

A MASTERBUILDER CARFAX SET. Shortly after OSN 8 appeared, with its article (p184) on the later MASTERBUILDER Outfits, I was able to see, courtesy of Geoff Wright, a #6001 CARFAX Set, still strung in its box. Said box measured 10"x14" and had a white label showing 5 manual models from one or other of the 3 Auto/Railway Sets. They were shown with yellow parts except for red Mudguards, and red 11 hole Strips in one model. The parts in the box were blue except for yellow Strips and Mudguards, and metallic black Angle Brackets, Rods, Spanner and Screwdriver. As far as could be seen the contents corresponded to those given in MCS X1.6 (plus the Screwdriver and a Spanner), but the N&B and no doubt the 1" Rod were hidden away in a red Carton with MASTERBUILDER in white on it. Rod #1027 was $3\frac{1}{2}$ " long as surmised. The Manual was identical to the one described in OSN 8. Conclusion: later MASTERBUILDER parts can be any colour so long as it is yellow, orange, red or blue, or even grey (see 4/73).

AND ANOTHER MASTERBUILDER No.1 SET. In OSN 8/184 a No.1 Set, which may have been an early one, was described briefly. Now again courtesy of Geoff Wright, I've been able to look at another, probably later, No.1. It was still strung in its box and appeared complete. The box, about 8x10", is the same size as the first but has fold out 'wings' with parts strung on them. The lid has red and cream stripes with a large, central photo of a model; it carries the EREKTOR WORKS, MOUNTSOREL address and the Ref No.K.W.1266. The earlier Set had a red lid with a plain white label with the QUORN address and KW1261-1. Both sets had basically similar contents: differences, and notes on the finish of the parts follow:

- In the later Set the Shackles, KW1052, and the Straight Connectors, KW1044, were the shorter types (see 6/119), and the Sockets, KW1051, were also shorter, approximately 7/16" long against 3/4". The Collars, KW1045, and the bosses of the End Brackets, KW1111, were 5/16" dia; all the other parts were 3/8", as in the first Set.
- There was a tiny brass Loose Pulley in the later Set, .377" dia, which I hadn't seen before: it may be the part without a PN in MCS/FB, p3/4 rhs. There wasn't one in the first Set, it may have been missing but there was a 1" Pulley, KW1091, which wasn't in the second Set. The Railwheels in the latter were the 1" steel type described in 6/119, against the $\frac{1}{2}$ " KW1081 sort in the early Set.
- Both Sets contained Spring Cord, another part I hadn't seen before; its diameter was .152" and it was plated a dull grey colour. Apart from that all the metal parts in the first set were nickel plated except the brass plated N&B and the black metallic finished Rods; the later parts all had the black finish except the brass gears and all the 'brassware', which were their natural colour, and the steel Railwheels. The N&B couldn't be seen only brass plated steel ones have ever been reported.

I've several times referred above to the Sets as later or earlier, and I've no positive proof of that. But there are some pointers, the PNs of the Sets for instance, and the brighter lid design of the 'later' one. My guess is that the change from nickel to black came in about 1951-52 when nickel was in very short supply; brass too was difficult to get and this might account for the reduced size of some of the brass parts.

EZY-BILT. Following the account in 7/144, Roger Baker sent copies of Lists for August 1960 and July 1961; in the first Sets 1-8 and 1A-7A are shown, in '61 there are in addition, Sets 9 and 8A, and the Clockwork Motor. So that nicely pinpoints the date of introduction of those items. The last PN in both Lists is 161, so the Sprockets, and Gears #176 and 177, had not yet been introduced; nor had the Chain, #149, it isn't in either List. Also neither contains the name of the manufacturer, but it must have been Ezy-Bilt Ltd because Ref F (see OSN 7) from EBL uses the old PNs and so must be before 1960, and Ref G equally from EBL, shows Sets 8A and 9, and the Motor, and so must be from 1961 or later.

TEMSI HOLE SPACING. With the last copy of Meccano Nieuws from the Meccano Gilde Nederland, Don Redmond received a copy of Peter Duyff's 1992 booklet on Meccano, Actuele Onderwerpen No.2449. In it was noted a difference in hole pitch between MECCANO and TEMSI; that for TEMSI being 12.729mm against 12.7 for MECCANO. So over 25 holes that's a difference of about .7mm, enough to cause difficulties in long frameworks if parts from the two systems were used together. I measured up some TEMSI parts which probably dated back to the 1960s or 70s, and sure enough they showed about the same difference. And not only for Strips and A/Gs, which all appeared to have been cut from a continuous length, but also along and across an 11x5 hole Flanged Plate. It was easy to detect the difference in the long parts and it was measurable with care even along 5 holes.

SMALL AD. FOR SALE. PALIKIT No.3 Set. Complete with manual, and parts still strung, but some rust damage. £15 plus carriage - Malcolm Hanson, 11 Willow Close, Long Ashton, Bristol. BS18 9DT. Tel: (0275) 392321.