

International Edition

Free,
electronic magazine
for railroad enthusiasts
in the scale 1:220
and Prototype

www.trainini.eu

Published monthly
no guarantee

ISSN 2512-8035

Trainini

German Magazine for Z Gauge



Anniversary of the Geislinger Steige

Märklin's last Advertising Locomotive?
Z Gauge Fun in South Africa

Introduction

Dear Readers,

We can consider ourselves fortunate that our Z gauge community is truly international. Recently, I was looking through some photos from our archive and found myself drawn to long-forgotten model railway exhibitions.

It wasn't a particular layout that caught my eye, but the many exhibitors from a wide variety of countries. Our design approaches may be the same or similar, but an American model railway enthusiast produces very different results compared to, for example, our French friends or even us Germans.



Dirk Kuhlmann
Editor

Once you have experienced this, you will not be able to get rid of it so quickly and will continue to be enthusiastic. We can finally see this internationality again in this edition.

Let's start with a report on the anniversary celebration of the Geislinger Steige. Holger Späing was there and visited each of the event locations, even enhancing them with exhibits from his own collection.

No sooner had he returned to Dortmund that he photographed what is probably the last advertising locomotive of the 101 series. Of course, it has a special message to convey, and the effort involved in giving the large prototype its 'new look' is immense. Let his report surprise you.

Now we leave Germany and present the latest models from French manufacturer Azar Models. We take a closer look at the covered UIC standard freight cars of the SNCF G4 type. We did this three years ago, but the current models have been redesigned and manufactured using large-scale production methods.

And now let's set off on our big journey! From South Africa, Evert Loo presents his Z gauge suitcase layout. Not only is his implementation extremely exciting, but also how he has to obtain his materials in roundabout ways. After all, the Cape of Good Hope is not known as a major model railway location.

What, you still haven't had enough? Very well, then let's fly across the Atlantic again.

Our translator Alexander Hock took advantage of the proximity of his home and attended the National Train Show for the first time on behalf of **Trainini®**. In the state of Michigan, surrounded by four of the five Great Lakes, he also met in person with our North American foreign correspondent Robert Kluz.

On behalf of my editorial colleagues, I hope you enjoy reading this issue and wish you a relaxing summer 2025! Please let us know where you pursue your hobby or find inspiration during the hot season.

Sin-Z-erely,

Dirk Kuhlmann

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We thank Evert Loo for his contribution and Eisenbahnstiftung for their photo support.

Date of publication of the German language version of this issue: 5 August 2025

Cover photo:

194 051-9 has rounded the "Alter General" ("old general") at km 65.4 with its short local train on the Geislinger Steige (by Bernhard Stein) and is approaching the village of Amstetten at the upper end of the steep line at the signal bridge, which has long since been dismantled.

Azar Model shows a maturing process

The French Evolution

The covered UIC standard freight wagons of the SNCF type G4 are also finding friends in Germany. Azar Models has listened to the wishes of its customers there and is currently presenting these wagons in their third generation. From our point of view, they now leave nothing to be desired.

In July 2022, exactly three years ago, we presented the then new models of the French G4 wagon family and were delighted with them. The new models correctly reproduced all the prototypical features and also had consistent dimensions.

Azar Models had chosen it for its entry into the Z gauge market, among other things. At the time, production was based on 3D printing. However, demand soon exceeded production capacity and it seemed sensible to switch to plastic injection moulding.



For the comparison with the previous 3D printed model, we had the new edition in the same design (item no. W02-ST; left), supplemented by the new version with aluminium ventilation flaps (W02-ST-A; right), as it looks more familiar to us in Germany due to the DB.

This had an impact on the delivery dates of all models that had been announced or had already seen their first deliveries. But Zetties are used to waiting and should be patient. It soon became clear that Azar Models was taking its new role in the market very seriously and wanted to build up a market for our size in neighbouring France.

The Corail carriages, which followed at great expense, were also immediately convincing and even the privately loan-financed project for a TGV train was successful. Azar Models had arrived with the customers and had built up trust.

Only the G4 carriages did not really fit into the picture for a long time: they were soon no longer available either, because the 3D printing phase had ended. The design was revised and adapted to injection moulding.



A direct comparison of the injection moulded model (left) and the 3D printed model (right) shows that, as expected, little has changed. And yet small differences can be seen in the close-up view.

When production models, as we know them from large-scale manufacturers, were finally available, customer opinions were divided: At home with our French friends, they were met with enthusiasm, especially as cars with tail lights that could be switched on and off also followed.

In Germany, however, the motherland of Z gauge, Azar Models has not (yet) been able to score with this new generation. It was rightly criticised here that the bodies, which were sprayed in brown plastic, were not painted but printed directly instead.

This resulted in a disturbing plastic lustre, which was particularly noticeable in the wagon formation, because the same did not apply to the surrounding freight wagons from Märklin, FR Freudenreich Feinwerktechnik, and others. However, the customer criticism also showed the interest in the products, because goods wagons are always an international phenomenon and here, we are talking about a significant design in view of almost 20,000 prototypes.

Company owner Moïse Rogez was impressed and told our editorial team early on that Azar Models wanted to respond and that the next edition would also be painted again. We therefore followed the manufacturer's news with great interest and could hardly wait to see the result with our own eyes. In July, the time had finally come.

Highest degree of maturity

We now have two versions of this third model generation before us. With the SNCF standard wagon G40.2 (item no. W02-ST) we have a direct comparison object to one of the earlier test models, the variant with replicas of unpainted UIC ventilation flaps made of aluminium (W02-STA) has supplemented the former range.

Let's take a brief look at the prototype once again: The type G4 covered freight wagons were put into service by the SNCF from 1963. These were UIC standard wagons, which did not differ from the models of other railway administrations in terms of traffic and were intended for general use.

continued on page 7



Here we see a large side view of both new injection-moulded models. The printing on both general cargo variants differs only in the road numbers. This is also correct because both belong to the same time period in the history of the prototype.

The “classic” version for general cargo, to which both models presented belong, was originally designated G4.02 and later G40.2. There were also versions for transporting early vegetables (G69.6) and livestock (G41.6), which Azar Models has also taken into account.

A decisive difference to Germany was that this was the last series of two-axle coaches of covered design. While the DB procured two-axle wagons until the end, the G4s at the SNCF marked the end of such developments after several generations.

Subsequent purchases, as with the Italian FS with its Gabs class, were aimed at four-axle bogie wagons, which were also included in the programme at Azar Models and should be available soon.



While the German Federal Railway continued to use two-axle covered wagons until the end, foreign railway administrations switched to four-axle bogie wagons at an early stage. Here, a Gabs of the Italian state railway FS is shown to the photographer on 30 September 2003.

At this point, it becomes clear that the French freight wagons deserve special attention, as they can also make a decisive difference to German goods trains. This also applies to the two-axle representatives, which we are highlighting again today.

As the SNCF put far less effort into the paintwork than the DB, the French counterparts initially appear somewhat strange to us: they have neither a black contrasting frame nor a black running gear. A separate roof colour was also not planned. Instead, the entire wagon is painted red-brown.

Only the ground-operated handbrake wheels and the UIC rope hooks stand out from this monotony, which stand out in prototypical warning yellow. This is a new colour for the rope hooks compared to the previous 3D printed products; the hand wheels were already painted yellow beforehand.

However, these were still etched parts glued separately to a thin base, which could easily be lost. After switching to injection moulding, this base was reinforced to the diameter of the handwheel and engraved with a precisely matching coat of paint.



The UIC rope hooks have also been painted yellow on the new injection moulded overlays. The buffers have also been painted black.

The difference can only be recognised if the wagon is removed from the track and viewed from below.

A gain that is only noticeable at second glance is the now black buffers and plates, which are characterised by grease application on the prototype and are therefore not perceived as brown. The Märklin-compatible system couplers have been retained, although the coupling shaft is now closed by a plate with three fusible plugs.

In the underbody area, the only difference between the original and current model is that two unused openings, which were apparently once intended for screws, have now been removed.

The dimensions have changed only minimally, which should be due to differences in the degree of shrinkage between the two manufacturing techniques. The weight has increased slightly to 6.5 grams and supports operational safety. It is on a par with models from other suppliers.

We also do not have to revise our judgement of the addresses. They were and are printed without having changed in quality. All inscriptions are clean, recognisable and largely legible with a magnifying glass. They can be categorised as late Era III and IV.

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Oblique views of both models with their identical details in a fine finish.

The colour-contrasting UIC ventilation flaps on the model that was newly added to this family of coaches (W02-STA) are probably also printed and not applied by stencil painting. In any case, the flaps are clearly and opaquely highlighted in the colour white aluminium – the result is an impeccable job, which Azar Models, as can be read on the box, has carried out in China.



Photo above:

In this comparison, the injection moulded model (left) looks shinier than its predecessor. This is due to the smoother surface. Especially on the roof, the thin stripes of the moulded layers can still be seen in the photo. The change to the floor-operated handbrake wheel is also recognisable.

Photo below:

The two models show the most obvious differences on the wagon floor, which has been visibly reworked. The closure of the coupling shaft has also been changed. The injection moulded model is again on the left.

We have occasionally heard criticism that the control rods would also have required this colour coating. We do not see it that way and cannot identify any prototype error. We have not found any photographs of the prototype that would also emphasise such a procedure for the SNCF.

In this respect, we are delighted with these new models in the third generation, which should also bring their buyers a lot of operating fun in the other colour and print variants. We are not the only ones looking forward to the four-axle vehicles, samples of which were on display in Altenbeken last year. Both will help to make our general cargo trains look even more colourful and varied.

And since these are not only very successful, but almost completely newly designed cars from a completely different manufacturing process, they also fulfil our criteria for the annual editorial awards.



Like the colour and print variants not shown here, the two new models are by no means sidelined. On the contrary, we are nominating the version with aluminium-coloured UIC sliders as a new design for the new releases of 2025 in the wagon category.

We are nominating the standard wagon with UIC aluminium ventilation flaps (W02-STA), which has been added as a new variant, for the best new releases of 2025 in the wagon category.

Manufacturer of the basic model:
<https://azar-models.com>



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Märklin's last advertising locomotive?

The 01 on a 101

The 101 series has long been on the decline: of the 145 units once in service, Deutsche Bahn AG only has around 50 left. However, these still characterise our image of the Intercity and can be found throughout Germany. And so, Märklin decided on what is probably its last advertising locomotive of this class.

In 2025, we will be celebrating 100 years of the standardised steam locomotive, as 1925 was the year in which the 02 series (10 test locomotives) and the later series-built and more popular 01 were born. With the "star of the rails" of times gone by, it was only natural to put the anniversary of the 231 units of the standardised steam locomotive in the public eye.

As expected, this was reflected in the Märklin catalogue programme in the form of matching steam locomotive models. But the Märklin Dealer Initiative (MHI) also had something special in mind with the model. It wanted to build a bridge from 1925 to the present day and ended up with the class 101 express locomotive.



On 9 July 2025, the freshly wrapped 101 127-9 presents itself exclusively to the photographer as probably the last advertising locomotive of its class.

With several generation leaps, it is virtually a great-granddaughter of the steam locomotive, as the original task for both is the high-quality express train service. What were once FD and FFD or, after the war, F trains, became the Intercity train class from 1971. The identical class designation, which differs only in the prefix for the traction type, also indicates the same use.

But how does a model railway manufacturer sensibly place an 01 on the locomotive body of a 101? Both a model and prototype motif of the complete locomotive would have been conceivable, but this would not



It all started on the morning of 8 July 2025: 101 127-9 has arrived at the DB Regio depot, been thoroughly cleaned and is now waiting for the film to be applied. Within hours, her exterior will be completely transformed.

really have been new, because such approaches already existed in the ancestor series of Märklin advertising locomotives.

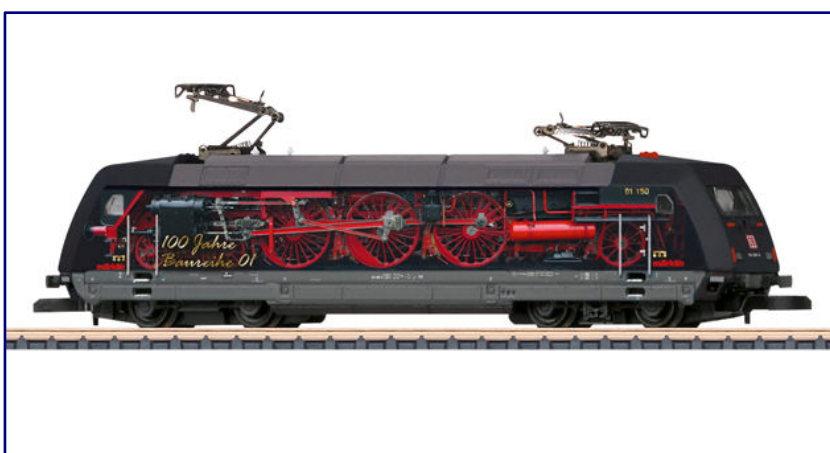
In addition, the black of a steam locomotive promises a certain elegance that is also striking in everyday life.

