

NEW SYSTEM Thanks to Peter McCall for sending a photocopy of the single sheet instruction Leaflet, some of which is reproduced opposite at reduced scale, and other details. The set was bought last year in Russia and the hole spacing is 10mm; the flat plates are a very dull red and the strips etc have an iridescent metallic finish. Four models are described, the two here, another crane and a second digger.



CONSTRUCTO (From Keith Cameron)

Sets labelled 'CONSTRUCTO' (no set number) were on sale in Canada through Radio Shack stores during the early 1980's. The boxes measure 14"x11"x1-1/2" and show (in full colour) two boys with a model breakdown lorry and a small crane. The sets contain an erratic assortment of parts as will be seen below. Hole spacing is about 10mm or 11/28 inch. This produces the interesting result that you can tell the number of holes of a part by its length (and vice-versa), for a part that is 'x' holes in length will also be 'x' cms in length. Strips are 1cm wide. Rods are either .148" or .125", see below. There is a small manual with line drawings of models. These are simple, but cannot be built because of insufficient parts. However, several parts are included that are not required by the manual models. The strips are heavily enamelled red, the trunnions and most of the pulleys are green, gears and wheel discs are yellow, the double braced girders are very light blue, brackets etc are heavy gauge metal, nickel plated. The plates are various colours. The trunnions have slots like Argentine parts. This system, I'm told, resembles, or is identical to Merkur. The complete contents of the set were as follows:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 1 25cm 25 hole strip | 2 27cm rods (.148") |
| 2 15cm 15 hole strips | 1 9cm crank handle (.148") |
| 1 3cm 3 hole strip | 2 127mm rods (.125") |
| 6 5cm 5 hole curved strips | 1 white plastic steering wheel |
| 5 6cm slotted strips | 2 2cm lengths of fine spring |
| 3 15cm 15 hole angle girders | 14 cheesehead bolts |
| 2 10cm 10 hole angle girders | 10 hexagonal nuts |
| 2 3cm x 3cm right angle strips | 1 hook shaped like an anchor, black |
| 4 angle brackets | 1 5cm x 5cm flanged plate, light blue |
| 3 fishplates | 3 10cm x 5cm plates, yellow metal |
| 1 double bracket | 4 10cm x 5cm plates, red plastic |
| 2 double bent strips | 4 5cm x 7cm plates, red plastic |
| 1 5cm x 1cm DA strip | 2 5cm x 7cm plates, blue plastic |
| 1 3cm x 5mm DA strip | 2 5cm x 5cm plates, blue metal |
| 1 14mm loose pulley, brass | 2 2cm x 3cm plates, red metal |
| 5 23mm pulleys with boss | 2 45mm x 3cm triangular plates |
| 3 38mm pulleys with boss | 4 15cm Flat girders, red metal |
| 1 60mm pulley with boss | 1 9cm flat girder, green plastic |
| 2 85mm pulleys with boss | 3 5cm flat girders, yellow plastic |
| 4 box spanners (!) | 2 trunnions, green metal |
| 1 small screwdriver | 2 flat trunnions, plastic |
| 8 1cm pinions (!) | 2 small hanks of string |
| 1 3cm gear | 1 mini-motor and mounting plate |
| 2 3cm contrates | 3 plastic gears, force-fit on motor shaft |
| 5 large old style pawls (!) | 4 thick rubber washers |
| 1 small pawl | |
| 1 collar | 5 10cm braced girders, very light blue |
| 1 coupling | 4 3cm wheel discs, yellow metal |

This seems like a lot, but trying to build a model faces you with problems: not enough nuts and bolts, only two very long rods, (shame to cut them), and only one flanged plate for models, many of which require two. And there are far too many advanced parts (flat, braced and angle girders, several sizes of pulley, oodles of small pinions and pawls).

[These from their descriptions are recognisable as MERKUR parts except the .125 dia rods, was there a reason for including them? Not that reason seems to have been uppermost in the mind of whoever put this set together, the contents above are notable different to those given in MCS -Ed]

CONSTRUCTO V-8 AND V-12 SETS Thanks to Don Redmond for sending some details of a CONSTRUCTO V-8 set which was once sold in Canada; it seems to contain MERKUR parts, as of course did other Canadian CONSTRUCTO sets, apart from perhaps the electric motor. The manual mentions a second set called V-12.

