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A NIT – PICKERS GUIDE TO A BETTER BAHN

PART 7

By J. Jesson

Liliput HO scale Einheits Type III stock.

A-III Cat. No. 88450

B-III Cat. No. 88550

WR-III Cat. No. 88650

AD-III Cat. No. 88750

I support that this stock should have been part 1 of this series, but I have only recently settled down to look closely at the stock and undertake the not inconsiderable amount of work necessary to improve it to a standard acceptable to me.

The prototypes were introduced between 1972 and 1975 in an attempt to improve internal Swiss services. The stock is air-conditioned, and was to have been tilting to allow higher speeds on the tortuous Swiss network. Whether they every saw service in their tilt form I am not sure, but problems with the system caused its abandonment, leaving only the distinctive profile. Another new feature was the fitting of automatic couplings throughout. This necessitated converting several Re 4/4 II locomotives to work the stock.

Liliput introduced their HO models of the A, B and WR in 1973, the AD following three years later. Each type has a one-piece body moulding, comprising sides, ends (including corridor connections) and roof, which is a somewhat loose fit over the chassis moulding. An interior is provided for each vehicle, sprayed in dazzling shades of red, green or blue, as appropriate.

Although the models were considered good when they were introduced, the intervening fifteen years have seen vast improvements in the model world. Much work is necessary, therefore, to bring the models to a standard comparable to todays offerings. The work can be categorised as follows:—

1. Running
2. Couplings
3. Windows
4. Interiors
5. Details
6. Standard of finish

1. Running

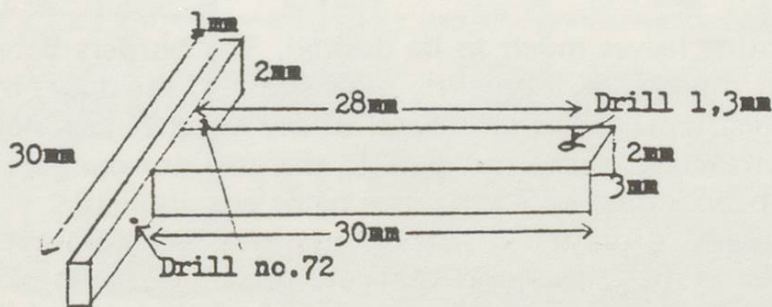
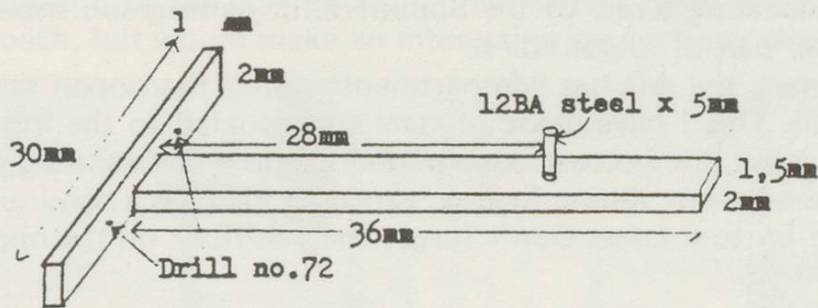
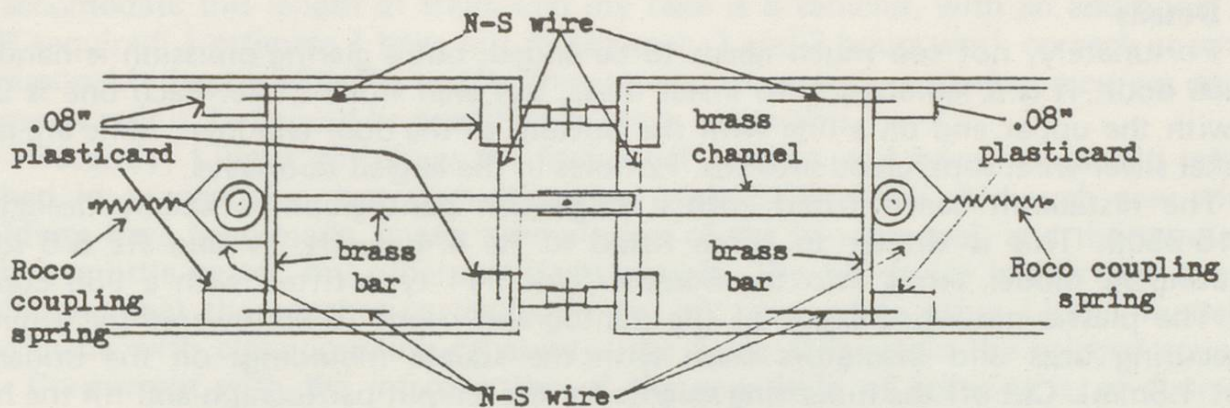
Liliput incorporated an ingenious system for simulating the tilt mechanism of the prototype. Each bogie has moulded 'ramps' each side of the centre pivot, while the floor moulding has two 'pips' in a corresponding position at one end only. The idea is that, as the bogie rotates in relation to the coach on entering a curve, the 'pip' on the outside of the curve is forced upwards by the bogie, thus tilting the coach. The smaller the radius of the curve, the more degree of tilt.

