

WEMA This interesting looking 10mm system with alternate holes in the Strips and A/Gs, is in MCS part 5; it was made by J.Eberspächer of Esslingen/Neckar though production of the sets was at Nebenzweig (assuming that's the name of a place) from 1946 to 1948. To add to the colours given in MCS, the Face Plate is orange, and the Gears and large Flanged Discs are yellow. The latter appear to have bosses.

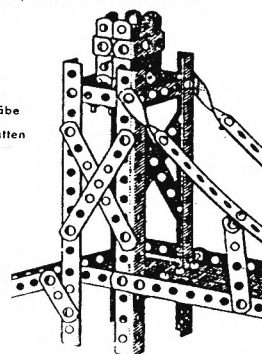
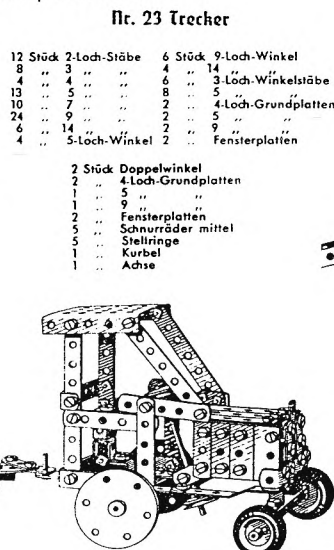
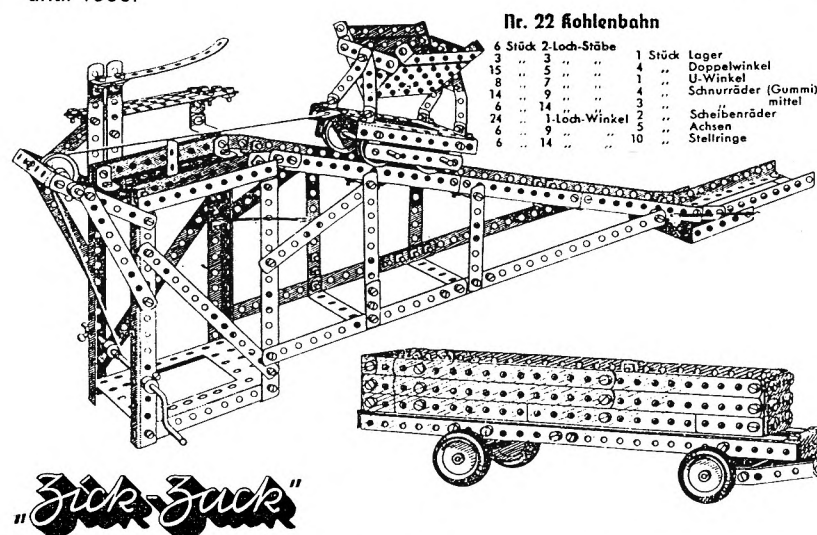
WESTFALIA A small system of about 20 steel parts which were either red or brass plated. The hole pitch was 14.1mm and the diameter 4.2mm. See also TECHNIK above

ZICK-ZACK This system dates back to the 1930s - it was made in Nürnberg, originally by Wilhelm Krauss, but from 1938, by Keim & Co, and that change saw a revision of the sets. The end date isn't known but Keim & Co. continued until 1960.

The holes were 5mm Ø, at 13.0mm pitch; some parts had a nickel finish, some were black metallic, and some were painted red or blue. Axles were made of aluminium.

30 parts are listed for models 21-23 on the page of the manual I have - • 2,3,4,5,7,9,14h Strips; • 1*3*1 & 1*5*1 DAS; • 5,9,14h A/Gs; • 4 Flanged Plates 5h wide with flanges along their length of 2,4,5, & 9 holes, and also a 5*9 with a centre 3*5 cutout; • Angle, Double, & Reversed Angle Brackets, and a Double Bent Strip; • 2 Pulleys both about 2h Ø, one with a boss, and the 6h Disc in the Tractor below which scales at over 60mm Ø; • an Axle, Crank Handle, Collar, and Rubber Ring for the Pulleys; • and a 90° Twisted Strip (gedrehte Stäbe) that looks well over 3h long but has only end holes - it can be seen in the Bridge tower below.

The ends of the Strips in the drawings of the models vary from large radius to nearly fully rounded; the Plates and A/Gs have sharp corners.



That was a Good Idea - The ASSEMBLO Patent

The French system ASSEMBLO was the first to use what many in this country will know as the DINKY BUILDER method of construction. Its French patent was granted on July 17, 1931; the UK application, which became Pat.No. 384191 was dated May 23, 1932 and was in the name of Marc Aurele Alfred Fay, a French citizen of 1, Avenue de Beauval, Garches, Seine-et-Oise.

