

# WRENN

# formula

# 152

## NEWSLETTER No9

## JUNE 2018

### EDITORIAL

Welcome to my ninth Newsletter and perhaps you are getting ready for your summer holidays. Although I do know that for some of you it is your busy time with seasonal responsibilities. Hopefully this will provide all of you with a little enjoyable break.

Articles this time include a review of the recent UK Slot Car Festival held at Gaydon and the Wrenn 152 exhibition stand on display, yes we were there again. Following that is hopefully a comprehensive listing of all of the possible variants of Wrenn 152 cars that can be assembled for your collection. I have decided not to split this article since I feel that it really should be read in its entirety to aid continuity and understanding, so it does run to the rest of the Newsletter. I have also attached a separate spreadsheet listing all of these car chassis variants in the hope that this does make sense for you all. I do hope that you enjoy reading this.



### SLOT CAR FESTIVAL 2018

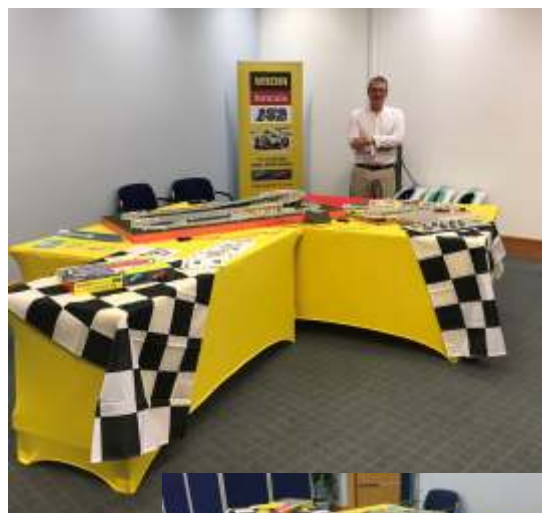
I hope that some of you managed to get to this year's Slot Car Festival in Gaydon. After my successful first exhibition last year, this was my second opportunity to 'fly the flag' and introduce Wrenn 152 to a largely new audience. I am very grateful to those of you who visited and to those who introduced themselves, I do hope that you and all of the visitors enjoyed your time spent there. It was great to see again Rob Miller, Roger Barker, Jonathan Hewitt, Steve Mann, Steve de Havilland, Jenny Burrell and the organising team. There were also some new interested individuals from Jersey, Italy and the US who came to the stand.... keeping up Wrenn's international appeal.

It was such a really special event and I would certainly recommend anyone who is interested in slot cars to visit the festival and just see what is available but also have the opportunity to see some of the early origins of

### SLOT CAR FESTIVAL 2018 continued

today's slot car movement. Besides Wrenn 152 being represented, Steve Mann & his brother brought along their early VIP layout with tinplate track and two of their Minic layouts. There was also a large combined demonstration layout of Minic & Triang railways and even a two-level Tyco road and railway layout, which took hours to assemble.

This year we had two layouts on the Wrenn 152 stand, my original factory-built shop layout and I am also very grateful to Roger for letting me borrow his larger, portable layout. I am delighted to report that over the two days of heavy running, the AC Ferraris and DC Coopers performed wonderfully, without the loss of any parts or even any loss, or irreparable damage to the collectors. This just goes to show how well engineered and made these cars were but it should really not be a surprise since they were intended to last through some lucky individual's childhood.



### WRENN 152 CAR VARIANTS

As you will probably all be aware, one of the distinct advantages of having a collection of Wrenn 152 slot cars, apart from the basic fact that they are beautiful scale models, is that there were not that many different car types manufactured. I would like to try to address the perennial question of how many different cars were actually manufactured. Notwithstanding the rarer and more expensive cars, with there being only six different car types and two colours of each available, you can easily assemble a small and interesting collection.

If you are just wanting to collect one of each type of car in both of the available colours, that is only 12No cars, but if you also wish to consider the three different motor types, then that increases the possible number up to 23No cars (8No AC Vibrator motored cars, 12No DC motored cars and the 3No 9-volt cars). The photos below show this type of collection.



### WRENN 152 CAR VARIANTS continued

However, should you wish to look a little deeper, there are a number of variants which you can find with the AC Vibrator-motored cars. After the initial introduction of the Red Ferrari & Green Cooper cars, Wrenn did continue with development of the cars and as the production progressed this influenced changes with the Chassis and correspondingly with some of the car's internal components.

In order to ease recognition of the variants I have decided to collate all of the available information in a spreadsheet which include my own Chassis Type designations for ease of separation. Although, whilst I do appreciate that it may ultimately be found not to be totally definitive, it does contain all of the information that I believe is available at this time especially when viewed against the accompanying photos. I am hopeful therefore, that this will serve as a yardstick for the future.

The very first versions of both of these initial cars, the Red Ferrari and Green Cooper, had a small rectangular recess externally just in front of the rear axle line, which was opposite to an internal raised section inside the Chassis that aligned the Coil Assembly. This version was only ever seen on the Red Ferrari and the Green Cooper cars and I have designated these as **Type A** Chassis.

Wrenn subsequently introduced a modification to both of these Chassis. The Cooper had a raised, narrow lens-shaped section added but the Ferrari just had the external recess removed. These changes then appeared in both colour versions of each of these cars, which I have designated the **Type B** Chassis.