This is a good and sensible approach for the base colour. However, it is also clear that the side wall can only accommodate a section of the 01.

The only thing on offer was the red contrasting chassis, a good choice, as it turned out.

Märklin customers got an impression of the planned motif very early this time: While the prototype for the “160 Years of Märklin” anniversary in 2019

was faster and models had not even been announced yet, the planned motif was already available in its preliminary form among the 2025 summer new items. The rolling advertising space will appear in the H0 (item no. 39479) and Z (88668) gauges for the ordering MHI.



The model of the MHI advertising locomotive was announced with this product picture. A few things have changed in the prototype: Instead of 01 150, the bogie of the 01 66 can be seen there, which was also taken in the so-called Bellingrodt position. Illustration: Märklin

The operating number remains open (almost) until the day of application. It is only possible to plan in advance to a limited extent which machine will ultimately be designed. Time and again, locomotives have to be taken out of circulation plans or inserted as replacements due to unforeseeable events such as defects or accidents.



The film rolls with the individual motif sections are ready, the work can begin and should be completed the same day.

Now also on the road in the original

On 8 July 2025, almost exactly six years after the big day of 101 064-4, 101 127-9 once again did the honours at DB Regio's Dortmund depot. It will commemorate the steam locomotive's milestone birthday throughout Germany for around a year, while its sister locomotive went the way of old iron in May 2025 and was dismantled at Bender in Opladen.

So, there was a touch of melancholy as a 101 stood in front of us for perhaps the last time, waiting to be transformed into a rolling work of art. But not everything went according to plan early in the morning: when we called the factory, we were told to take our time, as the locomotive had not yet been "run in".



Decaling begins on the front of driver's cab 2. The first black foils have been applied, cut out at the grip plates and arrived at the transition to the bevelled edge. The hot air gun is needed here to apply and align along this edge.

Instead, it had reached the neighbouring long-distance depot, where the gluing could not take place. An instructed train driver was needed to operate the machines and transfer them to DB Regio. Once this was done, the obligatory basic cleaning was due.

The employees of the company carrying out the order were nevertheless full of zest for action and immediately announced that they wanted to make up for lost time. 101 064-4 was to be completely covered on the same day in any case.

Compared to the aforementioned locomotive, the object of desire now stood on a different shed track. The reason for this was that it had been rebuilt in the meantime, which would not have allowed sufficient access to all areas at the original location.

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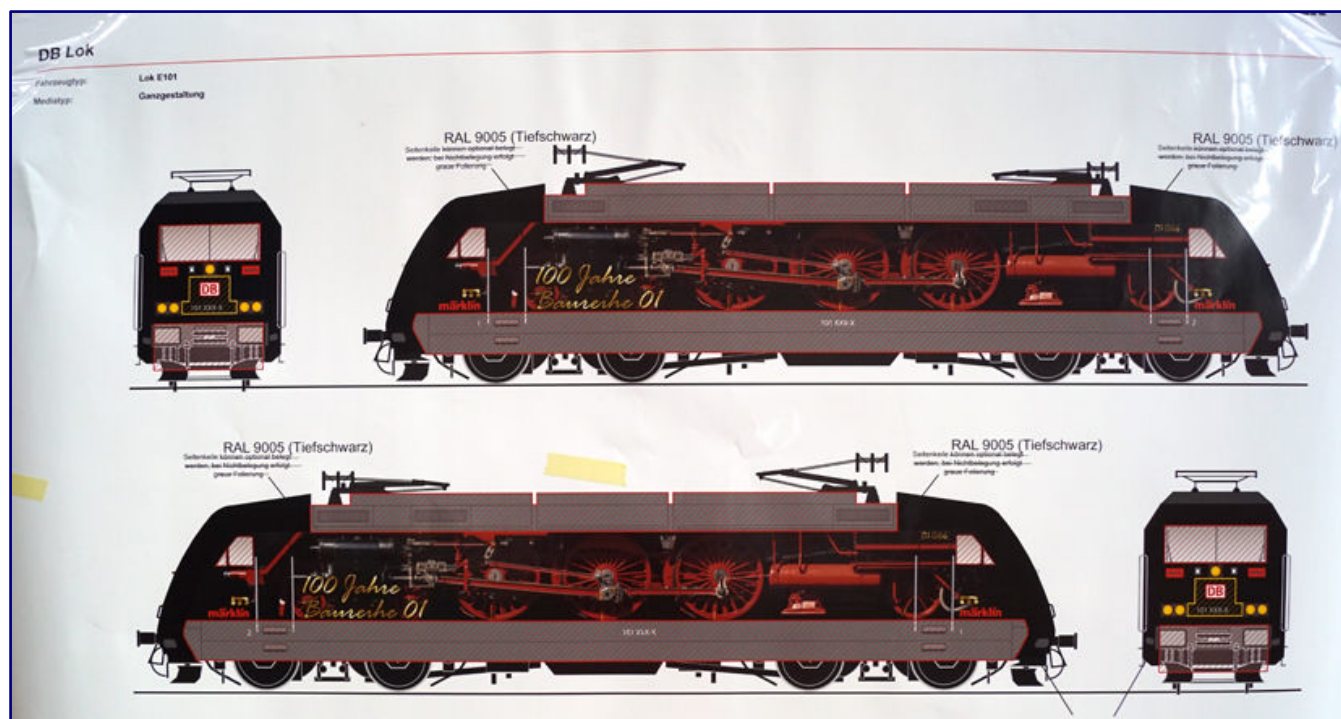


Photo above:

A separate film is used to show how the overall motif is distributed across the various rolls, their designations and their exact position on the locomotive body. During the work, this auxiliary film is fixed to a side wall as long as it is not yet being worked on.

Photo below:

Another film shows the overall motif and the RAL colours used. Both show areas that must not be covered (cross hatched in red) or that require special treatment (cross hatched in yellow).

In addition to the machine cleaning, a supplementary hand wash was also required. The areas of the front sides above the driver's cab windows were treated with special cleaning agents and insect removers so as not to impair the adhesion of the black foils.

And then we could finally get started. First of all, the lower front area of one side of the locomotive was transformed into a black surface. Slowly, it also grew in height, whereby the handle areas, sockets and lanterns had to be carefully cut out. For the time being, the sloping and slightly curved surfaces at the transition to the sides were left out.

Instead, it was now the turn of the first side surface. This is where the printed motifs were used, which were spread across many rolls of film, all of which were labelled and had to be applied slightly overlapping so that no gaps could be visible.



In the meantime, the motif on the long side of the locomotive becomes recognisable: the third of four large rolls is aligned and glued to the side wall.

Aligning them all horizontally and applying them correctly gave the impression of a highly demanding task. The two men looked through the many rolls of film specifically for the motifs they were looking for and routinely selected the ones they needed in order to continue working on the locomotive.

Roll after roll was pulled out, tested and then a first motif was applied to the side wall. The only option was a motif element on the lower edge of the frame, which could also be used as a further finish on the driver's cab door – this served as the starting point for the long side wall.

From there, the overall picture became increasingly recognisable. Large magnets helped to move the next film into position and check that it fitted correctly. Once it was a rough fit, the protective film was removed and an adhesive edge applied.



The fourth roll is being processed. In addition to the fan in the roof area, the picture also shows one of the bar magnets used to fix the adhesive films before removing the protective film in order to align them first.

However, parts of the image had to be removed several times, readjusted and lightly pressed on again. Once everything was in place, it was time to press it onto the surface. The adhesive side was now pressed onto the locomotive body with a plastic spatula and at the same time air inclusions in the form of bubbles were smoothed out towards the edges.

Over several hours, it was possible to watch Märklin's advertising motif take shape, as if in fast motion. Even though it was familiar from the drafts and drawings, it was to have a completely different effect on the viewer on such a large surface. One reason for this was the high gloss level of the 3M films, which made it difficult for the photographer to document everything without light reflections.

Finally, it was also the turn of the sloping side of driver's cab 2 and the black surface was closed on at least one side. With the application of the Dürr biscuit and the white lettering of the road number, this front side was finished.

First comparison of prototype and model

After the DB staff had to move the locomotive inside the shed, it was now possible to take a shot from a suitable angle that no longer showed any open working areas.



101 127-9 has to be moved to another track inside the locomotive shed using a transfer table in order to cover the second end.

While work continued on the opposite long side, the time had come to place the hand samples from Göppingen on the UIC step of the locomotive and to photograph them together with a partial view of the prototype.

It should also be mentioned that these hand samples did not yet have a road number. They would only follow as soon as the final prototype documentation was available. The necessary changes also include minor shifts in the motif, which result from practical reasons in order to avoid the inclusion of interfering elements.

They can result from door edges, steps or even handle bars if these are positioned unfavourably in the picture motif. The professionals reacted to this as far as possible, but this will now also result in adjustments to the prints of the models.

For example, the axle of the trailer has shifted towards the centre of the door compared to the original plan. The position of locomotive number 01 066 also had to be slightly corrected. Incidentally, 01 150 was still planned in the first plans, but the photo for the design did not have sufficient resolution for the project. New photos therefore had to be taken.

While we were busy comparing the prototype and hand samples, the large locomotive made rapid progress. In the meantime, the second front on driver's cab 1 was also closing and the work was coming to an end on the evening of 8 July. Finally, all the cuts for the handles and washing nozzles were made and a busy day came to an end.

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Work on 101 127-9 is nearing completion (photo above). Compared to the morning, it is unrecognisable. Meanwhile, the hand samples for the H0 and Z scale models, still without a road number, have taken their place on the UIC step of the template (photo below).



Photo above:

The big moment is approaching, the locomotive is ready to leave the hall and will soon be on public display. It should only be a few hours before the first sightings by railway photographers outside the factory.

Photo below:

Only a few changes will have to be made to the two hand samples from Märklin. Now that the road number has also been finalised, minor motif corrections can also be made, which can be identified by comparing them with the prototype photos.

The next morning, things were to continue from 8.00 a.m.: 101 127-9 was ready for its first trip out of the engine shed. But before this could happen, there were still a few things to be sorted out at the factory. Not only did an engine driver have to be found, but safety requirements also had to be met. Finally, the moment was approaching when the overhead line would have to be energised.

The remaining time was used to finalise the script for the exit and to position the cameras: What would the sequence look like? Which shots should be taken and when? And which track would the locomotive then be moved to?

The skies were also favourable and did not shower the two press representatives with rain. However, the cloudy sky was in their favour, as it reduced the reflections on the high-gloss locomotive surfaces!



The cloudy sky favours the portrait shot of the locomotive after it has been positioned on track 407. In the high-gloss foils, any light source would otherwise cause disturbing reflections. Thanks to the diffuse light, however, the locomotive was easy for Märklin to document.

And so, the almost ceremonial rolling out of the engine shed, the movement over the transfer table and parking on open track 407, which offered perfect conditions for taking pictures of 101 127-9 from all sides, succeeded.

Finally, the preparatory step of distortion-free photo documentation, which is so important for model productions, was also waiting here, carried out by a representative of MHI. The locomotive was to return to service the very next day: Its first service in its new livery was the empty run LPFT 78237, with which the coach set for IC 2157 was transferred from Dortmund Bbf to Köln Hbf (Cologne).



Her first service after the livery was applied was 101 127-9 as the new star in the advertising sky with LPFT 78237 from Dortmund Bbf to Köln Hbf (Cologne) to provide the set for IC 2157. With the power unit of 01 066 applied over the whole area, it drove in front of the photographer's lens at Solingen Hbf on 10 July 2025. Photo: Joachim Bügel, Railway Foundation

While we are finishing these lines here, the work in Göppingen is now in full swing at full speed. And we hope that this report will whet your appetite for the two miniatures in H0 and Z gauges. With a look at the history of the large prototype, they will certainly become something very special!.

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

Briefcase in South Africa

My Z Scale Story

How it all began: Our reader had no interest in Z gauge until he was asked to help with the sale of a model train collection. It was love at first sight and a new passion was born which gained Mini-Club a foothold at the Cape of Good Hope. Evert Loo from South Africa presents his suitcase layout today.

