54

OTHER SYSTEMS NEWSLETTER

OSN 54 OCTOBER 2020

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EDITORIAL This Issue has 28 pages instead of the usual 32. This change will also apply to any future issues and, in the face of repeated rises in postal charges, is to avoid having to increase the subscription rates for the printed version of OSN.

For anyone who hasn't come across them there are now two important sources of 'Other Systems' information. The first is that all of Jean-Pierre Guibert's Encyclopédie (see 52/1580) can now be seen at http://www.mecca-clocks.fr/accueil_autres_systemes_01.htm .Simply click on the initial letter of the system in question. Jean-Pierre's 'Database' can be downloaded from one of the small mauve panels below the initial letters – it is labelled 'Index de tri des jeux fichiers Excel'. The other mauve panels provide other useful information.

The second source is an extension of Timothy Edwards Meccano website to cover Other Systems. It contains all the information from MCS and my Database, plus scans of manuals, etc, and sometimes photos of sets. The scans can be downloaded. The address is https://meccanoindex.co.uk/Other/index.php?id=1601635899# . Access to a system is via its initial letter from the A-Z along the top. Other useful options under 'Other' Systems Home include downloading all the MCS pages, and a search facility of the Database for any combination of 12 parameters. Examples for 1, 2 & 3 parameters are 'Screw Thread'; 'Country' and 'System Type'; 'Material', 'Hole Pitch' & 'Hole Diameter'.

Finally on a sad note, Jacques Pitrat died unexpectedly in October 2019. Over the years he contributed many articles to OSN, often with details of rare or unusual systems. His last article will appear in the next Newsletter. For me Jacques was the ideal correspondent, always patient and helpful with my queries and questions. I'll miss you Jacques.

Shorter NOTES, with thanks to all contributors.

1. **FERMO**. A set of this German system from 1946-47 was described in 27/784. Its 3 main parts were Triangular Plates, the largest with a centre cutout the size of the smallest. The Manual though showed the largest with no cutout, and also the Pulley with boss was not illustrated (though it was listed as PN 18). Now Angel Rodriguez Palacios has provided details of his outfit dated March 1946. It is without doubt earlier than the OSN 27 set, its large Triangles have no cutout, it has no Pulleys, and there is no mention of the Pulley in its manual. Like the OSN 27 set it contained the 2 sizes of Disc that can be used to make pulleys.

FERMO: S4 [54/1644]

2. **Gilbert's MECCANO Products.** Kendrick Bisset showed a display of these recently and 24 photos of them can be seen at http://www.nzmeccano.com/image-141249. After the photos is a link to download notes on the various items. These include details of the relationship between the 1928 'Hornby' sets and the 1929 'Gilbert' outfits, as well as notes on all the later Gilbert ones, right through to the 1937-38 blue & gold sets. Also covered are the Liverpool made sets sold by Gilbert in the US, and oddball items such as Puzzles, a Foundry Set, and a model Greenhouse.

Also included, BOLTLESS BUILDER, the set below, said to

be from 1937. Kendrick wrote that it may have been a prototype, though a few examples of it are known to exist. Possibly it was intended to replace MECCANO MORECRAFT when that system left the Gilbert camp. The connections of the parts, using dimples and holes, did not make a secure joint and it is hard to imagine that BOLTLESS BUILDER would have been especially successful.

GILBERT MECCANO: S4 [54/1644] **BOLTLESS BUILDER: S1** [54/1644]

3. **TITAN Phases**. Details of two phases were given in 26/761 & 45/1381. The first had parts with a dull grey metallic finish, the second had nearly twice as many different types of part, and they were painted, with black Strips, green A/Gs, and red & blue Plates. Now Timothy Edwards has pointed out that there was also an in between phase similar to the first but with painted parts.

TITAN: S3 [54/1644]

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SPLINTOFIX This East German system was noted in 36/1069 and now a set is to hand. Its PR indicates a date of 1948.

Fig.1


Fig.2

The Box measures 21½*16½*1¾cm. The lid right has Will-Halle in the top right corner, and at bottom left: N (29) Gebr. Bieler, Halle-S, Paul-Riebeck-Str. 3-6, presumably the maker. The PR bottom right is: (28922) 40516 18. 10. 48 5000. Fig.2 shows the open box.


Fig.3a

The Parts (Figs.3,3a) are listed below with the quantities found in curly brackets. The 'red' parts are steel, otherwise all are aluminium. Holes in the Strips are 3.6mm at 18.0mm pitch; other holes are 3.5mm. The thread is 3.3mm Ø x .6mm pitch, and might be badly made M3.5. Otherwise, with a few minor exceptions, the parts are well made.

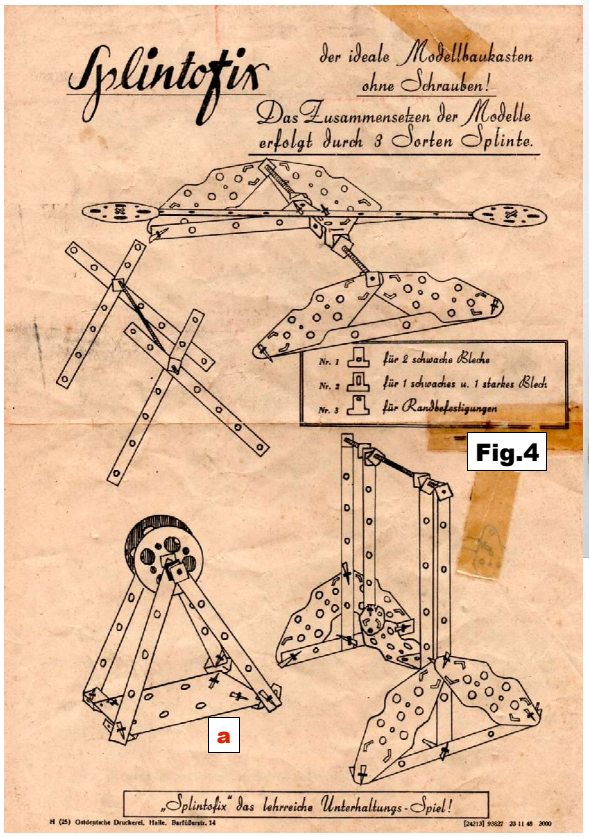


Fig.4


Fig.3

- Strips, 7,6,5h, 1.2mm thick {4,2,4}.
- Lozenge, .5mm thick {10}.
- Corner Bracket, .6mm thick {13}.
- Wheel Disc, 35mm Ø, .9mm thick {4}.
- Screwed Rod 10cm, threaded 4cm at each end {1}.
- Winding Handle {1}.
- Washer, 8.0mm Ø {4}.
- Nut, 8.1mm A/F, 1½mm thick {8}.
- Clips, types 1,2,3 (to join 2 thin parts; 1 thin, 1 thick part; 2 thick parts) {77, 56, 69}.
- Wedge, (mostly the two types on the right in Fig.3a) {73}.
- Pliers {1}. Spanner {1}.

No doubt various parts are missing and they include another 10cm Screwed Rod, a short Screwed Rod, the 2*4h Plate at 'a' in Fig.4, and perhaps a short Strip or Bracket for axles to run in (see Fig.5) though a Corner bracket served in Fig.6.

The Model Sheet is an A4 page with the front above. The PR along the bottom is: H (25) Ostdeutsche Druckerel, Halle,Barfüsserstr. 14 [24213] 93827 23 11 48 2000.

There are 3 models on the back, a 2-Wheel Flat Truck, a reasonable looking Chemical Balance, & the Cart in Fig.5 (shown in B&W).

Using the Parts Inevitably the Clips & Wedges are fiddly to use and assembly certainly takes longer than it would with N&B. And though they grip quite well if the Pliers are used to push the Wedge fully home, anything less than that often leads to Wedges falling out as assembly proceeds or the model is played with. The Pliers in the Set would do the job but suitable commercial ones with serrated lips were easier to use.

I couldn't think of a more interesting model so I built the Cart (Fig.6) from the Model Sheet, slightly modified with a pivoted front axle, albeit with only limited movement. Both Axles and their Nuts were substitutes (one of the threads on Screwed Rod in the Set had been badly damaged).

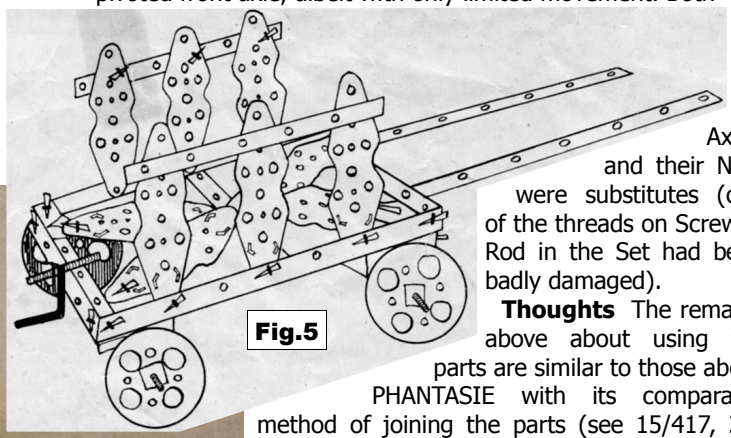


Fig.5

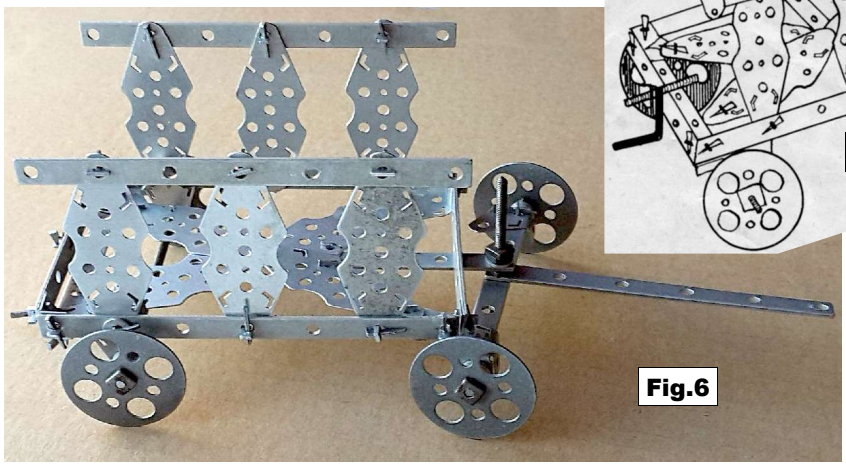


Fig.6

Thoughts The remarks above about using the parts are similar to those about PHANTASIE with its comparable method of joining the parts (see 15/417, 24/709, & 52/1610). But PHANTASIE had more conventional, and more useful, structural parts. I wonder who designed the Lozenge, with its small holes and vee cutouts. Or was it just an existing part for some other purpose and readily available at the time? But if so what could its original use have been?

PYFYLY: Bits & Bobs A No.0 set seen on Ebay (discussed later) has a Price List which includes sets already known (0,1,2,3; the Furniture sets 10-19; & Albums d'Décor 1 & 2), plus a new set and a new accessory, neither noted before.

The New Set called Grande Roue [Big Wheel] cost 20fr (but blurry so possibly 30, or even 50fr). A No.0 cost 9.??fr. The blurry Grande Roue set number is above '19'.

The New Accessory: **Séries d'Intérieur** They are listed under the Albums d'Décor, and, like the latter, are priced at 2 or 3fr. Given the content of the 'Albums' described below, I wonder if the Séries d'Intérieur were cards to form indoor walls and provide room settings for furniture models.

Album d'Décor Sheets. The Ebay photo of the 4 Sheets below, with a Salon set, are said to be 'album de décor' extras to the Set. Each contains parts for particular models: all on the

Fig.1

bottom right sheet are for a Windmill, those on the bottom left for a Cradle, and the two top sheets are mostly for furniture models. 3 are marked [1] and so may be from Album 1, or the [1] could indicate that they are for No.1 models (all 3 are for No.1 manual models. Fig.2, from elsewhere, shows a complete Fig.1 Sheet, and another seen for the Cradle is identical to Fig.1 except that the mauve colour is a light blue.

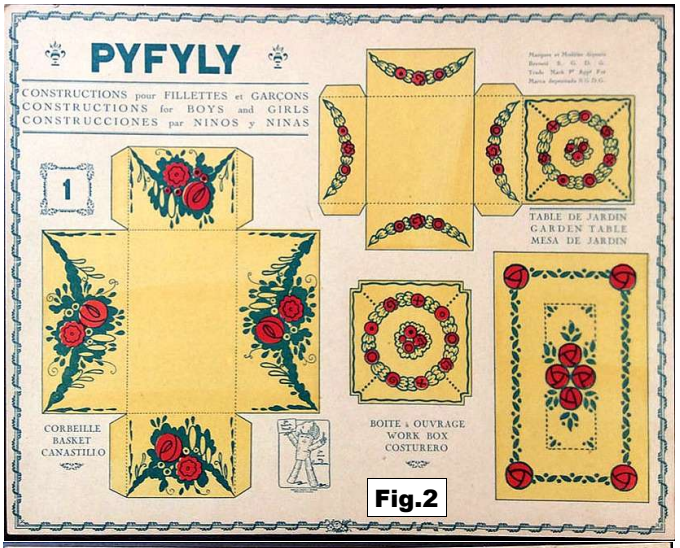


Fig.2

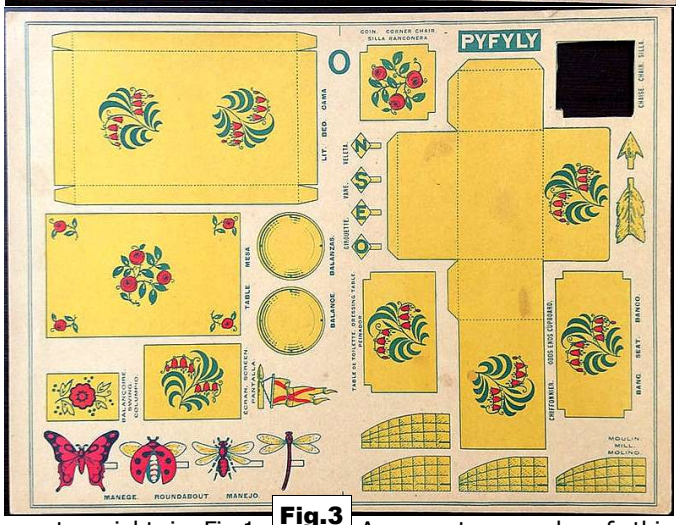


Fig.3

The No.0 Set. There are small drawings of Sets 0-3 in the OSN 28 No.0 manual and, like the No.1 (see 28/842), the No.0 box is shown as long & narrow, but appreciably smaller. It was something of a surprise therefore to see a No.0 (the Ebay set mentioned earlier) with the lid right. Its contents and manual cover look to be identical to the No.0 in 28/841, except that the Fig.4 set includes cardboard parts cut from a sheet like the one top right in Fig.1. An uncut example of this sheet (again from elsewhere) is shown in Fig.3. It is marked '0' and the parts are for No.0 models. And in fact their manual illustrations do include such models with floral designs on them, though they are not the same as on the Fig.3 parts. So was this Sheet another from an, as yet unidentified, Album or was it just included in the Set?

Fig.4

Since no other known sets include Sheets of this sort it may be that this No.0 was an early set and when the sheets were dropped a smaller box was possible. Or was it a late attempt to make the set more attractive?

PYFYLY: S8 **OSN 54/1646**

Snippet: the HUSTLER Demonstration Set
The set right was seen on Ebay and looks to be complete, including its paperwork, except that if there was ever a label on the plain cardboard lid, it has disappeared.

The box (right) scales at 7½*4¾" and has a selection of parts from the Action Toy Builder [ATB] set (see 25/746). It was intended to promote the ATB set, and it cost 10 cents against $1.50 for the 'real thing'.

There were two sheets of paper with the Set. One, folded in 4 to fit into the box, was a full colour ad for ATB on one side, with a set surrounded by the 12 models in the 1928 edition manual. There was a letter on the other side starting 'Here is your little Demonstration Set of Hustler Action Toy Builder' and going on to encourage purchase of an ATB set.

The other sheet, folded in two, has a similar message on

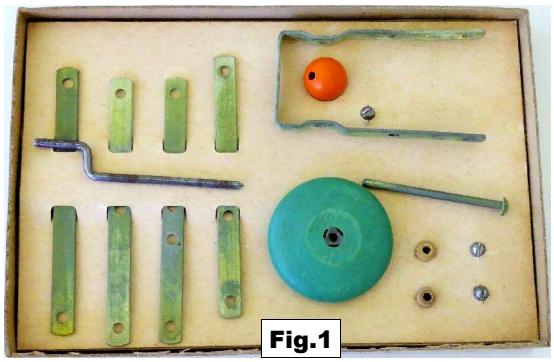


Fig.1

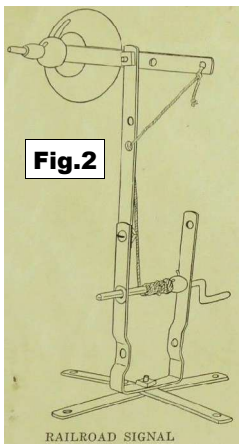


Fig.2

one side, and on the reverse 6 models that could be made with the Demo Set. One is shown in Fig.2, another is a simple [Spinning] Top, the others simple items of machinery, a Buzz Saw for example, all operated from the Crank Handle, mostly through a Cord drive.

HUSTLER ACTION TOY BUILDER: S1 **OSN 54/1646**

Another BILL DEEZY Set It was the same size as the one in 52/1587 but more complete, at least with regard to the Wheels, and it showed some manual pages. Said pages are unfortunately of poor quality and in what follows items in red were very blurry and the most likely to be incorrect.

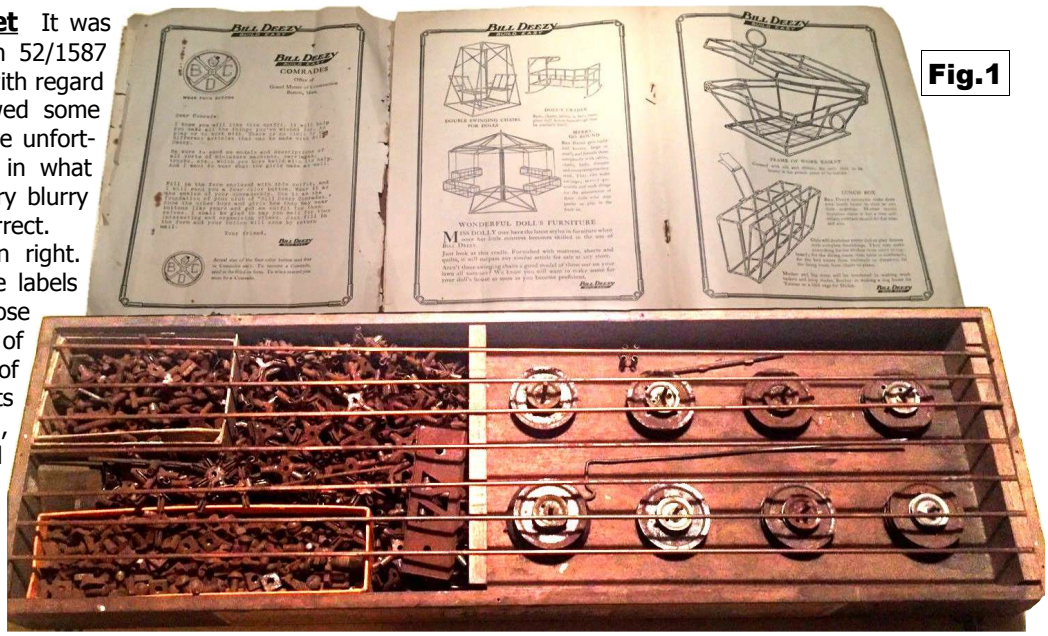


Fig.1

The 'New' Set is shown right. The little that remains of the labels on the box are similar to those on the OSN 52 set. The bulk of the Rods lie in the bottom of the box with most of the Joints on top at the lefthand end, but some are in the small cardboard boxes. The latter may of course not be original and among the parts are a few pieces of ERECTOR, the 3" Girder beside the larger box for instance. What is original is the board at the right end which carries the Wheel parts and has notches in its end pieces to carry 7 of the Rods.


Fig.2

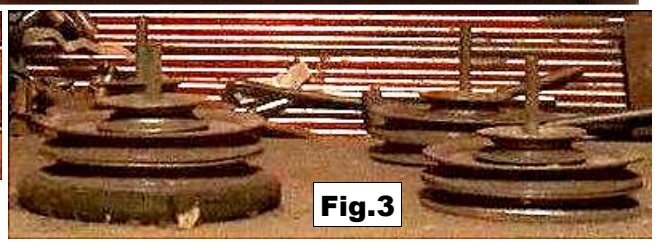


Fig.3

Fig.2 is an enlarged view of 2 of the Wheel Parts with a ¾" Loose Pulley with 2 face holes, as in OSN 52, on top, and what looks like a 1½" Pulley with 4 face holes underneath. They can also be seen in Fig.3, a view of the Board with it turned up and leaning on the front of the box. The parts under the Pulleys are discussed in the Parts paragraph below.

The Set Contents One of the Ebay photos showed the contents of the 4 sets produced (Nos.50, 100, 200, 500) as follows. ● Flexible Joints: 30/75/180/540. ● Coppered Steel Construction Rods: 12" 15/0/0/0; 20" 0/25/60/180. ● Bracing Wire: 25/60/150/400ft. ● Cable: 10/15/60,180ft. ● Pulley Wheels: 4/4/8/8. ● Cart Wheels: 0/2/4/16. ● Rubber Tires: 0/2/4/0. ● Wheel Rims: 0/0/0/16. ● Wheel Bands: 0/0/0/16. ● Pair K?? Deezy Pliers: 1/1/1/1. ● Catalog: 1/1/1/1.

It is clear from the above that the present & large OSN 52 sets are No.500's and the small OSN 52 sets a No.50.

Also listed on the page are 15 Auxilliary Packages: A,B,C,D Flexible Joints; AA,BB,CC,DD, each with Rods & Bracing Wire; X, 12 Pulley Wheels; X1, Bracing Wire; X2, Pair of Pliers; X3, 6 Cart Wheels; X4, 3 each Wheel Rims & Bands; S, 3 Rubber Tires for Wheel Rims; T, 4 Rubber Tires for Cart Wheels.

The Parts It's hard to reconcile the Wheel parts in the Contents above with those in the sets. All one can say is that those on the pegs in the present set are a ¾" Pulley with what looks like a 1½" Pulley underneath it, and that the parts underneath them at the bottom of the pegs in Fig.3 might be a Wheel Band on the left peg (a Road Wheel? or part of one?) and a Wheel Rim on the righthand one. Also that the 1½" Pulley looks like the Wheels on one of the models on the lid, as shown in Fig.7 model in OSN 52.

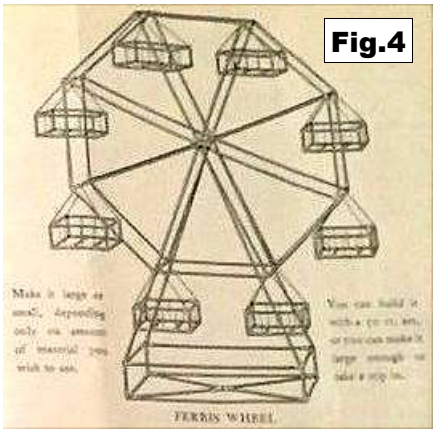


Fig.4

Several of the other parts haven't been seen in any of the known sets: the Pliers; the Bracing Wire (which would presumably be used for cross-bracing but was it thin piano type wire or flexible?); and the Cable (the name might indicate a flexible metal wire but it might I suppose be simply cord).

The Manual is Copyright 1914 and the models that can be seen are the Crane in OSN 52, the Ferris Wheel in Fig.4, and the models in Fig.1: Double Swinging Chairs for Dolls (Fig.12 in OSN 52), Doll's Cradle, Merry Go Round, Frame of Work Basket, & Lunch Box.

The lefthand page in Fig.1 is a letter to 'Dear Comrade' from the 'Office of the Grand Master of Constructions, Bill Deezy Comrades', and signed 'Your Friend, Bill Deezy'. It asks for details of models, and offers a free brochure.

