

SCHWERKA Brief notes on this small, early post-WW2 German system were given in 15/418 & 17/477, and now some more information is to hand thanks to Ansgar Henze, Don Redmond, & Werner Sticht. Don has confirmed that the unusual Windmill Sail in OSN 15 is a SCHWERKA part, and he also sent details of the STRUCTOMODE equivalent - it is very similar but is 97mm long, 34mm wide, the holes are 8mm Ø, and the inner corner is concave.

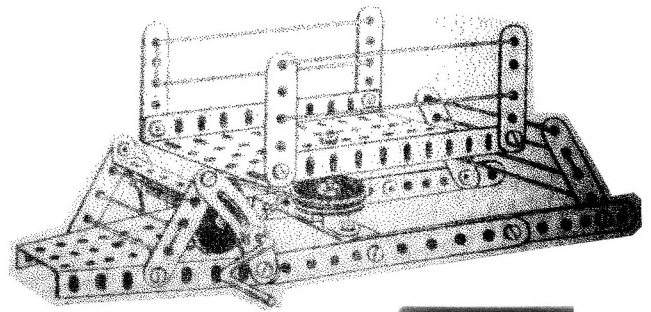
Werner sent photos of Ansgar's No.1 Set and wrote 'The parts are mostly aluminium with a hole spacing of 12.7mm, and many are MÄRKLIN copies. But the thread is M4 and in the Manual the Axles are said to be threaded.' The box is wooden with internal partitions and scales at 28*21cm. The lid (lower, right) is free to lift off, and is completely covered by an orange label, with the boy wearing a red shirt.

The Set Contents are given in the Manual and will be included in an MCS Extra Sheet. There are 26 different parts and the main ones are a 5*11 Flanged Plate, a Flanged Sector Plate, 8x 5h & 4x 11h Strips, 2 Curved Strips, 2x 1*5*1h DAS, 4 Windmill Sails, 4 Loose Pulleys which scale at 23mm Ø, and an 8h Wheel Disc. All these parts, and the various Brackets, look to be aluminium in the photo, and MÄRKLIN pattern (with the Wheel Disc, locked onto a Screwed Rod, instead of a MÄRKLIN Bush Wheel). Parts that look to be steel are the N&B (50 largish hex Nuts & 35 RH Bolts, 10mm u/h), perhaps bright plated, and a Crank Handle (120mm o/a) which isn't threaded. The Tools are a 2-ended Spanner about 8¼cm long, and a Screwdriver with a 7cm long, circular-section wooden handle. Also to be seen, though they are not in the Set Contents: a Saw Blade of about 4cm Ø, & a black, flat part, roughly 8*1cm, one end of which is shown right, below the Bridge.

The Manual is about 20*11cm deep, and the front cover is identical to the label on the lid. The model on the last page (with '30' in the top corner) is shown at top right, and with it are a list of the parts needed, plus fairly detailed building instructions. These, like all the text, are in German & English.

The logo on the lid has 'Grohag' in it, & from *Baukästen* (if I have it right), this was the name of the Leipzig firm (in East Germany) that sold SCHWERKA during 1946-48 through its subsidiary in Neustadt, near Coburg (in West Germany). It was also at some stage made by an unknown firm, possibly in the Nürnberg/Fürth area.

My No.1 Set mentioned in OSN 15, has a label, 208*148mm, identical to the one above except that it has no

