

Small Plant & Machinery

Ian Webb reviews models of interest to collectors.

REVIEWS

Hitachi ZX870 LCH-3 excavator

SI of Holland has produced a long line of high quality truck models over the last few years and it has now introduced its first excavator model, the 1:50 scale Hitachi ZX870 LCH-3. The real machine is a large hydraulic excavator with an operating weight of 84tonnes.

The model is well packed and comes with a uniquely numbered collector card which will be appreciated by collectors. As the model is highly detailed it needs to be handled with respect as some parts are relatively delicate.

The track frames are nice pieces with tiny graphics and the high quality metal tracks have very good bolt and grouser details.

The body is excellent and is probably the best yet seen on an excavator of this size. Alongside the cab the walkway has a finely

perforated surface and there are excellent fine metal grab rails. Behind the cab the details are first class. There are silver panel handles and clasps which are really great details. Various doors can be opened and these allow the superbly detailed engine to be seen.

The boom has individually fixed metal hydraulic lines which are top notch and there are some really good small graphics used. The bucket is attached with black bolts and can be removed.

This is an excellent excavator model which in many respects sets a new standard for models of this type of machine. It can be obtained for around £100 and is also available in two other variants with demolition tools instead of the bucket.



Below: The Hitachi ZX870 LCH-3 reaches up.

Overall Rating: Outstanding



Above: There is fantastic detail on the body. Left: This is a big excavator.

Ian Webb reviews construction models on his website and you can read more at www.CranesEtc.co.uk

JCB 3CX loader-backhoe

The JCB Company is world famous for its loader-backhoes and it has made more of these machines than anyone else. Joal of Spain has produced two model versions of the well known JCB 3CX in the larger scale of 1:25.

It comes in a large box which protects the model well, and there are no parts to fit. As the model is 1:25 scale it is relatively big, and as it is mainly metal it has a heavy and robust feel. The rubber tyres are good with a realistic tread and they are mounted on metal hubs, with the front axle steering working quite well.

The cab has good looking window frames with door hinges being detailed although grab rails and mirrors have not been modelled presumably to maintain robustness. Inside, the seat has JCB imprinted on the back but it seems to sit rather high compared to the steering wheel.

Other controls are replicated and the console has detailed dials.

At the rear, the backhoe is modelled well and is fully functional. The hydraulic cylinder jackets are plastic and there are no

hydraulic lines modelled. The bucket is a nice metal casting and is removable.

The loader arm linkages are well formed and the metal shovel is fine too with only the rivets being a little obtrusive as they stand out from the black paint. The shovel can be unclipped allowing the pair of forks to be folded forward to lift pallets.

The JCB 3CX impresses because of its large size in this scale although it is not the most detailed model. Two versions are available with alternative outriggers and backhoe mountings. It costs £55 from the JCB web shop.

Overall Rating: Recommended



Above: The JCB 3CX.



Above: A familiar pose as the JCB is set up for digging.



Above: The model has excellent detail with working rail bogies and outriggers.

Liebherr A 900 C ZW excavator

Road rail machines are used for maintaining the railway network and have special undercarriages which allow them to run on rails. Models of them are rare, but NZG produce the Liebherr A 900 C ZW which has also recently been released in special company liveries.

Thoughtfully, a piece of scale track is provided and the model sits on it well. The wheel hubs are nice metal items with good treaded tyres and the inner tyres have a different tread pattern which is used

to engage with the rail head to provide traction and braking. The chassis is cast well with working metal outriggers and rail bogies.

The body of the machine is very good quality with authentic details within the casting including grilles and door handles. Thin metal grab rails are excellent. The cab has excellent detailing including an additional passenger seat, mirrors, wipers and lights, and there are some very realistic-looking tiny graphics.

The boom and stick are cast well and the use of friction rivets means that there is no obtrusive modelling technique spoiling the look of the model. A particularly good detail is the very fine hydraulic lines running to the cylinders. The range of movement of the boom and stick is excellent.

Two tools are provided, a ditching bucket and a clamshell and these complete a really nice model of a specialist piece of equipment which can be obtained for around £60.

Overall Rating: Highly recommended



Above: The Liebherr A 900 C ZW runs on the rails.