OSN 54/1647 **BILL DEEZY: S3**

Snippet. METALCRAFT Right a better picture of the label in 35/1047. The latter was on a box larger than on other known sets, but this box is the normal, smaller size. And instead of a green backing card, the present one is yellow, the usual colour in other sets (and also in VOGUE & PIONIER outfits). This set's small parts box is missing.

The parts are entirely 'standard' with no additional holes in any of them.

The manual is as before with the same industrial scene on its cover, and no models at all, quite unlike the label.

OSN 54/1647 **METALCRAFT [2]: S4**

Snippet. 'New' System: MLADÝ STAVITEL The name means Young Builder and in the Ebay ad this Czech system was said to be from the 1940s. The name at the top of the logo on the lid right is REMY, and the name stamped on the packet in Fig.1 below looks like ING. OTTO BONDY.

The parts are a little unusual in having the MECCANO X rather than the TRIX pattern of holes. Otherwise the pictures speak for themselves: the Set is a No.1 and 8 different parts can be seen, 3 Strips, a DAS, a Wheel Disc, 2 sizes of Washer, and a Span'driver.

Most of the models here look like direct copies from the 'X' No.1 manual, but I couldn't spot a few of the MLADÝ models.

Fig.1

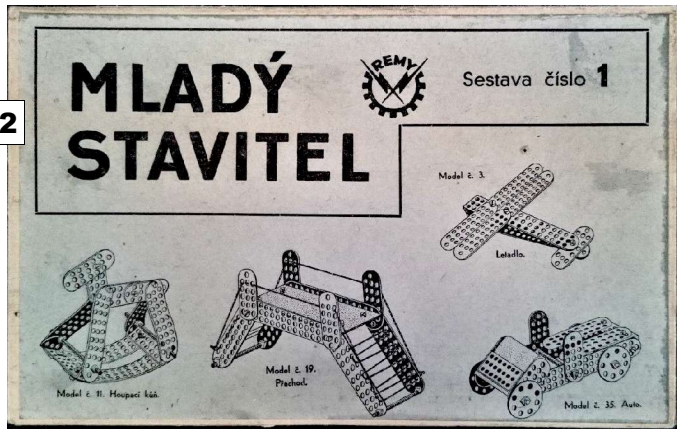


Fig.2

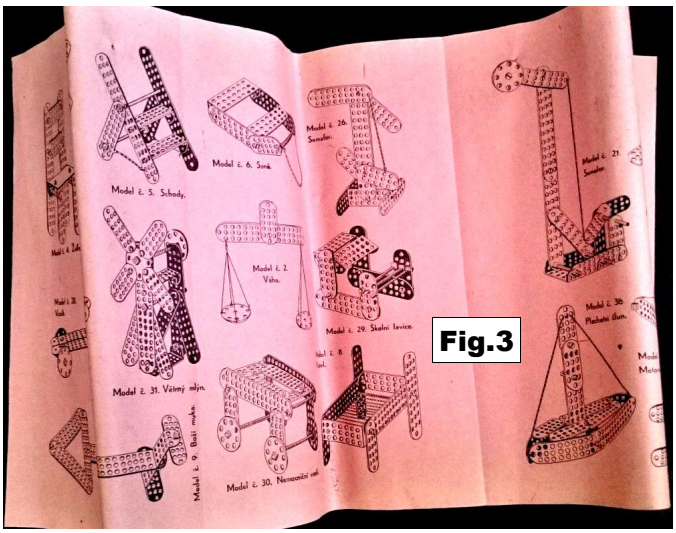


Fig.3

The Monoplane in Fig.2 for instance and the Railway Signal in Fig.3. Also the Windmill (Fig.3) is a BRITISH MODEL BUILDER model while the X1 version incorporates the 'X' C/W Motor.

All the parts look exactly like MECCANO X and, given the origin of many of the models, the content of the Set may be that of the X1 outfit. If so that would mean that the packet would contain N&B, A/Bs, and Screwed Rods. Oddly though I couldn't actually see any A/Bs in the models shown here.

MLADÝ STAVITEL: S1 OSN 54/1648

Snippet. A MACHINO Set This Indian set was recently offered on UK Ebay. Its name was mentioned in 32/941, together with one or two notes about it. They are borne out by the present No.0 set shown here.

Why Indian? On the lid in the label's top right corner, is a swastika, in India a symbol of divinity & spirituality. Also there is some Indian looking script on the edge of the small parts box in Fig.2.

The Set's box was said to be 25*18cm and under the swastika is 'INTELLIGENT PASTIME FOR THE BRILLIANT BOY. The text under the name reads 'MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL. BUILDS SCORES OF MODELS FROM A CHAIR TO BRIDGES, CARS, SHIPS, ENGINES, CRANES, ETC.'

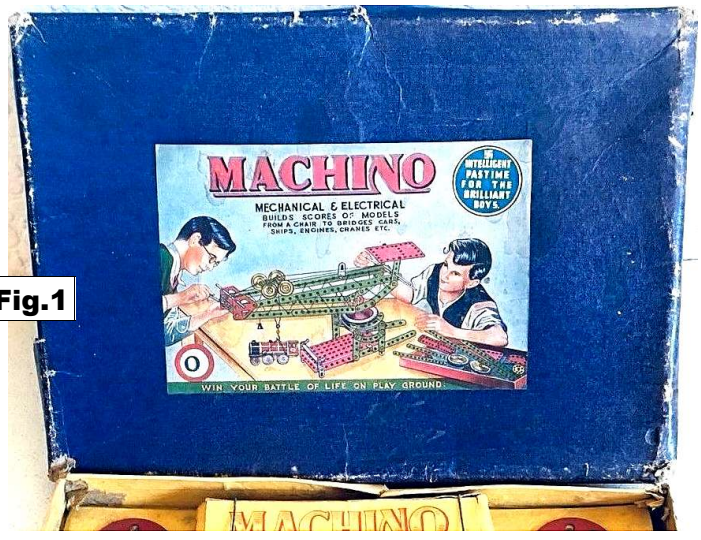


Fig.1

The Crane on the lid helps with MACHINO's date. It is a very, very close copy of the MECCANO No.3 model which first appeared in 1962. So MACHINO almost certainly dates from after that year.

The parts also look like MECCANO and scaling from the box's dimensions the holes are ½" pitch but at 4.0 mm, slightly smaller than MECCANO. If these figures are right MACHINO was typical of most Indian 'pre-M4 thread' systems except that the holes are slightly smaller. I wonder what the thread was. Most likely ⁵⁄₃₂"BSW, as with most of this period's systems, but MAXHINA (see 11/286) & PLANO (see 10/258), both launched in the 1960s used ⅛"BSW, but they though had smaller holes again.

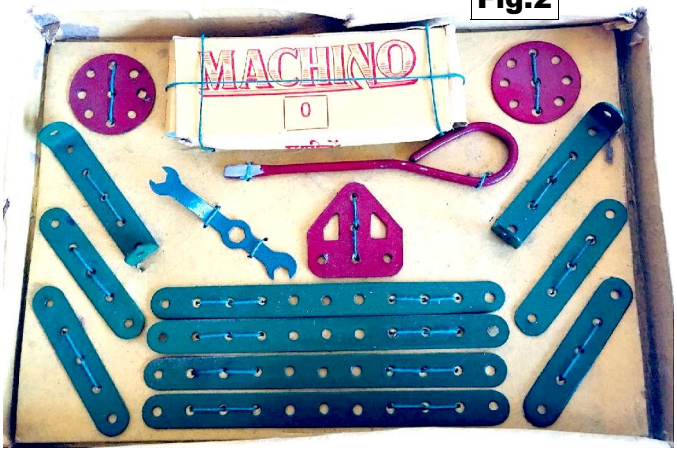


Fig.2

MACHINO: S1 OSN 54/1648

Snippets. 'New' Italian System: TECNOMECCANO

Shown here the Ebay photos of this Rod & Clamp system. It

Fig.1

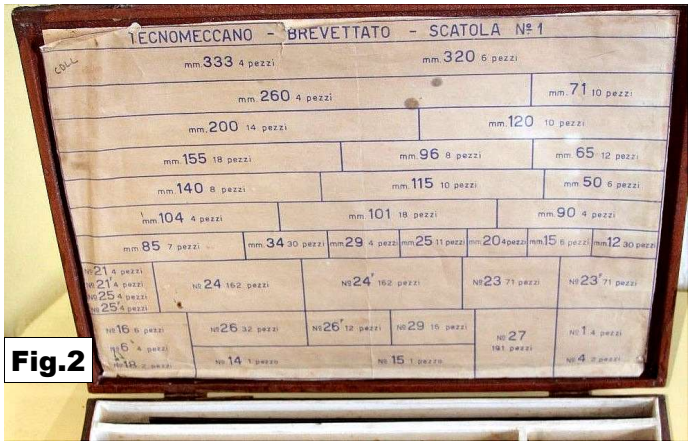


Fig.2

was said to be a Set 1, with a 37*26cm box, and made by Molgora of Milano. By the look of the lid it may have had a label once.

The layout of the parts is shown on the underside of the lid (Fig.2) and most can be seen in the box right.

Fig.3

The Rods There are 22 lengths: 333, 320,260,200,155,140,120,115,104,101,96, 90,85,71,65,50,34,29,25,20,15,12mm.

The Clamps. From the PNs they seem to come in 5 pairs with for each, one with a tapped (the PN has a superscript 'F', for threaded) and the other with a plain hole. 5 types can be seen and are represented left with a line for a Rod and a full stop for a Bolt hole. However there may be one other pair. The quantities given for the 5 pairs of PNs include 4 each for 2 of them. One, the Type (a) in Fig.4, is credible but there look to be more than 4 pairs for the Types (b)-(e), and in that case what is the other '4 off each' pair?

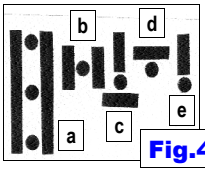


Fig.4

Fig.5

The Wheels. 5 different types can be seen in the bottom end compartments. At the left end 2 sizes of 'aluminium' Pulleys which scale very roughly at 3½ & 5cm Ø. At the right end (Fig.5) a Tyred Pulley about 3cm Ø over the Tyre, a flanged Railway Wheel 2¼cm Ø, and a Pulley of 2½cm Ø. If all are genuine they could correspond to the 5 PNs shown for these 2 compartments on the lid.

Other Parts Just the cheeseheaded Bolts which hold the Clamps together, a few longer ones, and the Formed Rods in Fig.5.

The Models The models on 2 pages of the manual (Fig.6) are a Scooter, Weighing Scales, a Tricycle Delivery Cart, an Aeroplane Hanger, & a House. Questions come to mind – for instance how are the Trike's front wheels retained on their axles, but the photo is too blurry to see.

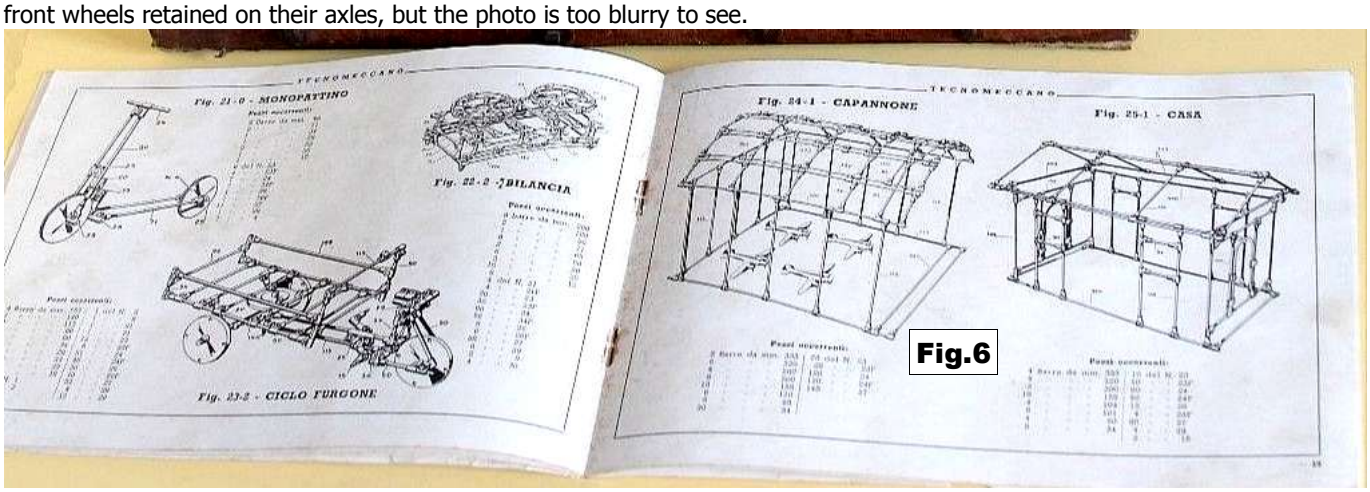


Fig.6

CLIPPA Never heard of it, well not surprising because it only ever reached the pre-production stage. John Timms has a factory produced No.1 sample set & model, and also a copy of the company's business plan. He kindly supplied details.

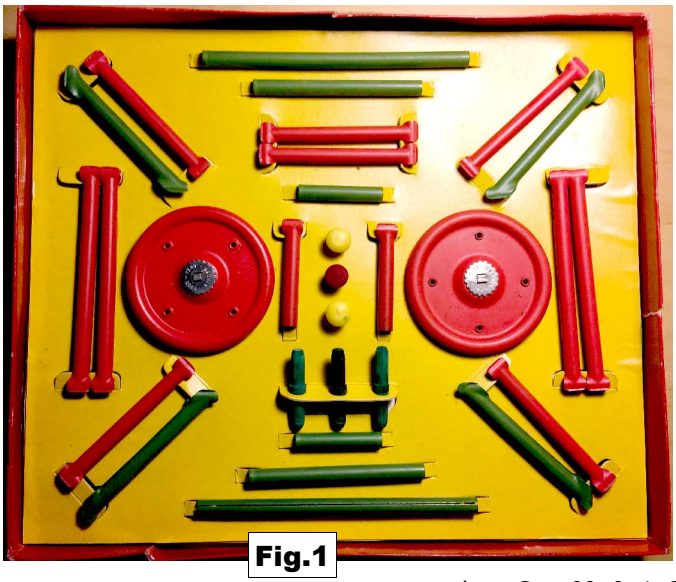


Fig.1


Fig.2


Fig.3

The Clipper Toy Co. was registered in the early 1950s with the intention of producing CLIPPA, a version of the by then defunct KLIPTIKO, but with a limited number of parts to aim mainly at 2-8 year old youngsters. 3 men were involved from the start but the main player was a Mr A Roseberry. By around 1955 two applications for Registered Design had been successful, and sample sets had been produced, but then activity ceased due to lack of money. A failed attempt to revive the project was made in 1959.

The SETS It was intended to market outfits 1-3 plus 2 linking sets, all using the same range of 10 parts as in the No.1 (see Fig.1). The same size box was to be used for the main sets; likewise both linking sets would be packed into their own same size box. John's set has a plain bright yellow lid edged with red but in production Sets 1-3 were to have a 3-colour label, and the 'a' sets a simple label showing its set number. The No.1 had 30 parts in all.

The PARTS Compared with KLIPTIKO there were some changes made as improvements. There was an extra, longer Clip which could form a diagonal in a square made of the shorter Clips, thus adding rigidity. And for added versatility a variant of the shorter Clip had angled ends. Another new part is the Connector in Fig.2 which pushed into Tubes to make it easier to join them – it was to be plastic in production. Also a pair joined by a Connector became a Long Clip but with the advantage that the ends could be at any angle, and differ between the ends.

So the 10 parts comprised 3 Tubes, 4 Clips (Long, Short, Short with Angled Ends, Half), a Wheel, a Connector, & a Hub Cap. The steel parts were to be made from .015" sheet (28 swg), as in KLIPTIKO, but were generally slightly smaller than their KLIPTIKO counterparts. Dimensions as follows with the KLIPTIKO values in brackets. Tubes are 3/10" (3/8") Ø and 1¾,3½,5½" (3,4,6⅝") long. Clips are 3,4¼" (3½") long. The Wheel is 3" (3¾") Ø. The Hub Cap is wooden, but to be plastic (metal). The Connector is 1⅝" long.

The MODELS 12 models were to be shown in the Model Leaflet for Set 1, with 4 Guns, including the Field Gun in Fig.3, 3 furniture models, a Robot Man, a Dog, a Windmill, a Bike, & a Ch't (?Chariot). With only 2 Wheels in the set none of the models can really be pushed along.

RETAILING For cheapness distribution was to be by representatives rather than wholesalers and the likely retail prices for the sets, based on factory costs and the usual margins, were 11/-, 19/-, & 27/9 for Sets 1-3, and 8/5, & 10/- for the 'a' sets. The aim though was to sell the No.1 for 9/11, 10 shillings being an important pricing point for potential purchasers.

The Plan has a comparison of prices between CLIPPA and various other toys. In nearly all cases the CLIPPA prices are well within the range for the other toys. The only one where a more or less direct comparison is possible is with MECCANO where Sets 00, 0, 1, 2, & 3 cost 6/9, 11/-, 16/11, 24/- & 33/6. It is suggested that the 3 CLIPPA sets compare with Meccano's Sets 1-3 on the basis that Sets 00 & 0 contain fewer parts if their N&B are excluded. True, but at least the No.0 had 4x 1" Pulleys with Tyres so push along models could feature.

KLIPTIKO Pre-WW2 In 1939 a No.1 KLIPTIKO set had 53 parts including 4x 1½" Wheels, and sold at 2/6. A MECCANO No.1, with 2x 1" Pulleys & Rubber Rings, cost 3/-, or a No.2 with 4 at 4/6. The KLIPTIKO manual models certainly doesn't do justice to the Set with again no model that could be pushed along on 4 Wheels. If the Fig.3 model is typical of the others CLIPPA models they were a distinct improvement on KLIPTIKO's. The MECCANO manual of the time showed many more models with a wide variety of subjects and full use of the wheels. KLIPTIKO had the advantage of being easy to assemble and those today who still remember having it speak fondly of it and of the ease of 'inventing' new, often large models. The only complaint is that it seemed impossible to incorporate steering in Lorries etc. KLIPTIKO needed a revamp but it was not sold again after the war so perhaps sales had not been high enough to warrant the investment.

SNAPSTICKS In 1959 Roseberry wrote to Games & Toys asking if any other toy similar to KLIPTIKO was being made, and the answer was no. SNAPSTICKS (see 44/1345) had been advertised in G&T in 1948. No doubt it had not succeeded in establishing itself. It wasn't mentioned in the Plan either but it's interesting that it too had additional longer Clips, two in this case.

An ASSEMBLO-FALCO Connection? The French ASSEMBLO was of course the original system of this type and is well known (see 15/420,444, 30/877); FALCO was Italian with the same style of parts (see 26/758, 39/1165, 51/1549) but full details are not available. Jean-Pierre Guibert though has spotted a possible connection between them as below, with an almost identical picture used on the covers of two documents. So was there a connection between them with the same owners perhaps, or a licence agreement. Or did FALCO simply copy the ASSEMBLO image.

Fig.1

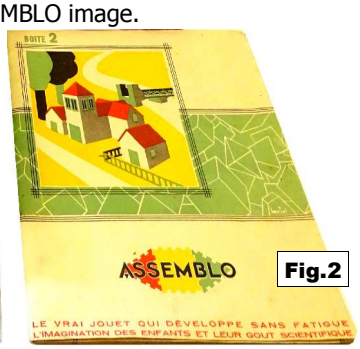


Fig.2

FALCO [2]: S3 **[54/1650]**

'New' System: STEEL CRAFT.

Another small English system, no doubt from soon after WW2. This account is largely based on details of a No.1 set kindly sent by David Hobson. It seems, apart from its Axles and N&B, to be complete but sadly has no manual.

Fig.1

The Box measures 32*25*3cm. The lid is covered by red paper, badly faded in part (Fig.1), but the label has survived in all its glory (Fig.2). It has 'BIRMINGHAM ENGLAND' along its bottom edge.

Fig.2

Fig.3 shows the base with the parts on a black card, either strung or held by bifurcated paper clips. 'STEEL CRAFT FC/C EACH NET' is written on the underside of the card in black ink, probably a price code?

The missing Axles might have been strung with the Crank Handle, with the N&B perhaps in a box or packet which fitted on the Flanged Plate.

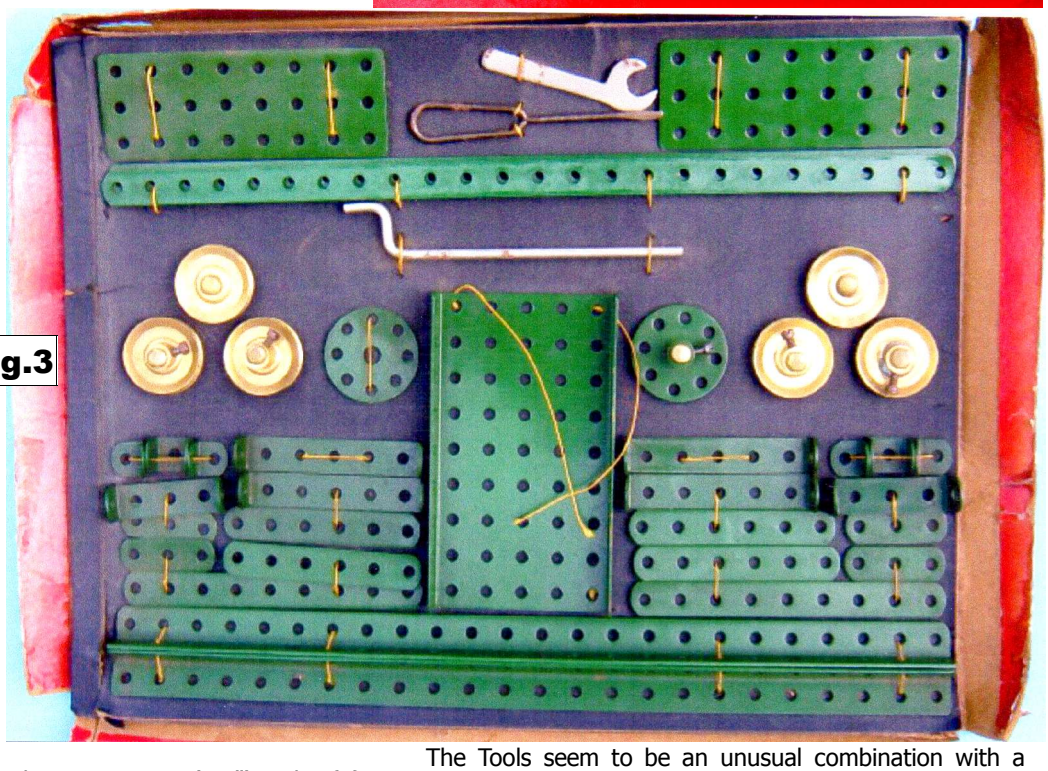


Fig.3

The Parts Apart from the brass Pulleys, all are steel, with the structural parts painted dark green. All holes are round. In the Strips they are 4.1mm Ø at ½" pitch, and are slightly rough on the underside. Bosses are brass, 9mm Ø, 9mm long, single tapped 5BA with brassed steel, cheeseheaded Set Screws, 6mm u/h.

The parts found are as follows with their quantities in curly brackets. **Strips** 24,9,6, 3h {2,2,4,4}. **A/G** 24h {2}. **DAS** 1*5,3*1h {4,2}. **A/B** {4}. **D/B** {2}. **Perforated Plate** 3*8h {2}. **Flanged Plate** 5*9h {1}. **Pulleys**, Fast, Loose, 28mm Ø {4,2}. **Bush Wheel**, 8h, 35mm Ø {1}. **Wheel Disc**, 8h, 35mm Ø, 6mm centre hole {1}. **Crank Handle**, nickel finish, a tight fit in Pulley bosses {1}. **Spanner**, nickel finish, jaws 8.2mm (.32") wide. {1}. **Screwdriver**, steel wire 2.8mm Ø, 3½" long, stem stamped 'TERRYS MADE IN ENGLAND' in tiny capitals {1}.

