

By about 1992 the No.1 & No.10 had been replaced by No.100 & No.1000, both in cardboard boxes, 2.3*1.7*9" & 7.5*7.5*1.4", and both probably with more parts (their prices had increased, the 10/1000 from \$95 to \$169). The No.7 continued as before and had been joined by a No.8 Ferris Wheel Set in the same size box as the No.7.

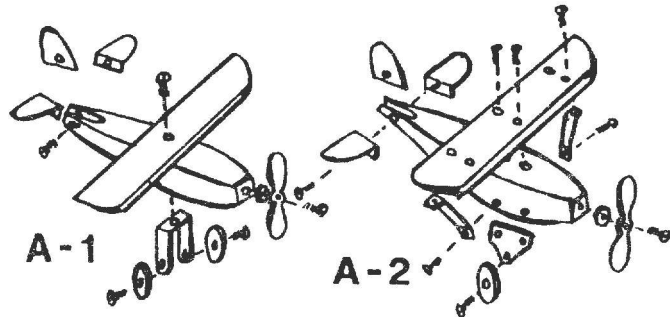
Another list, perhaps from 1993 has (apart from the M-1 with the BOY parts already mentioned) a C-10 set, with no details, and a C-100 set in a cardboard box 40*60*20mm. A photocopied list from 1998, possibly incomplete, has only the M-1 and the C-100.

The AIRPLANE SETS There were a number of these which made models that looked similar but differed in size, from 1.6" to 20" span, in paint finish, and in the types of model possible. All have steel parts joined by N&B, Wings with camber, and all but a set called BRIANNO seem to have a one-piece Fuselage. The first set dates from 1987 and the last is probably BRIANNO. To hand are 2 brochures from in between, each with a rather different range of sets, but I can't tell which came first. I'll give the prices for the Sets as a possible future aid to dating them.

The one set in 1987 (\$24.50) was called **ZP** and a Biplane is shown with a 12" span. It looks like the A-3 model in the next column but the illustration is too small to be sure of the details.

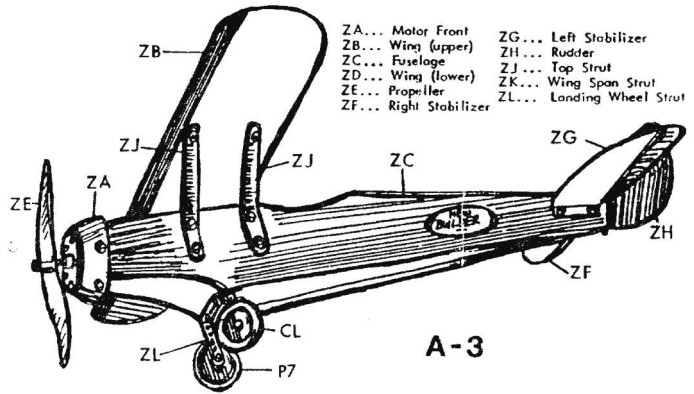
The assumed next stage saw 4 series of sets, A-1 to A-4, to make models of different sizes. Typical catalogue illustrations are shown in the notes that follow.

The smallest was the **A-1** (\$15) with silver painted parts & 2-56 Screws to make a 1.6" span model. Set A-1a (\$17) was similar but with a blue Fuselage and the other main parts yellow. The A-1H (\$29) had parts for both the Airplane & a Hanger (with gabled front & back walls, a red roof, no doors, but a large opening in the front wall).



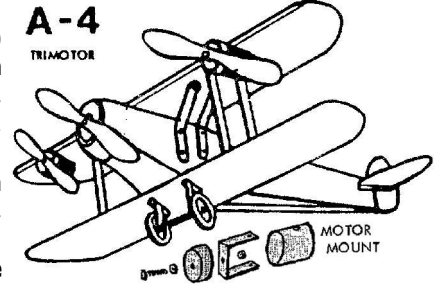
The models from the **A-2** (\$20) had a span of 3.5" and included twin motor & trimotor machines. The colour schemes were as the A-1, and Sets A-2a (\$23) & A-2H (\$35) followed the A-1 pattern. Left an Ebay photo of what might be an A-2a set, though there is no sign of parts for multi-engined aircraft.

The **A-3**, price \$139.50, made a 14" span Monoplane (as in the next column) or a Biplane, using 6-32 Screws. The Nose was red, the Fuselage blue, and the Wings & Tail yellow. The A-3a at \$138.50 was identical except



that the parts were painted silver. A flyer shows the same model under the heading: New BUILDER all metal Airplane // Johnson '87.

