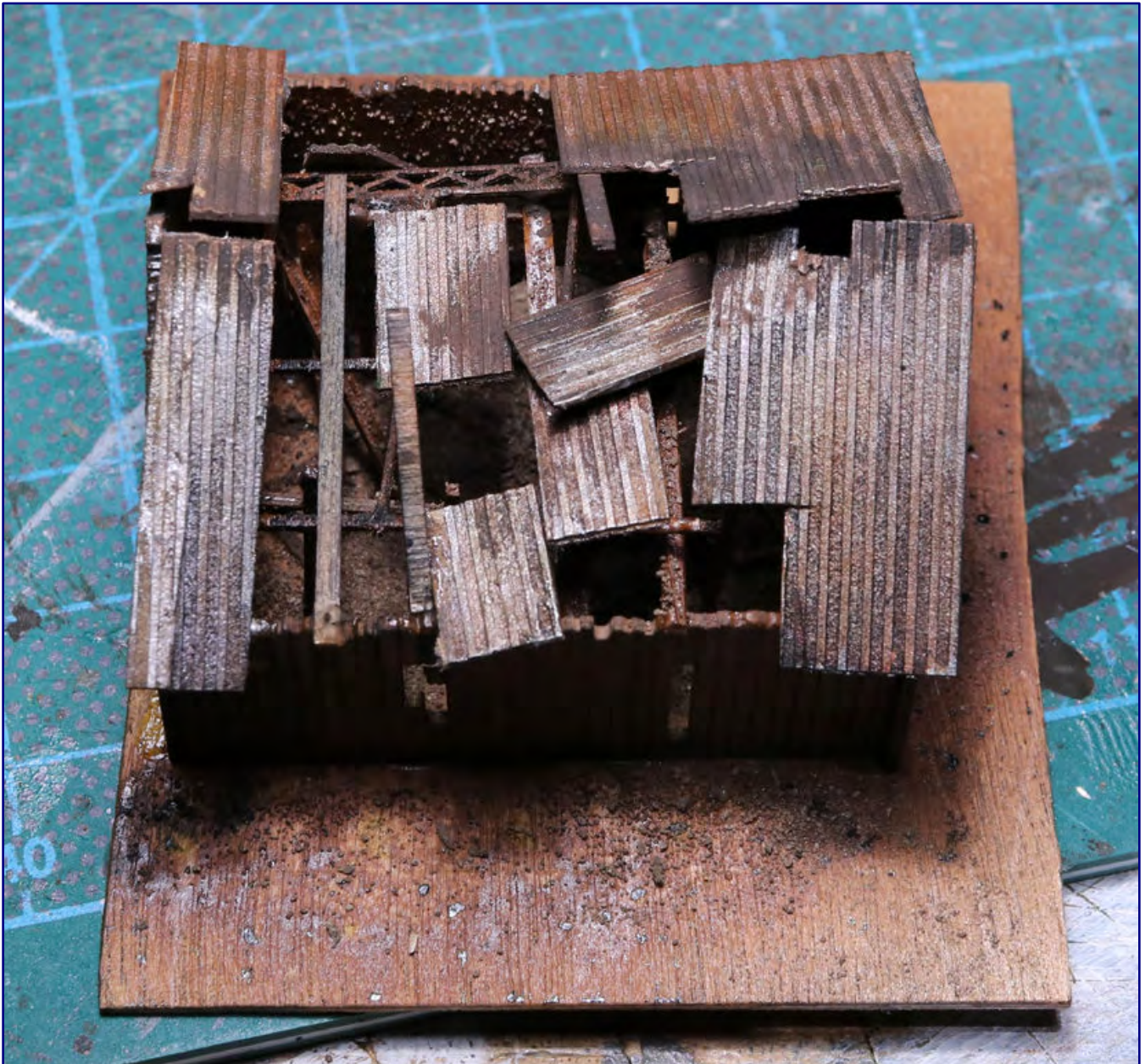
Photo above and following page above:
This looks like an abandoned building but isn't one! It is the former Solingen main station, which was actually still in operation when this picture was taken. It is a perfect showpiece for our abandoned places topic, even if this was probably not the intention of those responsible for the station at the time.



Photo below:
When constructing your own dilapidated buildings, it is always worth it to pay attention also to their “interior design”.

After so many impressions and information, we then come to the model railway department. There are often bare areas on almost finished layouts. Mostly it is the empty corners on oval track plans that make for potentially interesting real estate. Instead of covering them with a featureless grassy field, try occupying them with a more unique eye-catcher.

An abandoned house or an overgrown ruin, also unfold the described charms in the model, and will make for a visually interesting trackside detail.



We usually look at the model railway from above first. Therefore, we will also show how a dilapidated building can captivate the eye from a helicopter perspective.

When planning a new model railway layout, it may be worth including an abandoned place scene right from the beginning. For example, an abandoned farm would look good on a rural layout. The possibilities are manifold, as you can see.

On my layout “Helenensiel” I placed a small abandoned locomotive station next to the reception building at that time. On my “Kniephaven” layout, the small railway stop in the dyke foreland is an abandoned place. In both cases the buildings are boarded up with veneer wood cut to size of the windows and doors.

An even more extreme approach was taken on the US themed “Old Port Shop” layout. It includes a scene with abandoned tracks cut-off from the main line and in parts hopelessly overgrown with vegetation. The entire scene is complemented by a decommissioned coaling station and a decrepit diesel engine.



Even a single wagon can become a deserted place if the weathering is right! However, the rubbish to the side behind it should also be noted here, which further enhances this intentional setting.

This is a real peripheral feature, as it is placed at the back of the layout. It is designed to be noticed only at second sight. But once recognised, the scene will impress and captivate the viewer for a long time.

It is precisely this kind of playfulness with many different buildings, whether active or abandoned, that makes viewers linger for a long time at a layout, with their eyes guaranteed to explore every centimetre.

Give these abandoned places a try! On the internet you will find a multitude of photos and impressions, because their fascination is simply too great not to be shared it with others worldwide.

Author's webpages:
<https://www.helenensiel.com>

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Mobile Station WLAN All in one Hand

A wireless control unit for the Märklin control centers was a noticeable gap in the digital portfolio of this manufacturer. At the toy fair in spring, the people from Göppingen finally presented their idea of how to close this gap. The developers also focused on one-hand operation. Now the device called "Mobile Station WLAN" is on the market, and we have tested it for you with a focus on Z gauge value.

In 1984 Märklin was the first large-scale manufacturer to herald the start of the digital age in model railways. The number of models offered, control components and matching accessories grew quickly. Semiconductor technology and microelectronics developed rapidly, and the sequence of component generations was correspondingly fast.



Here we see the delivery scope of the Mobile Station WLAN (art. no. 60667) on the left in the photo. It comes with a round handle (bottom) to stick on for one-handed operation. The WLAN receiver box (60117; on the right in the photo) comes with two wood screws for mounting on the layout.

Since the technology was still expensive at the beginning and for many model railway manufacturers rather a marginal topic of their work, digital technology remained a business field for small, new and aspiring companies, especially in its early days – “start-up” is what we call it in today's use of language. Märklin, too, could not get by for many years without such “outside help”.

The years passed, a “Control Unit” of the early days became the “Central Station” (CS), the communication format Märklin-Motorola (MM) finally became MFX with automatic registration. Before that, with the takeover of Trix in 1997, the digital format Selectrix (SCX) had also come into the company, until DCC finally prevailed worldwide in the DC sector.

This is where Märklin's activities for the H0 and 1 gauges meet as well as the concepts still pursued by Trix for H0 and above all N with the Z gauge. For Selectrix there were the first decoders of such small size that locomotives of the nominal size Z could also be equipped with them. The requirements for a sufficiently high track voltage and electrical power were sufficiently close to each other for the two small scales.

To this day, Selectrix also found its way to Z gauge without being offered in large series, until the more modern DCC technology overtook it. Components developed for Minitrix could mostly also be used for the Mini-Club, because Märklin's former Nürnberg (Nuremberg) brand also made the turn to DCC digital format.



The two devices are offered as separate products. The reason is simple: For stand-alone operation or on an existing configuration based on the wired Mobile Station, the receiver box is interposed, while the Central Station can establish a WLAN connection using a router.

In addition, since the first generation (the “green version”), the small control unit “Mobile Station” (MS) was also a popular control unit for digital operators from our model railway segment. This has not changed until today, whereby the second generation is still in use, in contrast to the large CS3. Only the housing colour was changed from light grey to black.

If the MS2, for which the number indicates the product generation, is supplied with a mini club power supply unit, it delivers a track voltage of 12 volts, which is usable for our purposes; for sound decoders, up to 14 volts are useful to ensure non-interrupted operation.

Under these certainly timelapsd general conditions, it becomes clear that the new offer of a “Mobile Station WLAN” (art. no. 60667) is also worth a look and a test run for our scale.



Everything under control: The Mobile Station WLAN is based on the MS2 in its outer design and proven operating concept. Modifications such as the two recessed grips on the back qualify it for wireless operation

The “receiver box WLAN” (60117) is also included, which is required for the sole operation on the layout (then necessarily together with a track box) or as a supplement to an existing MS2 (with connection via track box).

It is sold separately because it is not required if the Mobile Station WLAN is integrated into a CS configuration as an additional device. We will not test this operation option because the Central Station (2nd or 3rd generation) without special precautions applies a higher digital voltage to the track than is advisable for our gauge.

Theoretical background of the new product

In one respect almost all digital suppliers seemed to be years ahead of the manufacturer Märklin: wireless hand controllers had long been established and were available. At Uhlenbrock, one of the pioneering companies from Bottrop in the Ruhr area, for example, it was and is the “Daisy” device.

At Märklin, the Mobile Station as a small control centre and hand controller (also for the Central Station) always kept a wired connection to the main unit or via the so-called “track box” to the conducting rails.

Because of the WLAN capability of the newer CS generations, Märklin finally reacted by integrating the clever mobile phone or a tablet computer, which communicate with the central station via the router. But a separate wireless handset was not launched.



The Mobile Station WLAN does not have a charging connection to charge rechargeable batteries. Instead, it can be operated with four A batteries or rechargeable batteries. They are inserted into the screwed in battery compartment on the back. The type of energy source chosen by the user must then be entered in the device menu.

Brand-loyal Märklin railway fans had to be willing to suffer while the desire for a wireless control unit was repeatedly put to the manufacturer. In September, the result was available to the first customers, and a first, albeit small, batch went on sale. Our test unit is also from this batch.

From the outside, there are hardly any differences to the well-known MS2. Those who are familiar with this device will therefore hardly have to adapt. Of course, the connecting cable to the CS or track box has been omitted.

The rotary control knob also differs somewhat and no longer has smooth surface, but has ray-shaped elevated lines, which provide a better feel and increase the ease of use. Here, you can quickly see that Märklin had one-handed operation in mind.

Two recessed handles on the back of the device are also suitable, which are intended for the four remaining fingers when the thumb is in use at the front. Younger model railroaders will probably find the new product much easier to hold if the handle which is included is glued to the centre of the back.

Those who fill their native language with Anglicisms, call this handle a “pop socket”. Young users are already familiar with this tool from their mobile phones. It enjoys great popularity there, which is why it certainly did not escape the attention of Märklin's developers.

The rest is largely the same as the familiar cable device: the backlit graphic display is only two-coloured instead of multicoloured and works with pictograms instead of pictures. Those who own many vehicles or locomotives with more than 16 digital functions will also want a larger and finer range of suitable symbols to distinguish between them.



The user interface of the two MS sisters is almost completely identical. The only difference is the rotary handle on the WLAN version (right), which has been fitted with ray-shaped elevated lines to make it easier to operate with one hand.

Overall, this means easy and familiar operation if the user is accustomed to the original device. After all, with the programme updates of the last few years, modifications have also been made at this point.

If Märklin itself emphasises this with the words “even without looking”, then the market leader from Göppingen is also concealing something that will become relevant in our test: The MS WLAN does not have a locomotive card slot like its wired counterpart.

But it apparently does have a gyroscope because it can detect changes in position like a modern mobile phone. At least, it is held vertically with a glued handle on the back for one-handed operation, so that the thumb can reach the rotary control.

The usual screen display would then be inconvenient because the head would have to be turned constantly to read the display. The MS WLAN recognises this position automatically and rotates the display by 90°. Incidentally, this works for both right-handed and left-handed people; the only thing it cannot do is rotate the display by 180°.



Whether left- or right-handed, the display can rotate 90° in both directions, but not upside down. The operator can specify in the unit settings if the display should rotate or remain fixed.

Unit in stand alone operation

Connecting the unit for operation is simple. The new product and the Central Station can connect per radio link. The procedure is explained in the enclosed instructions.