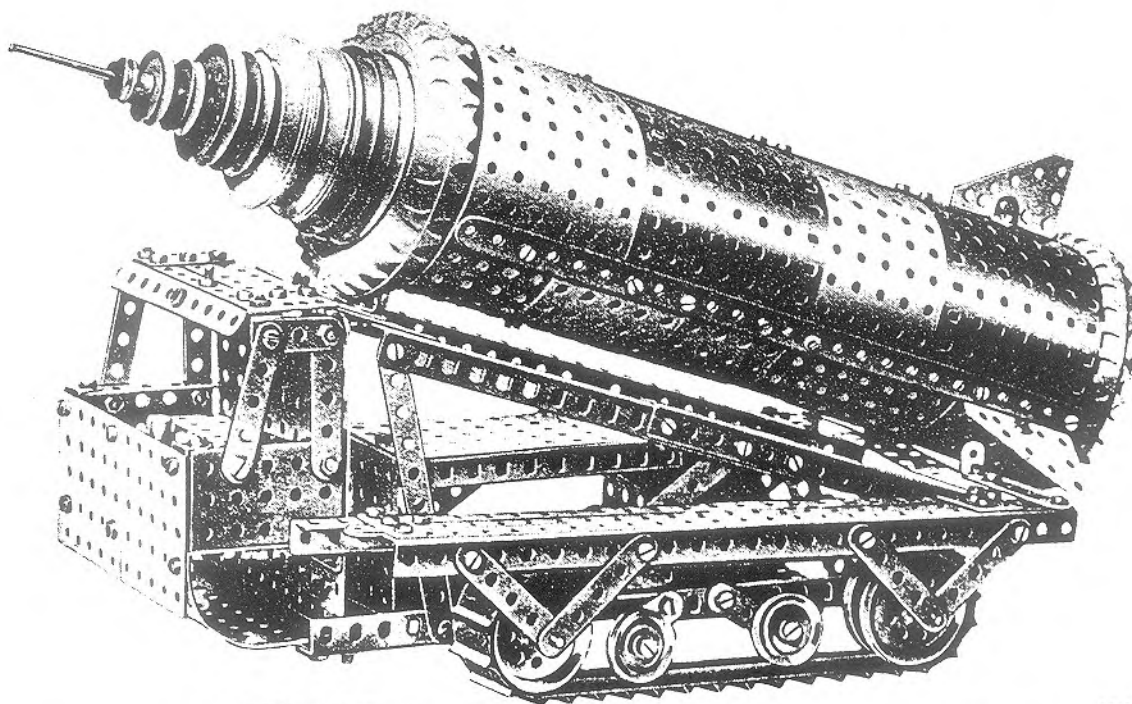
The illustrated parts pages in the manual are identical to those shown in MCS for MERKUR sets 201 and 202, and the V-8 box lid shows models which with one or two minor changes are identical to those in a recent MERKUR 201/202 manual. The biggest change is to the tyres fitted to the NO 82 Tyred Wheel - they have a much larger section than those in the Czech set, which are as illustrated in the illustrated parts section of the CONSTRUCTO manual. These fatter tyres can be seen in the two models at the bottom of this page, which appear on the box lid of the set.

Don notes that on the underside of the box is a coloured chart of parts which lists in addition to the parts shown in the manual, the following: 26A Curved Strip, large radius, stepped ends; 62A Shaft 20cm; 63 Shaft 32cm; 46A, 56, 47, 47A Gears 2.5 to 8.5cm; 93 Spring Cord; 37A Corner Gusset; 43 Pulley 7.5cm; 43A Pulley 10.5cm; 41 Bush Wheel 3.5cm; 44 Worm; 58, 58A Double Braced Girders 6 and 12cm. All these are standard MERKUR parts except that 62A is shown in MERKUR manuals as 17cm long, but they are not included in sets 201/202. It is not certain whether they were in the V-8/V-12 sets or whether they were just parts available within the Canadian range of MERKUR parts. Another difference is that there is a motor in the Canadian sets but not in the Czech ones.

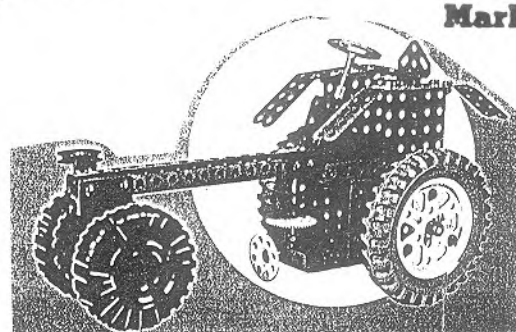
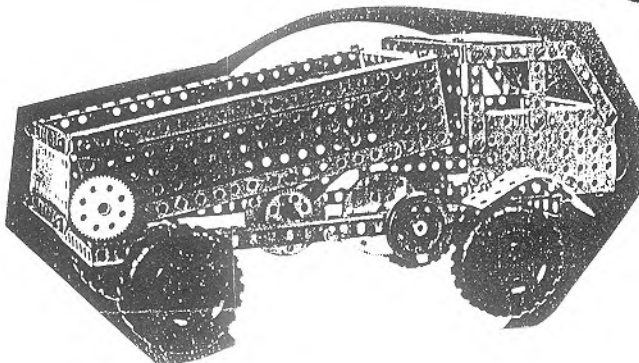
The cover of the manual is shown below natural size, the address on the back cover is Paramount Industries, 2175 Theodore, Montreal. The box lid measures about 13½"x18".

MANUEL **CONSTRUCTO** MANUAL

BUILT-O-MATIC SETS MOTORISED



Mark V-8, V-12.



VENTO Peter Page sent the illustrated parts list below (reduced in size and rearranged a bit). He writes "Here is another East German system which was offered by VENTO a few years ago at the Design Exhibition. Its sale was taken over by Philip Harris Education who offer at least part of it (I have an incomplete copy of their out of print catalogue - they also offer STOKYS, LEGO and plastic systems). This system could be a 'toy'. I spoke to Nick McNulty last week, they never knew the name of the manufacturer; they picked it up from (and deal only with) an educational supplier at a Hanover fair. I have somewhere a sample plastic base plate and from memory it was marked S M; could this indicate SCHEFFLER METALL? The thickness of the metal parts would make them very strong."

