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German Magazine for Z Gauge

International Edition

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for railroad enthusiasts
in the scale 1:220
and Prototype**

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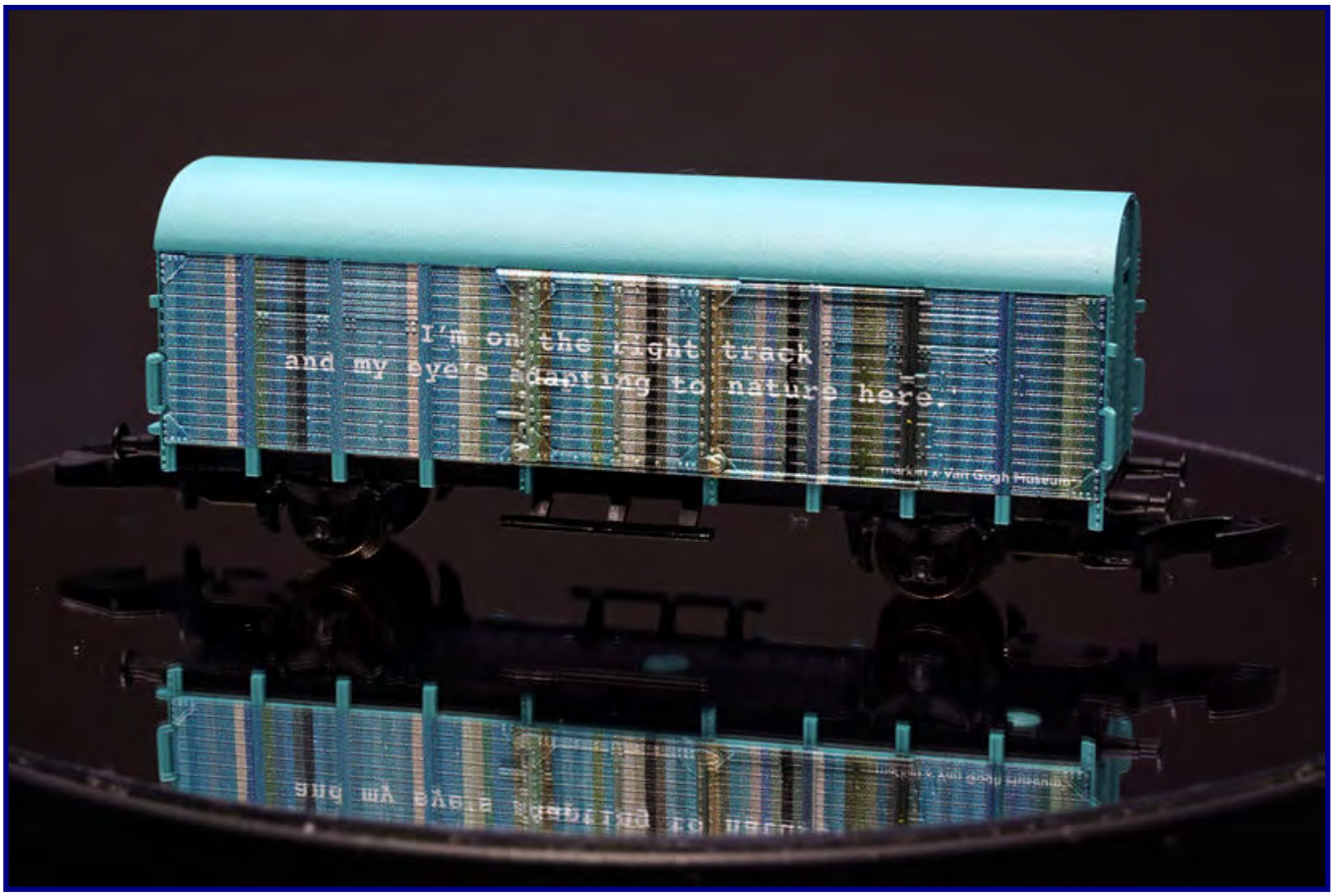


Model Railways and Art

Trailblazers on Rails
Inspiring People

Introduction

Holger Späing
Editor-in-chief

Dear Readers,

I admit that collector's topics are rarely to be found in our magazine. We have clearly dedicated ourselves to model railway construction close to the prototype and to those models that have a prototype and try to come as close to it as possible.

But in the Rhineland, where I work, people keep reminding me how different we all are: “Every joker is different!” Tolerance also means respecting those for whom collecting is the greatest thing or who seek their salvation in completely different forms of expression.

And so, our editorial team had been wondering for a while how we could put together an article for those readers who are just outside of what drives most of our readers.

Märklin made it easy for us, because their still young “Message Wagon” series is aimed at loyal Märklin collectors, but also tries to send a message by combining art with the model railway. Looking more closely at creation is more topical than ever these days.

And Vincent van Gogh is a famous artist who felt a close connection to nature and drew his strength from experiencing it. Let's not forget about it, let's put it at the centre of our activities!

In this edition, we would like to focus on the artist, his reproduced work, and an excerpt from his life. We hope you enjoy this unusual approach! If it is also an inspiration for reflection, then he has achieved a great deal.

But we have much more to offer. Then there is the 0 Series Shinkansen, which we are looking at in the prototype and whose Rokuhan model we are testing today. Not just any train was chosen: it is the “Hikari No. 1,” which set off from Tokyo at 6:00 a.m. on 1 October 1964 to inaugurate the era of high-speed transport.

This particular train had some special features that can also be found on the model. Rokuhan has placed great emphasis on authenticity, which we will explore in the test report. A “little brother” in the form of a 500 series Shorty could also be found at the Model Railway Days in Erkrath-Hochdahl.

Trainini® and **Trainini *TV*** were exhibitors there. We are reporting on this rather modest exhibition today because the Model Railway Day is coming up soon and our idea is hopefully worthy of imitation.

We didn't exhibit for seasoned professionals at the highest level but focussed specifically on children and consequentially offered a large tinkering booth. There is even a new episode on **Trainini *TV***. I hope you enjoy reading and watching!

Sin-Z-erely,

Holger Späing

Trainini® *International Edition*

German Magazine for Z Gauge

Editorial

Model

Prototype

Design

Currently no items

Technology

Currently no items

Literature (not translated - only in German)

News

We thank the Van Gogh Museum for permission to reproduce the artwork.

Date of publication of the German language version of this issue: 27 November 2023

Cover photo:
Model railways and art – do they go together? This is probably a matter of great debate, but many people have already appropriated the model railway artistically. Märklin now wants to send messages about them. We think this is an exciting and new idea!

Märklin enters the second round

A Message on a Railway Car

Art and model railway enter a liaison, the result is a message. What sounds like a simple formula is the idea behind the still young "Message Wagon" model series. The messages sent are international, and are therefore written in English. For the second time, it now also includes 1:220 scale and honours the world's most famous painter.

Vincent van Gogh is indisputably not only one of the most prestigious and best-known artists since the 19th century, but also one of the best. No other person's life and work seem to be as closely linked as in this painter's case.

Countless biographies, books and films deal with the stages of his life and their influence on his artistic legacy. He was almost always tempted to take his easel out into the open air, where he reproduced his impressions on canvas.

To highlight the effect of the new model in the "Message Wagons" series (item no. 82932) in the best possible way, we have implemented it in a black and white backdrop. For the second time, the inspiration for the motif is Vincent van Gogh.

Which other artists fascinated him and influenced his development in their own way can be recognised from his admiration, his works of art and meetings during his active period. Like other contemporaries, he increasingly moved away from Impressionism towards the later Expressionism. This transitional period is often categorised as post-Impressionism.

However, anyone who has ever seen a real van Gogh will be equally impressed by his painting technique, which gives the picture a completely unique and typical structure. Vincent van Gogh is still fascinating today, but he was only discovered late. He only achieved fame after his early death.

Today, it is hard to imagine that only a few of his works were sold during his lifetime. Today, they realise top prices and people seem to be aware of his artistic legacy.

This legacy also includes the active painter's connection to nature, which had been close to his heart since childhood. Again and again, he was drawn out with his easel and created portraits of what he saw in the places where he stayed – in the most important phase of his work in France.

1889 was a fateful year for him. His illness, characterised by seizures, prevented him from working during their occurrences. At the age of 36, he voluntarily went to the remote sanatorium and nursing home for the mentally ill in Saint-Rémy-de-Provence.

He was unable to leave his room for long periods. Dark corridors and barred windows are unlikely to have had a positive effect on his mind. At least, he was often allowed to leave the asylum with a guard and paint outdoors in the neighbourhood. He saw this as beneficial and conducive to his health.

His time at the clinic changed his paintings in many ways: the colours he chose, the meaning of forms and the selection of motif elements. The artist and his brushwork also changed in recognisable ways.

What always remained, however, was the desire to work outdoors with a special affinity to nature. “I am on the right path and my eye is adapting to nature here”, Vincent wrote at this time to his brother and patron Theo van Gogh, who was living in the art centre of Paris at the time.

Märklin printed this as an English-language message on the second “Message Wagon:” “I'm on the right track and my eye's adapting to nature here.” This not only fits perfectly with the motif chosen for the second wagon in the Z gauge series, but the picture selected is also a very special one among the approximately 900 paintings that the artist left behind.

Vincent van Gogh painted “Almond Blossom” in February 1890 during his stay in Saint-Rémy. The occasion was the birth of his nephew and namesake Vincent Willem. It was intended as a gift for his brother Theo and his sister-in-law Johanna Bonger, who was the person that would later make the painter widely known.

At the end of April 1890, the artist sent the painting from Saint-Rémy-de-Provence to his brother Theo van Gogh in Paris. It was meant as a present to his nephew Vincent Willem van Gogh who later founded the Van Gogh Museum.

So, it is not at all surprising that it was this work of art that was closest to the Van Gogh family's heart. According to the museum’s information, the original format of this artwork is 73.3 x 92.4 cm.

The Van Gogh Museum says the following about the motif chosen for the Märklin wagon: “Large flowering branches like this one against a blue sky were one of Van Gogh's favourite motifs.”

The artistic model for the second “Message Wagon” in Z gauge is “Almond Blossom” from April 1890. Illustration: Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation)

In fact, this is probably the brightest and clearest blue sky of all Van Gogh's masterpieces, and its intensity has an immense effect on the viewer.

It also forms a striking contrast to the white almond blossoms, which appear early in spring and ahead of the leaves. They are a symbol of new life. The special distribution of light in this painting also emphasises the painter's intention.

Some may consider the smooth areas of colour surrounded by contours in the blossoming almond tree branches to be “atypical” for Vincent van Gogh. In fact, however, like the position of the tree in the pictorial plane, they follow a Japanese style that was considered both modern and popular and was also frequently adopted by Vincent van Gogh.

Art on a railway carriage

After the “Cornfield with Crows”, Märklin has taken up a message and a painting by Vincent van Gogh for the second time. After several larger gauge predecessors, they also form the start of the “Message Wagon” series for Z gauge.

The wagon presented now (item no. 82932) could hardly have been more different from the first edition: Colours, techniques, motifs, and intentions are far apart, but also demonstrating the artist's versatility.

His love of and respect for nature are unique and indeed embody a message that is more urgent today than ever. If we want to preserve all of this in its beauty, great efforts and perseverance will be required. Nature is life and we should cherish and preserve both.

Vincent van Gogh recognised this and conveyed it to his viewers in his paintings. It is up to us to recognise this, to understand it and to transform it into responsible behaviour. Märklin had the idea of transporting a message that is more than 130 years old into the present.

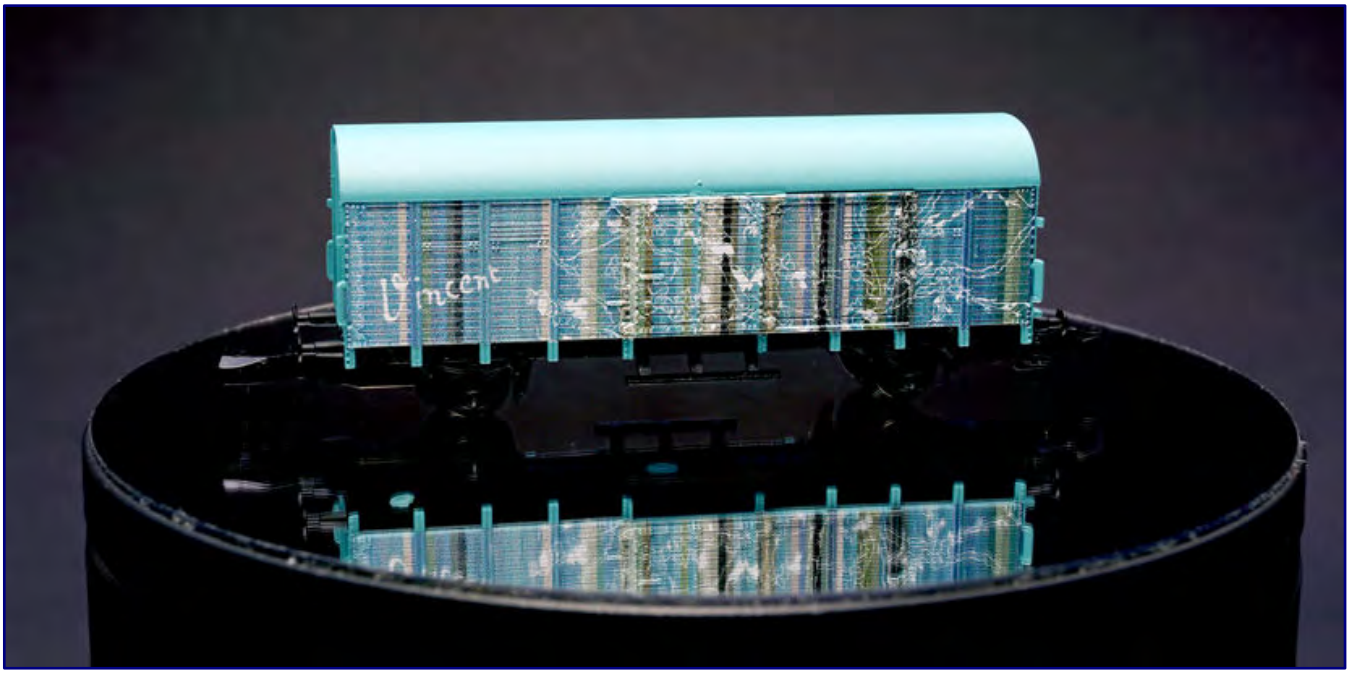
Stylistically, this seems to have succeeded: The main colour of the painting determines the image of the railway carriage. Matching colour hatching on the side walls also embodies modernity. The motif of the artwork has not been reproduced with photographic accuracy, but in its outline as if drawn with a white pencil.

