

New System: MOLECKI This German system consists of one set at present, & it is unusual in two ways. First, it has no Wheels of any sort, just Strips, DAS, Flanged Plates, & A/Bs; secondly, all the main parts are stainless steel - a first I think, though David Fellows has of course made MECCANO compatible parts from this material for some time. No danger of these parts being mistaken for his, the hole pitch is 14.0mm. My thanks to David Hobson for lending me his set for this account.

NAME MOLECKI Metallbaukasten. The name is that of the factory or workshop in which the parts are made, at Zella-Mehlis, a town between Eisenach & Sonneberg in Thüringen.

COUNTRY Germany

MAKER Fa. Molecki Werkzeugbau Zella-Mehlis, Gabelsbergerstr. 06, 98544 Zella-Mehlis, Thüringen. Tel/fax 03682 46125/482968 (this is only on a small label stuck inside the lid, to warn against putting the parts into ones mouth).

HISTORY Known from Ebay in late 2003. (Notice the girl's bare midriff in the lid label below - the fashion for this started, in Salisbury at any rate, late in 2003.) The seller was Norbert Büttner, Thüwa-Shop, Steigerstr. 51, 99897 Tambach-Dietharz, tel/fax: 036252 31505/32283. The set was also advertised on his web site (as of early 2004), www.thuewa.de - click on thüwa-shop, Artikel aus Edelstahl, Spielwaren. The price was €69.50 including postage inside Germany.



SETS Size A (but, from the web site above, others are planned). The parts are loose in a red plastic, commercial box, 36½*29*5½cm, with fixing partitioning & a clear, hinged lid. The label above, 20*28¼cm, is stuck to the lid.

HOLES: 4.0mm Ø (4.4 in A/B). **Slots** (only in A/B) are 6mm long. **Pitch** is 14.0mm.

MATERIAL/FINISH Quite shiny grey stainless steel except the N&B and Spacers.

PARTS Basics • Most parts are .8mm thick; a few are .9mm, & all the 19h Strips are 1.0mm. • **Widths** vary from 13.3 to 13.6mm, but the A/B is 14.2mm. • **Ends** are fully rounded or nearly so, but the **corners** of the Flanged Plate are nearly square. • **Quality** of the parts is good although the line of holes in a few Strips is not quite parallel to the edges, and there is slight burr in a few places. Some of the Strip ends & the slotted holes in the A/B indicate hand rather than machine finishing.

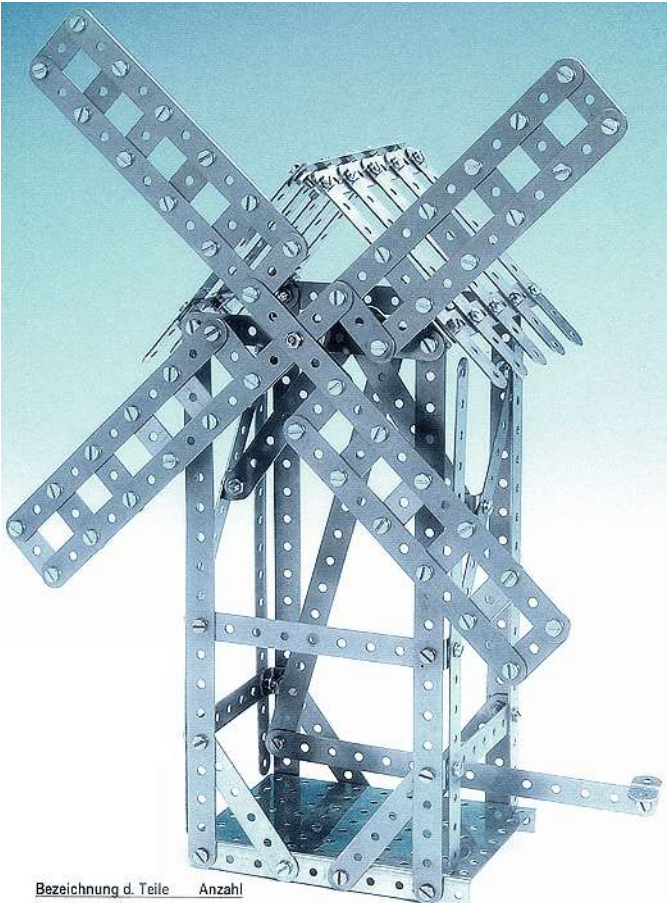
• **Strips** with 2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,11,14,15,17,18,19 holes. **DAS**, 1*5*1 & 1*3*1h. • **A/B**. • **Flanged Plate**, 7*10h. **Spacer**, 8.0mm o.d., 4.2mm bore, 11mm long, steel with iridescent finish.

