

edges of the Flanged Plate. Scaling from the size given for the box, 40*23cm, the hole pitch is, as might be expected, 1/2", or very near it.

Initially I thought MECANEX was a 'new' system but I find that it is in fact listed in my Database. I can't now trace the source of the entry but the additional points of interest there are that the hole pitch is 12.65mm, the Axles are 4mm Ø, but the N&B are only 3mm.

MECANEX: S1 [37/1101]

5. Snippets: BILDAL First, a correction to the **Set 1 Contents** given in 33/983. From the manual & set to be described, and Ebay photos of two apparently unused sets, only the stated quantities of Strips & Angles are in the No.1, and none of the other parts.

Next, recall (see 33/983) that BILDAL was made by Bettchers in Cleveland and that there were Sets 1 & 2. A No.1 set on Ebay took my eye - the box had No.1 on the lid and with just Strips & Angles the contents were as above. But the manual cover, below, a design not mentioned in OSN



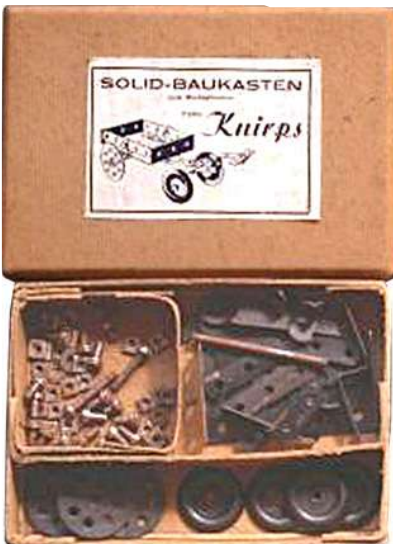
previously, has No.3 in the top left corner. (The same cover without the No.3 is in MCS.) The No.3 looks too neat to have been made by a youngster's printing set, so was there ever a No.3 set? Something to look out for but the Ebay ad said that the Set was 'made in Westmont, Illinois, so that might be a clue. Did another company produce BILDAL after Bettcher? Westmont is near Chicago & some 300 miles from Cleveland.

The manual with one of the other Ebay No.1's had the OSN 13/358 cover but only the Strips & Angle were shown & listed in the Illustrated Parts, just the parts in a No.1 that is. The Ebay ad included 3 pages of models, those on two are identical to models on OSN 13 pages (#1-5, & 15-18). One of the models on the last page, #21, was also identical but the other two, #19 & 20, had had the Wheels in the OSN 13 version removed, though they were still entitled Wagon & Box Car! All the pages had small typographical changes and p3 differed in having no reference to H.W.Graves as Licensor.

BILDAL: S2 [37/1101]

6. Snippet. SOLID A brief note on this small German system, based on a Model Sheet, appeared in 22/647. In the next column, the Ebay photo, courtesy Thomas Morzinck, of an actual set, and as can be seen the parts, apart from the N&B, are black. The maker was given as G. Schmidt & Co., of Oberbarmen (a suburb of Wuppertal). By scaling from the box, which was said to measure 17*12cm, the pitch of the holes in the Strips is at least 15mm and possibly a little more. But in the Wheel Disc it much less, 11mm or so.

The small print on the Model Sheet can't be read but it differs from the one in OSN 22 in that 16 parts are listed against 15 before, and the Ebay ad spoke of 11 models, 2



more than previously. Also if all the parts in the box were from one set there are more Wheel Discs and 'Half



Wheels' than the two of each listed on the OSN 22 Sheet.

SOLID: S1 [37/1101]

7. Snippet. 'New' System: DER KLEINE TECHNIKER There is a simple electrical outfit of this name but almost certainly not related to the set below. All that can really be



seen of the parts are some brightish Strips, and the blue Plates which, apart from their colour, look like STABIL. There was the cover of an early SCHEFFLERS manual shown in the Ebay lot but as far as is known early SCHEFFLERS parts were similar to later ones and quite unlike the blue Plates.

DER KLEINE TECHNIKER: S1 [37/1101]

8. Snippets. 'Matchbox' Sets These are the little outfits with their parts packed into a normal, small 'matchbox', and details of the two types then known were given in 6/131.

A further variant was made in America by Louis Marx and is shown in MCS under MATCH BOX CONSTRUCTION SET (2).