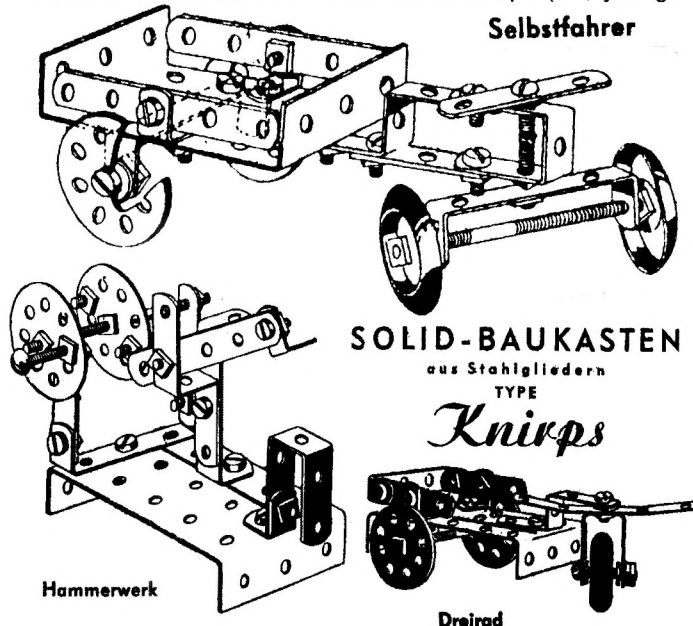


Turning bridge
Drehbrücke



logo, so perhaps it was made by the unknown firm. The Curved Strip found in it matches the MÄRKLIN part very closely; one of the two 11h Strips is 12.95mm wide and the other tapers from 12.8 to 12.5mm - both have ends which are not quite fully radiused. The dull black Windmill Sails in it are steel, & so is a silver-painted Flanged Sector Plate. The latter matches the MÄRKLIN part more or less exactly except that the bends are much less sharp and the slotted holes are 8.2mm long against 7.4. The 7h long Plate mentioned in OSN 15 was a mistake: on closer inspection the part in the model on the lid is a 7h long Sector Plate, presumably a draughtsman's error. The 15h Strip also mentioned there isn't among the parts in the No.1, and it isn't known if there were any larger Sets.

'New' System: SOLID-BAUKASTEN Toby Haffter kindly sent a copy of a German language Model Leaflet from this system, and he wondered if anything is known of it. 'Solid' in the dictionary means 'solid, robust, durable', and the Leaflet relates to a Set called Knirps (kid, young-



ster), a name used by Walther for one of his lines, a very simple version of STABIL, see 11/27. This Knirps is a small outfit too with only 15 different parts, and 55 pieces in the Set including 38 NBW. As well as the Knirps Contents, 4 other sets are listed on the Leaflet: 2 larger outfits called Kadett, & Primus (head boy, top of the class, in the dictionary), and linking sets, Knirps- & Kadett-Ergänzung. No doubt there were other parts in these.

All the main parts in the Set are used in the models opposite: • A 3*5h Flanged Plate. • 2 each, 3 & 5h Strips. • 2 Angle Brackets; 2x 1*3*1h DAS; a 2*1*2h Double Bracket; & a 2*1*2h Reversed A/B. • 2 each, 8h Wheel Discs & Pulley Discs; a 60mm long Axle threaded over say 1cm at one end & 3cm at the other. • 15x 7 & 1x 20mm Bolts, 20 square Nuts, and 2 Washers.

It is said on the Leaflet that the parts are made of steel. The holes in the A/B can't be seen but all the holes in the other parts are round. From the length of the Axle it looks as if the hole spacing is more than ½", 15mm perhaps. The Strips appear relatively narrow. The 2 Pulley Discs aren't actually used to make a Pulley but are sometimes paired to make a Wheel, as in the 3-Wheeler (left). The other 7 models on the Leaflet include 2 Signals, a Swing, a Mechanical Saw, & the Hammer (far left). Notice the lengthways line on the top of the Flanged Plate - it can be seen on 2 of the other models but not on the rest, so what could it be?

edges of the Flanged Plate. Scaling from the size given for the box, 40*23cm, the hole pitch is, as might be expected, 1/2", or very near it.

Initially I thought MECANEX was a 'new' system but I find that it is in fact listed in my Database. I can't now trace the source of the entry but the additional points of interest there are that the hole pitch is 12.65mm, the Axles are 4mm Ø, but the N&B are only 3mm.

MECANEX: S1 [37/1101]

5. Snippets: BILDAL First, a correction to the **Set 1 Contents** given in 33/983. From the manual & set to be described, and Ebay photos of two apparently unused sets, only the stated quantities of Strips & Angles are in the No.1, and none of the other parts.