The dominant contrasts thus retained their effect without overloading the side walls of the model in terms of motif or colour. The message from a Van Gogh letter, on the other hand, is not coincidentally addressed in English, the international business language.

The approach of combining model railways and art in a special way is new and also unique. This also requires a certain framework to emphasise meaning and value: The packaging is elaborate and must deliberately stand out from an ordinary catalogue product, but also from that of other special railway carriages.

This is also illustrated by the photographs that accompany this article. Märklin is addressing a further target group, because in addition to model railway fans, art lovers are certainly also the addressees here. In the same way, it is about the messages sent, which can also appeal to people outside the two target groups already mentioned.

Certainly, it may take a while for the message to reach and penetrate its recipients. But in the meantime, the idea has found favour, at least with us, and has met with acceptance. After all, it is just as difficult to comprehend on the scale of model railways as it is on the scale of collecting. It touches on both but opens new doors and calls for the aforementioned aspects to be included in addition.



The blossoming almond tree branches on Märklin's new art car look like a drawing in white ink and leave plenty of space for the colours, which the artist had once chosen with care, to take effect. The message that is intended to be sent is on the opposite side and can be read on the cover.

And so we hope for curiosity, interest and a good response. We wish the idea success and look forward to seeing what messages will be formulated and prepared to continue this extraordinary series of railway cars.

Model manufacturer:
https://www.maerklin.de

Van-Gogh-Museum Amsterdam:
https://www.vangoghmuseum.nl

Trainini *TV* – Episode 20:
https://www.youtube.com/TraininiTV

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Rokuhan's magnificent new model

Premier of the Shinkansen

The Shinkansen trains have enthusiastic fans all over the world, since they were the first high-speed trains in scheduled service and therefore quickly became famous. JNR broke new ground with them in 1964 and gave them an unmistakable design. Rokuhan has successfully created a Z scale model of the first version from the time of the Olympic Games in Tokyo.

It does not happen often that a 1.40 metre long multiple unit train rushes past you in Z gauge. What is even more surprising, however, is that, in this case, both the prototype and the model come from Japan.

Large series manufacturer Rokuhan has recently taken on the 0 Series Shinkansen (item no. T020-1) of the Japanese National Railways as a complete, twelve-part unit. Given the general lack of space in the densly populated island country, there will probably only be a few model railway layouts large enough to run the entire train.

With the 0 Series Shinkansen in the "Hikari No. 1" version (item no. T020-1), Rokuhan is now also opening up high-speed transport on rails at a scale of 1:220. Photo: Christoph Maier

Nevertheless, this creamy white and blue painted train will find its buyers there, because this is not just any old Shinkansen unit.

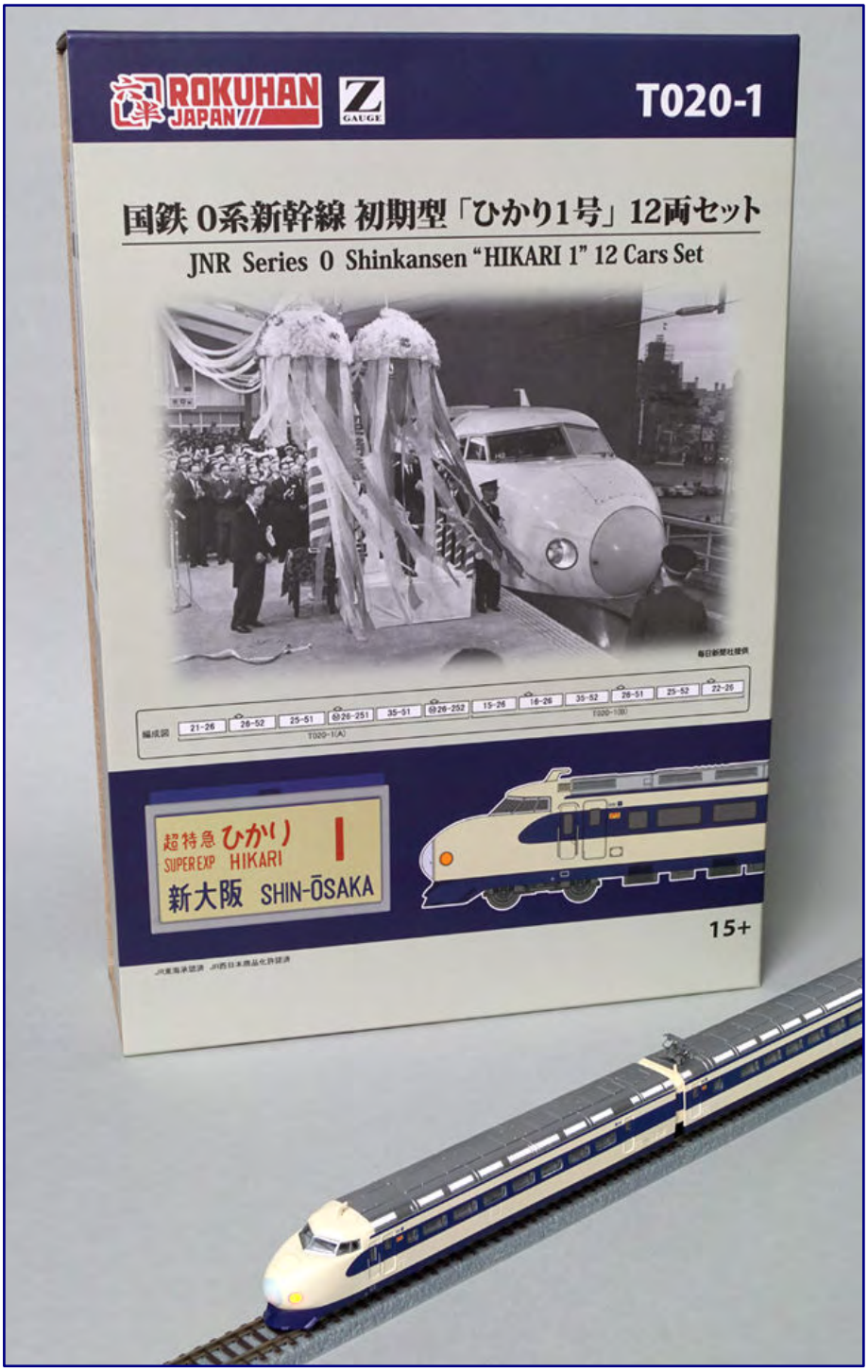
The model presented here was based on the very first train, “Hikari No. 1”, which left Tokyo for Shin-Osaka at 6:00 a.m. on 1 October 1964 and marked the beginning of high-speed train services worldwide with an initial top speed of 200 km/h.

Markings on the side of the model, which were later removed from the prototype, also bear witness to the special journey. As just mentioned, the inaugural train was if the “Hikari” type (Japanese for “light”), which Rokuhan also included in the product designation.

In contrast to the Kodama (“echo”) trains, which served every station on the new line, the “Hikari” only made two stops en route.

Most of the 360 wagons ordered for 30 twelve-car trains were already ready at the start of operations, but Rokuhan made a point of researching and reproducing the running numbers from the very first official journey.

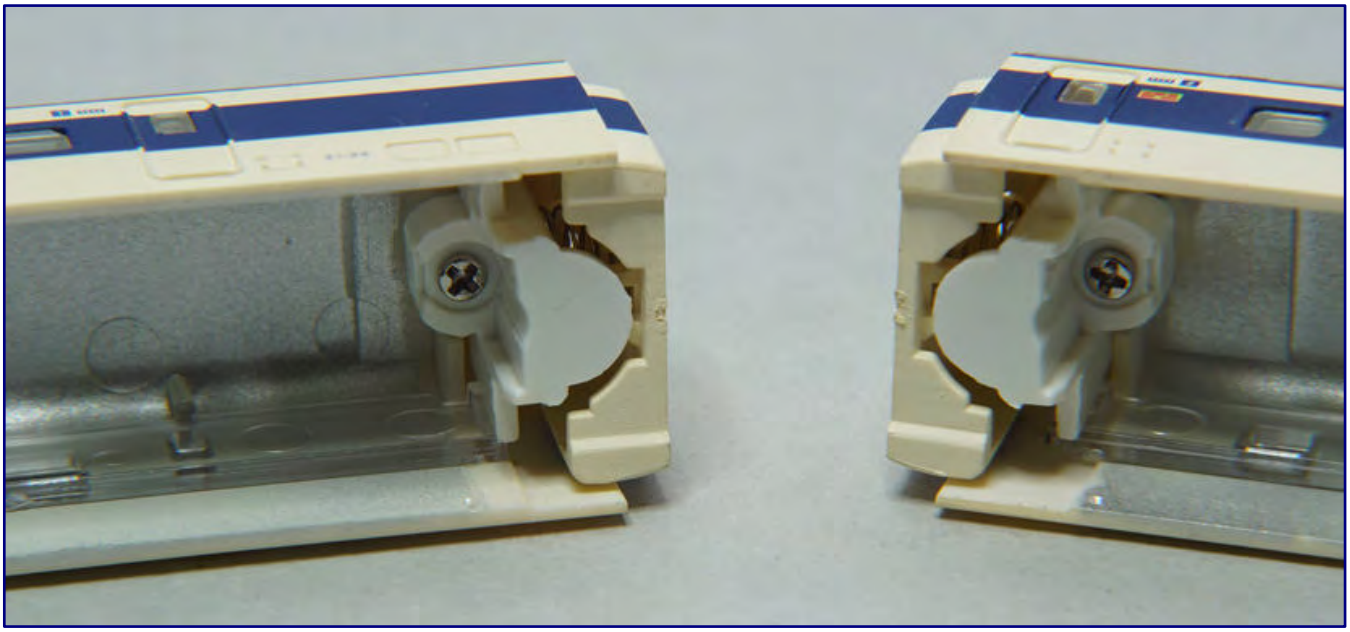
The journey time for the 515 km route was later reduced to 3 hours and 10 minutes, and the trains travelled up to 400,000 km a year. These are impressive figures and ex-plain why Rokuhan wanted to recreate the ancestor of all Shinkansen trains.



The twelve-part train is packaged in two book cassettes, which are enclosed in a cardboard slipcase. This is printed with a historical motif of the inaugural journey and also provides information on the formation of that train.

And we believe that it has been a successful project indeed, as the models make a good and high-quality impression, with the colours also matching those seen in contemporary photographs. A special feature of this Rokuhan's Shinkansen model are the car transitions, which ensure a cohesive train appearance.

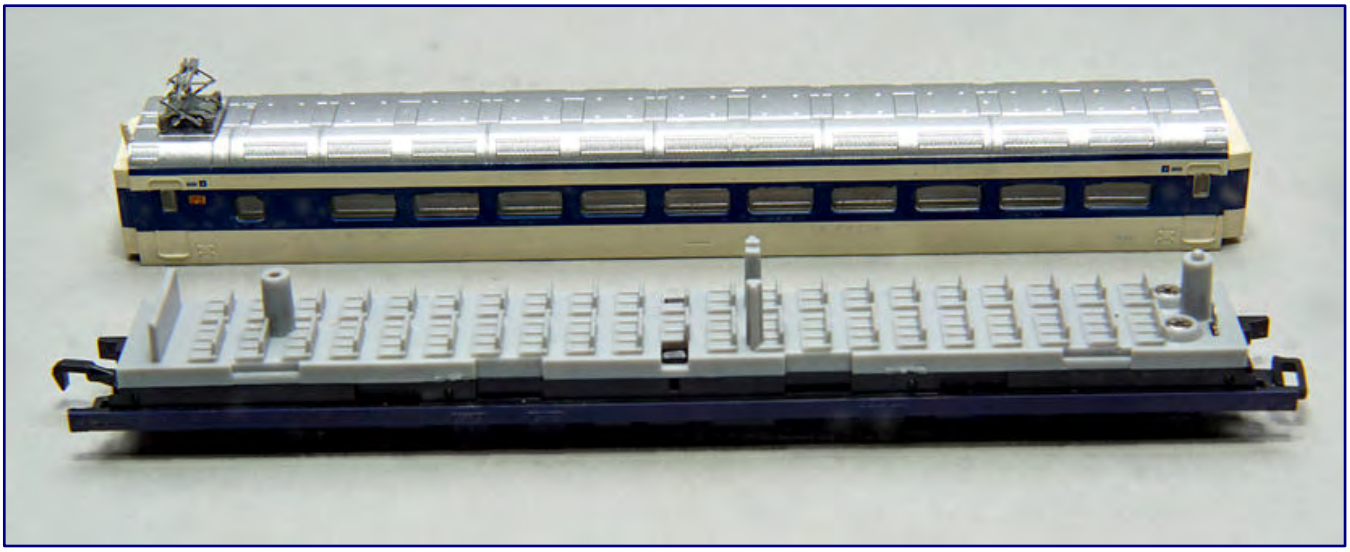
As with some previous models, the end pieces of the transitions also move around a vertical axis and are spring-mounted, which is why no disturbing gaps are visible between carriages, even in curves. The mechanical connection has also been realised in the usual simple way with eyelets and hooks, but they couple firmly and securely.



Once again, the manufacturer has attached great importance to a closed train appearance. To achieve this, the side panelling protruding beyond the ends of each carriage have been upgraded to movable transitions supported by springs.

They also protect the wagons from unintentional twisting and ensure that they are always correctly positioned in the train formation in line with the appearance of the prototype. There is also no electrical connection between the individual wagons, as each individual wagon draws its own power from all the axles with the help of the centre bearings.

Rokuhan managed to engineer this in a way that the train runs exceptionally smooth, with each individual carriages exhibiting hardly any rolling resistance when pushed along the track. These are the best prerequisites for optionally equipping the train with Rokuhan's proprietary interior lights type A (A009; 2 x required) and type C (A031; 10 x required).