Slightly unusually sized parts are the 3*8h Plate, and the 24h Strip & A/G, the latter with, like the Flanged Plate, square corners.

The Tools seem to be an unusual combination with a Screwdriver barely adequate for 5BA or 5/32" BSW, and a Spanner with jaws too wide for normal 'OS' nuts of either thread. However at the time the standard commercial 5/32" BSW nut was 5/16" A/F and the Spanner would have fitted that nicely.

OSN 54/1651 **STEEL CRAFT: S1**

A Mystery Set Fig.1 shows the open box and Fig.2 three of the smaller parts. The Set is thought to be German and may have originated in the Hamburg, Hanover region. The parts are cleanly made with 3.2mm Ø holes at 7.5mm pitch. All are aluminium including the M3 N&B. The Flanged Plates with their centre cutouts were clearly inspired by STABIL, but not the large and small Wheel Discs in the bottom left bay (with large Washers above the former). Thanks to Urs Flammer for the details.

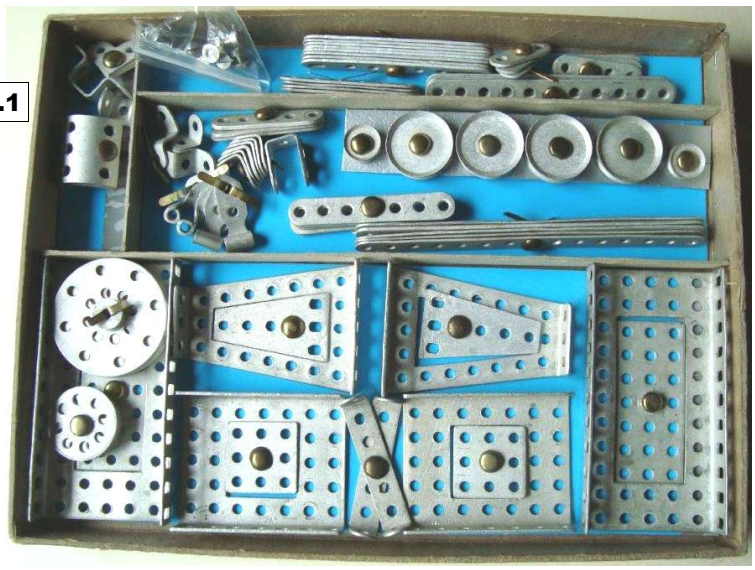


Fig.1


Fig.2

OSN 54/1651 **Mystery Set: S1**

Snippet. 'New' System: TECNO MECCANICO

Another Italian system from the 1950s, these notes are from the Ebay photos of a manual. It has 24 pages, 31*19cm. Below, its front cover and Fig.2 right is the set shown on the back cover.

Fig.1

Fig.2

66 parts are listed in Fig.3, a fair selection including 5 Gears (#230 is a Contrate). Nearly all the parts look like MECCANO, the exceptions are the Tools, the 5*7h Flanged Plate with its long sides flanged, and the Trunnions with holes instead of cutouts. The 8h Wheel disc looks like the prewar PN 217a. The Flexible Plates have no slotted holes, Meccano added them in 1953. There is no indication of the parts actual size.

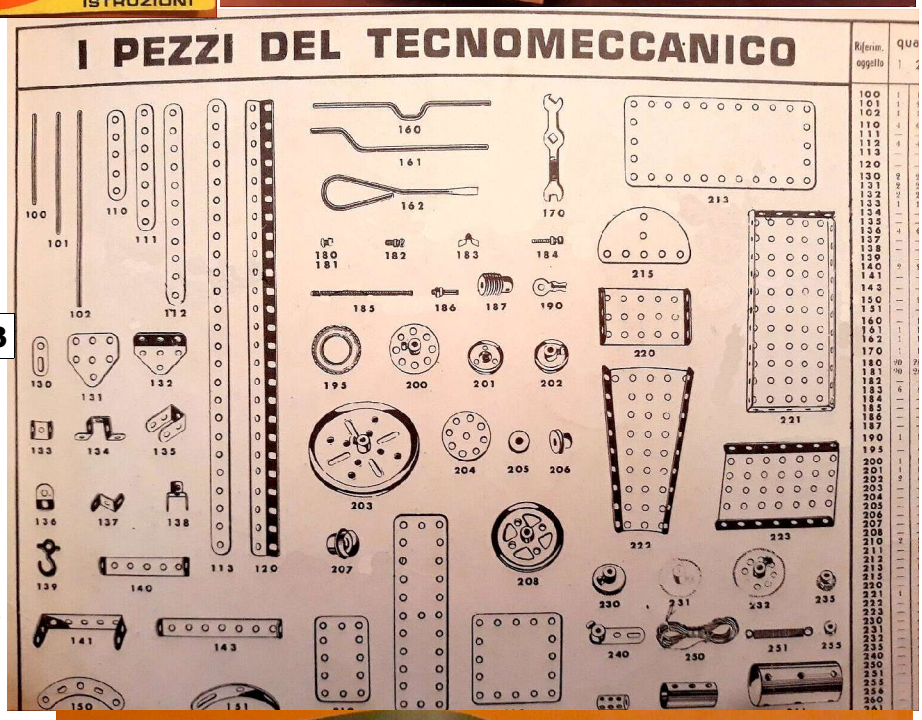


Fig.3

There were outfits Nos.1-8 plus linking sets 1a-7a. From Fig.3 the contents of Set 1 are quite similar to Liverpool's 1950s No.0 though the latter did include 2 each of the Tyre & Curved Strip.

Of the model pages shown in the Ebay ad, two are as in Figs.4 & 5 with photos and the parts numbered as in Fig.3. But the third (Fig.6) is quite different with the shaded line drawing instead of a photo, & a different numbering system for the parts: most as MECCANO but a few are not, nor are they as in Fig.3.

The models in Fig.5 are for Set 3 and the one on the right is a Mowing Machine with the cutting blade oscillated by a Crankshaft

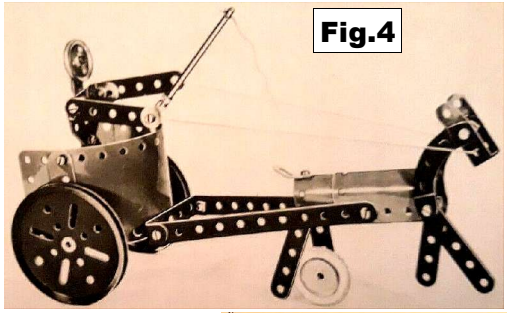


Fig.4

which is rotated by a friction drive from the starboard rear wheel. (The Crankshaft is included in all the sets except the No.1.) The blade arm is raised & lowered by the Crank Handle. The third model page shows the Roman Chariot in Fig.4, a

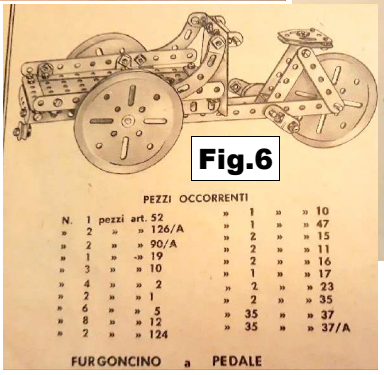


Fig.6

No.4 model.

I don't recognise any of the models here as being from any other system, and they seem to show some originality.

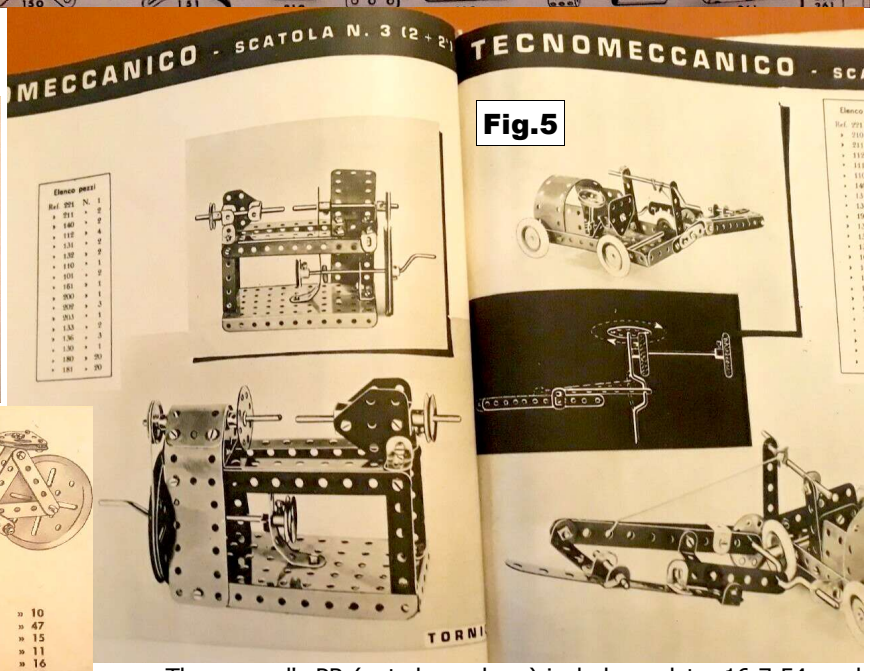


Fig.5

The manual's PR (not shown here) includes a date, 16-7-54, and 'Castelfranco Veneto', a town in Northern Italy, 40km NW of Venice. So perhaps that was also where TECNO MECCANICO was made but nothing is known of the maker except for the 'PM' logo in Fig.1.

INVENTOR by Jacques Pitrat

Inventor was a Czech system, invented c.1920 by Jazroslav Vincl, who later created MERKUR. A snippet was published in OSN 33/973, and the patent described in 34/1015. The system includes Sets 1, 2, and 3, this account is based on a No.3.

Most of the parts have hooked ends, and many of them have pressed through eyes along their length. Parts are joined by hooking the hooked end of one part over the end of one of the pressed through eyes in another part, at the angle desired. The various possibilities are shown in the patent.

The SETS As mentioned above there were 3 main sets: the manual implies that it is possible to upgrade a set to the next one, but it does not specify whether it is with a supplementary set, or by buying the missing parts. The contents of Sets 1-3 are given in Fig.3; 'kolečka' means wheel, 'hřidelky' rod, & 'matičky' nut. There are two anomalies in the contents. The 106mm Rod without Thread is only in Set No.1; however, it is possible to replace it with a 106mm Threaded Rod. And in fact for the two models where it would be used, the photo shows a threaded rod! Secondly, parts 4 & 4a are in the contents of the No.1, but are not in the No.2. This is a typo: they are in the list of parts for several models for Set 2.

The No.3 is in a 458*236*20mm cardboard box (Figs.1 & 2). On the lid a boy builds a model, and attracts the admiring glances of his sister; several other models appear in the landscape. An enlargement of the photo of the parts in the manual (Fig.4) is glued inside the lid.

The 59 different parts in the No.3 are shown in Fig.9. This is about 15 more than mentioned in the manual (Figs.3 & 4) because they do not include all the variations of the parts found in the No.3 (as described below). And there is actually only one type of Wheel despite two being shown in Fig.4.

Fig.1


Fig.2

The PARTS The steel parts are nickel plated and although they are nearly a hundred years old, they are in a good condition: only a few of them have small spots of rust. Most are Strips, A/Gs, & DAS; some are flat, while others have a sequence of 1 to 11 eyes. Some have a hook at each end; some at only one end; some no hook at all. There are two kinds of hook: they are shown in Fig.9a, one is like a 'U', the other likewise but with a round hole at the U's base. I'll call them 'U' & 'R'. A Rod can be put through the hole in the R hook: in Fig.6, the four Strips that support the Rod have an R hook. This use of the parts isn't explained in the manual or in the patent. The larger sets contain three Nuts (there are no bolts) and they are used on the threaded ends of the Rods. The allows for instance, a propeller or a windmill sail to be mounted (Fig.8), but the threaded ends of the Rods are mainly used to carry the Wheels, whose bores are also threaded.

The Rods are 4.0mm Ø with 4.0mm o.d. threads; the Wheel is 40mm diameter and has no pulley groove.

In the notes on the parts which follow comparisons will be made between some of the actual parts and those mentioned in the manual. To make this easier the PNs in Figs.3 & 4 have been added in red to the equivalent parts in Fig.9, and where variant parts exist they have been added under the same PN.

Where parts have a hook at each end they are in most

Číslo		Množství kusů v čísle 1	2	3	Číslo		Množství kusů v čísle 1	2	3
1	úhel pravý — 2 kusy s dírkou	6	8	18	23	pásky s osmi očky a 2 háčky délka 200 mm	—	8	12
1a	úhel šestihran	—	—	8	24	pásky s deseti očky a 2 háčky dél. 246 mm	—	2	8
1b	úhel osmihran	—	—	20	25	oj délka 200 mm	—	1	1
2	pásky s úhlem délka 50 mm	10	16	16	26	pravý úhel se 4 očky délka 60 mm	4	4	4
2a	pásky s úhlem délka 50 mm s 2 očky	2	2	6	27	pravý úhel se 12 očky délka 136 mm	—	4	4
2b	pásky s úhlem délka 50 mm s dírkami	—	2	2	28	pravý úhel s 18 očky délka 204 mm	—	2	4
2c	pásky s úhlem 6hran a 8hran	—	16	16	29	pravý úhel s 22 očky délka 251 mm	—	—	4
3	pásky s úhlem délka 75 mm	8	12	14		kolečka	2	4	4
3a	pásky s úhlem délka 75 mm ve středu dírka	—	2	2		hřidelky bez závitu délka 106 mm	1	—	—
4	pásky s úhlem délka 90 mm	2	—	19		hřidelky se závitem délka 106 mm	—	2	3
4a	pásky s.4 očky délka 90 mm	2	—	1		hřidelky se závitem délka 82 mm	—	—	2
4b	pásky s4 očky v háčku s dírkou délka 90 mm	—	—	4		hřidelky se závitem délka 70 mm	1	2	2
5	pásky 5 oček a háčky délka 131 mm	4	14	16		hřidelky se závitem délka 30 mm	—	—	1
6	pásky 5 oček délka 113 mm	2	2	8		matičky se závitem	—	3	3
7	pásky 4 očka a háčky délka 108 mm	4	8	14					
8	pásky 4 očka délka 90 mm	4	4	12					
9	pásky 3 očka délka 67 mm	4	4	12					
10	pásky 2 očka délka 60 mm	4	4	4					
11	pásky 2 očka, pravý neb levý háč. dél. 60 mm	2	4	12					
12	pásky oboustranné háčky délka 80 mm	2	6	30					
13	pásky oboustranné háčky délka 60 mm	4	4	12					
14	pásky oboustranné háčky délka 46 mm	4	8	30					
14a	pásky oboustr.háč. ve středu dír. dél. 46 mm	—	—	2					
15	pásky s úhlem délka 32 mm	—	—	16					
16	háček a očko délka 30 mm	—	—	4					
17	háčky na obou stranách délka 18 mm	—	—	8					
17a	háčky na obou stranách délka 18 mm	—	—	10					
18	pásky se dvěma očky délka 44 mm	—	1	4					
19	pásky se dvěma očky a háčky délka 62 mm	—	6	10					
20	pásky se třemi očky a háčky délka 85 mm	—	6	10					
21	pásky se šesti očky délka 136 mm	—	4	7					
22	pásky se šesti očky a 2 háčky dél. 154 mm	—	6	12					

Fig.3

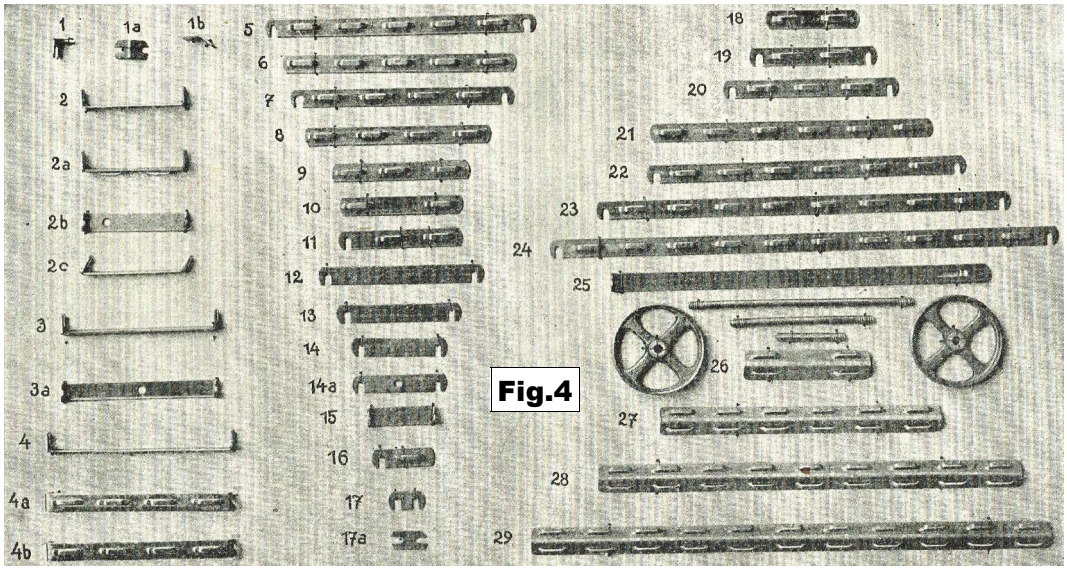


Fig.4

cases the same type. There are only two exceptions: in Fig.4, parts 5 and 7 are U at one end and R at the other one. In the actual parts, Fig.9, the two 5's have either U or R at both ends.

Fig.5

In the list of parts (Fig.3), DAS 4a has U, while 4b has R, at both ends. Thus, it is possible to have a Rod parallel to the Strip, which is useful for a spring or a door.

Many parts (1, 5, 7, 11, 23) have two variants: all the hooks are U, or all are R.

There are other kinds of variants: parts 2b, 3a, and 14a have a hole and are variants of other parts without a hole. Also in Fig.9 part 24 has a variant with a hole in the middle, and this appears in neither Fig.3, nor in Fig.4.

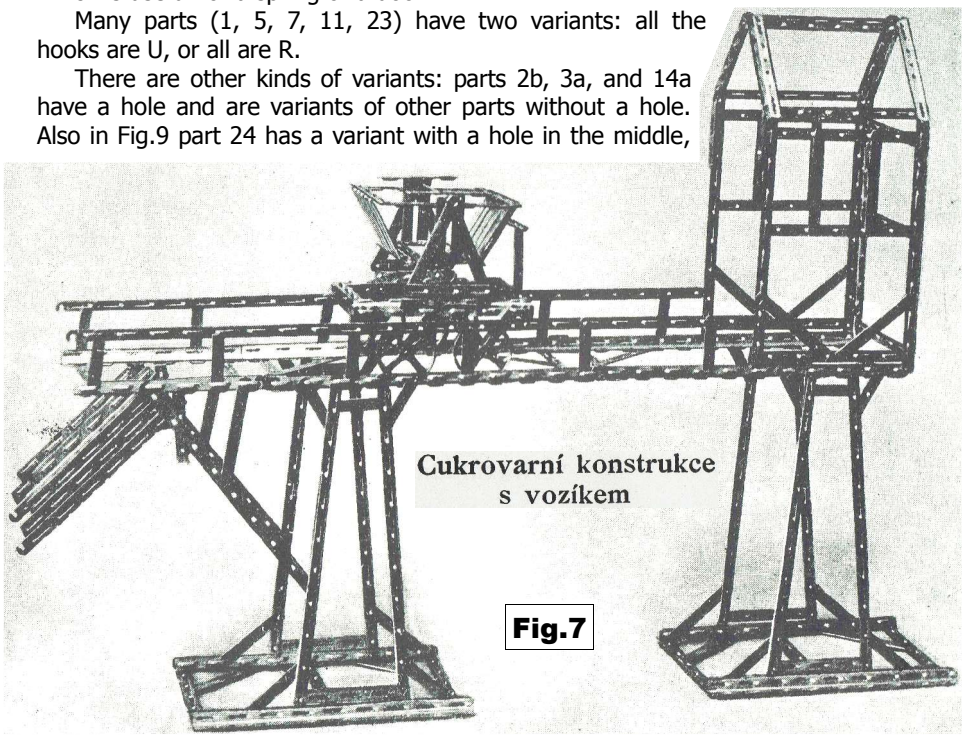


Fig.7

Furthermore, some parts with eyes are handed because they have one U end and one R end (part 7), or because they have only one hook (parts 11 & 16). Other variants, which also have one U end and one R end (12, 13, 14), are not handed because they are flat.

When a part has several variants not mentioned in the contents, the sum of all the parts present in the box is equal to its number in Fig.3: there are 16 angle brackets with two U, and 2 with two R, the contents indicate 18 parts 1. For some parts, this is more complicated; let us consider part 7, 14 of them are in set No.3. 5 are R at both ends, 5 are U at both ends, 2 are R on the left and U on the right, and 2 are U on the left and R on the right. Surprisingly enough, none of the 16 parts 5, represented on Fig.5 with U on the left and R on the right, exists in this form: there are 12 with U at both ends, and 4 with R at both ends!

Fig.6

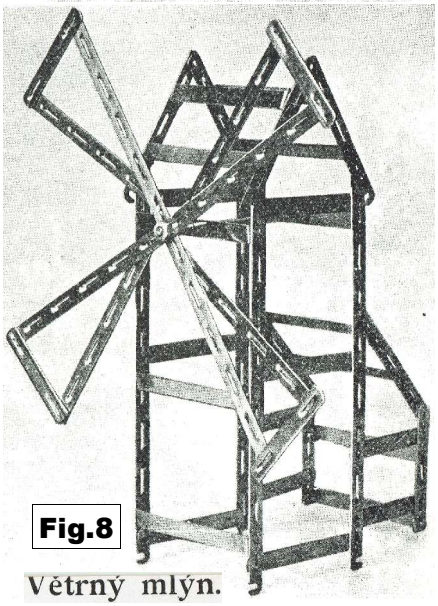


Fig.8

The MANUAL The 241*144mm manual (Fig.5) has 36 pages plus covers. It is written in Czech, but the language appears only in the introduction (written by Jaroslac Vancl), the content of the sets, the name of the models, and the list of parts needed for building them. Nowhere is the way to use parts described, this essential information is only in the patent (OSN 34/105). For the models there are no building instructions, only photos, which are not very clear. 23 models are shown for set No.1, 11 for Set 2, and 13 for Set 3. Examples are shown in Figs.6, 8, & 7 for Sets 1, 2, 3. Some models for Set 3 also have photos of substructures: with Fig.7, two more pages include the photos of three substructures. Many models are rather disappointing: they do not use all the potential of the set. However, in Fig.7 the model uses 245 of the 375 parts in set No.3.

END WORD This system deserves all the more credit in that it is very original. It is well suited for building static models, although it lacks Plates. However, it has a great weakness: it is the only system I know where 30% of the parts are omitted completely from its description!

It will not be easy to build models: the photos of the manual are not clear, and the choices between the different variants of a part are not indicated.

It is not surprising that its inventor later chose to develop MERKUR, a MECCANO-like system.

