

ITEMS FROM LETTERS

1. On TEMSI hole spacing (9/225), D. Courdoux says you can bolt 25-hole TEMSI and MECCANO parts together successfully but of course an Axle Rod won't go through all the holes. Also slight changes in gear meshing, good or bad, can be noticed when using TEMSI Plates. He adds that TEMSI parts are strong and of good quality, and that the red colour they use is specific to them.

2. Al Sternagle wrote that he had come across some MECHANIMALS parts (see 4/66): they are larger than might be expected, for example R-1 is about 7½" long and MB-4 is some 4½" wide. He has many more parts than were shown in OSN, no doubt from the other 'animals' in the series - one triangular piece has a base of nearly 12". Only some of the parts are aluminium, the bulk are of a good quality steel alloy and quite durable, especially the links and joints. The aluminium parts are stamped with their PNs. The thread is probably metric and is about the size of a U.S. No.4. If anyone has the complete building instructions for any of the MECHANIMALS please contact the Editor.

3. On the MIGNON Ansatzmutter (10/263), there was general agreement that it wasn't a locknut. Both Geoff Davison and Don Redmond suggested that 'Ansatz' in this context implied joining or an extension. It's possible that if the part is threaded right through it might be used to join two threaded rods, but why then reduce the size at one end? Or is it intend to be used inside a curved structure to avoid the flattening caused when a normal nut is tightened? Possible but a nut with a radiused end would probably be cheaper and more effective. My favourite suggestion is that it is used with a normal bolt to create a non-sloppy pivot joint for two Strips. The length of the 'extension' would then need to be slightly longer than twice the thickness of the Strips. It doesn't look that long in the illustration and the other thing is that with a 2.5mm bolt in the 3.1mm hole in the Strip, the wall thickness of the 'extension' would be little more than 10 thou. I looked in the Manual to try to see how the part was used: 3 of them are called up for one model and that's all, even though there are 10 supplied in the #3 Set. There are 3 pivoted joints in the model where the Ansatzmutter could be used but it isn't certain that it is. On the other hand I can't see anywhere else in the model where they would be needed for any purpose.

4. René Mikkers sent several items which are included elsewhere in this Issue and also mentioned that he can supply TEMSI and BRAL parts. The leaflet he sent showing the range of TEMSI parts is identical to that in 3/40. He also sent an illustrated List of BRAL parts together with prices. MCS shows most of the parts but additions are illustrated in 7/143, 8/192 and 9/227, though the latter aren't in fact in his List. Prices, in Dutch Guilders, seem reasonable, for example, 1.00 for a 25h Strip, 3.75 for a 49h Angle Girder. Details from R. Mikkers, Wezelstraat 23, 7559AP Hengelo, The Netherlands. Tel: 074-774327 (after 19.00).

5. Eric Sinton sent a clarification of his remarks in 10/267(8): STOKYS Chain can of course only be used with STOKYS Sprockets. He added that when he dismantled the model in question, a Rack and Pinion Locomotive, which had worked faultlessly for many hours with its STOKYS Sprocket engaging MÄRKLIN Large Toothed Rings straightened into rack form, excessive wear of the Sprocket's teeth was noticed, and their rather 'knobby' shape had changed to something nearer an involute pattern!

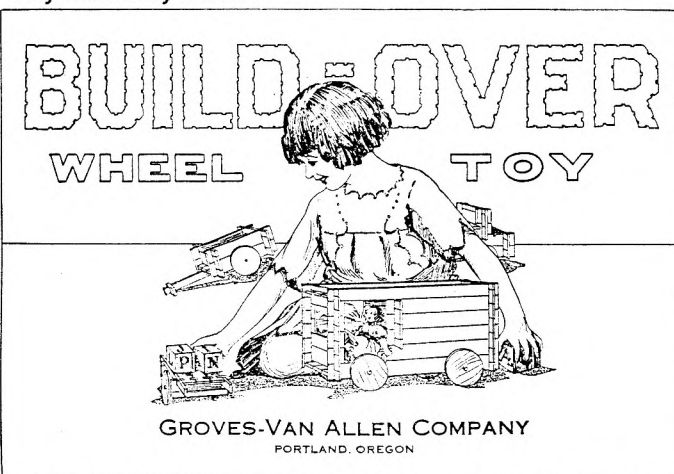
And on 9/227: BRAL Copriruota is a Wheelcover (Conical Disc in Meccanoese). The standard steel parts 3044,

