

POWERLINE UPDATE

Volume 2 Issue 10

October 2000.

Update on Powerline Products and Production.

Liverpool 2000.

A) The Exhibition

This year's AMRA Liverpool Railway Exhibition was as full as ever with layouts, displays, trade stands and the ever important paying customers/visitors. Yes even with blocked off streets, traffic and the Olympics, Liverpool numbers were good and about the same as last year. Powerline Models Pty Ltd was in attendance with a display of product and team members to answer your questions.

B) The 81 Class locomotive

At the exhibition the upgraded 81 Class locomotive, with the new SM/2 mechanism, was proclaimed a winner. There was a lot of praise for this 81 Class production run with new owners expressing their thanks for a great locomotive. It was interesting to note that many people did not believe we would improve the 81 Class let alone produce it within our specified time. These doubting Thomases were put to rest at the exhibition with sales for the 81 Class, for those who had stock, being very strong. It would appear some people got left behind due to past impressions and got caught out. The results for the 81 Class at Liverpool were very pleasing with impressions being very positive and demand suddenly exploding.

C) The RC-1

Winner number two was the Model Railway Remote Radio Control System, RC-1. An Australian researched, designed, manufactured and owned product built in Australia from local and overseas components. This unit was being demonstrated on the Powerline display stand creating a lot of interest and demand. Many people had not seen it before and were very pleased with the result. Others did not believe we were going to do it and now their doubts have been brought to rest.

D) The Australianised F3A

This made the hat trick, winner number 3. This locomotive amazed many with its quality and its mechanism and all at a cheap price too. This locomotive was quoted around the exhibition to be the best thing to happen to the hobby in years, a winner for the beginner and a cheap mechanism for the enthusiast.

E) The Train sets

Another winner admired by all for its quality and presentation was the train sets on display. Whilst meant for beginners many expressed their admiration for the sets as they saw quality and function over colour and gimmicks. The Link Line set not on display, with

the F3A, is now being anticipated as a winner as demand grows.

F) Spare Parts

Last but not least the fifth win for Powerline was the display and release of spare parts. These created a lot of interest with many not believing parts were available. The result was those trade stands with stock of the new parts quickly sold out of popular lines.

G) The 48/830 Class locomotive

Although not a new line, or a new release in the past couple of months, the 48 Class rates a mention due to the praise and positive comments we have received at the exhibition. It was pleasing to get such positive reviews.

Result

This year's Liverpool Exhibition was a very pleasing and positive show for Powerline Models Pty Ltd. With good comments, praise, strong demand and some people actually finding out Powerline is still alive and producing quality product. We really opened some eyes and minds this year.

Production Updates

A) The Australianised F3A

Running a little late the F3A has been produced and should be released about the end of October 2000. The official release date is now set at Monday 6th November 2000 even though we believe they may be available earlier. Stock is on its way now from Hong Kong and we hope to receive it any day now.

B) The Link Line train sets

The Link Line range of train sets featuring L201 the Australianised F3A are running a little late. First there were the F3A delays, then we ran out of transformer/controllers as we allocated all of them to the currently available and fast selling sets and then we ran out of track. Well the F3A and the transformer/controller situation is in hand but the track met with a hiccup. Deliveries were on time till our freight forwarder was late picking up the track, the ship booked was over booked and our container was not loaded onto the ship but held back for the next available ship. The result is an unacceptable and unplanned delay in releasing the Link line train sets. The official release date is now Monday 20th November 2000 with delivery expected to be available before this date. We hope to deliver before this date but for now this is the official release date.

C) The RC-1

The Model Railway Remote Radio Control System, RC-1, is now back on track with all approvals in place and all samples tested and approved. Boxes and related matter are running behind but due to other unforeseen delays there is nothing ready to pack just yet. The Official release date is now Monday 20th November 2000 with delivery expect to occur before this date.

D) The 81 Class

Delivered on time and in stores now.

E) Spare Parts

Most spares are now available. What remains will be available by the end of October 2000.

The Freight Rail 81 Class returns

All 4 numbered 81 Class locomotives are available and have been so for weeks. P206 Freight Rail 81 Class with single motor is available as 8108, 8181 and 8184. P207 Freight Rail 81 Class with dual motor is available as 8177. Note all 81 Classes can be dual motored and PDN001 Freight Corp decal is available to change your Freight Rail 81 to a Freight Corp 81.