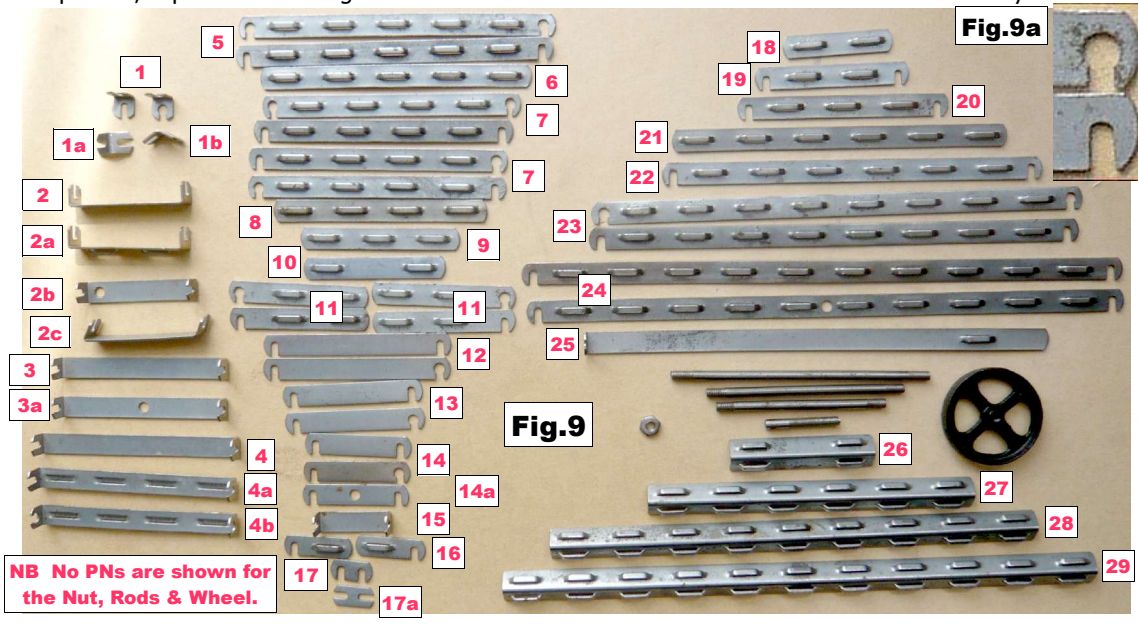


Fig.9

Fig.9a

'New' German System: TI-BA Urs Flammer kindly sent details of the set shown here, including the invaluable notes on the parts from Jürgen Kahlfeldt.

Fig.1

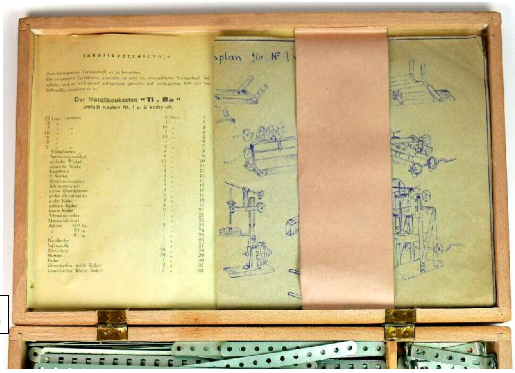


Fig.2

It is thought that TI-BA was probably made in the 1946-50 period but nothing is known of the maker.

The SETS The set here is labelled '1+2' and so perhaps there were also Sets 1 & 2. Or was '1+2' just to impress potential buyers? The Set's box is wooden and measures 366*236*35mm. The top of lid is shown in Fig. 1 and held on its underside (Fig.2) is a sheet with the set contents, and a model leaflet folded into four.

The PARTS Many of them can be seen in Fig.3, the open box. Axles and the N&B are steel, the other parts are anodised aluminium, .9 to 1.2mm thick, and coloured green, orange, yellow, blue, & natural, as shown. All Brackets & small parts are blue except for the green Flat Bracket. Holes are 3.6mm at 10.0mm pitch, though the latter varies by ± .06 in the 25h parts. The thread is M3. The parts in the set contents list follow with notes, quantities in curly brackets, and an asterisk for parts missing from the Set. #1-6 **Strips** 25,15,12,10,5,3h. 10.8mm wide. {6,4,10,4,10,4}. #7 **Flat Bracket** with 2 slotted holes. {4}. #8 **A/G** 25h. {4}. #9 **DAS** 1*5*1h. All holes except the centre 3 are slotted. {6}. #10 **A/B**, 2 slotted holes. {12}. #11 **Reversed A/B**. {2}. #12 **Double Bent Strip**. {1}. #13 **D/B** 2*1*2h. {1}. #14 **Bush Wheel**, 6h, 34mm Ø. {1}. #15,16,17 **Flanged Plates**: Sector; 5*5,12h (the 5*5h are under the 5*12h.), holes 3.2,3.5,3.2mm Ø. Slotted holes in flanges & along flanged edges. {2,2,1}. #18,19,20 **Pulleys** with boss, 69,33,22.3mm Ø. {2,4,2}. #21 **Screwdriver*** {1}. #22 **Spanner*** {1}. #23,24,25 **Axles** 100,50,30mm, 3.4mm Ø. {3,1,1}. #26 **Crank Handle*** {1}. #27 **Cord*** (Schnurrolle) {1}. #28 **Bolts**, cheesehead, 6,8mm u/h, some 6mm have raised (gewölbter) head. {50}. #29 **Nut** 5,5mm A/F. {50}. #30 **Spring*** {1}. #31,32 **Tyres**, Rubber, for #19, 20, 53/30, 38/22mm Ø, 12.5,8.5mm wide. {2,2}

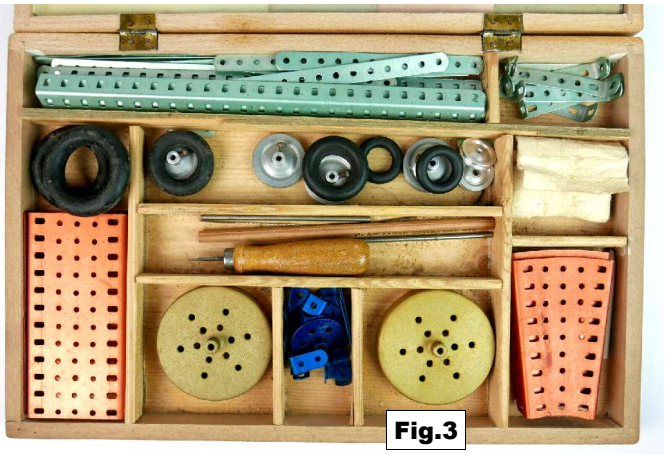


Fig.3

The following parts were found but aren't in the maker's list. **A/G**, 3h long, all holes slotted, blue. {2}. **Collar, Coupling** 8mm Ø, 8,10mm long. Natural. {4,2}. **Tyre**, rubber, 29/15.5 Ø, 6.5mm wide. It has no obvious use. {2}.

The MODELS The model sheet right shows 24 models. Their unusual presentation was most likely for cheapness or to meet a deadline for the system's launch. Conceivably though it was to encourage youngsters to think through the way the models should be built. The first quite simple models would have provided an introduction to this and the relative mechanical simplicity of all of them would have avoided any real difficulties, at least for the enthusiast with some experience.

One oddity, arising from the set's contents, no 3- or 4-wheel model could have all the wheels the same diameter.

The two models bottom right reproduce poorly. One is a Signal Gantry with two signal arms on each of two masts, all?some of them lever-operated. The model above it is a Steam Engine with a connecting rod from a Bush Wheel on the end of a Crank Handle. The drive to the 2-arm governor above isn't clear.

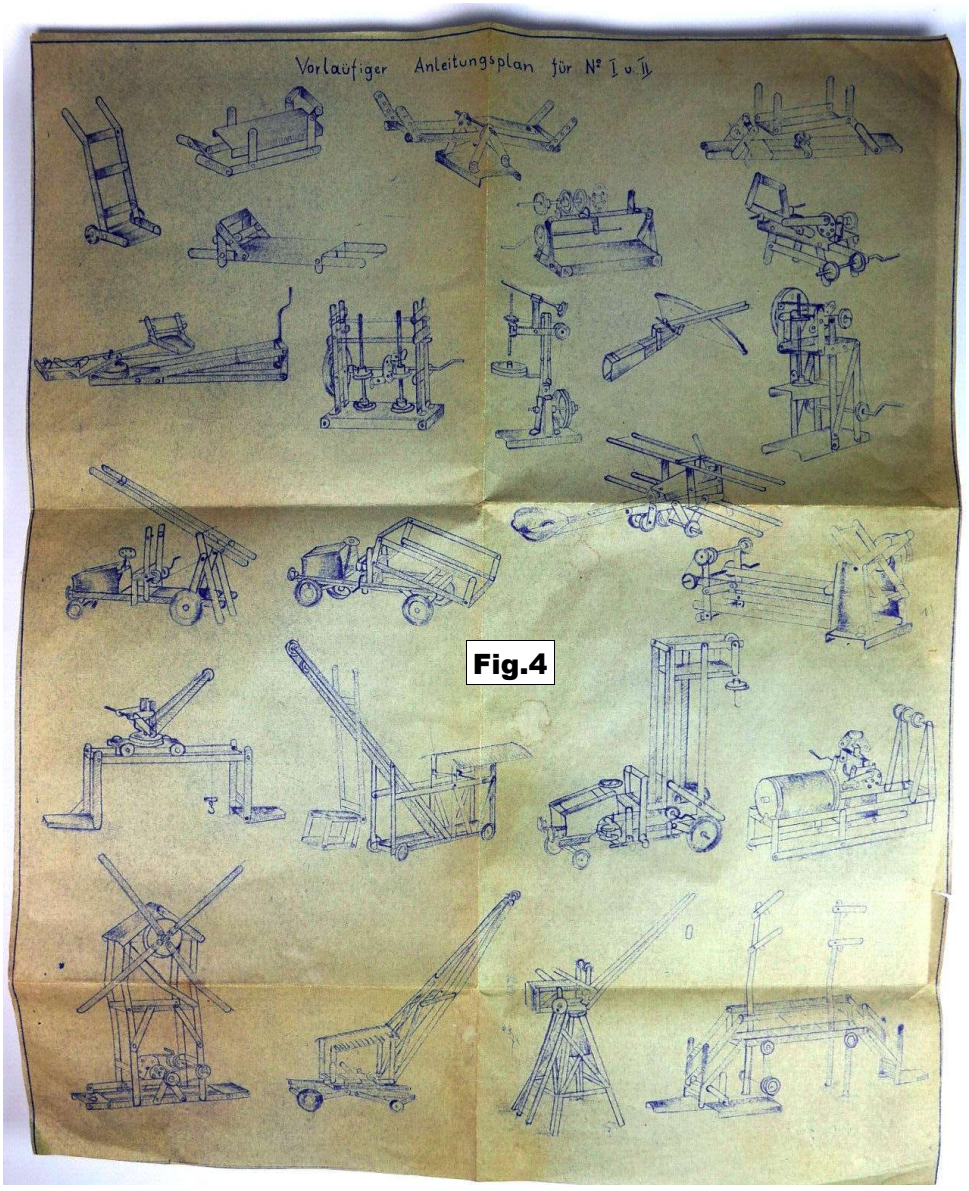


Fig.4

Snippet. 'New' System: LOCARNO The set shown was offered on the Dutch Marktplaats. Right, the lid with the manual above it, and the logo from the centre of the label inset. Far right the lid label enlarged. Figs.4 shows the parts in the box, and Fig.5 part of the manual. There is no indication of the size of the box, or of any other outfits.

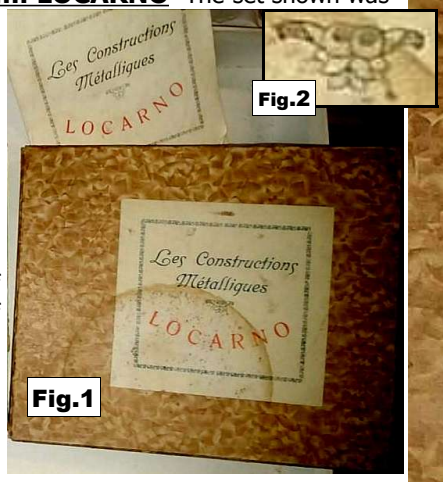


Fig.1

Fig.2

Fig.3

The only clue to the set's maker is the logo, but until it can be identified it isn't even clear in which country the set was made. Switzerland perhaps given that Locarno is a Swiss town, but it is said to be Italian speaking and if so a label in at least French and Italian would have been appropriate. If not Switzerland then France would be the obvious likely possibility.

The Parts There is nothing to point to the size of the parts. The different types that can be seen are green Strips in 15 lengths from 2 to 16h, a black Angle Bracket, and black N&B with hexagon Nuts & roundheaded Bolts. At a glance some of the Strips look wider than others and comparatively wide in relation to the hole size, but when the photo is blown up it's clear that at least in most cases the 'extra' width is due to irregular stacking of the parts, and the holes don't look unusual in size.

The Models speak for themselves, and, given the size of the Set, seem to me to make the best of having only Strips and Angle Brackets to work with. One wonders why no Wheels, or even Discs, were included. Do the windmill's sails rotate? Hard to see how unless there was a long Bolt in the Set originally. Incidentally the parts lists for the models have only Strips & A/Bs in them, with no mention of Nuts, or Bolts, long or otherwise.


Fig.4

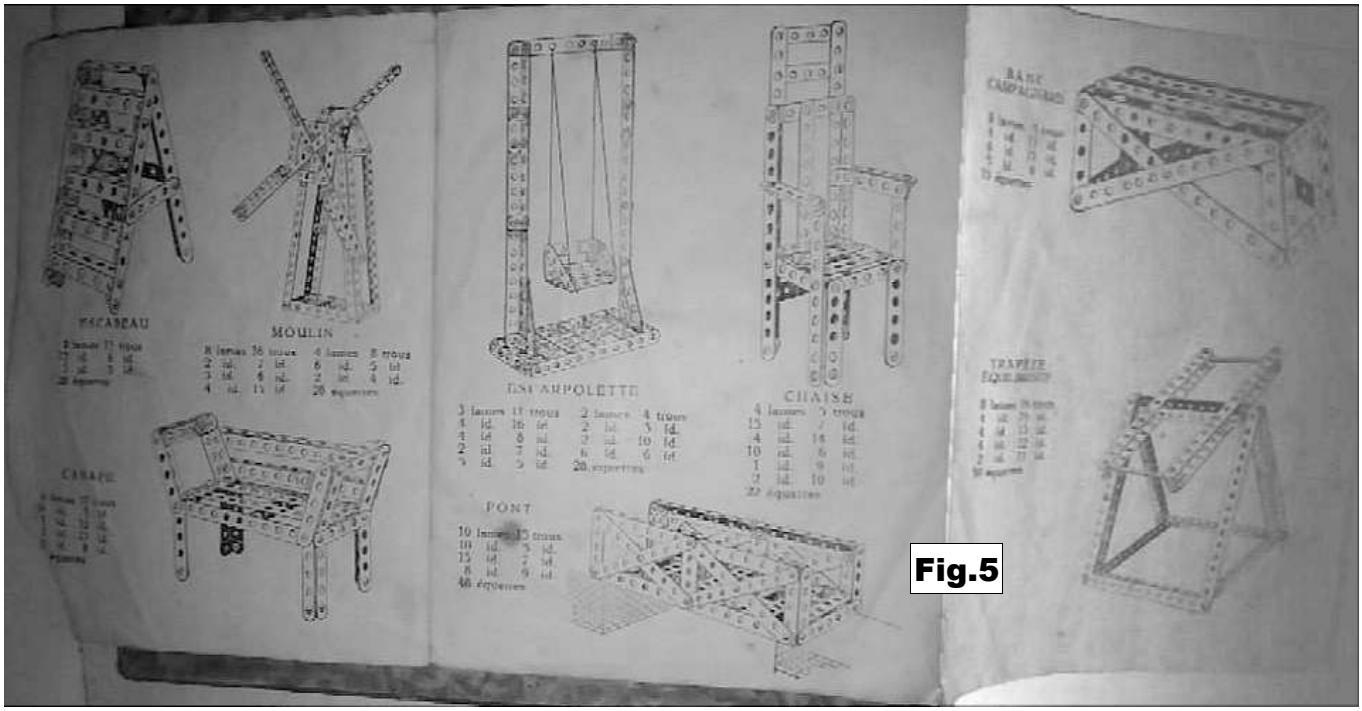


Fig.5

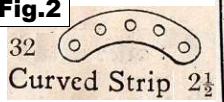
'New' Indian System: MICMAC These notes are based on two almost identical manuals for Set 1. Below the cover of

Fig.1

one of them. MICMAC was made by Jai Hind Limited of Calcutta. No date is mentioned but sometime after WW2 would be the most likely. There were 5 outfits, Nos.1-5 plus linking sets 1A-4A.

The PARTS 56 parts with MECCANO names are listed, most are illustrated, and all but one look exactly like MECCANO. The exception is shown right. Clues indicating a date after WW2 are that the Flat Bracket is called Fishplate, & the Wheel Disc is 1⅜" Ø.

Fig.2

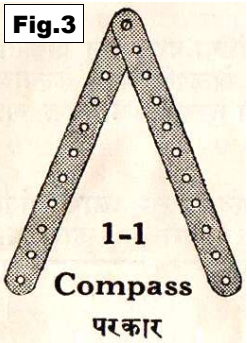


The parts which are not called up in the Set Contents (Fig.6) are: #1,3,5,6, Strips 1½,3½, 7½,9½"; #9, 3½*5½" Flanged Plate; #10, 5½* 2½" Flexible Plate; #21, Trunnion; #26, Axle Rod 1½"; #38, Elastic Band; #55, Anchoring Spring for Cord.

The SETS From the Set Contents the Set 1 doesn't really match any of the postwar Liverpool sets but the No.5 is roughly similar to the No.3.

The MANUALS The red-covered one above has 10 unnumbered pages (248*181mm) including covers. pp2 & 3 speak of How to Begin, & Lock Nutting, in English & 3 other, presumably Indian, languages (all of which defeated Google).

Fig.3



pp4-6 show models 1-1 Compass to 1-25 Field Gun (Figs.3 & 4, both at their original size), with names in English & one of the 'Indian' languages. Of the 25 models 15 are 2-dimensional, mostly geometric shapes, and the others are very simple models peaking in a Pair of Scales & the Field Gun.

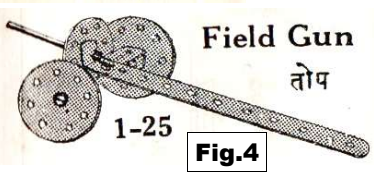


Fig.4

...p7 is about the models that can be made with Set 2, again in English & one Indian language. 4 larger & slightly more interesting models are shown from See-Saw to the Children Slope below (again at its original size.

p8 has a list of 10 toys made by H. T. PRODUCTS which doesn't include MICMAC. p9 has the Set Contents, and p10 the Illustrated Parts.

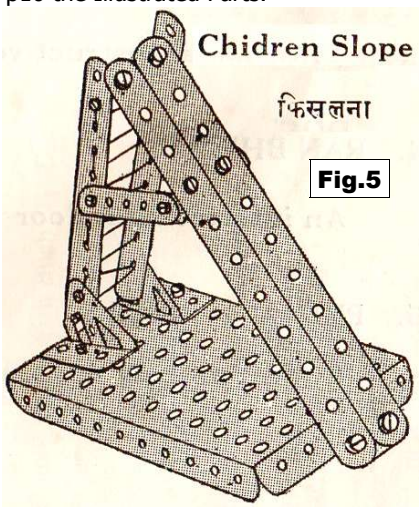


Fig.5

The other manual has an almost identical cover but with yellow replacing the red. It has only 8 pages. p2 has the same Intro but in only English and one Indian language. pp3-8 have the 3 model pages, the Set 2 page, and the Contents & Parts pages as before.

Fig.6

MICMAC CONTENTS

No.	Description विवरण	1	1A	2	2A	3	3A	4	4A	5
2	Strip with holes 2½"×½"	4	...	4	...	4	...	4	4	8
4	Do- 5½"×½"	4	...	4	...	4	2	6	...	6
7	-Do- 12½"×½"	...	...	...	...	...	....	....	2	2
8	Flanged Plate 5½"×2½"	...	1	1	...	1	...	1	...	1
11	Flexible Plate 5½"×1½"	...	...	...	2	2	...	2	...	2
12	-Do- 4½"×2½"	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	1	2
13	-Do- 2½"×2½"	...	...	...	...	...	2	2	...	2
14	-Do- 2½"×1½"	...	...	...	...	...	2	2	2	4
15	Curved Plate 2½"×2½"	...	...	...	...	...	2	2	...	2
16	-Do- U- Section	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	1	2
17	Double Angle Strip 1½"×½"	...	...	...	....	...	2	2	...	2
18	-Do- 2½"×½"	2	...	2	...	2	...	2	...	2
19	Flat Trunion	...	2	2	...	2	...	2	...	2
20	Trunion	...	2	2	...	2	...	2	...	2
22	Fish Plate	...	2	2	2	4	...	4	2	6
23	Angle Bracket ½"×½"	1	3	4	...	4	1	5	3	8
24	Double Bracket	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	2
24a	Obtuse Angle Bracket ½"×½"	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	2
25	Reversed Angle Bracket	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	1	2
27	Axle Rod 2"	1	...	1	...	1	...	1	1	2
28	-Do- 3½"	...	...	...	2	2	...	2	1	3
29	-Do- 4"	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
30	Crank Handle 3½ Shaft	...	...	...	1	1	...	1	...	1
31	Crank 3½",¾" Stroke	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	1
32	Curved Strip 2½"	...	...	...	2	2	...	2	2	4
33	Semi circular plate 2½"	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	2
34	Spring Clip	2	...	2	2	4	2	6	2	8
35	Wheel Disc 1⅜" Dia	3	...	3	1	4	...	4	...	4
36	Wheel with Bush	...	1	1	...	1	...	1	...	1
37	Pulley with Bush	...	...	...	2	2	2	4	...	4
39	Rubber Ring	...	...	...	2	2	2	4	...	4
40	Rubber Tyre	...	...	...	...	..	4	4	...	4
41	Round wheel with Bush 2½" Dia	...	...	..	...	...	1	1	1	2
42	Hook	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	1
43	Spanner	1	...	1	...	1	...	1	1	2
44	Screw Driver	...	1	1	...	1	...	1	...	1
45	Coloured String	1	...	1	...	1	...	1	...	1
46	Nut	12	6	18	6	24	21	45	15	60
47	Bolt	12	6	18	6	24	21	45	15	60
49	Bolt ½"×5/32	1	...	1	...	1	...	1	1	2
50	Round Slotted Strip 3"	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	4
51	Washer	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	2
52	Do- ¾	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	2
53	Rod Connector	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
54	Strip & Rod Connector	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1

Snippet. 'New' System: MŁODY KONSTRUKTOR

The name of this Polish system means Young Builder, or the like. Right the Ebay photo. The lid looks genuine in that its red matches the box's edging, but most of it is covered by what may be a manual with its bottom edge folded over. The parts in the box match those in the models on it so that justifies the set having the same name as the 'manual'. It is thought that the set may date from the 1980s or even earlier.

The parts that can be identified from those in the box, plus those in the models & set contents on the manual cover, are: ● Strips, 15,7,5,3h. ● Curved Strip, 9h. ● A/G, 20,9h. ● DAS, 1*3*1h. ● A/B. ● Flat Bracket or 2h Strip (but neither seen for sure). ● D/B (wide). ● Corner Bracket, 2*2h. ● 1*6h Corner Strip. ● Flanged Plates, 6*6,12h. ● Pulley (as on the Crane). ● Double Bent Strip. ● Road Wheel. ● Disc, with 4 face holes (under the lefthand Wheel & slightly larger than it, used as the Lorry's bonnet). ● Thimble (to the right of the righthand Wheel). ● Hook. ● Rods with Screwed Ends, 3 lengths. ● Spanner. ● Nut. ● Bolt. ● Bolt, 20mm long. (● N&B are M4.)

That makes 28 parts of the 30 listed in the set contents. One of the others might be an Axle Stop or Spring Clip. The numbers are blurry but the Set probably has 10 each of all the Strips, A/B, & Flat Bracket; 2 of each A/G; and 30 something N&B. Some of the parts look like the East German KONSTRUKTOR/CONSTRUCTOR but not the Curved Strip, 1*6h Corner Strip, Road Wheel, or A/G. The latter has no slotted holes and none can be seen in the other parts, but parts of the A/Bs & Flat Brackets can't be seen.

MŁODY KONSTRUKTOR [1]: S1 **OSN 54/1658**

Snippet. Another 'New' MŁODY KONSTRUKTOR.

