

Wheel or Spool which acted as a multi-way connector for square section Rods. BILDIT was patented in several countries and was on sale in the UK in the 1950s & early 1960s.

4. Tony Press has suggested, and I'm sure he's right, that it is the packet the parts were in that is under the French **MECCANO X1s** box in 16/446, and not a Model Leaflet as stated. He also mentioned that he has a similar style British MECCANO X box (with the light diagonal stripe), and I've noticed that a 1932 (or '33) UK catalogue shows both the X1 & X2 in the same style of box.

5. On the **STEEL TEC Corvette** (18/496), Keith Cameron wrote that there is a switch for the headlights. It's built into the console between the seats.

6. From Werner Sticht. • On the **MÄRKLIN nickel 5*11h Flanged Plate** in 17/473, such a part, #11321, of nickel plated brass, was included in their ELEX Sets, but I don't know of a corresponding 5*7h one.

• **VEB (K) Schmerbach** (reference SONNEBERGER in 18/504) was probably at the village of Schmerbach between Eisenach and Limenau; there's another Schmerbach near Meiningen but it's only a few houses without a proper road to it. CONSTRUCTION was also made at Schmerbach.

• Werner is in touch with **Karl Debik**, a collector of metal constructional systems from the former GDR. He knew practically all the manufacturers there and is preparing a history of the subject. He would welcome contact with other collectors (in German or in English) - his address is Nordshäuser Str. 25b, D-34132 Kassel, Germany.

7. From Kendrick Bisset. • On **ENGINEERO** (18/520), there was a 7-32 A.S.M.E. thread listed in the 1914 Edition of the *American Machinists Handbook*, together with 7-30, and the standard 7-36 (see 8/203). Haber Bros. were listed in the *Thomas Register* as toy manufacturers at 878 Broadway, New York City in 1917 & 1918, and later at 91 5th Avenue.

• Another **GIRDER BILT** Set (see 17/467). Again it has some parts missing, but the contents are broadly the same. The 15 of both the 4h Strips & Angle Bends in it probably indicate 16 of each originally. Again it contains one of the unusual 6*4h 'Plates'. The Wheels are the same diameter but thicker, more sharply detailed, and a dull red colour. The Screws are 4-40 (a much more suitable size), steel with countersunk heads, and 3/8" & 1" long. The hex Nuts are aluminium, .253" A/F & .095" thick. The Screwdriver & (different shaped) Spanner are 2 5/8" & 2 3/8" long respectively, and are shown below. There was a Model Leaflet with this

Set, the one used in MCS, 15 1/2*8 1/4", folded into 3. Its 18 models (plus 0-9 & 8 Letters) start with Rake and finish with an unnamed framework, 8*8*16h, with on the front, a cross or 4-bladed propeller made of 2x 8h Strips. All the models on the OSN 17 container are included but the Letters are different and use only 4 & 8h Strips.



8. Alan Partridge mentioned **MAKE-AND-KNOW**, a small set with MECCANO-like parts that was bought in India, probably in 1979.

9. Harry Mariën recalls being given a set called **MECANO** in the 1950s, as a child in Belgium. The parts were not copies of MECCANO.

10. Roger Baker writes of **ALCON**, see 8/199 & 9/224. In a 'Junto' Set the wood parts are match stick sized in various colours, and are cut to length according to the 'number' shown for each Stick on the model plan. A scale is provided with the length for each 'number' marked on it. He added that it is extremely fiddly to use, the Brackets are easily bent/broken, and the end result is a small, very flimsy, skeletal model.

11. On **Richter's Metal Sets** (10/260), Jacques Pitrat wrote, 'I have a third Richter set which includes only metal parts. It is a bridge set, but unfortunately not the 1895 one! This is **Set #10 Eisenbrücken**, an accessory set to be used with a normal ANKER set to build the piers, and from the style of the picture on the lid it dates from before WW1. There are 2 kinds of girder. The first is like the one at the bottom of 10/261 except that it has 6 bays instead of 4. Its length is 156mm and it is 34mm high; there are 4 in the Set. The other 6 girders are larger, also with latticed sides but the upper member is arch shaped. They are 205mm long, 34mm deep at the ends and 67mm in the middle. There are corresponding roadway parts, both 62mm wide: two 156mm long, and three 205mm. No N&B are used in assembling the parts, the girders slide onto the arms of a U-shaped strip, one at each end, with the roadway sitting on the base of the U. The girders are painted blue-grey and the roadways brown. In *Eisenzeit* it is indicated that these parts appeared in 1901 and that they were originally nickel plated.' [An illustration of the parts is on p54 of *Bauklötze Staunen*, but the parallel girder shown has only 4 bays. The German patent discussed in 10/261 is Nr. 133728.]