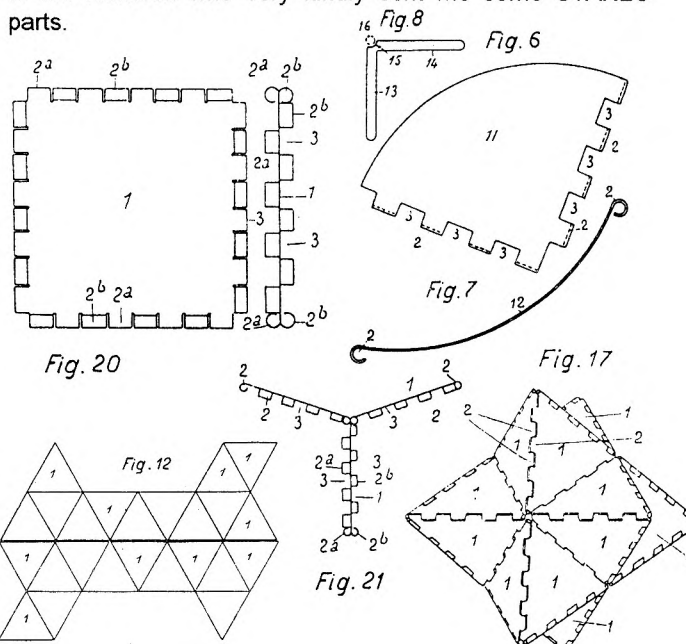
The basic idea is very simple, once you've thought of it, and presumably ASSEMBLO was quite successful, given that similar systems appeared in America as STANLO in 1933, in the UK as DINKY BUILDER in 1934, and in Italy as FALCO, sometime in the 1930s. ASSEMBLO claimed patent protection, in France and abroad, and as far as I know was the only one of the four to do so.

Two types of part were covered by the Patent. The ordinary Plates had gaps with formed tabs on the edges, all to one side; the other sort had a continuous series of tabs but formed alternately to either side of the Plate, as in Fig.20. This last feature was unique to ASSEMBLO and allowed more complex models to be made. Fig.21 is given in the Patent as an example. Another unique feature which added versatility was the Angled Rod (Fig.8) with the concave outer corner to allow another Rod to pass at right angles.

2 parts in the Patent were never produced, the Quarter Circle, Fig.6, and the Curved Rectangular Plate, Fig.7. Examples were given of making up 3-dimensional solids from a flat assembly of Plates - the 8-pointed star (Fig.17) from Fig.12 is a nice one. Models like that could help to enliven geometry lessons.

The side of the largest ASSEMBLO Square Plate measured about 70mm, a little larger than the 63mm of DINKY BUILDER, and slightly smaller than STANLO at 72mm. ASSEMBLO and STANLO Rods were about 3mm Ø, and DINKY BUILDER about 2.6mm. ASSEMBLO had 40 Plates, STANLO 20 and DINKY BUILDER 7, plus another 3 of those with painted doors and windows on them.

My thanks to David Hobson for sending the Patent, and to Bill Harrison who very kindly sent me some STANLO parts.



A MISCELLANY of SYSTEMS In OSN 15 I included some notes on various German systems, mostly based on information from Jeannot Buteux/*CONSTRUCTORAMA*, and now more from the same sources on various non-German systems. As before I'll also use material from *EISENZEIT* and other sources where appropriate.

ASSEMBLO This, as explained in 15/420, is the French original of the DINKY BUILDER type systems. A 1955 Price List shows 7 basic sets, 0-5 and LUXE, with the latter costing over twice as much as the No.5. There are also Sets A and B containing Wheels, and conversion sets 0 bis to 5 bis. The 5 bis cost only about a third of the difference in price between the No.5 and the LUXE, so most of the extra price of the LUXE probably went into better packaging.

Spare parts are also listed as follows: • Plates 1-27, but not the Nos. 28-40 that are shown in MCS. No.28 is a large rectangle and the others are the ones with tabs on both sides (see 15/420). • All the Rods shown in MCS including the 4 Angled Rods, H-L. • Of the Wheels in MCS the Pulley is listed, and one Flanged Wheel but its size isn't indicated, also the Wheel with Tyre, No.204, and the Axle Stops.

Fewer sets are shown in the 1955 List on p7 of MCS, but that was the range stocked by a particular shop.