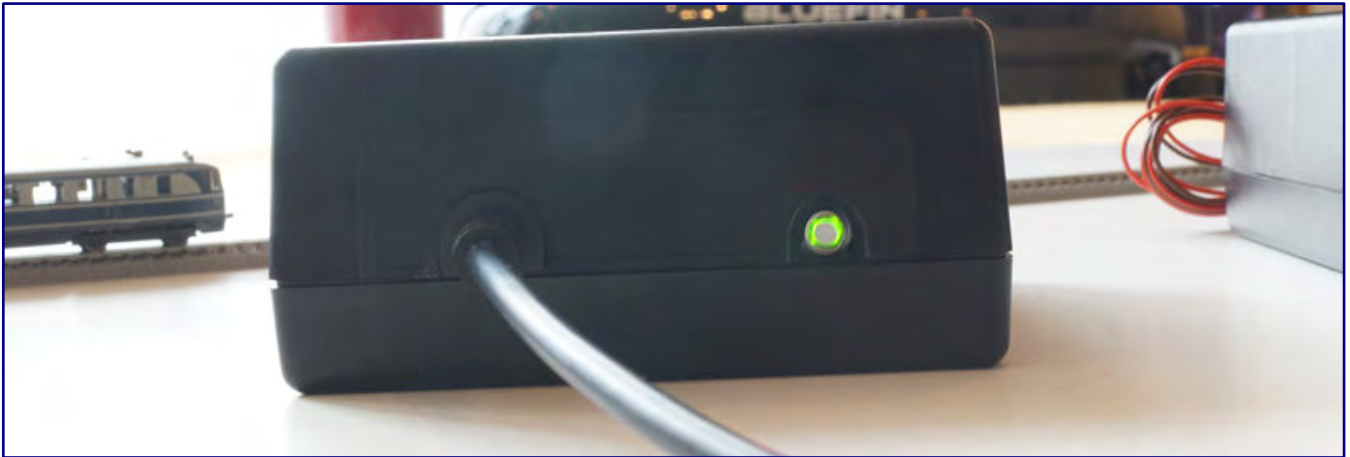
For stand-alone operation or together with an existing Mobile Station, the track box is required. The receiver box is connected to this like an MS2.

When first used, it updates the control programme of the track box and then sets up its own WLAN network. Its availability for operation is signalled by a green LED display in a switch.

For its part, the Mobile Station WLAN is switched on by pressing the stop button for more than one second after inserting suitable batteries. After booting up, it displays all WLAN networks found. The receiver box is then selected from these, which leads to a password prompt.



The unit is connected to the WLAN of the receiver box via the menu selection. It is then necessary to enter a password that is stored in the instructions.



A green LED on the switch of the receiver box indicates readiness for operation (photo above). In the mode that we are now testing, we cannot access a locomotive database. For new locomotives, we can only select “Create manually” or “Recognise” (photo below). If a new locomotive is to be recognised automatically, it may be useful to switch off the unused digital protocols in the Mobile Station WLAN.

This password is provided in the instructions. Unfortunately, it contains an error that experienced users of an MS2 may not even notice: The password entry is not only confirmed by pushing the rotary knob, but the shift key must also be pushed at the same time.

Now our first configuration is ready for testing. Märklin promises to be able to switch up to 32 locomotive functions and 320 electromagnetic items. This corresponds to the scope and operation of the MS2 in the current programme version, which is why we don't want to go into detail about it.

The most exciting thing for us Zetties will be the configuration of a locomotive that we want to operate digitally: The integrated Märklin digital locomotive database is also available and selectable on this unit. However, it is of no use to us because Märklin does not offer its Z gauge vehicles with digital operation. The situation is similar for model railroaders of larger gauges who also use other makes.

It has proved to be a convenient aid to use a locomotive card for each model, on which the address and all functions are stored by the MS2 and can be easily imported on any Märklin device.



Above we show the minimum configuration for the stand-alone operation of the Mobile Station WLAN: Both the receiver box WLAN (centre) and a track box (right), which generates the digital signal and puts it on the track, are respectively required. The two latter devices use an identical housing but can be distinguished by their imprints and the switch shown at the top of page 21.

This often eliminates the need for time-consuming manual creation because all stored functions are also stored on the card with the assigned function key, symbol, and function type. However, this is one of the few differences between our test candidate and its wired sibling: the card slot is missing.

The only remaining possible function is the automatic decoder recognition, which assigns the selected memory location in the database to the detected locomotive – in this case the first memory location due to the lack of selection.

The storage of a representative locomotive name, a locomotive symbol and all functions now remains manual work, which takes a lot of time, especially due to the lack of a keyboard on a touch screen. The larger the digital vehicle stock, the more annoying this effort is. In our view, the concept of the Mobile Station in both versions is not user-friendly.



If we use the readout function of the Mobile Station WLAN, it finds one that corresponds to the (long) address 604 in DCC format. The following procedure, which is identical for the wired device, is not very comfortable: Enter a locomotive name, select a suitable locomotive symbol (from a limited selection) and store all available functions on the respective F-key.

Once all this has been accomplished, we experience familiar operation and enjoy the lack of cables and the freedom of movement gained as a result. In particular on larger layouts, where the operator also wants to move around and follow his controlled model, this is of noticeable benefit.

Operating the Mobile Station WLAN as a stand-alone device or in a purely wireless combination is possible in the way described, but, for us, it results in a noticeable loss of comfort. It makes more sense to operate it purely with self-registering decoders, or Märklin digital products that are stored in the database.

Consequently, we now want to focus on combined operation with a Mobile Station 2, which then also provides the card reading function. As soon as two devices are in use, one must function as the main device ("master"), all others are subordinate ("slave").

In principle, one Central Station always assumes the role of master; in the case described, it is the Mobile Station with the smallest serial number, which for logical reasons should correspond to the oldest device in one's inventory.

This also applies to the Mobile Stations WLAN among each other, but according to the instructions not in relation to the Mobile Station 2: In this configuration, the latter always becomes the main device, a WLAN device is subordinate. This also seems to make sense, because the wired device should so far be the older device, but always locally bound and thus firmly assigned to the system. The mobile device, on the other hand, can more easily and flexibly change the centre with which it is to cooperate.

But here, theory and practice still diverge at the beginning of the test. Our test device has the serial number 717, which is far below that of the mobile station deliveries. The programme version according to the manual and the device is 4.0.0.1.

And, it is precisely this programme version that still has a serious error, as Märklin itself quickly recognises: The allocation of roles is based exclusively on the comparison of the serial numbers, the WLAN version wants to be the main device, which (so far) cannot be altered.



The message “No locomotive!” can be extremely nerve-wracking on both devices, because the larger your digital vehicle stock, the greater the amount of manual input required in this case. Time can be saved by using the locomotive cards from Modellbahn-Union, on which a model can be permanently stored with the selected settings and assignments. However, with programme version 4.0.0.1, the Mobile Station WLAN unfortunately still knows how to prevent the reading of the card.

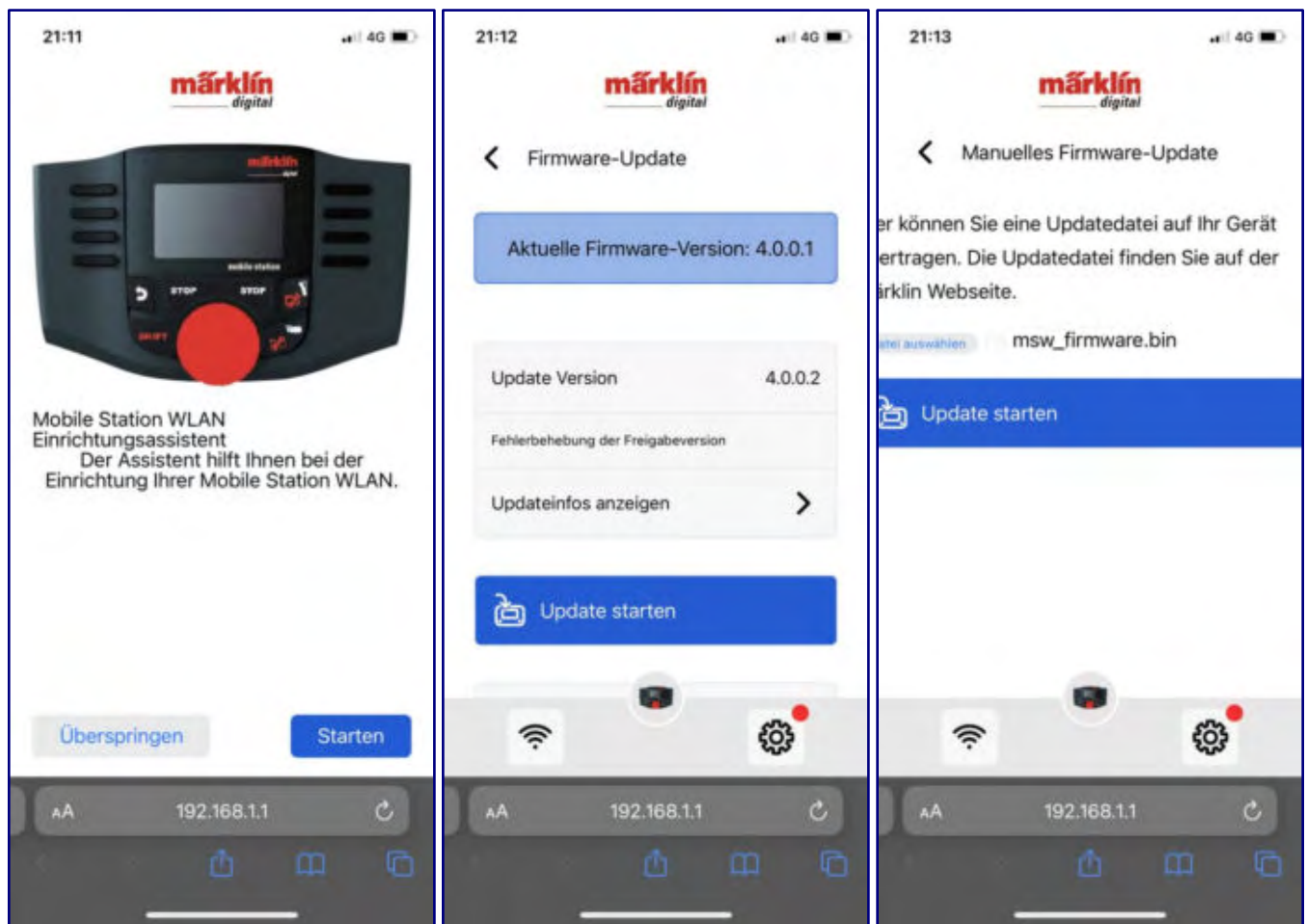
There is no access to the already existing, own database and no new locomotive can be added via the card reader, because the registration is reserved for the master. We have to interrupt our test for the time being, but fortunately Märklin provides an update to version 4.0.0.2.

Annoying programme pitfalls

Mistakes happen, Märklin has already reacted, so no need to worry. But in our test, updates are not as simple as the instructions describe. The reasons for this are probably security measures on routers and in various browser programmes.

But a certain “sneakiness” in the input screens also plays a role here, as we only realise later: If the password entry for the receiver box is to be confirmed on the last digit, i.e., with the last entry, this is not the case with the password for a home network.

Here, the unit first expects a jump to the following digit, which is no longer filled with a field content. This is not described in the instructions and is, therefore, probably, not intended by the developers. In this case, it can be considered a small programme error (“bug”).



For set-up, the Mobile Station WLAN allows access from an external device if both are connected via WLAN. It can then be accessed under the IP address 192.168.1.1 (photo left). We need this access to be able to update the programme (centre photo). After the manual update by means of the downloaded file “msw firmware.bin” failed, we decided to use the automatic version. It is noticeable that some screens do not yet adapt to the display size (photo on the right).

If you don't realise this, you could quickly get lost and get desperate. In our case, two dealers who offer free updates for Märklin digital devices failed to do so. Only later did we receive the decisive hint from a third party.

Back home, we tried our “luck” a fourth time – without changing the procedure from attempt number 1. We found the instructions for the installation on the Märklin website (see information box at the end of this article), we saved the file to be processed on the mobile phone beforehand.

Finally, the connection between phone and Mobile Station WLAN worked, the promised interface appeared on the display of the mobile phone. We selected “manual update” and referred to the location where the file was stored, as Märklin instructed. Again, the result was sobering: “Update image invalid,” moreover the display did not even adapt to the width of the screen.

What now? Our call for help to Märklin has so far gone unheard. One last time we tried the option of an automatic update which meant to use the manufacturer's suggested path. Surprisingly, the device reported that the update was complete.

It switched off, restarted, and now displayed the programme status 4.0.0.2. “Press here and wait for a miracle” could describe what we experienced. Finally, the test could continue. By the way, the success

is not visible on the phone's display, because here the device is only read out again on explicit command. So here, too, the user may quickly be led astray.



The developers really did not make it easy for us to successfully complete the update. In the end, however, we managed to do it the way described and the joint test with Mobile Station 2 could finally take place.