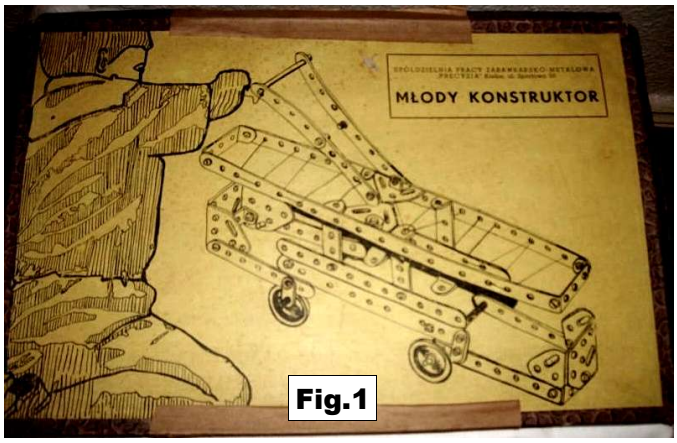


Fig.1

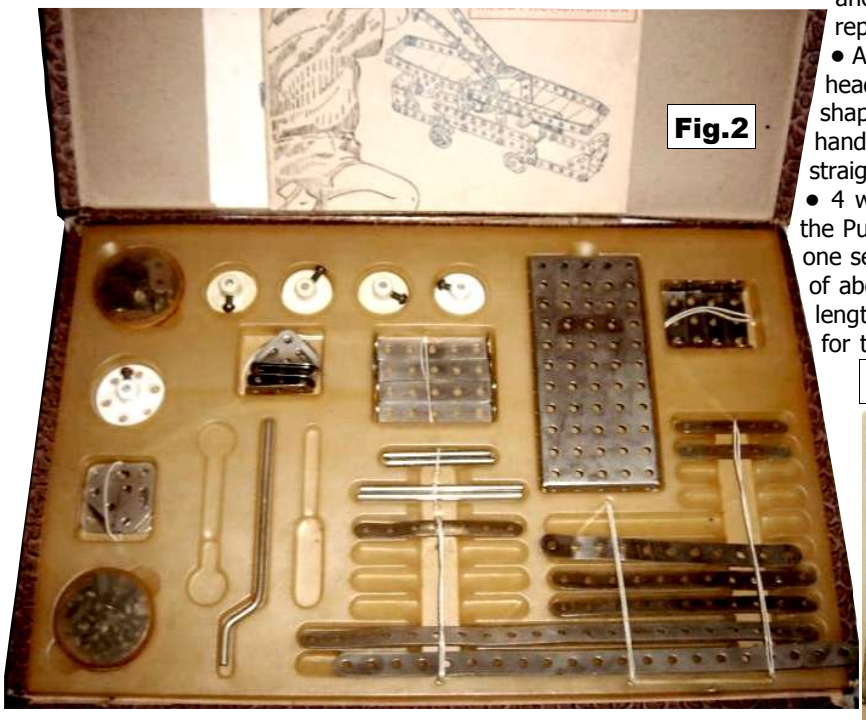


Fig.2

The parts in this MŁODY KONSTRUKTOR don't match those in the [1] system described above. Nothing is known of who made either, or exactly when. Sets of the same name with plastic parts exist. These notes are based on the set in Figs.1 & 2, with some details, & small variations, from other sets.

Fig.1 is the lid, Fig.2 the box & part of the inside of the lid. Said lid looks to have a label on it, mostly covered by the set's manual. The latter's cover design is identical to the lid label. Fig.3 below is a different lid from another, probably later, set.

The parts that can be seen, from all known sets, follow. All holes are round except the side slots in the Trunnions.

● Strips, 2,5,7,11,21h. DAS, 1*3,5*1h. ● Pulley, white plastic with integral boss, single-tapped. Other sets have it in light blue or bright metal. ● Bush Wheel, plastic, boss as the Pulley, red ones are known. ● Flanged Plate, 5*11h. In 3 of the 4 sets seen there are two in the recess, slid together on top of one another. ● Trunnion & Flat Trunnion with long slots replacing Liverpool's piercing. ● Crank Handle. ● Axle, 2 lengths. ● Nut, square. ● Bolt, round-headed. ● Screwdriver, wire with small, circular-shaped handle, or conventional with white plastic handle. ● Spanner, with square jaws, one end straight, the other angled & probably slightly cranked. ● 4 white plastic 'rods', about twice the diameter of the Pulley in length, were in among the small parts in one set – they might be thin-walled tubes with a bore of about the Axle diameter, and when cut to suitable lengths could have acted as axle stops. ● Black Tyre for the Pulley. The Fig.3 set has one in each of the two circular corner recesses.

Fig.3

MŁODY KONSTRUKTOR [2]: S1 **OSN 54/1658**

Snippet. 'New' Taiwanese System: FANCY The set here was offered on American Ebay and it was at first assumed to be from an American firm, but when enlarged the words bottom right on the lid's apron (Fig.1) reads 'MADE IN TAIWAN'. It could of course have been made for an American company but this seems unlikely with a name like FANCY and clumsy wording, 'STEEL AND PLASTIC GOOD' for example, bottom left on the lid (Fig.2). The Crane & Tiering Machine on the lid are ERECTOR models of the period for Sets 2½ or 3.

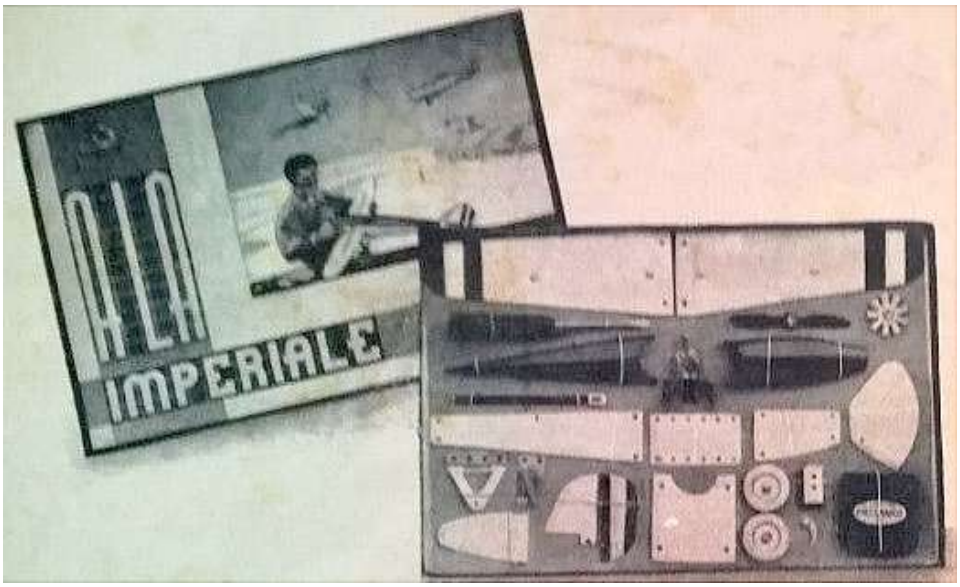
Fig.1

Fig.2

The parts, though not necessarily their colour, look to be copies from ERECTOR's 1932-62 period. 250 parts are claimed on the lid and the different ones which can be seen are as follows, with ERECTOR PNs. **Girders**, 2½,5,10", A,B,C. **Girders, Curved**, 2½,5", D,E. **DAS**, N. **Wire Hook**, AF. **Axle**, 4" AT. **Bush Wheel**, BT. **A/B**, CH. **Flanged Plates**, 3*1½,5½", MC, MD. **Perforated Plate**, 1½*5½", MF. **Nut**, N21. **Pulley**, ⅞", P7. **Crank Handle**, P24. **Cord**, P34. **Trunnion**, P79. **Bolt**, S51. **Long** Bolt, S62? **Rubber Ring** (on the 'Tierer'), CL was a Small Rubber Tire but not listed after the late 1920s. Doubtless there were other small parts, & perhaps some large ones too; for instance a 1950 ERECTOR Set 2½, which had less than 200 parts, included 4x 3" Disc Wheels.

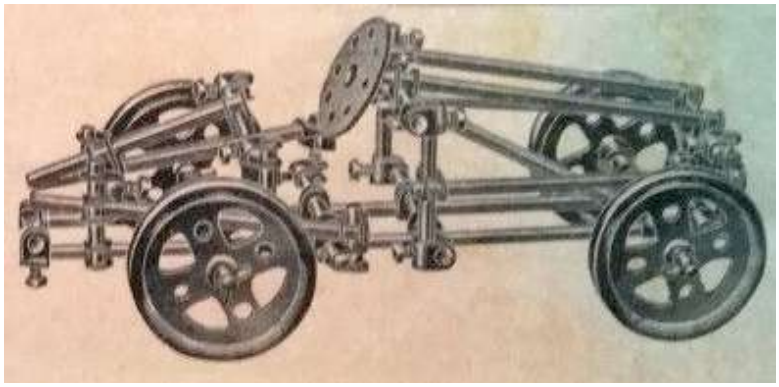
OSN 54/1659 **FANCY: S1**

Snippet. 'New' System: ALA IMPERIALE The firm Braglia, best known for its BRAL outfits, marketed similar sets under other names. One of these was MECCANICO and a manual, said to date from the 1940s, had ads for the aero set shown right, and for the METALGENIO system at the bottom of this page. Google renders Ala Imperiale as Imperial Wing, and the rest of the ad talks of aeroplane & seaplane models powered by a clockwork motor. The parts in the Set look just like BRAL Aero but I don't recall an Aero Motor for the BRAL aero models. Italy's interest in empire was strong in the 1930s and ALA IMPERIALE could well date from then.



OSN 54/1659 **ALA IMPERIALE: S1**

Snippet. 'New' System: METALGENIO As explained in ALA IMPERIALE above there was an ad for METALGENIO in a MECCANICO manual, said to date from the 1940s. MECCANICO of course was one of the names Braglia used for their conventional sets mainly sold as BRAL. The ad featured the model right and as can be seen its framework is made of Tubes or Rods joined by Clamps. These parts, or certainly the Clamps, are not standard BRAL, but the steering wheel could be a BRAL Bush Wheel, and the road wheels standard BRAL Pulleys fitted with Rubber Rings. The ad's text translates as: 'Modern Pastime for Youngsters. Compatible with MECCANICO. Patented.'



OSN 54/1659 **METALGENIO: S1**

'New' Dutch System: EUREKA

Thank you to Jan Ringnalda for the photos & details of this system. It was made around 1948-1949 by Fam. Brinkman, Hugo de Grootstraat, Purmerend, a town some 16km north of Amsterdam.

The SETS These were Nos.000, 000A, 00, 0, 0A, 1, 2, 3, & 4. Their structure (from the Model Sheet) was rather unusual: 000+ 000A=00; 00+0+ 0A=1; 1+2=3; 1+2+ 3=4; & 3+3=4.

Jan's set is a 00, & its box measures 30½*20*2¾cm, Fig.1 shows the lid. The small print along the bottom translates as Patent Pending No. 144449. The N&B are in a packet, Fig.2, 15½*11cm, which also has the patent claim, and is stamped with the set number, 00. '00' is also on the bottom right corner of the backing card (Fig.4).

A wooden box, available from dealers, would house all the parts in Sets 000, 000A, 0, & 0A.

The PARTS The 15 main ones, all aluminium, can be seen in Fig.4. Fig.3 shows the N&B, and in the box their packet sits on the Plate.

Holes are 4.9mm at 14.0mm pitch, but the centre hole of the Bush Wheel is 4.5mm Ø, and the hole in the Wheel is 5.8mm. The parts are listed below with their Dutch names in brackets and quantities in curly brackets. ● Strips (Strip), 14mm wide, 2,3,7,9h, {2,4,2, 4}. ● A/G (Hoeklijn), 17*17mm, 7h, {2}. ● A/B (Hoeklijn/Hoekje), {4}. ● D/B (Beugel), 1*1*1h {1}. ● DAS (Beugel), 1*3*1h, {1}. ● Bush Wheel (Schijf), 42mm Ø, with formed centre hole, {4}. ● Wheel (Wiel), formed, 42mm Ø, 2 can form a double-sided wheel or, back to back, a pulley {4}. ● D/B with Foot, 3*1*3h (Wielbeugel), to carry a pulley etc, {1}. ● Hook (Kraanhaak), {1}. ● Plate (Plaat), 9*7h, {1}. ● Bolts (Boutje), 6,10,30mm long, 3/16" BSW, {14,2,4}. ● Nut (Moertje), 9mm A/F, {18, some may be missing}.

The MODEL SHEET, 86*56cm, folds down to 21½*14cm. One side has Fig.5 in the top right corner with a model from Set 4, and under it a similar image but with a Set 3 Chair-O-Planes roundabout. These form the front & back faces when the Sheet is folded.

The other side has 4 columns with an introduction in the first and some standard constructions. Each of the other 3 has 10 models for Sets 000, 00, & 00+0 respectively. The models go from very simple, starting with a 000 Verkeersbord voor kruising [Traffic Halt Sign], to more interesting ones for the 00+0 set, witness the three below in Fig.6.

Fig.1

Fig.2


Fig.3

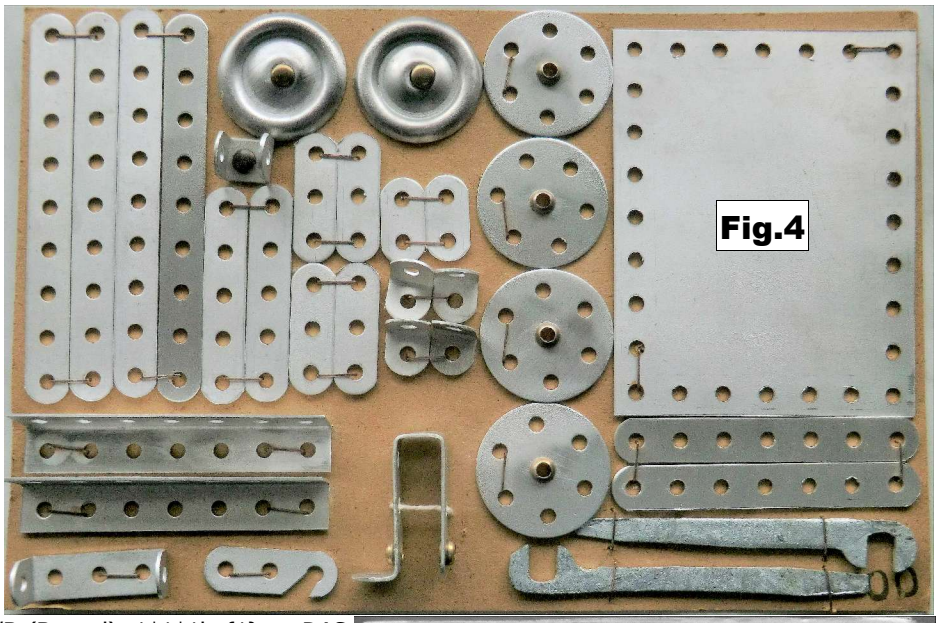


Fig.4

Fig.5

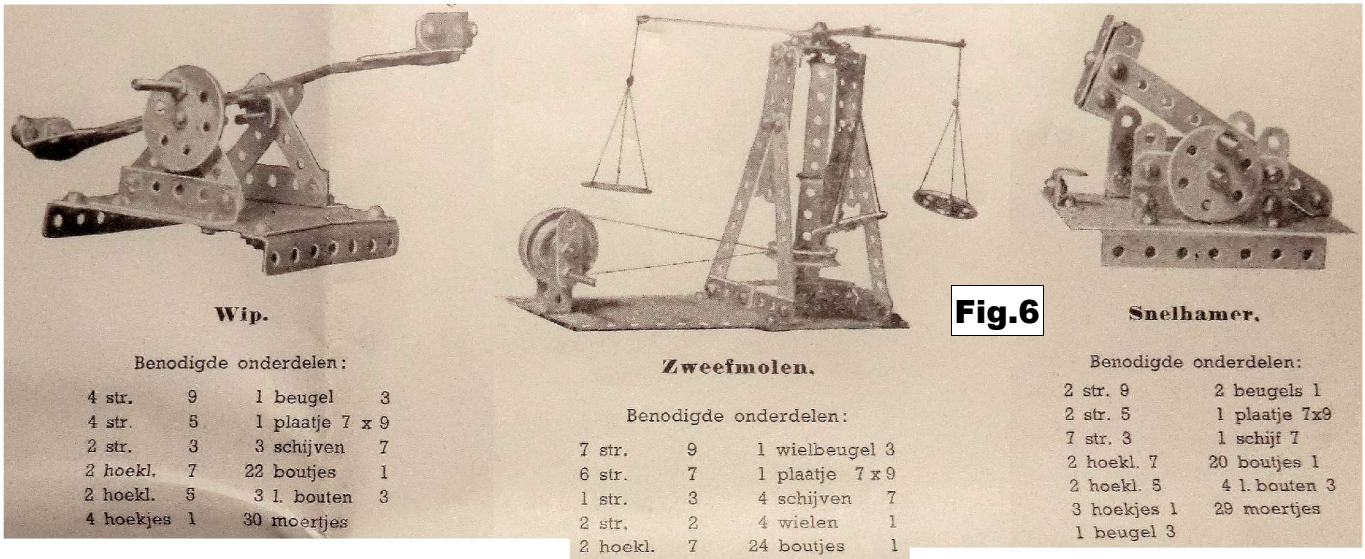


Fig.6

Snippet. 'New' Syrian System: MECHANO The set shown here was offered on the French Ebay. The lid below has

Fig.1

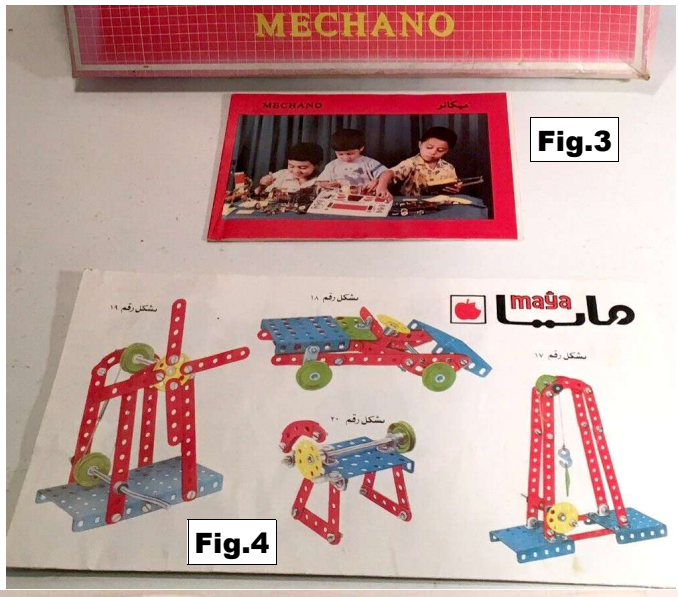


Fig.3

Fig.4

Fig.2

'DAMASCUS, SYRIA. P.O. BOX 4043 C.R. 14732 I.R. 9' on the side of the box above.

The Set is something of a puzzle. 2 layers of parts are shown (Fig.6) & those in the left one resemble Chinese WISDOM etc, while those on the right look like Czech MERKUR. There is a MECHANO manual (Fig.3) with the cover photo similar to the one on the box lid, and two models from it (Fig.5) are made of 'Chinese' parts. Two loose sheets show MERKUR models and one of the sheets is headed 'MAŶA (Fig.4) (the circumflex over the Y is blurry).

It seems almost certain that the MERKUR element was not part of the Set. When enlarged it can be seen that the boys in the photos on the lid & manual cover are using Chinese parts. No doubt the Set originally had a second layer of Chinese parts, & it would have included Trunnions, Flexible Plates, etc which would be needed for the models.

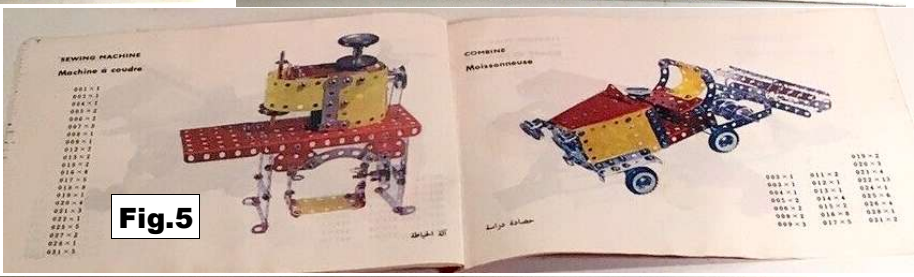


Fig.5

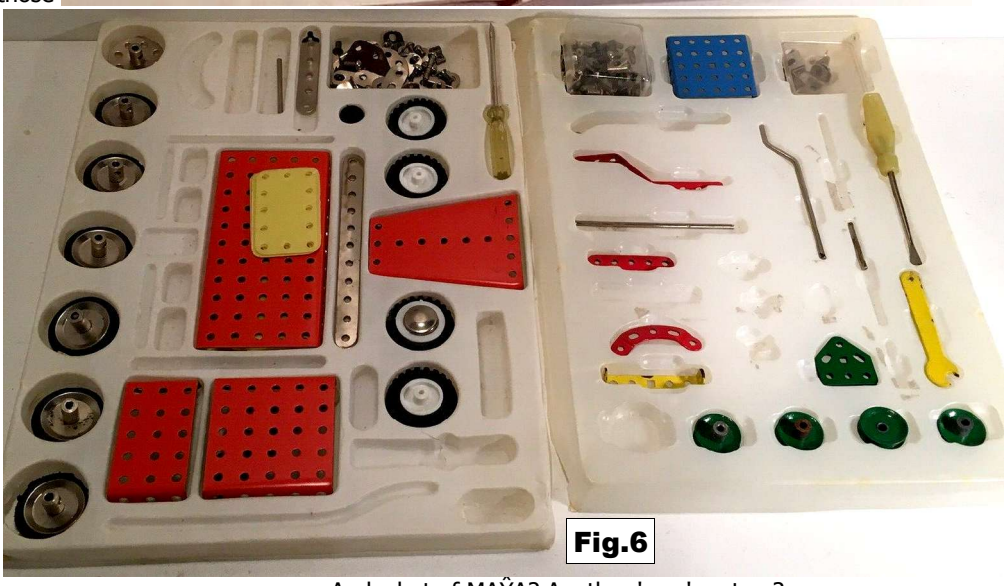


Fig.6

And what of MAŶA? Another 'new' system?

OSN 54/1661 **MECHANO: S1**

KONSTRUKTIONSSPIELE 38/1134 showed a box lid, & gave the name of the maker. 43/1319 showed the manual's front face together with some parts which it is now clear were not K'SPIELE.

Finally, Urs Flammer has kindly sent details of his set & its manual. The box, 12*14*2cm, has the OSN 38 lid. **The parts** are nickelled steel and those that can be seen in the open box right are: 9*5h Flgd Plate; 2,3,5,9h Strips; DAS; A/B; Pulley; Bush Wheel; Axle; Crank Handle; N&B (probably square Nut, cheeseheaded Bolt. All holes are round: 4.5mm Ø (with some 5mm) at 12.5mm pitch. Axles are 3.5mm Ø, & the thread M4, but M3 in the bosses.

The manual is a single-sided A4 sheet folded into 4 sides. Its front is as in OSN 43 and Fig.2 is the Crane on it. There are

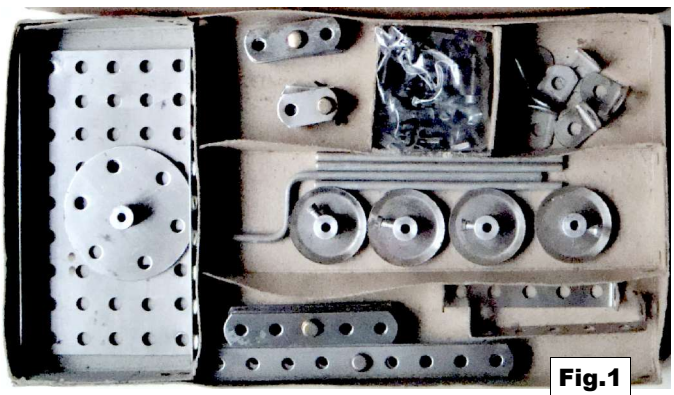


Fig.1

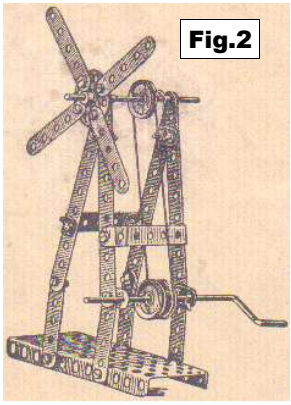


Fig.2

nine more models on the other sides, from Nr.2.Tisch to Nr.10. Eisenbahnwagon. All but one of these 9 models are much simpler than the Crane: the exception is a Railway Signal with the signal arm linked by Cord to the operating lever.