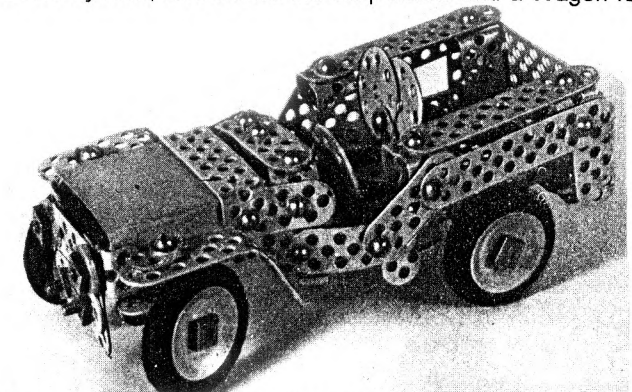
Since OSN 15 David Hobson has sent details of another, later ASSEMBLO patent. Its Convention Date is March, 1932 and it's in the name of P.L.Montchanin of 5 Rue Baudin, Rueil, Seine-et-Oise; the French and UK numbers are 752439 and 408801. The claim was that the tabs would be formed to allow the Rod to be a sliding fit in them, except that one tab on each edge would be partly divided, as below, and the shorter part closed up to grip the Rod.

This made it much easier to insert the Rods. I haven't any ASSEMBLO parts to hand but I suppose they incorporate this feature. STANLO do, but not all DINKY BUILDER parts. Those in a 1953 set do, but I'm told that earlier postwar ones don't - I haven't checked any prewar ones.

David also pointed out that the idea of plates edged with interlocking socket tabs that could be pinned together wasn't new, but was included in 2 earlier patents. No.140329 of 1919 (Edwards & Barker) used elements such as that below, for toy structures and making buckets and moulds for sand; No.166789 (Pierce, 1920) was also for sand moulds, and various shapes were to be made from formed or folded cardboard with just the outside edges pinned together, though how the sockets were to be made isn't clear.



BOY A leaflet introduces Rubber Tyres in a Box H for this Dutch system, and shows the Jeep below and a Wagon for

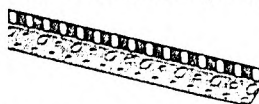


0-gauge track. Except for the Wheels on the Jeep, and the larger than usual square Nuts, the parts look like TRIX, though there is no positive indication of size. The boxes needed for the Jeep are 3 of No.1, 2 of No.1A, and 2 of H. There's no indication of date but at a guess the Leaflet might be from the early 1950s.

CONSTRUC The name of this French system was regis-

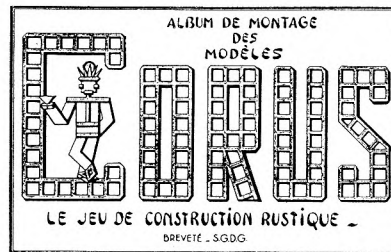
tered in 1948. The illustrations on a manual cover shows the Crane opposite and a boy working on the chassis of a 6-wheel Lorry. The structural parts - Strips and perhaps Angles and other sections - don't appear to have holes in them, and seem to be held together by push-on Clips.

CONSTRUCTOR There is much to be said about the different phases of this French system and I hope to return to it in a future Issue when I have more details. One part that's shown in MCS but I hadn't noticed until I saw it in an illustration from Jeannot, is the



1*2h section A/G (below), with all the holes in the shorter flange and every other hole of the inner row of the other one, slotted. MCS lists both these Girders and a flat Plate version, each 7,11 & 31 holes long. So with the hole pitch of 11mm, the length of the longest would be nearly 13½".

CORUS Another French system, this one patented in 1924. All that's available is the cover of the manual shown opposite. If the figure, or the letters of the name, are made from actual parts, how are they joined? And what are they made of? The word rustique may mean robust in this context.

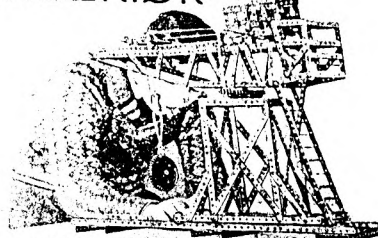


D.V.s INGENIØR This Danish system was mentioned in 13/360 and again all I have on it is the manual cover. Under the name (opposite) is Nr.7200, and apart from that there's a smart looking boy in a collar and tie, holding 2 Strips that are joined together by a N&B, which also holds what may be an Angle Bracket.



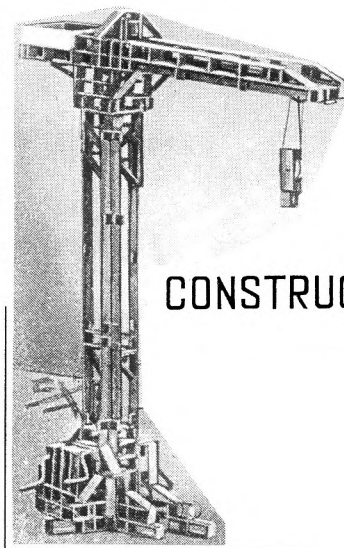
DEN DANSKE INGENIØR Another Danish system which was mentioned in 10/266 as being prewar. A copy of the box lid from a No.1 set shows the medium sized Crane opposite, made from Strips, A/Gs, and a few Perforated Plates, including some that look 5*11h size, flanged on the long sides. The load on the Hook appears to be a Pulley of perhaps 6h diameter fitted with a MÄRKLIN-style Gear Ring.

