

Small Plant & Machinery

Ian Webb reviews models of interest to collectors.

REVIEWS

Liebherr L 576 wheel loader

The Liebherr L 576 wheel loader.

The Liebherr L 576 is a wheel loader with an operating weight of around 24 tonnes. Conrad has introduced this new model of the machine in 1:50 scale and the only assembly required is to fit two door mirrors which is easy to do.

The transmission is modelled with plastic drive shafts and the large tyres have a good tread pattern. The wheels roll well and the rear axle floats with a good range of movement. The steering at the centre pivot point has a nice degree of stiffness and achieves a realistic angle.



The Liebherr L 576 loading a dumptruck.

The stairs and handrails up to the cab are metal and thin enough to look good, and there are textured non-slip walking surfaces. Inside the cab the detail is good with identifiable controls. The body has excellent see-through grilles and at the

rear there are painted lights and sharp graphics.

The Z-frame loader mechanism is modelled well and tiny warning signs add detail. It can hold any pose and reaches a realistic height.

This model is typically robust and well made with some nice touches of detailing. It is good value at around £55.



Overall rating:
Highly recommended

Caterpillar 740B EJ articulated truck

The Caterpillar 740B EJ articulated truck weighs 37 tonnes empty and it has an ejector body so it can discharge a load on the move, and also operate in areas of low headroom. This model is made by Norscot is 1:50 scale.

The detailing underneath is quite good and the rubber tyres have a good tread pattern. The rear suspension links the two axles and works well using small springs. Steering and articulation at the pivot point is very good with the steering cylinders having good stiffness.

The front is modelled with clean lines and the steps to the cab have a textured surface with the handrails and mirrors being of soft plastic. Although the cab appears to be plastic the colour match is excellent. The body chassis has some detailing in the casting which adds interest, and the structure of the dump body is good. The ejector has been modelled in metal and is fine, but three of the four stages of the hydraulic cylinder

are modelled in plastic which looks unconvincing and they are unrealistically fat. However the ejector mechanism works fully although it can be a bit stiff to move. The tailgate folds down and clips back into place nicely.

It is a typically strong Norscot model with few parts prone to easy breakage. There are a number of plastic parts but they have a good colour match. This is an interesting earthmover and is reasonable value at around £70.



Ejecting the load from the Caterpillar 740B EJ.

Overall rating:
Recommended



The Caterpillar 740B EJ articulated truck.

Liebherr SR 714 LGP welding tractor

The Liebherr SR 714 LGP is a specialist piece of equipment developed by Maats and it provides support for welding activities through the provision of a generator and crane. It weighs around 18 tonnes. This 1:50 scale model has been produced by NZG.

The track pads are metal with some good detailing and they are mounted on track frames which have some fine casting details and working rollers. They are fairly stiff but when



Overall rating:
Highly recommended

loosened up they do roll on a rough surface. The cab has metal grab rails and windscreen wipers and inside there is a tiny coloured instrument panel even though it is very difficult to see. The generator enclosure has tiny gauges which are visible through a panel window. At the front there are gas bottles in a rack and the HIAB crane has some nice graphics.



The Liebherr SR 714 LGP welding tractor.

It rotates fully and can be opened up and extended.

The cylinders and extending sections have enough stiffness to hold a pose and the hook can move in two directions, in and out and side to side.

The lower boom sections are metal and the telescopic sections are plastic.

This is an unusual and interesting model which is nicely implemented. It is well made and mostly metal with a good paint finish and is reasonable value at around £80.

Caterpillar 7495 HF electric rope shovel

The model's massive proportions are impressive



Caterpillar took over Bucyrus International in 2011 and rebranded the Bucyrus line into its own colours. The 7495 series are high performance electric rope shovels, produced in two versions. The 7495 HR is a hard rock version and the 7495 HF reviewed here is a high flotation version used where a low ground pressure is required such as in oil sands excavation.

The shovels are capable of excavating 100 tonnes of material at a time and can load large mining trucks in two or three passes.

This model by TWH Collectibles is in 1:50 scale and comes in substantial packaging which protects the heavy model well. There is no information about the model or the machine and the only assembly is a few

handrails which have to be fitted.

Starting with the lower works, the crawler tracks are massive with pads which are large heavy links individually pinned together. Each set of tracks is carried on huge track frames which have various bolt, lifting eye and bearing details. The tracks on the model work really well considering the heavy weight resting on them and this is in part helped by the working rollers on the track frame.

Above the turntable there is a large slewing motor on each side of the model. Although this is a hard to see without getting your eyes to crawler track level, the detail is outstanding with various cables and walkways modelled.

The standard of the walkways and handrails is excellent all round, with realistically thin sections made in metal. Access to the machine is provided via a pair of ladders. One is a stairway which is controlled by a hydraulic cylinder and this mechanism works, and the second is a vertical ladder which can be lowered and raised.

Excellent quality graphics result in legible warning notices and these are sprinkled across the model. Various floodlights

are beautifully modelled with the bulbs clearly visible inside the lamps and they can all be adjusted for angle.

The cab has first class modelling of the air-conditioning machinery outside. The two doors to the operator's cab can be opened, and inside the operator's station has joystick and pedal controls, and tiny graphics are visible on the workstation.

The roof of the machine has various access hatches detailed within the casting. A generator complete with high voltage sign sits in one corner and there are three giant air filters towards the rear. The large A-frame has struts supporting the boom and these are a realistic steel colour.

The boom is of heavy box beam construction and includes stairways which lead to the top where two pairs of very large pulley wheels carry the rope for raising and lowering the dipper. The tubular handle consists of a silver tube which has a pulley mechanism at one end and a complex arrangement for holding the dipper at the other end.

The dipper is a very heavy piece of modelling. A pair of excellent and fully-linked pulley connections holds the dipper, and painted heavy-duty riveted

The Caterpillar 7495 HF loading a mining truck.



The model is very detailed around the cab.



The Caterpillar 7495 with the access stairs lowered.



connections fix the dipper to the tubular handle. It has very thick walls and at the cutting edge has six teeth which are complete with rivet details. The door at the rear has heavy structural members finely recreated.

The main functions of the shovel work well. It rotates smoothly given the very heavy

weight of the model. The dipper functions are operated using two long keys which are supplied.

One operates the raising and lowering of the dipper and it has a brake and the key has to be pushed in to operate it. The tubular handle is worked by a separate winch at the front which is frictional and controls

it well. The dipper door can be opened by turning the small winch at the base of the boom although on the review model the door was not quite free swinging.

This is a very high quality model and a good-looking reworking of the original Bucyrus model in Caterpillar

colours. The rear counterweight has been changed to remove the Bucyrus name but in other respects the model is unchanged so some of the more recent developments of the real machine such as the cab design are not reflected. However it is hugely impressive and costs around £800.

The 7495 has wide tracks and massive body.



Overall rating: Outstanding

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