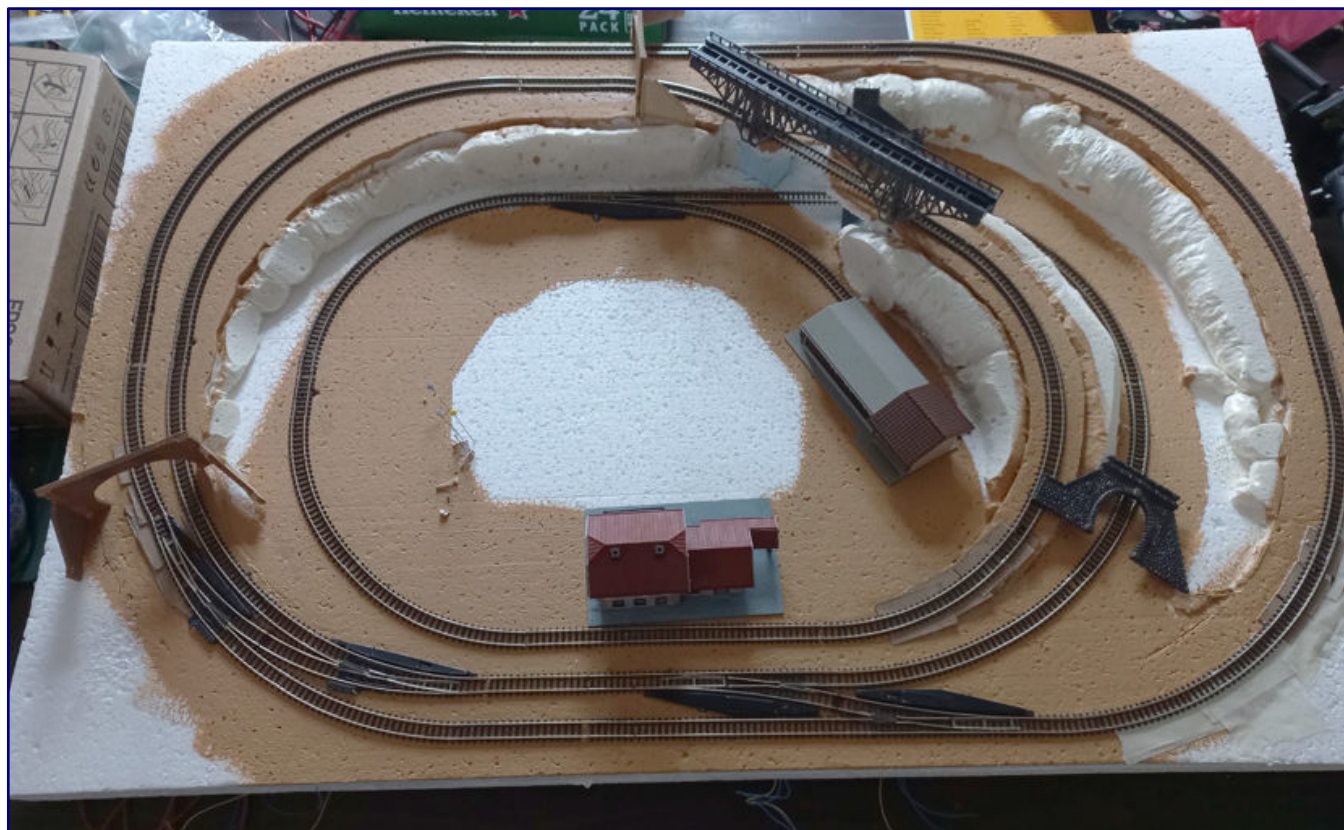
From Evert Loo. I was aware of Märklin Z gauge but had never seen it in real life. As my focus is N gauge, I was not really interested in it. I'm also very involved in model railways by repairing and maintaining them and by selling them on the second-hand market. And, I try to help where I can.



An impressive landscape unfolds in this suitcase layout: This is how Mini-Club at Evert Loo's home in South Africa comes to life every day.

My sister-in-law's father asked me if I could help him sell all his stuff as it was just sitting around in boxes. When I saw his Märklin Z gauge items and how they worked, I fell in love with them and just had to try them out. I became addicted! That was in October 2017, almost eight years ago.

Over the years I've established quite a collection and built four layouts for other people. But I also wanted a small layout to take home, so I started to hatch a plan.



This bird's eye view of the layout with track shows the position of the tunnel portals, buildings, and bridge. You can also see how everything is based on a machined foam board.

I saw one of the Noch briefcase layouts and decided to see what was on the market as inspiration for building my own layout from scratch.

In the end, I decided to follow the design of the Noch "Meran" briefcase layout. I recreated the track plan almost exactly as in the original, with the exception of an extra turnout at the back of the inner loop so that I could add the Wintersdorf goods shed (Märklin 8971). I also have the Wintersdorf station (Märklin 8970) and wanted to add it to the front of the layout.

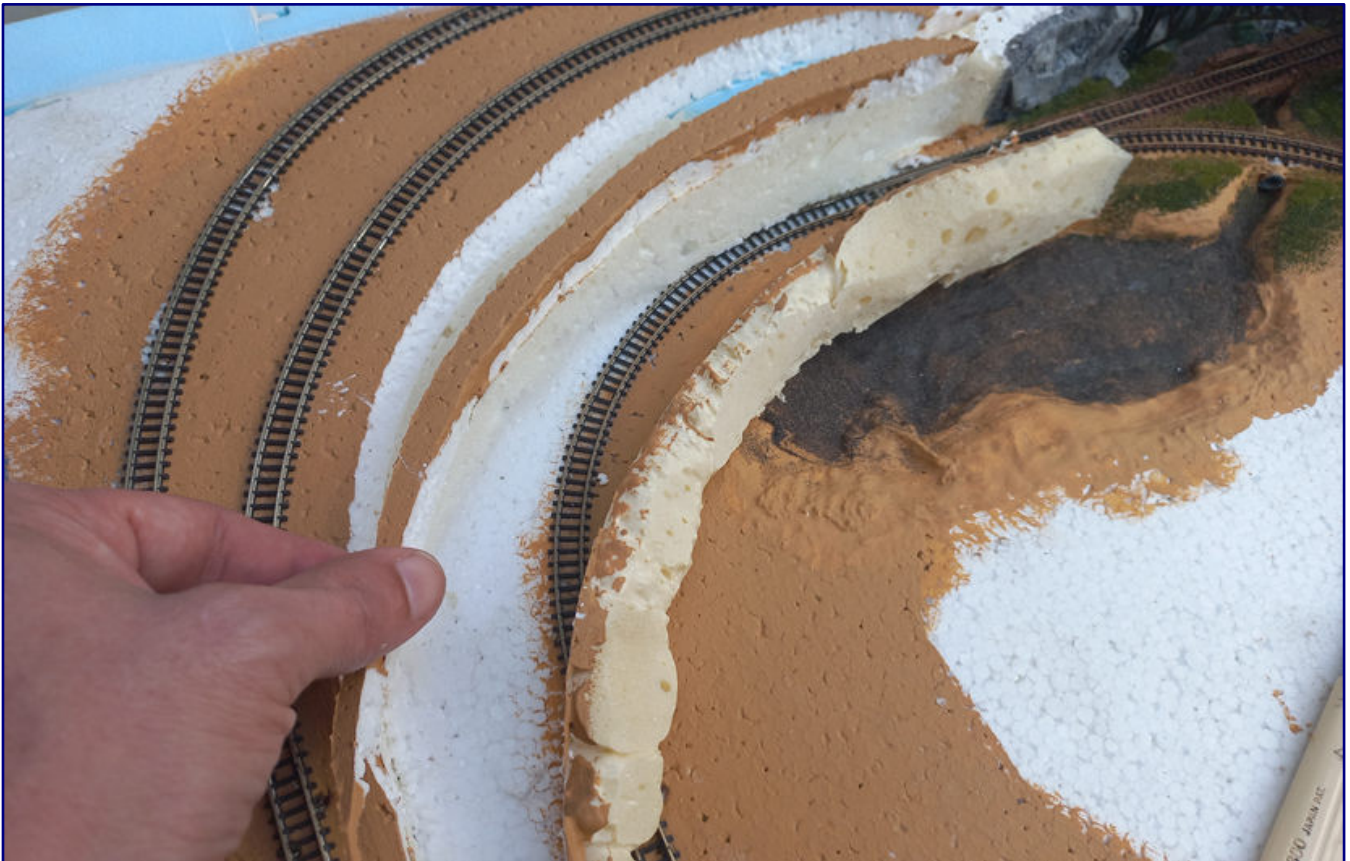
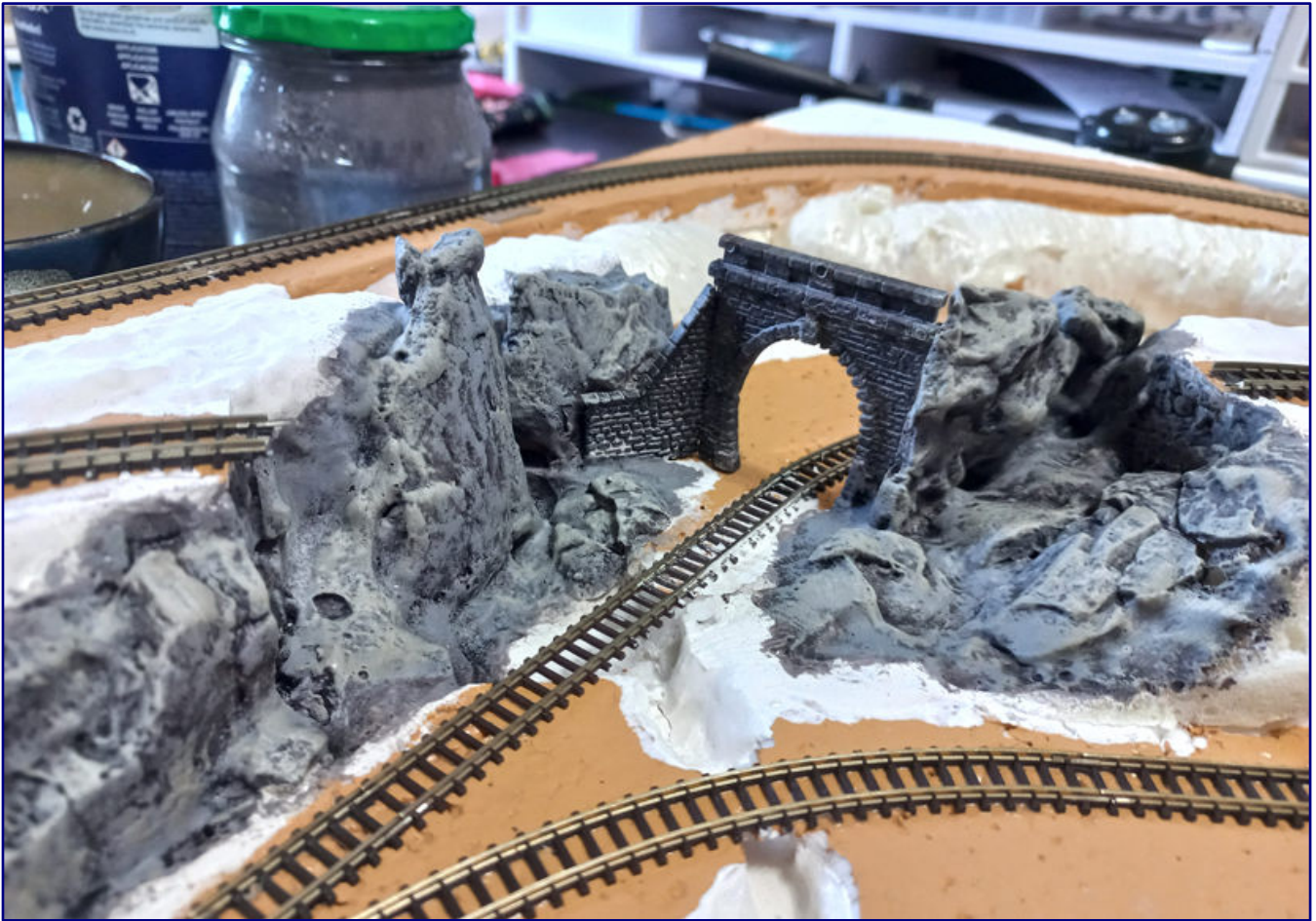
Having collected enough Märklin track from the collections I had bought over the years, I didn't have to buy any new. There are no shops in South Africa that sell Märklin Z gauge, so everything is second hand or specially imported from one of the manufacturers.

The building process

As this was to be a layout that I could take with me, I made the base from 10 mm thick foam sheets to keep it as light as possible. The slopes were cut out and raised to the correct height, as with the cookie cutter method.