Usefully supplemented

Now we have finally reached the point where our test unit is supposed to work as promised. Consequently, the Mobile Station 2 is connected to the track box, then again, the receiver box to the second slot and the power supply is restored.

The Mobile Station WLAN searches for networks and also lists the receiver box from a series of suggestions. It does not want to connect automatically. After the manual selection, however, it uses the password already stored and does not ask for a new entry.

Now we have access to our locomotive database, can delete locomotives, register new ones, and also use the card slot of the wired control unit. Finally, all the advantages of the new product become apparent.

The menu offers some settings that we would like to mention here: We have already explained that the display can adapt to how the operator holds the unit by rotating it by 90°. This function can also be switched off if desired, which will probably rarely be used.

Still quite new, but not specific to the WLAN variant, is the display option “Tachotyp” (speedometer type). This allows you to switch from the usual bar display to a numerical display of the selected driving level and thus to adapt it to your own preferences.

If the Mobile Station WLAN is not operated for a predefined time, the display dims, meaning it is illuminated less intensively in order to save battery capacity. The selected battery type, meaning the choice between a rechargeable battery and a non-rechargeable battery, is also a setting that probably has an effect on the behaviour due to differences in voltage and capacity.



After updating to programme version to version 4.0.0.2, the WLAN device subordinates itself to the Mobile Station 2, and we can access our existing database and also use the locomotive card reader, as desired.

Incidentally, rechargeable batteries must be extracted for reloading. Regarding the option of batteries, Märklin's innovation does not have a charging connection via USB-C (PD / “Power Device”). If the display is too bright or dark for active operation, this can also be changed individually. The optimum luminosity may also depend on the lighting conditions in the layout room.

Finally, it should be noted that the housings of the track box and the receiver box have identical external dimensions, and each have two screw holes in identical positions. Both can, thus, be mounted out of sight in a suitable place on the layout.

The housings of the Mobile Station 2 and WLAN are not identical despite having the same top face. The two recessed grips on the back with the missing card slot are not the only difference: the housing of the newly introduced handset is slightly thicker, which can almost only be seen in a direct comparison.

We are reaching the end of this article, and it is time for a conclusion. A wireless control unit has long been on the wish list of Märklin digital railway fans, and this does not exclude Z gauge.

Many customers want everything from a single source if possible and remain loyal to Märklin in digital operation wherever possible. Due to the lack of Railcom capability of many decoders, self-registration at the command station is not yet as widespread in 1:220 scale as in other nominal sizes. The locomotive card function of the Märklin digital command stations is, therefore, particularly helpful.



The direct comparison between the Mobile Station 2 (left) and the Mobile Station WLAN (right) shows further differences in the view of the top side: only the wired device has the card reader, while its slot is missing on the right. Due to the battery compartment, the WLAN version is also somewhat thicker. The fold-out round handle, which we use to hold the right-hand unit, is not a criterion, however: it is included with the unit and is only attached if the user wants it and it accommodates his or her habits.

In our test, the Mobile Station WLAN proved to be just as operational as its wired counterpart. After updating the programme, its locomotive card function can also be accessed again. This makes the new product an option to be considered for initial purchase as well as extensions.

Which device and which manufacturer will be preferred in the end is a matter of personal preferences and demands. In any case, Märklin is up to date again and only a modern graphic screen, like the one on the large Central Station, remains on the wish list.

We would like to disregard minor program errors here. It may be annoying at times and give the impression that an immature product has been put into production, but on the other hand these are only small things that have a big effect. Moreover, Märklin has reacted quickly and will continue to provide updates in the future.



For use in Z gauge, we recommend the minimum configuration shown here, in which the new Mobile Station WLAN is only an extension as a sole hand controller. Only in this way can we control two locomotives at the same time and also use the comfort of the locomotive cards.

Anyone who is overwhelmed by the situation can always go to their dealer, because they have taken on and continue to take on an important service provider function. And, so we are happy about this new product and think that it deserves to be nominated for the best new releases of the year 2023 in the category technology.

Provider webpages:

<https://www.maerklin.de>

Purchase of locomotive cards (house brand or Märklin):

<https://www.modellbahnunion.com>

Product update page and URL of the file:

<https://www.maerklin.de/de/service/downloads/msw-updates>
msupdate.maerklin.com/msw/4.0.0.2/msw_firmware.bin

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.

Moderne Bahn in Text und Bild **Aktuelle Triebwagenübersicht**

Die moderne Bahn ist in Bewegung. Besonders mit Ausschreibungen für Nahverkehrsleistungen gehen oft neue Triebwagen und Triebzüge einher, weil sie von den Aufgabenträgern verlangt werden. Aber auch im Fernverkehr hat sich seit Erscheinen der letzten Dokumentation wieder einiges getan. Es ist Zeit für ein aktualisiertes Buch, das dies zusammenfasst.

Michael Dostal
Typenatlas Triebwagen und Triebzüge
Deutsche Bahn und Privatbahnen

VGB | Geramond
München 2023

Taschenbuch mit Fadenheftung
Format 16,5 x 23,5 cm
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ISBN 978-3-96453-561-0
Preis 24,99 EUR (Deutschland)

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Rund fünf Jahre liegt die letzte Auflage des Typenatlas zurück, der nun in überarbeiteter Form wieder vor uns liegt. Da Fahrzeuge hinzugekommen sind, die es bei Erscheinen des Vorgängerbands noch nicht gab, war dies dem Verlag auch eine neue ISBN wert – zu groß erschienen die Unterschiede.

Aktuelle Triebwagen im Vergleich lautet die Herausforderung und Messlatte aber auch dieses Mal. Deutlich wird am reinen Zahlenvergleich zum Vorgänger ein nicht unerheblicher Zuwachs an Bildern. Das nehmen wir erfreut zur Kenntnis, haben wir beim Durchblättern aber nicht mal bewusst wahrgenommen.

Aber seien wir ehrlich: Niemand wird alt und neu gegeneinander legen und Seite für Seite abgleichen. Das wird kaum geeignet sein, um den Nutzen und Mehrwert für den Käufer herauszuarbeiten. Vielmehr stellt sich schließlich die Frage, ob das alte Buch noch die eigenen Ansprüche erfüllen kann.

Da wir hier von recht aktuellen Aufstellungen sprechen, wird die Antwort in den meisten Fällen Nein lauten. Und daraus resultiert ja auch für Verlag und Autor die Motivation, ein Werk zu aktualisieren und fallweise zu erweitern.

Verraten sei, dass sich die Seitenzahl nicht erhöht hat. Immerhin fallen alte Fahrzeuge ja auch mal weg und dann stellt sich die Frage, ob sie hier oder an anderer Stelle historisch zu dokumentieren sind. Dann können auch beide Bände nebeneinander im Regal einen Sinn ergeben.



Geblieben sind Autor und Struktur des Werks, formal geändert hat sich der Verlag: Geramond hat den Titel ohne Namensänderung zur VGB verschoben, die sie vor einigen Jahren von der Mediengruppe Funke erworben hat.

Die aktuellen deutschen Triebwagen werden mit einfachen Beschreibungen, kurzem Datenspiegel und mindestens einem Bild präsentiert. Einfache Orientierung und schneller Technikvergleich bleiben so weiterhin möglich. Bedingt durch den Umfang jedes Eintrags gehen die Texte natürlich nicht so sehr in die Tiefe, wie ein Baureihenportrait auf gleicher oder größerer Seitenzahl.

Genau das ist für die Zielgruppe, die der Verlag hier in den Fokus nimmt, aber auch ein wichtiges Kaufargument, denn ausschweifende Technikbeschreibungen jedes Bauteils hängen viele Nichttechniker auch schnell ab.

Als Buch aus einer Reihe ist der vorliegende Band als Ergänzung zum Typenatlas „Deutsche Lokomotiven“ gedacht, mit dem es dann ein fast geschlossenes Werk bildet, wenn wir Reisezug- wie Güterwagen an dieser Stelle mal außen vor lassen.

Eingang gefunden haben wieder unterschiedliche Traktionsarten. Neben Diesel- und reinen Elektrofahrzeugen ist die Fülle durch Akku-, Hybrid- und Wasserstofftriebzüge in den letzten Jahren weiter gestiegen.

Die Baureihe 612 mit Neigetechnik gehört hier fast zu den Auslaufmodellen, der Desiro HC von Siemens fand schon in der letzten Auflage knapp Eingang, aber die Entwicklung ging weiter. Bei S-Bahnen hat sich wieder einiges getan, ebenso auch bei der ICE-Flotte der Deutschen Bahn.

Entfallen sind nun einige Nostalgiker wie die letzten Schienenbusse, die Platz für neue Fahrzeuge machen mussten. Sonst hätte sich der gesetzte Seitenrahmen nicht einhalten lassen. Einen Hinweis verdient, auch wenn es sich um eine Wiederholung im Vergleich zur Rezension des Vorgängers handelt, das Einbinden von Bahndienstfahrzeugen.

Diese Züge der „gelben Flotte“ würden wir hier schließlich keineswegs erwarten, zumal sie ja eher abseits der öffentlichen Wahrnehmung ihren Dienst bei Fahrwegmessungen oder Instandsetzungsarbeiten verrichten.

Und so verbleibt auch dieses Mal ein runder Eindruck in unseren Köpfen. Die vorliegende Lektüre ist ausgewogen wie umfassend, informativ geschrieben, leicht zu lesen und zu verstehen. Sie gibt einen guten Überblick über fast alles, was heute auf Deutschlands Schienen unterwegs ist und beschränkt sich dabei auch nicht auf einzelne Eisenbahnunternehmen.

Der Umfang jedes Eintrags ist dem jeweiligen Fahrzeug angemessen, was seine Bedeutung und Erscheinungsvielfalt betreffen. Auch die Bildauswahl und -wiedergabe hat keine Wünsche offen gelassen.

So macht das Durchblättern unverändert Spaß und mit Blick auf das noch handliche Format lässt sich das Buch auch gut in Tasche oder Rucksack stecken, um unterwegs auf einem Fotoausflug mal zu einem der beschriebenen Fahrzeuge nachzuschlagen.

Publishing pages:
<https://www.vgbahn.shop>

Liegewagen der DB für Turnus- und Regelverkehr **Neue, schnell vergessene Wagenklasse**

Liegewagen als preisgünstige Alternative für eine Nachtreise mit Ruhemöglichkeit sind im Wesentlichen eine Nachkriegserfindung. Die DB stand dieser Idee kritisch gegenüber und wagte sich nur unter Druck und mit finanzieller Drittbeteiligung an die Bc-Wagen. Entsprechend vernachlässigt erschien ihr Angebot seit den Siebzigern. Im Vorbild fast vergessen, sind die Wagen bei Modellbahnern beliebt – wenigstens ein Buch stillt deren Informationsbedarf.

Armin Gärtner
Die Verkehrsgeschichte der DB-Liegewagen
Entwicklung, Typenvielfalt und Einsatz

Eisenbahn- und Heimatmuseum Erkrath-Hochdahl e.V.
Erkrath 2022

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Das Thema Liegewagen bildet nur ein Randthema des deutschen Bahnverkehrs, wenn wir die einstige Stückzahl der Wagen mit dem Gesamtbestand an Reisezugwagen vergleichen. Zudem verkehrten solche Wagen im Nachtverkehr, als normale Sitzwagen im reinen Tagesverkehr waren sie kaum im Einsatz.



Trotzdem sind die Bauarten der Bc-Wagen Modellbahnern bestens bekannt, denn wegen der auffallenden Schriftzüge und Schilder, die sie trugen, fielen sie auf. Touropa, Scharnow oder Hummel-Reisen stand unübersehbar an ihren Längsseiten, wenn sie Urlauber im Nachtsprung in beliebte Urlaubsorte fuhren oder von dort abholten.

Auch andere Turnuszüge wie der Alpen-See-Express haben diese Art zu reisen bekannt gemacht. Und mancher Eisenbahnfreund von heute wird sich selbst an die Familienreise mit der Bahn erinnern. Darüber hinaus setzte die Bundesbahn auch eigene Liegewagen im Nachtverkehr ein.

Doch diese blieben unauffällig: Trugen sie nach dem ursprünglichen Farbkonzept überwiegend noch das Blau der 1.-Klasse-Wagen aus dem F-Zug-Dienst, verschwanden sie später im elfenbein-ozeanblauen Einerlei und waren nur an Piktogrammen unter der Klassenziffer erkennbar. Ihrer Popularität tut das keinen Abbruch und diese Wagen stehen auf den Wunschzetteln vieler Modellbahner. In der Spurweite Z blieben diese Wünsche bislang fast völlig unerhört.

Für unsere Redaktion ist es daher keine Frage, dass hier noch ein großer Informationsbedarf besteht. Der Bestand an Fachlektüre zu Liegewagen tendierte bislang gen Null. Erkannt hat das bisher nur Autor Armin Gärtner.