There are no ordinary nuts or bolts listed so perhaps not all the parts are in these lists. It is odd for example that the only part that could be used as an axle is the 3.9mm brass rod. Also the use of the tubes VTT 131 and 132 is not evident, how would they be attached to other parts for instance, and although the 5mm 131 would slide on 130, the 6mm 132 would appear from its wall thickness not to fit over 131. I'm not sure whether it could be a toy, cutting the metal strips and angle girders would require a sturdy tool or a hack saw, and even the 2mm plastic plates would need more than mum's kitchen scissors. But the road wheels look quite toy like. In the description of VTT 125 there is mention of O.H.P: if that means overhead projector, it might reflect a commercial application.



STEEL MATERIAL — ZINC PLATED

Part No	Description	Price
VTT 100	Punched Strip 15 x 500 x 1.5mm 4.5mm Ø 15mm Pitch	6.60/10
VTT 101	Slotted Strip 15 x 500 x 1.5mm 4.5mm x 25mm Slot	7.20/10
VTT 102	Angled Punched Strip 15 x 15 x 500 x 1.5mm 4.5mm Ø 15mm Pitch	2.04 Each
VTT 103	Angled Slotted Strip 15 x 15 x 500 x 1.5mm 4.5mm x 25mm Slot	2.04 Each
VTT 104	Double Punched Strip 30 x 500 x 1.5mm 4.5mm Ø 15mm Pitch	1.32 Each
VTT 105	Double Slotted Strip 30 x 500 x 1.5mm 4.5mm x 25mm Slot	1.32 Each
VTT 107	Base Plate 20 x 20 x 170 x 500 x 1mm 4.5mm Ø 15mm Pitch	6.87 Each
VTT 111	Steel Tool Rack 5 x 10 x 250mm For Use With Gears	3.75 Each
VTT 112	Plain Strip Unpunched 15 x 500 x 1.5mm	9.30/10
VTT 113	Plain Strip Unpunched 30 x 500 x 1.5mm	16.30/10

BRASS TUBE, SPACERS & ANCILLARIES

VTT 130	Brass Rod 3.9mm Ø 500mm Long	1.05 Each
VTT 131	Brass Tube 5mm Ø 0.5 x 500mm Long	1.14 Each
VTT 132	Brass Tube 6mm Ø 1mm x 500mm Long	1.85 Each
VTT 133	Brass Spacer 5mm Ø x 0.5mm 7mm Long	2.43/100
VTT 134	Brass Spacer 5mm Ø x 0.5mm 15mm Long	3.42/100
VTT 214	Wing Nut M4 Zinc Plated	4.50/100
VTT 217	Brass Collar With 4mm Bore	23.88/100
VTT 221	Zinc Plated Hook	6.40/100

For details contact Nick McNulty at
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Part No	Description	Price
VTT 120	Polystyrol Plate 500 x 1000 x 2mm Unpunched — Red or Blue	TBA 8.05
VTT 121	Polystyrol Plate 500 x 1000 x 2mm Punched 4.5mm Ø 15mm Pitch — Red or Blue	123.60 25.53 Per Sheet
VTT 125	Polystyrol Base Plate — Punched 4.5mm Ø 15mm Pitch — Red, Blue & Transparent 15 x 18 x 74 x 149 x 2mm With Underside Marking On U Profile For Cutting. Transparent Plate For use With O.H.P.	7.50/10 5.18/5
VTT 126	Polystyrol Strip — Punched 4.5mm Ø 15mm Pitch — Red & Blue 15 x 149 x 2mm	2.05/10

ELECTRICAL COMPONENTS

VTT 301	4mm Jack Plug (Banana)	0.27p Each
VTT 350	6v Motor With Flying Lead	2.60 Each
VTT 351	Terry Clip For Mounting Motor (2 Recommended)	0.42p Each
VTT 352	4mm/2mm Reducing Bush For Interfacing Motor With Wheels And Pulleys — Black Plastic	6.06/100

GEAR WHEELS, WHEELS & PULLEYS

VTT 140	Gear Wheel 158 Teeth 60mm O.D. — Red	4.50/10
VTT 143	Gear Wheel 12 Teeth 15mm O.D. — Red	3.30/10
VTT 144	Bevel Gear 45° Angle 25mm O.D. — Red	4.45/10
VTT 145	Worm Gear For Use With Gears 10mm O.D. x 26mm — Black	5.40/10
VTT 146	Pulley 20mm O.D. — Red	8.10/10
VTT 147	Pulley 40mm O.D. — Red	7.20/10
VTT 148	Pulley 30mm O.D. — Red	6.00/10
VTT 149	Pulley 10mm O.D. — Red	4.80/10
VTT 151	Wheel 10mm O.D. — 20mm Width — P.V.C.	1.50/10
VTT 152	Wheel 10mm O.D. 20mm Width With Brass Bearing — P.V.C.	3.00/10
VTT 151	Gear Wheel 45 Teeth — Red	6.00/10
VTT 162	Gear Wheel 30 Teeth — Red	5.10/10
VTT 163	Gear Wheel 15 Teeth — Red	4.80/10

the earliest I have, the Introduction is signed by Franz Walther. I hope to include more details in a later issue. Later Tobias sent copies of a number of other patents to which I shall also return: they include two German 'DIY' systems called MECO and MEWEKA. He also kindly sent a 60 page booklet (in German) on building and constructional sets, issued by a Lucerne museum in connection with an exhibition held there earlier in the year. It has sections on wood, stone, metal and plastic systems, and under metal, BANGAROO and TECHNOFIX are mentioned, but only by name - more details when/if they become available.