I filled all the resulting gaps with expanded foam (XPS / Styrodur) which made for a very solid base. First, I painted it with a brown earth colour, then I laid the track.

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A few rocks were placed next to the tunnel portals and around the bridge (photo on page 27, top) and coloured with grey, black, and white paint in several stages. To make room for the mountain, some of the polystyrene had to be cut away (photo on page 27, bottom).

Its frame was created using polystyrene sheets, which were used vertically and horizontally (photo above). The snow shed (photo below) is also self-built and is shown here in its unfinished state, but with the retaining wall already in place.

The track was glued in place with Elmer's wood glue. This does not damage the track and allows for possible changes or repairs, if necessary. Then it was time for extensive test drives. As a result of these tests, I added pieces of thin cardboard in sections where the surface was not perfect. This raised the track slightly so that the trains ran more reliably.

I like mountains, bridges and tunnels, and think that these are elements which make a layout interesting. Mine also has a bridge, of course, because the inner loop crosses itself. I decided to build a mountain on one side and another short tunnel behind the bridge.

Then, I also had to build the snow shed myself. I thought this was a nice feature on the original Noch layout, so I wanted to add it. I cast all the rocks using Woodland Scenics rock moulds.



The snow shed, now also equipped with concrete foundations and supports to protect against rockfall and avalanches, does not fail to make an impact in the designed landscape.

Then I painted them with different shades of grey and a black wash. I also applied some light grey with a dry brush to emphasise the light spots on the rocks.

I used Woodland Scenics products for the scenery:

- Turf mix, soil mix, and green mix,
- fine turf, withered grass and weeds, and
- bushes and forest blend, medium green, and olive green.



Figure scenes bring a layout to life. Evert Loo has used them skilfully and lets us experience a busy day on the goods shed.

I used the Static King grass applicator from Woodland Scenics to electrostatically apply 2 mm short grass in the colours dark green, light green, and medium green, and 4 mm long straw grass. The combination of all these colours results in a very realistic look.

I also used the fine brown ballast from Woodland Scenics and painted the rails with rust colour to give the track a more realistic look. For the water, I used clear resin with a few drops of blue and brown colour. The ripples on the surface were created with Water Effects from Woodland Scenics.

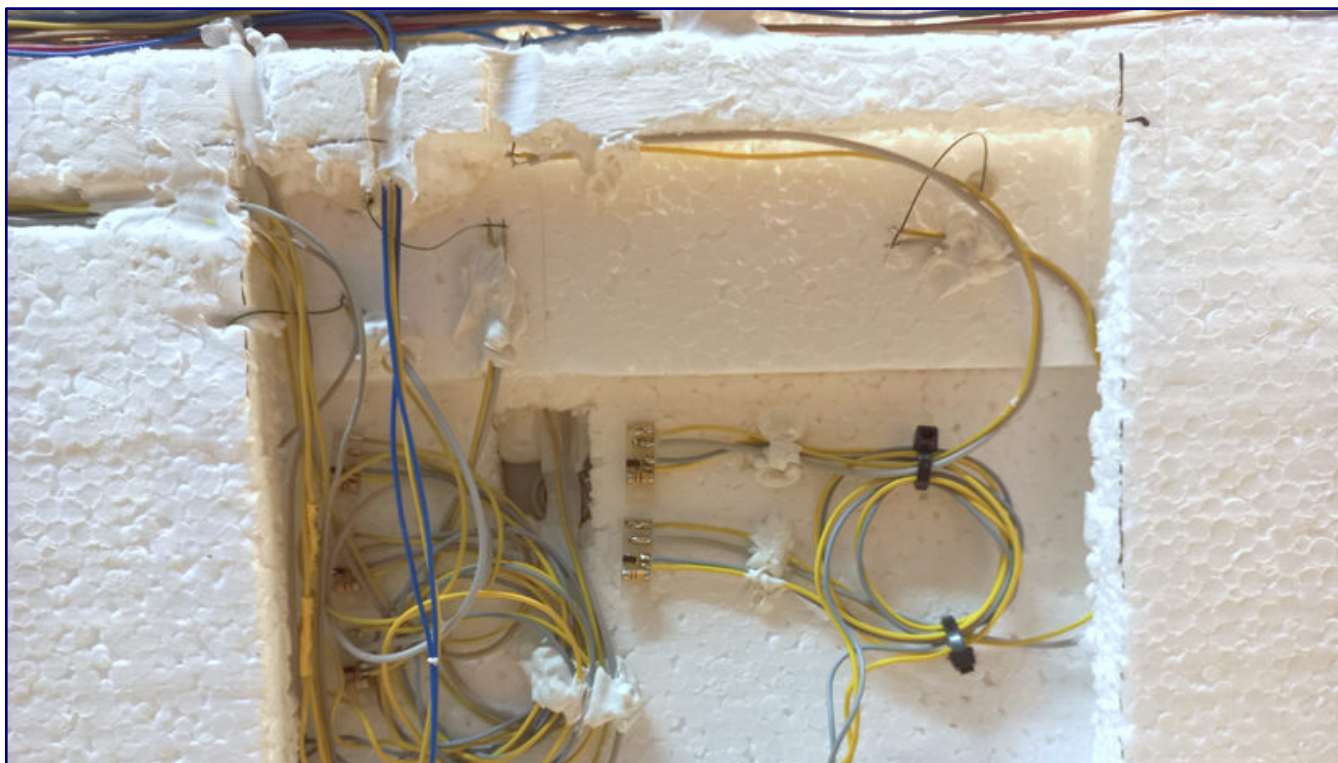
Then there are all the additional details that make a layout complete: The cars and lorries are from Märklin and I painted them myself. The figures and freights are all from Preiser.

The lights installed on the platforms and in the goods loading area are again from Märklin. However, I soldered the connections as the retaining clips on them came loose and were not as reliable as I wanted them to be. The wires on these lights are very small, so this was quite a challenge.

The suitcase and the future

I built the case from 6 mm thick pine wood and stained it a little darker to give it a slightly older look. Finally, it was painted with a clear, semi-gloss exterior varnish so that the wood is better protected when travelling.

continued on page 32



I used the Static King grass applicator from Woodland Scenics to electrostatically apply 2 mm short grass in the colours dark green, light green, and medium green, and 4 mm long straw grass. The combination of all these colours results in a very realistic look.



I plan to add four more signals soon, which have already been ordered from Märklin, and a friend is painting a nice backscene for me that will be visible when the layout is open.

And there is still room for another bush or tree.

So, this is how I have created a nice little layout for myself. I can run trains on it and just sit back and watch them while I relax.

Who would have thought it? After all, my train to Mini-Club wasn't a direct one, but now I'm hooked!

The bridge was fitted with prototypical forced rails to prevent derailments.



With this romantic view of Wintersdorf railway station, taken under the South African sun, we bid farewell to the Cape of Good Hope.

All photos: Evert Loo

Manufacturers mentioned in the article:

<https://www.maerklin.de>
<https://www.noch.de>
<https://www.preiserfiguren.de>
<https://woodlandscenics.woodlandscenics.com>

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.

Stichbahn an der Geislinger Steige **Lokale Entwicklungshilfe?**

Die Lokalbahn Amstetten – Gerstetten wurde am oberen Ende der Geislinger Steige als private Bahn gebaut. Sie sollte weitere Gemeinden an die Hauptbahn Stuttgart – Ulm und damit die große, weite Welt anbinden. Doch ohne eine UEF-Sektion und Engagement von Anliegergemeinden wäre sie längst Geschichte. Seit rund 30 Jahren dient sie mit touristischem Hintergrund dem Museumsbetrieb. Ein neues Buch fasst all das und noch mehr zusammen.

Korbinian Fleischer
Der Alb-Express
Die Lokalbahn Amstetten - Gerstetten

Transpress Verlag
Stuttgart 2025

Gebundenes Buch
Format 24,0 x 22,0 cm
128 Seiten mit 175 überwiegend farbigen Abbildungen

ISBN 978-3-613-71705-3
Best.-Nr. 71705
Preis 24,90 EUR (Deutschland)

Erhältlich direkt ab Verlag
oder im Fach- und Buchhandel

Wer den Autor Korbinian Fleischer kennen lernen durfte, der erkennt sofort, wie er vom Virus Eisenbahn befallen ist. Schon seit vielen Jahren macht er als Redakteur und qualifizierter Autor regelmäßig auf sich aufmerksam.

Fast schon legendär ist auch seine Spurensuche nach aufgelassenen Bahnlinien, die er mit dem Fahrrad absolviert und unter anderem mit der Buchreihe „Schienenwege gestern und heute“ einem breiten Publikum zugänglich gemacht hat. So weiß er seine Eisenbahnleidenschaft mit Sport und Erholung zu verbinden.

Geboren 1981 in Geislingen an der Steige, ist er geradezu prädestiniert, die Lokalbahn Amstetten – Gerstetten am oberen Ende der Steilstrecke zu porträtieren. Zudem ist er auch seit über zwanzig Jahren in der Museumsbahnszene aktiv, war zeitweilig auch Vorsitzender der Lokalbahn Amstetten – Gerstetten e.V. Wer also sollte hier besser berichten können?

Im 1960 in Berlin gegründeten Transpress VEB Verlag für Verkehrswesen und 1991 von den Paul-Pietzsch-Verlagen übernommenen Haus passt ein solcher Geschichtstitel perfekt ins Programm. Er gehört zu den wenig „echten“ Neuheiten, das heißt vollständig neu geschriebenen Büchern.

Anlass war das 175-jährige Jubiläum der Geislinger Steige in diesem Jahr, von deren Verlauf, die Lokalbahn ausgeht, und das anstehende 120-jährige Jubiläum eben dieser Stichbahn im nächsten Jahr. Sie dürfte also einiges an Aufmerksamkeit auf sich ziehen und das vorliegende Werk möchte hier einen initialen wie dauerhaften Start leisten.



Entsprechend breit ist die Zielgruppe: Nicht nur eingefleischte Eisenbahnhistoriker und Bahnfreunde sind angesprochen, sondern auch Reisende und allgemein Geschichtsinteressierte, die Baden-Württemberg bereisen und vielleicht eine eindrucksvolle Dampf- oder Ausflugsfahrt erleben möchten.

Und das ist mit einer bunten Mischung an Themen und Facetten bestens gelungen: Die Geschichte der privat von der WEG finanzierten Bahnlinie in Normalspur verteilt sich heute auf rund 90 Jahre Regel- und 30 Jahre Museumsbetrieb. Der Verkehr mit historischen Zügen begann aber schon weitaus früher, womit das zeitliche Verhältnis beinahe ins Gleichgewicht gerückt wird.

Folglich konnte ein Portrait von Strecke, Betreiber und Fahrzeugen nicht auf die Zeit beschränkt bleiben, als dort noch planmäßiger Personen- und Güterzugverkehr erfolgte. Der museale Betrieb hat ebenso seine Berechtigung und gleichermaßen Anteil an der erzählten Geschichte. Heute gehört diese Lokalbahn zu den bekanntesten Museumsstrecken Deutschlands und hier wird deutlich, warum das so ist.

Neben Sachverstand auch mit erkennbar großer Leidenschaft erzählt Korbinian Fleischer die Geschichte dieses Alb-Express in vielen kleinen Kapiteln, die gut und unterhaltsam zu lesen sind. Gut strukturiert arbeitet er die rund 20 km lange Strecke Bahnhof für Bahnhof ab. Dabei präsentiert er keine „schwere Kost“, sondern kurzweilige Ausführungen mit hohem Informationsgehalt.

Die Ausführungen reichen vom Bau und Betrieb der Strecke und alle (früheren) Unterwegshalte bis zu sämtlichen Fahrzeugen, die dort unterwegs waren und sind, sofern sie historisch dokumentiert sind. Eingeschlossen sind sogar Bahndienstfahrzeuge und rollende Hilfsmittel, die dem Erhalt der Trasse dienen.

Fast schon nebenbei erfahren wir auch die Geschichte der Ulmer Eisenbahnfreunde (UEF) und deren späteres Aufteilen in Sektionen sowie Unternehmen der Gegenwart für das Betreiben von Infrastruktur und Betrieb. Selbst Gastfahrzeuge auf der Lokalbahn werden nicht ausgelassen.

Machte diese Bahnstrecke einst Menschen mobil, brachte sie zur Arbeit oder Schule und sicherte Einkaufsmöglichkeiten außerhalb des eigenen Dorfes, so hat sie heute touristischen Wert, der seit 2021 in den Sommermonaten durch einen bestellten Freizeitverkehr unterstrichen wird.