The **A-4** (\$349.50) made a 20" span 'Monoplane, Biplane, Twin Engine, Trimotor, Low Wing, or Bomber'. Again a blue body with yellow Wings & Tail, but 8-32 Screws.



The second range was listed as **Brian Builder Airplanes**. Compared with the A series sets, the prices are much lower.

Set L (\$9) looks similar to A-2 but is shown with a Radial Engine. 'Builds Spirit of St. Louis Monoplane & 3 other models'.

Set A (\$19). Builds 7" span Monoplane & 3 other blue/yellow models.

Set B (\$29). As A-3. Below the single-engined Biplane model.

Set C (\$99). It seems to be similar to Set B but the models are 20" span and painted silver.

Set D (\$39). It appears to be similar to A-4 but 14" span and 6-32 N&B. The 'Instruction booklet shows 25 models'.

Set CX (\$29). 'Ceiling Mount and Electric Motor, fly model from wire.' Not illustrated.

Finally the BRIANNO sets. The No.0 with built-up fuselage and a Pilot is shown below. The No.1 has the same model on the lid as the No.0; the No.2 has a Biplane with Wheel Spats and a Radial Engine with Fairing Ring.



The ZEPPELIN SETS

The 1987 catalogue listed Sets ZX & ZM (along with the ZP Airplane outfit), and they were probably newly launched at that time.

The ZX Deluxe Zeppelin

Kit (\$169.50) contained most of the parts needed to make the model right, essentially a replica of the 4 feet long, 1929 ERECTOR original. Not included were the necessary ERECTOR Girders - in the original 50x 10" were used for the 10 longerons and 25 formed 5" for the 5 main Frames. Also not provided, the Motor in the middle Gondola (it wasn't shown in later illustrations), & it's not clear if the necessary N&B were in the Kit. The model is mostly silver with a red Nose Cap & touches of red elsewhere. The silver fabric Cover HO has a logo in red & gold; the alternative, \$10 cheaper, HOX was plain. The parts not shown in the drawing are the paper Red Star ZS & the 6" Ø Rear Ring HP, the rearmost frame.

The **ZM Mini-Zeppelin Set** (\$29.50) made a 1 foot long model. No other details are given but perhaps the model was similar to the later Mini-Zeppelin described below.

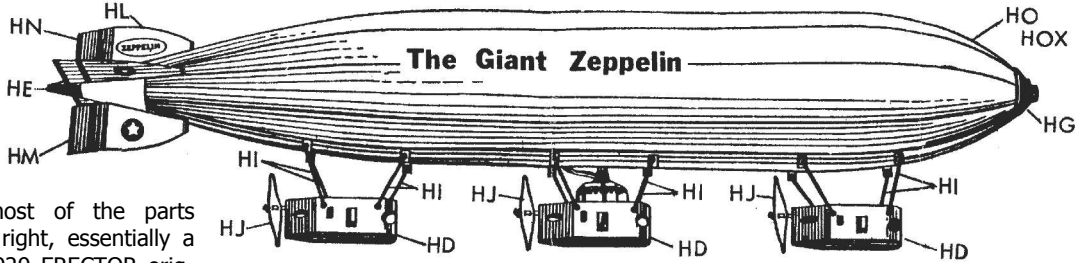
3 Zep outfits are shown in the brochure which has the L,A-D,CX Airplane sets. The first is the **Z Deluxe Zeppelin Set** (\$170) and it seems to be the same as the ZX although it is said that it 'includes parts for use with Erector 10" girEders (not included) to build ' - so perhaps parts for all the frames were in the Outfit.

The second outfit is the **SZ Zeppelin Set** (\$99) with over 50 silver painted steel parts to make the 18" model right. It is basically similar in construction to the METALCRAFT Zeppelin models, see 24/690.

The last outfit is the **MZ Mini Zeppelin Set** (\$39) with all the parts, including a silver Cover, to make a 1 foot long model identical to the one right except that the Mooring Mast wasn't shown. At the front the Long Screw passes through the end hole of the 2 Long Rib Girders & then through the 2 Nose Caps - the other, shorter Rib Girders are clamped between the Nose Caps. The Gondolas are suspended by thin Wire. The illustration right was in a flyer which dates from before 1993 and as can be seen the outfit was then called the **B Set Mini-Zeppelin**.

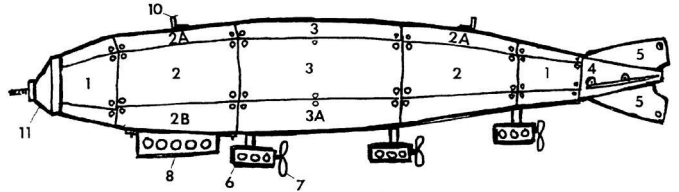
2 labels from **BRIANNO** Zep sets both show the large ZX/Z Deluxe model but in one the fabric Cover is coloured red.

