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MODELLING NEWS

Peter Marriott reviews some new scenic releases from the 2009 Nuremberg Toy fair that are suitable for modelling Switzerland.

The scenic manufacturers at the show were generally very positive with some reporting increases in turnover in 2008. Their view was that due to the economic situation modellers still wanted to buy model railway products but chose to buy scenic items rather than more expensive locomotives, etc.

There were a few common themes in the scenic manufacturers' releases announced for 2009.

- Better quality trees were announced by a number of companies including ER Décor, Heki and Noch. For example, ER Décor is introducing new poplar trees that stand up to 35cms tall and look very realistic using natural materials including trunks that bend. New for this year from Heki are taller spruce trees, new fir trees with soft foliage and sea moss trees are in ready-assembled and kit form.

- Working accessories are catching on fast with a number of firms going to retail moving figures, together with cranes and other rail-side features that move including Busch, Faller and Viessmann. For example Busch are to introduce a rowing boat that moves on a small lake. Animated figures from Viessmann include farmers and their wives, firemen, a miniature helicopter plus its operator and a wood chopper.

- Two useful products from Gaugemaster for 2009 are new fencing and a puffer bottle for use with static grass. Busch and Noch have introduced interior fittings for houses and other buildings.

- Better quality grass mats are now being produced by most of the major scenic companies. These mats have a variety of heights of grass and colour on the same mat. Strips of tall grass and tufts of grass are soon to be sold by most scenic companies. Busch is expanding its range of vegetable and plant kits further with summer flowers, weeds and even magnifying glasses for working with these tiny products!

- Manufacturers are forming partnerships with other companies, such as Noch who are now working with Atlas, the US company, and a new club started as a joint venture of Busch, Faller and Viessmann. Club members will be able to purchase exclusive products such as a log-moving road vehicle as shown on

the Busch stand. Go to www.mikrolaender.de for more information.

- Buildings and accessories in laser cut card are increasingly popular by Busch and Noch. Laser cut card kits from Noch this year will be new fences, various plants and a couple of exquisite looking bridge kits.

DHL depot by Faller.



Heki Swiss dioramas.



Laser cut bridge from Noch.