Under the shell we find interior fittings that reproduce the original 3 + 2 seating of the seating carriages. However, these do not provide legroom for figures! The pins shown in the photo are used for mounting the optional interior lighting.

After removing the shells, they are quick and easy to fit: simply place them on two guide pins, screw them tight on one side and hook in two tension springs to transfer the current from the contact plates protruding into the interior of the carriage to the circuit board – done.

We will also do this once all the measurements and test drives have been completed. This allows the replica interior to be shown off to its best advantage in the truest sense of the word. This is also standard at Rokuhan: all twelve coaches have a light grey replica interior, albeit with some unavoidable compromises in terms of authenticity.

Two short (A009) and ten long lighting sets (A031) are required, if the complete train is to be fitted with interior lighting. As all carriages are prepared with wheel current collectors and current guide plates in the interior, this can be done quickly.

This is, in particular, true for the motorized coaches where space is more limited that in the unmotorised carriage. The remaining cars have a complete reproduction of the rows of seats: 2 + 3 seating in 2nd class, 2 + 2 seating in 1st class and a different interior with a bar in the dining car and driver's cabs in the end cars.

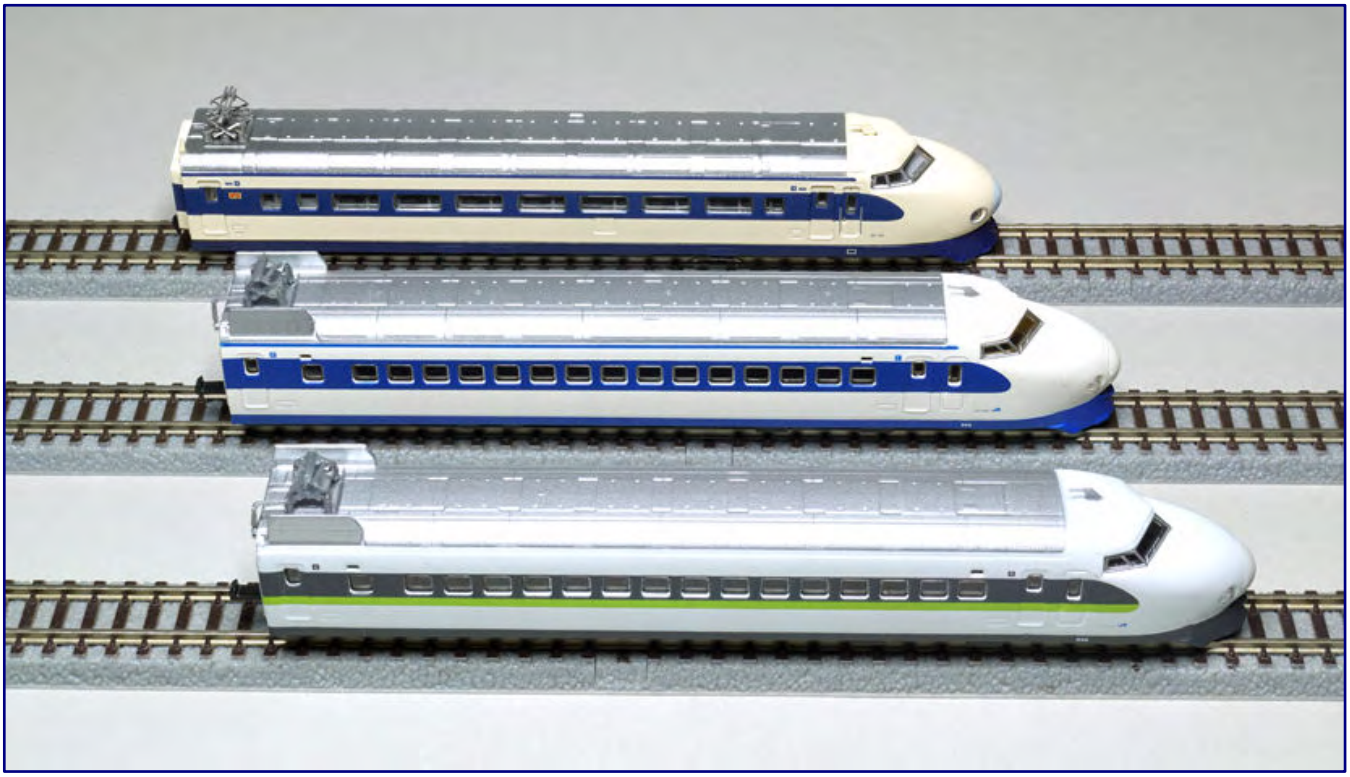
Putting figures in the carriages is certainly a good way to add some extra detail and life to the model. Given that Shinkansen trains are generally well occupied, one would need to add quite a few passengers. However, simple paint schemes on the figures should suffice – or rather on the upper parts of the body, as there is no space for the legs in the interior, something which is not visible through the windows.

The two restaurant carriages are equipped with authentic looking interiors. Here, for example, the bar area.

Illuminated noses

Talking about side windows: they make for another unique feature of the early series of this train and also define one of the differences between this model and the earlier 0 Series models of the F-Toys brand, for which matching bogies with drive were available from Eisen Platz.

The first 0 series trains had large side windows, which are replicated on the Rokuhan model. In the mid-seventies, JNR switched to smaller windows in order to reduce replacement costs. As there was no noticeable success and the smaller windows met with a poor response from customers, the national railway finally returned to the triple-glazed, larger windows.



This comparison between the Rokuhan model (rear) and two versions from the F-Toys brand (centre and front) clearly shows the different sizes of the side windows. The livery variant in the front is from the later years of operation could also be a future option for Rokuhan.

Another special feature of the chosen prototype was an important aim for Rokuhan when developing the model, as the Japanese manufacturer's website explicitly points out: The parabolic nose of the train was not only reminiscent of a rifle bullet, hence the name “bullet train”, but was also made of acrylic and partially translucent.

During the journey, it was dimly lit on the first and second train in the first days of operation. This was also implemented in the model and is paired to the two-light head signal and on the other side to the end signal. The lights work depending on the direction of travel and are equipped with yellow and red LEDs.

By the way: The 0 Series Shinkansen did not have regular couplers, which is why no double units could run. There was only an emergency coupling under the “front bowl” to be able to tow a broken-down train. The coupling cover without handles chosen by the manufacturer corresponds to the early days of operation. A faint light shines through it.

As already mentioned, the original livery in two silky matt shades has been applied neatly and with crisp sepearations on the model. Only the parabolic nose is slightly shiny to imitate the prototype material and its properties. The coach roofs are painted white aluminium. The driver's cab windows have chrome-coloured embossed frames, and the headlights are also framed in this colour. None of the windows on the sides have frames visible on the outside.

A special feature of the first two trains was the dimly backlit nose, which was therefore not painted in the colour of the car. Rokuhan also reproduced this exactly in line with the prototype), as can best be seen in the photo with the taillight switched on (photo above). Another special feature is more apparent in direct comparison with the F-Toys counterparts (centre and rear on the photo below): the Rokuhan model of the original version does not yet have the side handles that the two rear models have on their noses.

Dimensions and data for the JNR O Series Shinkansen:

	Prototype	1:220	Model	Deviation
Length (end carriage)	24.900 mm	113,2 mm	113,1 mm	- 0,1 %
Length (centre carriage)	24.500 mm	111,4 mm	111,3 mm	- 0,1 %
Height above rail head (roof)	3.975 mm	18,1 mm	17,8 mm	- 1,7 %
Width (car body)	3.380 mm	15,4 mm	15,4 mm*	0 %
Total centre distance	n. a.	---	91,4 mm	---
Pivot pin distance	n. a. .	---	78,9 mm	---
Bogie axle stand	2.500 mm	11,4 mm	11,1 mm	- 2,6 %
Wheel diameter	910 mm	4,1 mm	3,9 mm	- 4,9 %
Service weight	967 t**	---	210,6 g	
Axle formula	Bo´Bo´+ Bo´Bo´+ Bo´Bo´+ Bo´Bo´+ Bo´Bo´+ Bo´Bo´+ Bo´Bo´+ Bo´Bo´+ Bo´Bo´+ Bo´Bo´+ Bo´Bo´+ Bo´Bo´			
Power system	25 kV ~ / 16 2/3 Hz			
Power (twelve-part)	12.075 PS / 8.800 kW			
Permitted maximum speed	220 km/h			
Manufacturers	Nippon Sharyo, Kawasaki Sharyo, Kinki Sharyo, Kisha & Hitachi			
Years of construction	1963 - 1988			
Units produced	3,216 Wagen / 201 locomotives			
Retirement	14. December 2008			

* max. width of the Model 15,9 mm over the steps
** Specifications for a 16-piece set

The operating inscriptions are sparse in comparison to German railway vehicles, but they are complete on the model, as far as we can see, and flawlessly printed. They include the wagon numbers printed in silver colour and the 1st class numbers on two wagons.

As they are historically documented and binding for this model, we reproduce them in their correct order: 21-26, 26-52, 25-251, 26-25, 35-51, 26-252, 15-26, 16-26, 35-52, 26-51, 25-52 and 22-26.

The only thing not clearly readable under the magnifying glass are the printed replicas of the metal signs for the maiden journey of the train.

The original design of the train has already been mentioned several times. This not only serves to formally differentiate it from the earlier competitor model, but actually brings with it some different features.

A close-up of all the different operating markings: Except for the printing on the sign next to the right-hand entrance door, they are all flawlessly executed. The delicate but movable pantographs are also a sight worth seeing.

One of these is the six scissor pantographs distributed across the train. They have been very finely executed, including the contact strips, and are also an important feature of the twelve-car train. In line with the prototype, they can be found on every second car In operation, therefore, all six units were always connected to the contact wire.

Because this was a cause of high wear on the overhead line and also generated avoidable noise, the trains later received a continuous roof-mounted power line to supply all units, and the number of pantographs could thus be reduced. However, this was not yet the case in 1964.

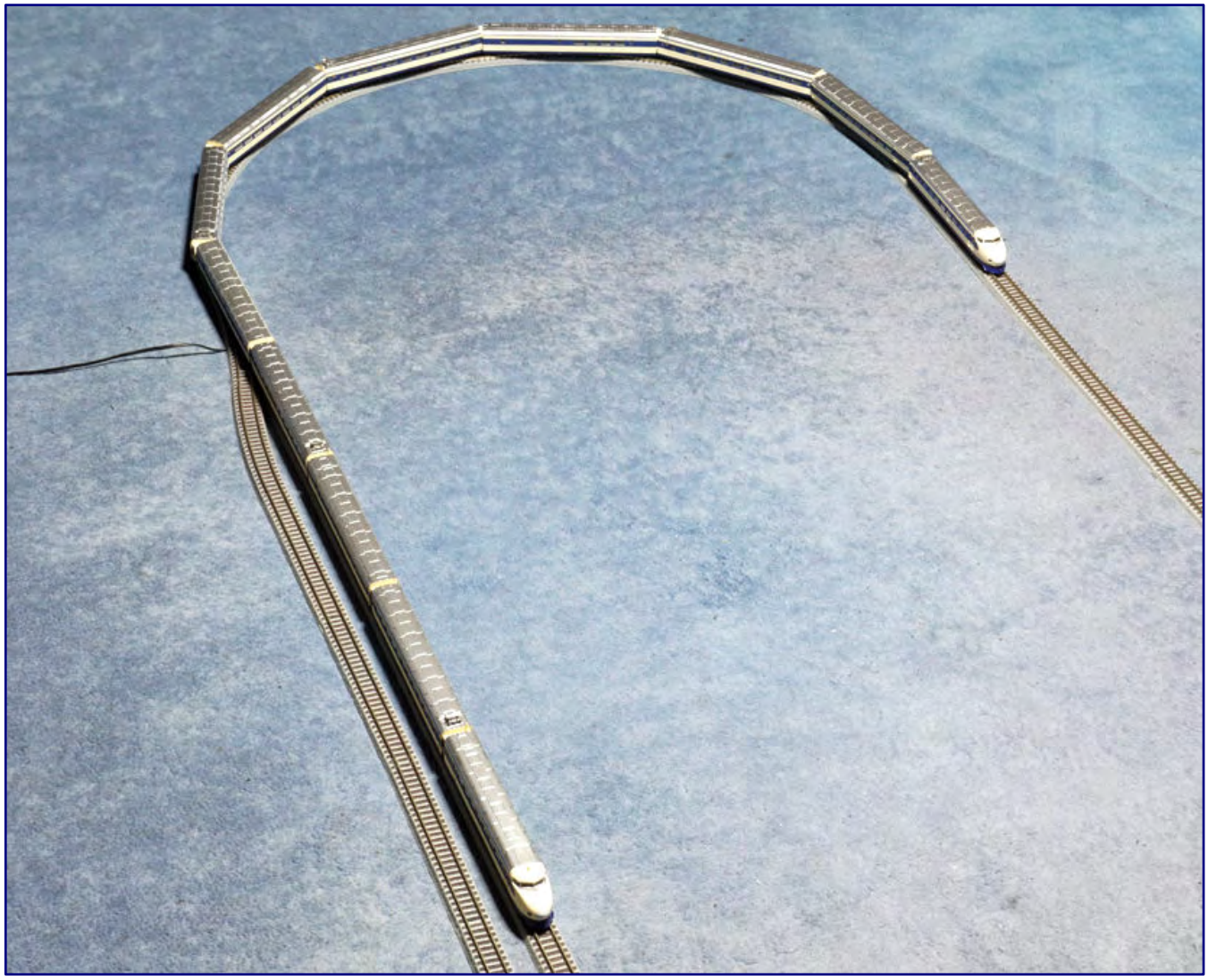
Another detail which highlights Rokuhan's skills: On F-Toys (centre and rear models), the end walls were designed and the insulators at the end of the car were finer, but due to the lack of a closed train design and rigid, coarse scissor pantograph, the overall appearance does not come close to the new product. The wind deflectors were a later addition and conceal the poorer impression to some extent.

Now we come to the final points of the visual assessment. The appearance is harmonious and also reflects the proportions of the train in every respect. This is also confirmed by the dimensions taken from the model. They are almost all spot on, deviations are limited to the expected measurement tolerances.

In percentage terms, only the bogie centre distance and the traction wheel diameter catch the eye. But if we look to the left in the table, it also becomes clear that we are talking about fractions of a millimetre in this case too.