OSN 54/1661 **KONSTRUKTIONSSPIELE: S3**

An UFSA No.2 Manual and some parts. Notes on these items follow on from those in 52/1611.

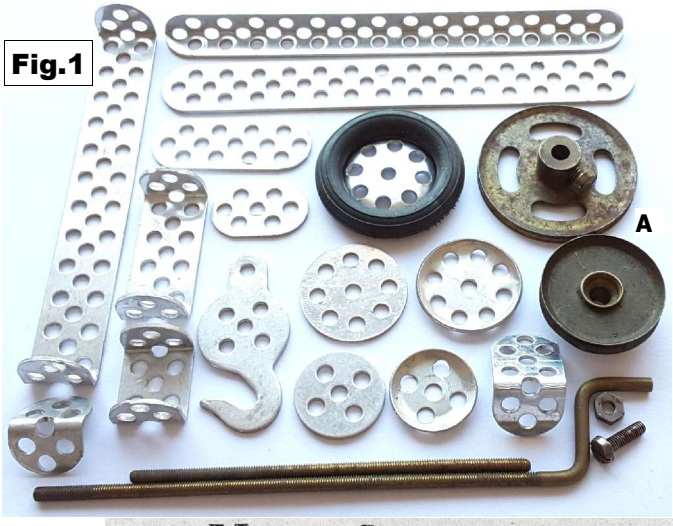


Fig.1

The SETS The somewhat unusual set structure of the system's 6 sets is given in the Manual's Intro and is the same as in the No.1 manual in OSN 52.

The PARTS All except the N&B and the Spanners are aluminium. See Fig.1 for examples. The Strips look like TRIX but differ slightly with 3.5mm holes at 7.9mm pitch, against TRIX's 3.8 at 7.8mm. The parts are listed below under their PNs, with the quantities found in curly brackets. All but one PN start with 'N.' (= No.) followed by, for Strips, DAS, Brackets, & A/Gs, a number denoting the number of holes along the centre row for a Strip, or the number in a Strip before it was formed into a DAS, Bracket, or A/G. Then after this number a letter: 'F' for all Strips, 'p' for DAS & Brackets, and 'a' for an A/G. Other parts have letters after the 'N.' followed by a number denoted the size. These are given in the list below.

• **Strips**, N.15F,13,11,9,7,5,3F. {6,4,6,4,6,8,3} • **DAS**, N. 15p,13,11,9,7p. {1,0,3,5,8} • **D/B**, N.5p. {3} • **A/Bs**, N.4p,3p, both bent across 2nd row from end. {6,2} • **A/G**, N.15a (called F.A.p in model parts list), bent along centre line. {8} • **Screwed Rods**, N.S.B.15,13,11, 9,7,5, (in cm?, in the parts they are 12,10,8cm long), brass, M3. {1,4,3} • **Crank Handles**, N.M.A.15,13,11,9,7,5, (the one in the parts has an 11cm shank), brass, M3. {1} • **Hook**, N.G.A., (in the manual models, & the No.1 described in OSN 52, they are the flat wire type, as right (from a photo of the No.1 not shown in OSN 52). {1} • **Discs**, N.R. 9,5, 24,20mm Ø with holes at 8¼,5½mm radius. {5,2} • **Pulley Discs**, N.R.9p,5p, made from the Discs. {4,10} • **Tyres**, N.R.G.9,5, to fit the Pulley Discs. See Note 2 below. {5,0} • **Spanners**, N.C.H.1,2, one with a screwdriver end is shown in Fig.2, the other is the same but plain ended. {0,0} • **Bolt**, **Nut**, N.V.T.1, N.D.A.2, nickelled steel, M3 thread, Bolt with 5.6mm Ø tapered cheesehead, 10mm u/h (those in the No.1 set are similar but round-headed, see OSN 52, Fig.3); Nut 6.1mm A/F. {10,2} • **Mystery part**. The part without the initial 'N' is 'S.B. speciale', & is listed after the Spanners. Possibly a special threaded part. No S.B.s or Spanners are called up for the manual models. • **Note 1**. The 2 Pulleys at 'A' in Fig.1 were with the parts but for several reasons are almost certainly not UFSA, for example their bore is 4.3mm & bosses are tapped M4. They are 26 & 39mm Ø – can anyone identify them? • **Note 2**. The Tyre is 36mm o.d. & fits the 26mm Pulley above but it may be UFSA because it also fits the R.9p Pulley Discs & looks similar to the Tyre in the No.1 outfit. It has circular ribbing all round. The smaller Tyre R.G.5 has not been seen.


Fig.2

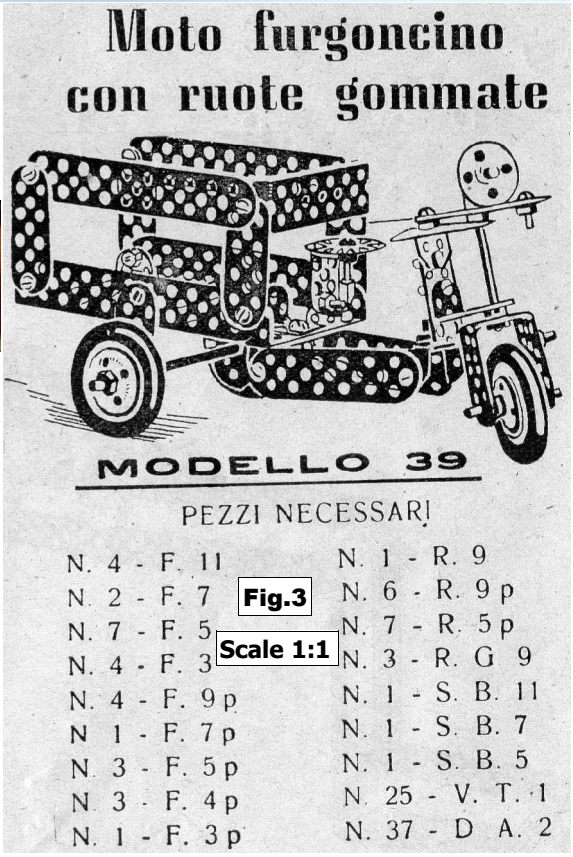


Fig.3 Scale 1:1

The MANUAL has 11 leaves, 24¾*17cm, held by 2 metal clips. C1 is as Fig.3 in OSN 41, which in turn is the same design as the lid label. The only difference in this case is that it is stamped '2', after 'N' bottom right. The other 3 covers are blank, without the printer's name on C4. Of the 11 leaves 2 are printed on only one side. One is headed IMPORTANTE and has an Intro including the set structure; the other a list of 40 USFA parts.

The remaining leaves are double-sided & show models 1-39, from Freccia indicatrice [Arrow indicator], to the Truck in above [Motor truck with rubber wheels]. The models seem to be original & generally look the part. There is a reasonable variety though the only car or lorry is a small Car Chassis. Nothing is said of the set needed for the models but they progress from small & simple to more complex, especially after No.29. A/Gs are only used in 2 models and look well as Footbridge handrails but rather spindly in the Crane left.

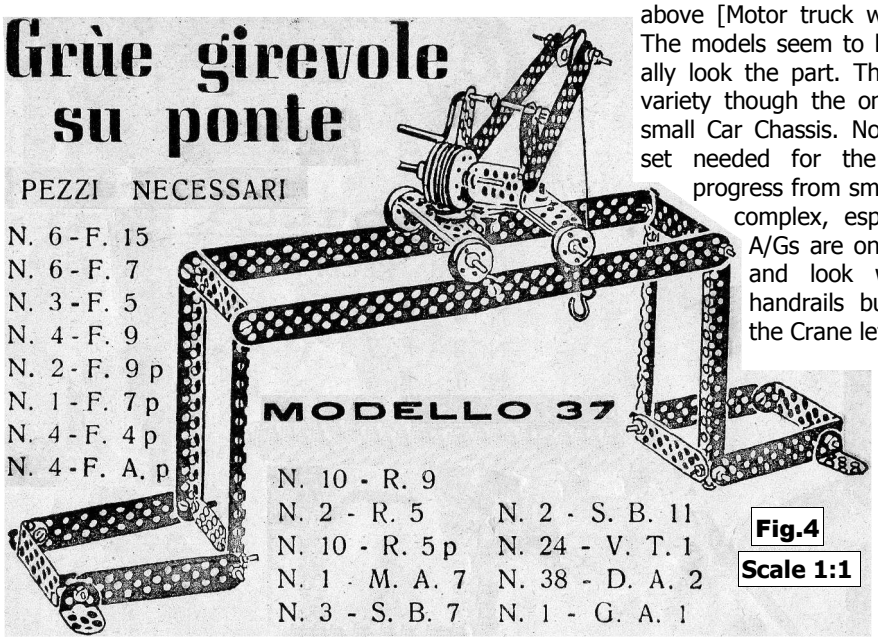


Fig.4 Scale 1:1

From the parts lists for the models in the Manual, those in this item are probably most of a No.2 set, but certainly many N&B, some Discs, & a few DAS are missing. Also perhaps the smaller Tyres.

'New' Italian? System: MAGRA No MAGRA set is known and these notes are based on a manual. As can be seen from the various models shown here, structures are made of Rods joined by Couplings. It was initially assumed that the Rods would be metal but in the text it is said that they are made of hardwood, and also that there are two types with different diameters.

The MANUAL has 48 light fawn pages, 245*170mm, plus

Fig.i

covers: C1 is shown above. (All the illustrations here, after Fig.ii, are in B&W for improved clarity.)

Said cover is in Italian but all the other pages are in Italian, Slovene (one of the three official Yugo-slavian languages), and German. The only exception is that the sets needed for the models are shown atop the model pages in Slovene only. C2 describes the system in broad terms, p1 has how to make the models, and p2 is about the parts, with illustrations as in Fig.ii. p3 has a note about driving the models with electric motors, and pp3-4 show various Basic Constr-uctions labelled Figs.1-28.

pp5-35 show 114 models with a line drawing of each, views of details where necessary, and a list of parts. The 114 are 29,22, 21,15,11,9,7 for Sets A,B,D,E,G, H,K (none for Sets C,F,I,J). The first model for Set A is labelled Fig.15; those for the other 6 sets: Figs.101, 201, 301, 401, 501, 601.

pp35-C4 have construction notes on the models headed by their model names. Model Fig.15 is 'Il molino a vento, Vjetrenjača, Windmühle', and the last model, Fig.607, is 'Saliscendi a piano inclinato, Nagnuta uzpinjačaagn, Schrägaufzug' [Funicular Railway].

The SETS. A', B', D', E', G', H', link Set A to B, B to D, D to E, E to G, G to H, H to K, with no mention of Sets C, F, I, J, C', F', I', J'.

The PARTS. Apart from the Rods, the parts are shown in Fig.ii. Most have a PN & also a designation which starts with a letter. PNs are used in the Parts Lists of the models.

In Fig.ii the Beams D-3,6; the Plate TA; & the Wheels: Pulley (25,35,45,60mm Ø; Flanged (20,50mm Ø); & Gears (8, 16,24 teeth) are wooden. A different version of the Pulley, with a long slot encompassing the 3 face holes, is shown in some of the Basic Constructions, see Fig.iv.

The Couplings, Collar, etc are presumably in metal. Also the wire parts with threaded ends. V6 is the Set Screw.

The Rods are not shown in Fig.ii or elsewhere: there are 2 types, SPA & DPA, both in hardwood. DPA fits into the smooth longitudinal bore of the Couplings, SPA is smaller in diameter to fit the smooth cross bores, see Fig.iii. Their PNs are their lengths in centimetres, and in the drawings of the models the PNs of SPA Rod PNs are underlined. The lengths of Rods called up for the models are 3,5,10,15,20,30cm for SPA, and 3,5,8, 10,15,20,30 for DPA.

There is no indication of the size of any of the parts but to give an idea, scaling the Rod diameters & their lengths in two of the simple manual models, the DPA/SPA Rod diameters might be 6/4mm, or if anything rather less.

The MODELS Those shown here are Rematori/Veslaći/ Ruderer (Fig.vi); Gramola/Tlačilni/Knetmaschine (Fig.vii); L'automobile dei pompieri colla scala e col carro accessorio/Vatrogasni automobil sa ljestvom i sa prikolicom/ Feuerwehrleiterauto mit Anhängewagen (Fig.viii); Macchina a vapore/Parni stroj/[not given] (Fig.ix); and Ponte di scarico con grû girevole/Rastovarni most sa pokretnom dizalicom/ Verladebrücke mit drehbaren Kran (Fig.x). All these are shown at their original manual size.

Looking through the manual certain types of model are hardly represented, there are few vehicles (a Set E Single-Deck Tramcar, the Fig.viii Fire Engine), no Cars or Lorries), and two

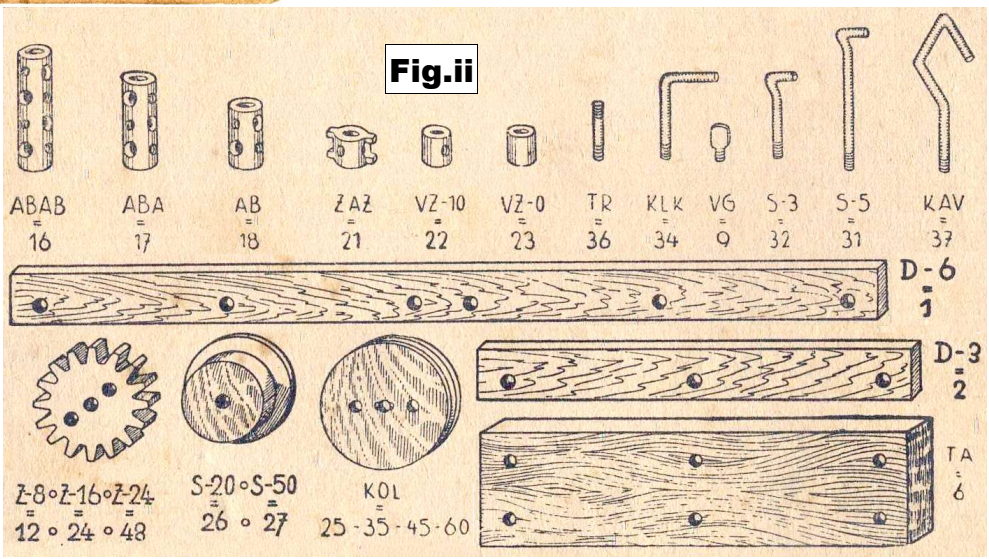


Fig.ii

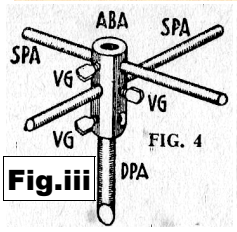


Fig.iii

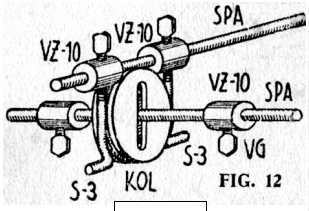


Fig.iv

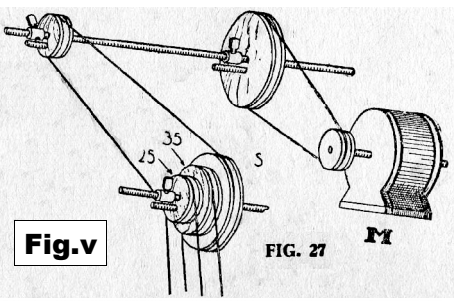


Fig.v

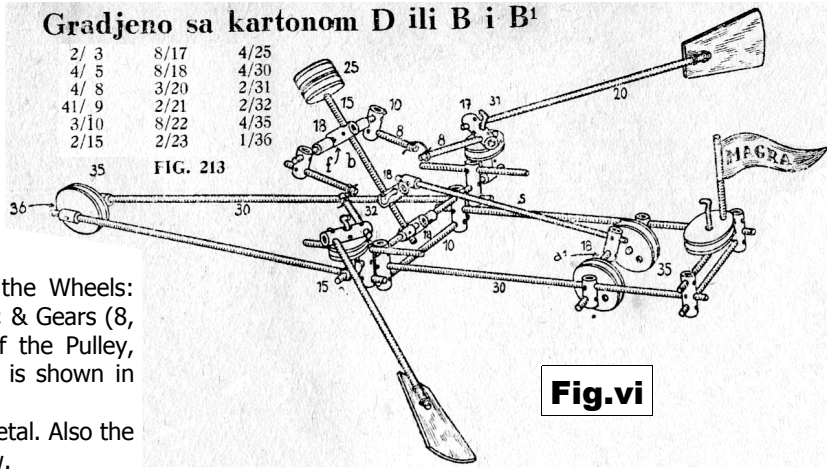
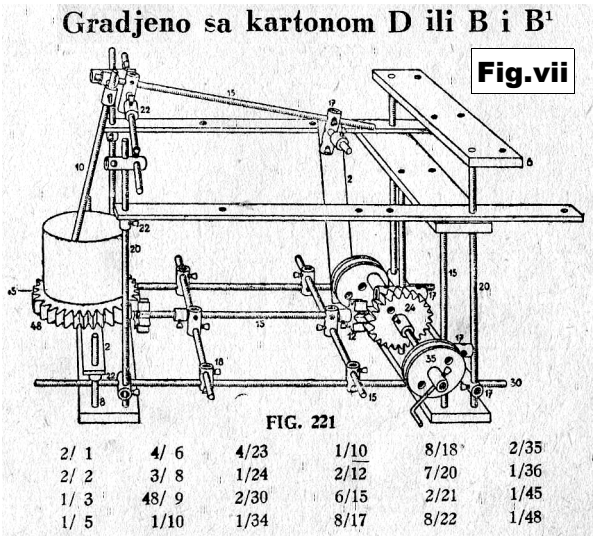
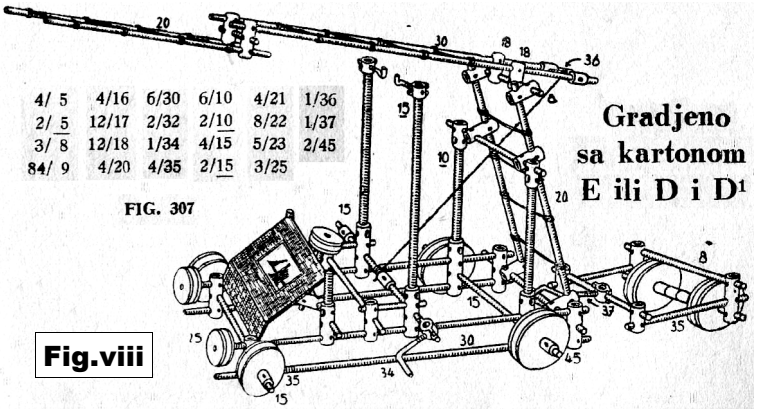
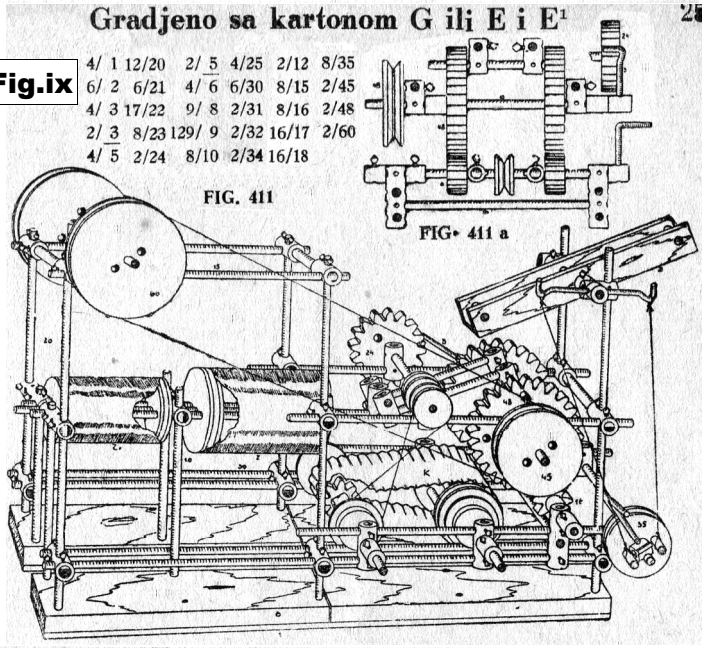


Fig.vi







simple Monoplanes (Set A & B).

Otherwise there is a good selection of mostly mechanical models. They include over 15 Cranes of various types; some 6 Windmills, usually driving a Pump, Hammer, etc; Sawing Machines; Presses; Conveyor Belts; railway items; Steam Engines; a Lift; Excavators; fairground rides; a Sewing Machine; etc; etc.

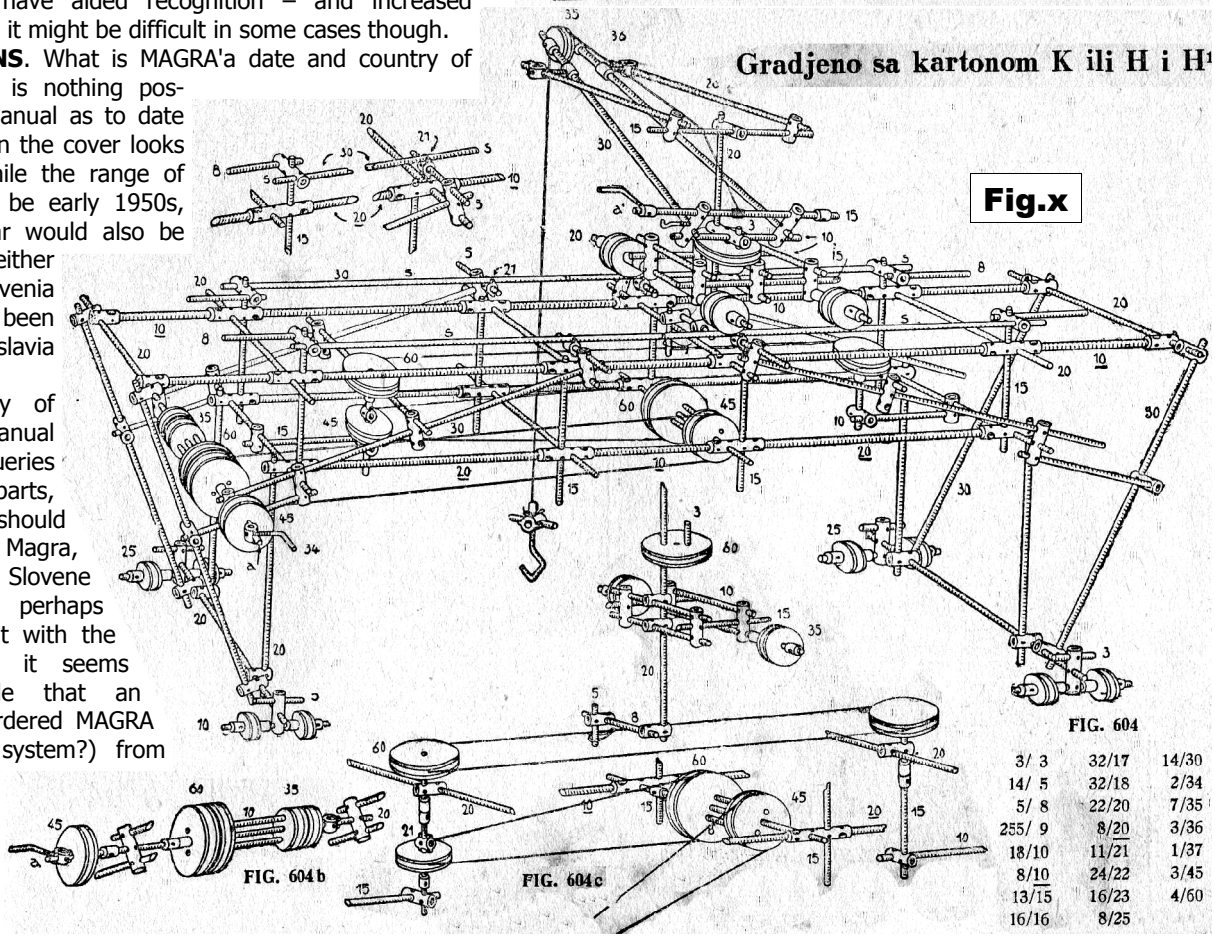
Other models include 5 Bridges, one a Transporter, & some novelties such as the nice Oarsman in Fig.vi, & a Sand Yacht.