Seit 1996 betrieb die UEF Lokalbahn die Strecke als Museumsbahn, um dann nur ein Jahr später einen Kauf zu stemmen, der den Überlebensweg sicherte. Sonst wäre dieser Weg an der Stelle zu Ende gewesen. Wie lebendig die Bahn bis heute ist, ließ sich erst Ende Juni erleben, als sie in die Feierlichkeiten zu 175 Jahren Geislinger Steige mit eigenem Programm teilnahm.

In einer einmaligen Weise wurde diese lange Zeit so zusammengefasst, dass nichts zu fehlen scheint. Wir formulieren nur deshalb vorsichtig, weil gewiss auch kleinere Anekdoten und Randerscheinungen mangels Dokumentation vergessen und verloren sind. Was nicht ein solches Schicksal erlitten hat, hat der Autor in vorbildlicher Weise zusammengetragen und aufbereitet.

Deshalb nominieren wir diese Lektüre mit ihren erfrischend informativen Inhalten für jedermann für die Neuerscheinungen des Jahres 2025 in der Kategorie Literatur.

Publisher's webpages:

<https://motorbuch-versand.de/transpress>

Schnellzugdampflok Baureihe 01¹⁰ im Portrait **Höchstleistung nach schwierigem Start**

Als Baureihe 012 besiegelte die stärkste Schnellzug-Seriendampflok der DB am 31. Mai 1975 eine Ära in Westeuropa. Tausende Eisenbahnfreunde aus vielen Ländern waren zuvor an die Emslandstrecke gereist, um ihren Abschied auf Zelluloid festzuhalten. Bis heute blieb sie unvergessen und so freuen wir uns über einen neuen EK-Band zu ihrer spannenden Geschichte.



Frank Lüdecke
Die Baureihe 01¹⁰
Betriebsmaschinendienst, Einsatz bei den
Bahnbetriebswerken und erhaltene Lokomotiven

EK-Verlag - EK Medien GmbH
Freiburg (Breisgau) 2024

Gebundenes Buch
Format 21,0 x 29,7 cm
320 Seiten mit 568 teilweise farbigen Abbildungen

ISBN 978-3-8446-6065-4
Art.-Nr. 6065
Preis 54,00 EUR (Deutschland)

Erhältlich direkt ab Verlag
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Fast genau 15 Jahre mussten Leser nach Erscheinen von Band 1 warten, bis die Geschichte der Schnellzugdampflok Baureihe 01¹⁰ beim Eisenbahn-Kurier nun zu Ende erzählt wurde. Irgendwann wurde es nur allzu deutlich, dass es von Jürgen-Ulrich Ebel den versprochenen Folgebund nicht geben wird.

Gleichwohl hat der Verlag mit Frank Lüdecke kompetenten Ersatz gefunden, der diese Aufgabe mit großem Engagement erfolgreich angegangen ist. Er zeichnet nun den Einsatz und die Betriebsgeschichte der schweren Pazifik-Lokomotiven nach.

Geeignet ist er dazu nicht nur als renommierter Autor und ausgewiesener Fachmann für ölgefeuerte Dampflokomotiven, sondern auch wegen seines persönlichen Kontakts zu ihnen in ihren letzten Dienstjahren. Das hat unsere Erwartungen – auch angesichts der bekannt hohen Qualität der EK-Baureihenbücher – kräftig in die Höhe geschraubt.

Im Folgenden werden wir herausarbeiten, wie weit das vorliegende Werk diesen gerecht werden konnte. Werfen wir zunächst einen Blick auf die behandelte Baureihe: Hinter ihrem Kürzel verbirgt sich die stärkste in Serie gebaute Schnellzugdampflok Deutschlands, die mit den höchsten Laufleistungen im deutschen und auch europäischen Maßstab sowie den schnellsten dampfbespannten Schnellzügen Europas in die Geschichtsbücher eingegangen ist.

Laufleistungen und Fahrplangeschwindigkeiten sind eng mit dem Betriebseinsatz verknüpft und deshalb Gegenstand dieses Buches, das nicht als Band 2 deklariert ist, wie uns auffallen musste. Die genannten Rekorde datieren alle auf die Nachkriegszeit und stehen alle in der Folge einer Modernisierung.

Das verwundert nicht, denn die Premiere 1939 stand angesichts des Kriegsausbruchs unter keinem guten Stern. Als nicht kriegswichtig eingestuft, wurden alle Bestellungen storniert, die nicht durch erfolgten Baubeginn verhindert wurden.

Nur 55 Exemplare gelangten als Stromlinienlok auf die Schienen und glänzten nur kurz in ihrem Einsatzspektrum. Der Krieg hinterließ zerstörte, defekte und vernachlässigte Maschinen mit teilweise rückgebauter Stromschale und maroden Kesseln.

Die junge Bundesbahn, bei der alle Exemplare verblieben waren, konnte auf lange Zeit nicht auf sie verzichten und ließ sie Mitte der fünfziger Jahre zu neuer Blüte erwachen: Ohne Stromlinienverkleidung und mit neuen Hochleistungskesseln versehen sowie teilweise Ölfeuerung umgebaut, liefen sie zur Bestform auf.

Bis zu 28.000 Kilometer pro Monat stehen in den Betriebsbüchern, die allerdings mit vielen Schäden und hohen Unterhaltungskosten erkaufte wurden. Diese Schnellzugdampflok hatte halt auch konstruktive Schwächen, wie im vergriffenen Band 1 deutlich wurde.

Jede einzelne Lok wird mit Endabnahme, Erstzuteilung, Umbeheimatungen, Neubekesselung, Umrüsten auf Ölhauptfeuerung und Ausmusterung ausführlich behandelt und dokumentiert. Ein eigenes Kapitel geht auf die unterschiedlichen Lokschilder ein – eine Besonderheit bei diesen Maschinen.

Frank Lüdecke zeichnet zudem den Einsatz von 1939 bis zu ihrem Ende Mitte 1975 in insgesamt 30 Betriebswerken von Bebra bis Würzburg detailliert nach. Enthalten sind kurzzeitige Stationierungen ebenso wie die bekannten Hochburgen dieser Baureihe.

Sehr ausführlich und gut bebildert sind, das war zu erwarten, die letzten Kapitel der Betriebsgeschichte in den Bw Hamburg-Altona, Kassel, Osnabrück und Rheine. So schließt sich der Kreis von teilweise eher unbekannten Informationen bis hin zur bestens dokumentierten Endphase der nun als 012 bezeichneten Baureihe auf der Emslandstrecke.

Inhaltlich abgerundet werden die durchweg kurzweilig zu lesenden und bildlich bestens dokumentierten Texte durch ergänzende Kapitel, die sich dem Versuchsdienst und auch Erfahrungsberichten widmen. So kommen nicht nur nüchterne Fakten, sondern auch höchst persönliche Eindrücke zum Gesamtbild, das wir als rund bezeichnen möchten.

Eine glückliche Fügung war das lange Warten auf dieses Werk dahingehend, dass das Kapitel zu den zehn erhaltenen Exemplaren davon profitiert hat. Nur zwei sind bei Erscheinen betriebsfähig gewesen, mit 012 104-6 fand sich aber eine besondere Vorlage.

In Bezug auf ihr Wiedererwachen in einem Zeitraum von mehr als zehn Jahren handelt es sich da nicht nur um eine sehr aktuelle Geschichte. Ihre Geschichte macht anschaulich, wie viel Arbeit, Geld, Mühen und auch Ausdauer erforderlich sind, um ein bedeutendes Stück Technikgeschichte zurückzubringen. Eisenbahnfreunde können sich auf Sonderfahrten vom Ergebnis selbst überzeugen.

Für unser zusammenfassendes Fazit bedienen wir uns eines Satzes aus den offiziellen Verlagsinformationen: Das Buch setzt der für viele Eisenbahnfreunde faszinierendsten deutschen Dampflokomotive ein würdiges Denkmal.

Dem ist einfach nichts hinzuzufügen – mit einer Ausnahme: Da der Verlag zwar 2024 als Erscheinungsjahr ausweist, der Titel aber erst im Januar 2025 in den Regalen lag, werten wir ihn für das Neuheitenjahr 2025.

Das ist insofern relevant, als dass dieses Meisterwerk hiermit für die Neuerscheinungen des Jahres 2025 in der Kategorie Literatur nominiert wird. Uns fehlt eigentlich nur noch ein passendes Spur-Z-Modell in gleicher Qualität zum perfekten Glück!

Publisher's webpages:
<https://www.eisenbahn-kurier.de>
<https://www.ekshop.de>

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175 years of Geislinger Steige

Big Railway Festival for the Anniversary

The Geislinger Steige is not just a local “phenomenon”: It has been part of the important Stuttgart - Ulm railway line for 175 years now and is a bottleneck on this route. Despite the construction of a new ICE railway line, it will retain an important function in the future. This was celebrated extensively on 28 and 29 June 2025.

On 29 June 1850, the last section between Geislingen and Ulm was opened and the Geislinger Steige was opened to public transport. Exactly 175 years later, this event was to be celebrated with a large railway festival on 28 and 29 June.

The preparations took well over a year, as the town of Geislingen an der Steige had a lot planned to honour the railway line, which follows an old trade route and initiated its economic rise, in a fitting manner.



The parallel exit of both steam trains into the Geislinger Steige at the end of the second day was both a highlight and a final highlight.

The centrepiece of the celebration was, of course, the station, which offered plenty of historical traffic. The (former) cogwheel locomotive 97 501 was used in front of the historic trains, as was 58 504, behind which was 58 311, a former Baden G 12, which was quickly and appropriately signposted as a Württemberg G 12.

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Labelled as 58 504, a Württemberg G 12 with a platform wagon apparently also travelled over the Steige (photo above). The second steam train was hauled by the former cogwheel steam locomotive 97 501 (photo below).

The Austrian returnee E 94 088, as well as 364 514-0, a former DB V 60, acted as a pusher locomotive for the special trips. The highlight of the journeys over the Steige was a parallel journey by both steam trains, which we were able to capture from an open location.

Many visitors were surprised to see that Württemberg platform coaches with 3rd and 4th class were also preserved in working order. They also provided the perfect backdrop on the platform for “travellers” in period costumes, which must have made for many historic-looking souvenir photos.



Only in a black and white image does the historically dressed travelling group in front of the Württemberg platform coach BCCi 2455 look completely authentic. It was a reminder of the time when the Geislinger Steige experienced its first heyday.

E 03 001 was a reminder of the time of the high-quality long-distance trains that once had to cross the steep line every day. With a four-car intercity set in the historic purple/beige colour, it commuted several times a day between Stuttgart and Ulm with a stopover in Geislingen.

However, the purple V 100 1019 from the UEF, the 151 129-4 from Konrail in several colour schemes and the “dot locomotive” 111 213-5 from Smart Rail could also be seen and admired on the sidings.

An exhibition of historic vehicles on the road to the railway station created a fitting atmosphere in the immediate vicinity. In addition to many civilian cars from BMW, Mercedes-Benz, Opel, and Volkswagen, two former MAN 4x4s and a Bundeswehr Unimog were also on display.

Whether it was a coincidence or intentional, we do not know: a Mercedes-Benz 280 GE of the fire brigade (off-road vehicle), which is apparently still in service, but does not belong to the latest generation of vehicles of the model built to this day, also fits perfectly into the series of this automotive history.



E 03 001 travelled between Stuttgart and Ulm several times a day with historic Intercity coaches. There was an intermediate stop in Geislingen (Steige) for embarkation and disembarkation.

There was also plenty of food and drink on offer at various stalls and shops in the station area. This was a good thing, as the rest of the offerings invited visitors to linger longer. Deutsche Bahn and other companies also took advantage of this to present themselves as attractive employers. DB also offered free tickets for guided tours of the signal box.

As several departures were offered each day, but these had to be limited due to the limited space available, there were long queues and most of those interested were unfortunately left empty-handed.

As a small consolation for all those who missed out, we are able to show a view of the festival site from the signal box with special permission from the infrastructure operator. This is not a matter of course, as this is the security area of a critical infrastructure operator (KRITIS).

We have not yet looked into the rooms of the reception building: These were also included and complemented the festival theme with modelling exhibits. The Kibri model of the signal box just mentioned was on display under an acrylic glass cover. The Ulm/Neu-Ulm model railway enthusiasts responsible for the event also displayed a small section of the Steige (incline) in the same 1:87 scale.

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The Mercedes-Benz 280 GE (photo above) is itself a historic vehicle, although it was probably not only on site just as an exhibit. The Magirus round bonnet (photo below) had the task of supplying the steam locomotives' tenders with water.