The interim conclusion is that Rokuhan has presented us with a very attractive and interesting model in terms of railway history. This is also emphasised by the special packaging, which differs from later editions. The two book boxes, in which this train is packaged, are enclosed in a slipcase, which refers to the special event with a historical photo and reproduction of the car numbers in the correct sequence.

The train comes with the following printed accessories (stickers): two reproductions of the “Hikari No. 1” train running signs, a print of the historical ticket and four different stickers for the rotary knob of Rokuhan speed controllers with motifs of the 0 Series Shinkansen.



We could only think of one way to visualise the total length of the twelve-part unit: A carpet railway with an oval track on which the complete unit can be photographed travelling around curves. Never before has such a long Z gauge train been sold under a single item number!

Technology and operating characteristics

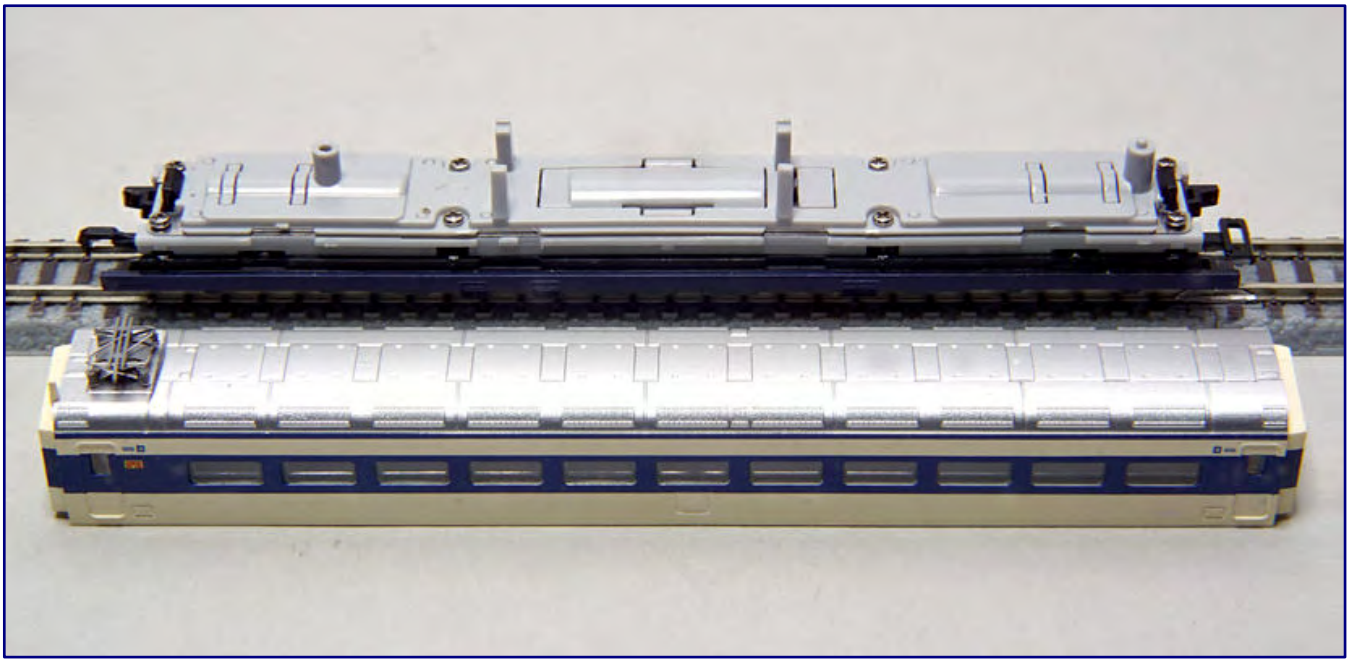
The first consideration in the technical section of our test is the weight of the multiple unit: A total weight of 210.6 grams exceeds all previous test candidates, which is not surprising. After all, we have never before presented a newly designed multiple unit here that is offered in twelve parts in one set – expansion sets will not be necessary.

With weights of mostly just under 15 g each, the individual cars are within the expected range of a long passenger car. The two motorised coaches operating in parallel in the 4th and 6th positions in the prototypical train formation of the inaugural run contribute to the total weight.

They bear the road numbers 26-251 and 26-252 and weigh 31.2 and 31.0 g. This also puts them in the average weight range for Z gauge locomotives. However, their tractive power is significantly higher because, as is usual with Rokuhan, they are equipped with traction tyres, which at the same time also make electrical contact.

Although there is no noticeable rolling resistance, all wheels are included in the power consumption on both sides. There are no electrical connections between the carriages. This means that each of the twelve carriages draws its own power for the head, tail, and/or interior lighting as well as the motors.

Once again, this works amazingly safely, but also has its pitfalls in secured signalling areas: As the two motor coaches are close to the centre of the train, they are regularly only detected by powered-off sections in front of signals when the head of the train has long since entered the secured area.



Two motorised coaches move the long train: they can be recognised by their significantly higher weight, two diagonally offset traction tyres and the lack of interior fittings: a modern bell-type armature motor operates under the central cover.

At the same time, only individual train sections will stop at the signal with the interior lighting switched off. We can see that the requirements of Japanese model railway enthusiasts are completely different from the habits of European customers.

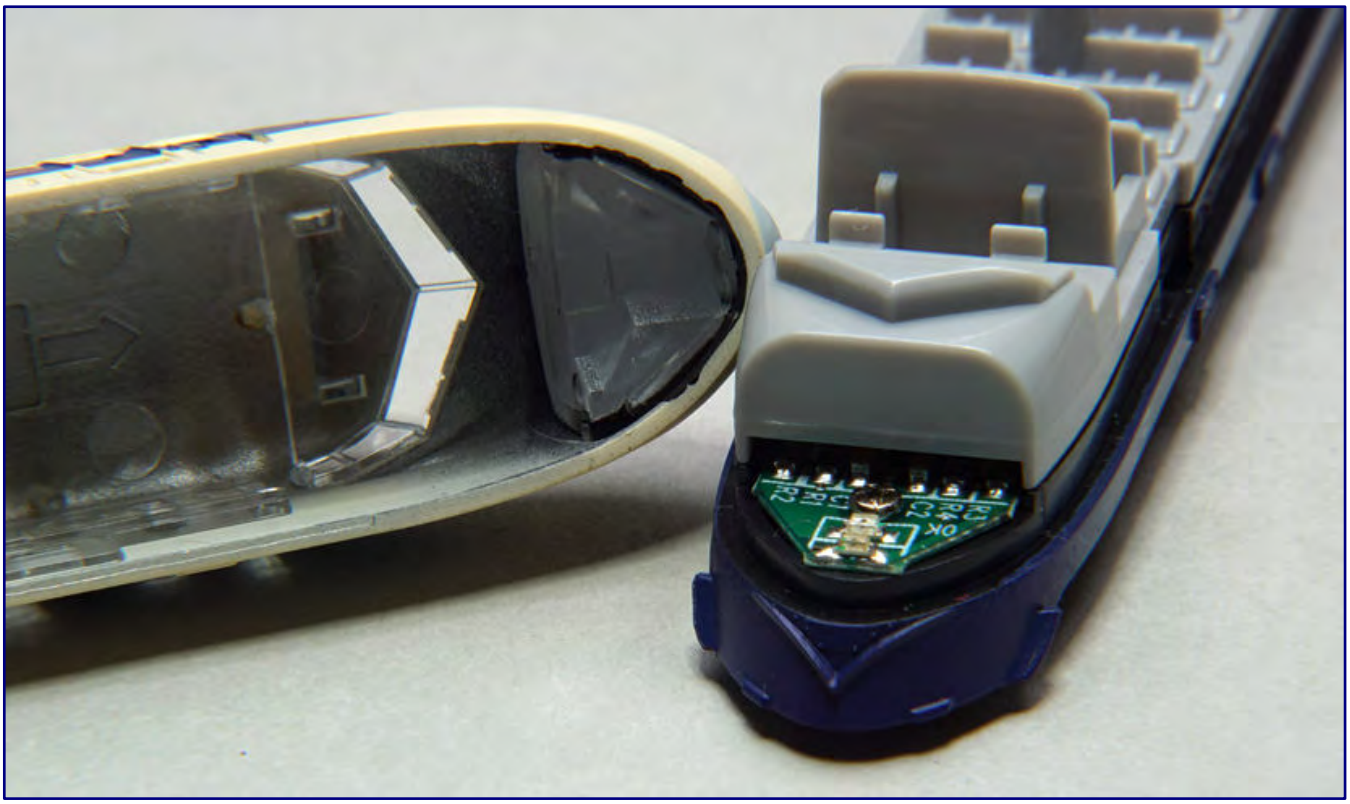
It is necessary to adapt to this, but hardly any Shinkansen will run together with DB models on the same layout. It should therefore be feasible to configure the layout accordingly. Customers will also be grateful because the power supply for the interior lighting is considerably more reliable than with Märklin's previous solutions with power lines across carriage crossings.

Let's just stick to the lighting. The retrofittable interior lighting, which we only installed after the electrical measurements, works with warm white LEDs. We find this very pleasant and prototypically accurate.

However, it remains a mystery why the manufacturer continues to use yellow headlights for the two-light headlights. With the exception of the class 181^2 series, this has always been the case up to now, but we hope that this will be improved in the future. The two rear lights at the other end are red, as usual.

The manufacturer specifies a minimum radius of 195 mm; our test runs were carried out on non-elevated 220 mm curves without super elevation with the Märklin 67011 transformer, in order to ensure comparability with our other tests.

Voltage and current readings were recorded with a suitable electronic measuring device; the speed measurements were carried out using the MTS-100 speed sensor from Halling Modelle (see **Trainini®** 3/2022).



A circuit board is installed in the nose area of end carriages. It is responsible for the yellow-red light change in the signalling lanterns and also for the light in the hemispherical cover, which once gave rise to the term "bullet train."

Let's now take a look at the driving characteristics that are decisive for many customers: At 0.4 volts DC on the track, the train slowly starts to move at the equivalent of 9.4 km/h. At this speed, it safely passes all points.

If we turn the transformer up further, it reaches its prototypical maximum speed of 220 km/h at 5.2 V track voltage. At 10 V this is 462.4 km/h, at 12 V even 557.9 km/h. However, the transformer for our test case even manages to put 13.5 V on the track with the low load.

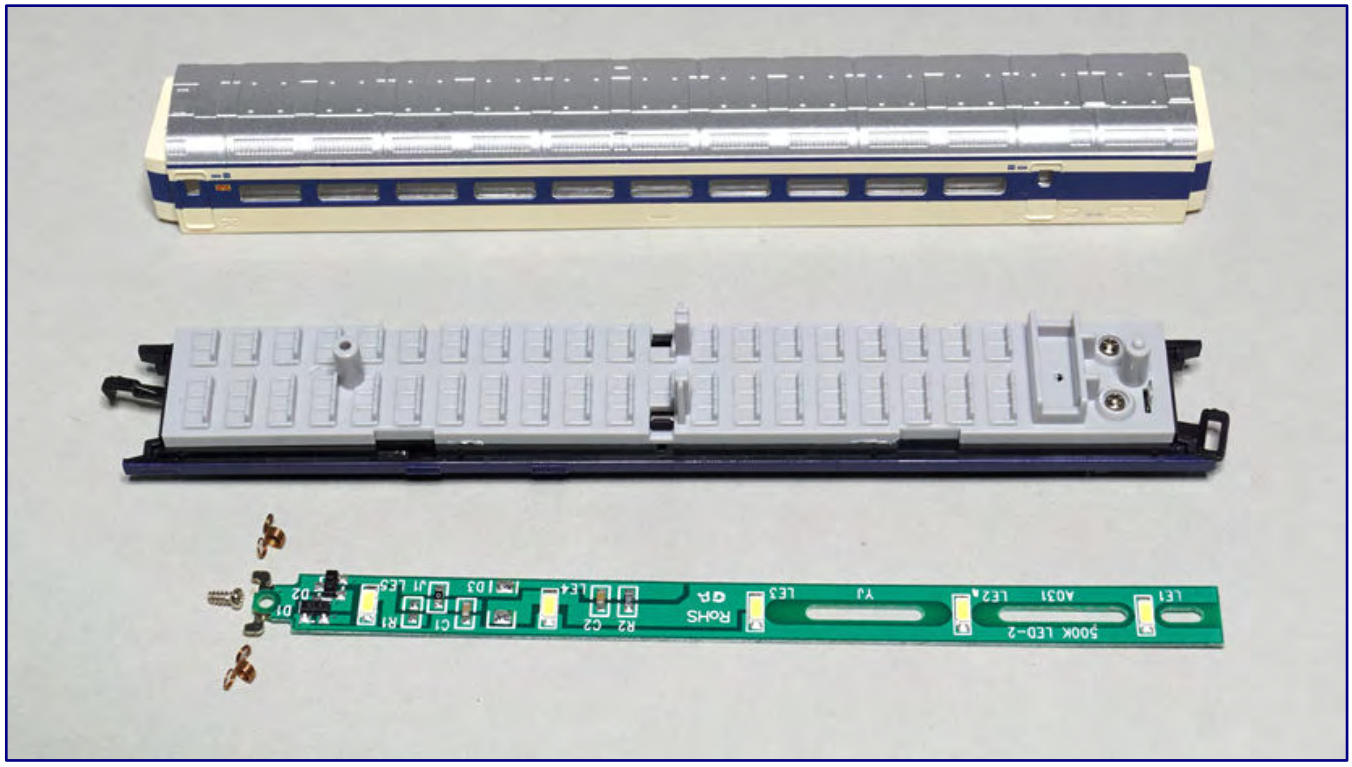
At 569.4 km/h, the 0 Series Shinkansen would have finally beaten the TGV's world rail record. But this would have failed because the train would have been carried off the track in the curves at this “flying speed.”

What conclusion do we draw from this: The company's own speed controllers offer significantly more driving comfort for these models and also offer a parking light function. Our test experiment exceeds the maximum operating voltage specified by Rokuhan and even Märklin and must not be the customer's standard case anyway.

However, the transformer we use is still widely used and dates back to the time of the five-pole motors, which placed a considerably higher load on it. Even with Märklin's more recent deliveries, we often notice a tendency to run off the rails, where the old motors caused the track voltage to collapse to the nominal value.