DEN DANSKE INGENIØR



EDISON A box lid of this Czech system shows a boy looking at the Grab on the next page, with a large High-Level Railway Bridge in the background, and a girl with a Swing containing a doll. In one corner is a shop window with sets and other models in it, and children and a young woman looking in. Her dress looks to me to date from the late 1920s or thereabouts.

As far as can be seen most of the parts in the models, Strips, A/Gs, and Flanged Plates, look like the ones shown in MCS, but a few don't. For instance the 8-spoke Wheel in



CONSTRUC

Corrections • Jeannot Buteux has pointed out that for the second time (!) I got the name of MAYKO wrong, see MAKKO/MAYCO in 15/427. But I did get it right in 16/447. • In the 3rd para of 'A Russian Baby' (16/435), the '5*10h Flanged Plate' should read '5*11h Flanged Plate'. • At the top of the 2nd column of 15/420 the 'red or blue' colour of the painted ZICK-ZACK parts should read 'green or blue'.

ITEMS FROM LETTERS

1. From Don Redmond: • John's Photo & Hobby, 2188 Danforth Ave., Toronto, Ontario, M4C 1K3, tel/fax: 416-421-1850/7441, stocks **TEMSI** sets and parts. • Parts which may be **CASTLE BUILDER** have a hole pitch of 12.77mm±. • In a large lot of **AMERICAN MODEL BUILDER** parts there were two types of N&B: the normal ones, plus 3mm thick, 3/8" square Nuts, and Bolts with 7mm Ø heads, both brass. And AMB Sprocket Chain has 13 links in 4". • The lower **STERLING** Screwdriver in 16/430 looks like the bought-in commercial item that is found with post-WW1 White sewing machines, and in other sets as well, including **AMERICAN MODEL BUILDER**. • A **BRAL 400** Set has deceptive packaging: it is in a carton 18*14*2" but the indentations for the parts are contained within 12¾*9*1½", so 34% of the volume of the carton. [I hadn't any record of a BRAL 400 Set and Don has now sent me more details. It's a small outfit from the current 'BRES' period, but before 1994, and it's based on 4 1" Pulleys/Tyres and a 5*11h Flanged Plate. I'll include more about it in a later Issue.]

2. From Jeannot Buteux: • From 15/413, there is also a Danish **EIFFEL** which is compatible with **MECCANO** and the parts are marked **EIFFEL**. [Could this be the **EIFFEL** mentioned in 16/458?] • The French **ASSEMBLO** patent (see 15/420) was No.720276 and was granted on 3 Dec. 1931. • **FALCO** [1] (15/426) was a **MECCANO**-type system with very colourful parts. • On **RODOPI** (see 16/458), it is confirmed that Bratsighovo is in Bulgaria.

Some new names: • **ARMA**, Czechoslovakian from 1955. • **CONSTRUCTAM**, French, perhaps from the 1950s. • **E.B.S.**, new theme sets from The Czech Republic introduced in 1996, with large, heavy, steel parts, nickel plated. • **LA CONSTRUCTION MÉTALLIQUE**, a French architectural system with 60 different Flanged

Plates as the main parts, each of which was available chromed, or painted in 10 different colours. • French **MA TOUR CONSTRUIT**, from the 1930s, with light steel parts. • French **TECHNIC**, 1939, with nickel plated steel parts but wooden Wheels.

3. In some French **TRIX** literature that Jean Estève kindly lent me the **BTB PENDULE ÉLECTRIQUE** (see 15/427) is included in a 1935 catalogue, price fr.59, and isn't among the new lines for that year, but it isn't in a list and brochure from 1938.

4. On **PREMIER** (16/457), David Fellows wrote that his brother received a set at Xmas 1955, and he remembers the Flanged Plates which were of a heavier gauge than contemporary **MECCANO**, and were finished in mid-blue semi-gloss enamel, similar to the current French colour.

5. From Keith Cameron on the **STABIL** article in OSN 14. 'Those Inventor's Outfits are extraordinarily advanced for their day, including the very early attempt to introduce heavy axles. But like so many innovations, these **STABIL** items have passed into oblivion almost unnoticed, perhaps due to failure to correct imperfections in the original design. I still think that the single metal teeth assembled in a metal strip around a hub was a brilliant idea - surely something should have come from it.'

6. From Kendrick Bisset. The **STRUCTO** Bridge (16/459) was the result of a marketing agreement between Structo, of Freeport, Illinois, and American Flyer of Chicago (before Gilbert bought the firm), which was formalized in 1922. AF advertised Structo non-constructional vehicles (trucks, autos) with AF trains, and acted as Structo's distributor. The 'constructional' Bridge is shown as an accessory in a (reproduction) 1918/19 AF catalog, and this would have been before Structo ceased producing their standard constructional outfits (see 15/424).

