

the models



WSI's 1:50 scale Mammoet Euro-78-04 with transformer load.

The heavy Mob

Ian Webb inspects the heavy haulage end of the modern truck collectables market

The Euro-78-04 trailer features proportional rear axle steering.



The really 'high tech' end of the model truck market is in the area of heavy haulage, and it is here that you find the biggest, most impressive models, which usually boast a significant amount of functionality too. The types of models covered in this area include low loaders, carriers for heavy loads, and special vehicles designed for the transport of large or unusual items.

There are a number of manufacturers of the real machines in Europe, such as Dutch companies Nootboom and Broshuis, and the German company Goldhofer. These companies have a wide range of heavy haulage products, many represented in die-cast. However, it is Nootboom that is the out and out leader in

the scale model sector, with a large range of ready-builts and kits of its equipment produced in different scales from 1:160 to 1:24, with many pieces in the standard scale of 1:50.

Royal Nootboom Trailers B.V. is the European leader in abnormal road transport and some of these are

big – up to 1000 tonnes. It has a long history, evolving from a blacksmith's forge set up near to Rotterdam in 1881. Today the firm supplies a variety of specialised transport trailers, and many of these, including low loaders used for moving construction machinery and equipment and ballast

carriers used to carry the heavy counterweights used by mobile cranes, can be seen in the UK working for heavy haulage contractors as well as crane hire companies.

Heavy metal

Nootboom started commissioning scale models of its many products around ten years ago, and a clear objective throughout was to achieve high quality scale replicas that appropriately represented the Nootboom brand.

The modelling began with the German companies Conrad and NZG, and one of the early Conrad low loader models even won a 'Model of the Year' accolade from the Dutch Miniature Car Club.

Early NZG pieces focused on classic Nootboom trailers, and a range of these historic models is still sold today.

In recent years collectors and Original Equipment Manufacturers



above A real ballast carrier operated by Dutch hauliers Mammoet, as seen on site near the Canary Wharf complex, London.



Euro-99-24 fully extended is a very long vehicle, as WSI's 1:50 scale replica clearly conveys.

below Axles on the dolly of the Euro-99-24 model can be raised to exhibit it as out of service.



Loaded with a Liebherr piling machine, WSI's Euro-99-24 makes an impressive display.

(OEMs) have demanded better quality models, at competitive price levels, and lower cost manufacturing in China is allowing this to be achieved. To this end, many of Nootboom's newer models have been produced by the relatively new Dutch model making company WSI, whose work I've found to be of an especially high standard.

WSI was formed in 2006, and under its WSI Collectibles brand makes high quality 1:50 scale models. One of its early projects was a giant model of the Mammoet PTC crane, which stands nearly 2m high and is currently the largest mass-produced scale model made. However it is the trucking sector that today accounts for around 75% of its model sales, and it has built a reputation for high quality models which are made in many variants. The large range features many different tractor units, such as DAFs, MANs, Scania's, Volvos and Ivecos.

For each tractor there are options of 2-, 3- and 4-axle chassis, some even with different wheelbases. There's also a choice from approximately 20 different toolboxes/tank units behind the cab, which makes them

"Any collecting wanting a model with a real 'wow' factor need not look any further"

ideal for heavy haulage models. There are different fenders and lighting bars available for some trucks too.

Low Loaders

The most common Nootboom trailers seen on UK roads are low loaders, most often used for carrying construction equipment from one site to another. The current WSI model range is varied, with a large number of limited editions representing

haulage companies across Europe.

One of the first releases was the Euro-78-04 Low Loader. This has been made in many different liveries and a particularly popular version is in the colours of Mammoet, the Dutch

heavy lifting specialist. The rear axles steer, and details on the deck include replica timber planking, complete with patterning to show the locations of the screws that hold the planking down. The Mammoet version of the model also comes with a model of a transformer as a load.

The latest low loader model is the Euro-99-24 with a DAF 8x4 tractor. In addition to the deck and four rear axles, this has a 2-axle interdolly,

which has a beautifully made axle mechanism that allows steering, and also for one or both axles to be raised and displayed as out of service.

One of the things I like about WSI models is the impressive level of functionality, which allows models to be displayed in a variety of ways.

Ballast Carriers

Large mobile cranes require heavy counterweights to be transported from job to job and the vehicles used for this are ballast carriers. They're easily spotted, owing to the large number of axles needed in order to distribute the heavy loads.

The latest ballast carrier model is the 6-axle OVB-102-06 made by WSI and this model has a very high level of accurate detailing – it even extends underneath the trailer where hydraulic hoses run to each axle and to the control console. You'll find suspension is working on each

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axle, there is proportional steering across the axles, and the first axle can be raised for out of service display.

A number of versions of this model have been produced. The one in Nootboom colours comes complete with a replica container that sits on the deck. The latest has been produced in the colours of Ainscough, the largest crane hire company in the UK, and so is of particular interest to UK collectors. It faithfully recreates the colour scheme and graphics of the real truck and trailer and the limited edition nature of the model means that it is likely to hold its value very well.

Mega Windmill Transporters

The growth of wind power generation in recent years has created a whole industry in terms of transporting and erecting the huge wind turbines that are increasingly dotting our landscape. To enable quick erection they're designed to split into separate loads, comprising tower sections, the nacelle and the blades. Nootboom has taken the lead in designing specialised haulage to transport these pieces, and this has led to the introduction of what is known as the Mega Windmill Transporter.

WSI has produced an outstanding set of Mega Windmill Transporter models. The latest of these is in the livery of the Danish haulier Frank Norager. It comes in a high quality presentation box and features a long tower section. You'll need a fair bit of display space as the overall length of the model is 3ft, but it can also be displayed without the tower section as if returning from site having delivered its load. Detail and functionality are of a very high standard, so any collector wanting a model with a real 'wow factor' need not look any further. Again these models are limited edition so should hold their value long-term.

The next step

So, what comes next in terms of Nootboom models? Well, at this year's Nuremberg Toy Fair, WSI showed off some early samples of extendible step frame trailers, and these should lead to some impressive releases later this year. Collectors interested in Nootboom heavy haulage models can also see a lot more by visiting the Nootboom webshop at www.Nootboomshop.com, and on the www.wsi-models.com website.

To read more about construction collectibles (including some reviews) visit the author's website: www.CranesEtc.co.uk. **MC**

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WSI's massive 1:50 scale Frank Norager Mega Windmill Transporter.



WSI's 6-axle OVP-102-06 ballast carrier in Nootboom colours, complete with container.



above A really good feature on the Nootboom ballast carrier is the removable spare wheel.



WSI'S 1:50 scale MAN TGX 6x4 tractor liveried for Ainscough, the largest crane hire company in the UK.



above The Ainscough ballast carrier, loaded with crane parts, makes a great addition to a construction model collection.