

Some GERMAN SYSTEMS Below notes on various systems that are not in MCS, and extra points about some that are. Many of them are small sets that appeared in the decade following WW2 and were only produced for a few years. My thanks to Jeannot Buteux who sent much of the information, some of it from the *CONSTRUCTORAMA* archive. Many other details have been taken from *EISENZEIT* (EZ), the invaluable book reviewed in 14/377, and from data that Werner Sticht kindly sent. However, as will be seen, there are still many gaps and any additional information will be very welcome. Also with my limited German I may have misunderstood EZ in places, and so, as always, corrections will be much appreciated.

AKRON This set dates from the WW2 to the early 1950s period and there's a small photo of the lid, and some notes on it, in EZ. Under the name is Stahl-Leichtbau-Kasten (Steel Lightweight Building Set) and what I can understand of the note says that thin elastic steel Strips were used with holes in them at 5mm pitch. And there's mention of spiral springs, possibly used as the method of fixing?

ALPHA MCS has 2 systems of this name and from the start date of 1931 given, the notes in EZ refer to the second one in MCS, the one with the 12mm spacing. The end date is given as c1970 though unless this encompasses both there may have been 2 ALPHAs on sale at the same time. There were 4 main and 5 linking sets, plus a small 50-Pfennig outfit, and it was the first system to have parts made of coloured plastic. The models included such non-technical subjects as a Weightlifter, an Ixex and Dancing Hares.

AUKI The box lid of this early 1950s set is shown in EZ but without any details, and the model on it is too small to see.

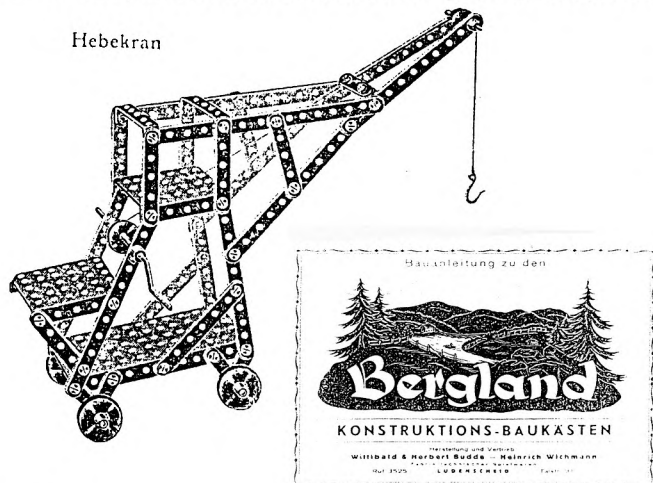
AUTO-CONSTRUKTOR This system is mentioned in EZ but no details are given. It may be the same as AUTO-CONSTRUCTEUR in MCS - that name came from a manual in Dutch, but the titles in the figures in it were still in German. EZ gives the start of production as 1928 and the maker as Curt Schrader of Eisenach, and from 1929 München. This firm had earlier made METALLO-TRIGON although it was called Stanzwerke GmbH at that time.

BAUFIX EZ gives the start date as 1932, and the maker as Saalheimer & Strauss, Nürnberg. It also refers to 'BAUFIX and **SIMPLEX**' as two cheap sets from that firm, but I'm not certain whether they were identical systems.

BENCO The start date isn't given in MCS - a set from around the early 1950s is shown in EZ.

