

THE POWERLINE UPDATE

The Official Newsletter for Powerline Direct and all the latest news concerning Powerline Models Pty Ltd
www.powerline.com.au

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2003

This is the first issue for 2003 and you will note as we go along that the format and the style of the Update may alter from time to time and issue to issue. Some readers have been critical of late concerning content and relevance. So we have opened the Update up to readers comments and articles. The last issue for 2002 called for submissions and articles for consideration.

On the production and new product front, Powerline Models Pty Ltd has been working on filling in gaps in the range and planning other productions as well. The BL/G Mk1 was the start, then there were the flats cars, next is the 48 Class and on top of that Powerline Models Pty Ltd is hoping to drop in a few surprises along the way. Any and all production runs now will be short production runs with minimal production numbers. So ordering and keeping up with what is new will be a must as will watching hobby stores for any new products.

G Class and BL Class release

After the sell out in 2002 and the demand for more locomotives by shops and customers, Powerline Models Pty Ltd has announced the release of the following locomotives.

P216	G Class Single motor	V/Line	G511
P216	G Class Single motor	V/Line	G513
P217	G Class Dual motor	V/Line	G512
P218	BL Class Single motor	National Rail	BL 27
P218	BL Class Single motor	National Rail	BL29
*P219	BL Class *Dual motor	National Rail	BL 35

Any person wanting one of these models should consult their local hobby store, Powerline Retailer. Those people who can not attain a model from their

local hobby store, or who are too far away from their local hobby store, are recommended to contact Powerline Direct immediately to be put down on a waiting list for any last minute cancellations.

STOP THE PRESS. The Directors of Powerline Models Pty Ltd have informed me of an increase in the production run of the G Class and the BL Class. It was decided to increase production numbers so that the issues of the last production run could be avoided and that no matter what those who had orders in by the dead line will be supplied. This was made possible by the sub contractor who wanted to make up for the past production run issues. All going well there maybe an excess of locomotives available but the numbers are now set in concrete there will be no further increase. So there is a chance for anyone still wanting to purchase a G or BL Class to do so through their local hobby store, Powerline Retailer, but it is recommended you do so quickly as some lines will not last long. All orders over and above the guaranteed back order supply will be supplied purely on a first come, first served basis. Right now there are some excess locomotives available but these are expected to be sold out before the expected delivery date. So run to or contact your local dealer as soon as possible to book your locomotive, please note this extension is only available to Powerline retailers with existing orders on file.

Delivery of these locomotives is expected in May 2003.

Note:

That the BL/G Mk1 are unlikely to be produced in these liveries again in the foreseeable future, or at least 5 years.

That the BL Class has been made available in dual motored form as well, P219.

Powerline Direct Orders

Any individual who has not got an order with their local hobby store, who does not have a local hobby store and who would like to order any of the locomotives mentioned in the previous section, are invited to get their orders in. The order must be by e-

mail, fax or mail and no orders after the cut off date will be accepted. Please ensure your order request is in writing with your name, address, phone number and/or e-mail address. No deposit is requested at this date.

E-mail ian@powerline.com.au
 Fax (03) 9596-3917

Mail: Powerline Direct
 P.O. Box 2100
 North Brighton 3186

SHOP BACK ORDER LISTING

The following shops are known to have current and existing back orders, orders, for the BL Class and G Class production run. It is strongly recommended you contact these stores when looking for a G or BL Class locomotive. Once sold out that will be it. Shops are still able to order locomotives but only orders received before 20th December 2002 are guaranteed, those orders after that date will be supplied on a first come first served basis with any excess stock.

Train World	Vic
Ballarat Model World	Vic
Bendigo Sports & Hobbies	Vic
Branchline	Vic
Brosters Toys & Hobbies	Vic
De Grandis Sportsgoods	Vic
Hobbies Plus	Vic
Junction Models	SA
Orient Express	SA
Perth Hobby Centre	WA
South Aust Hobby Centre	SA
The Buffer Stop	Vic
The Hobby Man	Vic
The Railfan Shop	Vic
Victoria Hobby Centre	Vic
Werribee Hobby Centre	Vic
Punchbowl Hobby Centre	NSW
The Railway Shop	QLD
PJs Hobby World	Vic
Bergs Hobbies	NSW
All Aboard	NSW
Caseys Toy Warehouse	NSW
Frontline Hobbies	NSW
Hobby Co	NSW
Hunter Valley Model Railways	NSW
Mals Toy Shop	NSW
Micro Models Hobby land	NSW
Penrith Toy & Hobby	NSW
Port World of Models	NSW
Railway House	NSW
The Signal Box	NSW
Vic Barnes Cycles & Model Rwys	NSW