7. Dave Taylor remembers that sometime in the mid to late 1950s Woolworths sold a set containing red and green parts, and the corners of the Strips were angled like VOGUE. He is 99% sure that it was called MECANO and asks if anyone else can recall it.

CONSTRUCTO V-8 AND V-12 SETS These Canadian Sets, made up from MERKUR parts, were briefly discussed in 4/60. Ed Furness has now kindly sent a copy of the manual which covers both Sets. The models in it are identical to those in the MERKUR manual for Sets 201/202 described on p213, and the Illustrated Parts and their PNs, and the two pages showing Standard Constructions, are the same too, apart from being in English rather than Czech of course. The CONSTRUCTO manual has much smaller pages, about 215x140mm, and the illustrations of the models are reduced accordingly; other differences are that none of the parts in the models are identified by PNs and in two cases pairs of models have changed pages and Model Nos. None of the models have the larger tyres shown fitted to models on the box lid.

The CONSTRUCTO Manual, marked as being Printed in Canada by the way, contains no Set Contents; on the back cover is a list of parts available from Paramount Industries and this contains all the parts shown in the 111 Parts and virtually all the other MERKUR parts then available. It also lists two manuals as well as this V-8/12 one; a 'Junior 1-4' and an 'Advanced 5-6'. These Numbers are presumably references to other sets, perhaps to the then current standard MERKUR Sets, #1 to 7. Some of the models in the V-8/12 Manual are marked as needing a Set 4, 5, 6 or 7 as well as a 'V' set. A copy of a CONSTRUCTO manual from Keith Cameron, it seems to be the one used for MCS, contains a selection of the models for Sets #1-4 from the MERKUR 1-7 manual discussed on p212, redrawn rather crudely, plus some other models which are not in any known MERKUR manual. So perhaps this is the Junior above, and if so was there a larger 'Advanced' CONSTRUCTO Set, as well as the V-8 and 12?

All this calls for some changes to MCS, but there's no more room so these will be included in OSN 10.

EXTRA MCS SHEETS. The Sheets listed below are available at 15p per Sheet plus postage.

BRAL(M): X1.1,7. [1 Sheet]	MERKUR(B): X1.3d/4d/6a,5a. [1 Sheet]
CRUSON: X1.3a,5a. [1 Sheet]	MERKUR(B1): X1.1,2,3/6,4-a,5. [3 Sheets]
ERECTOR SENIOR: X1.1,7. [1 Sheet]	META BUILD: X2.3/6,4a. [1 Sheet]
HUSTLER ACTION TOY BUILDER: X1.1,2,4,5,6/7. [3 Sheets]	METALMEC OPSET: X1.1,4-a,4b/6,5a. [3 Sheets]
INVICTA: X1.2a,4. [1 Sheet]	RHOCANO: X1.1,2/5,3/6,4. [2 Sheets]
KONSTRUKTIONSPIEL: X1.1,2/3/6,5. [2 Sheets]	

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sell MERKUR or TECC Sets, or both. He also sent some details of a new club called ERECTOR ENTHUSIASTS INTERNATIONAL which seeks to cultivate Fellowship, Communication and Education of (despite its name) all Metal Systems. Don is co-founder and invites anyone with similar aims to get in touch - his address, 23553 Belmont Drive, Westlake, Ohio 44145. U.S.A. Tel: (216) 333-2211.

7. Don Redmond came across a shop called Pinocchio and Friends in Toronto (4 Cumberland Street) which had WISDOM, Mini-MERKUR, and MECOTECH, a new Set which I plan to include in OSN 11.

8. In describing one of his models Eric Sinton remarked, "I wonder if it is widely appreciated that STOKYS Sprockets (and Chain and Roller Chain) are compatible with MÄRKLIN Toothed Rings and with the MECCANO Large-Toothed Pinion, Large-Toothed Quadrants and even the Multi-Purpose Gear."

9. Tony Rednall sent a Belgian ad for a plastic Set called BUILDERIFIC. The wording on the box is in English and on the inside of the lid there is an illustration of one each of the different parts in the box, they are brightly coloured red, blue, green and yellow, with black looking Road Wheels and Bolts. I can pick out 28 different parts and the total number in the Set is said to be 200. Many of them, the Braced Girders and 2 sizes of Triangles for instance look similar to PLASTIC MECCANO, but all the holes are the same size and there are other differences, like the square ends of the Strips, the longest of which has only 7 holes. Other parts include 2 sizes of Flanged Plate, spoked Pulleys (I think) and 2 sizes of Gear Wheels. Also on the inside of the lid are fairly large pictures of 7 reasonable looking small models; no manual is shown in the ad.

ORSTA PNEUMATIC SETS Some details of these sets were given in 4/65, 6/132 and 7/156. José Bernal Moreno sent a copy of a Fax, dated 16 September, 1993, that he had received from Traudl Rieß, a wholesale supplier in Germany: it said that although they still had a small quantity of sets and parts in stock, Orsta-Pneumatik was no longer being produced.

