



Car park and refreshment building at Lodge Corner.

Circuit of the Month

CRAVEN PARK FORMULA 152 CIRCUIT

by R. A. Phillips

The Craven Park Formula 152 Circuit was founded in December, 1962. It is a two-lane figure of eight track with a 1/52nd scale lap length of a quarter mile. The baseboard is in two sections and forms a complete layout 6 ft. 4 in. x 3 ft.

Wrenn Formula 152 was chosen because of its suitable size for the home, and the novelty of being able to overtake and drive two cars on one lane independently and the ability to tune a car—fast for Dad who wants to show off his skill on the corners, and slow for the three year old son who cannot yet control a sliding car—thus father and son can have a competitive race.

The majority of the track is glued on to the baseboard but six other sections have been left loose, together with all the buildings and trees. All these are stored in a 2 ft. x 1 ft. x 1 ft. case which has two trays in the top, one containing all the cars, the other holding the controller and all the spare parts.

The baseboards when folded together form a complete box, 3 ft. x 3 ft. x 4 in., so it is not very hard to store. Construction is in the form of two trays made with a hardboard base and 2 in. x 1 in. sides. A piece of 5 in. x 1 in. is glued across each tray in one place only with the track in turn glued to this, serving the dual purpose of raising the road to the bridge and also acting as a strengthener. Having many "OO" scale items from my model railway (no longer in use) all the buildings and scenic work are to that scale. The difference in scales is not too noticeable if used with care, and gives a feeling of spaciousness. Trees are kept away from the front

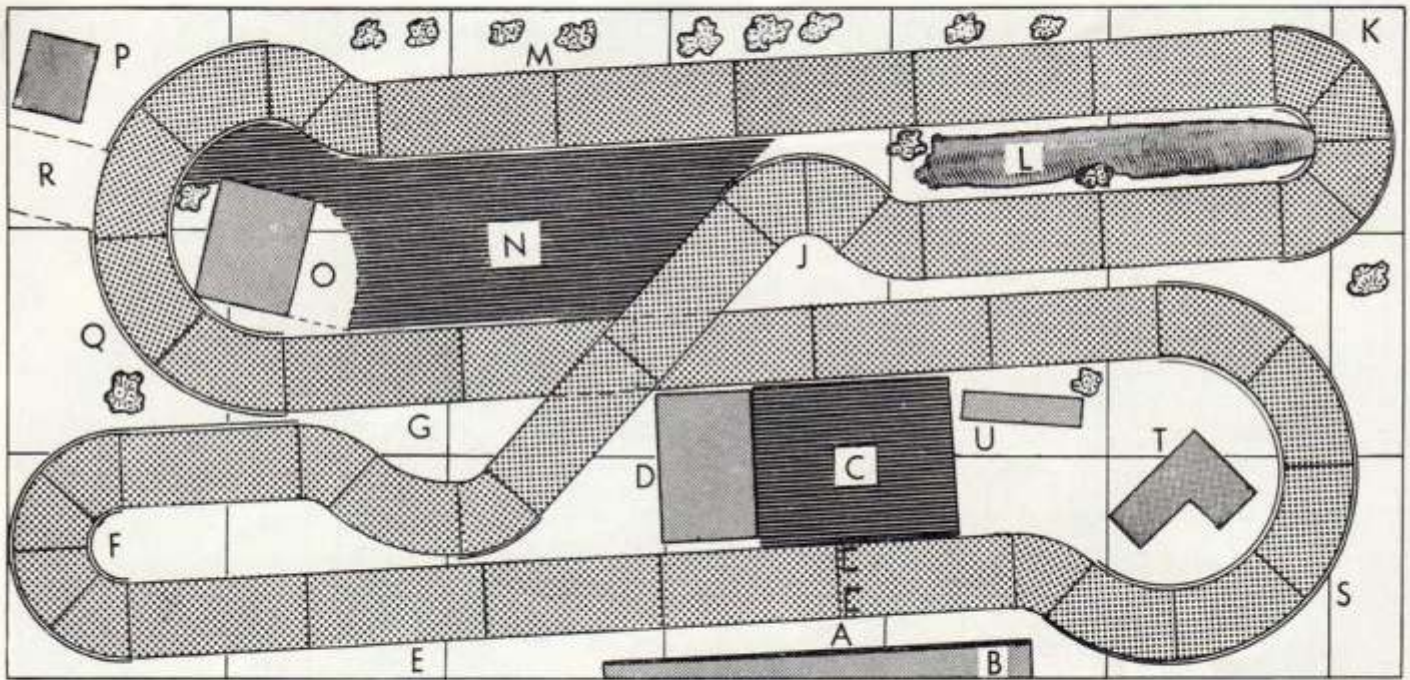
and sides of the layout so that they do not obstruct the track marshals.