Vogler & Son	QLD
Toms Discount Hobby Warehouse	NSW
Traralgon Toy Kingdom	Vic
Casula Hobbies	NSW
Seymour Toyworld	Vic
Hobby One	QLD
Forest Miniatures	NSW
Platform One	NSW
Toowoomba Trains & toys	QLD
Horizon Hobbies	QLD
The Train Place	Vic
Model Mania	SA
Valley Hobbies	Vic
Turntable Hobbies	Vic
Garden Miniature Rwys	Vic
Toys of Joy	Vic

These stores are the last bastion of hope for anyone who has not yet ordered a locomotive.

48 Class Production Proposal

Powerline Models Pty Ltd have planned to do another 48 Class production run in 2003. The proposed liveries are NSW Candy and the NSW Red Terror. The proposed production run is again a small quantity run based on orders and demand. What will actually be produced will be based on the response received from shops and you.

It is strongly recommended that all who would want, desire or wish to attain one of these models to contact their local Powerline retailer as soon as possible. Orders will need to be placed relatively quickly, as the production run will be only a small one and is expected to be available before the Liverpool Railway exhibition in October 2003.

P232A 48 Class mark 3 Candy	(4894,4895, 48102)
P233A 48 Class mark 3 Red Terror	(48107, 48121)

ORDERS ACCEPTED NOW.

Order yours now from Powerline Direct or your local Powerline Retailer. The back order book for these locomotives is expected to close end of June or early July 2003. Quantities will be limited.

The Grey Flat cars.

The next proposed colour for the 60-foot flat cars is grey. This will be the P702 series of flat cars from Powerline Models Pty Ltd under the LinkLine banner. Much like the Indian red and greens before them, the grey flat cars will be produced mainly to

order. Production of this next livery will be dependent on the completion of the Indian red and the green liveries. Once again these are being produced, assembled and packaged locally in Australia. Actual production details and dates yet to be announced. But are expected to be available by the middle of 2003 and may be as early as April.

The Green flat cars

Delivery of these flat cars began in February this year and it is expected all will be supplied by the end of March 2003. It is recommended that you consult your local hobby shop very quickly to get your green flat car or get your orders into Powerline Direct ASAP. The number being produced has been set and the production run is practically sold.

Again these flat cars are available as the plain green flat car with no containers or with a choice of containers.

P701	Green flat car
P701AP	Green flat car with Allied Pickford containers
P701CSR	Green flat car with CSR containers
P701FCL	Green flat car with FCL containers
P701KS	Green flat car with K&S containers
P701TF	Green flat car with TNT containers
P701TNT	Green flat car with TrackFast containers

The retail price from Powerline Direct will be \$23.00 for the flat car and \$29.95 for the flat car with containers.

Indian red flat cars

This was the first production run of the ready to run flat cars and was started with the best of intentions. These flat cars, along with the green flat cars, will be completed and released during February and March 2003. The Indian red flat cars are sold out so if you would like one, or many, it is recommended that you contact your local Powerline retailers as soon as possible.

Due to the demand for this flat car another production run is being considered and could possibly be available before the next issue of the Powerline Update is published. For those who want one of these ordering now would be recommended or else keep an eye out at your local Powerline Retailer or check out the Powerline web site at

www.powerline.com.au

Powerline "S" Coaches

In the Australian Model Railway Magazine, AMRM, of February 2003 on page 56 there is an excellent article on up grading the S coach. Economically, or cost effectively, Powerline Models Pty Ltd could not produce these R-T-R coaches to this standard. An excellent article by Graeme Brown and a must for those who wish to super detail their Spirit coaches. I believe future issues of the AMRM will have follow on articles that will be well worth looking at.

Powerline S Coach Bodies

To coincide with and support the articles of Graeme Brown in the AMRM on the Victorian S coaches Powerline Models Pty Ltd has decided to release a limited number of NQR S Coach bodies, without bogies etc. These bodies will appear in plastic bags in various liveries, whatever we have available in NQR condition, and will be sold as Not Quite Right with paint and livery defects. The bodies as packaged will sell for \$25.00 each and will be available from Powerline Direct or your local Powerline Retailer. These are sold as is with no warranty or guarantee expressed or implied. These S Class Passenger Carriage bodies should be available in stores around mid March 2003 and supplies will be limited.