It was amazing at Liverpool to find out how many people did not know the 81 Class was available and even more surprising for many to find how many shops did not have stocks of Powerline 81 Classes. Sorry folks but we did advertise they were coming and we did advise shops they were in but the doubting Thomases struck again and missed the boat. Needless to say those who had 81 Classes at Liverpool did very well and those who did not have now placed orders.

The results and responses in relation to the latest release of 81 Classes have been very positive and most pleasing.

6 Projects in one Year.

By the end of October 2000 Powerline Models Pty Ltd will have delivered six projects onto the market.

- a) The 48 Class
AUSTRAC
Freight Corp
A.N
- b) The 81 Class
Freight Rail in single & dual motor with new mechanism.
- c) The Australianised F3A
Expected by the end of October
- d) The RC-1
The Model Railway Remote Radio Control System is expected to be available late Oct to early November
- e) Spare Parts
Most available now
- f) Train sets
Freightline train sets available since August
Powerline train sets available since September
Linkline train sets available November

Although most sets are now available with some parts stock running low there may be some delays on some sets into November. This makes a full year for production and developments and we now move onto 2001.

Plans for 2001

Plans and productions for 2001 will be announced in the January 2001 Update but those who have been attending exhibition across Australia where Powerline has been in attendance have had sneak peaks. The observant amongst you who saw a Powerline display at an exhibition somewhere in Australia would have seen some displays that hint at what is coming next.

The SM/1 to SM/2 Conversion for the 81 Class.

Late in 1997 Powerline Models Pty Ltd released the first Australian owned, researched, designed and mass manufactured mechanism. This mechanism was a world leader with constant brightness directional lights. That is the light were always bright from about 3 volts onwards and they were directional with white markers and headlight shining up front and red markers on the rear which changed with the directional running of the locomotive. The weakness of this was the diode technology used and the ability to be DCC compatible when people really did not require it. The result from this was a voltage drain resulting in lights and motors not getting full power requirement.

Other areas in the SM/1, which required attention, were the wiring, wheels, traction tyres and light guides. Although not faulty they were areas where other problems could arise. The solution being a rework of these areas and the PCB which controlled power and lighting. Roll on research and development with assistance from the Powerline Production Centre and Powerline team member's families. Solutions; a new PCB using voltage regulation technology, new traction tyres, revised wiring, new wheel pressings and revise light guides with a better medium (acrylic). The result is the SM/2 mechanism and an improved 81 class locomotive.

Note the SM/2 can not be fitted with or adapted to DCC, it is not DCC compatible. The SM/1 mechanism, which is now a collectable, is DCC compatible and has the 8 holes for DCC fitting. SM/1 PCBs will be available for those wanting to fit DCC to their Powerline 81 Classes. Those wanting to convert their SM/1 locomotive to SM/2, up grading, can do so.

Also please note that the globe wiring, lighting wiring, for the 81 Class is different to the G/BL Class.

For converting an SM/1 mechanism to SM/2 you will require a SM/2 PCB, a soldering iron, screw drivers, solder and patience to do the basic up grade. To go the whole way I would also suggest some 2-amp wire, 1.5 mm drill bit, the new acrylic light guides and some new wheels. With the new wheels you have a choice of; standard with traction tyres, standard without traction tyres, RP-25 Nickel-plated wheels or RP-25 blackened wheels.

The basic conversion/up grade is the replacement of the SM/1 PCB with the SM/2 PCB. First you need to remove the body of the locomotive. This is easily done by undoing and removing the two screws found at either end of the fuel tank on the underneath of the locomotive. Then you place the locomotive on its wheels in front of you so that you may study the positions of the wiring and note which way round the new PCB fits, it can only fit correctly the correct way round as all holes need to line up.

Next you will need to unsolder the pick up wires and the motor wires. On a single motored locomotive this means three wire at the powered end and a single wire at the other. In a dual powered mechanism it means

six wires, three at each powered end. Note the power pick up wire, usually white, goes to the centre. The top motor wire to the right and bottom motor wire to the left. When looking at a mechanism from side on you will note lighting wiring at either end, then a set of three holes to the left, a space and then another set of three holes to the right and then another lot of lighting wiring. From left to right the wiring is as follows. Left three holes, top hole is for the top motor wire, middle is for power pick up and bottom is for bottom motor wire. On the right three holes it is the opposite, top hole for bottom motor wire, middle hole for pick up wire and bottom hole for top motor wire. Remember this for refitting. Once the wires are removed you will need to remove the couplers at either end. After removing the couplers, not required if you have fitted Kadee couplers, you may now remove the bogie(s) by unscrewing the top centre bogie screw. The bogie will now just drop out, so take care.

