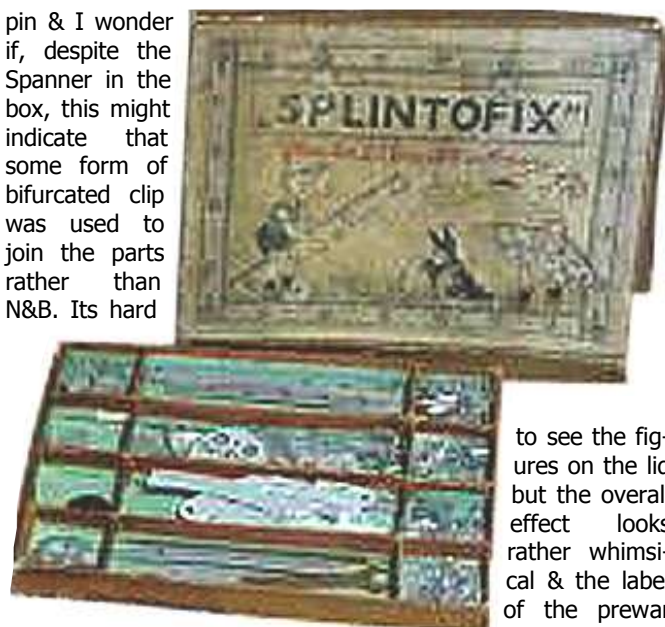


pin & I wonder if, despite the Spanner in the box, this might indicate that some form of bifurcated clip was used to join the parts rather than N&B. Its hard



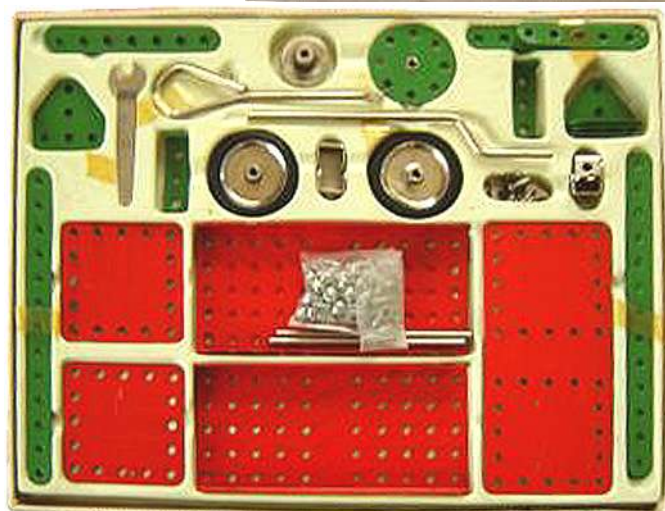
to see the figures on the lid but the overall effect looks rather whimsical & the label of the prewar ELECTRIC set

comes to mind (see 26/750).

SPLINTOFIX: S1

[36/1070]

4. **Snippet. 'New' System: MECA** The Ebay write up said that this set was made in Mexico by a company called Disa, and that the manual has 9 pages. As can be seen from the lid right the MECA·NO 2 could easily be read



as MECANO 2, and the 4 models shown above look to be taken directly from MECCANO manuals. The latest, the Milk Delivery Wagon, bottom left, was a No.2 model which first

appeared in 1954. Not all the parts that can be seen in the box match MECCANO exactly: the Trunnions have no cutouts; the 5*11h Flanged Plate at bottom centre has no end flanges, and no holes in the centre '5 hole' row; the Plate above it looks similar but 2 such in a small set would be unusual; the 5*11h (Flexible?) Plate to the right has a 5h square of holes at each end; and the green Strips at either side look to be 13h long.

MECA: S1

[36/1070]

4. **Snippet: LITTLE GIANT MODEL MAKER** The Tool from this American DIY system was shown in 21/603 and last year the set below was sold on Ebay. The words under 'Boys' on the lid are 'MAKE YOUR OWN CONSTRUCTION SETS', and the panels at the bottom are no doubt parts of a deep lid apron. The Tool is red and is mounted on a wooden base. The rod at right angles to the Tool's handle looks quite substantial and is perhaps a gauge bar rather than constructional material. I'm



not sure what the blue part between the Pulleys is.