Among the historic vehicles on display in the Bahnhofstraße area were a BMW 1502 (photo above) and a Mercedes-Benz 220 SE as a representative of the 'large tail fins' built from 1959 onwards, which replaced the pontoon models.



And this is what the dispatcher's view of the festivities in the station at his feet looked like - taken from the Gf signal box with the express and exclusive permission of Deutsche Bahn.

The model railway enthusiasts from Westerstetten had a much larger layout on the same theme: They were able to demonstrate Bernhard Stein's former Märklin exhibition layout, which is around eight metres long, in operation.

The central motif is the large rock formation known as the "General", parts of which had to be blasted away for the railway line. It also served as a backdrop for photos with Märklin's new items of a typical local train (item no. 81221), as both can be dated to the beginning of the 1980s.

The market leader from the district town of Göppingen had samples of various new products on the subject across all gauges and also presented itself with a sales stand and small demonstration layout (H0 gauge). Another was on display in the WMF "Fischhalle" sales room.

Another item on the programme was the premiere of the documentary film "Mit Volldampf auf die Alb" (Full steam ahead to the Alb) by Manfred Bomm and Korbinian Fleischer in the local cinema not far from the station: in 72 minutes, they present the history of the construction project of the century halfway between Paris and Vienna with a lot of historical footage.

The "Old Building" from 1445, one of the largest half-timbered houses in the world, was also a popular exhibition venue. It is home to the municipal museum, which houses a replica of the Geislinger Steige on a scale of 1:250.

The 28-metre-long Z gauge layout was built in 2000 for the 150th anniversary exactly as it was in 1925. Due to its unabridged length with the section between Geislingen and Amstetten, it can only be made accessible in a building of this size.

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As a representative of the model railway exhibits, we show another motif from Bernhard Stein's Steigen layout (photo above), today maintained by Modellbahnfreunde Westerstetten. In the meantime, the steam train with the Württemberg platform wagons is ready to depart for the Steige (photo below) and we leave the station with this motif.

It is well protected behind a glass wall, which also effectively prevents the scenery from gathering dust. Nevertheless, two of the original builders had to spend a lot of time getting it ready to run again before it could be shown in operation on the anniversary weekend (and on selected visitor days in future).



We conclude this report with a picture of the historic Geislingen railway station from 1925, taken in the “Alter Bau” (“old building”) on the 28-metre-long Z gauge layout, which we had also equipped with our own models.

We are proud to have contributed to the good visitor response – this layout was a magnet for many guests. The good cooperation in the run-up to and during the anniversary also included our contribution of rolling stock for the many sidings and sidings as well as the depot. The scenes thus presented themselves with the vibrancy of those years when the Albs ascent was still a bottleneck.

In one of the next issues, we will present this facility in detail and also go into the history of the railway platforms in more detail.

City museum and programme:

<https://stadtmuseum-geislingen.de>
<https://steigenjubilaeum.de>

Participating railway clubs:

<https://lokalbahn-lag.de> <https://modellbahnfreunde-nu.de>
<http://www.modellbahn-westerstetten.de>

Manufacturer presence:

<https://www.maerklin.de>

National Train Show 2025

Let's go to the Show!

From 14 to 19 July 2025, the 90th convention of the National Model Railroad Association took place in Novi, Michigan, which also hosted the traditional National Train Show on 19 and 20 July. This exhibition is held annually in different locations and states and is the most important in the United States. Our translator Alexander Hock was there for our readers.

By Alexander Hock. Novi is located in southeastern Michigan, a state in the Midwestern United States surrounded by four of the five Great Lakes. Novi is about 40 km from Detroit, 30 km from Ann Arbor and 15 minutes from where I live. So, off to the Train Show! My wife and I were there on Sunday, 20 July.

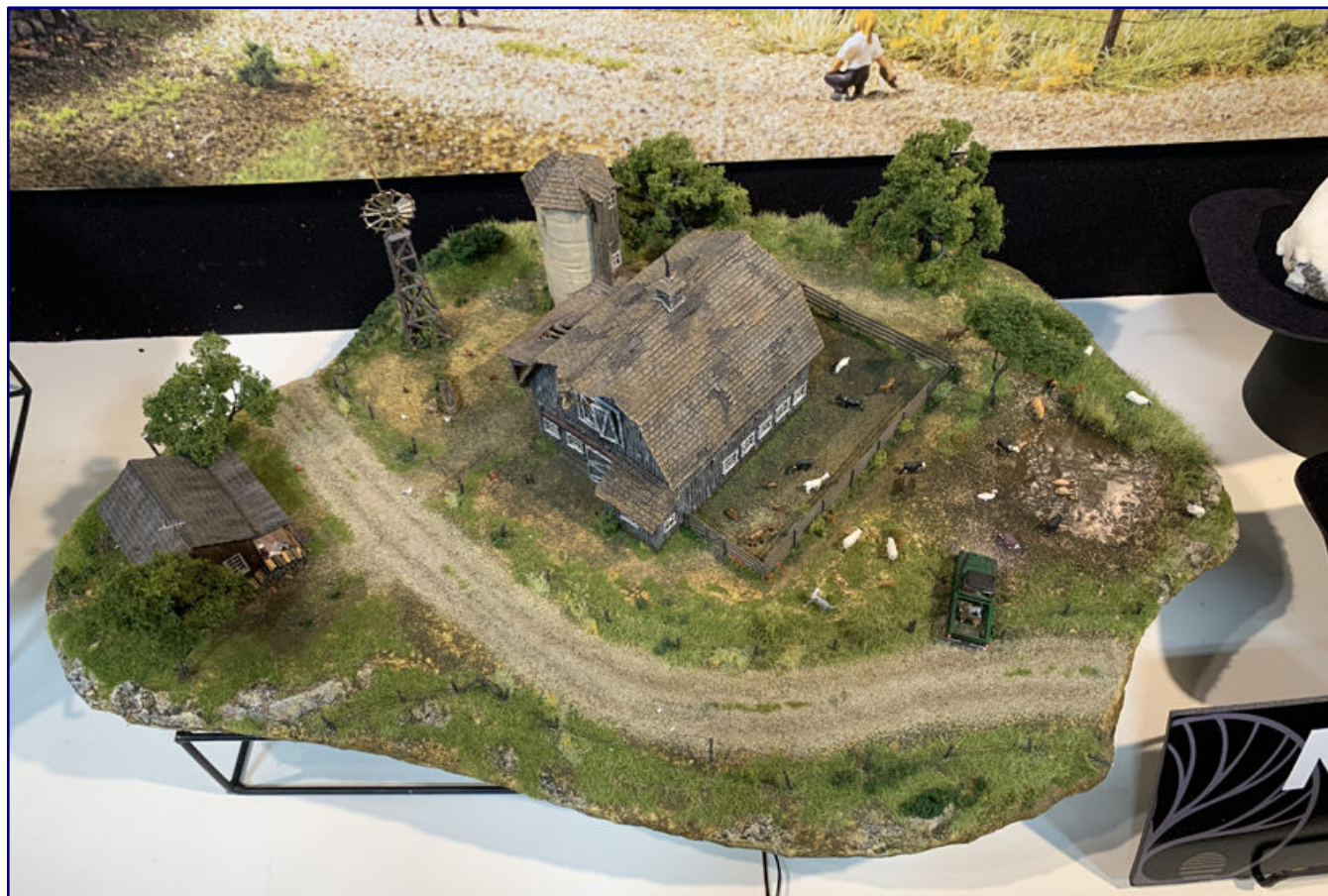


The NMRA (National Model Railroad Association) was founded in the USA in 1935 as a non-commercial organisation with the objective of developing uniform standards for model railways. Today, it has 16,000 members and is organised globally into districts. There are three districts each in the United States and Canada. The Atlantic District covers Central and South America, Africa and Western Europe. The Pacific District stretches from Turkey to New Zealand.

This year, the NMRA celebrated its 90th anniversary and hosted the NMRA Convention and the National Train Show 2025. The exhibition took place in Halls B and C of the Suburban Collection Showplace. The partition between the two halls had been removed and both halls together provided plenty of space for the event.

Right next to the two entrances and exits, there were toilets, catering facilities and places to rest. This was followed by several rows of sales booths, and behind them was the large presentation space for the layouts.

The first booth took us to Märklin, but it was very sparsely equipped. However, Z gauge was at least represented with a few exhibits. Other Z gauge manufacturers were not present. Some dealers in used models had Märklin and Rokuhan locomotives and cars on offer, as well as ready-made layouts from Noch and Tokyo Marui ProZ.



In addition to clubs, manufacturers were also present at the NTS. They demonstrated how the design material from Woodland Scenics can be used effectively.

I received a particularly warm welcome at the Ztrack booth. Robert Kluz, editor of Ztrack magazine, looked somewhat puzzled at my **Trainini®** polo shirt and asked how I came to be wearing it.

After I introduced myself, he took a lot of time to show me a Norfolk & Western J-Class 4-8-4 with a brass housing from AZL, which he had unpacked the day before and was presenting on his layout: an exceptionally beautiful model with a sophisticated design. He also had other AZL and Rokuhan items as well as kits from Archistories at the booth.

I also really liked the Woodland Scenics booth. Not only were small dioramas on display, but there were also demonstrations of how model railroaders can create their own.

Layout presentations

Of course, Z gauge was not well represented, but there was a small area with showpieces and also some operation. However, the layout area was dominated by the larger gauges and huge modular layouts. "Bigger is better" is simply the motto of the USA and there is just enough space.

These were often modular layouts from modelling clubs in N, O, and S gauges. These clubs used the opportunity to publicise themselves and recruit new members. Many of the layouts were therefore probably also related to the region of the clubs. In particular, the transport and processing of coal and ore were themes.

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H0 gauge was used to explain the production and processing of steel step by step (photo above). The European Train Enthusiasts (photo below) had chosen motifs from Germany and Switzerland.



Z gauge was also represented in Novi, although not with as many exhibitors as was the case at other venues of the National Train Show.

The European Train Enthusiasts caught my attention in particular, presenting their operations on a large H0 gauge layout with many lovingly designed modules based primarily on German and Swiss motifs.

Also impressive was the layout by 'Bridge Man', who has a particular passion for the construction of wooden and steel bridges, but also presented a Ferris wheel and an impressive model of the Eiffel Tower. See also the website address in the information box.



There was also plenty for children of all ages to see and try out: A large layout made of building blocks with a beautiful replica of Diagonal Alley from Harry Potter. There was also a large area for building and trying out wooden railways, which today even feature replica railway sleepers.

“Thomas the tank train” on a circle with a matching train in garden railway format was also well received. The children were able to ride along on the wagons, which was gladly accepted in large numbers.



One of the highlights for our translator and reporter was a visit to the Ztrack stand. Rob Kluz (left), his wife, and employees looked after the visitors there and also presented an AZL new product from a new mould, which is right in front of them.

At the sales booths we found a wide range of items relating to railways, from books and clothing to track material, turnout controls, modules for control and digitalisation, and locomotives and carriages in all gauges.

Overall, the exhibition was well attended and very entertaining during our presence. It was possible and desirable to talk to the exhibitors at any time. We both enjoyed this personal premiere visit very much and were able to take many new impressions home with us.

All photos: Alexander Hock

Pages about the exhibition:

<https://cityofnovi.org>
<https://nmra2025.com>
<https://www.ztrack.com>
<https://www.youtube.com/@thebridgeman4819>

Video about the Eiffel Tower remodelling:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jDj8kW4LYT>

1zu220-shop.de

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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.

Feedback on the manufacturer's response:

Here are two quick photos of the small diorama I'm currently building as a 75 x 42 cm cabinet insert. The main kits are all from Archistories.

Bernd Moritz, by E-Mail

A thank you from the readers:

Once again, it's time to say thank you for regular issues with a wide range of new topics, lots of information, impressions, ideas for crafting and much more. It's incredible what has come together for us "Zetties" over the years.

You notice it, for example, when you are looking for something that was published a long time ago. Of course, you always wait for the next issue, and if it comes a little late, that's no bad thing. After all, the editorial team also has a life outside of Trainini, and we receive the publication free of charge. Where else can you get something like this for free?