CONSTRUCTO - CONTINUED FROM OSN 9/235 There wasn't room in OSN 9 to include the following AMENDMENTS TO MCS SETS: replace by: A small Set and perhaps a larger one; also Sets V-8 and V-12. COMMENTS: Add: The models shown on p5 are from the 'small' Set, those for the V-8/12 Sets are identical to MERKUR Sets 201/202 models, though some of the Tyres shown on the box lid are different, see OSN 4/60 and 9/235. Some 'small' Sets are known that contain strange selections of parts, probably to use up remaining stocks, see OSN 3/38.

EXTRA MCS SHEETS The Sheets listed below are available at 15p per Sheet plus postage. That makes £4.95 + post for all 33 Sheets. Those with * relate to earlier Issues and contain little new material.

* BRAL: X2.3/6-a. [1 Sheet]	PLANO: X1.1,2,3/4-b,5-a,6. [4 Sheets]
CONSTRUCTOR (2): X1.2a,5a. [1 Sheet]	STEEL TEC: X1.1,2,3/6,4,5. [3 Sheets]
DUX (A): X1.2,3/5/6,4. [2 Sheets]	STRICON: X1.1,2,3/4/6,5. [2 Sheets]
MÄRKLIN (E): X1.1,2,3/4/6,5. [2 Sheets]	* SKOLNIEKS: X1.1,2,3/6,4-a,5. [3 Sheets]
MECANIKIT: X1.1,2,3/4/6,5. [2 Sheets]	TECNIKIT: X1.4-a,5a,6. [2 Sheets]
MERKUR ALFI: X1.1,2,3/6,4-a. [3 Sheets]	* TEMSI: X1.3/4-a,6. [2 Sheets]
* NECOBO: X1.3/4/7,3/4a. [1 Sheet]	ULOX: X1.1,2,3/4-a,5,6,7. [4 Sheets]
	WISDOM: X1.4a/6a,5a. [1 Sheet]

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METALLO Maybe Jim Gamble kindly gave me a Model Leaflet in Danish on which someone had pencilled 'Metallo?'. The heading at the top of the front page is INGENIØRKASSER but that probably means Engineering Sets, and it's possible that originally the Leaflet was stapled inside an outer cover. A Danish METALLO was mentioned in 16/458 but I don't know if it's the same system.

So a few notes in case anyone can shed light on the matter. The Leaflet is a wide sheet folded into three, giving 6 'pages' 216*164mm deep. On the front are the Set Contents for Outfits No.21, 22, 23 & 24, and there are 32 different parts in all, numbered from #2 for an 11h Strip to #70 for a 25mm Pulley. The back page has at the bottom in small type, CHR, ANDERSEN - KBHVN. K., no doubt the printer in Copenhagen. There are photos of 31 small models with no model numbers but a parts list for each, and the Outfit(s) it can be made from (the Sets aren't progressive). The first model on each page is Bogstav A (Letter A), Kardinal+ stol (Armchair), Vindmølle, Flyvemaskine, & Signalmast.

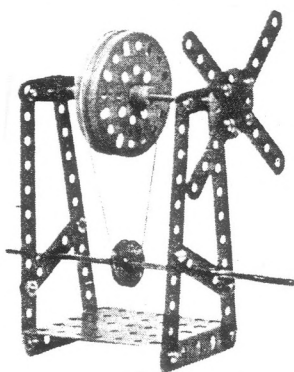
Except as noted the parts look like MÄRKLIN, and the main ones are: 3-11h Strips, Crank Handle (like M19), Bush Wheel, Flanged Sector Plate, 5*7h Flanged Plate, 1*5*1 DAS, Hook, 6.5cm Flanged Pulley, Curved Strip (with the 3h long centre slot), and 25mm Pulley. There are also a Double Bent Strip and various Brackets: Angle (1*1 & 1*2h), Double (1*1*1 & one probably 2 holes deep), and Reversed Angle, but the exact form of these can't be seen. The Bolts are cheeseheaded & the Nuts largish hexagonal.

The parts may be like MÄRKLIN but the Sets aren't - the baseplate in each is a 5*7h Flanged Plate whereas in MÄRKLIN a 5*11h one is used. The smallest set has 25 N&B, 14 Strips/DAS, a Flanged Plate, & 4x 25mm Pulleys; the largest has another 25 N&B, 12 Strips/DAS, a Flanged Sector Plate, and 2x 6.5cm Pulleys. The quantities of 13 of the parts aren't progressive and I can't see, from the models or otherwise, any logic behind the make up of the sets.

Most of the models don't remind me of any other system; the ones below are among the more ambitious, or show the various parts.

