

Small Plant & Machinery

Ian Webb reviews models of interest to collectors.



A number of new 1:50 scale Caterpillar models are expected to appear by the end of the year from Caterpillar's preferred supplier, Norscot. These include the 24M motor grader, the 597T pipelayer, the 793F mining truck and the 374D hydraulic excavator. A number of existing models will also be appearing in military tan colours.

Also expected are some new models from TWH Collectibles including the giant Manitowoc 31000 crawler crane in 2011, and a number of existing Grove crane models in new liveries later this year.

REVIEWS

James Jack ballast trailer

Ballast trailers are specialised heavy haulage trucks which are used to carry the heavy counterweights used by mobile cranes. This 1:50 scale model of a Nootboom six-axle trailer is produced by WSI and it is in the colours of the Scottish company, James Jack.

The tractor unit is a DAF unit and visually it is very striking in the James Jack livery. It is highly-detailed with numerous lights which have tiny lenses and the grilles look very convincing. Behind the cab, coiled air lines can be posed fixed to the trailer.

The cab tilts to reveal a detailed engine and it has a steerable front axle with a reasonable range of movement.

The trailer is very high quality.



Above: Detail at the rear of the model.

Underneath, the structure is excellently modelled and hosing extends from the front to each axle assembly each of which also has working suspension. Counted from the front, axle one and axles three to six steer, and the trailer looks great when posed steering.

Below: The ballast trailer loaded with crane parts.

It has an excellent deck surface with the plastic rendered to look like timber decking complete with fixing screw locations. A spare wheel holder has an opening door and a removable wheel. Also included is separate pack of metal deck posts and these fit into holes in the deck edge.

This is a great looking model with good functionality and is good value at around £130.

Overall Rating: Highly Recommended



Above: There are excellent details under the trailer.

Below: The Liebherr R944C tunnelling excavator.

Liebherr R944C tunnelling excavator

The Liebherr R944C is a tunnelling excavator and as such it works in a very harsh environment. It is made suitably robust for the task with heavy duty parts and plenty of protection to the vulnerable components. It has been modelled in 1:50 scale by NZG.

The metal tracks are of high quality and the track frames and sprockets are detailed. They even have dirt scrapers fixed above each set of tracks. At the front an adjustable dozer blade is attached and the hydraulic components

for this have special covers which can be opened.

Detail inside the cab is really good with pedals and joysticks, and the floor has a textured surface.

Body detailing is excellent with superb graphics and there are a number of metal grab rails which give the model a quality feel. Fine grille details are matched by panel handles and painted bolt heads, and at the rear the lights have individual protection grilles.

The boom has silver hydraulic lines leading into rubber hoses and there are special protection plates applied all over.

In a number of places the bolt heads have been painted silver – a really great detail. The main boom and stick can be raised, lowered and rotated to enable the tools to get to difficult to reach places.

There are two tools supplied. A mill attachment has rotating cutting heads each with well formed teeth. A separate ripper bucket has three very finely formed teeth and is another high-quality piece.

This is a top notch model, and is priced around £120.

Overall Rating: Outstanding



Above: The milling head rotated for cutting.



MAN DHAS and tipper trailer

The German model maker, Conrad, has produced this 1:50 scale model of an old-timer MAN tractor with a tipper body. It is one of a series of such models produced for MAN trucks.

The tractor is crisply detailed with a nice radiator grille bearing the MAN name. The engine cover opens and inside is a metal engine block and the casting of the body has door details and body styling well represented.

The tractor chassis has the transmission, exhaust and suspension modelled in a pleasing way. Nice treaded tyres are mounted on detailed hubs and the steering has an excellent range with a good hard lock.

Overall Rating: recommended

The dump trailer body is metal and feels robust. The hydraulic cylinder that lifts the body has seven telescopic sections and works very well. At the rear of the body there is a twin door tailgate which can be opened. A couple of landing legs can be lowered to support the trailer when detached from the truck.

This is a nice historic model which is solidly made and good value at around £80.



Above: The opening tailgate.

Left: The MAN old-timer being loaded by a 22-RB.



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