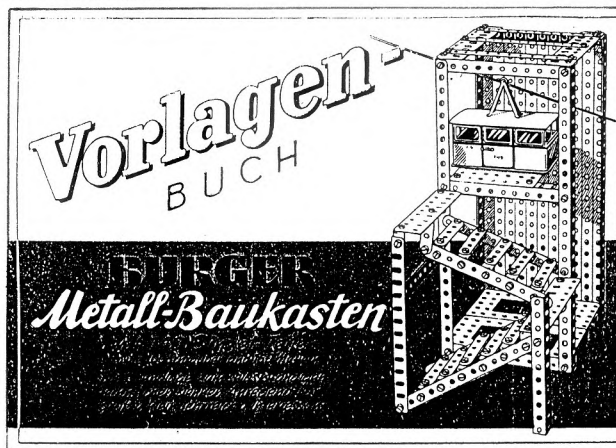
BERGLAND Made by Willibald & Herbert Budde/Heinrich Wichmann, in Lüdenscheid from c1945 to about 1950. The

Hebekran



manual cover with its mountain scene is shown at the foot of the last column; an inner page has two Nr.1 models that can also be made from Sets 0 + 0a. About 18 parts can be seen in the Crane, including Strips from 2 to 15 holes, a 5*11h Plate flanged along its longer sides, and a smaller one, probably 5*5h but sometimes it appears to be 6h long.

BURGER Probably from the 1950s, only one set is mentioned on the manual cover (below), and the text on it says that it contains 140 parts plus 100 Bolts and 150 Nuts. That might suggest that Threaded Rods were used as axles. Other parts that can be seen in the Cable Car Station on the cover are 5*11 Flanged Plates with the STABIL-style centre 7*3h cutout; 25,14 & 11h Strips and A/Gs; and 9 & 11h Flat Girders.



CONSTRUCTION EZ gives the start date as around 1965 and the original manufacturer as VEB (K) Metallwaren Schmerbach bei Gotha. From sometime between 1979 and 1982 production passed to VEB Ppaffschwende, and the original sets numbered from 100 upwards were replaced by the series starting with C01. KONSTRUKTION, the forerunner of CONSTRUCTION (see 8/181), isn't mentioned in EZ but the manufacturer given in MCS was from Gotha (a town near Erfurt).

Of the earliest parts EZ says that the Flanged Plates were sometimes painted, and the large plastic Circular Plates (Lochscheibe) was bright blue. This might have been the 50mm Ø Scheibe shown in MCS for CONSTRUCTION but it may be noted that for KONSTRUKTION a 70mm Lochscheibe is listed as well as a 50mm version. Both look as if they are metal, but the MCS entry may well not show the earliest parts.

DER KLEINE INGENIEUR EZ has 2 references to a system of this name and I'm not sure if they are one and the same. There's a photo of a small box lid from the WW2-early '50s period, with a model of a Ferris Wheel on it, and elsewhere talk of a DDR set with STABIL-like steel parts.

DER JUNGE KONSTRUKTEUR There is quite a bit about this DDR system in EZ. It was made by Hans Wunsch of Niederwiesa and appeared in 1959. The hole spacing was 12.5mm and the parts were black, of good quality, with plastic gears. As well as the outfits in MCS there was a theme set to make a Tractor, 3-Furrow Plough, Roller, and Harrow, and a Nr.1000 outfit with about 1000 parts. Later on (after 1966?) there were sets to make bridges and cranes; railway locos and wagons; and cars and other motor vehicles. No reference to the system is known after 1972.

DER KONSTRUKTEUR FMF A small set from the WW2-early '50s period. The box lid shown in EZ has 3 boys and a girl admiring a very simple model of an open-topped

double-decker bus - it's made of short Strips and 3h Ø Wheel Discs, the latter probably nutted to Screwed Rods as axles.

DITMAR This system from the late 1940s has small parts with 3.7mm holes at 8.5mm pitch. The Manual has only the name and Metallbaukasten on its cover; inside the text is in English, French and Spanish as well as German. The model below includes Strips from 3 to 15 holes; A/Gs 19, 23 & 35 holes long; a 3*1*3 Double Bracket; a 7*11h Perforated Plate, and a Pulley of about 50mm Ø with 6 holes in its face near the centre. The Plate and A/Gs have square corners. Again Threaded Rods seem to be used as axles although the Pulley is shown with a tapped boss. A larger model is featured on the box lid in Pl.60 of EZ and some red Circular Plates or Pulleys of perhaps 70mm Ø can be seen. The other parts shown are black but some were in fact plain aluminium.