Next, recall (see 33/983) that BILDAL was made by Bettchers in Cleveland and that there were Sets 1 & 2. A No.1 set on Ebay took my eye - the box had No.1 on the lid and with just Strips & Angles the contents were as above. But the manual cover, below, a design not mentioned in OSN



previously, has No.3 in the top left corner. (The same cover without the No.3 is in MCS.) The No.3 looks too neat to have been made by a youngster's printing set, so was there ever a No.3 set? Some-

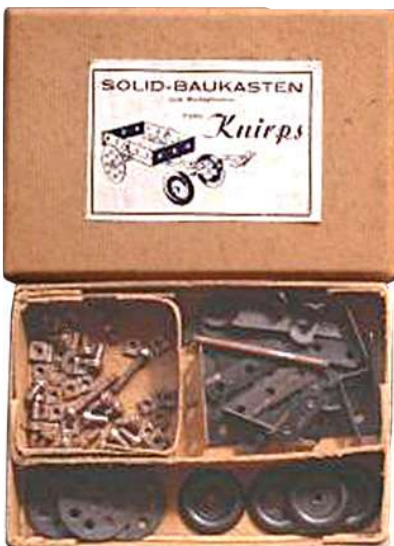
thing to look out for but the Ebay ad said that the Set was 'made in Westmont, Illinois, so that might be a clue. Did another company produce BILDAL after Bettcher? Westmont is near Chicago & some 300 miles from Cleveland.

The manual with one of the other Ebay No.1's had the OSN 13/358 cover but only the Strips & Angle were shown & listed in the Illustrated Parts, just the parts in a No.1 that is. The Ebay ad included 3 pages of models, those on two are identical to models on OSN 13 pages (#1-5, & 15-18). One of the models on the last page, #21, was also identical but the other two, #19 & 20, had had the Wheels in the OSN 13 version removed, though they were still entitled Wagon & Box Car! All the pages had small typographical changes and p3 differed in having no reference to H.W.Graves as Licensor.

BILDAL: S2 [37/1101]

6. Snippet. SOLID A brief note on this small German system, based on a Model Sheet, appeared in 22/647. In the next column, the Ebay photo, courtesy Thomas Morzinck, of an actual set, and as can be seen the parts, apart from the N&B, are black. The maker was given as G. Schmidt & Co., of Oberbarmen (a suburb of Wuppertal). By scaling from the box, which was said to measure 17*12cm, the pitch of the holes in the Strips is at least 15mm and possibly a little more. But in the Wheel Disc it much less, 11mm or so.

The small print on the Model Sheet can't be read but it differs from the one in OSN 22 in that 16 parts are listed against 15 before, and the Ebay ad spoke of 11 models, 2



more than previously. Also if all the parts in the box were from one set there are more Wheel Discs and 'Half



Wheels' than the two of each listed on the OSN 22 Sheet.

SOLID: S1 [37/1101]

7. Snippet. 'New' System: DER KLEINE TECHNIKER There is a simple electrical outfit of this name but almost certainly not related to the set below. All that can really be



seen of the parts are some brightish Strips, and the blue Plates which, apart from their colour, look like STABIL. There was the cover of an early SCHEFFLERS manual shown in the Ebay lot but as far as is known early SCHEFFLERS parts were similar to later ones and quite unlike the blue Plates.

DER KLEINE TECHNIKER: S1 [37/1101]

8. Snippets. 'Matchbox' Sets These are the little outfits with their parts packed into a normal, small 'matchbox', and details of the two types then known were given in 6/131.

A further variant was made in America by Louis Marx and is shown in MCS under MATCH BOX CONSTRUCTION SET (2).

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'New' Indian System:

MODELLO These notes, courtesy Jean-Pierre Guibert, are based on an unused No.0 outfit. MODELLO was a copy of MECCANO produced by Funcraft Industries, Bombay - 3. The models were copied from the MECCANO 1954-61 No.0 manual. The range of sets isn't known but the manual's Intro mentions Sets 00, 00a, 0, 0a, & 1.

The No.0 box measures 28*21*2.5cm and its lid & base are shown in Figs.1 & 2. The set's contents (with 25 types of part) are identical to those in the matching Liverpool outfit.

Holes in the parts are 4.2mm Ø at 12.7mm pitch and the Axles are 4mm Ø. Quality is not quite as good as MECCANO. The N&B look very like Meccano's but are solid brass. I can't read the word moulded into the Tyre but it is neither MECCANO nor MODELLO.