The end result is not really effective, and can cause derailments, so I have removed the 'ramps' from the bogies by use of a sharp knife. Removing the floor 'pips' would have the same effect, but the bogie 'ramps' needed to be removed to accomodate the couplings.

Marks on the underside of the floors on some of the coaches showed that the flanges of the rather coarse Liliput wheels were rubbing on the floor. There are several solutions to this problem, but my way out has been to fit Roco 9mm diameter RP25 profile wheelsets. (Cat. No. 40266).

2. Couplings

No such things as close-coupling devices were about when these models were introduced, with the result that there are large gaps between the coaches. I have installed a home-made system of brass bar and channel, wire and plasticard as the intermediate couplings, with Kadees at each end of the rake. The accompanying diagrams, hopefully, should make clear what I have done. I used a coarse file to clean off the detail on the ends of the corridor connections so that the coaches could move smoothly in relation to each other on curves.



3. Windows

The prototypes have a distinctive seal around each window, which Liliput have not depicted on their models. So far I have fought shy of trying to reproduce this feature, as there are so many windows involved. It is a pity that some enterprising firm has not produced a conversion kit.

4. Interiors

As always, the interiors benefit greatly from being painted.

Floors – grey (Humbrol Ocean grey HB3)

Walls – buff or cream (Humbrol 121)

Seats, smoking – red (Humbrol British Crimson MC5)

Seats, non-smoking – green (Humbrol Green Leather MC28)

Seats, first class – blue (Humbrol 89)

Seats, dining car – blue (Humbrol 96)

The odd seats at the extreme ends of the coaches are green, irrespective of the status of the adjacent saloon. Interior doors can easily be painted in (don't forget the toilets) using Humbrol Metallic Polished Aluminium.

5. Details

Fortunately, not too much needs to be added, but a glaring omission is handrails by each door. It is a tedious job to instal these, but well worthwhile. Each one is 9mm long with the upper end on a line with the bottom of the door windows. Mine are made of nickel silver wire, superglued into No. 72 holes in the angled doorways.

The restaurant car is fitted with a single-arm pantograph, officially designated ESa 15-2500. This is similar to those fitted to Re 4/4 II, III, IV and Re 6/6 locos, translating in model terms into the Sommerfeldt 944 type fitted with a 985 contact head. The plastic mounting piece of the pantograph needs to be lowered by trimming the securing boss and insulators flush with the square mouldings on the underside (about 1.5mm). Cut off the mounting spigots for the Liliput pantograph and fill the holes in the roof. The hole for the locating screw of the Sommerfeldt pantograph should be 8.24mm outwards from the inner pair of spigot holes.

Alone of the different types, the AD has compartments rather than open saloons, necessitating a corridor handrail. This I have made of steel rod epoxied to the inside of the window moulding 2.5mm above the bottom edge of the window and running across 6 windows. The window in the adjacent sliding luggage van door also has a handrail, but slightly higher, 4mm above the bottom edge. Don't forget the van door on the opposite side, like I did.