LITTLE GIANT: S1

[36/1070]

6. **Snippet. 'New' System: METALL-BAUKASTEN** Below the lid, and in the Ebay photo it was surrounded by a large number of various parts. Most were shiny and probably MFA/MFC. Also several dull grey parts, probably TRIX. Finally a few rusty, ordinary looking parts, from the Set perhaps: 5, 7 & 11h Strips, 1*5*1h DAS, & two 2h Ø Fast Pulleys. Scaling from the Strips, the box would be a little longer than the 11h.



METALL-BAUKASTEN [5]: S1

[36/1070]

6. **Snippet. CORUS** The Window panel right (upside down) was in an Ebay lot of loose CORUS parts. It is a type of window not seen before as an actual part but it was used in the manual model House shown in 32/946. The parts were said to be the remains of a No.00 outfit, but the Window panel and some of the other pieces were probably from a larger set.



CORUS: S3

[36/1070]

brass in Ebay photos. • The Screwdriver, but there is one in Fig.4. • Pulley #54. • Threaded Coupling #57. Cord #64. • **Remarks.** The Flanged Plates & Flanged Discs are made of 1mm thick steel and are noticeably heavier than is usual.

The MANUAL It has 72 pages, 230*162mm, plus covers. The front is identical to the lid label except that the background colour is pale brown. C2-4 are blank. p1 has an Introduction, much of it about the Motor. p2 is blank & p3 has a photo of a Crane (a halftone, as are all the illustrations) identical to Model 109 on p65. pp4-5 has 19 standard constructions; p6 gives the different gear ratios possible with the Gears, p7 shows 4 gearboxes with the Gears between Side Plates #35, driven by the Motor through the Worm. pp8-10 are the Illustrated Parts. pp11-71 have Models Nr.1-111 from Rollekarré (a #32 running on 4x #61) to Aussichtsturm (Observation Tower). Model 101 is the Gantry Crane on the cover. There is one reasonable photo & a Parts List for each model, with extra views for the larger ones. p72 is blank apart from the PR: Druckerei "Berthold Haupt" Dresden A 17. III-9-89 5673 It 3504 58.

Well over half the models were easily spotted as having been copied or inspired by models (line drawings) in the prewar MÄRKLIN manuals to hand, and many of the others looked as if they might have come from the same source. It had been necessary to adapt most to use the actual parts in the Set, and 7 of the 12 larger ones had been motorised, sometimes using one of the gearboxes on p7. The Funicular Railway in Fig.2 is one of the better examples of those (at the original size but Abb.104a has been cropped). Apart from the Motor drive, few of the models have any mechanical complexity and only one Vehicle is fitted with steering.

OTHER SETS & HISTORY Neither the Set's box nor manual mentions a maker but Baukästen gives it as VEB Energieversorgung Dresden, & a date of 1958. That date perhaps corresponds to the last numbers in the Manual's PR.

Various changes can be seen in the Ebay photos and in a



Fig.4

possible date order the present set is an early example followed by: • Sets with the Flanged Plates & Flanged Discs painted green, and the Pulleys #51 & 52, red. • The same colour scheme but with a new lid label & manual. Such a set is shown above and the manual was said to have 71 pages, and to date from 1960. Of the 2 pages of it shown, one has the same 4 models as the '1958' version, though with different model numbers, while the largish 2-car Cable Railway on the other is not in the '1958'. The Tram on the new manual cover/lid label isn't in the '1958' either. • A manual with the same cover but with (if correct) 62 pages and said to date from 1961.

POSTSCRIPT When I came to make a model I discovered (eventually) that the hole pitch of 8 of the 22 11h Strips was 12.45mm. Otherwise both types were identical.