Er war in seiner Studienzeit als Liegewagenbetreuer tätig und reiste mit diesen Wagen im Auftrag der ehemaligen DSG (Deutsche Schlafwagen- und Speisewagengesellschaft) quer durch Europa. Von

seinen Eindrücken und der Arbeitswelt jener Tage berichtete er in einem ersten Buch, das so großen Anklang fand, dass zwei Folgebücher folgten.

Dieses zweite haben wir bereits in **Trainini®** 2/2023 vorgestellt und ist inzwischen ausverkauft. Das dritte Buch zum Themenbereich liegt uns nun vor: Es behandelt den aus Sicht von Vorbildfreunden und Modellbahnern wohl spannendsten Teil zur Übersicht der eingesetzten Wagen.

Liegewagen waren bei der DB zwischen 1953 und 2016 im Einsatz und berühren daher gleich vier Epochen der Modelleisenbahn – kaum jemand kommt deshalb an ihnen vorbei. Als „Voitures couchettes“ war die Bauart eine französische Erfindung vom Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts, die in Westdeutschland erst nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg aufgegriffen wurde.

Dies beschreibt der Autor in einem geschichtlichen Abriss, der erläutert, wie die Bundesbahn entgegen ihrer Erwartungen und Überzeugungen überhaupt dazu gebracht wurde, Bcm-Wagen zu konstruieren und zu beschaffen.

Deren Erfolg und internationale Vereinbarungen führten schließlich auch zum Beschaffen von Liegewagen für den Regelverkehr im Nachtzugdienst. Jenen für die Reisebüro-Sonderdienste bezeichnete die DB als Turnusverkehr. Die eingesetzten Wagen waren getrennt eingesetzt.

Weil sie folglich viele Jahre das Erscheinungsbild der Urlaubs- und Nachtzüge maßgeblich mitbestimmten, griff der Autor auch dieses in den vorherigen zwei Bänden nicht bearbeitete Thema auf: Überblick über die Entwicklung und die eingesetzten Bauarten sowie deren Einsatz und erfolgte Umbauten.

Mehr als 60 Jahre Eisenbahngeschichte fanden auf diese Weise Eingang in die vorliegende Lektüre. Sie wurde gewissenhaft, ausführlich und tiefgreifend recherchiert und analysiert, um sie in diesem Werk aufbereitet wie verständlich zusammenzufassen.

Ein großes Problem stellte das Bebildern vieler Passagen dar. Wagen stehen eh selten gezielt im Fokus von Bahnaufnahmen, aus dem Inneren fehlen Fotografien meist völlig. Aber auch diese Klippe umschiffte Armin Gärtner in für uns anerkennenswerter Weise.

Zugleich entschuldigt er sich im Vorwort für die geringere Qualität vieler eigener Aufnahmen aus seiner Dienstzeit als Liegewagenbetreuer. Neben dem Alter der Bilder ist das vor allem der eingesetzten Kamera zuzuschreiben, die ja auch in das Budget eines Studenten passen musste, der mit einer Nebentätigkeit zu seinem Lebensunterhalt beiträgt.

Genau das macht dieses Buch aber auch so authentisch. Keinesfalls wirkt es „abstrakt“ und von einem Unbeteiligten niedergeschrieben. Auch nach fast fünfzig vergangenen Jahren sind viele Besonderheiten noch in Erinnerung, die hier miteingebaut wurden und einen besonderen Reiz ausmachen.

Auffallend ist, dass die DB so zögerlich war, modernere Bauarten zu entwickeln, als das Geschäftsmodell zu kippen begann. Ein Kapitel zu Projekten und Entwürfen enthüllt, wie viele Ideen und sogar Pläne es zu klimatisierten Liegewagen gab.

Nur die TUI hatte den Mut, solche Wagen nach zeitgemäßen Anforderungen der ausgehenden Siebziger zu bauen und auf eigene Rechnung zu beschaffen wie einzusetzen. Sie waren ein Erfolg, kamen aber um Jahre zu spät.

Wir wollen nicht zu viel verraten. Dieses Buch ist eine klare Kaufempfehlung und verpasst eine Nominierung für die Neuerscheinungen des Jahres nur, weil es bereits im Vorjahr aufgelegt worden ist.

Publishing pages:
<https://www.lokschuppen-hochdahl.de>



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Märklin Days in Göppingen Life in the Booth again

After an enforced break due to the pandemic, Märklin once again called its customers and friends to the fair at its home. Peter, too, is apparently a model railway enthusiast and ensured the best weather – quite helpful for an event that is also held outdoors to a large extent. And, so, it was full for Märklin Days, which also offered visitors a lot to see and experience.

When Märklin invites us to Göppingen every two years, tens of thousands follow suit to enjoy the Märklin Days with its colourful programme. Between 15 and 17 September 2023 it was that time again, the break to the last edition was unintentionally, but unfortunately four years. The need to catch up seemed correspondingly great.

As with the previous exhibitions, the event was once again allowed to adorn itself with the attribute “International Model Railway Exhibition,” and this time for the 38th edition. Of course, this also awakens our ambition to take a closer look at how international the meeting really is on the exhibitor side.



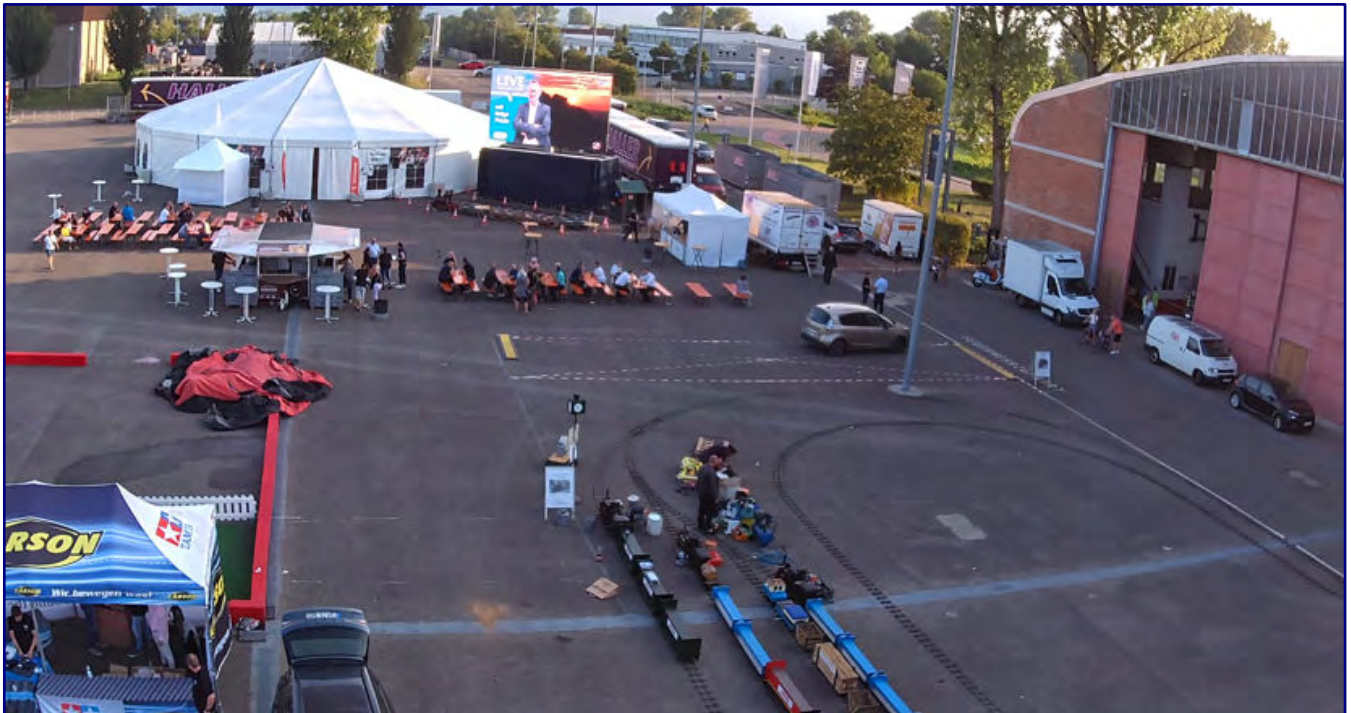
44 1315 again played a central role: in its shelter, reminiscent of a Märklin packaging from an elevated perspective, it formed a backdrop for the many table-based sets displayed on the factory premises.

At least we perceive that after the unfortunate, perhaps deliberate end of the biennial fair in Cologne, this brand has simply moved on to Friedrichshafen without any conceptual change on the spot.

However, no one is going to make a multi-day trip just because of a colourful logo in order to be there and find out whether a trade fair can meet their personal expectations. When this flagship was first used in Göppingen, the meeting there still had the character of an in-house exhibition, because other large-scale manufacturers of rolling stock were completely absent and probably not invited either.

This was different four years ago, but every exhibition has to overcome start-up difficulties after a forced break of several years. And, so, this report should also serve to answer the questions that arise for our readers after we have critically, but constructively, analysed what was presented.

As with prior such events, the 13th Märklin Days were held simultaneously at different venues in the city. On the one hand, there is a lack of a suitable exhibition hall to unite all the exhibitors and sections, and on the other hand, the Märklin factory, and Märkliseum cannot be moved, as part of the whole. With the prototype part taking place at the station and at the Leonhard Weiss track construction company, a special feature also has to be considered.



The calm after the storm: One of the three days of the fair is over, the Stauerplatz has emptied. In the background you can see the round tent with play areas and a stage where studio talks were held. On the right is the Werfthalle, a former helicopter hangar, which offered Märklin and the large accessory manufacturers a presentation area and had also once again accommodated the Z Gauge Convention.

As far as visitors are concerned, the event was well attended overall, but the three days were very different: Friday was by far the busiest day in our opinion, and, at times, there was no way through at the layouts.

The two weekend days were also good, but significantly less frequented than the “record day”. If we are basing this solely on our impressions, there is a good reason for this: the organiser did not provide us with any final information on the official number of visitors.

And since we can only be at one place at a time, we cannot make a valid statement for the others. However, the “rumour” circulated through the halls was that the visitor record of 2019 had not been met, but that the 13th Märklin Days is the second best attended edition. Incidentally, around 60,000 people were expected over the three days.

World record and great exhibits

In view of the focus of this magazine, our report should concentrate on what was shown in 1:220 scale, but at the same time not completely ignore what happened and was shown outside our scale.

And so we begin our report with a successful world record attempt, which was reported on at an evening event in front of invited guests on Friday evening by Märklin managing director Wolfram Bächle, who also invited RhB director Dr. Renato Fasciati to the lectern to provide context.



Hold your breath, will the world record work? That's what the three actors surrounded by cameras must have thought before the order for the LGB train to depart: at the lectern (from left to right) Wolfram Bächle, Dr Renato Fasciati, and Florian Sieber. Photo: Stephan Fuchs

As is well known, the Rhaetian Railway set a world record with the longest narrow-gauge train in the world on 29 October 2022. To do so, it coupled all 25 existing Capricorn multiple units together and ran them on the Albula line. The total length of all four-part units was 1,910 metres.

This sounds very simple to a layman, but the director of the railway company talked very vividly about the many pitfalls that had to be navigated around: all 25 trains had to be supplied with electricity at the same time, the couplings are exposed to enormous loads and must not break. Special precautions, coordination, continuous communication and absolutely synchronous manoeuvres are required.

At times, those involved could not believe that it had worked out in the end. In his own company, the railway boss was initially met only with astonished faces and shaking heads; only from the media did he receive signals that he was on board. When he asked for the reason, he was told: "It's simple: your attempt can also fail."

A personal conversation at the buffet – the editor-in-chief of this magazine was also involved in two unchanged world records – took place with mutual understanding and respect for the enormous efforts. Media pressure can also be a burden at times, but at the same time it can also be a challenge.



The train of 25 Capricorn units is on the move! Accompanied by the cameras, the suspense remains as to whether it will also make the specified distance without breaking couplings or encountering electrical and mechanical problems. A few minutes later we know it has succeeded! Photo: Stephan Fuchs

In Göppingen the same now applied to Märklin, and Dr. Fasciati provided the same assistance to the two Märklin managing directors that he himself had received from Göppingen a year earlier. An identically assembled LGB train was now to run in the EWS Arena and also would break this world record for model railways. After all, that's about 85 metres of train length still on the scale of 1:22.5. Many of the problems that the RhB had to solve, also had to be overcome by the house of Märklin.

It worked with a large number of witnesses, which our reporter Stephan Fuchs also wanted to make sure of. However, it was not reproducible on the following days, because the many couplings did not want to take part for more than three days. Of course, they hardly corresponded to the series standard anyway, but the project succeeded thanks to thorough preparation.

While the action took place in the stands of the handball hall and there were also traders in the gallery, the main attraction for the visitors was the playing field. Here, various 2m gauge layouts were set up and captivated with great motifs, including a Big Boy that ran over a hand-built wooden truss bridge ("Trestle Bridge") again and again.

