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SERNFTALBAHN TRAM KIT

Ron Smith

The Sernftalbahn Verein (SeTBV) is an active Swiss group working to preserve the memory of the metre-gauge roadside tramway that ran in Kanton Glarus from the SBB station at Schwanden to Elm between 1905 and 1969. The attractive stations are still intact, used by the replacement bus service, which must have the grandest bus stops in Switzerland! The group are based at Engi where they operate a museum in the goods shed, and have laid a short length of track to hold a two axle goods van that is being rebuilt and repaired. They have various initiatives to raise money, and in 2010 one was to produce a HO cardboard kit of Engi station, their base. Details and a review were in the August 2010 *Continental Modeller*. They have now produced two cardboard kits, available in both HO and O, one of the tram-type vehicles that ran on the route and one of the red SeTB Triebwagen CFe2/2 No 3.

Trying the tram model I found the kits to be very detailed, high quality printed cardboard sheets needing some degree of skill to complete. The contours of the tram are complex with curving sides and roof. Instructions came in German with an English language translation available. The cutting-out needs to be precise, and done with sharp clean tools but the most difficult part was getting the bulging shape of the body correct (lots of long matchsticks were used for strengthening) and making the intricate steps. The tip is apparently not to assemble too many parts at once - taking time and, having held them together with clips, ensuring that the glued parts were completely dry before moving on to the next part. The sequence is logical and clear, but mistakes are often irreversible. The HO-gauge kits are quite difficult to assemble due to the small parts and are not recommended for first time builders, but the O-gauge kits give more scope for adjustment of any mistakes. I would suggest that the instructions be followed to the letter since any short cuts which are tried will leave the model in a sorry state and possibly unable to be finished.

Both kits (specify the gauge required) are priced at £7.00 for HO-gauge, or £19.50 for O-gauge. The price includes delivery and can be ordered from Ron Smith, Rhus, Banff Road, Keith, AB55 5ET. They will be sent directly from Switzerland. Sterling cheques should be made payable to R. Smith, or PayPal to ronald-smith@lineone.net. The proceeds of sales all go to support the objectives of the SeTBV. 

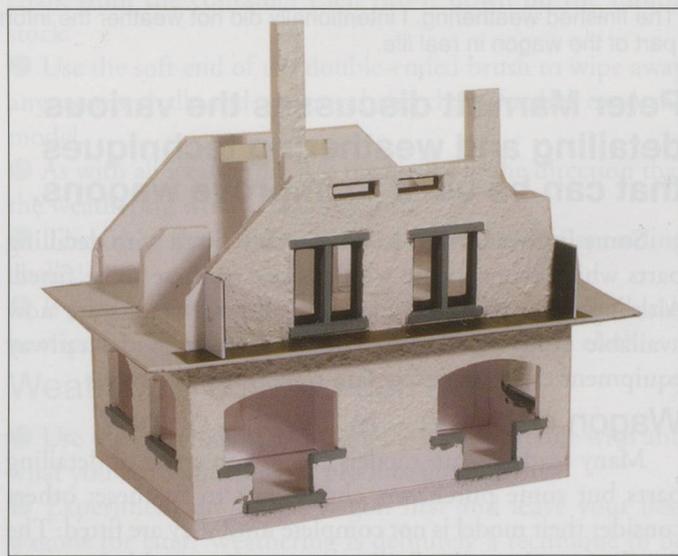


FONTANIVENT MOB

Michael Farr describes his superb station model

I was attracted to the building because it is not to the normal "chalet" design of MOB stations. When the line opened this was simply a halt with a wooden building similar to the one still at Sonzier, but it was upgraded when the Clarens-Chailly-Blonay tramway opened in 1911. This line closed in 1955. Thanks to the kindness of MOB/Golden Pass I was fortunate to acquire photocopies of the original drawings from that time. Fontanivent is quite unusual as the building lies at an angle to the track, but it was built facing this way because at one time it was centrally placed between the MOB tracks and the CCB tramway. In those days it even boasted a refreshment room. Operationally in the tramway era it must have been interesting, as the trams reversed here and had to cross the "main line" tracks. In the early afternoon apparently two MOB trains and two trams had to cross at about the same time. The foundations of the tramway shed can still be seen and a short length of the CCB main line towards Blonay has been retained as a siding on which several elderly wagons are stored. 

Editor's note: Michael's model was featured in a recent edition of *Continental Modeller*. Jolyon Sargent of Peco Studio supplied the photographs.



SWISS EXPRESS SCENERY CLINIC DETAILING AND WEATHERING WAGONS



The finished weathering. I intentionally did not weather the information panels on the wagon because these are usually the cleanest part of the wagon in real life.
All photos: Peter Marriott

Peter Marriott discusses the various detailing and weathering techniques that can be used to improve wagons.

Some European wagons arrive ready-fitted with detailing parts whilst others come with packets of these to be fitted. Although a large number of UK outline wagons are now available ready-weathered, with European model railway equipment this is the exception rather than the rule.

Wagon detailing – is it worth doing?

Many ready-to-run models come with a bag of detailing parts but some purchasers choose not to fit these; others consider their model is not complete until they are fitted. The detailing work on the Railion wagon discussed below took about a hour.

The result is that I now have a wagon that looks more realistic than the version straight from the box, and I gained satisfaction from doing the work.

Weathering – is it worth doing?

Weathering is the process of making models look more realistic by simulating the effects of rain, sun, dust, snow, grime, ageing, etc. As few European models are available ready weathered it is usually up to the purchaser to decide to modify their models. Some of us will understandably choose not to weather our rolling stock because of cost and re-sale implications; this is very much a personal matter. We can choose how far we want to weather our rolling stock – will it be lightly weathered or very dirty? We can also be selective with our weathering - so, for example, a wagon can be detailed and painted to represent replacement timbers and panels. Personally I find it very satisfying to see a wagon that I have weathered myself, working its way around a layout. To me the process is fun but I also confess to still finding it rather nerve-racking. Even after weathering numerous wagons each time I begin on a new wagon I still worry “I do hope I make this wagon look better not worse!”