The grandstand is a converted Corgi Press Box, and the Clubhouse is made from two unfinished Airfix Control towers. The pits were built with balsa wood, painted and covered with brickpaper. The paddock has not been modelled as yet, because no suitable arrangement has been suggested. Grass banks were formed by gluing empty match boxes to various heights, covering them with Polyfilla, painting them green, and then spraying them with rayon flock. Bushes are selected pieces of lichen, and the lake was formed by letting a piece of glass into Polyfilla after it had been painted black, blue and green. The baseboard sides were covered with brickpaper with card pieces added to give relief and then posters were added.

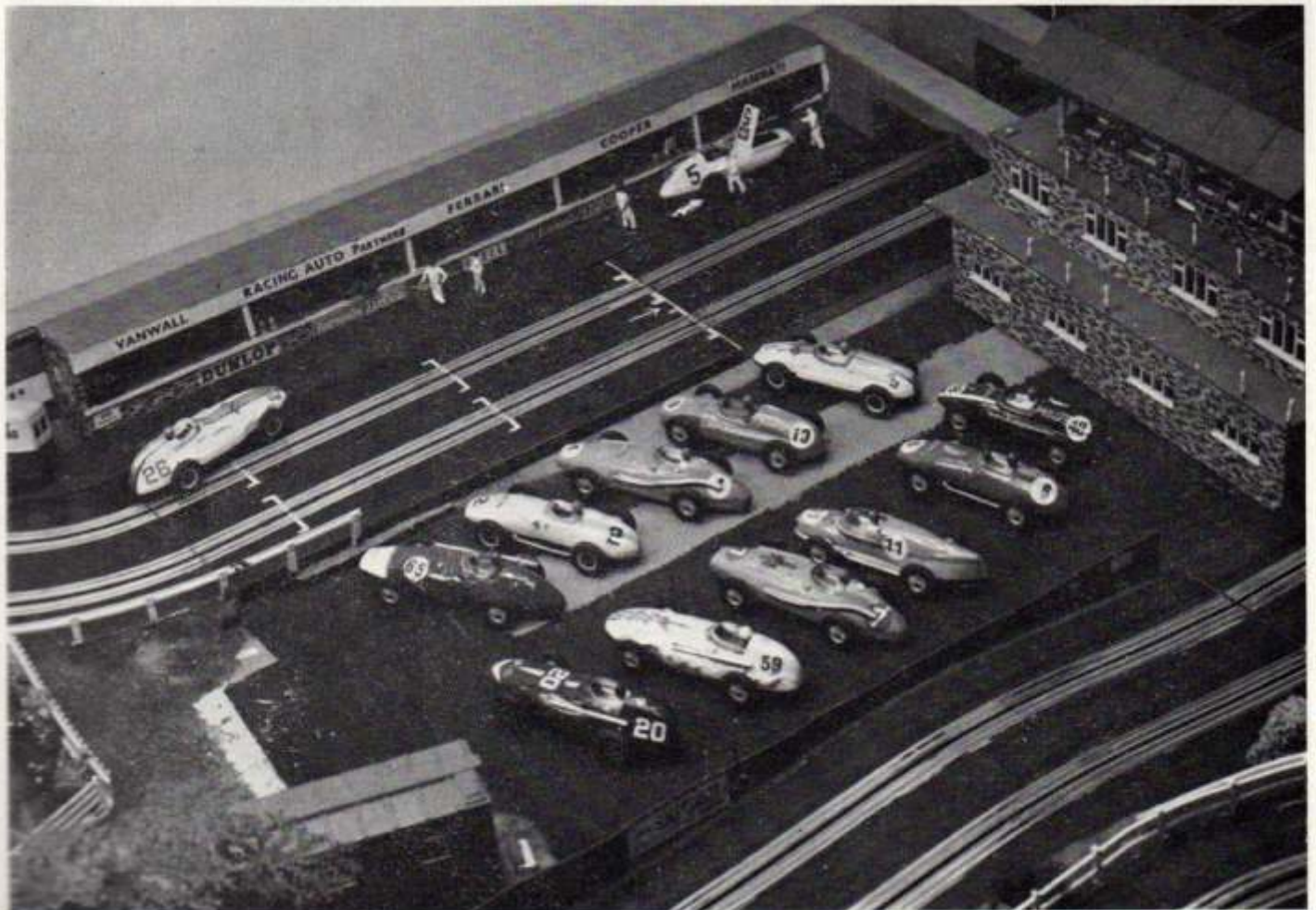
Th four loose joining straight across the baseboard have been kept parallel, thus without any alteration whatsoever to the existing baseboards, the layout can be extended to any length.