A steady hand and a trained eye should therefore help us to use this beautiful train in such a way that we will enjoy it for a long time. We deliberately ignore the fact that it is far outside the NEM expectations, because the control on the rotary knob is more important to us, and it works. Nevertheless, we suggest changing the gearbox tuning in future designs at the expense of the top speed.

As expected, the current consumption is low, but differs more than we had expected in both directions of travel. For this reason, we do not give average values for all measurements, but those for travelling forwards (towards Shin-Osaka) and backwards (towards Tokyo), separately.



One of the long PCBs (A031) has been placed in front of the open housing in the opposite direction to its mounting direction: It is installed with the LED radiating downwards on the pins of the interior fittings. The screw hole can be seen on the far left, which will be visible again under one of the slotted holes. The two tension springs are attached to the "arms" of the plate next to which they are positioned. The counterparts protrude from the grey interior part on the far right.

At transformer position 100, both motors together draw around 38 mA forwards and 44 mA backwards. At position 150, these values rise to 56 and 64 mA. Nevertheless, they remain fully in line with expectations.

They are on a par with the values of other bell-type armature motors used in Z gauge. The doubling of the current consumption with parallel connection corresponds to the laws of physics compared to only one operating drive.

Summary

With this new product, Rokuhan has once again taken great care to deliver a visually and technically appealing, high-quality product. The long train is sufficiently and properly motorised to also perform its high-speed service in the model.

The successful transposition of the prototype's appearance into the model, which is perfect in every respect, does the rest to guarantee operating fun on the layout. And in view of the popularity and high profile of the train, which also provided important impetus for the development of high-speed services in France and Germany, this will certainly not be limited to Japan alone.

Hikari number 1 is on its inaugural journey from Tokyo towards Shin-Osaka. The photographer lies in wait for it as it exits the tunnel onto the river bridge and successfully captures it on celluloid. Writing railway history is now possible on a small scale with the help of Rokuhan. Photo: Christoph Maier

We are also expecting a noticeable level of interest in the two other main Z gauge markets. Anyone who is not already enthusiastic about the prototype should now catch fire after seeing this model.

And this is why we acknowledge the importance of this successful new product by nominating it for our best New Product of the Year 2023 award in the locomotives category.

Model manufacturer:
https://www.rokuhan.com

Website of the German importer:
https://www.rokuhan.de

Trainini *TV* – Folge 21 (Middle December):
https://www.youtube.com/TraininiTV

The Shinkansen of 1964
Bullet Train

Japanese high-speed transport has its roots in the bullet train project. Once the decision in favour of bullet trains had been made and the first Shinkansen line was under construction, the vehicles began to take shape. With their round noses, in which a sphere seems to be integrated, and their high speed, they earned the nickname bullet trains.

The 0 Series Shinkansen were not given their series designation until later, when it became necessary to distinguish them from the other types that followed them. They were the first multiple units to be built in Japan for travelling on high-speed lines.

Shinkansen actually means “new main line” in the literal translation and therefore does not refer to the trains travelling on it. However, the term developed into a synonym. One reason for this may have been the large-scale advertising in the early years.

This 0 Series Shinkansen appeared on 5 May 1967 near Yurakucho Station in Tokyo in the same state as the new Rokuhan model. At this time, the high-speed service was not yet three years old. Photo: Roger Wollstadt (CC-BY-SA-2.0)

It made the trains and their design world-famous. However, hardly anyone understood the term Shinkansen or knew how to categorise or define it correctly. The fact that Japan would opt for multiple-unit trains was not even planned at the beginning.

At a time when great attention was being paid to growing car traffic and increasing air traffic, it was already courageous to rely on the railway for long-distance transport and create a completely new infrastructure.

Due to the mountainous topography, the Cape gauge (1067 mm track gauge) , which is not suitable for high speeds, had traditionally prevailed in Japan. The planned “bullet trains” were therefore accompanied by a change to the standard gauge system (1435 mm).

At the same time, it was assumed that locomotive-hauled trains could be used again for rolling stock. Whether they should run with steam or electric traction was still an open question at the time. In the end, multiple units were chosen because they promised a more even distribution of the masses and would reduce the stress on the superstructure.

When this twelve-car unit was put into service on the Tōkaidō line in 1971, the commercial success of the Shinkansen was already clear. The trains have already undergone their first modifications. For example, the parabolic nose has been painted in the same colour as the car, changes have been made to the bottom of the apron, and the number of pantographs has been reduced. Photo: Wilford Peloquin (CC-BY-SA-2.0)

In order to secure the political decision in favour of the new system, the project costs were deliberately set too low; in fact, they ended up being twice as high as requested. However, the Shinkansen system developed into a successful model and later became a revenue and profit generator: passenger numbers tripled between 1966 and 1973!

Further figures underline the success of the JNR after privatisation: the four lines existing at the end of the 1980s were used by over 200 million passengers a year. The total length of this network was 1831 kilometres. When this twelve-car unit was put into operation on the Tōkaidō line in 1971, the commercial success of the Shinkansen was already clear. The trains had already undergone their first modifications. For example, the parabolic nose was painted in the same colour as the car, the underside of the apron was modified, and the number of pantographs was reduced.

The market share of total traffic between Tokyo and Osaka (approx. 500 km) was 85 %, between Tokyo and Hiroshima (approx. 800 km) 65 %, and between Tokyo and Hakata (approx. 1100 km) around 30 %. The train delay during rush hour was up to four minutes.

The first construction work for the first line began on 20 April 1959, using structures already built for the bullet train project, such as the Nihonzaka Tunnel in Shizuoka Prefecture.

Nevertheless, enormous earthworks were necessary, as curve radii of 2500 metres (later increased to 4000 metres) for the high speed led the route over many an obstacle. However, the high performance of the new multiple units also allowed gradients of 1.5%.

On 1 May 1961, Japanese National Railways (JNR) received loans totalling 80 million dollars from the World Bank for its project. This was linked to the strict condition that the line had to be opened by the 1964 Olympic Games in Tokyo, which was achieved on time: the inaugural journey from Tokyo to Shin Osaka took place on 1 October 1964, with the Games starting nine days later.

After the privatisation of the JNR, JR West was responsible for the San'yō line. It later repainted the trains back to their original colour scheme. A four-car unit reaches Hakata station as a Kodama connection in July 1998. Photo: © DAJF / Wikimedia Commons / CC BY-SA 3.0 & GFDL

Due to a lack of commercial experience, the cruising speed of the new trains was initially no higher than 200 km/h and was only subsequently increased to 220 km/h, making them the fastest commercially used railway vehicles in the world when they were introduced.

Around 60 years after the three-phase test runs on a German line near Zossen, a state railway reached and exceeded the “magic” mark for the first time in scheduled traffic. This also symbolised Japan's economic recovery after the Second World War.

continues on page 27

Pictures of the front end and carriage transition with wind deflector in the last years of operation. Photos: Cassiopeia sweet (PD-self; top) / Takeshi Kuboki from Amagasaki, Japan (CC-BY-2.0; bottom)

From tests to regular operation

Before the first line was put into operation in 1964, test runs were carried out on a 37 km section between Odawara and Ayase in 1962. The JNR had already acquired land here for the original bullet train project and was able to enter the construction phase quickly.

This test track was used to test the Shinkansen 1000 series prototypes and also to develop the 0 Series trains. When the entire line was completed, the test section finally became part of the Tōkaidō-Shinkansen.

A special feature of the train technology and track equipment was the automatic driving control of the multiple units, which made signals superfluous. Both acceleration and braking were initiated automatically and controlled externally. Only the last few metres at the platform are influenced by the driver, so that a Shinkansen stops precisely at the platform.

Scenes like this one with a 16-car unit on 26 April 1992 also prompted our translator Christoph Maier to create a suitable operating diorama for this extraordinary train. Photo: Gohachiyasu1214 (CC-BY-SA-4.0)

All information (track status, etc.) and driving commands reach the driver's cabs via coded signals in the AC frequency of the traction voltage. The trains themselves also send signals in advance, which determine the route at track junctions. If seismographs register an earthquake, all trains receive impulses to stop immediately for safety reasons.

After the two Shinkansen prototype trains of the 1000 series, a third was produced as a prototype for the 0 series. This third set consisted of six carriages: a dining car, a 1st class carriage, and four 2nd class carriages. With the start of regular high-speed services, this train was used commercially with 12 carriages.

continues on page 29

Shinkansen trains traditionally have a 3 + 2 configuration, as can be seen on the way to Kyoto in 1971 (photo above) and in the Kyoto Railway Museum (photo below). Photos: Wilford Peloquin (CC-BY-SA-2.0; above) / Cheng-en Cheng (CC-BY-SA-2.0; below)

The standard trains were painted cream white with a blue window strip and blue frame and rail clearances. Their round shapes at the front still bore witness to the previous decade, before angular designs became more modern. A special feature was the translucent, but not transparent, spherical noses of the first trains, through which light shone.

480 carriages were originally available, which were combined into 40 trains – i.e., twelve parts per unit. Each of these trains was divided electrically into six units of two carriages each, and each half of the train had a dining car.

Each train assembled in this way offered space for around 1000 passengers. Each axle of a train had its own drive with a 185 kW shaft motor. Extrapolated to the entire train, this is 8880 kW (12075 hp). They are supplied from an overhead line with 25 kV voltage at an industrial frequency of 60 Hertz.

The construction of the 0 Series Shinkansen trains began in 1963 and lasted until 1986. In view of the expected service life of only 15 years due to the high load, instead of the usual 30 years for other rail vehicles, it is clear that at no time all the units were ever built-in service at the same time.

A total of 3216 carriages were built in 38 series. The maximum number in the stock in 1976/77 was a proud 2338 wagons in 146 trains, with two wagons serving as reserves.

Most of the vehicles were actually taken out of active service after the estimated period. The last trains of the series covered here ran as the Kodama service on the San'yō-Shinkansen line of JR West and on the Shin-Osaka - Hakata line.

As Kodama 635, this six-car unit is travelling in new, very attractive colours as it passes in front of the photographer's lens in Higashi-Hiroshima on the San'yō line. The train runs from Shin-Osaka to Hakata. The train shows wind deflectors next to the pantographs, and the smaller side windows described in the text, which were temporarily installed to save costs. Photo: © DAJF / Wikimedia Commons / CC BY-SA 3.0 & GFDL

This leads us to the order of the multiple units during the entire operating period: until 1971, the trains were twelve-car units (two dining cars, two 1st class cars, and eight 2nd class cars). From 1969, however, 16-car units were also put together due to the strong increase in passenger numbers, and these became the norm from 1971 onwards.

The composition of these trains varied depending on the line travelled. The ratio of 1st to 2nd class carriages was different. From 1985 until the last year of operation in 2008, only four- or six-car units were used on less popular routes.

Shortly before being withdrawn from service, the units still in the JR West fleet, which had been responsible for the San'yō-Shinkansen since 1987, were repainted in their original livery (cream blue / white). Their last scheduled service took place on 30 November 2008, and on 14 December 2008 they were finally retired with their last journey.

A 0 Series Shinkansen is also preserved in the Kyoto Railway Museum and can be viewed there via a promenade. Photo: Brakeet (CC-Zero)

The fact that these conventional trains, developed long before three-phase AC technology came to dominate railway technology, were built and used for so long is closely linked to the economic situation of the former JNR.

Due to a massive increase in land acquisition costs, blockades, and resistance to the expansion of the network, as well as labour disputes, the Japanese National Railways increasingly got into financial difficulties and was ultimately overindebted. The network and technology stagnated, and passenger numbers even fell, at times.

The government countered this in 1987 by initiating privatisation and founding four regional companies, which were to be responsible for individual routes of the Shinkansen network. Subsequently, further development picked up speed noticeably.

Due to their special historical significance, some 0 series trains and carriages have been preserved: JR West donated a head end to the Railway Museum in York (England) back in 2001. In August 2008, a complete train was transferred to the Saitama Railway Museum.

Webpages with model information and data:
https://www.hochgeschwindigkeitszuege.com/japan/jr-baureihe-0.php

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.

Die Vielfalt offener Wagen
Massenphänomene und Exoten

Offene Wagen stellten einst die zahlenmäßig größte Gruppe an Güterwagen im Staatsbahnbestand. Und das sollte auch über Jahrzehnte Bestand haben. Entsprechend groß ist auch die Modellvielfalt. Fast 30 Jahre nach Erscheinen seines Bands 3 der Güterwagen-Reihe aktualisiert die erste von zwei Broschüren das erforderliche Wissen.

Stefan Carstens
Offene Wagen (1)
Hintergrundinformationen, Modell-Bauanleitungen und Basteltipps

Modellbahn Union
Kamen 2023

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Zum Herausgeber, aber nicht alleinigen Autoren der vorliegenden Broschüre brauchen wir wohl nicht viele Worte zu verlieren: Stefan Carstens ist im Bereich der Eisenbahnliteratur bestens bekannt. Er hat viele wichtige Archive übernommen, fotografiert selbst und hat sich ein profundes Wissen besonders im Bereich der Güterwagen erworben.

Werke, die seinen Namen tragen, stehen ohne Ausnahme für herausragende Qualität. Auf seine Rechnung gehen viele heutige Standardwerke, darunter die inzwischen auf drei Verlage verteilte Güterwagen-Buchreihe, die mit dem hier besprochenen Sonderheft angereichert und inhaltlich ergänzt wird.

Aufbauend auf Band 3 der genannten Reihe, der erstmals 1996 erschien, liefern die von Stefan Carstens beauftragten Modellbauer und Autoren, darunter auch wieder er selbst, viele neue Informationen, die in den bisherigen Auflagen noch nicht enthalten sind.

Ein wesentlicher Grund dafür ist, dass sich in den fast dreißig Jahren seit Ersterscheinen viele Erkenntnisse ergeben haben, die frühere Annahmen widerlegen, stützen oder auch vervollständigen. Erinnert sei hier nur an den Zusammenbruch des Ostblocks, der überhaupt einen Zugriff auf Archive und Quellen erlaubte, deren Existenz 1996 nicht mal bekannt war.