OSN 39/1177

METALL-BAUKASTEN mit Batterie-Motor: S3

MECA An Ebay snippet about a No.2 set from this Mexican system appeared in 36/1070, and now David Hobson has kindly lent me his recently acquired, unused No.2. With one or two very minor differences it looks exactly like the earlier one.

The BOX is 26½*34*2cm and the lid, and pale yellow formed plastic tray, look identical to the Ebay set. Some of the parts are slightly too big to fit into the recesses in the tray.

The PARTS Many of the parts can be seen in OSN 36 and the following notes fill in the gaps, with quantities in curly brackets.

• **Holes** are at 12.7mm pitch; many are 4.7mm Ø but some are smaller, down to 4.2mm, and more than one size of hole can be found in some of the Strips.

• **Finish:** Plates are red; the 5-13h Strips, the Trunnions, and the Wheel Disc are green; the N&B are BZP; and the other parts including the 3h Strip are nicked. The paint has been applied by dipping.

• **Ends & corners** are fully rounded, or for the 5-13h Strips, nearly so.

• **Strips** 13,11,7,5,3h {2,2,4,4,2}. • **DAS** 1*3*1h {2}.

• **Brackets** These are made of quite thick metal (.9-1.3mm) {3x A/B; 4x D/B; 1x Rev. A/B}.

• **Plates** 5*5, 5*11h, and 5*11h Flanged {2,2,2}. All are rigid, made of .8mm thick steel. The pattern of holes is as in OSN 36 with no holes in the centre '5h row' of the 11h long parts, nor in the centre of the flanges.

• **Trunnions** Angled; Flat {4,4}. 5h pattern; the bend point of the Angled version varies considerably.

• **Pulleys:** • 34½mm Ø with a 4mm long, 7.9mm Ø boss, untapped of course, and fitted with a 46mm Ø Rubber Ring {4}. • 25.3mm Ø and 5½mm wide with a 9.4mm Ø boss single tapped 5-40 (the pilot hole goes right through) {1}. • The bosses' bore is 4.1mm.

• **Wheel Disc** 44mm Ø, with the holes on a 33mm pcd, and an eyelet boss {1}.

• **Axles** 100 & 20mm long and 3.88 & 4.08mm Ø respectively {2,1}. • **Crank Handle** 4.08mm Ø and 154mm long o/a, with a 35mm handle offset 17mm. All these parts have sheared ends. • **Axle Stop:** an unclenched eyelet with a 7.7mm Ø head and 5½mm long {14}. It is a push-fit on the 3.9mm Axles and very, very hard to push onto the 4.1mm Ø parts.

• **N&B** The thread is 7-32. **Nut:** square, 8.8*8.7mm, 2¼mm thick, pressed {25}. **Bolt:** 7.1-7.3mm Ø RH, 9¾mm u/h {24}. **Set Screw:** 5.9mm RH, 6½mm u/h {1}.

• **Tools.** • **Spanner**, 75mm long o/a with a cranked end {1}.

• **Screwdriver**, 118mm long o/a, made of 4.06mm wire {1}.

The MANUAL It is in Spanish and has 8 unnumbered landscape pages, 260*186mm, plus covers, all printed on cream art paper. The front cover is identical to the box lid except that the '2' at the end of MECA-No is omitted. C2 has an introduction signed by Los fabricantes (the manufacturers) saying to start with the simpler models. There is a photo of

each of the 19 models, all copied directly from MECCANO manuals, with just the building instructions reference numbers removed, but in some cases not all the lines that linked them to the parts in the model. The models (with the MECCANO name in brackets) run from COCHECITO (Kiddie Kar) to FUNICULAR (Telpher Span), and were probably taken from the 1954-61 manuals. No set is specified for any of them but in the MECCANO manuals 5 were No.1 models, 5 No.2, and 3 were from each of Sets 3-5. They are not in that Set order but the smaller models are generally shown first. C3 & C4 are blank.

