

EDITORIAL

Welcome to my tenth Newsletter and our summer is gradually ending, what with heat waves and thunder storms it certainly has been changeable here in the UK. The initial article covers what is thought to be the very last Price List that Wrenn issued, followed by an article on another, relatively new Portable Layout that has been constructed. Finally I have received some additional information on the Wrenn 152 portable layouts that the factory produced which expands my previous recent article. I would also like to welcome a new Wrenn 152 convert, Paul Fahey, who lives over in Australia. I am hopeful that he will enjoy being part of our collective group and perhaps share his thoughts over time. I do hope that you all enjoy reading this latest Newsletter.



THE LAST PRICE LIST?

After some discussion with our collectors, and in particular Bernard Sampson one of our Wrenn 152 enthusiasts over in the US, it seems that what could possibly have been the very last Price List produced by Wrenn was actually inserted into the last 9-volt sets. It follows the previous simple typed Price List sheets but is without a date and is actually titled as a 'Temporary Price List/Order Form'. Since all of the items were only available direct from the factory, the bottom half of the sheet was intended to be used as the order form section by tearing the sheet in half and sending this with the remittance for the chosen items. There is no mention of the set but since it does state that it is a price list of additional cars, track and accessories this would reinforce the fact that it was included in the last sets. Bernard has kindly confirmed that one of his 9-volt sets contains one.

It is interesting to note what is included but also what are notable by their absence. The two cars have their new 'C' codings, most of the track sections are still available, apart from the more expensive Lap Counter and the now redundant Deflector Straight. There does seem to be one anomaly since the list contains the

THE LAST PRICE LIST? continued

XG6 Collectors. As far as I am aware from what I have seen, and other enthusiasts have confirmed this also from their perspective, all of the 9-volt cars were only supplied with braids of a similar size as used on 1/32 scale slot cars instead of the usual Wrenn flexible or non-flexible Collectors. This braid solution would have been so much cheaper to supply which seems to have been Wrenn's main objective with this final range. So perhaps, just as Wrenn had done previously by retaining a code number but using newer versions in packs of other items, this pack actually would have contained 4 No short lengths of braid with possibly a hole punched in each for the fixing screw? Although until an example is seen this obviously cannot really be confirmed.

Most of the items were understandably a similar price to the previous Price List except the cars, which had been substantially reduced from the last Price List seen, which was the one issued in November 1965. In this the cars were 28/- (£1-8-0) each but they were now reduced to 12/6, which was well under half of their previous price. Bernard has kindly shared a photo of this Price List below and if you have any further information about those last days of Wrenn 152 it would, as usual, be gratefully received. Thank you for sharing Bernard.



NEWSLETTER No10

SEPTEMBER 2018

PORTABLE LAYOUT

If you visited the 2018 Slot Car Festival you would have seen another portable layout in operation that I have built for a friend of mine and it performed admirably over the two days so apart from the initial cursory clean, there were no problems at all with the layout. The construction used was the same as used in my first layout but this one is a little larger, being 1525 x 762mm, or 5'-0" x 2'-6" in 'old money', for those of us past a certain age! This track layout attempts to include the maximum track possible in the available space and features all of the different track elements of a Chicane, Deflector Straight and Lap Counter.



This particular layout enables a couple of Trackside Pit Buildings to be included. Again I mounted these onto a 3mm thick styrene carrier with two cut-down sections of Straight track positioned in front, with the addition of some styrene fencing sections behind. This provides a wider pit area so that some figures or additional cars can be parked in front of the Trackside Pits but 'off the racing line', still allowing the races to be staged. This treatment of mounting the buildings onto a 3mm thick piece of styrene seems to be an ideal solution if the track sections use the Track Clips and Fence Posts which raise the track off the surface of the baseboard. The styrene and additional Track section are cut to fit between any obstructions such as the Track Clips and actually lifts the Pit Buildings to the correct height in

PORTABLE LAYOUT continued

relation to the track surface. A few figures were also included as well as some Flags and Flagpoles in order to 'complete the scene' and enhance this little diorama. Please find a couple of detail photos below to show the two versions that I have assembled up to press.