45mm for the 50mm, and 3045, 66mm for the 75mm Pulley, have a narrow steel strip rivetted in the central hole. The ends of this strip are bent in such a way as to make it easy to clip the disc securely to the Wheel. The plastic version seems to have a stub axle (also in plastic?) which may indicate some use other than as an attachment to the 50mm Pulley.

6. Roger Baker confirmed my guess (10/247) that the output shaft of the MARBI motor can be repositioned in the corresponding holes on the opposite side of the motor. The drive is taken from the same large gear wheel which is, of course, centrally mounted.

7. Clive Weston wrote that a Mr Rod Moore, the curator of the Cumberland Toy and Model Museum, Cockermouth, Cumbria, Tel: 0900-827606, has several OS in his reserve stock, and that on a recent visit he was able to handle his large collection of ANCHOR blocks. The interesting feature of these sets was that the flat metal parts, apparently used to construct a framework with the stone blocks as infill, were joined by a rod method akin to that of DINKY BUILDER.

8. Kendrick Bisset sent details of a BUILD-OVER Set, but not the one with metal parts listed in my OS Database. Both were made in Portland Oregon, but by different companies, and the parts in this outfit are all wooden. Apart from Wheels and Axles, there are various notched Strips, about ¾" thick, which slot into one another at right angles. There were 3 sets and the #3 model on the cover of the Manual (below) is called a 'Police Patrol', despite the lady driver. The parts are plain, untreated wood and are not very accurately made.



9. From Don Redmond: 'I saw a RICHTER set recently which contained two styles of braced girders. One was rectangular as in 10/261; the other was curved (humped) at the top.' And on MERKUR ALFI (MCS X1.2): 'The legend "Vyrobce" etc. says: Manufacturer: Metal Enterprises, OPMH Broumov; I did not find 'stredisko' but it may be plant or unit. Does anyone know what OPMH stands for?'

In a later letter: 'In a toyshop in a town near Kingston [Ontario] I noticed a GIRDER AND PANEL set with the name Irwin Toys, of Toronto, the Canadian distributors of MECCANO, on the box. I didn't have the opportunity to open and examine the set, but the illustration much resembles other plastic architectural building sets.'

Don also mentioned an ERECTOR No.100 Set he has acquired, which probably dates from the 1950s. The box is 10½x9x¾" and the lid has the same design as that shown for EL NUEVO ING. ARGENTINO in MCS. There is no manual but a sheet pasted inside the lid shows 10 models. It has the code M3366 on it while the lid has M3409. The

Wheel or Spool which acted as a multi-way connector for square section Rods. BILDIT was patented in several countries and was on sale in the UK in the 1950s & early 1960s.

4. Tony Press has suggested, and I'm sure he's right, that it is the packet the parts were in that is under the French **MECCANO X1s** box in 16/446, and not a Model Leaflet as stated. He also mentioned that he has a similar style British MECCANO X box (with the light diagonal stripe), and I've noticed that a 1932 (or '33) UK catalogue shows both the X1 & X2 in the same style of box.

5. On the **STEEL TEC Corvette** (18/496), Keith Cameron wrote that there is a switch for the headlights. It's built into the console between the seats.

6. From Werner Sticht. • On the **MÄRKLIN nickel 5*11h Flanged Plate** in 17/473, such a part, #11321, of nickel plated brass, was included in their ELEX Sets, but I don't know of a corresponding 5*7h one.