Joachim Karsten, Weinstadt



The diorama outfitted with Archistories kits serves as a cabinet insert for our reader. Photo: Bernd Moritz

Question about "Switch on the lights and clear the stage!" (Trainini 6/2025):

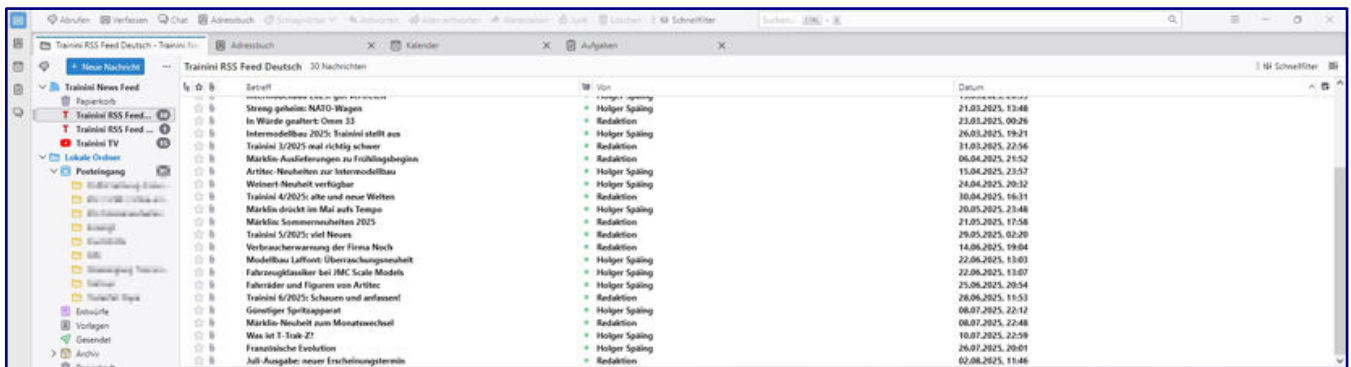
The article is very informative and I would be interested in the circuit diagram for the circuit board. Unfortunately, I have noticed that if you were to rebuild it 1:1, there would be a short circuit through the current collector. There is no indication that the wheelsets need to be replaced, and which ones were used.

Perhaps you can give me an answer to this. Thank you very much.

Thomas Lindemann, by E-Mail

Editor's reply: There is no short-circuit on the axle discs and it is not necessary to replace the wheelsets! The axles of our model, like most others, are insulated on one side in one of the two wheel discs. Accordingly, the insulation within a bogie only has to be on the same side, on the other side of the vehicle they have to be opposite each other.

Each wheel wiper then takes exactly one of the two poles. Plus and minus are connected to the connections on the circuit board. This principle of current collection is not new and is used by all suppliers who offer axle sliders for bogies with these standard axles.



Here we show an example of an RSS feed built into the Thunderbird programme for all three-page addresses as listed below.

You have received an answer to your question about the circuit diagram from the supplier of the product. As this is a commercial product, it is not intended to pass on the data.

Automatically recognise new posts:

Firstly, I would like to thank you for the magazine, it is simply fantastic and the effort and quality cannot be praised highly enough. Even though I'm more of a beginner, it's always fun to read and the instructions and reports are impressive.

I have a question about the website -> News: There doesn't seem to be an RSS feed for it at the moment, is that perhaps in the pipeline?

Somehow, I keep failing to look at the site, with a feed, I (and not just me) would have an even better overview.

Thorsten Nitsch, by E-Mail

Editor's reply: According to our technical site administrator, there has always been an RSS feed on our website, which was updated a few years ago, for news (messages) on the German and English pages and for our YouTube channel. The various feed reading programmes usually recognise these automatically.

The URLs for the RSS feed is as follows:

<https://www.trainini.de/feed.xml>

<https://www.trainini.eu/feed.xml>

https://www.youtube.com/feeds/videos.xml?channel_id=UCLxfRVEwB8OxvJ3OHNYe1oA

News on the Trainini Anniversary Exhibition 2025:

There are still around two months to go until the **Trainini Anniversary Exhibition 2025** opens its doors. This also means that we are now in the peak phase of preparations. Together with the exhibitors, we are currently creating fact sheets that summarise all the important visitor information about each stand or installation.

These overviews will not only be displayed at the stands, but will also be compiled in an exhibition catalogue. It will be published on our website (<https://www.trainini.de/ausstellung>) one to two weeks before the event and can then be stored electronically on mobile devices or printed out so that no exhibit is missed.

Afterwards, the document may provide valuable memories of a hopefully outstanding event. On-site QR code replays also allow mobile charging on the spot.

In the meantime, our surprise exhibit has also arrived at the editorial office, the identity of which we are deliberately not revealing and which will be given a little refresh in the coming weeks.



The question of the surprise exhibit is still like looking into a crystal ball. Our visitors will find out straight away on 4 and 5 October 2025.

However, we are certainly not betting too high that this showpiece has been repeatedly missed by zetties at shows; we will soon change that for exactly two days.

The list of exhibitors has also been updated and supplemented in the last few days and is available as a PDF document at the bottom of the event page. Further changes and clarifications will follow on an on-going basis.

We also recommend our visitor information on how to get here. In the document of the same name, we provide information on the car parks in the immediate vicinity and the largest car park within walking distance (5 to 10 minutes depending on walking speed).

You can also relax with the help of the railway, as there is an RRX (Rhine-Ruhr Express) stop the same distance away, which can be used with the Deutschland-Ticket. These trains also make it possible to use the P+R facilities at the two neighbouring stops (2 and 5 minutes journey time).

There are still places available for visitors to the exhibitor get-together on the evening of 4 October 2025 in a restaurant in Dortmund-Lanstrop (with a view of the newly renovated industrial monument "Lanstroper Ei"). If you are interested, please contact the editorial team by email.

A plea for T-Trak-Z:

"What is T-Trak-Z?", most of our readers will now be asking themselves. Behind this name is an idea from the N nominal scale, which has long since been transferred to our gauge and is now also making fans in the United States. We would also like to promote it because we see it as an enrichment of our scale.

T-Trak modules found many enthusiasts among the “nines” on a scale of 1:160. All module standards require standardisation with regard to size, width, position of the track lines, the transition and the electrical connection, and usually also the terrain cross-section.



Here we show an example of one of the easy-to-build T-Trak-Z modules with embankment: The individual wooden parts have already been assembled, while the landscaping is still pending. On the corresponding message on our portal page, you can see another photo showing the scope of delivery in individual parts.

It was easy here because the standard was based on a ballast track system, as offered by Kato and Tomytec. The length of the modules is based on their geometry, special electrics are not required because the manufacturers' rail connectors are simply used as a transition, which can also be disconnected at any time.

In comparison to other modular standards, this standard is based on relatively small and manageable system components that are placed on tables rather than standing on feet. This also eliminates the need to define a stand height.

Since Rokuhan now also offers a comparable track system for Z gauge, it was only logical to transfer this module standard to the 1:220 scale. The result is now called T-Trak-Z and is available in various cross-sections (railway embankment, cut or level / track and curve modules) in Germany from TrainSetter (<https://trainsetter.de>).

We have received three modules with a railway embankment, each 33 cm long, so that we can present this idea in more detail. Here, we show how the pre-cut wooden parts are delivered and the scope of this delivery set. We would also like to demonstrate them as a haptic experience at our **Trainini Anniversary Exhibition 2025** at the beginning of October.

Affordable quality tool:

At the Toy Fair 2024, we came across the Taiwanese manufacturer Sparmax and were able to try out a few spray guns. Our impression was surprisingly good, especially because of the really favourable prices.

Since 2018, this manufacturer has been part of the well-known company Anest Iwata (Japan), which offers equally outstanding tools under a secondary brand. The SP-20X model, which is predestined for precise finishing work with its 0.2 mm nozzle in Z gauge, aroused particular interest. We are planning on carrying out some ageing work with Ammo-Mig products on a freight wagon model.



The SP-20X model from Sparmax is an affordable and precise tool for beginners and advanced users alike.

Arguments in favour of the SP-20X model released in 2018 are the 7 cm³ flow cup that can be unscrewed, which then leaves a small paint trough, as well as the simple conversion from “double action airbrush” to so-called “single action”.

The latter term means that the air flow constantly flows through the spray gun and is not opened and closed in a controlled manner by pressing the mixing lever. The lever therefore loses one of its two functions and is then only used to control the flow of paint.

This is exactly what helps beginners to familiarise themselves with the tool and carry out their first exercises without fail. All you need to do is replace the air supply valve with an enclosed replacement part.

The step can therefore be reversed at any time, making this extremely affordable tool both beginners and advanced modellers. Incidentally, Sparmax offers the complete basic equipment for the best results from a single source with no less favourable compressors.

Märklin deliveries in July 2025:

Märklin continued with new deliveries at the turn of the month into July. The double diesel locomotive 288 002-9 a/b of the German Federal Railways (item no. 88151) again shows the version after conversion to Maybach engines without a roof attachment and with four sandboxes per side and locomotive half.

It is also painted purple again, but unlike its sister locomotive, which appeared as an insider model, it does not have a contrasting black frame. This allows the prototypes to be distinguished from afar, which makes them both equally attractive as models.



With the class 288 (item no. 88151), the double diesel locomotive has now also arrived in the regular catalogue range and is presented for fans of Era IV.

The model for Era IV also has a replica of the engine room including interior lighting, drive by bell-type armature motors and direction-dependent lighting with warm white and red LEDs. Different coupling rods for different radii are also included and allow the distance between the locomotive halves to be kept as close as possible and safe to operate.

Two red Donner coaches have also arrived at dealers: the first is the Insider 2025 (80335), the prototype of which is used as a dining car on the Minden Museum Railway. It is intended for use in the present day with a museum railway connection.



288 002-9 a/b was clearly distinguishable from its sister locomotive even from a distance: The purple-red painted frame gave it a different appearance.

The second model is ahead of its time and can be purchased even before the first gingerbread biscuits are available from the grocery stores. We are talking about the 2025 Christmas car (80635), which attracts attention with its matching design on the red background and matches the editions of the two previous years.

News from Panzer-Shop.nl:

This provider (<https://www.panzer-shop.nl>) has been on holiday since 16 July and will resume business on 3 August. Customers are therefore asked to be patient if it takes a little longer. However, this 3D printing manufacturer is also starting the summer with a range of new products:

The IFA W50 ADK 70-0 mobile crane is now also offered in an active position, i.e., with a raised crane boom. The Kakerbeck HL-61 trailer complements the agricultural theme after the end of the NVA.

The Magirus-Deutz Jupiter is now also offered in its 4160 version with tarpaulin or flatbed only. There are also tipper versions with a flat loading area and a high version. There are also three new models for camping



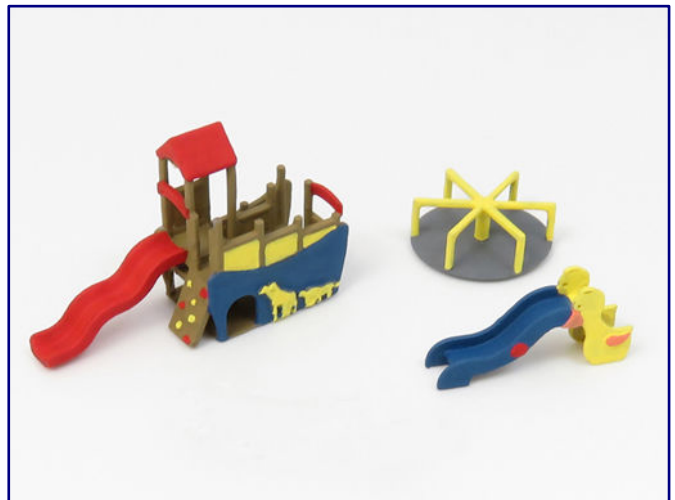
Mobile crane IFA W50 ADK 70-0. Photo: Panzer-Shop.nl

enthusiasts: Mercedes-Benz T2 Camper and the Volkswagen LT 28 with high roof and as LT 35 with alcove conversion.

At Yellow Dwarf, children's dreams come true:

In July, Yellow Dwarf (<https://www.yellowdwarf.eu>) will be focussing on children's playgrounds. With three new pieces of play equipment, they can also be modelled to create varied housing estates.

A climbing wall for children (item no. 60349) and the children's playground I (60350) and II (60351) models are on offer. All new products are supplied to the customer as unpainted 3D prints. Matching children's figures can be found in the Klingenhöfer Miniatures or Trafofuchs programmes.



The kits "Children's playground I" (item no. 60350; photo left) and "II" (60351; photo right) are two of the latest new products. Photos: Yellow Dwarf

Hydrants (60071), which are still an indispensable accessory on many street corners today, followed a few days later as a further innovation.

Transfer to the Noch offer:

The train approach alarm from Rokuhan presented in the last issue will also be included in the Noch range, where it will be given the item number 7297454, which will also allow it to be ordered and purchased from local model railway dealers. We are not yet aware of the planned delivery date for Germany.

New mould for AZL:

As presented at the National Train Show, a new steam locomotive in brass will be added to the AZL programme. The manufacturer is thus returning to its beginnings. The Norfolk & Western Class J streamlined express steam locomotive, of which only 14 were built between 1941 and 1950, is to be offered with all operating numbers.