Powerline Models Pty Ltd on the move

In the New Year we have moved 'lock ups' which includes all Powerline bulk stock, of which there is too much. Included in the move are our accounting records, books, magazines and cars, yes Brian and I have to have somewhere to keep the Chevs, race car, rally car and the bits that keep them all going. All this does not fit too well in your average garages and was getting a bit tight at the old location, thus the relocation. Something like 50t was moved into the new premises that should be better set out and easier to operate than the previous location.

Thus we have been very busy and some stock and deliveries were slow to arrive early in 2003 but once we get it all finished we expect to have a more efficient service. The actual move itself has taken much longer than expected, added to this the new set up at the new lock up too has taken longer than expected.

Local Production

Starting out at square one Powerline Models Pty Ltd encountered problem after problem in the attempt to increase local production, and local content. We finally think that we have got the spray painting right,

at long last, with the spray gun and spray booth now operating satisfactorily. The pad printing is still causing us some trouble, and delays, but we are steadily getting that to work right as well.

Hopefully the end result will be improved production runs, less delays, more production, a larger range and hopefully delivery on time. Nothing is done over night and although this has taken longer than expected we feel the end results in the future will be worth the wait and the trials.

Associated Distributors Update.

The T Class series 2 and series 3 white metal body kits are back on the market and available in stores now. The body kit comes complete with side frames, fuel tanks, steps and pilots and is designed to fit an Athern SW1500 mechanism. Side frames as well as steps, side tanks and pilots are also available separately. Associated Distributors also have a VR decal set available for these locomotives. This is a popular Australian HO white metal kit that is well suited to beginners and experts alike and should continue to sell well. Place your orders with your local hobby store now.

DCC

Choosing a DCC system is not an easy task, too often we have a tendency to start reading specifications and features offered, and often end up overwhelmed with our new found knowledge. You will meet people who have already bought a system and each will recommend that you buy the system they did, as they are happy with their decision and confident in what they have brought. The list goes on, as the decision becomes more difficult and more distant with each book or article you read or each person you speak to.

Before I go any further I will state I am not an advocate or a supporter of DCC and in fact I prefer cab control and block controls of a conventional layout. I have read articles in Craftsman, Model Railroader, Model Railroading, Model Railroad News, been involved in News Groups and E-mail discussions and read just about every book available on the topic as well as trialing and using many DCC Systems as well. So I have a little knowledge on the subject and it still has not won me over. So first and foremost be sure you really want to go DCC.

When you have decided you want to go DCC the issues you will next need to consider are; reliability, simplicity of installation, simplicity of operation, what you actually want to get out of DCC, what features you require, what functions are important

and lastly what you can really afford. Importantly make sure the system you buy meets the requirements of the NMRA and complies with NEM652 and/or NEM651. This will ensure some compatibility with other systems. Dollars are not the secret to success or the answer to getting a DCC system to suit you.

After too much reading and a lot of time spent using various systems and other peoples layouts I must say each system has its merits and really there is not a great deal of difference between the major brands. Yet two systems came to the top, one as the all rounder and best value and the other as simply the best.

The Atlasmaster DCC system has had a lot of very positive reports and after trialing it I can see why. This system is relatively simple, is user friendly in terms of DCC systems, is functional and reliable, is very competitive in price, will do everything most people require and the Atlas master chip has 4 functions and is dual mode. When I say dual mode I mean it can operate on a conventional layout or on a DCC layout. For those who want a functional, reliable, not too technical and affordable DCC System then the Atlasmaster DCC System is it. Currently this is the preferred system of Powerline Models Pty Ltd. This system is available from all Powerline retailers who stock Atlas products. Price is approx \$315.00 for the latest commend unit, version 3.2 with all new features, and approx \$57.00 each for the 4 function dual mode decoder.

For those who want the best then Uhlenbrocks Intellibox of West Germany is it. This system starts off with a control panel that has two slide controls, a central LCD, a central key pad, cover a full 8 functions plus as well as being able to fully program any chip. What's more the system does allow you to do all track controls, signalling and interfaces with your computer allowing for Internet downloads. The latest Lok chip can be programmed with any steam, diesel or electric locomotive sound you require. Fleishmann have adopted this system as it for their brand and brought it out with their own FMZ system software included in the unit. This is the unit to buy which meets all NMRA standards and NEM as well as incorporating the Fleishmann FMZ software. If you really want to be serious about DCC and you are willing to pay for the best, approx \$1,200.00 for the main unit and \$70-\$180 per decoder, then the Uhlenbrock Intellibox with FMZ is the ONLY unit to buy. There is no equal or anything better. More information can be found at www.uhlenbrock.de and can be purchased from All Aboard Model Railways in Mittagong NSW or Train World Pty Ltd in Victoria as well as any other good model railway shop in Australia. Please note that Uhlenbrock make HO and N scale decoders and are recognised in the

