

# Small Plant & Machinery

Ian Webb reviews models of interest to collectors.

## REVIEWS

### Grove RT540E rough terrain crane

The RT540E is a rough terrain mobile crane which is often seen on sites where the travelling conditions are not ideal, such as motorway construction. The real machine can lift a maximum of 35 tonnes. This 1:50 scale model made by TWH Collectibles has now been produced in the colours of Michielsens, a large Belgian crane hire company. It comes with a reprint of the Grove product guide and a simple instruction sheet.

The model has good quality tyres mounted

on detailed hubs and both axles steer independently. The carrier is really well detailed with the outrigger pistons looking like pistons instead of just screw threads and the engine area is excellent with superb grilles and an opening battery compartment on one side.

The crane body is highly detailed and there is a removable panel which gives access to the hydraulics. The cab has windscreen wipers and mirrors, and inside there is a fire extinguisher, textured floor and numerous internal notices for the driver. It also features a sliding door.

The boom is a four piece telescope which is nicely decorated and the metal hook block is already reeved in the factory which saves a job for the collector. Also supplied is a lattice extension jib and this can be attached to the boom top with pins and it also has a telescopic extending section. A second hook block is provided so two winches can be rigged although it would have been better if it had been a single line hook.

The crane rotates and the boom can be set at any angle and fully opened up the model becomes quite large. A nice touch is that the boom features a working angle indicator. This is a very detailed model and is available in a variety of different liveries for around £165.

**Overall rating: Highly Recommended**



Above: The RT540E travels on site.



Above: The opening cab door reveals plenty of detail. Left: Set up and ready to lift.

# Caterpillar 793F mining truck

This is a 1:50 scale model by Norscot of the giant 793F Mining Truck which has a nominal payload capacity of 250 tons and a gross operating weight of over 400 tons.

It is a big and heavy model.

Underneath, most of the major suspension and transmission components are present. The wheel hubs are plastic and detailed, and the big rubber tyres are not too shiny, so they look good. The front axle steers to an angle which is reasonable and the rear axle has working suspension which is stiff but effective.

The majority of the handrails are metal and they look realistic. The cab deck has a textured surface and it has nice fire suppression equipment, a double exhaust, and a flap on the cab deck lifts to reveal the engine inside. A good detail is that the mirrors are different with one having a distinct convex shape. Inside the cab double seats can be seen.

The body has a heavy metal construction with plastic parts but fortunately the

colour match between plastic and metal is very good. The body is raised by a pair of two stage cylinders and these are stiff enough to hold any pose. The angle of tilt is very good. At the rear, body retaining cables can be lowered although there is no attachment point, and debris bars can be lowered and adjusted.

Norscot has produced a robust product

which befits the real machine. Big mining truck models always look impressive and this is no exception. The detail level is not to the best of modern standards but the overall impression is favourable and it can be obtained for around £150.

**Overall rating:**  
**Highly recommended**



Left: This is a massive mining truck.  
Below: The Caterpillar 793F tips its load.



# Sandvik DT1130i tunnelling jumbo

Conrad has produced a range of models for Sandvik and this is a 1:50 scale model of a tunnelling jumbo which is used to drill holes for bolts or explosive charges in hard rock tunnelling operations. The real machine has

an operating weight of 45 tonnes.

This is a surprisingly big and heavy model which is made to Conrad's usual high standard. The wheels have good quality tyres mounted on detailed hubs,

and the rear axle has a good range of steering movement. There are four working stabiliser pads which can be lowered.

At the rear, the engine area is modelled well with various elements detailed in metal and there is a fold-down access ladder. Two hose reels within the body can be rotated. The operator's cab is large and includes two seating positions each complete with controls. An interesting feature is that the entire cab can be raised up on a telescopic mechanism for better visibility.

At the front there are three drilling arms each of which has a tiny drilling head at the end of the drill string. The range of movement of the drills is excellent as they are mounted on adjustable three stage telescopic booms with full three-way movement at the end. The drills can also be moved along the drill string guides. There is also an access platform mounted on a telescopic boom. This is a very well executed model and although it is a little pricey at around £225 it is good value because of its unusual nature and high quality.

**Overall rating: Highly recommended**

Ian Webb reviews construction models on his website and you can read more at [www.CranesEtc.co.uk](http://www.CranesEtc.co.uk)



Above: The engine compartment is detailed.  
Left: The Sandvik DT1130i spreads its drills.