Gears are used extensively in the models, there is even a pair in the 'A' outfit, and are sometimes used in right angle drives, as in Fig.vii. Otherwise the only mechanical features are Cord drives and centre pivoted front wheels in the undercarriage of one Crane.

It's not always easy to see what some models are meant to be from their illustrations, and their names quite often defeat Google. A little amount of cardboard is used in a few models, more would have aided recognition – and increased realism. Fixing it might be difficult in some cases though.

QUESTIONS. What is MAGRA'a date and country of origin? There is nothing positive in the manual as to date but the boy on the cover looks post-WW2 while the range of models could be early 1950s, though prewar would also be credible. In either case Slovenia would have been part of Yugoslavia at the time.

On country of origin, the Manual says that queries about the parts, models, etc should be sent to Magra, Lubiana, the Slovene capital. Thus perhaps Yugoslavia but with the Italian cover it seems quite possible that an Italian firm ordered MAGRA (an existing system?) from Slovenia and intended to sell it there as well as in Italy, and in Germany.



Equally though the Slovenian maker could have pointed the manual towards what it hoped would be its best market, and could perhaps have had a different cover for each of the 3 countries.

Snippet. More on the Italian IL MECCANICO 900

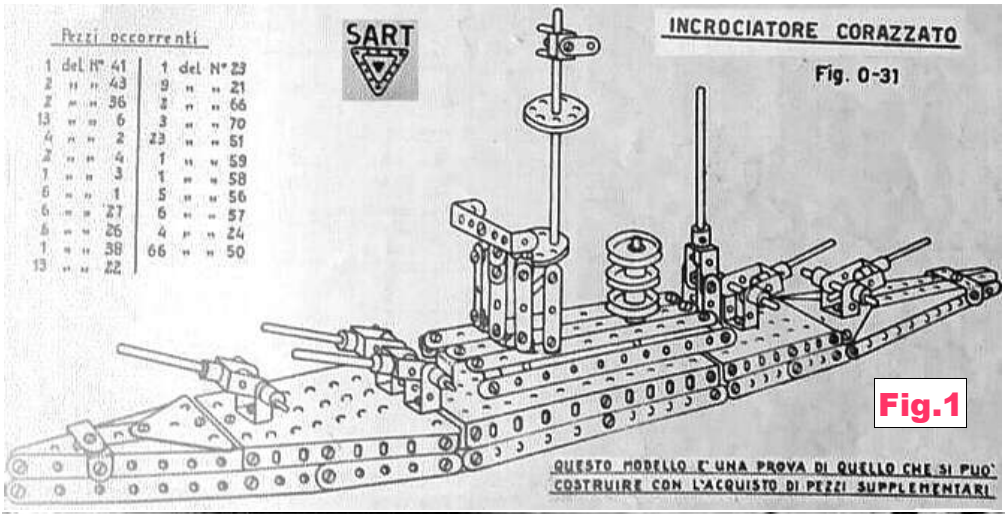
These notes add to those in 45/1356 and are based on the 3 photos from a 33 page No.4 manual offered on Ebay recently. The first page is the front cover and it is identical to Fig.1 in OSN 45 (with the same method of binding the pages together) except that it has '4' on a small orange circle after 'CATALOGO' (under the name), and there are 7 sets, N.1-7, mentioned at the bottom instead of 5, N.0-4. The bottom line on the page says, as before, that one should specify the SART brand when buying more parts.

One wonders if Sets 5-7 were additions to the range because of the system's success, or whether they were withdrawn in the light of poor sales, and the No.0 was added to try to attract customers who might then buy a larger set. Odd that, unlike most makes, there seems not to have been any linking sets.

The other two pages are blue as in OSN 45, but in B&W here for better clarity. One has the Armoured Cruiser below, the other the illustrated parts list in Fig.2.

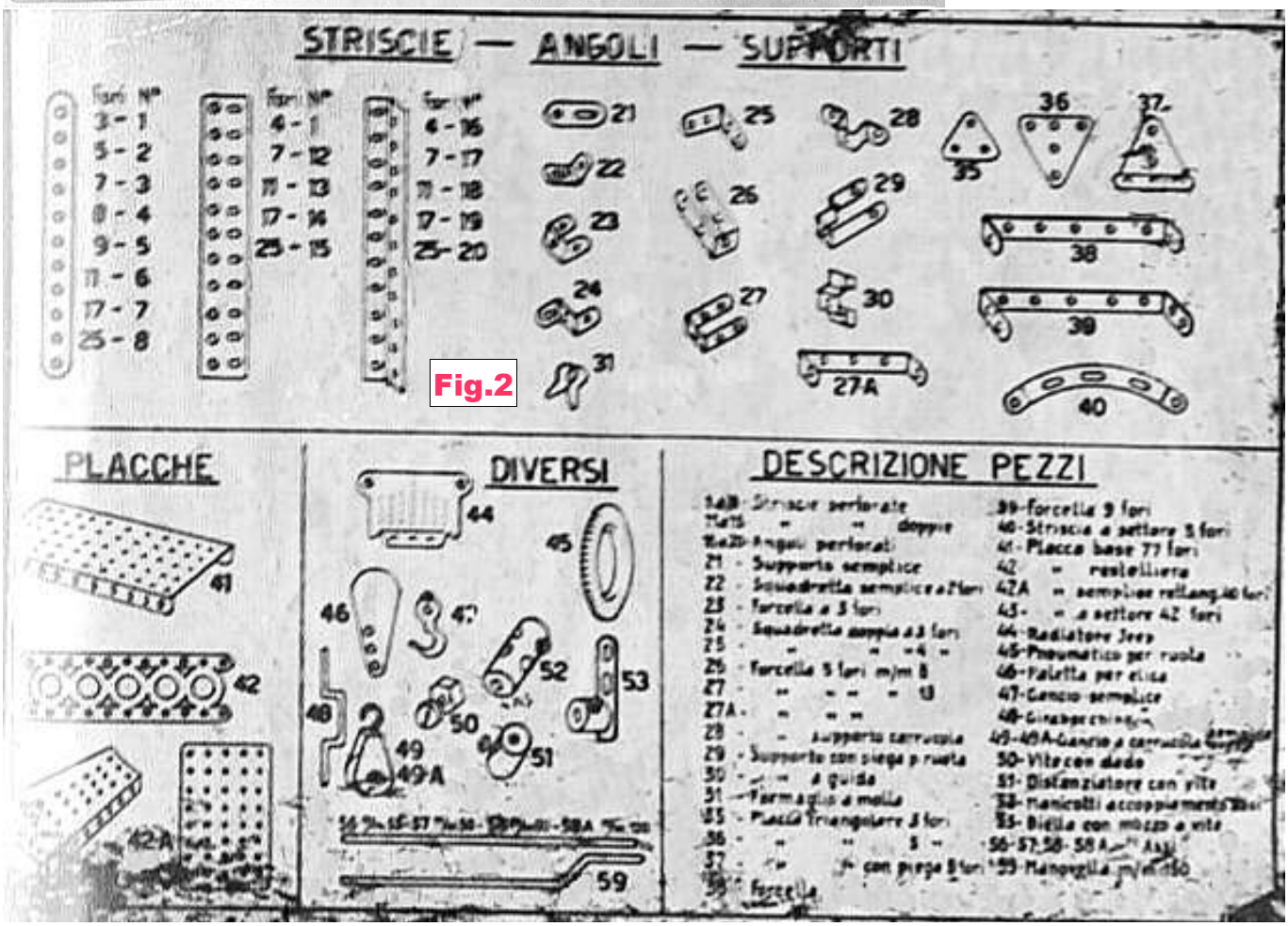
Many of the parts in Fig.2 look like MECCANO and notes on the others ('Sart parts') are given in the list that follows.

#1-8, 3,5,7,8,9,11,17,25h Strips. **#11-15**, 4,7,11,17,25h Flat Girders. **#16-20**, 4,7,11,17,25h A/Gs (the ends look to be near square). **#21-29**, MECCANO-style Brackets. (**#26,27** are 8, and 11?13mm across, Meccano's 8mm wide Single Bent Strip, #102, was added in 1916 but the 14mm wide 1" D/B, #11a, was not introduced until 1962). **#27A**, DAS. **#30**, probably similar to Meccano's original Eye Piece. **#31** Sart Spring Clip. **#35**, Triangular Plate. **#36,37**, Sart Trunnions. **#38,39**, DAS. **#40**, Sart Curved Strip. **#41**, Flanged Plate 5*11h. **#42**, 11h Sart Braced Girder. **#42A**, Perforated Plate 5*8h. **#43**. Flanged Sector Plate, 8h long. **#44-53** Sart variants: **#44** Car Radiator; **#45**, Tyre; **#46**, Propeller Blade; **#47** Hook; **#48** Crankshaft; **#49,49A** Pulley Blocks; **#50** hexagonal Nut & cheeseheaded Bolt; **#51** Spacer; **#52** Coupling; **#53** Crank. **#56-58A** Axles. **#59** Crank Handle.



There is no indication if the above were the parts in the system or just in Set 4, but in any case they would have been a Pulley for the Tyre, and no doubt other parts – wheels & gears are mentioned on the Manual's front page. In fact Pulleys can be seen in the Cruisers's funnel in Fig.1, probably #70, and 2 Wheel Discs on the mast, #66.

The Armoured Cruiser in Fig.1, is Model 0-31 on p21. No set is mentioned but it is said to need some extra parts. The two widths of the 2h D/B are used in the gun mountings and at the base of the rear mast.



'New' Spanish System: CAMPEON Thank you to Angel Rodriguez Palacios for the information in this account. CAMPEON is a small system akin to two other Spanish systems, GOLIATH (see MCS) & INVICTA (36/1078 & earlier). However the CAMPEON Strips have a distinct hole pattern with 'diamonds' of holes either side of a centre hole. The longer 'INVICTA' Strip in 9/222 is no doubt a CAMPEON part.

The known parts are shown below, though possibly not all the variants of the DAS & Spanner are original. Holes are 3.9mm at 8.0mm pitch, and the thread is 3.5x.8mm, subject to confirmation.

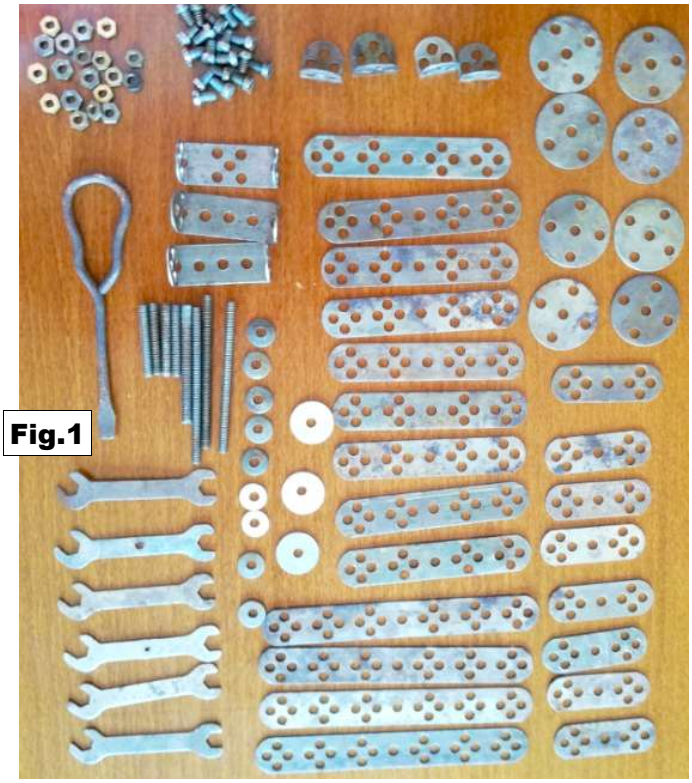


Fig.1

Fig.2

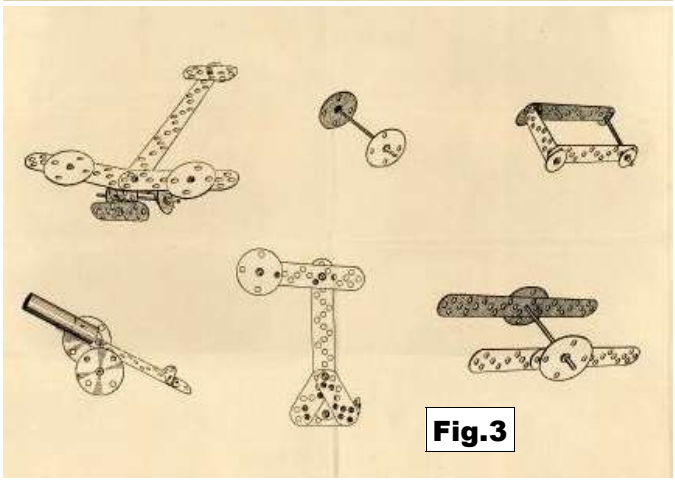


Fig.3

The Model Leaflet is one sheet folded over. It is probably for a small set. Above, its front (Fig.2) and rear (Fig.3) sides. Notice that the hole pattern in the parts is as INVICTA. Inside the first side has 7 Letters & the number '7'; the second, 8 simple traffic signs.

CAMPEON: S1 **OSN 54/1666**

'New' System: ERECTO The set to be described was offered on UK Ebay. There was no manual with it. The box is cream coloured, 8* 6¾*1", & the (very faded) wording on the lid (right) reads ERECTO THE YOUNG ENGINEER'S BUILDING KIT.

Fig.1

The parts in the box consisted of some 1960s MECCANO, probably most of a No.1 set, and those listed below, with quantities in curly brackets. With the possible exception of the Bolt, all of them exactly match early LYNX (1946-47): see 16/436, & MCS p3/4a (or Timothy Edwards OS web pages at https://meccanoindex.co.uk/Other/Lynx/index.php?id=1593684368). ● Strips: 12,4h {4,8}. ● A/B, 2*2h {1}. ● Flanged Plate, 4*7h {1}. ● Discs, 1" Ø {4}. ● Wire Hook {1}. ● Bolt, 6BA, brass, cylindrical head, 4.7mm Ø, ⅜" u/h. LYNX Bolts are usually roundheaded & ¼, ½, 1" long, but soon after WW2 any suitable parts were likely to be used. {7}. ● Full Nut, 6BA, hexagonal, 4.1mm A/F, 2mm deep {5}. ● Spanner {1}. ● Spring Clips {3}.

These parts could of course have been genuine LYNX but for the moment it will be assumed that they were the original parts in the Set, no doubt bought in from The Bay Mfg Co. If they were not it would of course mean that (sadly) none of the original 'real' ERECTO parts survived.

It was found that the Crane below, inspired by a No.1 MECCANO manual model

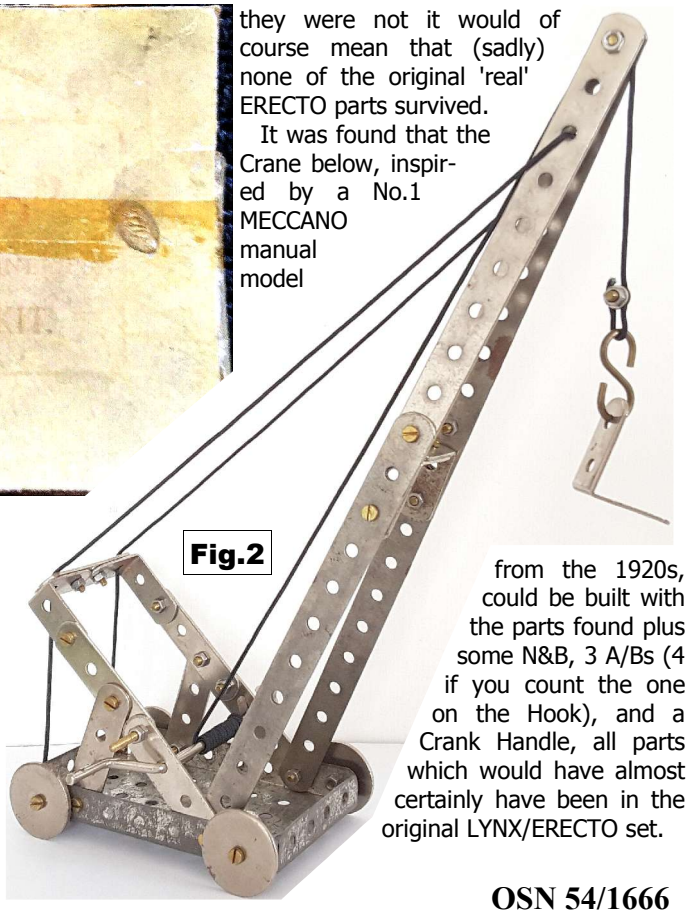


Fig.2

from the 1920s, could be built with the parts found plus some N&B, 3 A/Bs (4 if you count the one on the Hook), and a Crank Handle, all parts which would have almost certainly have been in the original LYNX/ERECTO set.

ERECTO [3]: S1 **OSN 54/1666**

'New' System: A Different EUREKA This EUREKA is Spanish, made by Celsa (Valencia). As will appear this is an interesting system, unusual is several respects. It's not known when it was made.

The details here are mainly based on material kindly supplied by Angel Rodriguez Palacios. It can be seen on Timothy Edwards' 'Other Systems' web pages.

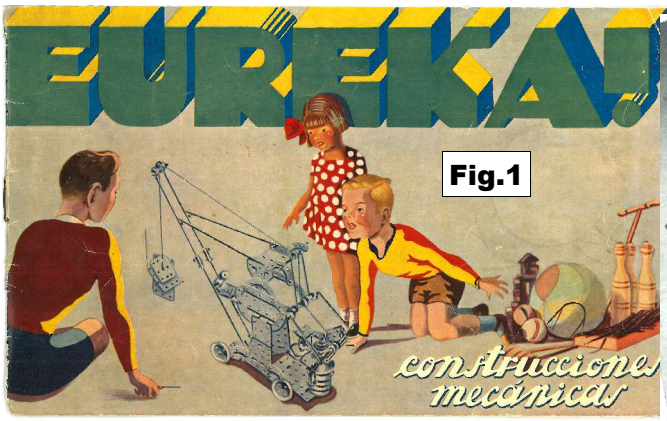


Fig.1

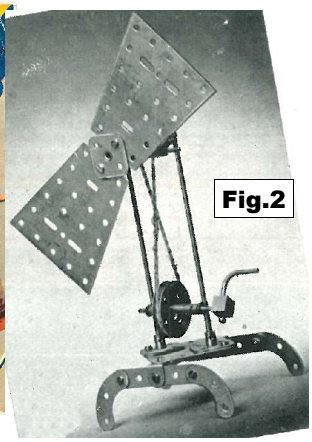


Fig.2

The PARTS All are shown in Figs.3 & 4, and many can be seen in Figs.6 & 7. Holes are 3.9mm Ø at 15.7mm pitch, Axles are 3.6mm Ø, & the thread is M3.5.

For a system of this size there is a good selection of Pulleys, Gears, and other 'mechanical' parts. Notice the several Rod & Strip Connectors (#39-42), the rectangular Coupling #50, and the other rectangular part #53, which is described as a 'Suspensión pendular'.

The range of constructional parts is unusual with very few Strips & A/Gs, the longest of which is the 5h, 8cm Strip. So it's not surprising to see that the framework of the model in Fig.1 is composed mainly of the Rods.

Other points: the 90° Rod looks a useful part; only one of the rectangular Plates has a centre hole; its an interesting idea to have the two types of Curved Strip; there are very few slotted holes but Celsa 'splashed out' to have the decorative but rather useless side cutouts in the Trunnions; the discs of the Pulley #62 are held together by 4 face tabs and the Rubber Ring #76 fits on it.

In 2 of the 3 sets seen the parts have a bright finish. All the limited number of types of part in the third are coloured with dark red Strips & Trunnions, and dark blue Plates. Pulleys, Discs, & bossed parts are mostly dark green but the large Pulley #63 is blue and the Pulley #62 is a deep yellow.

The SETS There were Nos.1, 2, & 3 plus linking sets I & II. Their contents are shown in Fig.5. For their size the sets have relatively few N&B, due no doubt, at least in part, to the use of Rods instead of Strips & A/Gs. As a comparison, before the advent of Flexible Plates a 1930 MECCANO No.3 had 94 N&B compared with 90 in the EUREKA No.3 but only about half as many non-N&B parts, 240 against 447.

Examples of Sets 1 & 3 in photos have been seen. Their boxes are covered in a grained black (possibly dark green) material, with the label as in Fig.1. The No.1 has a small white round disc on the label with '1' on it. The No.3 has the 2 layers shown in Figs.6 & 7. The No.1 has similar looking partitioning.

The MANUAL The pages aren't numbered. Fig.1 shows the cover, identical to the label. The first two inside pages are introductory and include the set structure. The next page has a list of the parts, with blank spaces for their prices. There follow 4 pages with models 1-6, 7-12, 13-18, 19-25. There is one photo of each, and each page is followed by another with the names of the models and a list of the the parts needed for them. The final 4 pages have the set contents (Fig.5 here), the illustrated parts (Figs.3 & 4), and finally a page with a list of the sets with the number of parts in each, and again, blank spaces for their prices.

All the models are quite small. There is no indication as to which set is needed for them but any of them could be made from a No.1.

There is a good selection of models. They include a few of domestic subjects, agricultural implements, & fairground rides; a Monoplane, no motor vehicles other than a Tractor; a Crane (Fig.8); a Railway Signal; an Anti-Tank Gun (Fig.9); an AA Gun; a Yacht; a Windmill (Fig.2); and three near 2-D figures including the Horseman in Fig.10.

As would be expected Rods are used for structures of any length. The only mechanical features are pulley drives.

