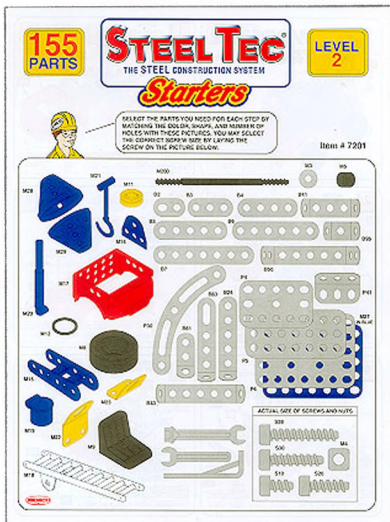


Wheels are pushed on the shafts which emerge from it on both sides. It is used in all the models, usually driving the rear Wheels.

This 60+ year old found the models reasonably easy to build, and they had a solid feel to them when completed. The N&B could be well tightened with the Tools provided although it would have been easier if one end of one of the Spanners had been angled. The Nuts didn't seem to work loose but some were too tight on the thread to be run down without using a Spanner. Pivoted joints were made by tightening a N&B onto one of the soft plastic Washers provided, and this seemed satisfactory. Sometimes though lock nuts were shown but there was no mention of them in the instructions. Initially the Motor seemed rather feeble but this was because its shafts were rubbing in the holes in the inside faces of the Mudguards, which they had to pass through. It was possible with some difficulty to rectify this, and then the model performed well on a hard floor.

SUMMARY OF MANUALS [Details for the #3 manual, where different, are given in square brackets.]



(No Model Nos) •Other notes: none.

[Name: Steel Tec Starters Level 2 [3]. •Details of maker: Remco, Tel: 1-800-243-2961. •Dates & Ref Nos: ©1995; 3/23/95 [6/10/95 and 5/12/95]; Item #7201 [7203]. •Page size: 217*280mm deep. •No. of pages: 16 [36] inc covers. •Language: English. •Printing: coloured line drawings. •Page Nos. of Illustrated Parts & highest PN: 1, S38 [1-2, X1]. (No Set Contents) •Sets covered: Level 2 [3]. •No. of models: 6 [10]. •Name, Page No. of first & last model: WRECKER TRUCK, 2; CEMENT MIXER TRUCK, 14. [INDY RACER, 3; WRECKER, 33]

And COOL STEEL Don Bock kindly sent an (American) Sears Holiday 1995 Wish Book and the illustrations from one item in it are shown below. The accompanying text reads 'Get Ready to Rule with COOL STEEL™ Dynamic Vehicle Set! The only steel construction toy for 4 to 7 year olds. Rough 'n tough pieces are sized just right for little hands while designed to work with big imaginations! 125-piece set includes 4 plastic tools. Pictorial instruction book contains plans for 7 projects. Ages 4 through 7. Wt. 1.25 lbs. \$29.99.'

No indication of size is given but by the look of the (plastic?) N&B the holes are quite large and the basic hole spacing might be 1".

The model truck featured looks a little nondescript perhaps but the biplane on the box lid is better, and the small models shown along the bottom include a jet plane and a helicopter.



The parts that can be seen in the ad are 3,4 & 6h Strips, Plates of the same lengths and 2h wide, Angle Brackets, and Flat Trunnions with 7 holes at half the standard pitch. They are variously coloured grey, yellow, red or blue. The N&B are shown grey and red, and both are hexagonal with a wide screwdriver slot in the bolt heads.

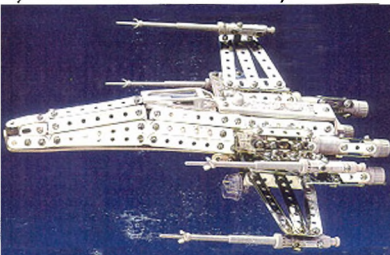
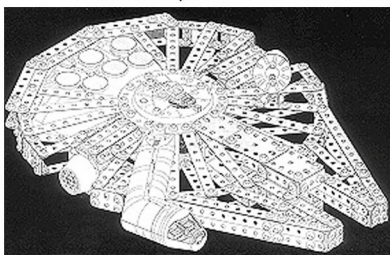
The box lid is white with a blue border and the word MYKIDS can be seen, no doubt a brand name.