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5. On **KONSTRUKTOR K.115** (19/530), Michael Denny pointed out that the town of Brest is now part of Belarus, rather than Russia, and that the Éavod in the maker's name should read Zavod (meaning factory or works).

6. From David Hobson. • Another **CONSTRUCTION JEEP** set has been seen, with similar packaging to the one described in 17/469. However it was marked with a KK (see 14/373) in an oval, and in a larger oval, **MARUSAN TOYS \ SAN \ JAPAN**. Also the Flanged Plate was the large, rounded corner type, painted red. The N&B were nickel and the Bolts roundheaded, but the Nuts were hexagonal.

• On **MAKE-AND-KNOW** (see 19/555), there was also a plastic version, a poor quality copy of the original, 1956, **PLASTIC MECCANO**. A leaflet shows models for Sets A, B & C, and has on it, 'Manufactured by Ravindra Plastic Works (India)'; on a Set A box is, 'Sindhvani Toys & Games'.

7. From Don Redmond wrote of a **TECHMASTER** No.50 set corresponding to the one described in 14/391. The N&B appear to be commercial items; the round heads of the Bolts are 5.3mm Ø, and the Nuts 8mm A/F.

8. Kendrick Bisset wrote that he had learnt about some other systems through auction items on the internet. A site called **ebay.com** has a listing site specifically for 'Erector' sets, and OS show up there periodically.

• One such is the **#150 POW'R HOUSE Ferris Wheel** Kit mentioned in 19/552, and it is clearly very similar to the 'mystery' model in *Canadian Meccanotes*. A picture of the set below shows dark coloured Braced Side Supports, spaced apart at the bottom by a red Base with steps pressed into one side. Yellow Radial Arms bolt onto 6-arm Hubs, probably grey plated, and support blue Rim Segments, cranked at each end, 6 to a side. The Rims are channel section; the Arms may be similar or angle girders.



The Base is not shown in the *Meccanotes* model. The 6 Chairs are variously red, blue & yellow, each with a decal of an animal on the back rest - a giraffe, elephant, lion, bear, seal & hippo. No drive can be seen but a **Motor** construction set was available. The illustration gives no indication of size. The box lid has the model, in different colours, against a fairground scene. **POW'R HOUSE** sets were made by Kelmar Corporation, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, & a **Sky Ride** set has also been mentioned.

• Another item is a **1943 BILD-A-SET** outfit, with thick paper parts held together with wooden pegs. It is suggested that these materials were used because metal was not available during the war. Some notes on a **BILD-A-SET** manual cover appeared in 15/426. Bild-A-Set also made a large number of rather nice card buildings.

• Kendrick also sent a list of **screw threads** from a 1924 S.W.Card Mfg. Co. Tap & Die Catalog. So far as 60° U.S. threads go, the sizes over and above those in 7/169 & 16/459, are the US Std: 3/32" x 50 tpi, 1/8" x 32, 1/4" x 27, & 1/4" x 28. New 60° metric ones are 2mm Ø x .45mm pitch, & 2.5 x .45, though compared to OSN 7, most French threads are listed as International (IFS), and vice-versa. Kendrick listed the smaller threads as well, down to 1/16" and the US #0 diameter, if anyone would like details.

• Finally he mentioned that Marx Trains have produced a system called **TIN TOWN**, which is very similar to the 1920s **BILT-E-Z** (see 14/378). It is being sold (at train shows) as a collectible, not a toy, because of the sharp edges and toy safety requirements.

9. From Jacques Pitrat. • The Wetzel web site (see 19/552) no longer exists, and other 'unknown' metal sets listed were: #510 **MAGNETICKS** (Magnetic Constr., Ohio, 1949); #5804 **CABLE CAR BUILDER** (Schuco, Germany, 1954); #1 **MICKEY MOUSE** Assembly Set (California, 1947); and #1A **MAGNETIC CONSTR. TOYS** (Goodtoy Prod., England, 1915). A lid from a **KUKO** set, by VEB Ankerwerk Schmalkalden, was also shown.

Another interesting site is <http://www.chem.sunysb.edu/msl/LEGO/>; it's mainly Lego but there are also pages on **AMERICAN MODEL BUILDER, STANLO, & STEEL BUILDER**.

A #2 **KLIPTIKO** set has a 32 page manual in Dutch, but nothing in Dutch on the lid. The 'importeur voor Nederland' was W.L.M.Weimar of Rotterdam, possibly the same as 'Weimar frères' who were the Meccano 'agents généraux' in the French 1910 & 1911 manuals. [From copies Jacques sent, the manual cover is similar to the UK one that has a large (Eiffel) Tower on the left, and the Contents, for Sets 1-6 & 0-5A, are as p6 of MCS.]

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