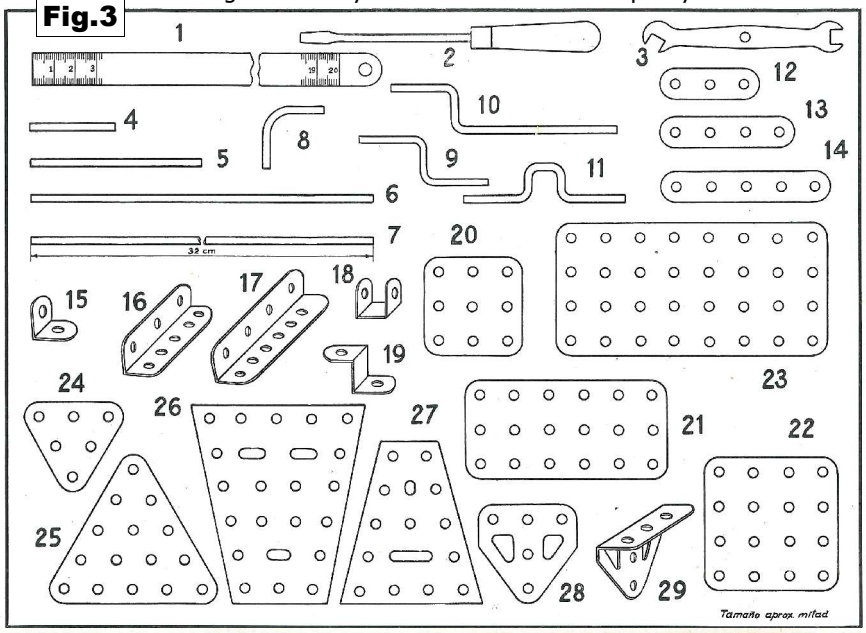


Fig.3

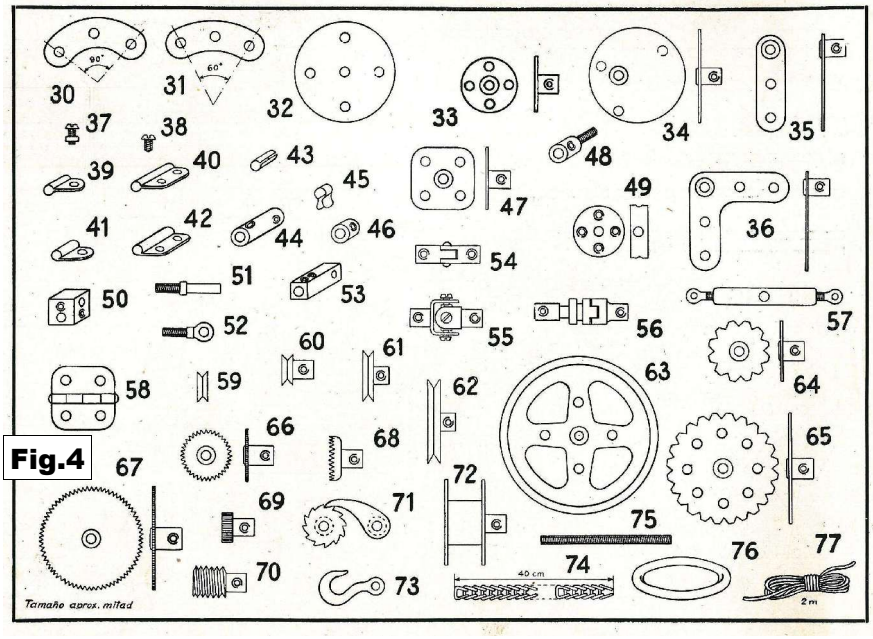


Fig.4

N.º de ref.	ESPECIFICACIÓN	NÚM. DE PIEZAS POR CAJA				
		Núm. 1	Supl. I	Núm. 2	Supl. II	Núm. 3
1	Doble decímetro.	1	—	1	—	1
2	Destornillador	1	—	1	—	1
3	Llave	1	—	1	—	1
4	Varilla 4 cm. long.	8	7	15	5	20
5	» 8 » »	6	4	10	5	15
6	» 16 » »	4	2	6	4	10
7	» 32 » »	—	—	—	5	5
8	» angular (codo)	2	2	4	4	8
9	» manivela corta	1	1	2	1	3
10	» » larga	—	1	1	1	2
11	» cigüeñal	—	1	1	—	1
12	Tira perforada 4'6 cm. long.	6	2	8	2	10
13	» » 6 » »	4	2	6	2	8
14	» » 8 » »	2	2	4	2	6
15	Soporte L	4	4	8	4	12
16	» L 4'6 cm. long.	1	1	2	2	4
17	» L 6'2 » »	1	1	2	2	4
18	» U	2	2	4	2	6
19	» Z	2	2	4	2	6
20	Placa 4'6 x 4'6 cm.	2	2	4	4	8
21	» 4'6 x 9'4 »	1	1	2	2	4
22	» 6'2 x 6'2 »	1	3	4	2	6
23	» 6'2 x 12'6 »	—	1	1	1	2
24	» triangular n.º 1.	1	1	2	2	4
25	» » » 2.	—	1	1	1	2
26	» trapezoidal » 1.	2	—	2	2	4
27	Placa trapezoidal n.º 2	—	1	1	1	2
28	Soporte eje (plano)	2	2	4	4	8
29	» » (angular)	—	4	4	—	4
30	Cuadrante 6'2 cm. ∅	12	4	16	4	20
31	Sextante 7'8 » ∅	—	6	6	6	12
32	Placa circular.	1	1	2	—	2
33	» » con tornillo.	1	1	2	—	2
34	» excéntrica de 3 puntos.	—	1	1	1	2
35	Palanca manivela (recta)	1	1	2	—	2
36	» » (angular)	—	—	—	1	1
37	Perno	30	30	60	30	90
38	Tornillo	15	5	20	10	30
39	Brida céntrica sencilla.	12	6	18	6	24
40	» » doble	2	2	4	6	10
41	» plana sencila	12	6	18	6	24
42	» » doble	2	2	4	6	10
43	Manguito unión a presión	4	4	8	4	12
44	» » con tornillos.	2	2	4	6	10
45	Tope pinza (acero)	4	2	6	4	10
46	» con tornillo	2	2	4	4	8
47	Pie montante	4	2	6	4	10
48	Terminal varilla con rosca	—	1	1	1	2
49	Unión cruz (plato)	1	1	2	—	2
50	» » (dado)	4	2	6	2	8
51	Pivote (muñón)	1	1	2	2	4
52	Abrazadera.	—	2	2	2	4
53	Suspensión pendular	—	2	2	2	4
54	Unión rótula	—	1	1	1	2
55	» cardán	—	—	—	2	2
56	Embrague	—	—	—	1	1
57	Tensor	—	1	1	1	2
58	Visagra	—	2	2	2	4
59	Polea 15 mm. ∅ loca	2	2	4	2	6
60	» 15 » ∅ fija.	2	—	2	2	4
61	» 25 » ∅ »	—	2	2	2	4
62	Rueda 40 » ∅	4	—	4	2	6
63	» 75 » ∅	—	2	2	2	4
64	» 28 » ∅ para cadena	—	2	2	2	4
65	» 50 » ∅ » »	—	1	1	1	2
66	» 25 » ∅ dentada.	—	1	1	1	2
67	» 45 » ∅ »	—	1	1	1	2
68	» angular 20 mm. ∅ dentada.	—	1	1	—	1
69	Piñón dentado	—	1	1	1	2
70	» vis-sin-fin	—	1	1	—	1
71	Rueda trinquete completa	—	—	—	1	1
72	Tambor cabrestante	—	1	1	1	2
73	Gancho para cuerda	—	1	1	1	2
74	Cadena transmisora 40 cm.	—	1	1	1	2
75	Varilla rosc. 3'5 x 60 long.	—	1	1	2	3
76	Neumático para rueda n.º 62.	4	—	4	2	6
77	Trozo cordón de 2 metros	—	1	1	1	2

Fig.5


Fig.6

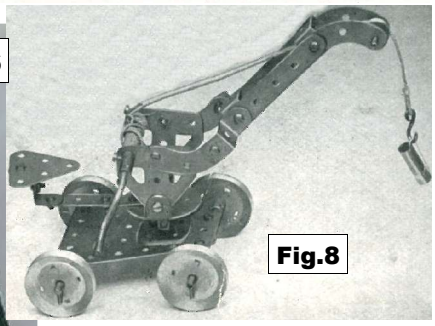


Fig.8

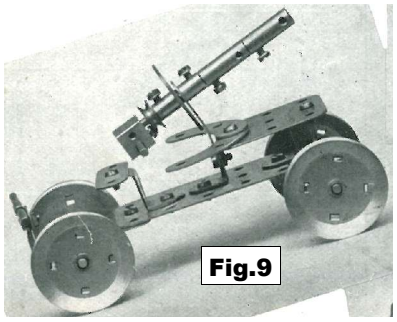


Fig.9


Fig.7

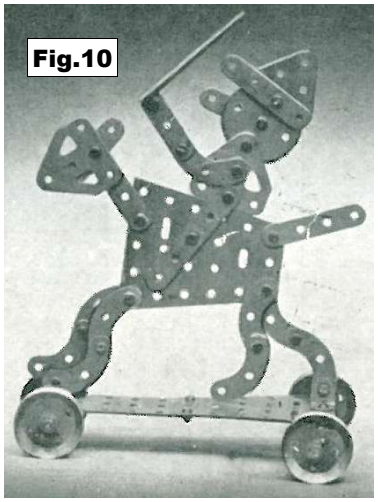


Fig.10

An Unusual MEX Set. The usual MEX has Strips with narrow slits between the holes, and across some holes, see 16/452 & 49/1505. This MEX has parts almost identical to BAUFIX/BATIFIX (see MCS & 6/136). The parts are shown in Fig.2 at about half size. Compared with BAUFIX their nickel (or possibly highly polished) finish, is better but there is significant burr around many of the holes. The thread and the N&B though are as MEX. The 4mm Ø wooden dowel is not used in any of the Leaflet models, and will not pass through any of the holes in the parts.

Fig.1

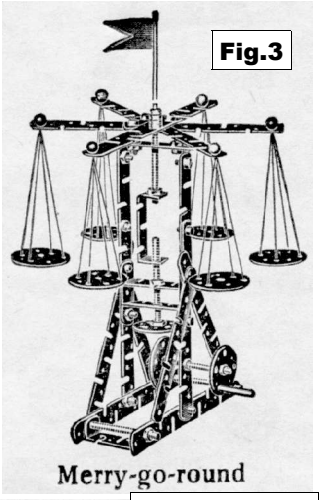
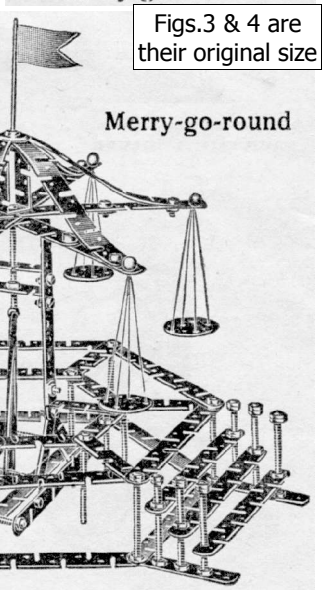


Fig.3



Figs.3 & 4 are their original size


Fig.2

The Set is in a box 15*21¼* 1½cm. In design the lid (Fig.1) is quite similar to BATIFIX (I've never seen a BAUFIX lid). It has FOREIGN bottom left (on the blue Strip). The parts are in a pale orange envelope 13*19½cm.

The Parts As found they were: **Strips**: 5,5,3 of 5,7,9h. **DAS**: 2. **Wheel Disc**, 30mm: 4. **Small Disc**,13mm: 4. **A/B**: 4. **N&B**, steel, 3.5mm Ø x 32 tpi: **Nuts**, hexagonal, 6.0 A/F: 25; **Bolts**, tapered cheesehead 6.5mm Ø, 6mm u/h: 11. **Threaded Rod**, 55mm: 2. **Spanner**, coppered: 1. **Dowel** 4½" long: 6.

That makes the 72 pieces claimed on the lid but includes those very doubtful Dowels. More parts would be needed for some of the Model Sheet models, at least 1 extra for both the 7 & 9h Strips for example.

The Model Sheet is headed NEW "MEX" CONSTRUCTION SET, with MAKES ENDLESS VARIETY OF MODELS along the bottom. 27 small models are shown on this side with 8 slightly larger ones overleaf. All are typical BAUFIX models and 22 of them are direct copies from a BAUFIX Model Sheet to hand. The best model, the Merry-go-round in Fig.3, is the only one to have a mechanical feature, a friction drive between 2 Discs. Also on the reverse side are 5 much larger models; a Caravan, a Church, a Giant [Big] Wheel with a cord drive between pulleys made from the 2 sizes of Disc, a Windmill, and the Merry-go-round in Fig.4. The latter seems to have no drive to the centre shaft but perhaps there is an elastic band below the Threaded Rod. The model could then be wound by hand. A puzzle is what the Wheel Disc above the platform on the left represents. Both Merry-go-Rounds look to have extras: the little balls at the end of the arms, and the flagpoles with flag.

Thoughts No other MEX set of this type is known, nor any reference to it. And with the amount of burr on the parts I wonder if the Set was a prototype which never went into production. And with the use of a BAUFIX stable lid & BAUFIX models, and the FOREIGN on the label, perhaps the German firm was involved in some way. If so though it's hard to understand why special parts, which would have needed tooling, were made, or bought from another company, when BAUFIX parts could have been used, polished up for the occasion if need be. After all that perhaps the reason this MEX was never launched was that it finally dawned on someone that ULOX was patented and that the MEX parts were identical to ULOX in most respects. It would be interesting to know if BAUFIX was ever sold here.

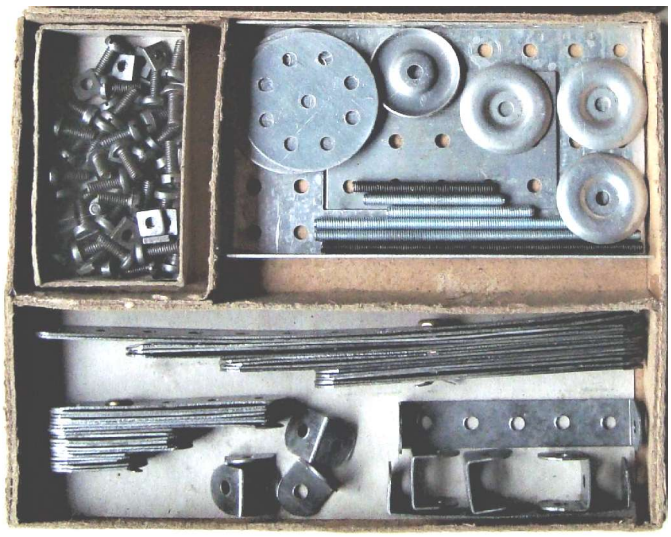
Fig.4

OSN 54/1669 **MEX [2]: S1**

Another No.1 METALLIX Set Urs Flammer kindly sent details of his No.1 set. It differs only slightly from the one described in 30/889, but for convenience all aspects of it will be covered here.

The set is thought to date from around 1950. The box is 195*155*20mm with the label as in 28/821 except that it does not have the '1' on it. The maker is again as on the label. In the box (right) the Strips are steel, the other parts aluminium. Holes are 4.2 & 4.4mm Ø at 14mm pitch. The thread is M4.

The manual, 147*102mm, has all the features in the OSN 30 one. There is an Intro on pp 2-3 with the firm's address given as (20a) HANNOVER, Kirchröder Straße 99. Also that there are Sets 1 & 2, and that a clever boy could build 70-80 different models with the No.1, and 130 with the No.2. The No.1 Set models, Scales, Mobile Crane, & Lorry, are on pp 4-6, and the larger No.2 Crane is on p7. p8, the back cover, says don't let your set get wet, or you will spoil it.



OSN 54/1669 **METALLIX [1]: S3**

Snippets. More on DUX Aero Sets To start with, when did the various sets appear? What follows is from lists of sets in several manuals, leaflets, etc that have dates in their PRs.

Sets 104, 106, 106a, & 108 were shown in a Nov 1932 manual (the year the Aero sets were introduced) together with the Flywheel Motor (Kreiselmotor). See 10/248 for notes on the Sets & 12/330 for the Motor.

From a Sept 1933 brochure the items added were Sets 106b (Elektro), 106c (Autogiro), 109 (Flying Boat), & the C/W Motor (Federmotor). See 42/1270-2 for notes on all these.

From another, Aug 1935, brochure, the new sets were Nos. 102, 103, 110, & 106d. 102 & 103 were for smaller 32cm span, models. The 102 looks to be the same as the Nr.50 in 42/1269 except that the 102 on its lid replaces 50. The 103 (Figs.1 & 2) has parts for either of the models on the lid. The Seaplane floats on its oversize Floats & it taxies along thanks to a C/W Motor driving an oversize Prop. The land-plane has the same Prop and presumably can also taxi along.


Fig.1

Models for the 110 are similar to the 108's but include movement of all the control surfaces (ailerons, elevators, rudder) from the 'joystick' & rudder in the cockpit. The linkages are wire rods preformed to suit. Google translates part of the description of the 110 as 'The Dux 110 was built on behalf of the Ministry of Culture'. Set 106d adds the 110 control functions to the 108 models (the joystick does move the elevators, not as stated in 42/1270).

Fig.2

The sets listed in a June 1938 manual are: 102, 103, 104, 106, 108, 110, 106a, 106d, & C/W Motor. Thus the 109, 106b, 106c, & Flywheel Motor seem to have been dropped. In an August 1939 manual the 102, 103, & 106d have also gone. It would be good to confirm these changes from a brochure, etc.

OTHER SETS Figs.3-6 are from two 90L sets offered on Ebay recently. The Set has parts for the single-engined model on the lid (Fig.3) with the set number, 90L, at top right. The model though has just DUX-90 on the sides of the fuselage & wings. It's not clear how the sides of the fuselage & fin, and the upper & lower surfaces of the wings & tailplane are held together. No doubt the 20 M2.6, 3mm long countersunk Screws, & 8 hexagon M2 Nuts that are in the Set are used but perhaps some of the parts just push or clip together. All the control surfaces are hinged and can be moved by hand. A C/W Motor drives the prop & landing wheels.

Fig.3

Fig.4

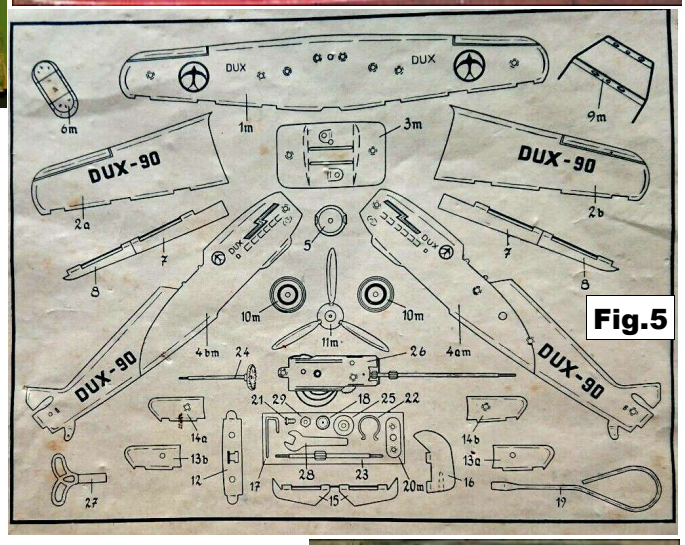


Fig.5

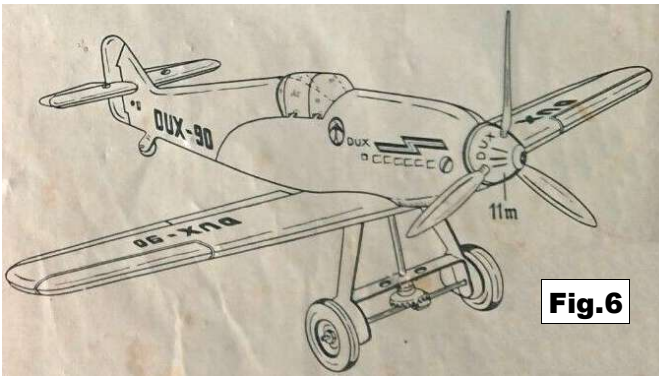


Fig.6

The twin-engined model on the lid has DUX-92 on the fuselage but nothing else is known of it.

When did the 90L (& perhaps the 92) appear? If after 1939 one might have expected that at least the 'Me.109' would be in military colours. A set to make a realistic Ju 87 in military livery was produced at some stage. Fig.7 shows the model leaflet.

Fig.7

'New' System: TOKA Thanks to Angel Rodriguez Palacios for these notes. They are based on parts and a model leaflet; there was no box with them. TOKA is a small system but it has an interesting selection of parts and some original models.

The PARTS Holes are 6.5mm at 13.7mm pitch, the thread is M6. The parts are shown below, and to an extent in the models. 29 different items can be seen as follows. ● Strips, 3,5,7,9,11,17h, & 9h Curved. ● DAS, 1*3,5*1h. ● Brackets:

Fig.1

Fig.2

Angle, 1*1,4h. Double. Obtuse, 1*1,3h. Reverse Angle. ● Triangular Plate 2*2h. ● Perforated Plates, 3*3,5h. ● Flanged Plates, 3*7h, 2*2h. ● Discs, perhaps 20 & 30mm Ø. ● Fairing (between the D/B & the Curved Strip). ● Screwed Rod, perhaps 40mm long. ● N&B, both hexagonal, probably bright zinc on steel, with 3 lengths of Bolt. ● Spanner.

The LEAFLET It is single-sided with the heading in Fig.1. The word under TOKA is INNOVATION. The whole sheet can be seen on Timothy Edwards web site. 5 models are shown, 3 small & 2 larger, with 5 or 6 views of each. The best of the small ones is the Sailboat in Fig.5, the others are a Helicopter and what I take to be a Floatplane. The two larger models (below & right) are quite sizeable, the Motorcycle is 20+cm overall and the Helicopter's fuselage is 35 to 40cm long. The Fairing looks well on the latter but it would considerably impede the pilot's view!

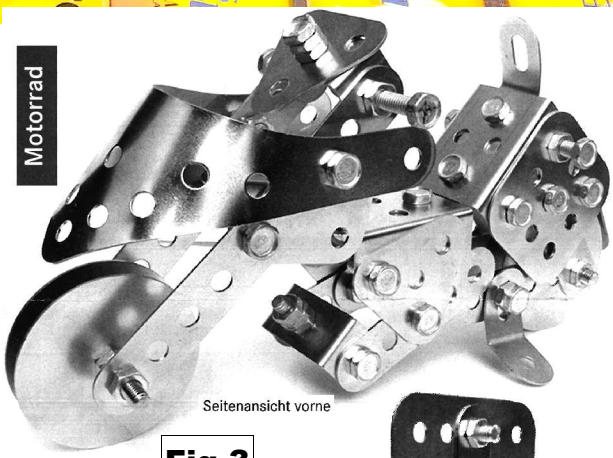


Fig.3

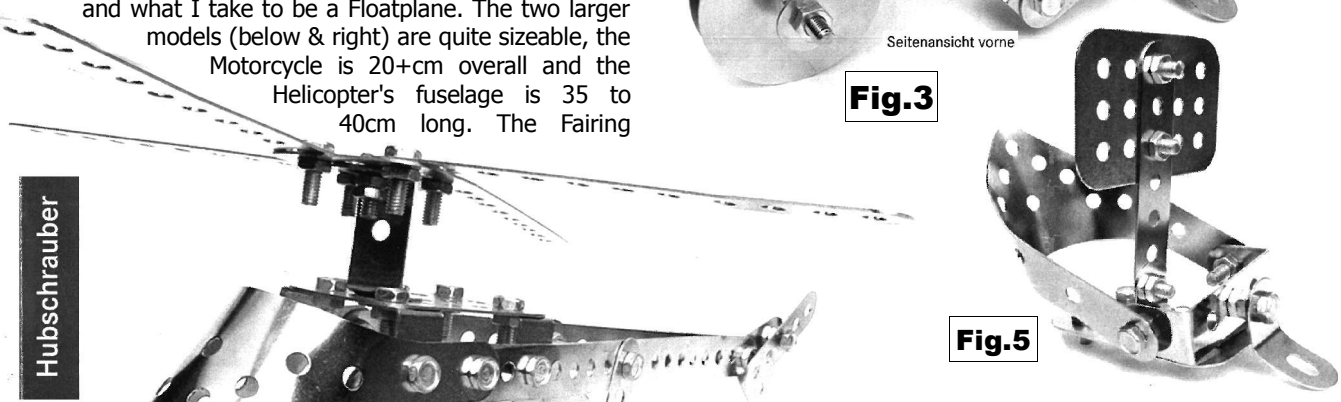


Fig.5

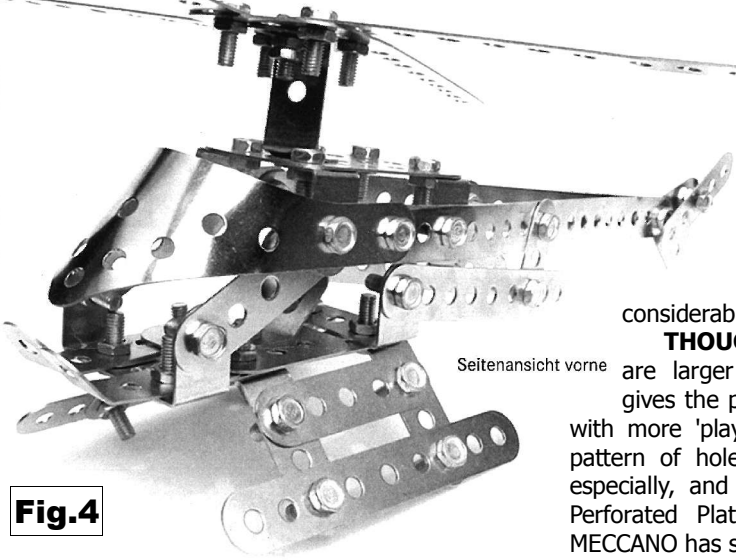


Fig.4

THOUGHTS Personally I like TOKA in that its parts are larger than MECCANO & Eitech/'POLYLONG'. This gives the possibility of easier to assemble, larger models, with more 'play-value'. But one of TOKA's limitations is the pattern of holes in some of the parts, the Flanged Plates especially, and too much material outside the holes in the Perforated Plates. Also, beware he who tries innovation, MECCANO has survived for 100+ years against all comers.