When rewiring the SM/1 to SM/2 it is best to use new 2 amp wire and re do the wiring from the motor(s) to the PCB. Those of you who have an early 1999 Powerline Update will have diagrams for up grading the SM/1 to make it run better. This wiring modification for the power bogie is what we suggest here.

This wiring modification is quite simple but make a world of difference to wire reliability and durability giving it a better life. First you are required to remove, unsolder, the existing wires from the power bogie(s). Then with the bogie in front of you, with the rear of the motor facing you and the worm gear end facing forward or away, drill a 1.5 millimetre hole on either side. The one on the right should be level with the top motor soldering point, the bottom one just below the level of the motor bearing. The right side wire should be tinned at one end first then fed through the hole to the top brush soldering point and carefully soldered into place. (Note the tinned section should only be about 4-5 millimetres at most. Then the wire should go down from the hole to level with the bottom of the motor and then bent so it goes straight back up from there to be cut level with the upper most point of the motor bogie, level with the top mounting point. Then the wire bared and tinned. The bottom motor wire should also be bared and tinned first the threaded through the 1.5 millimetre hole on the left and down to the lower brush soldering point. Carefully solder it into place taking care not to melt the motor clamp or the pick up wire. This wire too goes down from the hole to level with the bottom of the motor and is then bent so it goes straight up and is cut level with the top most point of the power bogie. Again the wire at the top is bared and tinned in preparation for fitment.

With the bogies removed and prepared for refitting now is a good time to replace the PCB. This requires the removal, unsoldering, of the lighting wires at either end and undoing a few screws. Remember to have noted which way round the PCB fits. All wiring points, screw holes and holes through which the locomotive body is secured must be correct.

To remove the old PCB you simply unsolder the lighting wiring at each end, taking care to keep it together as you remove them. The wiring of the light globes is very different for the SM/2 compared to the SM/1; they are not the same. Then unscrew the retaining screws and carefully remove the PCB. Then place the new PCB in position and screw it into place. Then all we need to do is resolder the lighting wires into place and refit the bogies. When refitting the bogies you screw them in to place first then resolder the new wiring into place. Just take your time and do it a step at a time and work

logically, remembering the pick up wire always goes to the middle hole.

Now I will try and explain the wiring of the globes for the 81 Class as simple as possible in text. When facing the end of a mechanism you have three globes each with one red and one white wire. Then in the above PCB you have six holes for wiring. Starting from the back left the holes we will call A-B-C-D-E-F and from left globe to right globe the wires will be 1(red), 2(white), 3(red), 4(white), 5(red), and 6(white). With this in mind the wiring sequence for the 81 Class is 1B, 2C, 3E, 4A, 5D and 6A.

For added improvement there are a few bonus options. To further enhance the lighting you can replace the SM/1 light guides with the new acrylic light guides. For those who want blackened or finer scale wheels there is the RP-25 wheel sets in either Nickel-Plated or blackened. Then there is also the Freight Corp decal to give that Freight Rail 81 Class its new corporate identity. The end result is one of the best Australian locomotives on any Australian model railway anywhere.

The 48/830 Class locomotives.

In previous issues of the Update we have run articles on the workings, improvements and success of the current production run of 48/830 Class locomotives. We still continue to get questions on the improvements in the 48 Class and requests for that information to be printed again. Firstly we will state that an Austrac 48 Class on an up ward grade, incline, on the AMRA NSW club layout pulled 24 passenger carriages. Then we will draw to your attention to a review on page 277 of the June issue of Continental Modeller, which reviewed an Austrac 48 Class. A very favourable review from an independent, non-biased, modellers magazine.

The new 48 Class locomotives feature some small improvements that make a difference. The improvements include: new mark 3 Mabuchi motor, new motor housing for better cooling and less over heating of the motor, improved wheel stamping, new traction tyres, modified lighting fixtures, modified pilot, improved contact strip fitting, improved paint finish and the Flettner vent. All this results in a better running and better looking locomotive which has taken pride of place on many layouts across Australia.

The running of the new 48 Class features smoother starts and better slow speed running. As noted it also pulls a better load, and up an incline too. 24 coaches up an incline is pretty good compared to the stories I used to get of only 3 or 5. To complement the smoother improved running is improved finish with crisp painted finish and well-defined lining and lettering. The AUSTRAC livery is a masterpiece, which took 36 individual masks to get right, and some fine work by our contractor. The A.N 830 is the best in this livery we have done yet with a more accurate finish. The Freight Corp 48 Classes look good and are more accurate than many will notice, and in a lash up they run and look good. Do not take our word for it, take a look at exhibition, club and private layouts with the new locomotives running on them and you will see for yourself.