• **Fixings:** M4 commercial steel N&B with BZP finish. **Nuts**, hex machined, 7.0mm A/F & 3.0mm thick. **Bolts**, 7.0mm Ø CH, and 8, 20, 45, 65mm u/h.

• **Tools:** **Screwdriver**, 145mm long with black rubbery, triangular section handle decorated with short red lines, and 3.2mm Ø blade. **Spanner**, commercial 7mm with one open & one ring end, marked 'CHROM-VANADIUM' & 'DIN 3113'.

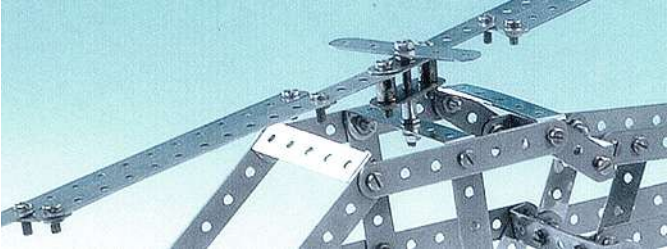
SET CONTENTS (as found) 6,2,5,4,6,8,19,4,14,8,14,10,34,7

of 19,18,17,15,14,11,9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2h Strips; 8 & 1 of 1*5*1 & 1*3*1h DAS; 28 A/B; 2 Flgd Plates; 4 Spacers; 127,7,1,1 of 8,20,45,65mm Bolts; 124 Nuts; 1 Spanner; 1 Screwdriver.



Bezeichnung d. Teile		Anzahl	
Grundplatte	01	07-Lochstab	02
02-Lochstab	01	08-Lochstab	04
03-Lochstab	24	09-Lochstab	19
05-Lochstab	02	11-Lochstab	08
06-Lochstab	04	14-Lochstab	01
		15-Lochstab	04
		17-Lochstab	05
		19-Lochstab	04
		Winkel 1x1-Loch	24
		Schraube M4x65mm	01
		Schraube M4x45mm	01
		Schrauben & Muttern	130

MODELS There were three A4 model sheets in the Set, each with a photo of one simple model on it, together with a parts list. The best one is the Windmill above. It is treadle operated although it's not clear what provides the pivot for the treadle lever. Another model is the Helicopter being made on the lid label. It is skeletal, but over 65cm long, and it could easily be improved from the remaining parts in the Set. The Spacers can be seen in the rotor head below. The final model is a rather strange Big Wheel, with a 2-dimensional wheel on one side of a pylon, and carrying 6 2-dimensional cars. Like the Windmill it is treadle driven, with a pivot point made from 3h Strips.



REMARKS Stainless steel has obvious advantages in terms of durability but is not perhaps quite as attractive looking as say nickel. Incidentally, David has pointed out that there are various grades of stainless steel and in this case the Strips are slightly magnetic whereas the Flanged Plate is entirely non-magnetic.

The use of a treadle is an unusual and interesting feature but locknuts are needed for it, and also when using the long Bolts as axles. However there is only one Spanner in the Set and its jaws are thicker than the depth of the Bolts.