Detailing and weathering a Roco ‘RAILION’ bogie covered wagon

These DB wagons are frequently seen on Swiss lines. The equipment that I used to weather this wagon (without an airbrush) was just a couple of aerosols of Humbrol acrylic paint, Tamiya weathering chalks and craft acrylic paints. The tools that are needed to

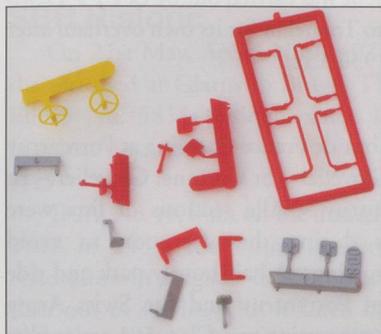
The Roco Railion wagon straight out of the box just looks too clean and shiny! Compare this with the finished wagon above.



detail and weather the wagons were a sharp craft knife, a small pair of tweezers and some small paintbrushes.

Detailing

The model came with quite a number of parts to be fixed to the model – in red, yellow and grey plastic. The accompanying pictures show that the holes into which the detailing parts are to be pushed are quite large, so if you choose not to fit the parts the wagon would not look too realistic. A small diagram is supplied with the wagon showing where the parts are to be fitted. Some of the parts are tiny and need a steady hand and tweezers to push them in place. I used a dab of Deluxe Materials Plastic Magic onto the join to be doubly sure that the parts would stay put.

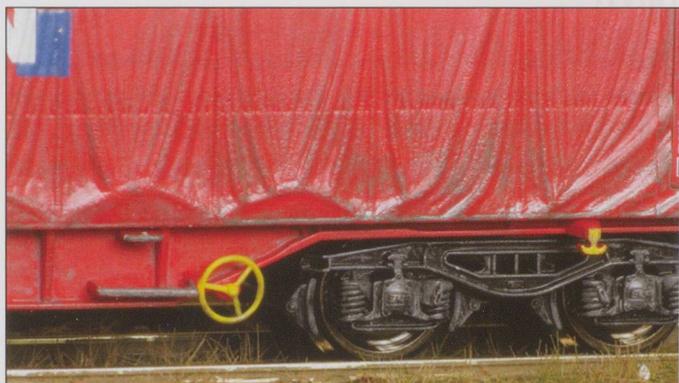


Here are the add-on bits and pieces that came with this particular wagon.

Weathering

On this wagon I used three weathering methods – weathering chalks, acrylic spray and dry brushing. Before I started I looked at the various

prototype pictures that I had to hand to see where the dirt would lie in real life. The next step was to use Tamiya Weathering Master B Set (Snow/Rust/Soot) chalks to apply a covering of dirt along the body sides with the supplied sponge/brush. I covered the roof in a lot of black weathering chalk and once I was happy with the amount of dirt on the wagon I sprayed the lower body with light grey acrylic paint by Humbrol, using a couple of light passes. To finish I dry brushed the raised details on the wagon as described below.



Some of the parts have been added to the wagon here and the bogie has been dry brushed with grey paint.

The dry brush technique

This method is used to enhance the raised details on a model rather than for applying a solid colour. The technique is as follows:

- Lightly dip a small but wide paintbrush into the acrylic or enamel paint.
- Rub the excess paint off the bristles of the brush on some paper tissue.
- Brush lightly over the details of the wagon.
- The paint will stick to the raised details and will highlight parts of the model.



The end of the weathered wagon. The dirt and grime effect has settled into the joints so that it looks more like the effect one would see on a real wagon.

Using Tamiya weathering chalks

Various companies make weathering chalks in a number of colours. Chalks are available in powder or in stick form. The chalks that I have used for this wagon are made by Tamiya because they are quite widely available in model shops in the UK and are sold in plastic trays of 3 colours, plus a double-ended brush (sponge one end, sponge brush the other) for applying the powder chalks. Remember when using Tamiya chalks:

- Chalks work best when applied to dull or non-glossy models, so you may find that applying a light coating of matt varnish, or distressing the model with glass fibre brushes before weathering, will enable the chalk to adhere better.
- The supplied brush with its foam cap is used to collect the chalk from the container then rub it down on the rolling stock.
- Use the soft end of the double-ended brush to wipe away any excess chalk and to spread the chalk further onto the model.
- As with all weathering rub the chalks in the direction that the weathering would naturally form.
- The tip of your finger is also a useful tool in spreading chalks!
- If you do not like the effect you have made the chalk can be wiped away even after it is dry by using a damp cloth.

Weathering dos-and-don'ts

- Use the materials that you are most comfortable with and what you are confident will produce good results.
- Experiment on an old wagon first and leave your best wagons for later! Weathering is definitely a technique to be learned.
- Work from prototype pictures to see exactly how a particular wagon would weather over time. Look where the rust patches are likely to occur.
- Go easy on weathering! It's better to do it too lightly rather than too darkly. You can always add another layer but it is not so easy to remove a coat – apart from water-based products.
- When you are happy with the finished result the weathering can be sealed in and protected by a quick spray of matt varnish from an aerosol. This usually has the effect of toning down the weathering.
- To create rust spots make up a little paste by mixing rust chalk with a little matt varnish or PVA glue. Dab the paste onto the sides and underframe of wagons with a small paintbrush, a wooden stick or a cocktail stick. Drag the paste downwards to create the appearance of streaks of rust washed down the sides of the wagon by rain. ☒