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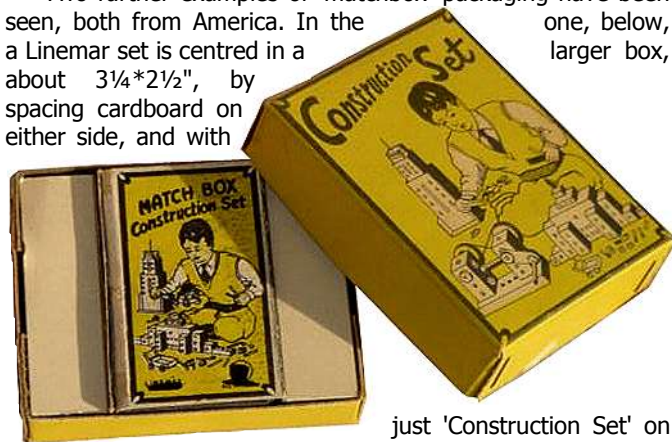
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Its front is like the Linemar outfit shown in Fig.3 in OSN 6 except that the words at the bottom are 'MADE BY LOUIS MARX & CO 200 5th AVE. N.Y.C.'. It is the set shown on the card below, and the back has the MBCS name, followed by 'The Vest Pocket Builder'; 4 'medals' (different



to those on the CLOU set); and the Louis Marx address. The card, 150*123mm, has push through tabs which hold the bottom of the set's sleeve in place, and it can be seen, less the set, in the MCS '100 TOYS IN ONE' entry (which was no doubt made before it was realised that the card was just packaging for the Set).

Two further examples of 'matchbox' packaging have been seen, both from America. In the one, below, a Linemar set is centred in a larger box, about 3¼*2½", by spacing cardboard on either side, and with



just 'Construction Set' on the lid. Notice that the Linemar name on the Set has been blacked out.

The other example is another 'Linemar' box with the blacking out at the bottom. It is packed in a clear plastic bag about 1½ times the size of the box. The bag also contains a model sheet, folded to fit into it. The top is closed with a piece of folded cardboard stapled over it, one side of which is shown above.



Also mentioned in OSN 6, a Spanish set called MACÓN with scaled up 'matchbox' parts, and another called TEXAS with parts that could be used with MACÓN. An example of TEXAS has yet to be found and no further MACÓN sets are known.

MATCHBOX SETS: S1 [37/1102]

9. **Snippet. A SUPERSONIC Outfit** Most of the parts in this 1950s UK Aero system were described in 14/367 and a couple of other points about it are mentioned in the AJET article elsewhere in the Issue. No set was known until one was sold on Ebay recently and the box & manual are shown in the next column. The top half of the lid was included in the original photo and was a blue or purple but badly faded, with a label covering most of it, identical to the corresponding part of the manual cover. The main parts are strung or clipped singly to the backing card. Notice that the red Bush Wheel has 3 face holes, not the 4 mentioned (incorrectly) in OSN 14. The quantities of the smaller parts used in the manual models are: 16 Flat Brackets; 12 A/Bs; 52 Nuts; 44,8,2,4,2,2 of ¼,⅜,½,



⅝,¾,1" Bolts; 2 Axles; & 4 Spring Clips. By scaling, the Nut is ⅝" square, the standard A/F size of 4BA commercial nuts at the time. Most of the N&B have a brass look and reflected light could account for the few with a silver appearance.

SUPERSONIC: S1 [37/1102]

10. **Snippet. An ARWILL Lid** Details of a manual and some parts from this small UK system were given in 29/856, and the similar BELMONT was described in 36/1076. Both are a little unusual in having 2h wide Flat Trunnions, 4, 8, & 12h long Strips, and a 4*8h Flanged Plate. Now, below, the lid of a set



sold on Ebay. The 8 models on it are all in the OSN 29 manual, though some are seen from a slightly different viewpoint. The Set's contents weren't shown, nor were the dimensions of the box given.

ARWILL: S2 [37/1102]

11. **Snippet. An EZY-BILT Set with Yellow Parts** The existence of yellow Strips was mentioned in 19/545 but it wasn't clear if they were ever included in sets. Now a No.5 outfit seen on Ebay, seeming complete, has all the Strips, DAS, & Trunnions in yellow; the only other 'strip' parts are green Curved Strips, and the other parts are in the normal red & nickel colour scheme. The Lid is yellow with the 2 boys & a Shovel design, as on the manual cover in 22/638. It has SET NO.5 above the righthand boy and LEAD FREE under him. The words EZY-BILT LTD., ADELAIDE can be seen in a line under the design. There are 2 layers of parts in light blue moulded plastic trays and the manual cover is the Sidney Harbour Bridge type shown in 7/145. A Price List with the set is dated FEBRUARY 1967; the address on it can't be read but it is not the Kilkenny one on the February 1966 example in MCS, and its last line could be Adelaide S.A.

EZY-BILT: S6 [37/1102]

12. **MERKUR in 2007** Based on the English language section of the company's web site (www.merkurtoys.cz) in mid-2007, there have been no changes to the ranges of parts & sets noted for 2005 in 33/991. The Czech section though shows

5. **'Matchbox' Set Parts.** Jean-Pierre Guibert sent details of the key dimensions of the parts in his 2 CLOU matchbox sets & a Louis Marx MATCHBOX set. That's to say the pitch & diameter of the holes in the 5h Strip, the diameter of the bore in the wooden Pulleys, & the diameter of the wooden Rods/Axles). He found that they are the same for each brand and that they differ from those in the Database.