7. From Josep Bernal on a point about the production of **MECCANO** in Spain by Exin around 1970. Their last address (now closed) was Exin-Lines Bros. S.A., Roger de Flor 86, Barcelona 13. Later production was transferred to Mexico using the same machinery. The thread used for both the Spanish and Mexican parts was M4.

EXTRA MCS SHEETS The Sheets listed here are available at 15p per Sheet plus postage. That makes £7.95 for all 53 Sheets.

MCS Amendments, List No.5 [1]

ANCHOR: X1.2,5a,5b [2]

ARTS ET MÉTIERS Série 3: X1.1,2,3/4/6 [2]

BERGLAND: X1.1,2/5 [1]

BURGER: X1.1,2 [1]

CONSTRUCTION JEEP [2]: X1.2/5,2a/5a,4 [2]

DITMAR: X1.1,2/5 [1]

DORANDO: X1.1 [1]

FANTASIE "R": X1.1,2 [1]

FERROX: X1.2/5 [1]

FIX: X1.1,2,4/5 [2]

FRYDAGH: X1.1,2/5 [1]

GLOBUS Der Kleine Ingenieur: X1.1,2/5 [1]

GLOBUS LEICHTBAU: X1.1,2 [1]

KONSTRUX: X1.1,2,5 [2]

MAC et NICK: X1.3/4a-3c/4d,5-a [3]

MAFELL: X1.1,5 [1]

MÄRKLIN: X1.2,3,4/6,4a/7c [2]

MECHANIC: X1.1,2,5 [2]

MECHANISKAIS KONSTRUKTORS 'SKOLENS':

X1.1,2,5,3/4,3a/4a/6-3c/4c/6b/4d [4]

METEOR (M): X1.1,2,3/6,5 [2]

MINIATUR: X1.1,2,3/4/6,5 [2]

MKA: X1.1,2/5 [1]

MÖWE: X1.1,5/7 [1]

MWK: X1.1,5 [1]

PHANTASIE: X1.2/4,5 [1]

PLASTICON: X1.2 [1]

SACHSENMEISTER: X1.1 [1]

SPEDICON: X1.1,2/3,4,5 [2]

STEEL TEC: X2.2a/5b,4a-c,5a [3]

TRIANGLE: X1.1,5 [1]

TRI-SECTOR: X1.1,7-7b [2]

TUBA: X1.7 [1]

ZICK-ZACK: X1.1,2,5 [2]

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7. The sizes given in 15/420 for **ASSEMBLO & STANLO** basic square Plates seem to be wrong. In fact on measuring some parts known to be genuine the two are very nearly the same size. The distances A, B, C, D (Rod centres, free edges, tab width, large gap) in the diagram below are 72, 66¾, 7¼, 13½mm for ASSEMBLO, & 72½, 67, 7½, 13mm for STANLO. All the ASS parts seen have (like SLO, see 16/444) a split tab on each side to grip the Rod. The cutout in the large rectangular part (#17 for both) is 52¼*16½-17mm for ASS & 52½*16¼-16½ for SLO. In the parts to hand the corners of the centre cutouts in the ASS Plates are not square as shown in MCS, but angled, like SLO.

Details of some of the **ASSEMBLO Wheels** can also now be given. All seen are zinc die castings with the name around the centre. The Loose Pulley #200 is 24½mm o.d. & about 4¾mm wide. The Flanged Wheel #201 is 28mm o.d., with the tread tapering to 21mm Ø. The Road Wheel #204 has a 41mm Ø hub, with a tapering central boss in the recessed back face. Two types of tyre are known, both 62mm Ø o.d. One is hard black rubber with tread around the flat top as in MCS; the other is a slightly soft dark grey rubber with no tread and a near circular section, a fat rubber ring in fact. Neither have the name on the sidewall as in MCS.

The dimensions A-D for **DINKY BUILDER** are 63, 58¾, 6½, 11½mm, for both pre & postwar parts. The prewar ones do not have the split tabs, but grip is provided by Split Rods (made from semi-circular section rod doubled over & bowed out, as right). D B **Road Wheels** are 39½mm o.d. & are made from 2 pieces like the MECCANO part, but instead of a boss a rubber insert is trapped between them & grips the axle. On mine the metal wheel actually rotates around the rubber insert but whether this was intended I don't know. Probably the rubber has shrunk with time.

Does anyone have details of the ASSEMBLO-like parts from the Italian **FALCO** system (see 26/758)? [30/877]

ASSEMBLO: S1, STANLO: S1 DINKY BUILDER: S1

8. Paul Goodman wrote that Märklin have commissioned Metallus to produce a special edition **MÄRKLIN METALL Excavator Set**. It will cost €750 & will be sold in Germany from May/June this year, to celebrate '90 years of metal construction systems'. [Presumably the 90 years since the firm started to make MECCANO under licence. Right, a rather fuzzy photo from the Märklin web site. A letter in the latest CQ says that the N&B will be M4, and that orders must be placed by 30th May.]