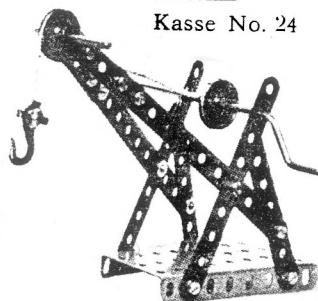
Vindmølle

Kasse No. 23 + 24



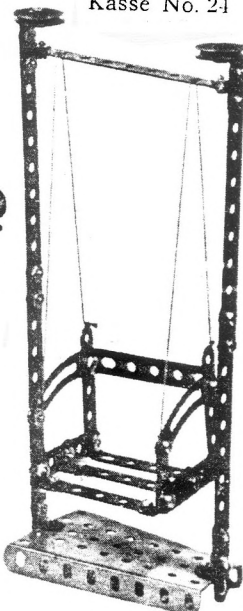
Kran

Kasse No. 24



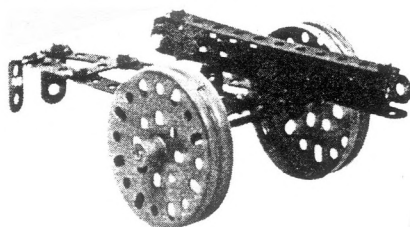
Gynge

Kasse No. 24



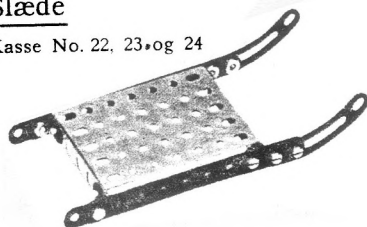
Kanon

Kasse No. 24



Slæde

Kasse No. 22, 23+og 24



A CONSTRUCTO ADVANCED JUNIOR SET MARK 2

Don Redmond sent some details of the set's box & manual, supplied to him by a friend, and Richard Symonds sent a photo of his similar box, and the manual with it. Thank you to both. This is the CONSTRUCTO that had MERKUR parts, and was sold in Canada by Paramount Industries in 1980. The box is 29*20*1.8cm & has end openings; the top (below) is in full colour and the boy is looking at 3 typical small MERKUR models (a Windmill, Car, & 90° Pulley Drive), which are on a yellow surface against a blue backdrop. On the bottom the usual MERKUR Illustrated Parts, including blue 5 & 10h Braced Girders.



Don's manual has 32 unnumbered pages plus covers, 212*146mm deep and stapled at the top. Nothing is known of the covers except that Paramount's address is on the back. The following projects (models) for Sets Mark 1-4 are shown. 1: On pp1-4, #1, Semaphore signal discs, to #51, fortune wheel. 2: pp5-11, #62, automobile, to #77, sedan chair, plus #52, wheelbarrow, #79, automobile, #90, skier, #83, machine gun. 3: pp12-23, #110, gun, to #139, lift and crane. 4: pp24-32, #151, machine saw, to 175, drilling machine. No set contents are included.

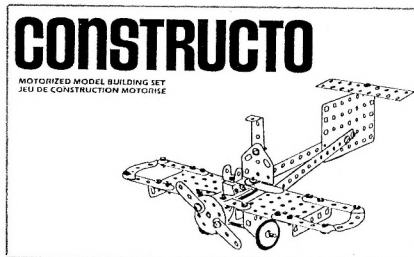
In the light of the 'Junior 1-4' & 'Advanced 5-6' manuals mentioned in 9/235, it's a bit confusing to find this box marked 'Advanced Junior', but the models on the lid & in Don's manual are typical of those for MERKUR Sets 1-4, & not 5-6. No doubt there were 4 sets, Mark 1 to Mark 4, all with this manual, but whether they were all called Advanced Junior remains to be seen. If the 65 'Projects' claimed on the lid is correct there must be some gaps in the model numbering within the Mark 1 &/or 2 models.

This is not the same box as Keith Cameron's (see 3/38) - the size & lid design differ, and Keith's had no Set No. His manual is different too: let me describe it from a photocopy he kindly sent

some time ago. The page size and format is similar to Don's but it has only pages 1-14 plus covers. The front cover, left, is the one in MCS; the back shows various parts and a Pair of Scales, (see MCS/NZ) - presumably,

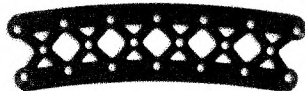
taken all together, the parts in a Set (but not the parts in Keith's, see 3/38). The models, all of which can be made from the parts on the back cover, run from 1. Shovel \ Pelle on p2, to 60. Dune buggy \ Véhicule pour sable, on p13. On the cover is 'Motorized Model Building Set', singular, and no mention is made anywhere of different sets, and the word 'project' isn't used. Page 14 is about the Motor included in the Set.

Richard's manual has the same cover as Keith's, but its contents aren't known, and so there's a doubt whether it 'belongs' to the MARK 2 Set. Given that the parts in Keith's set don't bear any relation to those on the manual cover, or those needed for the models, it looks as if his manual went with a different set originally. The indications above point to it not being one of the Mark series, but if Richard's manual, assuming that inside it's the same as Keith's, did actually belong to his set, it was perhaps included as a substitute, at some stage, for Don's type. One difficulty is that it contains only 60 models, but if the 2 on the covers (front & back), and the 3 on the box are counted, that would make the 65 claimed.



• The flanged metal **Trays** on which parts were mounted in some **ERECTOR & GILBERT MECCANO** sets could also be used as baseplates for models. The holes in the base of these Trays are usually in a regular pattern but additional holes may be found which were probably needed to allow the required display of parts. In the 21" Tray of a GILBERT No.110 Set the 7*19 holes are at 1" centres but there are an additional 9 holes between the 2nd & 3rd lengthwise rows - 6 at 2" & 3 at 1" centres. Another Tray is 14 5/8" x 7 7/8" x 3 3/8" deep with the hole pattern shown left, with 2" spacing lengthways and 1" across, & 3 extra (blackened) holes. It is smaller than any box recorded in the literature, and so perhaps it was a short Tray to allow a full depth end compartment for, say, an Electric Motor. [Several sizes of Tray are shown in *Greenberg*, and all seem to be listed as part GY, regardless of size. Most have double flanged edges (like a Reversed A/B) so they can sit down on, & within the 4 walls of a box's partitioning. However the No.9 Set shown on p106 of *Greenberg 1* has an additional Tray with a perforated base and single flanges which look about 1" deep. Only one Tray is included in the Contents for this Set. GY was introduced in 1929 and was last listed as a Separate Part in 1933; most are painted black but the one in the 1933 No.8 on p16 in *Greenberg 2* is red.]