It starts with road number 611 as an operational museum locomotive of the Virginia Museum of Transportation (item no. 17072-1). The remaining thirteen road numbers correspond to the historical status from operational use (17072-2 to -14). The models have separately applied parts and traction tyres. The recommended minimum radius is 245 mm.

We continue with diesel locomotive motifs: The EMD F7A & F7B are now in service for Frisco (63014-1 / -2), while the EMD FP7 passenger train version is rolling for the B&O (65302-1 / -2). The ALCO RSD-5 wears the colour scheme of the ATSF (63326-1 / -2) from Phase I.



The Norfolk & Western class J express steam locomotive is new in design, here as an operational museum locomotive 611 (item no. 17072-1). Photo: AZL | Ztrack

Also to be reported are the EMD SD40-2 of Norfolk & Southern (64211-1 to -3) and the EMD SD60 of CN (65020-1 / -2).



The EMD FP7 for the B&O (65302-1; photo left) is the passenger train version of the F series. The ice-blue 4180 pressurised air unloading wagons of the Rock Island (916008-1; picture on the right) are beautiful to look at. Photos: AZL | Ztrack

We continue with modernised 1937-40-foot covered wagons from SSW for Cotton Belt use as single wagons (905411-1) and double packs (915411-1). The modernised Trinity tank wagons from TCBX (905508-1 / 915508-1) are available in the same configuration, while the ice-blue 4180 compressed air unloading wagons from Rock Island are available in quadruple (906008-1) or double (916008-1) versions.

The goods train escort wagon with side-opening windows is now available in the colours of the Frisco (92027-1 / -2). A single 53-foot container is available with JB Hunt (95106B) lettering and a 48-foot counterpart from ITEL (95008).

Milk transport with EtchIT modelling:

After a long time, EtchIT-Modellbau (<http://etchit.de>) is once again announcing a Z gauge new product. This is a complete kit for the IFA W50 L/S lorry with milk tanker trailer (item no. XD126_Z). The tractor unit has the short chassis with semi-trailer for the matching semi-trailer for transporting milk.

Thinking about Christmas now?

At Klingenhöfer Miniatures (<https://www.klingenhoefer.com>), we are starting with a new product that poses precisely this question: "Child receives gift from Father Christmas" (item no. Z-W02-e). The two figures are supplied as simply primed blanks with pressure supports.

Also new is the sales booth for a market stall (Z109-6B), which is supplied in a single colour and can be coloured by the customer. There are also new animal figures: The ibis (Z-TV08) is rarely seen outside of zoos or bird parks, even though ibises and spoonbills are native to all of Central Europe. Four self-colouring figures are included in the set.



Here a child receives a present from Father Christmas (item no. Z-W02-e) and we see the scene as a monochrome primed blank and as a painting suggestion from the supplier. Photos: Klingenhöfer Miniatures

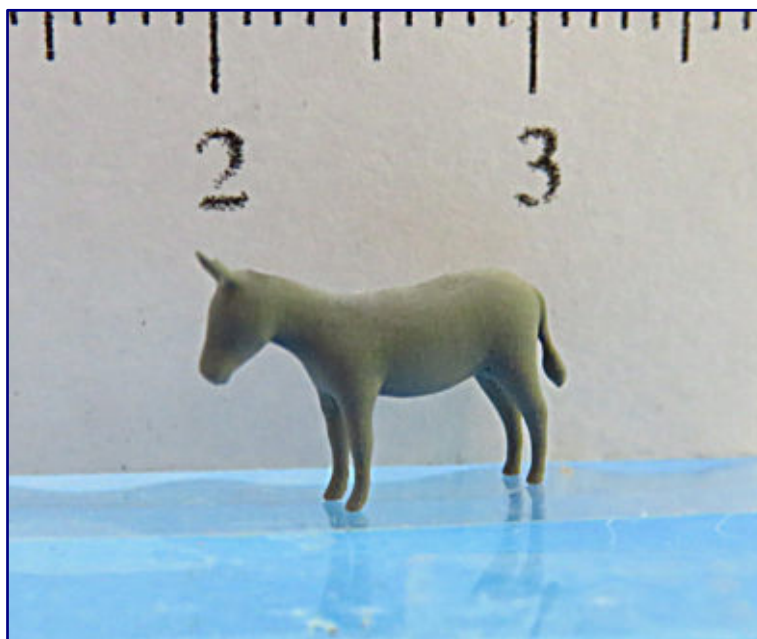
The situation is different with the domestic donkey (Z-TE18-e), a common pet worldwide that has a grey, sometimes brownish coat colour.

Although they are often thought to be stupid and stubborn, they are very intelligent and, unlike their horse relatives, do not flee carelessly.

It is nice that these beasts of burden, whose habitat was in the rugged wasteland and mountains, now also have miniatures. Two monochrome grey painted animals are included here.

International Toy Fair supports children:

Through the Spielwarenmesse's Spirit of Play Foundation, many exhibitors support a good cause with their goods. Thanks to volunteers, two complete 20-foot containers were filled on the last day of this year's edition of the fair.



The new house donkey (Z-TE18-e) should find many installation locations on the site. Photo: Klingenhöfer Miniaturen

The donations were handed over on behalf of the exhibitors by Christian Ulrich, Spokesman of the Board of Spielwarenmesse eG. The recipients in this case were the Haus für Kinder and the neighbouring active playground in Nuremberg. They are two of a total of 19 facilities in the Nuremberg city area that are run by the same organisation and benefit from the donations.

The Kinderlachen association from Dortmund, which supports children in need in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, also received a substantial donation. Christian Vosseler, the association's director, distributed it to the women's refuge Horizont e. V. women's refuge in Munich. In total, organisations with 600 children received donations.

The Märklin Days are calling:

Märklin cordially invites you to the 14th Märklin Days in Göppingen, which have also been declared the 40th International Model Railway Exhibition. From 19 to 21 September 2025, visitors can once again expect a unique combination of model railway fascination, real steam attractions and a family-friendly supporting programme.



After the summer holidays, the Märklin Days will be calling to Göppingen and inviting visitors to take a tour of the factory in Stuttgarter Straße on Fridays and Saturdays.

Over 100 exhibitors and manufacturers from the industry are expected to be on site at the venues Stauferpark, EWS-Arena, Leonard-Weiss-Firmenareal, Göppingen railway station, Märklineum, and Stammwerk (main factory).

Free parking and a free bus service between the event venues will make travelling from afar easier. Märklin is expecting around 50,000 visitors again, just like two years ago. Up-to-date information can be found on a separate event page at <https://www.maerklin.de>.

NoBa models make a comeback:

Although the company's own website (<https://www.noba-modelle.de>) states that electronic sales will not resume until mid-October, this manufacturer is immediately announcing a large number of new products.

This is initially the VT 55 tower railcar with powered NoBa chassis in the original purple-red livery (item no. 5223_1RF) as a finished model. We had already announced our participation in the cross-



The new, four-axle Laaeks 553 car transport double wagon (item no. 5334R) is shown here in kit form. Photo: NoBa-Modelle

manufacturer new product focus “Black Gold” in the spring with the DB’s Okmm 58 Kübelwagen in the versions without (5331R) and with brakeman’s platform (5332R).

Both are also offered as ready-made models (the item number is extended by the letter F in each case) and will also be shown, accordingly, at our anniversary exhibition. A real surprise are two car transport double cars, one of which also complements the Märklin Off 52.



For the first time, we can show our readers the DB’s Okmm 58 Kübelwagen (5331RF / 5332RF; photo above) as finished models. Also new is the Berlin S-Bahn class ET 165 (5236RF; photo below). Photos: NoBa-Modelle

This is the case with the three-axle Offs 55 as a kit or finished model (5335R / 5335RF), which is accompanied by the more modern four-axle Laaeks 553 (5334R / 5334RF). The Offs 55 is scheduled for a detailed portrait at a later date and will also be shown at our exhibition.

Further wagon models are the VTG Tadsy type bulk goods wagons with in-house bogies (533R / 5333RF), the finished models are painted blue here. The range of new items also includes the modern Stuttgart DT 8.4 tram train (5726R) and the class 6284 (5238R) as a diesel multiple unit that is no longer as fresh as the prototype.



This blank of the Austrian Rh 4061 (5028R) is intended for a shorty chassis. Photo: NoBa-Modelle

Those who build big city motifs at home and have been waiting for the ET 165 multiple unit of the Berlin S-Bahn (5236R) will be delighted. With its traditional livery, it will soon also be available as a finished model (5236RF).

The latest addition to the rolling stock range is the Austrian locomotive Rh 4061 from ÖBB. Three different basic models are available as a kit: for Shorty (5028R) or Märklin running gear (5029R). The latter model can also be selected with an open door (5027R).

The Agria small tractor (6621R / 6621RF) with two figures, supplied by Trafofuchs, is intended for agricultural use. Meanwhile, five pairs of skis are preparing for the next winter, travelling to the customer either unfinished or painted (10507R / 10507RF).

The trade fair at Bodensee Lake Constance will be back soon:

From 31 October to 2 November 2025, Faszination Modellbau in Friedrichshafen will open its doors for the 23rd time. The trade fair on Bodensee (Lake Constance) will then present various branches of model making, including model railways and Z gauge. Organiser information is always available at the following address: <https://www.faszination-modellbau.de>.

New wagon model from FR:

A new FR model of a DB workshop wagon 613 (item no. 49.343.131) produced by the Uwe Schuster assembly service is now available from the 1zu220 shop (<https://www.1zu220-shop.de>). The railway service wagon in chrome oxide green paintwork, produced in an edition of 40 units, was based on a covered goods wagon of the type Gms 54.



The DB workshop wagon 613 (item no. 49.343.131) is based on a covered goods wagon that was converted for further use as a railway service wagon. Photo: 1zu220-Shop | Jörg Erkel

The changes were also made to the model in line with the prototype: It now has transfer windows for the personnel travelling or working in it as well as a side extension in the roof area at one end of the vehicle.

Customs duties of 35 % in force:

In March, Ztrack, in its capacity as a wholesaler for the US market, announced that the model railway products it sells are now subject to import duties of 10%. Since 1 July, these have now risen to 35% for Rokuhan shipments!

Ztrack will pass some of this on to retailers, which is why price increases are to be expected there. However, the distributor intends to bear the majority of the costs itself. In order to clarify which items are already subject to the new regulations, they will be labelled with a customs reference on the invoice.

Goods still in stock are not affected by this; the cost increases only take effect when reordering from Japan. The packs with 220 mm long, straight tracks were apparently the first to be affected (Art.-Nr. R009).

Announcement of Herpa new products:

From the Herpa new products brochure V/2025, we have again selected the 1:200 scale aircraft models that do not exceed a length of 30 cm and can be found in Europe. These are the following announcements in the Wings collection:

CSA Czech Airlines Airbus A220-300 – OK-FYD (Art.-Nr. 573740),
Croatia Airlines Airbus A220-300 – 9A-CAE “Zagreb” (573757),
Belgische Luftstrijtkrachten (Belgian Air Force) Lockheed Martin F-35A Lightning II - FL002 (573641), and
French Air Force Airbus A400M “10 Years of A400M” (573771)

The NATO Airbus A330 MRTT also appears in the Snap-Fit series, Multinational Multirole Tanker Unit – T-061 (614573) and the Pan Am Boeing 757-200 – TF-FIC “Yankee Clipper II” (614603).



NATO Airbus A330 MRTT, Multinational Multirole Tanker Unit – T-061 from the Snap-Fit series (item no. 614573). Photo: Herpa

The opportunity is favourable at Full Throttle:

Based on a special order from a dealer, William D. Wright decided to produce a regular run of the cars requested here. We are talking about 51-foot bulk goods wagons with a closed, cylindrical container.



The closed bulk goods wagons of the CNW appear as packs of two in both yellow (item no. FR1071; photo left) and green (FT1072; photo right). Photos: WDW Full Throttle

The new two-pack of these wagons (item no. FT1072) bears the green livery of the former C&NW (Chicago & North Western) and is likely to sell out quickly. The yellow version of the same railway company followed shortly afterwards and is made up in the same way (FT1071).

Imprint

ISSN 2512-8035

Bibliographic information of the German National Library: The German National Library lists this publication in the German National Bibliography. Detailed bibliographical data and editions can be found in the DNB catalogue at <https://portal.dnb.de>.

The publication of **Trainini German Magazine for Z Gauge** is voluntary and non-commercial. **Trainini German Magazine for Z Gauge** does not aim for any sources of income. This publication is governed exclusively by German law.

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