MÄRKLIN: S1

[30/877]

9. On **Pocket ERECTOR** sets, Tim Edwards wrote that he has one with a box like the top ('Gilbert') one in OSN 13/342. Its model leaflet is copyright 1975, and the set contents are

the same as those of the 'Gabriel' set except that the 3*9h Plates are made of blue plastic. Also on rereading OSN 13, the date in the first line should have been 'Early in the 1980s'

ERECTOR [4a]: S1

[30/877]

10. David Hobson sent a French ad for ERECTOR, said to be from 1925. The outfits listed are 3 JOUETS A ROUE sets (Gilbert Wheel Toy, see 8/198) at Frs. 49,80,125, to make 8,12,21 different toys; 7 Erector sets at Frs. 12,24,30,49,70, 125,175, with an electric motor in the last 3; and 4 Electrical sets at Frs. 20,45,65,80. A photo of each type is given and the old, wide Girders are shown in the Erector one. There are also photos of a Tele [Morse] Set, a Phono Set, a Chemistry Outfit, an Air-Kraft Set, & a Wireless Outfit. Those are the names on the lids, all in English, and the rest of the wording that can be seen in the photos is in English too. The address given for 'vente en gros' (wholesale sales) is 24, rue de Liège (sic), Paris.

ERECTOR [2b]: S1

[30/877]

WEB SITES

[30/877]

- <http://edwards.web.users.btopenworld.com/meccano.htm>
- Tim Edwards has added full details of his **MCS MECCANO CD**.
- **Stokys** are now at www.Stokys.ch. Sets & packs of parts can be ordered from the site.

QUERIES

[30/877]

Query 29 On the colour of STABIL Cord, Werner Sticht wrote 'that blue/white Cord (two coloured strands twisted together) was used in the 1950s & 60s - 'I remember it very well from my first STABIL set that I got in 1957. Plain white Cord was used in sets from the 20s and 30s.'

SMALL ADS

[30/877]

Wanted OTHER SYSTEMS INSTRUCTION MANUALS, or good photocopies - either • to buy; • or exchange photocopies (EZY-BILT, BUZ (inc NZ), & BETTAFIT manuals available, also some STEEL TEC, MEK-STRUCT, & CONSTRUCTION); • or exchange original EZY-BILT 1-5 & 6-8 manuals for other original manuals. Please send details & prices to Mr Vern Ellis, P.O. Box 3277, Alice Springs, Northern Territory, Australia 0871. Tel: 0889538282. Email: vern.ellis@switch.com.au. Also **to swop**: a 2 model CONSTRUCTION 663 set.

For Sale KLIPTIKO No. 6 in original wooden box, nearly complete. The box veneer is a little chipped, but the label, which is inside the lid, is perfect. It portrays a small boy playing with Kliptiko, dressed in a green woollen jumper, knee-length grey socks, and short grey trousers. Most parts have a bit of rust. No manual. About £80. Please contact Mrs. C. E. Hutchinson: email: paradise1000@skegness60.fsnet.co.uk, or at 13 Holme House Road, Cornholme, Todmorden, OL14 8LD.

For Sale ERECTOR parts & metal set boxes. Details from Ivor Ellard, 44 Well Lane, Galleywood, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 8QZ. Tel: 01245 269830. Email: ellard@nildram.co.uk.

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- **Circular Parts** The **Bush Wheel & Wheel Disc** are 35mm Ø {1,1}. The centre hole of the latter is 6½mm. The **Circular Plate** {2} is 70mm Ø & has 15 (!) equispaced edge holes at a radius of 29½mm. The red plastic **Loose Pulley** {1} is 18mm o.d., 6mm wide, and the 14mm Ø bottom of the vee is flat. Both its sides are recessed.

- **Gears** All are plastic moulded onto a brass bush with boss. The 16t **Pinion** {1} is 14.3mm o.d. with a 5mm wide face, and it meshes well at 2h spacing with the 46t, 38.1mm o.d./2.5mm face **Gear** {2} — its disc has an 11¼mm Ø, 2½mm deep boss on the outer face to give extra support to the brass bush. The **Worm** {1} is 14.0mm o.d. & 12.7mm long (about 5 turns), excluding the boss.

- **Axles** are 49 & 69mm long {1,1}. The **Rods with Screwed Ends** are 130/91mm long with 74/25mm of thread at one end, and 60mm long with 10mm of thread at each end {1,1,6}. The smooth parts of all three are 3.4mm Ø.

- **Fixings** **Nuts** {120} for the 6 & 10mm **Bolts** {110,10}. The single turn **Spring Washer** {120!}, 6.5mm o.d., is chemically blackened. The black plastic **Spring Clip** {10} is 5mm wide, 7mm deep o/a, with 2½mm wings, and grips well on the Axles. The black **Grub Screw** {10} is 4mm long with a flat end and a

normal screwdriver slot.