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There was also another interesting variant to consider with the Chassis of the AC Vibrator-motored Ferrari & Coopers cars. Originally the early AC cars had solid axle supports which were raised semi-circular sections of the Chassis, each with a hole and these required the axles to have one of the Wheels, and also the Ratchet Wheel if appropriate, removed to extract the axle. These have only been found on the Ferrari and Cooper cars where again examples of both colours have been seen designating these as the **Type B** version of the Chassis. Later these sections were opened out at the top in the injection moulding tools for these cars, to allow both the front and rear axles to be snapped in and out easily for maintenance. By the time that the Vanwall and Maserati cars were introduced, the 'snap-in' axle mounts were the standard approach and subsequently for all cars. These versions of the Chassis I have termed as **Type C**. So this now increases the absolute number of different AC Vibrator-motored cars up to 14No.



It was originally assumed that when the change to DC motors was introduced that Wrenn just 'modified' some of their existing stock of AC Vibrator Chassis as an interim solution to accommodate the new DC motor, before the injection moulding tool could be permanently changed. Unfortunately this is actually incorrect since there were two significant changes necessary, the first included the simple punching out of an additional small, rectangular hole in the Chassis to provide access to the bottom carbon brush underneath the new motor. There was also another important change and this was to internally enlarge the area around the new Cog Wheel on the rear axle which necessitated a raised, curved

### WRENN 152 CAR VARIANTS continued

section to be added externally. Surprisingly Wrenn did not take this opportunity to change the position of the raised lettering on the outside of the Chassis. Only examples of the Ferrari & Cooper cars have been seen with some of the lettering under the Chassis being 'lost' in the hole and all of these Chassis I have termed as **Type D**. When the Chassis tool was modified again for the other cars it allowed the opportunity to also change the position of this lettering.

When Wrenn's next batch of DC motored cars was being produced, these **Type E** Chassis included all of the latest introductions of snap-in axle mounts, the superfluous (AC) mounting holes were filled and the repositioned lettering dictated by the new bottom access hole. Only two types of car have been seen with this type of Chassis, the Maserati and Vanwall. Surprisingly the Ferrari and Cooper cars have not been seen with this Chassis and again there may be examples found in the future but as yet they are absent.



When the next type of DC Chassis was introduced it was designed for all of the car types and included all of the above features but Wrenn also included another surprising element. This was a small central hole which was positioned at the rear of the car, similar in size to the one at the front of the car used for the Guide Pin,



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which I do not, as yet, have any information at all. However Wrenn did take this opportunity to finally change the orientation of the raised lettering under the Cooper (which had been opposite to all of the other cars produced previously) to align it in the same direction as the other cars. This ultimate DC Chassis I have termed **Type F** and this now increases the possible DC car variants, at present, to 20No cars.



Finally Wrenn introduced their new 9-Volt range of cars. These Chassis had two transverse slots to accept the bottom of the Maximiser motor and the raised lettering 'WRENN MADE IN ENGLAND' was orientated in the opposite direction to all of the other previous cars, except the early Cooper car Chassis, as noted above. All of the 9-Volt cars seen do not seem have had any Chassis variants, so these are all designated **Type G**, as below. There were only Red Maserati and Yellow or Light Green Vanwall cars produced and this ultimately adds only 3No cars.



Hopefully the previous photos illustrate all of the individual variants discussed. So you can have a very small collection, which could just include the very early AC Vibrator-motored cars that are relatively easy to find and would be cheap to assemble. Alternatively

### WRENN 152 CAR VARIANTS continued

you may wish to attempt to collect all of the individual variants should you have the inclination and also the funds. If so, then the maximum number of variants of all of the Wrenn 152 cars that I believe were ultimately manufactured is currently 37No!

Since no confirmed information is available as to the overall quantities of each car type or colours that were manufactured, some of the above may go some way to explain why the majority of Wrenn formula 152 cars that are seen today are Red Ferraris and Green Coopers, which has always seemed to have been a constant puzzle.

I am indebted to Rob Miller, Sven Nillson and Bernard Sampson for assisting with confirming some of these details, as well as providing some of the accompanying photos from their collections. Should anyone have any additional information on this important subject, it would certainly be welcome and gratefully received, especially if any of the 'missing' DC motored **Type D** or **Type E** cars are located. Please see the additional spreadsheet attachment sent with this Newsletter for clarification.

So you don't have to re-mortgage your house to have an interesting collection of Wrenn 152 cars.....that is, unless you really want to of course. Happy collecting.

### USEFUL CONTACTS

Rob Miller has a new website forum for Wrenn 152.  
[www.tapatalk.com/groups/wrenn152/](http://www.tapatalk.com/groups/wrenn152/)

Site includes a forum for all slot car manufacturers including Wrenn 152 and a Swap Shop.  
[www.slotforum.com](http://www.slotforum.com)

Site covers Wrenn railways and Wrenn 152 and includes a list of currently available items for sale.  
[www.wrennspecialist.co.uk](http://www.wrennspecialist.co.uk)

French manufacturers of reproduction urethane tyres for Wrenn 152 who sell either direct online at  
[www.slotcarstyres.com](http://www.slotcarstyres.com) or via eBay as seller dauremy.