The final photo below shows the larger pit complex in situ and also includes the trusty Hammant & Morgan DC Power Unit that I tend to use. For besides their good reputation of being almost 'bomb-proof' I find it perfectly adequate to power both the AC & DC cars with only the added minor inconvenience of having to clean the AC car's contacts a little more frequently.



FACTORY-BUILT LAYOUTS UPDATE

Soon after my article on the factory-built layouts was published in the March 2018 Newsletter, some very interesting photographs were discovered by Maurice Gunther. These photos show some of the Wrenn exhibition stands and layouts that were taken to a Toy Fair at Olympia and also to one in Germany. Cedric Wrenn is seen attending both of them in his Sales capacity but unfortunately we can't identify where in Germany this was held, although a possibility could well have been Nuremburg, which held an annual Toy Fair.

There are three photos from Olympia which show two different layouts. I understand that these photos feature a number of sportsmen, as yet unidentified, trying their skills at another sport! From the advertising there was a competition taking place for children in two different age groups, junior & senior, to race on the layout.... but what about their parents! From the date of the final stated on the banner this would have taken place in August 1961. Were you there, do you remember this? The layout that was used for the competition seems to be the last and largest figure-of-eight one identified in my original article. The only difference seems to be the missing Grandstand with it's flags & flagpoles, which could have certainly been a hindrance to the track marshalls when the racing was taking place. There is also mention in the photo below of an Exhibition Souvenir - Formula 152 Cars, priced at 3/6, now that was a great offer.

**FACTORY-BUILT LAYOUTS UPDATE continued**

The second layout, below, also seems to be a figure-of-eight circuit but with the addition of a railway track around the outside of the central slot racing track. The small advertising board near the layout in the hall does promote the various gauges that were available of the Wrenn railway track. Included on the layout there seems to be two Trackside Pit buildings, possibly the prototype First Aid Hut and a prototype Grandstand. Unfortunately I do not have any other photos or further information to be able to identify this layout or what it contained, as yet, so this will have to go into the pending pile awaiting confirmation.



FACTORY-BUILT LAYOUTS UPDATE continued

Finally the photo below was taken at a Toy Fair in Germany and is very interesting, for besides showing all of Wrenn's 152 products it also has their range of model railway track products on display. There are 1st generation Set Boxes and Extension Packs featured, so this will probably date it between mid-1961 and 1963. This is the first time that I have seen an official photo which includes one of the smallest factory-built oval layouts, featured in the centre, and there seems to be two more working layouts on display. The one on the left seems to have a railway track included around the outside. The one just visible on the right hand corner is unfortunately just too small to comment on and finally there is also another one which apparently is hung on the right hand wall as well.



There seems to be three different showcards on display, two of them I have seen before but the third, larger one is a bit of a mystery. I have extracted a small section of the photo opposite to aid identification to see if anyone can assist, but I do have to apologise about the quality as this has been enlarged from a scan of the photo. I do appreciate that this is a Black & White photo but from the adjacent showcard and catalogue it would suggest that the top half is probably Yellow and the bottom half could be Light Blue. Contained within a possible White outline of a racing circuit, the words seems to be 'The Winner!' and then 'Wrenn 152' plus another line, which could be 'Electric Model Motor Racing' and then a final line of text at the bottom but other than that I am a little in the dark about it. Have you seen it before or do you have any information about it?

FACTORY-BUILT LAYOUTS UPDATE continued

To actually see these photos is an absolute privilege and I am very grateful to Maurice to have found them in his collection and has given permission for their sharing. They are great, thank you.

**USEFUL CONTACTS**

Rob Miller has a new website forum for Wrenn 152.
www.tapatalk.com/groups/wrenn152/

Site includes a forum for all slot car manufacturers including Wrenn 152 and a Swap Shop.
www.slotforum.com

Site covers Wrenn railways and Wrenn 152 and includes a list of currently available items for sale.
www.wrennspecialist.co.uk

French manufacturers of reproduction urethane tyres for Wrenn 152 who sell either direct online at
www.slotcarstyres.com or via eBay as seller dauremy.