• **VEB (K) Schmerbach** (reference SONNEBERGER in 18/504) was probably at the village of Schmerbach between Eisenach and Limenau; there's another Schmerbach near Meiningen but it's only a few houses without a proper road to it. CONSTRUCTION was also made at Schmerbach.

• Werner is in touch with **Karl Debik**, a collector of metal constructional systems from the former GDR. He knew practically all the manufacturers there and is preparing a history of the subject. He would welcome contact with other collectors (in German or in English) - his address is Nordshäuser Str. 25b, D-34132 Kassel, Germany.

7. From Kendrick Bisset. • On **ENGINEERO** (18/520), there was a 7-32 A.S.M.E. thread listed in the 1914 Edition of the *American Machinists Handbook*, together with 7-30, and the standard 7-36 (see 8/203). Haber Bros. were listed in the *Thomas Register* as toy manufacturers at 878 Broadway, New York City in 1917 & 1918, and later at 91 5th Avenue.

• Another **GIRDER BILT** Set (see 17/467). Again it has some parts missing, but the contents are broadly the same. The 15 of both the 4h Strips & Angle Bends in it probably indicate 16 of each originally. Again it contains one of the unusual 6*4h 'Plates'. The Wheels are the same diameter but thicker, more sharply detailed, and a dull red colour. The Screws are 4-40 (a much more suitable size), steel with countersunk heads, and 3/8" & 1" long. The hex Nuts are aluminium, .253" A/F & .095" thick. The Screwdriver & (different shaped) Spanner are 2 5/8" & 2 3/8" long respectively, and are shown below. There was a Model Leaflet with this

Set, the one used in MCS, 15 1/2*8 1/4", folded into 3. Its 18 models (plus 0-9 & 8 Letters) start with Rake and finish with an unnamed framework, 8*8*16h, with on the front, a cross or 4-bladed propeller made of 2x 8h Strips. All the models on the OSN 17 container are included but the Letters are different and use only 4 & 8h Strips.



8. Alan Partridge mentioned **MAKE-AND-KNOW**, a small set with MECCANO-like parts that was bought in India, probably in 1979.

9. Harry Mariën recalls being given a set called **MECANO** in the 1950s, as a child in Belgium. The parts were not copies of MECCANO.

10. Roger Baker writes of **ALCON**, see 8/199 & 9/224. In a 'Junto' Set the wood parts are match stick sized in various colours, and are cut to length according to the 'number' shown for each Stick on the model plan. A scale is provided with the length for each 'number' marked on it. He added that it is extremely fiddly to use, the Brackets are easily bent/broken, and the end result is a small, very flimsy, skeletal model.

11. On **Richter's Metal Sets** (10/260), Jacques Pitrat wrote, 'I have a third Richter set which includes only metal parts. It is a bridge set, but unfortunately not the 1895 one! This is **Set #10 Eisenbrücken**, an accessory set to be used with a normal ANKER set to build the piers, and from the style of the picture on the lid it dates from before WW1. There are 2 kinds of girder. The first is like the one at the bottom of 10/261 except that it has 6 bays instead of 4. Its length is 156mm and it is 34mm high; there are 4 in the Set. The other 6 girders are larger, also with latticed sides but the upper member is arch shaped. They are 205mm long, 34mm deep at the ends and 67mm in the middle. There are corresponding roadway parts, both 62mm wide: two 156mm long, and three 205mm. No N&B are used in assembling the parts, the girders slide onto the arms of a U-shaped strip, one at each end, with the roadway sitting on the base of the U. The girders are painted blue-grey and the roadways brown. In *Eisenzeit* it is indicated that these parts appeared in 1901 and that they were originally nickel plated.' [An illustration of the parts is on p54 of *Bauklötze Staunen*, but the parallel girder shown has only 4 bays. The German patent discussed in 10/261 is Nr. 133728.]

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METEOR: X2.3d/4d,3e/4e,5a/6b [2]

MÖWE: X2.6/7a [1]

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