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We are not alone!

Ron Smith



Swiss railways are well known and appreciated throughout the world, and the SRS is not the only Swiss specialist society. A leading one is the VSZ (Vereniging Spoorgroep Zwitserland) in the Netherlands. The VSZ is very active, and for some 32 years has produced an excellent quarterly magazine *'Signalglocke'*. It was the VSZ who "staked out" the Gotthard to produce the double DVD about the classic route that can be bought from SRS Sales. The Netherlands comprises twelve Provinces, and to cover the country the VSZ has five regions, roughly sized according to a geographic spread of the population. The Gelderland (mid-east of the country) Group has its club rooms in Gennepe and in November 2016 Gilbert Kegels, *'Signalglocke's'* editor hosted my visit there. Gennepe, close to the German border, is known as 'Spoorstad (Railway Town) Gennepe' as it once was the site of the works of the Noord-Brabantsch-Duitsche Spoorweg-Maatschappij and was an important railway centre. Although there is now little trace remaining of this, a plinthe 0-10-0T and some art-work on a roundabout commemorate this aspect of its past. The VSZ have a house just off the main street

that accommodates: a workshop; layouts; café area - including two seating bays from old NS coaches; store rooms; audio/visual equipment; models, and a library of DVDs, magazines, books, etc. Here the Group are working on a fine exhibition standard modular layout, which will allow the various modules to be cleverly exhibited in various combinations from small to enormous. They fit into each other to make transport easier too! The theme is the Graubünden, and the completed modules are very detailed. As with all model railways, it is never finished, and several modules were under construction, utilising the various skills of the members, during my visit. Each of the VSZ regions has a similar centre where they meet at least weekly. It was great fun to meet the members and see the impressive layouts, the Bemo and LGB stock, plus HO models from all manufacturers, and to enjoy the fellowship. I could have stayed all day - but as it was I left a bit late to catch the train from nearby Nijmegen! 

TOP: Just some of the high quality scenery on the layout.

LEFT: A general view of the clubroom and layout.

BELOW: Even the social area is made to look like a carriage interior.

All photos: Ron Smith



Boats at the Quayside

Peter Marriott looks at building boats

In the September 2016 edition of *Swiss Express* I showed how, by the use of a proprietary kit from Bachmann Scenecraft, it is easy to construct a very realistic model of a quayside. In this follow-up feature we look at an easy way to build a boat to be moored at the quay.

Using a Kibri Boat Kit


The Kibri range of boats are quite basic plastic kits. The boat that I bought was a fireboat but I decided to modify it to become a more general boat seen commonly in harbours. The kit comes with a pictorial four-page instruction leaflet and the box has a colour illustration of an assembled boat on the lid. The completed kit measures 135mm overall. I first cleaned some small sections of burr from inside the cabin windows then washed the plastic hull, cabin and other parts in soapy water and roughly assembled the main parts in unpainted form to give me some idea as to how the completed vessel would look. Painting the hull was easy by using Tamiya masking tape along the join between the two coats each, of black and white paint. I painted the cabin sides white and the roof brown then used the supplied glazing in the windows. Adding the handrails, flagpole, mast and other details, improved the look of the boat a lot. Whilst adding the details was "fiddly" this was definitely worth doing. The hull finishes at the waterline so it is easy to place onto the 'water' in a harbour. Building the kit took about 3 hours in total excluding the drying times of the paint. The kit cost under £15 at the time of buying it from Winco a few years ago. It may not now be available, but some model shops may still have one in stock and the same modelling principles apply to other manufacturers kits.

Tools and Materials

The additional materials and tools required to make the boat kits were:

- contact adhesive
- a selection of paintbrushes
- low tack masking tape
- a resealable cutting board
- a selection of acrylic paints
- a sharp craft knife.

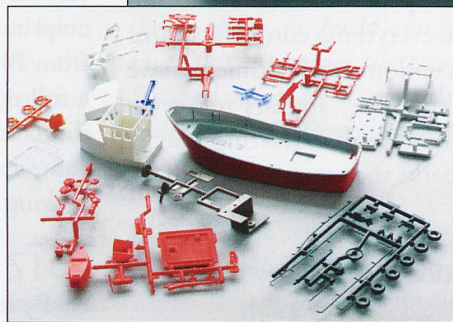
Acknowledgement

This article is based upon one that previously appeared in LOKI magazine. 

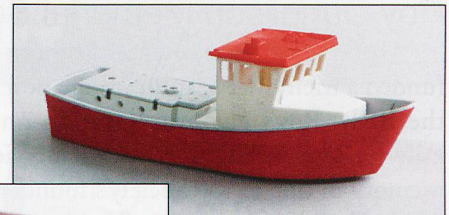
Editor's Note: Anyone interested in model ship kits should check out the website of Artitec (www.artitec.nl) who produce a range of vessels in both HO and N scale. For a Basel Rhein Harbour type model there are barges, etc. And other models could be modified to represent smaller Swiss lake ships.



The box of the Kibri boat showing how the plastic fireboat would look if it was assembled according to the instructions.



A dry run of a partially assembled kit shows that both the hull and cabin roof are moulded in red plastic.



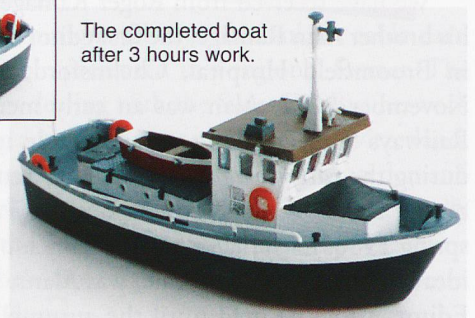
The hull was painted with two coats of black acrylic paint. Once that paint had fully dried Tamiya masking tape was run along the hull so that the upper part of the hull could be painted white.



The cabin roof was painted brown. Compare the look of this boat compared to picture 3. Just 30 minutes painting makes a big difference!



The completed boat after 3 hours work.



Here further details have been added to the cabin roof including the mast. A rowing boat was added together with handrails, lifebuoys and other details.