Update for Normal STEEL TEC Thanks are due to David Hobson, Don Redmond, Chas Shrubsole and Richard Symonds for sending details of ads or sets that they'd seen prior to Xmas.

From Canada. At 'Toys R Us': • #7127 Vehicles, 1182 parts to make 58 models. \$130. This set contains only standard parts, including a 17h A/G. • #7130 Helicopters & Planes, 564 parts, 6 models, \$100. Special plastic parts are used for major areas of each model, and are specific to that model. • #7140 Millennium Falcon, 1063 pieces, \$130. • #7141 X-Wing Fighter, 450 parts. Mostly Strips with some plastic trim, \$70.

Kmart had Sets No.2 and 3 (see 10/240), No.201 (12/322), and an 'ADJUST-O-MATIC' Power Wrench for which the drive can be at 90° to the handle, like the normal Power Wrench, or at 135°, or straight ahead at 180°.

From Dufferin Game Room Store: • A Star Wars Millennium Falcon set at \$150 (below). The top deck is mostly Strips with some plastic fill-in parts. • A Star Wars Wing Fighter at \$100 (below) - it is said to be 'exclusive' but the illustration is identical to the one in the Toys R Us ad. • Also a Deluxe Power Wrench at \$25 (Eaton had this too with a picture which looks similar, but not identical to the adjustable one mentioned above).



An Irwin ad shows a 262-piece No.2 at \$30. An unidentified ad shows some of the outfits already mentioned plus 16 of the single model sets -

no details can be seen except that 6 are No.1's, 7 are SK's, and 3 might be either. There have also been references to the Work Center/Storage Case at \$40, and a Road/Rail/Air Set (302?) at \$50.

In England sets were seen on sale in Bath and Midsomer Norton, and at 'Toys R Us'. The Argos set (13/357) was still available, at £38. Sets known, or shown on the back of the boxes, with what details are available, are:

- #950992 U.S.S. Starship Enterprise Star Trek 410, including battery lights and electronic sounds. ©1994 on box. £35.
- #950712 Harley-Davidson Electra Glide, Café Racer, WW2 Cycle. Motorised. 545 parts. £40 (later reduced to £25 in Bath). This looks like the No.301 of 12/322.
- #700502 Speedsters. 6 models. These are the 6 SK models mentioned in 12/323.
- #950682 Road Wreckers, 262 parts, 8 models, £20. This is the original No.2 (10/240), which was later called the No.202 (12/322).
- #950692 Speed Demons, 8 motorised models. The original No.3 (see 10/240)
- #950702 Heavy Duty Destructosaurs, 9 models. The original No.6, including the dinosaur head (10/240).
- #950722 Power Wrench, £10.
- #951012 Heavy Duty Power Pack (?).
- 6 sets to make a single model at £10 each. All are ex-No.1 models with different names and in some cases parts that were yellow are shown as red:
- #950622, Rhino Hauler.
- #950672 Tough Truck.
- #950822 Rescue Ranger, 154 parts.
- #950832 Dirt Digger, 139 parts.
- #950922 Road Grader, 141 parts.
- #950932 Hover Hawk (helicopter), 168 parts.

Boxes seen had the 'Peter Pan' logo of the UK distributor on them, and were marked 'Made in China. © 1993-1995 Remco Toys, Inc. New York, NY 10010. Peter Pan is the registered trademark of Blurbird Toys [UK] Ltd. Customer Services, Peter Pan, Dragonparc, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 1PQ. Tel: 01685 721456'.

COOL STEEL This system was mentioned briefly in 14/385 and details of the two sets that are known to have been produced are now to hand. Most of the pieces are steel with large holes, widely spaced, but the threaded parts are plastic, and also the tools & wheels. COOL STEEL is only known from the year 1995 and was made in China for the MyKids company of Hong Kong and the U.S.A.

Leading Particulars

Name COOL STEEL

Country Hong Kong/U.S.A.(but made in China).