Ditmar

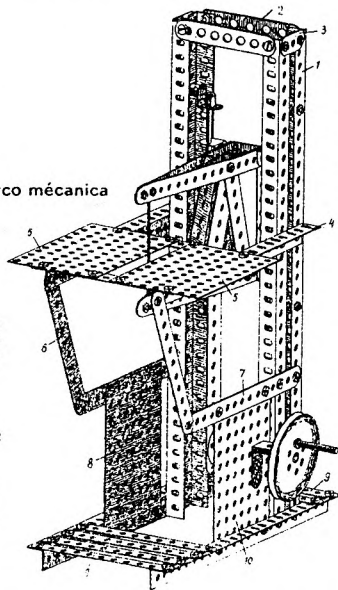
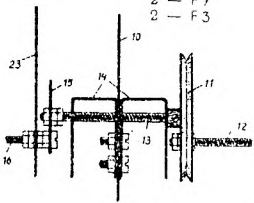
Nr. 44

Automatic bow saw

Scie en archet mécanique Sierra de arco mecánica
Mechanische Bogensäge

Construction parts:
Parts de construction:
Partes de construcción:
Bauteile:

- | | |
|---------|-----------|
| 7 - F15 | 4 - W35 |
| 8 - F11 | 2 - W23 |
| 6 - F9 | 2 - W19 |
| 2 - F7 | 8 - W1 |
| 2 - F3 | 2 - U5 |
| | 2 - U3 |
| | 4 - Pl |
| | 1 - Sch 2 |
| | 1 - G6 |
| | 3 - G3 |
| | 2 - A13 |
| | 8 - St |
| | 1 - SR 2 |
| | 8 - S1 |
| | 2 - S2 |
| | 28 - M |
| | 5 - M5 |



DÖCO EZ says that this system was made by Döhle & Co., Berlin-Stralau around 1920, but no details are given.

DORANDO An architectural set from 1926 made by Mosbacher & Schönfeld of Frankfurt am Main. A photo in EZ shows black metal strips and channels bolted together to form a framework, with stone blocks as infill. They are mostly fawn with some blue uprights, and the window blocks are black with white frames and green shutters. A red tiled hipped roof sits on top - it's made from thin material and though it looks to be in one piece, some joints would have been needed if it fitted into the box shown.

DUX AERO EZ says that this system came on the market in 1932, the probable date of the manual in 11/287.

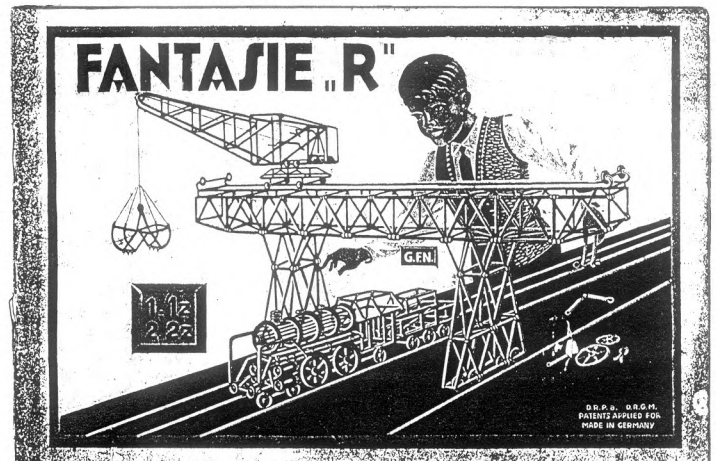
DUX-UNIVERSAL This rather unusual system is well covered in MCS and I hope to write some notes on it in a future issue. EZ mentions a February 1939 Patent No. 705732 but I'm not sure whether it was actually made before WW2. Production ceased around 1958.