Buyer beware, the new locomotive produced this year are: P235B Freight Corp 48 Class locomotives numbered 4806 & 4862, P237A A.N 830 Class locomotive numbered 846 and P239 AUSTRAC 48 Class locomotives number 4814 and 4836. Note the Flettner vent, blank pilot, no buffers, no buffer plates, improved packaging and the beige warranty card with red serial number. All other 48 Class locomotives

(P230, P230A, P231, P232, P233, P234- all, P235, P235A, P237 and P238) are obsolete, out of any warranty, and are pre 1994. Beware of old, second-hand and obsolete models and buy your Powerline products from recognised Powerline retailers only.

The advertising error

In the end most people guessed the error whilst also listing many others. The error that stood out and was the one we were looking for was the picture of P204S 81 Class Stealth 8167. What it should have been was P207 81 Class Freight Rail dual motor 8177. It was a simple error that stood out and that we let slip through to create interest and to let it be known that most of the last remaining Stealths have been converted to SM/2. For those who want DCC there are a few that have not been converted and remain SM/1 but most of the remaining units have been converted to SM/2. It must be noted that the Stealths are Limited Editions and no more will be made.

The winner of the quiz is Trevor and Di Wood of Mt Colah NSW.

The Big locomotives can motor conversion.

We have had a little feed back on this little conversion, all stating how easy it really was. One person tried to go for a bigger can motor than mentioned. It must be noted here that in the basic conversion, fitting the can motor to the bogie with minimal modifications, it was tried fitting a bigger can motor but found the existing set up had a problem with movement due to torque. That is why we stuck with the small motors in the article to keep it simple.

For those who stated their interest in a centre can motor conversion with flywheels and all wheel drive, this side of the conversion was held back as it is more complicated and required a little more work. To give you some advanced pointers the existing bogies are kept with a bracket made to support the worm gear on a drive shaft, the bulk of the weights are removed and a choice of can motors can be used. Two people have attempted this conversion using different can motors and different drive shaft set-ups and both were more then pleased with the end results.

The G Class and X Class conversion.

It was rumoured that the G and X classes of Freight Australia were going to receive some new engines. The G Class I was led to believe would get a 710 engine, something like a 710G3, and the 645E3B from the G Classes would be fitted into the X Class locomotives. Well apparently I got the 645E3B conversion from G to X Class correct but the motor being fitted into the G Class may not be the 710 like I thought. Peter Clarke whom I have found to be the accurate one, and who many believe is the walking data base on everything railways related, informs me that the new engine for the G Class will be model 645F3, which has the same power of the 710G3 and is similar but stronger then the 645E3B. The 645F3 also run 50rpm quicker at 950rpm rather then the 900rpm of the 645E3B.

Orders taken now

Powerline Direct is again taking orders for Powerline product and accessories. Payment maybe via cheque, money order, Mastercard, Visa card and Bank card only.

Orders may be sent via fax, 03 9596-3917, email, sales@powerline.com.au

Or post, P.O. Box 2100 North Brighton 3186. Please provide order in legible written format.

Advanced orders for the RC-1, Australianised F3A and train sets are now being accepted.

RC-1	Model Rwy remote RC system	\$199
L201	Australianised F3A	\$46.75

All Powerline product is available from good hobby stores across Australia. See your local Powerline retailer for product, service and advice or contact Powerline direct.

The web Site

www.powerline.com.au

The web page is well on the way and running late but producing the best model railway web page in Australia takes time. The upload date has not been set but soon as it ready you will be the first to know. We assure you it will be worth the wait..

Product Questions

For Powerline product questions and queries please contact; support@powerline.com.au

Powerline Sales Queries

For sales questions and price, retail only, please contact: sales@powerline.com.au

Hobbyrama have moved

Hobbyrama in Queensland have moved to larger and more spacious premises on the corner of Stafford Road and Shand Street in Stafford. Their new phone number is 07 3352-3333.

Associated Distributors

The last of the pre-ordered CL Classes are due to be delivered before the end of this year. On top of this there will be about eight locomotives still available and the possibility of another eight by February 2000.

Powerline Update

For questions or queries concerning the Powerline Update please contact; ian@powerline.com.au

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