On the premises of the construction company Leonhard Weiss (LW), track-laying machines and locomotives could be seen, some of them from below the maintenance pit, if desired. Bouncy castle and trolley rides delighted the youngest visitors there.

A new product 2024 for the H0 scale was already announced there. This did not happen by chance, because LW presented its prototype there in a premiere to the visitors. We are talking about the dual-mode Vectron 248 040, which looks extremely good in the company yellow. Subsequently, we were frequently asked for our own assessment of whether Märklin could also plan this model in Z gauge?



Leonhard Weiss used the exhibition to present its new Vectron Dual-Mode 248 080. At the same time Märklin announced a gauge H0 model as a new product for 2024.

In the meantime, it has become a tradition of the Märklin Days that the Leonhard Weiss area is given a bit of model railway, so that there is always a direct link to Märklin. The regulars' table MIST 7 presents itself there with an approximately 45-metre-long modular layout on which the Karwendelbahn trains are handed over from block to block to a new "dispatcher".

The tour continued by rail bus transfer to Göppingen station. Each time, we find more modern and historic prototype vehicles here. Because of their great attraction, steam locomotives are the main focus of attention.

Some of them also invite visitors to take a ride in the driver's cab. In 2023, there were significantly fewer vehicles than in previous years, and at the same time there were no vehicles that do not (yet) know a Märklin implementation and used to be a hidden announcement of new products.

Nevertheless, it was exciting to see and hear old acquaintances puffing away. And with 151 001-5, there was also a pre-series locomotive on which connoisseurs wanted to study the differences to the following series-production specimens. A 140 can also look really good if it is given a metallic paint that looks like the delivery colour from a distance and shows its true characteristics up close.

Göppingen station is the only venue (apart from the factory tour) that can be entered without a ticket. We mention this because the prototype area, as a publicly accessible site, is not locked, even at night.



Always besieged were above all the steam engines, whose running gears, cylinders and linkages fascinated many visitors in particular (photo above). A special guest this year was pre-series locomotive 151 001-5 (photo below), on which it is worth comparing its differences to the series machines.

Once the visitors had disappeared at the end of an exhibition day and the fire in the steam locomotives was extinguished, a heavenly calm returns with the onset of summer twilight. Free from the crowds of visitors, there are then completely undisturbed views of the great prototypes.

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Hp00 shows the signal in front of 194 192-1, as she is to be exhibited during the entire event. At blue hour, the German Crocodile “cheats” its way into the photo in a particularly striking way.

Photo on page 48:

Almost a regular guest at the Märklin Days is 38 3199, returned from Romania, in Prussian livery, but with a Reichsbahn number, reflecting the operating condition in the early 1920s. Both photos: Jan Szymkowiak

The machines are then bathed in a very special light from the last sunlight and later from the many lights. Our reader Jan Szymkowiak from Kiel made skilful use of the “blue hour” to take particularly moody photos of the crocodile and steam traction. Enthusiastic about his motifs, he immediately agreed to share them here with all other readers.

Factory and Märklineum

Märklin's main factory was also always well attended. That is not new either. However, it was important to note that factory tours were only possible on Friday and Saturday between 9:00 am (start of the event) and 3:00 pm. Sunday, as a protected day, must not be used for work.

We have already reported several times on the production processes, of which zinc die casting, brass investment casting, electroplating and also the turning of very small parts are reserved for the Göppingen plant. We do not want to repeat that here and refer to a **Trainini TV** episode that will be published soon and will also include a tour of this section.

However, it is still worth mentioning how effective Märklin's training workshop was in terms of publicity. Not only were contact persons available to talk about training courses at the company and to answer questions. The apprentices and dual students also showed how they put the skills they had acquired into use.

Visitors were allowed to take away a yellow-transparent drinking cup as a souvenir, which was a teaching piece from the injection moulding area. So, even at home, it will not be forgotten that Märklin can be a



At the entrance, to the factory tour, Märklin had set up the driver's cab of 110 144-3 - an exhibit from the days of the "Märklin Experience World," whose whereabouts after its abandonment were unknown to us until now.

good alternative for young people who are enthusiastic about model railways in view of the increasingly lamented shortage of skilled workers.



With open eyes during the tour, we discover turned parts for Z gauge wheels on the lathes of the Märklin factory in Göppingen.

Once outside again, hunger and thirst soon made themselves felt.

In the shade of the LGB open-air layout and the 44 1315 "packed" like a Märklin model, it was possible to fortify oneself at the tables around the food stands.

Not all of those who lingered there will have noticed the new truck trailer with Märklin design that was standing nearby in the company yard.

This may also have been due to the long queues that formed at the special sale tent. The treasure trove in the Märklinium was closed for the fair and so many sensed attractive special offers here. Unfortunately, we cannot say whether this was true.



Many guests at the Märklintage did not miss the opportunity to take a walk through the Märklineum after the factory tour. There, the large show layout also impressed with its clever lighting and projection effects on the background.

As not all areas were able to cope with the large crowds this weekend and the Märklineum, was scheduled as an optional additional tour after the factory tour, two interactive areas remained separated with flutter tape and were closed off. As we know from last year's opening ceremony, it is precisely these interactive areas that set the Märklineum apart from other attractions.

However, we did not perceive any criticism of the way visitors were led past the two points. After all, the overwhelming majority had paid the discounted entrance fee primarily to experience the large display facility on the lowest floor up close.

The illustrated reports in the Märklin magazine will have contributed significantly to this. With the elaborate weather and night projection on the background, also accompanied by thunder during thunderstorms, it has an almost unique attraction.

And even those who couldn't afford an admission ticket were in good hands in the museum shop area and the display cases with current Märklin products. These showpieces behind glass are, after all, special treasures for every model railway enthusiast who wanted to have a good look at them in peace and quiet.



Märklin had photogenically set up its new semi-trailer from Hungary in the factory courtyard, but only a few visitors seem to have noticed and photographed it.

In addition, the special atmosphere that gives the impression of being in a round shed with an indoor turntable is also nothing ordinary. Somehow everything seems “typically Märklin” and yet unusual as well as new. Many visitors took a personal look at the factory museum for the first time and were enthusiastic about how classic and modern railways are brought together here in the model.

Now, at the latest, we were probably not the only ones who wanted to see what model railways had to offer elsewhere. We therefore continued to the Stauer Park with the shipyard hall, where helicopters were once maintained and repaired, and a tent city. In the tents, N, H0 and 1 scale layouts were again on display, some of which were particularly appealing.

The larger suppliers such as Busch, Faller, Noch or Viessmann (with Kibri and Vollmer) were represented in the hall and presented autumn novelties or innovations from the spring. Trade fair sales were also a central component.

Also present were publishers such as Eisenbahn-Kurier or VGB | Geramond as well as the figure manufacturer Preiser. Here, as at every major exhibition, a demonstration was given of how a posing model is carved in wax by the artist. Some of you may have wondered whether this was a show or everyday life, when suppliers such as Faller or Noch have long since produced human replicas of at least the same quality on computer screens.

Many other suppliers were represented, some with the familiar programme and often without new products, which is why they are not highlighted separately here. Märklin speaks of more than 100 exhibitors, of which some came from outside Germany.



At least in Z gauge, no new products were presented by the accessory manufacturers exhibiting in the Werfthalle. However, a visit to the stands was well worthwhile for advice and trade fair offers.

Hidden and innovations

In the information box at the end of this article, we have (hopefully) listed in full those who run or make Z gauge offerings. Some were not easy to find and were off the beaten track. For example, Klingenhöfer Miniaturen, a figurine manufacturer for our scale, was quite hidden in the back corner of tent 1.

In view of the short time available for preparing the report, we did not even pass by there. So, we can only hope that at least the customers found the stand and perhaps searched for it specifically using the stand directory.

This is also where a quiet criticism of the event comes in: Tents are certainly not ideal places for model railway exhibitions. A large Z gauge layout that had not been shown for a long time was also withdrawn because it was to be allocated a place in the tents. On the bending wooden floor, however, a safe operation of the trains cannot be guaranteed.

Then there are the enormous climate fluctuations depending on the weather. Ten years ago, heavy rain showers poured down on the festival grounds and the water seeped through the tent seams and dripped onto the exhibits. This year, the sun burned down on the tent shell for hours and made it unbearably hot inside most of the time.

It is also unfortunate, as in the case of Klingenhöfer, when Z gauge is concentrated in one place and a single vendor sets up his stall far away from it. It will not be possible to attract walk-in customers with chance finds and occasional purchases in this way.

Now, we would like to let some figures speak for themselves: The total area of the Stauferpark is about 17,000 m². Of this, the outdoor area takes up about 8,000 m², which was occupied by play areas for young and old, as well as seating with catering. This leaves 9,000 m² for exhibitors in the Werfthalle and the tents.



We show this photo of the King's track 1st photo as a representative of the facilities worth seeing and what else is on offer in the tents. Photo: **Trainini®** / Hendrik Späing

Part of the covered area was reserved for a world of games and wagon painting in the separately standing round tent. There was also a stage where various interviews were conducted. We recorded parts of one of them with Managing Director Wolfram Bächle and Sales Manager Gunther Schneider and will show it in our upcoming series of contributions from **Trainini TV**.

Before we get to the presentation of the Z gauge, we must now take a brief look at Märklin's own stand parts. The usual range included showcases with the latest innovations and an area for assembling your own H0 gauge locomotive. Contact persons were also available at all times to answer all questions from visitors and customers.

Smaller and larger show layouts for gauges 1, H0, and Z are also part of the self-presentation. The Märklin Insider Club celebrated its 30th anniversary, inviting its members to a glass of champagne and giving them a useful souvenir in the form of a small plastic bandage box.

Repairs could also be submitted in Göppingen or collected again in individual cases, provided this had been agreed beforehand. The presentation of Märklin Engineering, which dealt with prototypes, new technology perspectives and prototype work, was densely attended.

The aim was to show how ideas are implemented in order to test their usefulness, economic feasibility and future viability. Michael Zauner, for example, showed us how measuring injection castings have been further developed in the company since the first locomotive (series 80) was built using this technology.



Two examples of what Märklin offered in the Werfthalle: The popular telephone boxes made of brass injection casting were offered again, and Märklin Engineering had now also created a draw well as a demonstration object (picture above). At the MHI stand, the Württemberg passenger car (art. no. 98181) found a buyer after the forced break.

A large black box turned out not to be the proverbial “black box” but a state-of-the-art 3D printer inside which crystal clear and different coloured resins were assembled into vases or “glass blocks” with what appeared to be a locomotive cast in them.



Special wagon for the Märklin Days 2023 (80923; photo on the left) and the current one of the MHI (82032; photo on the right) with a metallic paint job.

This technology, which could be viewed here and was also explained on request, is also used to create the 3D printed figures announced by Noch, which are now to be delivered soon. Märklin also showed prints that corresponded to an electric locomotive in about the size of the Zf scale. However, the new technology is intended for the H0 scale and selected spare parts.

Collectors were also catered for. Four special wagons were up for grabs on site. As each time, a G 10 car was chosen to commemorate the Märklin Days 2023 with a historical motif (item no. 80923).



Since the beginning of the Z Gauge Convention South Germany at the Märklin Days, there has always been a special commemorative wagon. In 2023 it was this yellow Fals side unloading wagon (80520).

Since the Z Gauge Convention in southern Germany was also held at the same time, a bright yellow Fals side unloading wagon (80520) was dedicated to this part of the event. MHI jumped on the bandwagon many years ago, this time offering a metallic blue painted old tank car with historic Märklin inscriptions (82032). The noble-looking colour scheme really suited the model.

A fourth and last special model was actually already three years old, but could not be put into circulation as planned because of the pandemic. This was made up for there and so a dark green-beige painted Württemberger passenger car (98181) also went over the counter. Its nominal occasion was “30 years MHI - 15th general meeting 2020” – printed on both sides with the collectors' community in mind.

The Z Gauge Convention

The side room, which was reserved for Z gauge and was the location of the “convention,” was not only in our opinion the one with the most sophisticated and beautiful layouts. Our community can pin this praise on itself as a lasting impressive group achievement and should not forget that.

We add that it was also the only area where not only the visitors fully met the demand for internationality. The exhibitors came not only from Germany, but also from Italy, Poland, and Austria. On the visitor side, of course, there were many other nations as well.

What was shown in the Z gauge could easily be walked in one round, provided that the occasional great narrowness in an approximately three-metre-wide foot corridor did not prevent this. The layout “L'Isle-sur-Sorgue / Provence”, the last one Wolf-Ullrich Malm built before his death, remained largely unaffected.

It was demonstrated by Rainer Tielke and Thomas Stobbe, who were familiar with the control programme and the rolling stock, most of which they had built themselves. And so many visitors were able to enjoy the lovingly designed motifs of the sunny region of France. The TGV, which regularly frequented the track, also caused astonished looks. In contrast to the other long-distance and local trains, it did not stop at the station.