• The **ERECTOR 6" Curved Big Channel Girder**, EZ, can be found with two different curvatures, and the pitch of the holes is slightly different too, with the outside holes on the convex, outer edge at a pitch of about 5.9" on the large radius type (left) and 6.05" on the more curved one. [This change was noted in the *S. Cal. N/L* for Spring 1993 & in *Greenberg 2*, pp85, 87. The original large radius type of 1928, with 18 to a circle of about 35" Ø, were red, but were changed to nickel in 1935, and later they may have been BZP. The design was altered in about 1947, to give 11 to a circle (of I calculate a mere 20 1/2" Ø). It is supposed that



Colour Pictures Some of the illustrations from OSN 2, 3, 4, 5, 20, 21, & 22 can now be downloaded from the OSN web site www.OSNL.freemove.co.uk
Illustrations from other Issues will be added later.

this was done to allow the part to be used in the new Roundabout model, but in fact only 9 are used in it, to form a nonagon rather than a circle. Nickel parts of this type are known and later ones may be BZP or cadmium plated.] Don added that the 6" Curved Beam Girder, DV (with a 1/2" flange on the outer edge) has an even larger radius, and from MJ 41, 28 of them make a circle of 53 1/2" Ø.

• On Canadian **CONSTRUCTO** (see 10/267 & 20/565), it is said that Paramount Industries obtained the MERKUR parts from Czechoslovakia in bulk, and contracted a rehabilitation workshop to pack them into CONSTRUCTO boxes, which bear the label 'Made In Canada'. But only the boxes, and probably the manuals, were made in Canada.

10. David Lawrence emailed that he has heard of a **STEEL TEC** Item #7135 'Limited Edition' **Ford Bigfoot** set, and asks if anyone knows anything of it.

11. On **CLIFFIX** (21/596) Michael Grace wrote, 'When I was a child in Dublin, the local corner shop had what was I suppose, a job lot of CLIFFIX sets, and sold them off very cheaply - that was in about 1955 I think. Mine was rather rusty I remember and a great disappointment to a boy used to MECCANO!'

12. From George Wetzel. • His current **Sales List** of 40 items, divided about equally between ERECTOR, OS, and architectural systems. Prices range from \$25 for a 1937 ELECTRIC TINKERTOY Set, to \$900 for a 1935 #9 1/2 ERECTOR HUDSON box plus various parts. I can copy the List to anyone interested, or visit www.bidgtoys.com.

• A copy of the box lid label and the Illustrated Parts from inside the lid, of **THE SMART ENGINEER**, 'size No.8', 'Walthers Building Construction Game'. It is WALTHER'S ENGINEER under another name, see 7/164 & 19/550. More details in the next Issue.

EXTRA MCS SHEETS Each Sheet costs 15p + postage if the whole batch as listed in each Issue of OSN is ordered at the same time. That makes £5.50, £5.70, £6.60 for the 34 below, including postage to UK/Europe or surface anywhere/rest of world by air. For all other purchases each Sheet costs 20p + postage if copied double-sided like the originals, but 7 1/2p per side + postage if copied single-sided. All back Sheets can be supplied.

MCS Amendments, List No.8 [1]
ebs: X1.1,2,4/6/7,5 [2 Sheets]
GEOBRA: X1.1,2/5,5a,4 [2]
HEIKO: X1.1,2,5 [2]
JACK & JILL DANDY: X1.1,2,3/5/6,5a [2]

JR. ENGINEER: X1.1,2,5,3/5a/6 [2]
KOSMOS MASCHINENBAU: X1.1,2,3,4/6,5,5a [3]
MEHANO(TEHNIKA) Electrical: X1.1,2,5,7 [2]
METAMECH: X1.2,5 [2]
MR MECHANIC: X1.1,2,3/4/6,5 [2]
PFEIDA: X1.1,2/5,4 [2]
SCHWERKA: X1.1,2/3/5/6 [1]
SOLID: X1.1,3/5/6 [1]
TECNICA: X1.1,2,3/4/6,5 [2]
TOY KRAFT: X1.1,2,5,6 [2]
WEMA: X1.4,5a [1]
YOUNG ENGINEER'S SET: X1.1,2,3/4,5,5a/6 [3]
YOUNG ENGINEER [2]: X1.1,2,3/5/6,5a [2]

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EDITORIAL First, please note my new email address above. The OSN web site has changed too – it is now www.osnl.co.uk & includes all the colour illustrations from the B&W issues. (If you find that sometimes a picture does not load, 'refreshing' the page always seems to do the trick.) The old site will continue for a week or two but it will not be possible to update it.

The STRUCTO article in this issue turned out to be longer than I'd anticipated, and as a result several pieces have had to be held over until OSN 31. Apologies to contributors thus affected, but it's encouraging to me that after over 900 pages of Other Systems material there is still plenty in the pipeline. This happy state is of course mainly due to all who have sent items, large & small, so let me take this opportunity to say thank you to everyone, and to hope that you will be able to keep up the good work.