The SHIP SET In 1992 Ed Furness sent me the photo right of a model he had made from a Brian Johnson Ship Set. Apart from the colour scheme & a few minor changes the parts look very much like the Gilbert MECCANO originals (see 22/642) and I assume they are the same size. I can't see the winding gear for the rubber band 'motor' on the foredeck, & there are no derricks, but perhaps Ed decided not to fit them. Also I don't know if the Set

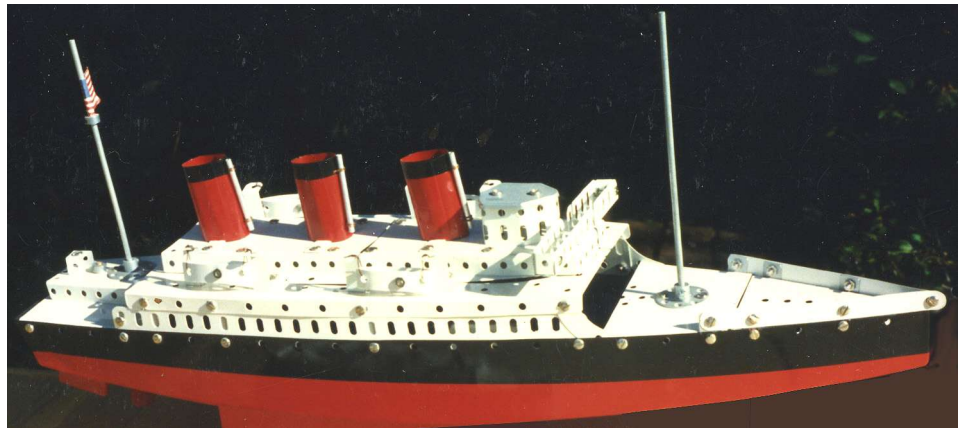
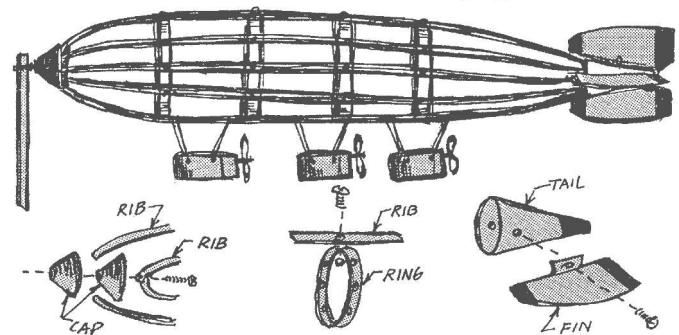


contained the parts not needed for the Liner model. **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS** My thanks to all who have sent material including Brian Johnson, Ed Furness, & Richard Symonds. Thanks also to Brian for permission to use illustrations from his catalogues, etc. He is still in business at 341 University Drive, Menlo Park, CA 94025, tel: (650)322-7033, selling ERECTOR repro parts & 'cardboard', but his current ads make no mention of sets (but see the Postscript below).

SZ... STEEL ZEPPELIN BUILDING SET



"B" SET Mini-Zeppelin



POSTSCRIPT Since the account above Brian has written that he plans to reintroduce some of the sets in 2007, plus other new ones. All will be shown in his 2007 catalogue & the new outfits will include 'a large Auto, tiny Autos, a large ERECTOR-style Airplane, tiny tiny Airplanes, a new tiny constructional set, & a tiny block building set.

Brian kindly sent a sample of one set and its lid is shown left, together with one of each of its parts. It is No.25 & the box, 29*15*12mm, contains 4 each of the 2h Strip & NS; 1 A/B; 2 D/B; 4 Wheels; and 8 N&B. The Wheels are card, the other parts steel, silver painted except the nickel, 4-40 N&B. Holes are 3.1mm Ø at 1/2" pitch. The 14



models in the Model Leaflet are of necessity quite simple.

The parts in the No.25 look similar to those in an earlier set I had previously overlooked. It dates from not later than 1993 and has a BRIAN BUILDER box label, though its model sheet is headed Tiny Builder. The Auto right was on the lid label, and was also shown on other lids, but I'm not sure which set was needed to build it - possibly a special Auto set and a lid label is known with No.122 **BRIAN AUTO BUILDER** on it.



Brian also set a Block set and though not usual OSN fare, it is rather cute, with 11 wooden parts to make 19 models like the one right. There are 3 cuboid parts, the largest 18*12*12mm, with little black oblongs painted on for the windows & door, and 2 sizes of red painted gable-ended roofs.