L'Isle-sur-Sorgue / Provence” was Wolf-Ullrich Malm's last major layout. Unfortunately, he was no longer able to exhibit it personally. But it found its way to Göppingen – including a self-built TGV with 3D printed parts.

The direct stand neighbour was Aurelius Maier (Design Modellbahn). He exhibited one of his Plexiglas layouts, which are intended as sophisticated living objects with a model railway connection. Their effect resulted from the combination of transparency, movement of a train, coloured scattered lights as well as plays of light and shadow. With photos it is hardly possible to show how everything together affects the viewer.

From here, we started the announced counter-clockwise tour and first headed for the ZFI stand. Here, Sylvester Schmidt ruled with the best overview of all exhibits and exhibitors, as he had played a central organisational role in the process.

In addition to a Märklin display case with showpieces of previous ZFI annual wagons and special editions, the glass cabinets also deliberately contained a cross-section of various small-series programmes in order to show guests from outside the track world what they will not find at specialist dealers and yet significantly enhances the range.



The design objects by Aurelius Maier play with light and shadow (top photo). Small-series novelties shown at the ZFI stand included the trike driver by Trafofuchs (photo below left) and the oil boom crane by HOS-Modellbahntechnik (photo below right).

HOS-Modellbahntechnik, for example, demonstrated its oil boom crane there, which is part of the depot equipment also on display. There was a colourful selection of figures from Trafofuchs, from which for us a well-known television steam locomotive with axle sequence B from a puppet show.

To make sure that this “reception area” did not look static, the “50 Year Mini-Club” and “Dead End City” box sets were also waiting here to be activated at the push of a button by the visitors and to let a train run across the oval.

The oval as the basic shape of the routes was much larger for Jürgen Wagner. “Along the Rhosel” he led the spectators in epoch IV and inspired them with motifs of vineyards along the Rhine valley and the Moselle, which together give the rectangular layout its name.

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The Wiener Z-Stammtisch promoted its layout idea and ÖBB train operation (photo above). The popular theme of water was depicted by Gotthard Schmidt with his harbour scene (photo below).



A marvel of craftsmanship, creativity and technology is Raffaele Picollo's Wuppertal layout (pictured above), which also made the convention a bit more international. A classic, on the other hand, is the "Bridge on the River Kwai" diorama exhibited by Raillex, which was once based on a Faller kit from H0 scale.

The Wiener Z-Stammtisch (Vienna Z Club) was also present: as in Altenbeken, for example, its active members had made it their task to demonstrate smaller case layouts and their club layouts that had been put together to form a modular layout, in order to show how trains running in a small space can be viewed in several different scenes at meetings.

Gotthard Schmidt, as the neighbouring stand, again demonstrated the revised harbour layout that he has taken over. It also seems to have been inspired by the port of Hamburg, because here too we find a musical theatre in the immediate vicinity. In any case, the railway takes a back seat as cargo ships, museum ships and a sea rescue cruiser dominate the scene.

Raffaele Picollo had travelled from Genoa and had once again reached into his bag of tricks. He had continued to build on his Wuppertal layout and further enhanced it. The suspension railway as the real eye-catcher almost takes a back seat, because in the background a circus draws attention to itself on the fairgrounds.



Alois Forstner has incorporated various motifs from Munich on his case layout. The rolling stock used also deserves attention, as many vehicles were or are equally typical of the city and region.

Meanwhile, the miniature golfers on the opposite side were actually rolling the ball. And those who looked closely also spotted a trip by Mr Bean with his mini packed to the brim, which banished him to the roof itself.

Roland Kimmich and Christine Specht recalled the now defunct Railex brand by means of models of various kinds that they brought along and the “Bridge on the River Kwai” diorama, which had also made it to 1:220 scale in Stuttgart.

Alois Forstner's passion for football could not be overlooked on his wide suitcase layout, as he had immortalised the Munich stadium in the left section of the layout and was also able to accommodate a miniature of the Olympic Tower. But the camera train that ran along the tracks and showed this layout from the locomotive driver's perspective caused a lot of excitement.

One of the longest journeys was made by Oliver Kessler, who lives in Poland near the Ukrainian border and runs his company there. This company is responsible for the Z-Car system, which has been vigorously developed in recent years.

In addition to the self-driving buses and trucks, many other vehicles have been able to join them because chassis of different lengths and designs have made their use more flexible. However, Oliver showed how several car models are steered on intersecting roads so that they stop at intersections or buses pull over to the right at the bus stop.

Other highlights

The modular layout "Ratekau and surroundings" of the Eisenbahnfreunde Schwartau with various motifs from Ostholstein was also worth a longer stay. The fieldstone church was installed the other way round this time and was easier to view, but Jan Tappenbeck and Hans-Jörg Ottinger had also installed very personal motifs in the meantime.



Torsten Schubert always attracts attention with his many flashing light exhibits. His creations were there right from the start and have continued to grow over the years.

So, some dogs were also on the road as models with their owners and in the case of “Otti” we could even take a look at his house and those of his neighbours. But his own developments, which he sells as kits and which were ready to be used as models here, also caused enthusiasm.



The fieldstone church from Ratekau is a central point of the module layout from Bad Schwartau. Around it there is also bus traffic with vehicles from Z-Car-System.

Personal enthusiasm prevailed because of the announced rectangular site “Hirschsprung” by Jürgen Walther. It could be seen a few years ago in Altenbeken, but at that time it was not yet fully developed—especially the trees on the slopes were missing.

In the meantime, Jürgen had finished all the construction work and was already at shows with her again. Only a personal photo session was not yet possible. Finally, we were able to make up for it and when we drove around the layout with our eyes, we discovered many details worth seeing and exciting perspectives that do not open up with simple supervision.

Gerhard Maurer also travelled to Göppingen, but he did not demonstrate any of his layouts, instead he showed Manfred Forst's showcase with Hunt's large coaling system, which Märklin had produced a few years ago and which is particularly effective in this depot diorama.

Texas' landscape and its oil fields form the backdrop for the “Red Rock Canyon” layout with which Birgit and Volker Brock (Trafofuchs) had travelled. This object had been extensively overhauled by Birgit and equipped with new figures.

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Photo above:
On the Ratekau site, Hans-Jörg Ottinger has also recreated his own street with his house and those of his neighbours. Family dogs, which were only handed over on site, are now also used there as figures. In the background, one of his self-built locomotives is in action.

Photo below:
Figures also play a special role on Trafofuchs' Texas layout: Who recognises the two celebrities sitting on the wall of the tank?



Photo above:
The rock to the left at the edge of the picture gives its name to Jürgen Walther's new installation and also found its way into the depiction because of its famous legend of how the forest animal escaped from its hunter.

Photo below:
Hirschsprung station is depicted in its historical state, i.e., in the days when trains still stopped and crossed there. It has often been used as a model for various layouts, but the buildings were always a compromise with the PS kits of the big accessory suppliers. This time everything is right!

Besides railway photographers taking photos of the passing goods trains near a level crossing with a flurry of flashes, we also spotted a well-known TV couple from Sesame Street sitting on a wall.

Our man for **Trainini TV**, Ralf Junius, showed his first work “Kistrath”. This was a showcase with a curved single-track main line from which a siding led into a small company area. The railway operation is characterised accordingly by trains passing through and service trips by the siding operator, whose loading ramp became accessible after opening a gate.

Torsten Schubert (Z-Lights) had set up his Z gauge fair and showed many illuminated models, which only partially follow the 1:220 scale. An important contribution from his side were again explained soldering demonstrations, which are supposed to take away model railway enthusiasts' shyness about this technique and to teach tricks. Birgit Foken-Brock also gladly resorted to the workstation to show visitors how she colours her 3D printed figure blanks.



Winzlingen is in Swabia, says builder Thomas Heß. But, in any case, the operation on the small suitcase system is digital and is a good demonstration piece for this control technology.

Wilfried Pflugbeil from Chemnitz announced his appearance with “Wiesenthal” as his last exhibition. We have already presented this sophisticated layout with many moving scenes in detail and awarded it Exhibit of the Year in 2020.

His announced withdrawal as an exhibitor was received with great regret, but seemed understandable to the astonished interlocutors when Willi pointed out his age, now 80, which hardly anyone had guessed who did not know him better. He assured us, however, that he still wanted to appear at exhibitions as a visitor and then enjoy them himself. We look forward to hopefully many personal meetings and wish him good health for the future!

For some, the “Dingenskirchen” console railway by Matthias Vogel may take some getting used to. As the only showpiece on site, it deliberately refrained from landscaping and only hinted at an environment around the tracks with individual buildings and a locomotive shed.

This exhibit is intended to emphasise the warm colours of wood and to stage the building material in such a way that it knows how to fit into the domestic environment like a piece of furniture. A new demonstration installation in the usual manner with greenery and paths is already under construction – but nothing is to change in the future with regard to the console track, which was scheduled for display for the last time.

The name said it all for Thomas Heß, who knew how to fit “Tiny Things” into a suitcase. The circuits of this small layout were operated digitally, which was probably only noticed by those who took the time to take a closer look. Then it could also be noticed that individual locomotive models made operating noises.



A branch line idyll and a time that is only rarely depicted form the recipe for success of “Draxlried.” A special feature of Hagen Sroka, however, are the many Era I vehicles that he has modified or built completely himself.

Equally controlled was “Draxlried” by Hagen Sroka. He had lovingly collected Bavarian motifs and recreated the romance of a branch line on the K.Bay.Sts.B. Hand-built, Bavarian shaped signals were just as much a part of it as a loading crane or the station's reception building.

But the rolling stock didn't come off the peg either, because Hagen is also an enthusiastic and restless hobbyist who prepares one model after the other for his layouts according to his personal taste and makes it ready to run. So, it made a lot of sense to crouch down and let the light trains with tiny locomotives slowly pass by in order to catch all their details with the eyes.

With this end to our tour, we sum up that we were able to see some familiar exhibits again, although they had not yet been exhibited in this region. Some were passionately built on and given new finishing touches that invited us to linger again.

At the same time, there were also great installations to see that had not yet been widely exhibited and were actually celebrating their premiere here. They were complemented by some classics, some of which were also given a new look.

All of them together resulted in an appealing and colourful mixture with which our Z gauge could be presented in almost full width and in great variety. More clearly than before, we also heard appreciative praise from model railroaders outside our own scene. And that's what makes us happy and proud at the same time.

That's why we should make a note of the next industry get-together in Göppingen in our calendars. It will take place from 19 to 21 September 2025. We can be curious to see what things worth seeing will be presented at the same place again!



Relevant Z Gauge exhibitors:

- <https://artitec.nl>
- <https://www.busch-model.com>
- <https://www.design-modellbahn.de>
- <https://www.eisenbahn-kurier.de>
- <https://www.faller.de>
- <https://www.germond.de>
- <https://www.hack-bruecken.de>
- <http://www.hos-modellbahntechnik.de>
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- <https://z-stammtisch-bayern.de>

Trainini TV – Folge 18:

- <https://www.youtube.com/TraininiTV>

TAG DER MODELL- EISENBAHN

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Museum
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HOBBY-SHOW

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DEUTSCHEN
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02. & 03.12.2023 // 10-17 UHR



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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.

Great pleasure about the exhibition report:

The pre-announcement of the September issue of your magazine with the corresponding cover photo already made me very curious. This morning I opened my laptop and read the report about your visit to the museum in Schramberg with great anticipation.

I would therefore like to praise you for your successful reportage and the illustrative photos.

I am very pleased that you are doing an excellent job of promoting the Schramberg Railway Museum with your comprehensive report and that "my" Z layout in particular, I believe, is well received there. My special thanks for that. Now we are looking forward to Trainini TV!
Eckard Jehle, Karlsruhe



Answer from the editors: The article on **Trainini TV** will unfortunately have to wait a while, but will of course follow as promised. At the moment, our focus is on creating one for the Märklinage. Due to the large scale of this exhibition, this is connected with a large time commitment.

Our tender building project is motivating:

Enclosed are two photos of my tender. The artificial coal was removed and the tender was filled with styrofoam. Since styrofoam is made up of many balls glued together, a knife was used to create an almost flat surface. Sifted bird sand was used as coal. To get the black colour, black paint (Revell) was dribbled on the bird sand.

After drying, a coal-like structure is created. Tinkering tip from Märklin magazine from 1997 or 1998. (...) What I will still change are the ladders. How do you get up such a ladder? The starting point were the ladders from Laffont made of plastic or from Klingenhöfer made of brass.

I then decided on the brass ladders from Klingenhöfer because the ladders are almost the same width. I then cut the ladders to length, primed them and then painted them with black paint (RAL 9005), but did not attach them to the tender yet. The existing ladders on the tender will be completely removed, and then replaced by the painted brass ladders.

In the photo you can see the differences, but you can also imagine the result. Even though the new ladder protrudes a little closer to the rails, I am confident that smooth traffic is possible.