The latter were based on the values in MCS and those of the parts in sets which I had on loan at the time. In the light of J-P's results I measured the parts in the sets currently to hand, a CLOU, a Louis Marx, & a Linemar MATCHBOX. (Notes on the different 'Matchbox' sets were given in 6/131 – MCB2 there is the Louis Marx.)

Below the measurements in millimetres (m = mean value).

Set ↓	Pitch	Hole Ø	Bore	Axle Ø
CLOU Database	8.6	3.2	2.9m	3.0m
CLOU J-P	8.5	3.15	3.0	3.0m
CLOU Mine	8.7	3.15	3.0	2.9m
Marx Database	8.7	3.3m	3.0	3.0
Marx J-P	8.5	3.15	3.0	3.0m
Marx Mine	8.75	3.4	2.9	3.0m
Linemar Database	8.7	3.4m	3.3m	3.1m
Linemar mine	8.75	3.3	3.3	3.2m

Many of the Axles vary slightly in diameter along their length and/or are significantly oval in section. My Marx Axle can push into the Pulley (actually a Wheel because it doesn't have a pulley groove) because its wood is very soft and fibrous.

Given that care was taken to make the measurements as accurate as possible there are clear differences in the metal parts. Especially noteworthy are the different pitches within the

CLOU sets, and the different pitches & hole diameters within the Marx. Presumably they would have been due to different tooling, though whether by the same manufacturer (or subcontractor) one can't say.

And in case you wondered, the pitch of the holes in the other parts matched those in the Strips.

MATCHBOX SETS: S2 [46/1389]

6. **STABIL** Werner Sticht continues to add to his STABIL website, www.stabilbaukasten.de.vu. Click on "Neuigkeiten" (= news) and you will find links to • STABIL before 1912; • other early German systems plus details of MÄRKLIN, TRIX, & MECCANO in Germany; • and detailed accounts of STABIL Pulleys & Flanged Wheels.

In addition the 'News' section has links to updates on 1911-1912 toy trade catalogues, on the 'Eisenbahnwagen-Baukasten', and on the wooden 'Maschinen-Baukasten'. There are also links to the numerous Änderungen und Korrekturen (Changes & Corrections) throughout the site.

STABIL: S8 [46/1389]

7. **VEX** The high shipping cost of VEX items bought from the firm in America was mentioned in 41/1253. Now the company's website, www.vexrobotics.com, says that most products can be shipped from England, but I wasn't able to check any actual shipping costs.

Also on the site, a list of resellers, among them 3 in the UK: one in Malmesbury, Wiltshire; one in Radstock, Somerset; and the third in Brentford, Middlesex.

VEX: S5 [46/1389]

METALL-BAUKASTEN Following the note on Jan Ringnald's set in 42/1621, Jean-Paul Guibert has kindly supplied details of his set, including the photos shown here. The box is the same but the set is much more complete and all the parts in it are thought to be original.

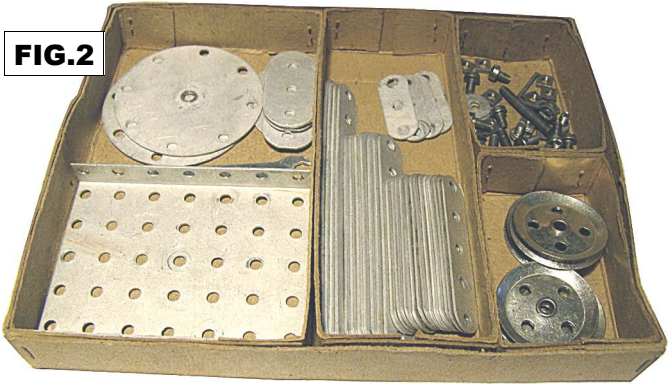
In all it contains 15 types of part as follows: 3,5,7,9h Strips; a 3h Strip almost twice as wide as the standard Strip; a 5*7h Flanged Plate; a 5h Ø Circular Plate; a 3h Ø Pulley; a Spanner or Span'driver (partly covered by the top edge of the Flanged Plate); & in the top right compartment, enlarged right: a Washer; a wire Handle Crank; a short Screwed Rod,



a square Nut, & 2 lengths of cheeseheaded Bolt.

The main parts are aluminium with 4.1mm Ø holes at 13.0mm pitch. The N&B, etc look nickelled; also the Pulley – it looked aluminium in Jan's set.

A great many 9h Strips would be needed to make the Bridge on the lid.



OSN 46/1389 METALL-BAUKASTEN [5]: S3

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