Aber auch auf der Modellseite, die seit Beginn der Reihe nicht ausgeklammert war, hat sich viel getan. Solche, die einst betrachtet und für Umbauten oder Superungen herangezogen wurden, mögen heute

als überholt gelten. Vielfach sind sie auch gar nicht mehr erhältlich oder wurden von deutlich besseren Nachfolgern ersetzt.

So macht auch der Erfinder und Herausgeber der Reihe keinen Hehl daraus, dass nach dem Ursprungsband über gedeckte Wagen der Regelbauart auch die folgenden Titel über die Sonderbauarten (bisheriger Band 2) und danach die offenen Wagen (Bände 3 und 4) eine Aktualisierung verdient haben.

Doch jedermann weiß: Zeit ist begrenzt und Band 2.1 nicht fertig, ein völlig neuer Band 10 zugleich aber auch im Entstehen. So war es sicher eine gute Idee, all das angesammelte Wissen und neue Erkenntnisse, die sich nicht in einem Buch unterbringen lassen, zu einer Broschüre zusammenzufassen.

Und so ist der Vorbildteil dieses Mal ausführlicher als bei den bisherigen Broschüren der Reihe „Modell & Vorbild“. Schwerpunktthemen sind die von den Staatsbahnen gebauten Wagen, die geschweißten Wagen der Deutschen Reichsbahn sowie die während des Zweiten Weltkriegs im Ausland gebauten Wagen.

Achtung: Damit sind nicht nur Wagen nach deutschen Zeichnungen gemeint, sondern auch solche Fremdwagen, die unter deutscher Besatzung in hiesige Bestände gelangten und auch nach Kriegsende weiter Dienst taten. Viele bislang unbekannte Fotografien wie auch Originalzeichnungen untermauern die spannenden Texte.

Das Konzept der Broschüre ist dennoch unverändert geblieben, aber der Anspruch an den Modellbau hat sich deutlich verändert. Bewusst sollte der Fokus nicht auf Perfektion und eine Stufe des Feinmodellbaus gehoben werden, wie ihn nur wenige beherrschen und er nur eine kleine Zielgruppe anzusprechen vermag.

Ein Grund dafür war auch, dass es in allen Spuren sehr viele zeitgemäße Modelle offener Wagen gibt, die häufig nur wenige Handgriffe und kleine Verfeinerungen brauchen, um noch näher an ihr großes Vorbild zu rücken. Das sind beispielsweise Zurüstungen von Pufferbohlen, Neubeschriftungen oder Alterungen, wie wir sie auch selbst gern zum Thema machen.

Zusätzlich eingeflochten ist zum Ende des Hefts ein Vorbildartikel die epochenübergreifende Kohleförderung, den verschiedenen Kohlesorten und -arten und zu deren Transport. Diese Hilfen sind wertvoll für den Leser, weil Kohle einst das meisttransportierte Ladegut in diesen Wagenbauarten war.

Ganze 132 reichten aber nicht aus, um alles neu Zusammengetragene hier unterzubringen. Deshalb wird Anfang 2024 noch ein Band 2 folgen, der weitere Vorbilder näher betrachtet und diejenigen Modelle dazu vorstellen wird, die seit Erscheinen des Referenzbuchs neu auf den Markt gekommen sind. Auch dazu sollen dann kleinere Basteleien vorgestellt werden.

Mit Blick auf die große Zahl unterschiedlicher Modelle auch im Maßstab 1:220 und der Bedeutung offener Wagen beim Vorbild können wir die besprochene Broschüre auch Zetties nur wärmstens ans Herz legen. Auch ohne explizites Betrachten unserer Baugröße lassen sich viele Ideen, Vorschläge und Anregungen mitnehmen – auch bei uns haben sie Projekte für künftige Beiträge in Gang gesetzt

Publishing pages:
https://www.stefancarstens.de
https://www.modellbahnunion.com

Europalok und Geschwister
Über Grenzen hinaus

Der Begriff „Europalok“ brachte deutlich und unmissverständlich zum Ausdruck, in welche Richtung sich die Bundesbahn orientierte, als sie Mehrsystemlokomotiven entwickeln ließ und (in kleinen Stückzahlen) auch beschaffte. So kommt ihnen doch eine besondere Bedeutung zu, die in der Fachliteratur bislang vernachlässigt wurde. Doch das ist nun endlich vorbei!

Harald Jordan | Manfred Lohmann | Mathias Oestrich | Tobias Pukallus | Manfred Traube
Die Mehrsystem-Elloks der Deutschen Bundesbahn
Die Baureihen 181, 182, 183 und 184

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Die Geschichte der von der Bundesbahn entwickelten Elektrolokomotiven scheint beinahe abgearbeitet, was die Baureihenbibliothek im EK-Verlag betrifft. Doch immer wieder mal werden wir eines Besseren belehrt. Das liegt an Lücken bei Fahrzeugen, die nicht so sehr im Fokus stehen, wie auch neuen Erkenntnissen.

Auch ist die Einsatzgeschichte der meisten Konstruktionen, die ab etwa 1951 begannen, bis heute nicht zu Ende. Einige Lokomotiven stehen unverändert mit einzelnen Exemplaren im Dienst privater EVU. So ist es auch bei der Baureihe 181^2, die eines der Themen im vorliegenden Band ist.

Sie hat erst vor wenigen Jahren ihre zweite Karriere begonnen und unverändert gelangen neue Maschinen zurück in den aktiven Dienst. Gleichzeitig steht sie am Ende einer Entwicklungsreihe, deren vorausgehende Glieder weitgehend in Vergessenheit geraten sind. Auch die Baureihe 181^2 war mit nur 25 Exemplaren bei der DB eher eine Randerscheinung, wenngleich auch kein lokales oder nur regionales Phänomen.

Doch wie es auch sei, auf der Modellbahn steht sie aktuell sehr im Fokus. Nach Roco und zuletzt auch Piko hat sich auch Märklin diesem Loktyp im Maßstab 1:87 angenommen, bei der Spur N war es Arnold. Auch im Maßstab 1:220 hat sie dank Rokuhan eine schon fast zehn Jahre währende Geschichte. Das Interesse der Modellbahner am Vorbild sollte also ausgeprägter denn je sein.

Und damit haben wir schon die Zielgruppe dieser Lektüre erfasst. Wegen eines hohen fachlichen Anspruchs sind das vor allem die technisch versierten Eisenbahnfreunde, aber ebenso die Statistiker und eben auch diejenigen, die lediglich Inspirationen und Eindrücke für den Einsatz ihrer Modelle suchen.

Alle drei genannten Gruppen kommen mit diesem Buch auf ihre Kosten soviel sei schon vorausgeschickt. Gewiss gilt es, das noch etwas zu differenzieren und aufzusplitten, aber als Fazit, das sonst am Ende dieser Rezension zu lesen, wäre, taugt es auf jeden Fall: Dieses Werk darf in keinem Bücherregal derjenigen fehlen, die sich zu einer der drei Gruppen zählen.

Doch was erwartet sie bei der Lektüre? Gleich fünf Autoren, darunter bekannte und weniger bekannte Namen, haben daran gearbeitet, die Geschichte von gleich vier, zahlenmäßig nur als Splitterbauarten geltenden Baureihen aufzuarbeiten.

Erstmalig wurden, von einer früheren EJ-Broschüre zur einzigen Serienbauart aus diesem Themenfeld mal abgesehen, die Mehrsystemlokomotiven der früheren Bundesbahn in einem Buch gewürdigt. Um ihre Bedeutung herzuleiten, beginnen die Ausführungen mit geschichtlichen Abrissen.

In einem Überblick werden die behandelten Baureihen kurz dargestellt, um dann einen Rückblick auf die Elektrifizierung bei den europäischen Bahnen zu geben, der die Vielzahl an Systemen erklärt und die Probleme des grenzüberschreitenden Verkehrs verdeutlicht. Eine besondere Rolle kommt dem Saarland und seinen Eisenbahnen zu, die hier zum Verständnis ausführlicher zu beschreiben war.

Dann folgen die bekannten und klassischen Teile eines EK-Baureihenportraits: Technik- und Einsatzgeschichte – hier für alle vier Baureihen einzeln und chronologisch aufgearbeitet. Auch die Unterbaureihen 181^0, 181^1, 181^2, 184^0 und 184^1 werden dabei differenziert betrachtet.

Als „Europalok“ gefeiert und ins Licht der Öffentlichkeit gezerrt, herrschten hier trotz aller einstigen Probleme hohe Erwartungen. Auf einem Kontinent, der Krieg und Nationalismus zu überwunden haben schien und politisch näher zusammenwuchs, war das Zusammengehören mehr als eine kurzfristige Modeerscheinung.

Doch was heute selbstverständlich erscheint und kaum noch so deutlich wahrgenommen wird, bereitete auf technischer Seite große Herausforderungen und brachte auch Fehlschläge mit sich. Die „Europalok“ E 410 (Baureihe 184) wurde keine, stattdessen erwies sich erst die Baureihe 181^2 als voller Erfolg, der aus den Erkenntnissen mit der E 310 (Baureihen 181^0 und 181^1) resultierte.

Dass die zuletzt genannten Vertreter der Baureihen 181 und 184 auch als formschön gelten, dürfte trotz ihres Status als „Exoten“ im Betriebsbestand sicher der Hauptgrund dafür sein, dass sie auch in verschiedenen Maßstäben auf die Schienen fanden.

Der EK-Baureihenband wird so allen Erwartungen gerecht, zeigt aber auch einige Unterschiede zu anderen Büchern der Reihe. Das ist nicht als Kritik zu verstehen, unser Hinweis soll nur vor Fehlannahmen beim schnellen Durchblättern schützen: So ist kein als eigenständiges Kapitel abgetrennter Statistikteil zu finden.

Grund dafür ist einfach die Standorttreue aller Maschinen. Maximal zwei verschiedene Betriebswerke der DB verzeichnen ihre Betriebsbücher, wenn wir innerhalb Saarbrückens mal von einem „Wechsel der Straßenseite“ absehen.

Und auch bei den gedruckten Farbaufnahmen stellen wir einen Unterschied fest. Anders als bei vielen anderen Bänden sind sie nicht in einem separaten Farbteil gesammelt, sondern übers Buch verteilt in kleineren Einheiten zu finden. So ist der Gesamtanteil zumindest gefühlt noch deutlich höher als bei Auflagen zu deutlich älteren Konstruktionen.

Die Wiedergabequalität und Auswahl ist wie die Textverständlichkeit auch hier wieder auf höchstem Niveau. Und so ziehen wir doch noch ein weiteres Fazit: Vor uns liegt ein neues Standardwerk, das wir verdient für die Neuerscheinungen des Jahres 2023 in der Kategorie Literatur nominieren.

Publishing pages:
https://www.eisenbahn-kurier.de
https://www.ekshop.de

Model train days in Hochdahl

Participating instead of just watching

The Erkrath-Hochdahl railway and local history association organises model railway days every year. Thanks to the help of supporting clubs from the surrounding area, they always offer a colourful programme.* Trainini® *was also there for the first time. The programme for youngsters seems unique and is worthy of imitation, as we report.

Size isn't everything, as exhibitors and visitors to the 2023 Model Railway Days in the Hochdahl engine shed recently discovered. The local press was also impressed and generated even more demand with an enthusiastic report. In fact, everything was just right here, which is why we want to take a look back: Imitation explicitly desired!

What had happened? The Erkrath-Hochdahl Railway and Local History Association (EHEH) invited visitors to a model railway exhibition within its historic walls, as it does every year. The model railway clubs from the surrounding area, from Düsseldorf to Wuppertal, support it by actively participating with exhibits and personnel.

With this four-strong delegation, Trainini® supported the model railway days in the Hochdahl engine shed. In addition to promoting Z gauge, the main focus was on a craft and hands-on programme for children, which was extremely well received.

After a nice contact, good exchange and helpful support in working in and with archives in spring 2023, a delegation from **Trainini®** was also present for the first time. Due to the exhibition profile, which is deliberately aimed at the broad public, and a consistently high proportion of children among the visitors, we decided in favour of a hands-on and handicraft offer.

The EHEH's good public relations work in the run-up to the event also proved to be helpful. The visiting local editor was also personally impressed by the concept and what was on offer, which is why his report on the exhibition weekend provided further impetus.

On the first of the three days, he had explicitly planned to visit the **Trainini®** stand, as the EHEH had already drawn his attention to the new offer here. However, he also realised that he was unable to see and reach this presence without having to work his way through a crowd of people.

Due to the large crowds, all the active participants were in constant use and it was therefore not possible to hold the desired discussion before the end of the exhibition on 1 November 2023. The question-and-answer session therefore only started at 6.00 pm and focussed primarily on the question of why there was such a high demand here.

Shots like these were only possible in a few quiet minutes on the three days of the exhibition: on the left, three (of nominally four) handicraft areas are nevertheless occupied, on the right you can see the EHEH's children's layout, where the youngest were allowed to be train drivers themselves.

Five pages of notes later, our thirst for knowledge was quenched and we are happy to explain how we achieved this success. The local press representative only had one question: “Can I come back (privately) on Saturday and try it out for myself?”

We could not have received greater praise and clearer recognition, because such words speak of personal enthusiasm. However, it is important for us to analyse and understand such experiences and to be able to repeat them in Hochdahl and elsewhere.

If we were to rely solely on statistical data, our report would be interesting, but much less spectacular. The Hochdahl engine shed is now a museum and offers a well-known and popular hall for many events. The building is located close to the current S-Bahn station, is easy to reach by car and public transport, and has historical significance.

The railway line that runs along it is the oldest in western Germany and is particularly challenging topographically. In the first years of operation from 1838, the steep incline between Erkrath and Hochdahl

A large part of the company's own presentation was consistently geared towards young model railway enthusiasts: The children took control of the track oval made of club table layouts while the glue on their beer mat dioramas dried. Inside, they and their parents marvelled at a Shorty Shinkansen (left) and two youngsters' dioramas (centre and right) by former primary school pupils.

could only be negotiated with the help of a steam engine, which pulled the trains up the hill using huge pulleys and chains.

After a short time, it became clear that this method was too complex and expensive, as well as not very promising in view of increasing train weights. From then on, trains travelling downhill pulled their counter-train uphill using the chains and guide rollers. But even this was eventually outdated and the push-pull service familiar from other ramps was introduced.