Hartmut Schnittjer, by E-Mail



With coloured bird sand our reader knew how to recreate hard coal in prototypical effect, which he would like to show us on this tender. Photo: Hartmut Schnittjer

Editor's reply: We are pleased about this feedback, because it shows us that construction contributions motivate, spur on and challenge our readership. At the same time, we have identified a need for this type of tender and addressed it to NoBa models. If we may make one more suggestion for optimisation: The coal protrudes a little on the outer sides, which does not suit a pouring cone. As long as the glue has not set, the carbon insert can still be carefully pressed down at the edges with a toothpick.

Note on a new accessories manufacturer:

I had contact with a French manufacturer of model scenery. He produced a typical bridge in H0 and N. I asked him if he was prepared to scale the bridge to Z. He was very enthusiastic and rescaled the bridge to Z scale for me.

From now on, there is a new Z scale scenery manufacturing in France. It is no problem to contact him in English. Communication is excellent. This is the link to the Z items: <https://cites-miniatures.com/categorie-produit/z-1-220/>.

Pieter Willems (Belgien), by E-Mail

Editor's reply: We are pleased with this tip and will pass it on to our readers straight away!

Continued at the 1zu220-Shop:

Even if the item number 98202 falls out of the series of the first wagon series (98160 to 98168), the Westheimer wagon series of the 1zu220 Shop (<https://www.1zu220-shop.de>) now finds a continuation. A new heat protection wagon in white paint and with a roof in white aluminium is the tenth in the series. It advertises the "Alte Wildsau" beer brand, which also comes from the local brewery at the company's location.



The Märklin “Alte Wildsau” heat protection car (item no. 98202) continues the exclusive Westheimer beer car series at the 1to220 shop.



Soldering and work station with magnifying lamp (art. no. 170556). Photo: Faller

As our photo shows, the model intentionally conveys the convincing impression of a heat protection car on a G-10 basis, as they once ran in large numbers for breweries, hired by the Bundesbahn. This model is again a wagon produced by Märklin and designed with tampon and digital printing.

Faller autumn new products 2023:

Shortly after the editorial deadline, we received access to the product photos of Faller's autumn novelties. Their new products brochure is 32 pages long. And in it are not just two new kits for our scale.

The “Langwies” station (item no. 282702) is a replica of the original station found on the picturesque Arosa Railway (Rhaetian Railway) in the Swiss canton of Graubünden.

Soon, it will also be able to decorate 1:220 scale layouts in its alpine and wooden style. Since its appearance is not necessarily reminiscent of a reception building, a different use is also conceivable. As with the “Langwies” Alpine House (282772), it is also a laser-cut kit.



After a long time, Faller once again focuses on Swiss Alpine buildings: railway station (282702; photo left) and Alpine house “Langwies” (282772; photo right). Photos: Faller.

Other new products include useful aids and tools: a dedicated figure glue (170485), a pick & place tool (170557) for precise placement of the smallest parts, and non-magnetic tweezers (170558). The soldering and work station with magnifying lamp (170556) can be helpful for many projects, offering many possibilities to hold, fix or bring objects to be worked on into the appropriate work position.

Two new models from EtchIT-Modellbau:

“It’s already rusting in the catalogue” was a contemporary comment when the Renault R4 was mentioned. Nevertheless, the small car was popular and found buyers in Germany, as well. In its classic red colour, it is still very familiar to the author of this report.

EtchIT-Modellbau (<http://etchit.de>) is now creating a memorial to him with a new product in 1:220 scale. The kit made of the usual fine 3D-printed parts (art. no. ET030a_Z) has been available for order since last month.



The Renault R16 (photo left) and the smaller Renault R4 (photo right) are shown here as N-gauge samples from the accessory manufacturer, but identical to the Z-gauge miniatures. Photos: EtchIT-Modellbau

The larger R16 with hatchback, which appears as the second new product (ET036_Z), came from the same prototype manufacturer. It too is based on a French vehicle. Both car models consist of two parts (body and chassis), which can be painted separately and thus do not require any masking work.

Beer wagon at Full Throttle:

Friends of the FT refrigerated wagon series should be pleased with the new product for October 2023. Full Throttle continues a journey along the Great Lakes and found the fitting template for its beer wagon series (article group 9400) at the Erie-Lackawanna RR.



The appealing-looking "Beck's Beer" refrigerator wagon (art. no. FT/B 9408) continues a new series of wagons. Photo: WDW Full Throttle

It also leased older, wooden refrigerated trucks to the Magnus Beck Brewery, which served its market with its "Beck's Beer" brand, not to be confused with the similar-sounding German beer brand, from Buffalo until 1956.

At the turn of the 20th century, the refrigerator cars were refurbished and received a steel substructure, Bettendorf bogies and a new brake system. In this form, the models (art. no. FT/B 9408) will soon be on Z gauge layouts.

More Märklin deliveries again:

After a temporary standstill, Märklin is continuing more extensively again in October, and a few more new products have been announced for delivery for the Christmas business. The class 86 tank steam locomotive (item no. 88693) has now arrived in stores in its entirety. This model is technically up to date and is lettered for the Deutsche Reichsbahn-Gesellschaft (Era II).

Also completely arrived at the dealers is the electric locomotive of the series Re 4/4 II of the SBB in green (88593). It also corresponds to the modern state and shows a Swiss light change. Feature of the model for epoch IV are the lower top lights in round shape, i.e., before the later modernisations.

A real surprise is the train set "Bauzug EfW" (8172), which we only presented as an autumn new product in the last issue. A few days later it was already available. For this reason, we are only showing one photo of it today and refer to our descriptions in the previous issue.



The EfW construction train (item no. 81372), which Märklin announced only a few weeks ago as an autumn novelty 2023, has already been delivered.

The second message car for Z gauge (82932) was only vaguely announced. Unveiled on 5 October, it could be ordered one week later. As a result of the high demand, not all interested parties were able to place their orders and their purchase requests were cancelled during the validation and payment process.

A GI Dresden without brakeman's cab was again chosen as the basic model and printed with a Van Gogh motif for the second time. The theme this time was the artist's love of nature, which he expressed in the portrait of a blossoming almond tree. The design implemented by Märklin is correspondingly lively and harmonious.

High release rate at Yellow Dwarf:

Not a month goes by without the kit supplier Yellow Dwarf (<https://www.yellowdwarf.eu>), which uses 3D printing to close many programme gaps and make ideas tangible, introducing new products. In October, many different topics will be covered at the same time.

The graves (art. no. 60411), which also include a single coffin, create a final and dignified resting place for the dead on a scale of 1:220. After the collapse of the Eastern Bloc and in view of current events, the Red Army Monument (60026) seems somewhat out of time.

The four fishing boats (60103) bear a somewhat misleading product designation, as they are rowing boats for anglers. The occupants, who may have been waiting for these new products, will consequently cast their fishing rods from there and not nets.



The graves (art. no. 60411) are certainly not a desirable topic, but they belong to our everyday life, and, thus, also to the model railway. The new product has been lovingly prepared with all the important features. Photo: Yellow Dwarf

Commonplace for us and yet not represented on the model railway so far is the DHL packing station (60090). The Boy Scout Camp II (60505) will probably bring back memories of their youth for some buyers. However, the tents built on a wooden base frame seem unusual for German regions.

Quarterly information from Ladegut Küpper:

In autumn, the leaves do not fall from the trees, but plenty of trees are felled and processed. At least that's what the duo from Spur Z Ladegut Josephine Küpper from Aachen.

Therefore, a reminder was given of the suitable loads for low-sided and high-sided wagons on the subject of timber transport: logs (Art. No. Z-Wood-1), stacks of boards (Z-60-long / Z-60-D / Z-60-H), firewood (Z-96), wooden boards (Z-158), and tied-up wooden elements (Z-159).



The new ballast load shown here is now available for Märklin's Eaos 106 open wagons. Photo: Spur Z Ladegut Josephine Küpper

A gap in the range for the Eaos 106 model high-sided wagons (Märklin 86950 and identical) has also been identified: There is now a new ballast load with two separate ballast cones on an accurately fitting

carrier board with intermediate web. The supplier pages can be reached as follows: <https://spur-z-ladegut.de>.

The forefather of high-speed transport:

Rokuhan delivered its Shinkansen series 0 at the beginning of October. The twelve-part inaugural train "Hikari" (Item no. T020-1 / Still 7297942) is reproduced, which heralded the high-speed era worldwide with its ceremonial journey from Tokyo to Shin Osaka on 1 October 1964.

The models make an extremely successful impression and show the typical features of the first trains of this series, which were built until 1986. Characteristic for the first vehicles are the large side windows, the original paint scheme with the blue window stripe and the slightly translucent ball of the early "bullet trains".



When the tail light is activated, the prototypical translucent ball at the tip of the Shinkansen series 0 (item no. T020-1) from Rokuhan in its original design is clearly visible.

Rokuhan has also largely reproduced the interior and cabs of the cars. There is no room for a figure, but a torso behind the windows should be quite effective after installing the factory's own interior lighting.

Electricity is drawn from all axles via the tip bearings, which is almost frictionless. However, there is no electrical connection between the train sections. Good driving characteristics are also typical for this manufacturer, thanks to the flat bell-shaped armature motors in two of the intermediate carriages.

For Japan, the trains and the Shinkansen system became a symbol for the recovery of the economy after the Second World War, because they were a flagship of high technology. Also because of this significance, we want to look at the new product in **Trainini®** 11/2023 in more detail.



Illustration: EK-Verlag

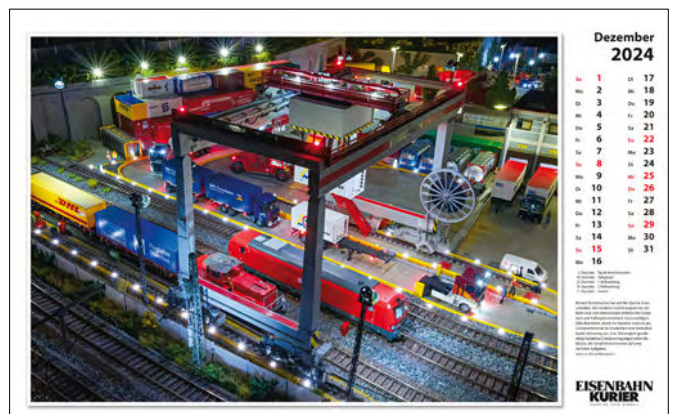
Calendar offers for 2024:

As autumn approaches, publishers announce their photo calendars for next year. They traditionally feature steam locomotive and construction series themes, but also appear with motifs of trams and historical vehicles or agricultural machinery, but do not forget the model railway.

This applies to both VGB | Geramond, where we miss the well-known Miba-MEB photo calendar for the first time and only find one with photos of new Brandl layouts, and Eisenbahn-Kurier. We have selected the 2024 model railway calendar from their programme for a brief review.

Even the appealing cover photo with the popular VT 115 arouses curiosity and captivates the eye. That is why we also took a closer look at the twelve-monthly motifs. Although the EK editorial team was so fascinated by the abundance and quality of the Z gauge layouts on display at the Märklintage, none of the motifs in our scale made it into this calendar.

Nevertheless, it is worth buying and hanging up even for model railway enthusiasts of our scale. No less than ten motifs impress with their generous landscapes, which attractively highlight the photographed trains with harmonious colours.



We have selected the motifs for February and December 2024 as examples to underline our impressions. Illustrations: EK-Verlag

A crane terminal motif at night and an industrial theme that fits well with the article “Abandoned Places” in this issue complete the selection. Although the scales shown are limited to 1:87 and 1:45, and Era III is conspicuously dominant, what is shown seems anything but one-sided.

The selected motifs stay in the mind and provide many ideas and inspirations for your own building projects in the smaller representation of our nominal size.

Those who still want to wait for a calendar tailored to Z gauge, or to complement it, will not have to wait much longer: Around mid-November we will present the **Trainini Photo Calendar 2024** and make it available for download and self-printing.

First car model delivered:

After the first offering of an FS electric locomotive for Z gauge, the manufacturer GMmodelli Torino (GMmodelli[at]hotmail.com), which has been established in Italy for years, has now also delivered its first car model in 1:220 scale.

The car in question is the Alfa-Romeo 75, built between 1985 and 1993. The vehicle, which was the last design of the tradition-rich manufacturer from Milan before it was taken over by FIAT, now enjoys cult status. It was powered by engines ranging from 1.6 litres to a V6 with 3.0 litres of displacement on the rear axle.

The model has now been delivered in red paint (art. no. ME-0008/1), but more will follow in the future. Designed on the computer, the model parts are created in the 3D printer before they are elaborately coloured by hand.



The Alfa-Romeo 75 also has what it takes to become a classic as a model (item no. ME-0008/1), not only in Italy. A photo showing this vehicle also dismantled with a view of the recreated interior can be found in the news on our portal page.