Maker MyKids Mfg. Co. Ltd., Hong Kong 5, Yuk Yat Steeet, 7th & 10th floor; & Wilson Industrial Building., To Kwa Wan, Kowloon, Hong Kong; also 16400 Ventura Blvd., Suite 337, Encino, CA 91436, U.S.A. The CE label has the Encino address and also John Crane Ltd., Northampton, NN3 5HT, England.

History Boxes have ©1995 and the CE label on them. An American ad is known from 1995.

Hole dia. 9.8mm **Hole pitch** 32.0mm

Sets 125 Piece Dynamic Vehicle Set, & 178 piece Jumbo Vehicle Set.

Material/Finish Most parts steel, variously painted in silver, green, blue, purple, & mustard. The threaded parts, the Wheel & Pulley, and the Tools are plastic, in the same colours except that yellow replaces mustard, and the Road Wheel is black.

Boss No boss. Wheel bores are about 10mm Ø.

Fixing Thread: 8.9mm o.d. by 2.3mm pitch (.35" x 11tpi). Plastic N&B: octagonal Nuts 17mm A/F, 8mm deep; Bolts, 10½ & 33mm u/h, with slotted octagonal heads 17mm A/F, & 8 mm deep. Screwed Rods are used as axles with Wheels loose on, or nutted to them.

Axles Screwed Rods.

DP No Gears.

Motors None.

Remarks Said to be intended for 4-7 year old children.

THE PARTS The illustration of the parts in Fig.1 is taken from the inside of the lid of the 178 set, with reference letters added. The quantity of each part is given, with the 125 values added as 'x' where they differ. The notes below explain points which may not be clear.

- The **Spanner** is 141mm long. The 2 lugs at the right end look as if they might be intended to be used as a screwdriver tip but are slightly too thick to enter the slot in the head of the Bolt. The **Screwdriver** is 154mm o/a.
- The 5mm Ø handle of the **Handle Crank** (a) is at about 33mm radius, and the boss on the remote side from the handle has an octagonal recess to fit over the Nut.
- The **Trunnion** (b) is made from the (7h) Flat Trunnion, with the bend line along the centre of the middle row of holes.
- The **slotted holes** in the Plates are 13.7mm long.
- One of the two **3*4h Plates** (c) in the 178 set is actually bent at 90° giving two 2*3h faces. The single part in the 125 set is this bent pattern.
- The different **Strips** vary from 18.0 to 18.5mm wide; the shorter ones are (like the Plates) .65mm thick, and the longer ones, 85mm.

- The **righthand 2*4h Plate** (d) is very thin (.25mm) clear plastic. Only one was found in the 178 set; the second in the 125 is in fact 3*4h, and both sizes are needed for the models shown on the box.
- The **A/B** (e) is the same width as the Strips, and its two arms are similar, about 28mm long, with a round hole.
- The **Road Wheel** (f) is 68mm Ø, and 37mm wide. It is the hollow type with no back and 5 webs to support the internal boss. The centre of the front is recessed a little with 5 slightly raised 'spokes'.
- The **Pulley** (g) is 49mm o.d, and 9mm wide, with webs, on both sides of the disc, around the 5 (10mm) holes & the circumference (forming the sides of the 'V').
- The **Screwed Rods** (h) are 70, 111, & 181mm long.
- Under the **Nut** (i) is a blind **Acorn Nut** (j), octagonal like the N&B, with a 10mm wide oblong recess in the head to fit the tip of the Screwdriver. The **Bolt** (k) has a similar recess in the bottom of the slot. The Long Bolt, used to hold the parts together in the box, isn't shown.
- The **parts** are accurately made from fairly soft steel, and are well finished apart from a little non-sharp burr here & there. The paint scratches fairly easily though. With one or two exceptions the **colours** of the different parts are as in Fig.1 but some parts are also in a second colour to suit the models' colour schemes.

THE SETS The parts are packed in a styrofoam block, with the Strips, & Plates, held together by standard N&B, plus 4 of the Long Bolts mentioned earlier. On the box it is said that all of these N&B 'may be discarded if you wish', but they are of course very useful. The block is in an end-opening box with a transparent top, covered by a hinged flap. The 125 flap is shown below, and the box is 43*29*5cm. The 178 scales at 53cm long, and the top of its flap is similar but the featured model is the one shown in OSN 14 (wrongly shown in the ad as a 125 model).