85 007, which came here for a few weeks after the end of its service on the Höllental railway to earn its place of honour, before it was finally taken out of service, achieved brief, albeit great, fame here.

History with a future

The locomotive shed, which hosted the exhibition on 1, 4, and 5 November 2023, served as a shelter for the push-pull locomotives and a place to bunker coal, collect water and remove slag. Today, only photos bear witness to this, as there are no longer any tracks directly in front of the shed or inside of it.

To this end, the historical site houses an archive, primarily on local railway history. It proves to be valuable time and again when the EHEH publishes its own books and thus helps to ensure that regional history is not forgotten.

On the fringes of the event, we, therefore, also met author Armin Gärtner for a personal initial discussion, whose latest work we reviewed just last month. He gave us an insight into the follow-up volume on the history of DSG, which he is currently working on.

Author Armin Gärtner (left) proudly presents the book cover design for his new work on the history of DSG, which is currently nearing completion. Editor-in-chief Holger Späing (right) is looking forward to an exciting read with him.

The chosen structure, selection of images and the few passages that we were able to read in advance have inspired us and aroused our curiosity about the publication. This is planned for spring 2024 and is to be combined with a club anniversary. We will keep our readers up to date on this.

The Hochdahl engine shed has only recently developed into a meeting place for model railway enthusiasts. In 2023, there were well over 1,000 visitors, including exactly 650 paying adults and a further 400 children with free admission, more than ever before. This meant that the previous record from 2019, the last pre-pandemic edition, was once again clearly surpassed.

But what makes the Model Railway Days so special is something else, as there are much larger exhibitions. The exceptionally high proportion of children certainly speaks for itself. If we listen to the many complaints about declining interest in the hobby, then a different photo emerges here. So, it can't be down to the children and their parents alone. So, what distinguishes the model railway days in Hochdahl from other club exhibitions?

Here we see the organiser's communication in advance as a success factor. The press must accurately publicise the fact that this is a family event that is particularly geared towards the needs of children.

This old layout still does a good job: it invites you to produce the electricity required to power the locomotive yourself on your bike.

In order to be able to do this, those responsible must also understand what these needs actually look like. Anyone who has children or grandchildren can observe this and experience it first-hand. Everyone else should and may ask their parents. This is also an opportunity to find out how parents imagine a family-friendly destination.

The following key points seem particularly important to us:

- Children want to learn to understand their environment. The German word already suggests that it is not enough to offer something to look at, but that something tangible is required. People don't learn just by looking, their hands convey lasting memories and learning effects.
- This means that it is not the level of design of the exhibits that is the decisive success factor in attracting young people, but the options to participate and touch. Otherwise, children are always taught not to touch anything (while all too often, adults can't keep their fingers to themselves).
- For parents, especially single parents, the expected financial outlay is important. The more expenses for admission and ancillary costs (such as contributions for offers and catering) have to be calculated, the more a visit is examined and compared with alternatives.

Adults paid 2 euros admission, children aged 14 and over 1 euro, and all younger visitors paid nothing at all. 4 euros certainly won't hurt a family, but the number of visitors (and voluntary donations) will still make a tangible contribution to the association's coffers.

At the Trainini® craft table, children were allowed to landscape a beer mat and add a tree, flower or figure to fit their individual taste. This offer, which was free of charge for participants, was only possible thanks to sponsors who were mentioned at the table.

The arts and crafts activities were free of charge for the participants and were financed by sponsors and in some cases also privately. This also removed an important inhibition threshold for parents, who often reacted more cautiously than the children because they were first expected to do a necessary cash check.

Part of the company's own concept for success is that it is not adults who actively approach and look after the children, but rather the company's own youngsters. This also requires desire and motivation on this side, but has long since become a matter of course.

Children in the middle of it all

And last but not least, we must not forget that the children are visiting a model railway exhibition with their parents. If the “grown-ups” are looking at details and technical refinements, the children's eyes will linger on moving trains, raising and lowering barriers, and cars.

And the question arises as to whether they are allowed to intervene themselves. While the answer elsewhere is usually no, the children in Hochdahl usually had a ride controller in their hands before they could even express their wishes.

continues on page 43

The EHEH had set up an old prefabricated layout in the centre of the hall just for this purpose, with no staff to be seen for miles around. When it is clearly communicated, that children are allowed to become train drivers themselves, then their hands are also used, and there is a delighted laugh in return.

The presence of Ralf Junius (**Trainini *TV***) and Holger Späing (editor-in-chief) followed a similar concept. Most of the space was taken up by the craft table with a total of four places. Supervised by **Trainini**-juniors Kristin and Hendrik Späing, the children were allowed to design a beer mat with a landscape on their own or with their parents, even unaccompanied parents were not turned away, as long as they did not take a child's place.

During the breaks for drying the glue, they then worked on the layout set up by Ralf Junius from club layouts, on which they ran the mouse train. At the touch of a button, they could also start the circuit for a lorry model. Shorties from Rokuhan such as the Hello Kitty Shinkansen or the “Glass Train” also found the right recipients here.

For experienced model railway enthusiasts, however, there was also a peep-box layout called “PeZuBox.” The diorama “On the Swabian railway” created years ago by Kristin and Hendrik Späing and a primary school project entitled “Defective signal at block 53” demonstrated the quality that a first-time project can achieve, if patience and observation skills are present.

Using the example of the therapy diorama (presented in three parts in this magazine in 2022), parents learned that model making does not automatically have to be expensive, if it is to be good. After all, the invisible core is made up of many materials that are already available in the household and craft room. What has to be purchased regularly justifies the purchase through its yield.

Other participations also presented comparable entry options for digital operation and digital control, for example, and met with great interest among the youngest generation (“digital natives”).

It seems almost superfluous to point out that paper modelling has its own challenges, but in almost no case does it involve high costs. And, so, it came as no surprise that some families returned during the weekend.

continues on page 46

There was also plenty to see for Z gauge in Hochdahl, including these two box layouts at MEC Wuppertal e.V. In a summery atmosphere, the circus (photo above) invited visitors to a performance, while winter spread its very own idyll in a snowy landscape (photo below).

This railway bus was also on display in the "PeZuBox," much to the delight of the children (photo above). Paper modelling was also represented during the weekend, where visitors were also encouraged to take part (photo below).

Quite a few proudly reported that they had visited a specialist model railway retailer during the two previous shopping days and had stocked up on craft and design materials.

And that's the only way everyone can benefit in the end. Three days of exhibition meant hard work and high capacity utilisation for everyone involved, but also the certainty of having inspired many younger people and infected them with the model railway bug.

Only on the first day of the exhibition was this Z gauge box layout on display at the MEC Wuppertal e.V. stand. At the weekend it was exchanged for the suitcase that can be seen on page 44 above.

It will also be good for the parents to know that their children have discovered a creative and challenging hobby that teaches them many skills, technical understanding, and manual dexterity. And should questions arise in the future, they will also know where and to whom they can ask them. Let's tackle it and our future will be saved.

Organiser's webpages:
https://www.lokschuppen-hochdahl.de

Video on Trainini *TV* (Episode 18):
https://www.youtube.com/TraininiTV

Adventausstellung Modelleisenbahner Soest

Modellbahnbörse

Fahrbetrieb auf allen Anlagen

Kaffee und Kuchen

Würstchen vom Grill

Am 10. Dezember 2023
Von 11:00 bis 17:00 Uhr

Neuengeseke

Neuengeseker Heide 1

Unkostenbeitrag: Erwachsene 3,50 € / Jugendliche bis 16 Jahre 2,- € / Kinder unter 6 Jahre frei

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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.

To the photo on page 54 of Trainini® 10/2023:

I've just leafed through the new Trainini. When you leaf through it, you often have a superficial look. And then there's the eye-catcher.

I got stuck on Hendrik's shot. This is not only king track 1, but also a royal photo.

Hendrik has got it right. He focusses on the locomotive; the background is only slightly blurred. And on the right, the passer-by (passenger or is it a railway employee?) with whom you leave the photo.

Even if it is gauge 1, I think the photo belongs in the Trainini 2024 calendar, unique and first-class. Hendrik gets first place from me.

Hans Helbach, Bonn

Editorial response: This is a recording that would not be published under the author's name, but solely under the Trainini® brand as the sole rights holder. In this case, however, the editorial team is of the same opinion as expressed in the letter to the editor. Our up-and-coming photographer has delivered an exceptionally good piece of work, the motif of which has been accurately recognised, the overall image composed to match it and then implemented with impeccable craftsmanship. It was therefore a matter close to our hearts to explicitly point this out and give him the chance to establish himself as a model railway photographer in the long term.

Missing part 2 to the construction report:

A long-cherished wish has come true. I ordered the ET 403 from NoBa-Modelle and have since had it delivered. I printed out your report in the 9/21 issue and studied it in detail.

My question: has the 2nd report on the “glass work,” lettering and motorisation been published in the meantime? If so, in which issue?

Rainer Leip, per E-Mail

Editor's reply: Unfortunately, part 2 of the model of the 403/404 series from NoBa-Modelle is still outstanding. It is one of a long list of unfinished projects that have so far been prevented from being completed for various reasons, some of which we have also discussed in this issue.

Nevertheless, we decided on part 1 at the time, expecting a prompt continuation, because the train fitted in perfectly with the “50 Years of Intercity” theme, as this was exactly what it had been developed for. It was also one of our biggest wishes for Z gauge models until it was finally granted.

We are happy to reveal our approach to the glass work: due to the large number of panes of different sizes, we prefer liquid glazing with Micro Kristal Klear from Microscale. Typical for this train, however, were the brown tinted and vapour-coated windows (without driver's cab), to which the original paintwork was also elaborately matched.

The Class 403/404 high-speed railcar for intercity services is unfortunately one of our projects that has been put on hold for far too long for various reasons.

This colour effect can also be achieved with this product. For this purpose, some dark brown colour, ideally with the help of the RAL tones also used in the colour tape, is mixed into the adhesive varnish beforehand. An (equally) water-based varnish should be used here; the appropriate dose should be determined by means of preliminary tests. For this purpose, a suitable quantity is first decanted and mixed separately, to be prepared in case of failures.

Trainini *TV* Episode 19 available:

In October, we reported on the Märklintage in Göppingen and the associated Z gauge convention in southern Germany. We also announced an accompanying episode on **Trainini *TV***.

Episode 19 was released a few days before this issue was published and can now be seen on our channel on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/TraininiTV.

The Micro-Trains new products:

Micro-Trains (https://www.micro-trains.com) would like to start and end November with four product deliveries. The series begins with wagon number 9 from the “War of the Worlds” series of novels (item no. 525 00 183). This olive-green flat car is loaded with a load showing debris from Mars spaceships that have been shot down.

This is what this year's Micro Mouse Christmas trolley looks like (item no. 507 00 740). Photo: Micro-Trains

This year's Christmas car (507 00 740) with a new Micro Mouse motif also appears to be indispensable.

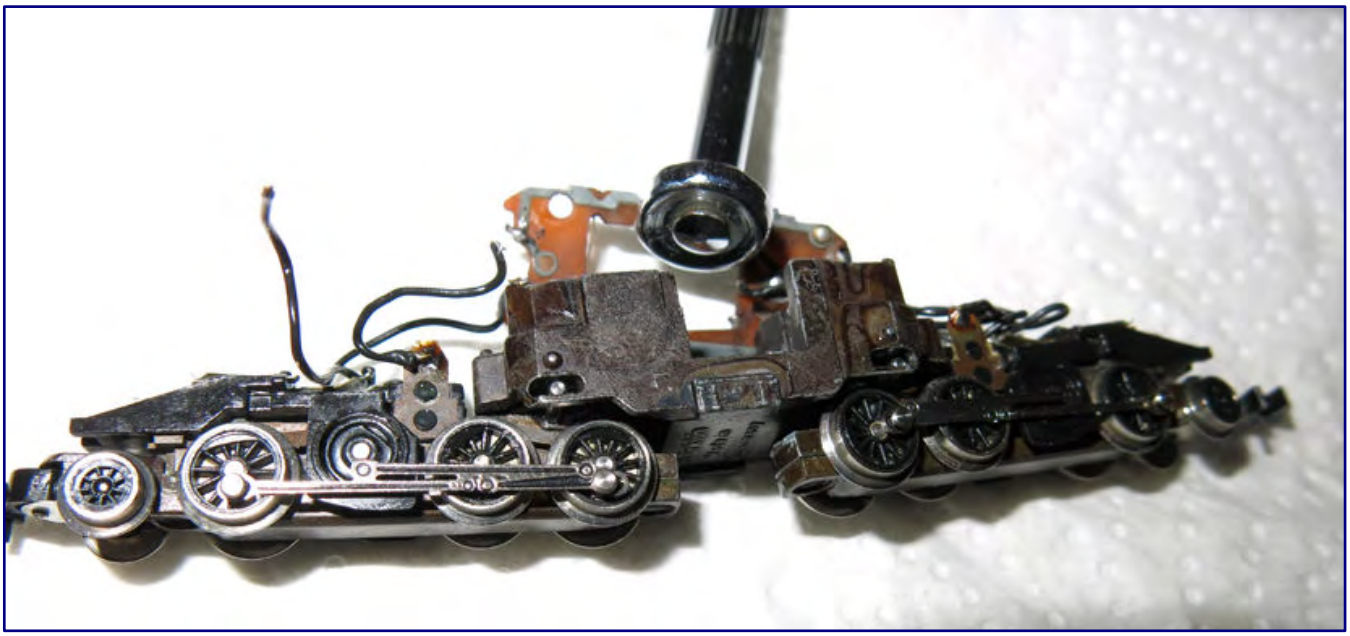
Two three-car sets of “Operation Toy Train” (994 01 272 / 983 01 272) also support the work of the Toys for Tots Foundation with their sales proceeds.

The cars are identical, but packaged differently, which also explains the difference in price.

Neighbourhood assistance on Z gauge:
An attentive **Trainini®** reader would like to offer the community private help as a Z gauge doctor. Daniel Probst can provide the following help for all locomotives with carbon brush motors (three-/five-pole):

- repair,
- maintenance,
- hardened oil removal and cleaning.

This does not apply to models with a bell-type armature motor. His main focus is on models that have been standing around for years, no longer run, or run poorly, and now need to be put back into operation.



