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Track Cleaning in HOm

David Broomfield shows you how to polish your rails under the wires

Because of the catenary and the attendant difficulties for track cleaning, one is inevitably the victim of a self-inflicted injury when falling for a Swiss prototype to model. At least, in standard gauge HO or N there are the Roco track cleaning wagons, but this option is not available for metre gauge or is it?

Take one Roco track cleaning van (Cat.No.46400):

1. Remove the body from the chassis by inserting a small screwdriver between the two and gently prising the body outward until the lugs come free, pulling it off from the non-platform end until the final lug on the body end by the platform comes free.
2. The internal weight is simply removed by prising off the retaining discs from the two spigots which come through the body from the external (lower) weight. Lay the parts aside and:
3. Take one Bemo side door bogie van (Cat.Series No.2278) and prise out the side doors with the small screwdriver to reveal the lugs holding the body to the chassis which can be taken apart by depressing these lugs.
4. Drill two holes on the centre line of the chassis the same distance apart as the spigots on the lower weight from the Roco van and large enough to let them pass through freely.
5. Carve away the two moulded cylinders from the underside of the Bemo chassis and do the same to the ribbing between the solebars sufficiently to allow the lower weight to sit snugly against the underside of the chassis.
6. Reassemble the weights on the Bemo chassis.

Now comes the only difficult part. The springs on the Roco unit are too strong, this presumably is because the Bemo wheels are

smaller in diameter and the height of the chassis above rail level is correspondingly lower. If used, they will have the effect of turning the cleaning pad into a brake which is too strong even for the Bemo Ge6/6" to overcome. So:

7. Unscrew the cleaning pad holder from the lower weight and, before refixing it, adjust the spring tension. I expect this could be done by stretching and shortening the existing springs, but I used less powerful springs which I shortened by trial and error until the tension seemed right; ie the loco could pull the vehicle reasonably freely.

Hey Presto! A track cleaning vehicle for HOm, proof is whether you get dirty lines on the cleaning pad after a trip round the layout.

In passing this idea to a fellow metre gauger I did query whether one could carry out the operation in reverse by using a Roco N gauge cleaning wagon and uprating the operation. I left him toying with the idea, perhaps he'll let us know if he tried it and whether it works.

Exhibitions

The Society will be taking a stand at Inrex; 18-22 April 1992. Offers of assistance with manning to Giles Della Gana.

We will also be at the Newmarket exhibition on 13 June 1992 with a stand and layout. Offers of help to Les Heath.

The object is to publicise the Society, gain new members and - perhaps most important of all - to provide a venue where members can meet.

J.H.Phillips, of 15 Audley Gate, Peterborough, PE3 9PG is in the process of designing an N gauge model based on Moutier station and would be pleased to hear from any member who can provide a track plan or photographs of the station..