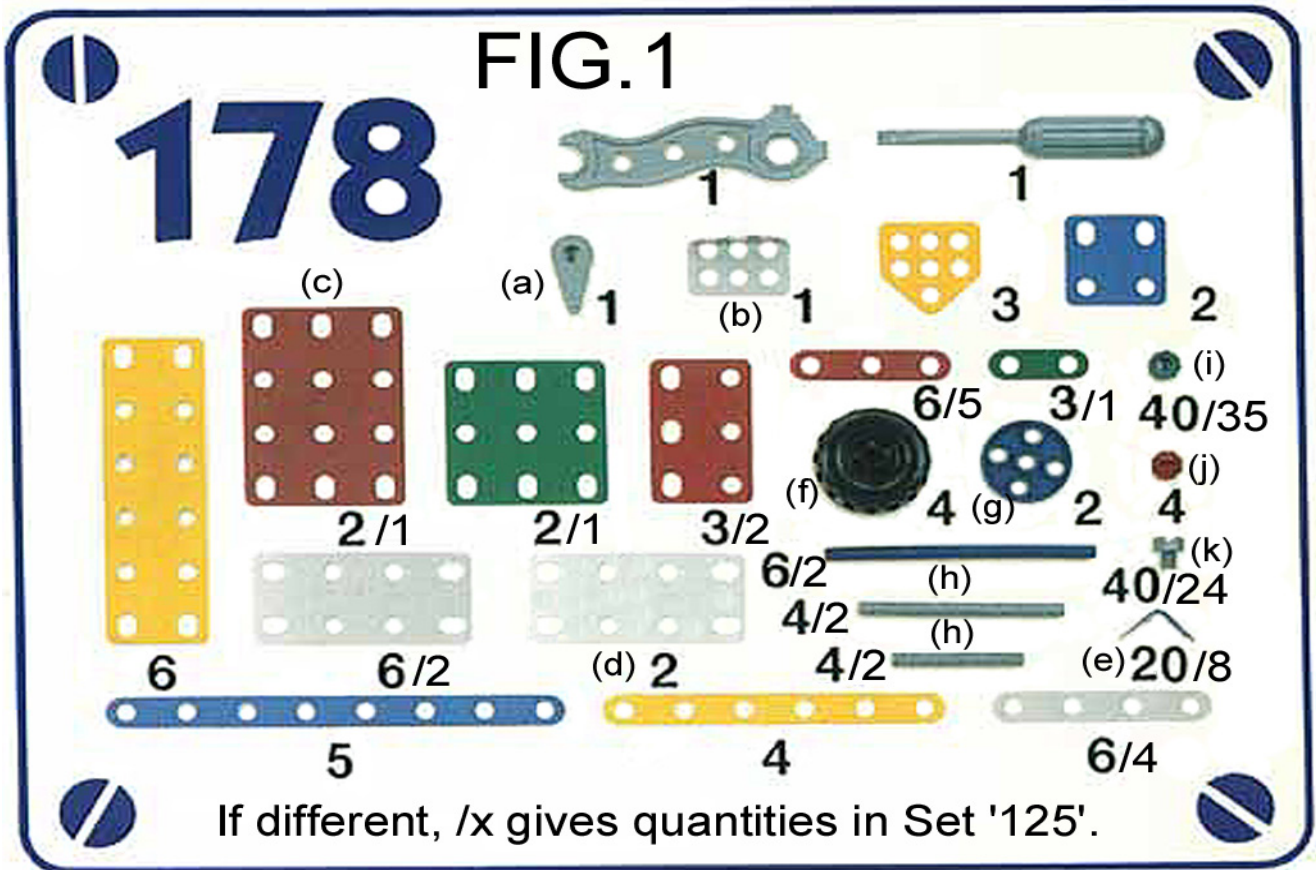


It appears from the Illustrated Parts that both sets include all the different parts, but as already noted, the 178 has the flat 3*4h Plate not in the 125. The 125 set to hand, probably unused, actually contains 14 A/Bs, and an extra Trunnion.

As well as the company details on the bottom of the box there are '©1995 The Design Center', 'Patent Pending', and (on the 125) 'Item No.3352'.

