

Small plant & machinery

Ian Webb looks at what is new in the scale model world, and reviews models of interest to collectors.

Following on from the Nuremberg Toy Fair earlier this year, two more exhibitions have given collectors a glimpse of new models. The first was at Bemmel in Holland, a popular annual event which focuses on collectors and model builders.

Among the new models appearing was another mega windmill transporter which looks great for heavy haulage fans, and a prototype example of a Hitachi 850/870 excavator. Both these models are from WSI and look highly detailed.

The Intermat exhibition in Paris is one of the major shows for full-size equipment. New models are often announced or available at these shows and Intermat saw a Mecalac and three Case models from Conrad, as well as a new version of Conrad's



Above: TWH's new Grove RT540E will be available in August.

giant Liebherr LG1750 mobile crane. TWH also announced a highly-detailed model of the Grove RT540E Rough Terrain Crane along with a Peterbilt Mechanic's Truck.

Reviews

CATERPILLAR 906H COMPACT WHEEL LOADER

Norscot has been the supplier of Caterpillar models for many years, and recently they have been able to significantly improve their quality to keep pace with other model manufacturers. The real 906H is

a very small machine weighing less than six tonnes and this model in 1:50 scale comfortably fits in the palm of your hand.

As a small model, it is a little delicate with the small detailed parts needing to be treated with care. The cab structure is plastic but does not really look it so this does not detract from the model. The detail around the cab is very good with mirrors, windscreen wipers and grab

rails. Inside the cab is fine as well.

The articulated steering works although the modelling of the drive shaft to the front axle means that it tends to spring back and so it cannot be displayed showing a tight steering lock. In contrast the mechanism for lifting and tipping the bucket works very well.

This is a very nice, small, model and can be bought for around £30.

Overall Rating: *Recommended*



Above: Norscot have produced very good detail around the cab of the 906H.

Left: The CAT 906H is a very compact machine.

ACCESSORIES – CRANE HOOKS

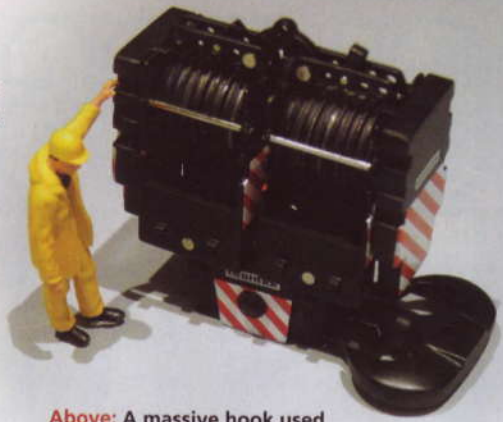
Most models are commissioned as promotional items by the manufacturers of the real machines and are made to match a budget and specification. For collectors wanting a higher standard of model there is a growing market for add-ons to standard models which provide additional functionality or realism. YCC Models is a company based in Taiwan which aims to provide excellence in model-making and has produced a few models of extremely high quality. It started

out making parts for models and one of the areas where it now has an extensive range is in crane hooks.

YCC has a strong focus on Liebherr products, and it has introduced a full range of 12, 1:50 scale hooks in different sizes, with some also available in different colour combinations. The smallest is a simple single line hook block nominally used for loads up to around ten tonnes, and the largest is a massive arrangement with 18 sheaves used for loads up to 450 tonnes. There is also a hook for use with Terex Demag cranes.

The common feature of all the YCC hooks is the very high quality. The parts are all metal and some of the hook blocks are made of a surprisingly high number of separate small components. In terms of realism they all look great and are superior to the hooks provided by other makers. As might be expected, these are not made in huge numbers so are not cheap, ranging up to £50 for the biggest hook block.

Overall Rating: *Highly Recommended*



Above: A massive hook used for lifting up to 450 tonnes.

Below: YCC make hooks of all sizes.



LETOURNEAU L-1850 LOADER WITH 55 CU.YD. BUCKET



TWH Collectibles have recently released the latest 1:50 scale model of this giant LeTourneau machine which is usually used in mining applications. To give a flavour of its size, it weighs around 230 tonnes and has a 1,000 gallon fuel tank.

Getting it out of the box it is clear that this is a highly detailed precision model and it is good to see a brochure describing the real machine included. A small amount of assembly is required to attach a few handrails and lights and clear instructions are provided.

The detail level is excellent, with fire extinguishers, tiny graphics and excellent mesh walkways. Hydraulic lines connect to the cylinders and the controls inside the operator's cab are replicated to a high standard.

A trademark of TWH's models is the higher level of features provided. On this model there are various opening doors which reveal fully detailed interiors, with many tiny components. The functionality is good too. The rear axle is floating, and the articulated steering works nicely. Raising and tipping the bucket works well, and the cylinders used are stiff enough to hold any pose without the bucket bleeding down.

Overall this is a really good model. At around £400 it is not cheap, but it is good value considering its high quality.

Overall Rating: *Highly Recommended*

Left: The huge Le Tourneau L-1850 loader.

Below: Excellent details with even the fan visible behind the grille.



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