- **Tools** The nickel **Spanner** {1} is 78mm long o/a. The **Screwdriver** {1}, 93mm long o/a, has a 44mm 4-fluted handle and normal blade tip.

- **Misc.** The white plastic **Axle Stop** (above the Spring Washer in the photo of the parts) {1} is 8mm Ø & 8mm long, and is a push-fit on the Axle. The plastic jelly mould shaped **Cone** is 47mm Ø & 15mm deep {3 blue, 3 white}.

- The **Motor & Battery Box** (2x AA batteries, with reversing switch) are similar to MECCANO/STEEL TEC items, but unlike the other parts, neither is well made. The boss on the end of the motor is loose in the 1mm too large hole in the front face of the casing, and the switch on Battery Box is inoperative in one of its 2 'ON' positions.

The MODELS There was no manual with the set to hand and no mention is made of one on the box. So perhaps the 7 models on the underside of the box are all the guidance provided, but on the other hand, apart from the Big Wheel, it is difficult to see much detail in most of the others, even using a magnifying glass. These 'small' models comprise a Swing and various types of Roundabout & Chair-O-Planes.

OSN 31/939

METAAL CONSTRUCTIE SET: S2

Snippet - New System: MECHANIC This may well be the same as, or very similar to, METAAL CONSTRUCTIE SET. Examples, apparently new and unused, of a set bearing the name were sold on Ebay from July to December 2003 by someone in Australia. The description read 'Mechanic Metal Construction Set. 544 Pieces with wind up motor included. Ages 7+', and the only illustration was the lid right. The words under the model can't be deciphered but those under 'METAL CONSTRUCTION SET' are 'Only one model can be made at a time', and under the '7+' at the bottom is '2003'.

The 544 parts is the same number as in the METAAL CONSTRUCTIE SET outfit above and it will be remembered that the word 'MECHANIC' was on its box. Another similarity is the apparently identical model on the lids. Both are driven from the same yellow Electric Motor despite the C/W Motor claimed for MECHANIC. The final similarity is the model on the yellow star on the MECHANIC lid — it is identical to one on the under-



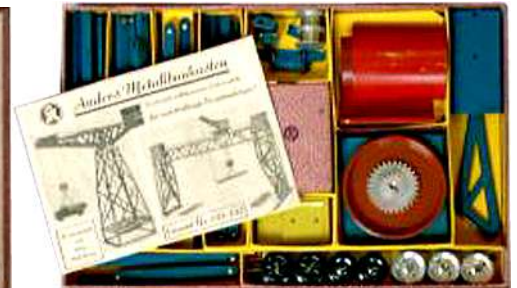
side of the METAAL CONSTRUCTIE SET box.

OSN 31/939

MECHANIC [2]: S1

An ANDERS Gigant Set Since the notes on p932 were written the **Gigant Nr.132** shown right has been seen on Ebay, a larger outfit with more ambitious models than any of the Gnom sets.

Assuming the Wheels and Pulleys along the bottom are the same size as the Gnom parts, the box scales at some 42*27cm, and the Jib Frame, far right, would be the same size as before. Also the compartment on the far left would be the right length to take the A/Gs in the 112 set. Other parts which can be seen are 2



bright, flanged Winding Drums at top centre, and the bright Gear on top of the large red Disc or Pulley.

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ANDERS: S2

This is the last page of OSN 31.

Correction

In the diagram of the ASSEMBLO Plate in 30/877, the dimensions C & D should be interchanged. Thanks to Don Redmond for pointing this out.

All MECCANO & Compatible Parts

Thanks to Howard Somerville there is now a web site, www.hsomerville.com/IPL/, which has links to about 24 sources of these parts, and many of them give details of what is available or offer downloads of parts lists, etc.

Binding OSN Pages

Now the pages are double-sided there's a simple way of making them into the old B&W style, stapled N/L. Lay the appropriate sheets edge to edge & join each pair with a strip of 19mm Scotch tape. Then staple the resulting A3 sheets with a long-arm stapler, or make suitable holes with a pin and push staples through. Fold over.

CLIPPA Never heard of it, well not surprising because it only ever reached the pre-production stage. John Timms has a factory produced No.1 sample set & model, and also a copy of the company's business plan. He kindly supplied details.

The Clipper Toy Co. was registered in the early 1950s with the intention of producing CLIPPA, a version of the by then defunct KLIPTIKO, but with a limited number

of parts to aim mainly at 2-8 year old youngsters. 3 men were involved from the start but the main player was a Mr A Roseberry. By around 1955 two applications for Registered Design had been successful, and sample sets had been produced, but then activity ceased due to lack of money. A failed attempt to revive the project was made in 1959.