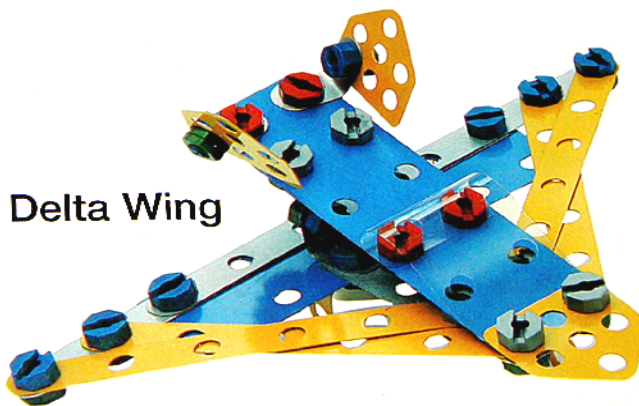
THE MODELS No manual is known for either set - for both the underside of the flap has a reasonable size photo of each of the 6 models on its top. Apart from the 'Blue Baron' Biplane, the 125 models are a Chopper, a Moto-X Racer (a Motorcycle using the Pulleys as wheels), a Baja Buggy, and the Delta Wing & Hot Rodster [sic] on the facing page.

It is stated on the box that the target age group for the sets is 4 to 7 year olds. The models should therefore be fairly simple, and so they are, but it's not easy to work out from the photos exactly which parts are to be used where. A plus is the N&B which go together easily and don't tend to

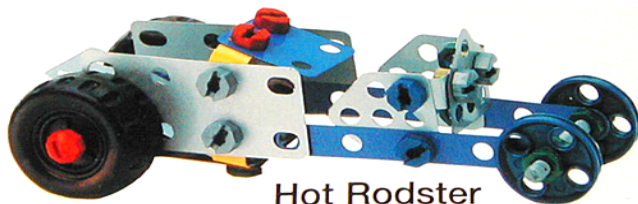


work loose. A minus is the small amount of metal outside the holes, which makes it too easy to bend the parts across the holes, especially the Strips. It is as well that no appreciable bending of the parts is needed to make the models. The Acorn Nuts are used on the ends of the axles as a neat way of retaining the Wheel.

Truck in OSN 14, a Formula 500 (Racing Car), a Power Lifter (Fork Lift Truck), and the Earth Mover below. None have any moving parts apart from the Wheels.

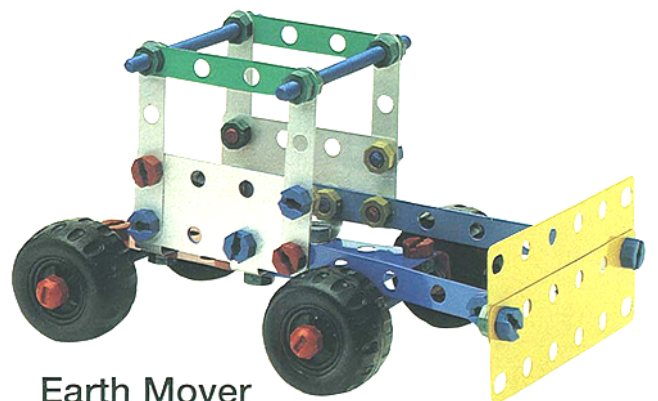


Delta Wing



Hot Rodster

2 of the 6 models on the 178 box, the Biplane & the Moto-X, seem to be the same as the 125 models; the others are the



Earth Mover

I thought I would try to make a mechanical model and after several false starts, managed a Mechanical Hacksaw. The only part suitable for the crankpin was the Long Bolt from the packaging. I attempted to include a pulley drive with the Pulleys mounted on Screwed Rods running in Strips. It wasn't a success because adequate tension in the rubber band belt made the Screwed Rods jam against the sides of the holes, even when the Strips were doubled up.

THANK YOU to Kendrick Bisset for supplying details of the 178 Set.

PS I forgot to mention a logo on the underside of the flap of both boxes. It is a yellow ring on a green panel with the black silhouette of a boy's head & shoulders inside it. He has a spanner in hand & wears a hard hat. Overlaid is a red band with 'Whistling Dixie' on it.