EIFFEL EZ gives specific dates (see 10/247), with production between 1940 and 1948.

ELECTRIC There's an MCS entry for this system and a few further details were given in 8/183. The only mention in EZ is the dates (c1932-c1970), and the various makers after the one in MCS, as follows: from c1940, Böhmer & Helm, Meißen; in the DDR, Mewa Mesco-Werk VEB Meißen Sa.

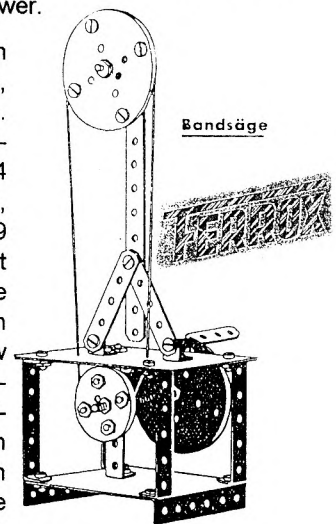
FANTASIE "R" This simple system was made by Gebr.

Fleischmann of Nürnberg, and was introduced in 1932. It was also sold under the name **ROBA**. It cost 50 Pfennig a pack and consisted of Tubes connected by (rubber?) Couplings. As can be seen, the Manual cover below boasts a quite large Crane and Loco, and has 1,1z,2 & 2z on it, presumably set numbers. EZ says there were only 29 different parts but that the Manual contained 168 models on the theme of the technical world.



F.D.K.K. Another small? system from the WW2-early '50s period. Two widths of Strips were used, 9mm and 12mm. Holes were 5mm Ø and the spacing 11.9mm. The parts were of steel with a black finish. A small photo of a box lid in EZ shows the top of a large Tower.

FERROX Another small system from the late 40s to early 50s, with 4.1mm holes at 12mm pitch. There were about 20 parts including Strips of 2,3,5,7,11 & 14 holes; 1*3*1 & 1*5*1 DAS; 1*1, 1*3, & 2*1*2 Brackets; 17,36 & 69 mm Discs; and 2 Plates, one flat and one flanged. The flanges are always shown with 6 holes in them, but otherwise only a few holes are indicated, and their position varies in the different models. Note the 'extra' hole that can be seen near the centre of both the large and small Discs in the Bandsaw opposite; also the ends of the Strips, Brackets, etc with angled corners, like **VOGUE**. Again Threaded Rods were used as axles. Some parts were aluminium and the others were red, green, or black.



- Bandsäge
- | | |
|------------------------------|---------|
| 1 Grundplatte, gerade | |
| 1 Grundplatte, gebogen | |
| 1 Traverse | 11 Loch |
| 2 Traversen | 5 Loch |
| 1 Traverse | 3 Loch |
| 4 Winkeltraversen | 1x5x1 |
| 2 Winkel | 1x3 |
| 3 Winkel | 1x1 |
| 2 Lagergabeln | 2x1x2 |
| 3 Scheiben | 60 mm |
| 3 Scheiben | 36 mm |
| 1 Welle 80 mm, 1 Welle 40 mm | |
| 26 Schrauben, 36 Muttern | |

FIX Another little system, in this case made by MWK of Kitzingen/Main. A date of 1948 is known, and EZ gives production as around 1940. There were less than 30 parts but they were rather unusual. There were 2 types of Strips. One that I'll call a Linked Strip had 2,3 or 4 strips joined together with eyelets, so that the elements could rotate relative to one another. The elements were equivalent in length to strips 3,4,5 & 8 holes long but each had only the end and one centre holes. The ends of the strips are shown rounded. There were 12 different Linked Strips, as shown - they ranged from 2x3h strips to a 3+4+5 which can be seen forming the triangular frame at the lefthand end of the Signal in the next column.

The 'ordinary' type of Strip again had only a centre hole plus rectangular end holes that extended out to the square