The SETS It was intended to market outfits 1-3 plus 2 linking sets, all using the same range of 10 parts as in the No.1 (see Fig.1). The same size box was to be used for the main sets; likewise both linking sets would be packed into their own same size box. John's set has a plain bright yellow lid edged with red but in production Sets 1-3 were to have a 3-colour label, and the 'a' sets a simple label showing its set number. The No.1 had 30 parts in all.

The PARTS Compared with KLIPTIKO there were some changes made as improvements. There was an extra, longer Clip which could form a diagonal in a square made of the shorter Clips, thus adding rigidity. And for added versatility a variant of the shorter Clip had angled ends. Another new part is the Connector in Fig.2 which pushed into Tubes to make it easier to join them – it was to be plastic in production. Also a pair joined by a Connector became a Long Clip but with the advantage that the ends could be at any angle, and differ between the ends.

So the 10 parts comprised 3 Tubes, 4 Clips (Long, Short, Short with Angled Ends, Half), a Wheel, a Connector, & a Hub Cap. The steel parts were to be made from .015" sheet (28 swg), as in KLIPTIKO, but were generally slightly smaller than their KLIPTIKO counterparts. Dimensions as follows with the KLIPTIKO values in brackets. Tubes are $\frac{3}{10}$ " ($\frac{3}{8}$ ") Ø and $1\frac{3}{4}, 3\frac{1}{2}, 5\frac{1}{2}$ " ($3, 4, 6\frac{5}{8}$ ") long. Clips are $3, 4\frac{1}{4}$ " ($3\frac{1}{2}$ ") long. The Wheel is 3" ($3\frac{3}{4}$ ") Ø. The Hub Cap is wooden, but to be plastic (metal). The Connector is $1\frac{5}{8}$ " long.

The MODELS 12 models were to be shown in the Model Leaflet for Set 1, with 4 Guns, including the Field Gun in Fig.3, 3 furniture models, a Robot Man, a Dog, a Windmill, a Bike, & a Ch't (?Chariot). With only 2 Wheels in the set none of the models can really be pushed along.

RETAILING For cheapness distribution was to be by representatives rather than wholesalers and the likely retail prices for the sets, based on factory costs and the usual margins, were 11/-, 19/-, & 27/9 for Sets 1-3, and 8/5, & 10/- for the 'a' sets. The aim though was to sell the No.1 for 9/11, 10 shillings being an important pricing point for potential purchasers.

The Plan has a comparison of prices between CLIPPA and various other toys. In nearly all cases the CLIPPA prices are well within the range for the other toys. The only one where a more or less direct comparison is possible is with MECCANO



Fig.1



Fig.2

Fig.3

where Sets 00, 0, 1, 2, & 3 cost 6/9, 11/-, 16/11, 24/- & 33/6. It is suggested that the 3 CLIPPA sets compare with Meccano's Sets 1-3 on the basis that Sets 00 & 0 contain fewer parts if their N&B are excluded. True, but at least the No.0 had 4x 1" Pulleys with Tyres so push along models could feature.

KLIPTIKO Pre-WW2 In 1939 a No.1 KLIPTIKO set had 53 parts including 4x $1\frac{1}{2}$ " Wheels, and sold at 2/6. A MECCANO No.1, with 2x 1" Pulleys & Rubber Rings, cost 3/-, or a No.2 with 4 at 4/6. The KLIPTIKO manual models certainly doesn't do justice to the Set with again no model that could be pushed along on 4 Wheels. If the Fig.3 model is typical of the others CLIPPA models they were a distinct improvement on KLIPTIKO's. The MECCANO manual of the time showed many more models with a wide variety of subjects and full use of the wheels. KLIPTIKO had the advantage of being easy to assemble and those today who still remember having it speak fondly of it and of the ease of 'inventing' new, often large models. The only complaint is that it seemed impossible to incorporate steering in Lorries etc. KLIPTIKO needed a revamp but it was not sold again after the war so perhaps sales had not been high enough to warrant the investment.

SNAPSTICKS In 1959 Roseberry wrote to Games & Toys asking if any other toy similar to KLIPTIKO was being made, and the answer was no. SNAPSTICKS (see 44/1345) had been advertised in G&T in 1948. No doubt it had not succeeded in establishing itself. It wasn't mentioned in the Plan either but it's interesting that it too had additional longer Clips, two in this case.

An ASSEMBLO-FALCO Connection? The French ASSEMBLO was of course the original system of this type and is well known (see 15/420,444, 30/877); FALCO was Italian with the same style of parts (see 26/758, 39/1165, 51/1549) but full details are not available. Jean-Pierre Guibert though has spotted a possible connection between them as below, with an almost identical picture used on the covers of two documents. So was there a connection between them with the same owners perhaps, or a licence agreement. Or did FALCO simply copy the ASSEMBLO image.



Fig.1



Fig.2