On the newsletter format, a few of the readers who responded favoured the same margins on all pages, but many more wanted to keep the present arrangement. So be it, and in fact the question may not be an issue in future because I've found, in printing this issue, that the paper I use has been improved, and will now print satisfactorily on both sides. I've tried doing some sample double-sided pages and all seems well, so the next issue may be double-sided – 'may' because unforeseen problems are always possible. In any case the pages will still be loose sheets I'm afraid. I shall also print single-sided pages for my own use (to file with my MCS sheets) and I can easily print more that way if anyone prefers them like that – but if so please let me know by mid-August for the next issue.

Shorter NOTES, with thanks to all contributors.

1. Don Redmond wrote of some of his 13mm pitch **MERCATOR** parts, see 29/848. • The boss of the **18mm Pulley** is d/t M3.5 or similar (but the pitch is not .6mm). • **Peening** is smooth & round with no indents. • The **Gears** have 13 & 39 teeth as listed; the Gear Wheel is 1½" Ø & the face width of the Pinion is 10mm. • The **6*6h 4-flanged Plate #95** is red. • The **Boiler #142** is green and is rolled from a heavy 8*8h plate; the **Boiler End** has a 7mm wide flange and an internal boss ie when the part is fitted on the Boiler body it is on the inside. • Other parts include 5, 6, & 7h **A/Gs**, and 1*4*1h **DAS**.

MERCATOR: S6

[30/876A]

2. News of two hitherto unknown Canadian **CONSTRUCTO** sets (basically MERKUR parts repackaged by Paramount Industries, see 20/565) from Don Redmond. The first is **Starter Set No.0**, a single card with a photo of a boy pointing to 2 small models in the top block, and the parts underneath it held by an adhered plastic sheet. 9 models are shown in B&W on the reverse together with the Paramount address and 'To create more advanced projects...Ask for Constructo Sets Nos.1,2,3,4,5,6,V-8,V-12'. The main parts are Strips up to 10h, a 5*5h Flanged Plate, 2 Flat Trunnions, & 2x 2h Ø Pulleys.

The second item is a **Motor Kit** with similar packaging but the boy is looking at a Lorry & Gantry Crane (see MCS MERKUR (D) 5). The centre piece is a 'jet motor', the small MERKUR motor/gearbox/driving axle unit. Its base is sheet metal 50*26mm with bent-up sides, and the motor, 25mm

long, flattened top & bottom, drives 3 stages of reduction starting with the 10t motor pinion. The final shaft is a standard 85mm Axle which carries the Road Wheels in some models. Some of the parts are missing but 2x 3cm Gears, a Pinion, and a large & a small green Pulley remain. There is also a space that may have housed a Worm. On the reverse are 2 bilingual paragraphs about 'The Constructo JET electric motor', and a list of the sets 1-V.12 again.

CONSTRUCTO [1]: S1

[30/876A]

3. The use of 7-32 N&B by Meccano in America in the 1920s was noted in 29/846 and now Kendrick Bisset has identified the **new MECCANO thread** (in a new Erector Ferris Wheel set packed in a tin box) as the very same 7-32.

MECCANO: S1

[30/876A]

4 From Kendrick Bisset. 'In Toronto Jim Bobyn showed me a **US MECCANO #6** outfit circa 1920, and examination of the A/Bs indicated STRUCTO parts. It later occurred to me that Structo sold their construction outfit line to Meccano in, it is believed, December 1919. On checking my collection I found an incomplete 1920 #5x outfit with all the 5 & 11h Strips, and all the A/B, of STRUCTO pattern. The other Strips are normal MECCANO. So it would appear that US Meccano used certain STRUCTO parts in at least some of their sets circa 1920. All those seen are tin plated.' [When new would they would have been shiny and a reasonable match for the nickel used by Meccano at the time.]

U.S. MECCANO: S2

[30/876A]

5. From Kendrick Bisset. 'A **MASTER BUILDER No.4** set recently obtained, with not too many parts missing, has little new to add to the information in OSN 16/450, except for the Pinion & Sprocket Wheel. The Pinion is listed as 1/2", but it is 1/2" diameter at the root with a pitch diameter closer to 9/16". It has 18 teeth and a 3/16" face. The Sprocket Wheel is listed as 1", but is actually 3/4", with 12 teeth. All of the strips have large radius ends.' [Using the above the DP of the Pinion would be 32.]

MASTER BUILDER: S2

[30/876A]

6. On the numbering of the **Gilbert MECCANO** sets, see p890, it was noted by Richard Symonds in 19/546 that the 110 & 115 sets became Nos.10 & 15 in 1932, and now Jacques Pitrat has come across evidence that Gilbert certainly considered selling the larger sets under new numbers. Jacques wrote that a mint 1932 #15 Gilbert Meccano set, including Meccano Briks, was for sale on eBay and in the description of the set there was the following sentence: 'A label placed inside the cover of the catalog notices that set No.110 is the same as No.10; set No.115 as No.15; set No.125 as No.25; set #150 as No.50.' This does not of course prove that such sets were ever actually sold.

Another point of interest. Among Kendrick Bisset's notes about his c1933 No.10 on his web site (www.usmeccano.com) is: There is a rubber stamped '10' in the top right hand corner of the lid. On checking I found '10' on my box at the same place inside the lid, just in the corner.

GILBERT MECCANO: S1

[30/876A]