The windows are transparent and allow a view of the interior equipment, which is also reproduced. The appealing model, which can also be used outside of Italy in many different ways, whets the appetite for many more new products, because passenger car models in particular currently form a large gap in the Z scale programme.

The manufacturer uses a dealer distribution network in Italy, and, in Germany, the 1zu220 Shop also took on the role of a distribution partner a few weeks ago.

October at AZL:

Two new versions of the EMD E8A mark the October deliveries at American Z Lines. Both belong to the Southern Pacific. As a "black widow" it appears with two road numbers (item numbers 62617-1 / -2) as well as with a "bloody nose" (62616-5 / -6), for which the road numbers have now been corrected.

The heavy half luggage car with three-axle bogies bears the colours and inscriptions of D&RGW (74025-1 / -2) in the new delivery. The three-part column wagons are also again among the current deliveries. The TTX vehicles are this time equipped with trailers of the forwarder Schneider (905233-1). Two trailers each are also available again for purchase individually (954009-1).



The term "black widow" is used to describe the paint scheme with which the EMD E8A of the Southern Pacific (item no. 62617-1; photo left) is delivered. The command car of a fire engine is replicated by the former BNSF goods train escort car (921022; photo right). Photos: AZL / Ztrack

The former goods train escort wagon with wide-vision cabin (921022) is on the road as a command wagon in a fire-fighting train of the BSNF, which also has a red paint scheme for this reason. A clear contrast to this is provided by the Tropicana refrigerator cars with new service numbers. They are available as double (914842-2) and quad pack (904812-2).

Last but not least, AZL has exchange bogies on offer. For passenger coaches of the "City of Los Angeles" these are 26 (72400-V) or 6 pieces (72401-V), for the shunting locomotive SW1500 there are single parts (AZLSW1500AAR-BLACK).

The manufacturer's webpages with photos of all deliveries can be reached at <https://www.americanzline.com>.

Traffic regulation in Z gauge:

After a successful return of the supplier JSS-Elektronik or its pages, we received a tip about a particularly popular product.

In fact, it serves a topic that is not exactly lavishly provided for on our scale: traffic lights.

A small version, i.e., a mast without an arm with a second unit hanging higher, is included in this manufacturer's range together with electronics for a proper traffic light circuit. After painting the mast and screen, it also provides the best protection for crossings on Z gauge layouts.



With traffic lights and an electronic module, regulating traffic is easy even in Z gauge. Photo: JSS-Elektronik

Both products are explained under the following webpage addresses:

<https://jss-elektronik.de/produkt/verkehrsampel-spur-z/>

<https://jss-elektronik.de/produkt/10-fach-led-decoderampelsteuerung/>

New products from Herpa for the Christmas business:

As usual, we list here the new aircraft from the Herpa range for the scale 1:200. We focus on models that can be found at European airports, do not exceed a total length of 30 cm and cannot be attributed to a warring country.

These are for the “Wings” product range:

ITA Airways Airbus A319 “Pietro Mennea” (Art.-Nr. 572798),
Maersk Air Fokker 50 (572804),
Embraer E195-E2 - Corporate livery (572842), and
Turkish Airlines Vickers Viscount 700 (572866).

In the Snapfit series with simplified plug-in models in flight representation will appear:

Icelandair Boeing 757-200 “Hekla Aurora” (610735-001) as a reissue, and
Eurowings Airbus A320neo (613910).

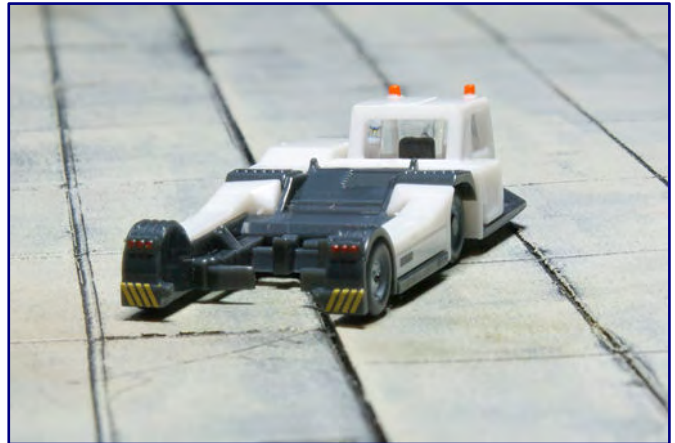
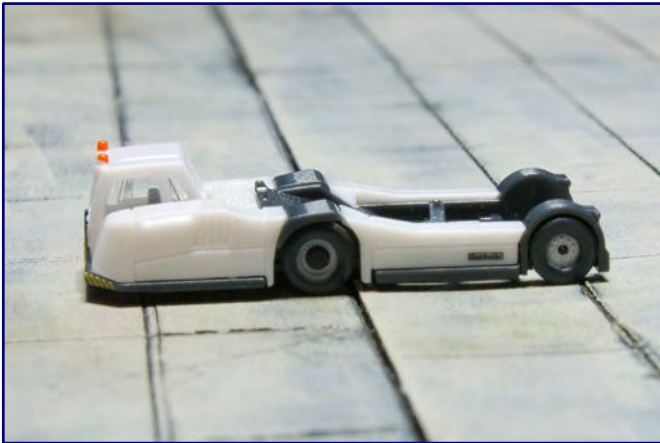
All the new products listed are planned for delivery in November and December 2023.

The delivery of the Goldhofer AST-2 aircraft tractor (572088), which already took place in February / March, completely passed us by. The white vehicle has been realised quite elaborately: It has a glass insert in the driver's cab, colour-contrasting rims and hazard warning lights as well as printed warning stripes.



Here, the new Goldhofer AST-2 aircraft tractor (art. no. 572088) from Herpa is successfully in use on an airport diorama.

The headlights are also individually and sharply separated, as are the tail lights at the other end. The imprints also include the manufacturer's brand Goldhofer. With this scope of design and good engravings, the new product fits perfectly into the Wings series 1:200.



Side and oblique views from the rear reveal a few more details that make Herpa's new product in 1:220 scale a successful and eye-catching model.

There it is also urgently needed by the airport scene designers, because an aircraft tractor can be found on every apron and it is impossible to imagine the spectators' gaze without it. And this vehicle is probably a typical representative of a so-called "push-back vehicle".

So, it was a real gap in Herpa's programme. The "Tow Bear" vehicle that used to be in the programme, which pulled instead of pushed on the nose landing gear, is hardly to be found at international airports today. So, it seemed about time that the accessories manufacturer followed this step in the model as well.

Glass train in a shortened form:

Rokuhan has now realised the DB class 491 ("Glass Train") in two versions as a shorty. The choice fell on the Olympic blue design of the seventies (art. no. ST015-1) and the subsequent paint scheme with gentian blue as the basic colour (ST015-2), with which the prototype finally crashed in December 1995.



The Olympic blue version of the class 491 (art. no. ST015-1) shows us the finely and very prototypically designed scissor pantograph DBS54.

The extreme shortening of the shortys, which are so popular with Japanese model railroaders because they take up as little space as possible, suits this model much better than many other vehicles whose prototypes are also significantly longer.

The effort that the manufacturer has put into this type of entry-level model is striking: The housings were moulded, painted and printed in crystal-clear plastic. They allow a free view, only interrupted by the chassis, which can be exchanged for a motorised version. Thus, they come quite close to the prototype impression at this point.

But, what we find most impressive are the movable pantographs, which have been completely redesigned. According to the prototype, both models have a single-arm pantograph and a scissor-type pantograph. The single-arm pantograph SBS 65 has been shortened compared to the model of the 181.2 series, i.e., it has not been taken over from it.



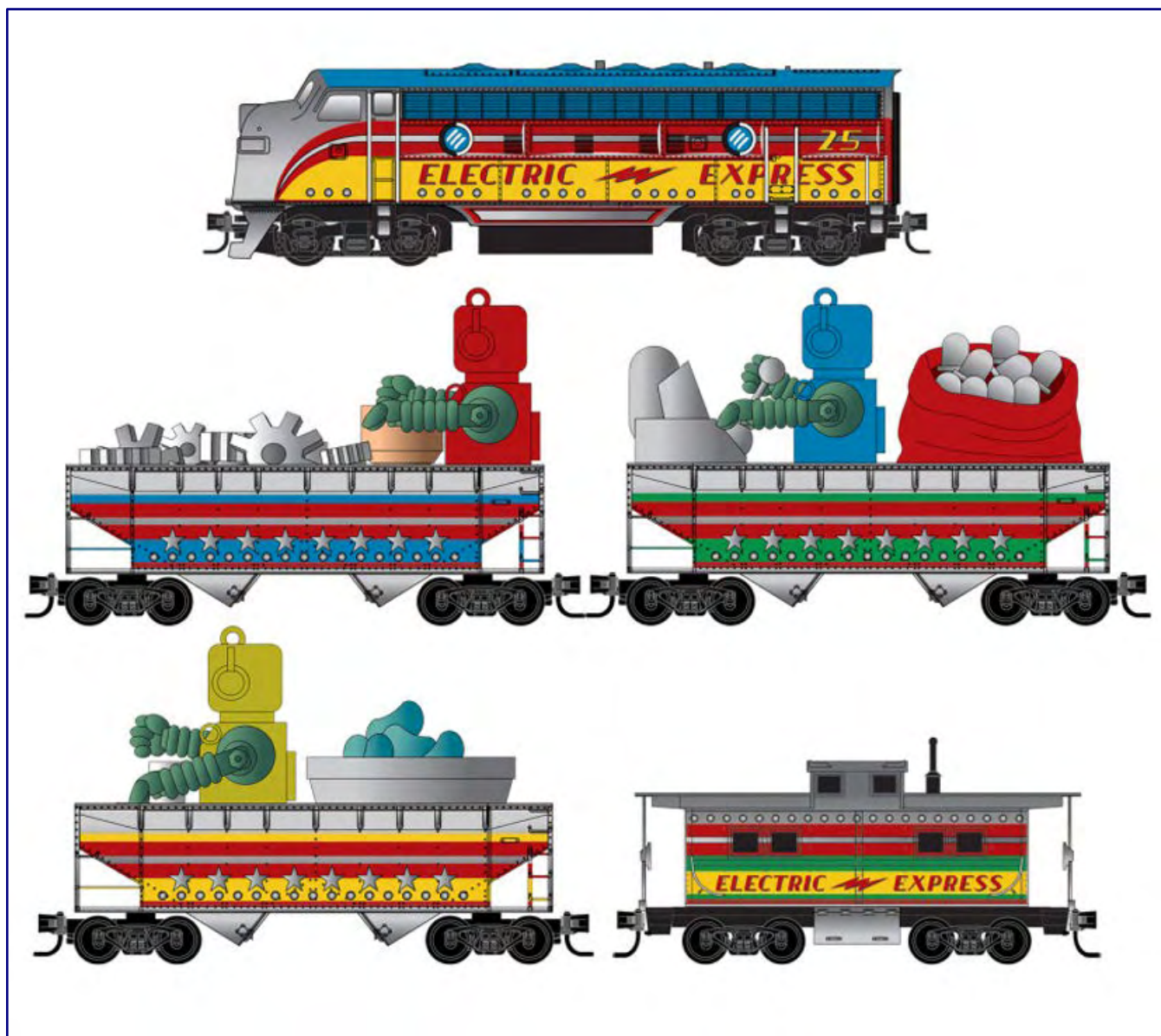
From this perspective, the gentian blue version of the “glass train” (ST015-2) clearly reveals the free view through the interior that was so characteristic of the prototype.

The DBS 54 pantograph, which is also new in shape, is significantly smaller than those from Märklin and also shows the typical diagonal struts in the upper pantograph, which Märklin's conversions have lacked for 49 years. The collector shoe, which stands out somewhat dominantly here, is about the same size as the one on Märklin's counterpart. This illustrates the filigree of the basic construction.

This suggests that Rokuhan is the first Z gauge manufacturer to create a scale version of one of several designs of the DBS 54 scissor pantograph! With a finer collector shoe and a carrier that fits on the roofs of Märklin models, it could become the perfect exchange part to bring their roof area closer to the large prototype.

Christmas is not too far away:

In view of Advent and the Christmas season, the “Robot Christmas Train Set” (art. no. 994 21 100) will soon be delivered by Micro-Trains (<https://www.micro-trains.com>). The train set consists of an EMD F7A diesel locomotive, three bulk goods wagons, and a goods train escort wagon all in a colourful Christmas design. The bulk goods wagons carry robotic decorative inserts that give the festivities a very modern character.



The “Robot Christmas Train Set” (art. no. 994 21 100) from Micro-Trains has an unusual look, which obviously suits the American taste for colourful Christmas decorations very well. Illustration: Micro-Trains

In parallel, the “War of the Worlds” literature model series is continued with wagon number 8 (518 00 845). It is again a boxcar with the basic colour of this series and book motifs from the American literary classic.

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