To summarise, I will now guide you on a tour of the racetrack. Next to the starting grid, is the Paddock and the grandstand. As we leave the start and drive along the straight, we pass the Club House and the Red Cross Cabin, then enter the first bend of the circuit, called Woodcote Corner which is a sharp right-hander flanked by a crash barrier.

The road rises and we enter the double bends known as the Esses, followed by the bridge and then into High Bend. A down gradient brings us into a sharp left hander called Water Bend and on our left,



Above is the plan of the circuit; the key is as follows: A, Starting Grid; B, Pits; C, Paddock; D, Club House; E, Deflector Section; F, Woodcote Corner; G, The Esses; J, High Bend; K, Water Bend; L, Lake; M, The Everglades; N, Car Park; O, Restaurant; P, Lodge Hotel; Q, Lodge Corner; R, Main Entrance; S, Paddock Bend; T, Manager's House; U, Workshop Carriage. Below: Cars lined up in the Paddock, opposite the Pits.





A Vanwall leads two Coopers through Paddock Bend.

we pass a small lake which many people find very suitable for swimming, in spite of the resident swans! Along the tree lined straight called the Everglades, we pass the car park which becomes quite crowded on race days. Wide sweeping Lodge Corner encircles the car park and Café where teas and light refreshments can be obtained, and consumed inside, or out in the sunshine.

The Main Entrance is also situated here, with the Lodge Hotel adjacent. We now travel along Club Straight under the bridge, round the Paddock Bend and pass the Manager's House, which ends the tour of the circuit. There are many scenic items yet to be completed, but all additional work is only to give a better finish, as the track itself is complete. At present, there are 130 people, 10 birds and two dogs on the layout.

I think that home racing should be as well organised as Club racing, but as visitors are unlikely to own their own cars, a large stud of 21 cars is provided. The usual number of drivers at a meeting is four, five or six, so visitors have a choice of at least 18 cars, and are given as much time as possible for practising to enable them to choose their most suitable car.

Tables have been compiled to show at a glance a set programme for any number of drivers between three and eight. The main event consists of twelve or fifteen races, giving each competitor five or six drives. Races are short, usually being five, six or eight laps and the procedure is as follows.

A and B are drivers, C and D are marshalls at either end of the layout. For the next race, C and D are drivers and so on as per programme, and an extra marshall would be a timekeeper. These short races ensure continued interest by all concerned and eliminates the chance of becoming bored while waiting to drive. After the main event, if time permits, we hold time and record events. One such race is the Two-Lap-Dash with Le Mans start. Our method is that each driver places his car on the starting grid, leaves his controller in a convenient position on the edge of the baseboard and then sits down on a chair six feet from the layout. When the flag falls, he grabs the controller and completes two laps as quickly as possible.

Most people like to see their names in print, and our visitors can see their own in the race reports published in the "Craven News" which is our own twice yearly newsheet printed on my Adana press. Other printed items include Drivers Passes (an invitation card), programme, blanks and letterheads. Although the circulation of our newsheet is very small ("Model Roads and Racing" has nothing to fear from us!) it does help our friends to prove to their friends that they drive racing cars, and did win the North-West London Grand Prix—for there it is in black and white!—it's all good clean fun.

Three cars racing past the lake towards Water Bend.