Repairs, such as here the replacement of rotten and tearing strands on a Märklin crocodile, are gladly carried out as part of private neighbourhood help. Photo: Daniel Probst

He has access to an extensive stock of parts or procures the necessary spare parts. Zetties who wish to make use of his private assistance must reimburse him for any costs incurred, including postage, at cost price or enclose (German) stamps (or international reply coupons).

It should be clear to anyone interested that such an offer has limits and is not intended to replace commercial offers. If you have any of the problems described, please contact the following e-mail address in confidence: spur-z-nachbarschaftshilfe@web.de.

Märklin-Insider Model 2024:
Märklin presented the 2024 Insider Club models at the trade fair in Friedrichshafen. The DB VT 889 rail bus from Wismar (item no. 88820) is to be released in Z gauge. The “little pig snout” therefore has a purple-red paint scheme with decorative lines and DB lettering in light ivory.

Although the prototype was already taken out of service in 1951, it was probably still used by the young Bundesbahn in view of the great shortage of vehicles in the post-war years – unfortunately, no photo evidence of this is known.

The model is a completely new construction with a finely detailed design. The chassis and superstructure are made of metal. Many add-on parts such as the side access ladder and the roof rack ensure a good overall appearance.

The Wismar rail bus VT 88 902 of the German Federal Railway (item no. 88820) is to feature fine details and an interior. The club members who did not have the chance to acquire a comparable vehicle from Z-Modellbau at the time will be particularly pleased. Illustration: Märklin

The interior fittings and the driver's cab are also to be modelled. A plank replica is reproduced at both ends of the vehicle as impact protection; the model does not have couplers.

This new product is powered by a bell-type armature motor on both axles. The headlights and marker lights (3 x warm white / 2 x red) and interior lighting are dependent on the direction of travel and use LEDs.

Great new products from Trafofuchs:

Some of the following new items were already on display in the showcase at the Märklintage, but only now have they found their way onto the webpages and thus into sales. In memory of last summer, nudists are looking for an all over tan in the “Sunbathing on deckchairs” set (Art.-Nr. AS02).

The figures from the “Out and about with children” pack (W10), which could be out and about at a Christmas market, for example, provide a glimpse of the coming winter.

The “Sunbathing on deckchairs” (item no. AS02; photo above) is reminiscent of last summer, while “On the road with children" (W10; photo below) is more about the current weather. Photos: Trafofuchs

The railway enthusiasts have been joined by a cameraman with a tripod (BA02). The “three camels” (WN09) provide mounts for the Three Wise Men and thus enrich the in-house nativity scene programme.

The list of unlit vehicles is rounded off by a jeep with forester and dog (KL19). These new models can be viewed and ordered on the manufacturer's website at http://www.trafofuchs.de.

Euromodelbouw in Genk:
Unfortunately, we did not receive any information from the organiser or any other indication, which is why we have not highlighted the following event in the reports of the previous monthly issues.

However, the Euromodelbouw 2023 in Genk (Belgium) was definitely worth a visit. On 25 and 26 November 2023, from 10:00 to 18:00, Z gauge was also represented in the Limburghal. Two exhibitors were listed in the directory, including Z-Stammtisch Rhein-Ruhr. Among other things, they presented a modular layout covering an area of 11 x 3 metres.

However, experience has shown that new and used items are also easy to buy at Belgium's largest modelling exhibition. Other modelling sectors and offers for children were also represented on site. The exhibition website provided all the information required for a visit, also in English: http://www.euromodelbouw.be.

EMD E8A of the Burlington (CB&Q) for the California Zephyr (item no. 62619-1; photo above) and C&O goods train escort car for the Chessie system (921030-1; photo below). Photos: AZL / Ztrack

Rather quiet month at AZL:
November was rather quiet for American Z Line, as some of the new items were delayed. The only locomotives are two EMD E8s from Burlington (CB&Q), one A and one B unit, in the special colours for the California Zephyr (item no. 62619-1 / -2). An eleven-part car set for this (72102) is already being released for the third time by AZL.

The heavy semi-baggage car in Pullman green paint scheme (74018-1 / -2) was used by the same railway company. Then there is the goods train escort car with a wide-view cabin and lettering for the Chessie system on the C&O side (item no. 921030-1 / -2).

The green livery of the R-70-20 refrigerated wagons may seem unusual when the keyword “Western Fruit Express” is mentioned. This is the company colour of the BNFE, which can be found in a set of two (914844-1) and a set of four (904814-1).

The 53-foot Articulated Spine Cars (905200-1) follow in five parts in yellow livery with the old TTAX logo now with trailers from UPS. These can again be purchased individually as a double pack (954000-1). Manufacturer photos of all new items can be found at https://www.americanzline.com.

Product variant at Yellow Dwarf:
Beehives were among the first items that the Czech small series supplier Yellow Dwarf added to its Z gauge programme (https://www.yellowdwarf.eu). The beehives II (item no. 60302) represent a new variant of such an insect home.

This is a roofed shelter with floors in which the beehives known from earlier times are set up, which were typical of eras I to III and were still occasionally found in era IV.

Another good idea are food and drink vending machines (60051), which can be found in many places today, but have so far only been realised on a small scale. There are also three new products for decorating building sites: Pipelines / (60227) and II (60228), as well as manholes (60229).

GMmodelli Torino with its own pages:
GMmodelli Torino has been found, at least in Germany. For direct deliveries and supplying other EU countries, however, a separate website is required, which can also be used to distribute information.

Beehives II (item no. 60302; photo above) and food and drink vending machines (60051; photo below). Photos: Yellow Dwarf

The Turin-based duo is now proud to announce that this milestone has been reached. Their own website is now available at https://www.gmmodelli.com.

Unexpected new product at Azar Models:
Azar Models from France is increasingly developing into a full-range supplier, because a new product that we did not expect is opening a new chapter here. Available now is a pulse current speed controller called “Zmaster” (Art.-Nr. S007).

This is a high-performance speed controller system for operating analogue Z gauge locomotives. The device uses “pulsed direct current technology,” known to most model railway enthusiasts as pulse width modulation. This enables smoother starting and fine control over the entire speed range.

The Zmaster is a new PWM speed controller from France for Z gauge. Photo: Azar Models

The special feature of this new product is that there is a choice of two modulation frequencies. The high frequency can be used to control modern locomotives from its own production, while the lower frequency is suitable for older generation locomotives with three or five-pole motors.

Further information was already available on the manufacturer's website at the time of going to press, and online translation aids can be consulted, if required: https://azar-models.com. In addition, a short film showing the creation of the models can be viewed on the manufacturer's film channel: https://youtu.be/FQW_exfD_OA.

Darmstadt's wedding tower:
Klaus Schultheis is the name of the modeller who created the model of the Darmstadt Wedding Tower. Although not realised in Z gauge, the striking and historic building on a scale of 1:350 is certainly suitable as a background model that will also catch one's eye from a distance.

The history of the template for the polyurethane model, which is available in various versions, is described on a separate page, which also lists the illustrations and article numbers as well as a source of supply: http://www.meine-kleine-stadt.com/hochzeitsturm-darmstadt.html.

Märklin deliveries in November:
The Christmas business and, therefore, the peak season for model railways is underway. This is also reflected in Märklin's deliveries since the publication of the last issue. Traditionally, the manufacturer puts its new annual catalogue into circulation just in time for the start of the season. This is also the case this time, with the surprise locomotive 18 201 with a second tender gracing the front cover.

The rolling roof car set (item no. 86682) with three Tams 886 type cars has been delivered in its entirety. The class 50 steam locomotive (88847) with a Christmas design on Witte wind deflectors and tender as well as the Christmas car (80633) have also been delivered in their entirety.

The class 78 (item no. 88086) was the first Mini-Club steam locomotive to also have red marker lights so that it could pull and push this five-car push-pull train with "Hasenkasten" (87074). The steam locomotive also received new lighting, which, in addition to a warm white three-light headlight, now also shows red tail lights on both sides for the first time. It has two pairs of converted three-axle coaches and a "rabbit box" attached, which also has an LED light change. Compared to the first delivery tested in our magazine, the frame in the cab area of this model has now also been painted black in line with the prototype

Something special, offered as MHI one-off series, is the DB 78 245 tank steam locomotive (88068) with push-pull capability and the associated "push-pull train" car set (87074). They are labelled for Era III and reproduce a pushed train as it was used in the BD Essen until the beginning of the 1960s.

The steam locomotive also received new lighting, which, in addition to a warm white three-light headlight, can now also show red tail lights on both sides for the first time. It has two pairs of converted three-axle coaches and a "rabbit box" attached, which also has an LED light change. Compared to the first delivery tested in our magazine, the frame in the cab area of this model has now also been painted black in line with the prototype.

There is also a new design to report, which was delivered in duplicate: Friends of the modern, strike- and weather-stricken railway can look forward to the Sgns 691 carrying wagon, which reached the dealers in

The Märklin magazine car 2023 (item no. 80833) is a new design. The type Sgns 691 depicted with it was also delivered a few days later in the form of a DB-AG car set. Photo: Ralf Junius

blue livery with two containers as Märklin magazine wagon 2023 (80833), and as a set of three wagons (82640). We plan to present the traffic red examples of this set from the Deutsche Bahn AG stock in detail in December.

Exceptional models at Full Throttle:

WDW Full Throttle (http://www.wdwfullthrottle.com) announces a special new product in November. In response to popular demand, it is offering four double packs of coke wagons. The models were created many years ago and were completed with matching bogies and now supplemented with coke load inserts.

The coke wagons (item no. FT2500) were created many years ago and are now supplied by Full Throttle with a matching load. Photo: WDW Full Throttle

The new product (item no. FT-2500) is a replica of a factory-owned, 33-foot Extended-Top Rib-Side Coke Hoppers. The grey-painted models only have a three-digit operating number and are perfect for equipping a coking plant based on the US model.

Advent season at Klingenhöfer Miniaturen:
Klingenhöfer Miniaturen (https://www.klingenhoefer.com) is starting Advent 2023 with a new, larger range of unpainted figures: Three chickens or storks and two snowmen are being offered at a particularly affordable price.

For Christmas themes, the manufacturer also offers a Christmas sleigh, a nativity scene set, and, separately, nativity figures.

Nativity figures and the Christmas sleigh are offered for self-painting – presented here as a design suggestion. Photos: Klingenhöfer Miniaturen

The five owls, a Cape buffalo, and two eagles with outstretched wings are already finished.

Märklin Christmas special 2023:
Once again, this year, Märklin has produced a new promotional film for the Christmas season and prepared a campaign page (https://www.maerklin.de/de/weihnachten/esistsoweit) for acquiring new customers.

This time the theme is the much-quoted Märklin family, i.e., the community of model railway enthusiasts beyond their own circle of relatives. Interested parties can find discounted starter packs, contact details and the nearest specialist retailer on the campaign pages.

If you would like to watch the film, you can also access it from this page and then share it as a link from the YouTube platform if you like it.

The world's smallest Christmas tree:
The smallest Christmas tree in the world will be on display again this year from 27 November 2023 in the shop window of Galerie Lamers, Kleppingstraße 8 in Dortmund. It can then be viewed and photographed around the clock until 28 December 2023.

With a height of just 14 mm (without top ornament), it is still a valid and externally recognised world record for artificial Christmas trees after 16 years.

Its special feature, which makes it so unique and is a prerequisite for achieving the world's best performance, is its special concept: tree, lighting, and decoration must not form a single unit.

It can therefore be decorated and redecorated at any time. In 2012, this was also demonstrated as part of a public campaign in the Westfalenhallen Dortmund to give it more lustre with new gold jewellery.

Last year, editor-in-chief Holger Späing (left) had the honour of presenting the world record in the Christmas edition of the Dortmund Show. Photo: Markus Bauer

There are plans to expand his shop window presence with a small model railway layout, also at the explicit request of the gallery owner. However, it is not intended to “move into” it, but to have such a showpiece at its side.

NoBa-Modelle is back:
After the end of the summer break, the duo from NoBa-Modelle have started new developments and are already presenting their first results. They are focussing exclusively on traffic on rails. First of all, the superstructure for an E 040 high-sided wagon (item no. 5328R) should be mentioned here.

This is the open car that was once put into service as the Omm 55. The part is intended for replacement on the running gear of the Märklin item 8622 and is therefore a little too long. However, this offers the option of upgrading a standard chassis from the 1972 launch programme that can be obtained at a reasonable price.

Another series of new products is dedicated to BLS vehicle transport, known as “auto transport” among the Swiss. Residual impressions of drive-on (5325R), ramp (5326R) and centre wagons (with (5323R)

The centre wagon without ramp plate (item no. 5324R), here the fully painted and labelled manufacturer's sample, is part of the BLS car transport system. Photo: NoBa-Modelle

and without ramp plate (5324R)) are offered here. The unit is also available as a complete kit (5327R) or finished model (5327RF).

At the time of going to press, the Bundesbahn class 624/924 diesel multiple unit has only just been presented, which is why we can only show it here as a CAD volume model. The three-part unit is to be included in the range as a blank with chassis and drive (5230R) or as a complete finished model in its original paintwork (5230 RF).

The chassis and housing are made from resin using 3D printing and powered by modified parts from Rokuhan-Shortys. The technical basis of the bogies also comes from this platform and thus offers a possible power consumption from all axles.

Trainini Photo Calendar 2024 with a delay:

You will soon be able to print out the new **Trainini Photo Calendar 2024** in DIN A3 landscape format, which can then be accessed via our website. You can find it via the selection sequence homepage → Magazine → Photo calendar via the portal webpage.

We were a little behind schedule because we were still working on two episodes of **Trainini *TV*** at the same time, and the construction of the photo diorama for the cover picture also took some time. But for us, as I'm sure for you too, quality comes before deadlines.

We have carefully selected 13 different motifs in order to present a wide variety and the most representative cross-section possible of Z gauge in all its different facets. We have collected a wide variety of eras, railway administrations, seasons, types of traction and motifs in order to fulfil this requirement.

We very much hope that you will also like the **Trainini Photo Calendar 2024** and that it will adorn many walls in the coming year, thereby promoting our nominal size. Shortly after the German version, the English Trainini Photo Calendar 2024 will also follow on our EU domain, in which the US holidays are taken into account.

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