REMARKS The parts, though not wonderfully finished, and with a few of their holes a little out of line, nevertheless look perfectly usable. But they are a strange selection for a small set – why for example 2 Flanged Plates, and why include 13h Strips if the models are to be MECCANO copies. And why 3h long DAS when the 5h long type is much more common in MECCANO.

The lack of a centre hole in the Plates, presumably to save

on tooling, would be one difficulty in trying to build the models, but what rules out most of them, even the small ones, is the lack of a Bush Wheel – I suppose the Wheel Disc with an Axle Stop on either side might be adequate in some cases but it's doubtful. In the absence of 5h long DAS, and without several more A/Bs, the Double Brackets would have to be used instead, or with the 3h DAS perhaps. Many of the models would also require Plates to be curved which, given their thickness, would be quite impracticable.

Even accepting the above, most of the small manual models look more or less unsuitable for the parts in the Set – one still has a Magic Motor driving it - but I haven't checked to see if a better selection could have been made. The No.1 models are: Kiddie Kar, Letter Balance, Stamping Mill, Railway Breakdown Crane, & Tricycle Van; the No.2's: Milk Delivery Wagon, Mechanical Hacksaw, Chariot and Driver, Autogiro, & Drilling Machine.

MECA: S3

OSN 39/1178

Snippets. Two Early Swedish TEKNIK Sets

The First Set. The Lid The Tradera (Swedish Ebay) photo right shows it to be different to the type most commonly found, see 20/572. The maker, CEGS LEKSAKSTEKNIK (= toy manufacturer), HUDDINGE, along the bottom is no doubt an allied company to the one given in OSN 20.

The Parts The colour scheme is much simpler than the multicolours used later. The parts are all of the early type with the small Triangular Plate, 4 & 6h Strips, and Plates in lengths with an even number of holes. Also most of the Plates are not fully perforated and this is a clear pointer to the Set being earlier than any of those in OSN 20. The Road Wheel cum Pulley Disk is the type seen in the early-1940s manual described in 20/574, but not in later editions.

The Manual It has a similar cover to the one in 20/574 one except that Handbok replaces Modellbok at the top. The models on the Set's lid are among those in the early-1940s manual except that the Plates in the latter are fully perforated, and the Plane has a tail skid instead of a Wheel.

The Second Set. The Lid is of the same basic design but it is printed on pale yellow board and the models, though similar, are not the same. It also has a '1' in a circle in the triangular space over the bottom right model.

The Parts Of the few remaining, the Strips & Plates are all of the later type, an odd number of holes long, and the Plates are fully perforated. These, plus some Brackets, are all painted the silver used in the later colour scheme. Also in the Set, a few parts that look like KONSTRUKTÖREN (see 38/1146) including two grey painted wooden Wheels.

There was no **manual** with the Set but the models on the lid, a Plane (slightly different to the one on the first lid) and a Lorry with Trailer, are both in the early-1940s manual but not in the later ones.

Dates **The First Set.** From OSN 20, the Huddinge factory was set up in 1939-40. The parts in the Set are not fully perforated and therefore predate the early-1940s manual. Thus the set would be from the few years between 1939 and the early 1940s.

The Second Set. From the parts it was later than the first but most likely came soon afterwards, and it may well correspond to the 'early-1940s' manual. The models on the lid are in said manual but are not in the mid- and late-1940s



editions described in OSN 20, nor in the 20/576 1950s No.1 model leaflet. Also other Tradera lots show sets with the new 1950s lid, multicoloured parts, and either the mid-1940s or the late-1940s manuals.

Range of Sets. If the models on the lids were from the largest outfit of the time, the first set was probably the only one then produced, and hence perhaps the absence of a set number on the lid. As already mentioned the models on the second lid are in the early-1940s manual and as this was labelled 'III' perhaps 3 sets were made at that stage. Then perhaps 4 were available by the mid-1940s, witness the OSN 20 mid-1940s 2-4 manual, and 5 by the late-1940s, given the late-1940s 2-5 edition.

In all the above it should be remembered that the dates of the manuals are largely unconfirmed.

TEKNIK [2]: S1

OSN 39/1178