The manual has 8 pages 25*19cm with the front in Fig.3. It has 17 models from 0.1 GARDEN SEAT to 0.17 LATHE, and all are from the 29 in the MECCANO No.0 original, but not in the same order. They have the same illustrations, Parts List, & building instructions, and one is shown in Fig.4. The back page has advertisements for Funcraft's Chemistry Set, Little Doctor outfit, & some Conjuring Tricks.



Fig.1



Fig.2

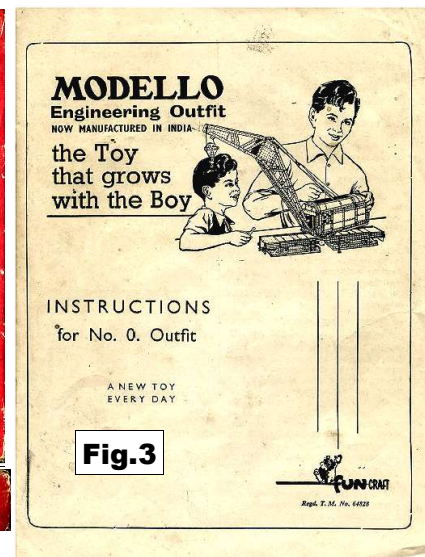


Fig.3

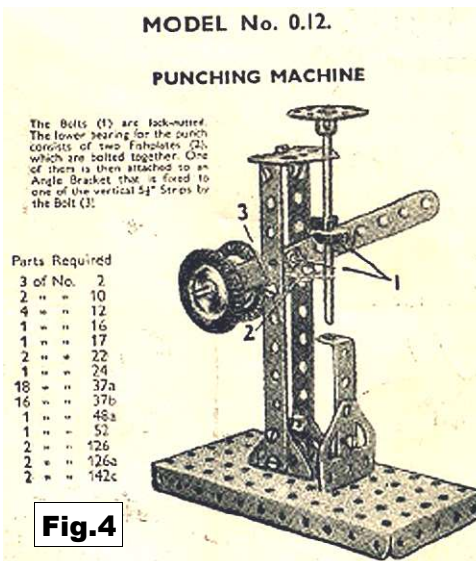


Fig.4

OSN 50/1517

MODELLO [2]: S1

5. Snippet. 'New' System: MI TALLER Mi Taller means My Workshop in Spanish and the No.3 set below was seen on the Argentine Ebay earlier this year, along with Sets 2 & 1. They have respectively 210, 140, 80 parts with 8, 5, 5 Tools. All 8 Tools are shown on the No.3 lid; those for the smaller sets are the Screwdriver, 2 Spanners, Hammer, & Pliers. The parts look more akin to MECCANO than CONSTRUCTION but unusual parts are 7-hole type Trunnions, 5*5h Flanged Plate, & white Flexible Perforated Plates. The No.3 box measures 50*34cm.



MI TALLER: S1

[50/1517]

6. SOLID Parts. Some notes on this small German system were given in 22/647 & 37/1101. One thing missing was details of the parts and now Urs Flammer has sent notes about his.

The parts are made of blackened steel, 1mm thick. Holes are 4mm at 15mm pitch and none are elongated. Strip parts are 10mm wide with large-radius ends, and the corners of the Flanged Plate are square.

The thread is M4. Nuts are square, 7mm A/F; Bolts have tapered cheese-heads. In a set seen on Ebay the Long Bolt is roundheaded, as in the photo above. It also shows the Span'driver.

The Wheel Disc is 33mm Ø with holes at 10.5mm radius. The Pulley Disc is 30mm Ø and as can be seen above a pair would form a wheel with a rather 'pointed' tyre.

SOLID: S2

[50/1517]

7. BILDAL. MCS has no date for this US clip-together system (see 33/983), only 'Made for about 2 years, probably in the early 1930s'. Now an Ebay item shows a Xmas 1928 ad and while not saying the system is new, it does have the air of being so, with sets post-free from the factory if your dealer cannot supply. Games & Toys had a UK agents ad for BILDAL in May 1929.

BILDAL: S3

[50/1517]

