

N-Trak UK

May 2014

Welcome to my first attempt to put together a newsletter for N-Trak UK. Over the past few years Neil Lancaster has tried to produce an irregular newsletter but at the recent Bournemouth convention he was looking for help and – well, let's just say I volunteered to do the newsletter. It must have been the drink at lunchtime!

Neil will continue to deal with the convention and membership while I try to produce the newsletter.

I hope that this will become a regular publication with the eventual intention of producing a bi-monthly newsletter. I don't think it will ever be as big as the main US N-Trak newsletter, but who knows? The main thing about producing a regular newsletter will be to secure a regular flow of material for publication: I can't write it all myself. Since the distribution of the newsletter will be almost exclusively by electronic means, I'm not worrying too much about page limits. I might have to change my mind when you send me 100 pages for the next issue, but till then... I'm also hoping to include photos – in colour!

How can you submit material for publication? The best way will be by email. Send your material to me at ralph.snelling@googlemail.com. I can accept text in most of the recognised formats (.doc, .rtf, .txt, .docx, etc.) used on Windows-based PCs, but I don't think I can handle Apple based formats. For photos, I'd prefer .jpg or .png files, but again, I can use most PC formats. Now, on to what format I'll be sending out...

At present I propose to send out a .pdf file (don't worry Rex, I'll carry on sending you a printed copy) but if you would like me to use a different format please let me know.

Now to business:-

2014 Subs

You should have had an email reminder from Neil recently reminding you that your subs for 2014 are now due if you did not pay them at Bournemouth or direct to Neil. Please make sure you pay Neil as soon as possible if you have not already done so. Can I also remind you please to let Neil have any changes of details, especially email addresses, so that we can send correspondence to the correct address?

Bournemouth 2014

The 2014 convention was held once again at the Trouville Hotel in Bournemouth over the first weekend of March. This year we didn't use the upstairs room. The Poole and Black Diamonds layouts occupied the main suite on the ground floor. Trade support was provided by Neal's N'Gauging Trains, an ever-changing bring and buy selection and a display of his 'Boxfile Dioramas' by Chris White.

The gathering came together on the Friday, this year without the Black Diamonds having to resort to emergency carpentry! As ever the hotel served us well and the meals were excellent. Don't come to an N-Trak convention if you're on a diet!

Saturday was busy with lots of trains running on both layouts and lots of conversation about all aspects of N Scale modelling: electronics, resin casting, 3D printing and many more. Later in the day came the raffle and then the AGM. Now normally the AGM is opened – and then closed! This year there was an announcement of the changes in responsibilities and some changes to the competitions, but more of this later. As usual the raffle had an eclectic mix of prizes and seemed to last for ages. We're grateful to Russ Cook for the effort he puts in to organising this part of the convention.

Now on to competitions. This year there was a new award, kindly donated by Chris White, for dioramas on a layout. Chris judged this class himself and the winner was a small farm scene on one of the Black Diamonds modules.



I apologise for the poor quality of this picture but I only had my phone available to take it!

In the other classes there was a dearth of entries, the only ones being Dahra Dry Goods in the structures class. This was entered by me and was built from an RS Laserkits wooden kit with a lot of detail additions in the interior. Since most of these are white metal castings this little model weighs a lot more than its appearance would lead you to believe. There were a number of remarks about Fork Handles!



In the rolling stock class I also entered a set of four Nn3 Denver & Rio Grande Western coaches using 3D printed parts.

Given the shortage of entries, the judges decided not to make any awards this year.

The purposes of the modelling competition are to:-

- Encourage the improvement of the standard of N Scale modelling within the N-Trak UK community.
- Provide modellers with the opportunity to display their skills to others and encourage others to enhance their own skills.

Competitions are held annually at the N-Trak UK convention.

Judging will be by a panel of judges, selected at the time of the competition by the contest organiser. The competition will be based on the four categories below. In each category the

award of the trophy will depend on the number and overall standard of the entries submitted. In addition to awarding the trophy in each category, the judges may, at their discretion, award certificates of 'Honourable Mention' to other class entries if they are deemed to be of sufficiently high standard. All entries must be the work of the entrant.

Entrants may make multiple entries in a single class and may enter more than one class.

The contest classes are as follows.

The N-Trak Loco and Stock Cup

- Awarded to a single item of rolling stock, passenger, freight or caboose (van).
- Entries may be scratch built, kit built or modified proprietary item.

The Neal Carnaby Loco Cup

- Awarded to a single locomotive, multiple unit consist, diesel or electric multiple unit or other self-powered train (e.g. RDC, Doodlebug, Interurban, etc).
- Entries may be scratch built, kit built or a modified proprietary item.

The Barry Owen Cup for Structures

- Awarded to a single structure or small group of related structures either in isolation or as part of a small scene.
- Entries may be scratch built, kit built or a modified proprietary item.

The N-Trak UK Most Attractive Train Award

- Awarded to the train which, in the judges opinion, best reflects the spirit of North American railroading, past or present.
- Entries may be scratch built, kit built or a modified proprietary item.
- Entries may reflect any time period and type of railroading.

The Chris White Award for Small Dioramas

- Awarded to a diorama containing a single structure or small group of related structures, accessories and scenic material as part of a small scene.
- Entries may contain scratch built, kit built or proprietary items (as made or modified).
- Entries should display a consistent level of modelling with all items (structures, figures, accessories and scenery) integrated into a cohesive display.

For all classes the following rules apply

- Entries to be judged may be displayed on the contest table or on a layout / module with the agreement of the judges.
- Entries on layouts / modules must be notified to the contest organiser / judges prior to judging

OK, so that all sounds very formal and official! It isn't meant to be. The basic rule is, if you have a model you're proud of, bring it along, tell the organisers you've got it and you may be going home with the silverware! Just to give you some idea here's a

couple of pictures of past winners of the Barry Owen cup.

Firstly a hotel built from an RS Laserkit wooden kit but using shingles from York Model Engineering.



Lastly, a model of a real building, the bakery at Silver Plume, Colorado. This was built from a Banta Model Works kit with added scratch built interior detailing. By the way, the 'thing' hanging in front of the door isn't a lamp; it's a bird feeder for humming birds built from embroidery beads and bits from the junk box. Anyone make N Scale humming birds?



The thing about all these models is that, whilst they are all built from kits, each has gradually extended my own modelling abilities. Also I like my models to tell a 'story'; the viewer should be able to see 'what's going on here' from the model.

Diary

The Gosport Group have open running meets at St Mary's Parish Centre, Alverstoke, on May 17th, August 16th and November 22nd 2014.

6th-8th March 2015 – N-Trak UK 2015 Convention at the Trouville Hotel, Bournemouth.

Price will be £109 per person for Friday night dinner, Saturday breakfast & dinner and Sunday breakfast plus Friday and Saturday night accommodation. More details to follow later. For those wanting more you can stay Thursday night for £49 and Sunday night for £40. More details later.