6. Finish

The standard of Liliputs painting leaves much to be desired. The borders between different colours are indistinct, and the orange frequently ends short of the doors in the recesses. The top orange line above the windows on several of my coaches was slightly too low and on one coach did not extend round the ends to the corridor connections. On most coaches the guttering had been missed when the roof paint was applied.

Remedying these faults is really a matter of matching the paint colours, and patience. The orange is not too difficult, but I found at least four different shades of grey on various coaches. A good match for the orange is 15 parts Humbrol Signal Red (221) plus 2 parts Humbrol Yellow (66). The nearest grey I have found is Humbrol Grey (HJ2), darkened slightly with Humbrol Ocean Grey (HB3). A good starting point I found to be a 9 : 1 mix, but the varying shades used by Liliput mean this ratio had to be altered to suit each coach. I still have not got mine completely right.

Roofs I painted with Roco Umbragrau (10107), and handrails are yellow (Humbrol 66). The doors are Humbrol Metallic Polished Aluminium, while the bodyside extensions below the doors are dark grey (Humbrol 67).

This leaves only inscriptions. The Liliput markings are very good. Not only are the triple language initials and symbol clear, but the tiny vehicle running numbers and technical details are clearly read under a magnifying glass. I was fortunate to find some

very small, white, dry-paint numbers on a sheet of French wagon numbers, so I was able to alter the running numbers to avoid duplication. (Before anyone asks, the French wagon numbers came from a Paris model shop).

Unfortunately, Liliput seem to have dropped a clanger with the restaurant car. According to pictures I have, the word 'Restaurant' should be rendered in block capitals of the same size and style as the ownership letters, rather than the lower case style depicted by Liliput. Also, the restaurant car is unique in that the vehicle details are not at the bottom right-hand end of the bodyside on both sides, but are at the *same end as the door on both sides*. Liliput have got this wrong as well, but it could be that both the lettering style and positioning have changed, for these are errors which Liliput do not usually make. (I hope this is the case, because I don't fancy changing mine).

I believe the full rake of 'Swiss Express' stock is 14 vehicles. Few model railways can accommodate this length of train, and my rake is 8 vehicles, with an additional B for use if required. I estimate I have put in between 2 and 3 hours work on each coach, and am reasonably happy with the result. The close coupling system works on curves down to one metre radius, but could be modified to work below this.

Recently, Liliput withdrew the individual coaches and have introduced sets, still finished in orange/grey, but with the latest style of lettering. Although new window mouldings have been made, giving a simulation of the window seal, and the standard of finish is a little better, my other criticisms remain. The tilt device is a strange hangover considering that the coaches certainly do not tilt, and while other Liliput models are being made with close-coupling capability, the Type III's retain the original couplings.

Concurrent with the introduction of the new style of lettering is, of course, the introduction of the control trailer, Bt, rebuilt from the B. There is, as yet, no model of this coach, but would make an interesting job for someone — but not me!



Re4/4II arrives in Zürich with the rebuilt Swiss Express stock on the new Luzern/Zürich Pendlezug service

Photo: Editor

Standard coach type III.

	1 : 1	1 : 87	A	AD	B	WR
Length over buffers	24600	282,8	280,0	280,0	280,0	280,5
Length over body	24200	278,2	278,5	278,5	278,5	279,0
Width	2850	32,8	33,7	33,7	34,0	34,0
Height	3800	43,7	43,3	43,2	43,2	44,0
Bogie centres	18760	215,6	215,9	215,9	215,9	215,9
Bogie wheelbase	2350	27,0	28,2	28,2	28,2	28,2
Wheel diameter	800	9,2	9,0	9,0	9,0	9,0
Buffer height	1060	12,2	12,0	12,0	12,0	12,0
Buffer separation	1750	20,1	19,8	19,8	19,8	19,8



Elektrische Lokomotive Re 4/4 IV 10101-04.

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