UK and Europe as the world leader. Their decoders, although a bit more expensive, are the best and most reliable decoder available. The HO decoders measure 20 x 10.5 x 3.8mm and the N scale decoders measure 12 x 9 x 3.4mm. Note the decoders are power regulated and protected against short circuit. Wire connection, 8 pin and 6 pin plugs are available. In HO the maximum power load is set at 1000mA and 600mA in N scale.

These two systems are purely recommendations, and the preferred DCC systems of Powerline Models Pty Ltd, as there are many other choices like Digitrax, NCE, MRC and Lentz. The one thing I like about both the Atlas and the Uhlenbrock DCC systems is that speed control can be by the traditional round knob and not be pressing buttons or using a slide control. It is all a matter of what you feel happy and confident with. I personally am happy without DCC.

Exhibitions

PORTLAND

To us this was a brand new exhibition that was a great unknown. This was the first time Powerline Models Pty Ltd had put on a display in Portland and the last exhibition to be attended for 2002. Held in the Cable Tram depot and visitors centre the exhibition was a small show featuring numerous layouts and displays from Warrnambool, Geelong, Harcourt, Stawell, Portland, Hamilton, Adelaide, Ballarat and Melbourne. Train Clubs from Corio, Warrnambool, Ballarat, the Grampians (Stawell), Portland and Hamilton were in attendance. One of Portland layouts on display was actually a representation of the old wharf, the Portland Sea baths and the Portland foreshore. A realistic layout to behold that is well done and used as a display in the visitors' centre. Unfortunately due to its size it can not visit other exhibitions which is quite disappointing, yes there were requests for this layout to attend other exhibitions, but stacks up as a good reason to visit this exhibition along with the other layouts and displays there are to see. G, HO and N scale were all represented, as also was Hornby TT. Yet this exhibition had one other attraction, a very well built reproduction of a cable tram with trailer for rides from the exhibition into Portland and back. For those who made the trip to Portland it was an enjoyable exhibition and my one regret was that I did not have time to take a ride on the cable tram replica.

Warrnambool

The first exhibition in 2003 was Warrnambool and making this show happen was a testimony to the clubs determination. A fire at a public utilities offices firstly meant the club lost much of the space it had allotted to the exhibition to office space. Then

there is the familiar ring of the public liability issue, firstly being able to get it and secondly being able to pay for it. With all this added to the usual exhibition workload the club still managed to put on a show. Corio and Sunbury Model Railway Clubs were in attendance as were other layouts local and interstate. Personally I like, and enjoy, going to the Warrnambool Exhibition and for the locals it is a great show but this year there was something missing. Maybe it was the vibrance of past exhibitions, maybe just making the exhibition happen in its reduced state had taken something away from it or maybe a significant club layout from the host club for exhibitions is required. Whatever it was this is definitely an exhibition with potential that is yet to be fully tapped and I am still surprised that the West Coast Railways have not become involved with promotions or a special rail tour.

Corio

The second exhibition in 2003 is also one of Victorias most established exhibitions with this year being the Corio Model Railway Clubs 30th Model Railway Exhibition. This years exhibition had one major draw back, plenty of sunshine and a hot weekend. As usual there were plenty of good displays to see and trade stands to check out but many missed out as they were kept away by the warm weather. Many favourites were in attendance as were some interstate visitors like DIRT and a new layout from the La Trobe Valley Model Railway Club. For the modeller looking for those detail parts and the narrow gauge modeller there were some gems to be found among the white metal parts available from F&G Models. For model train enthusiasts in Victoria the Corio Exhibition is a must and those who passed on going this year due to the warm weather missed out.

Future Exhibitions

Powerline Models Pty Ltd attends many exhibitions each year in Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia. Should any club or group running an exhibition in any of these states wish to have Powerline Models Pty Ltd attend their exhibition please feel free to contact Ian Comport.

The address is:

Ian Comport
Operations Manager
Powerline Models Pty Ltd
P.O. Box 2100
North Brighton 3186

We are always looking to attend new and different model railway exhibitions and may be able assist organisers with additional displays, layouts and stalls.

Exhibitions

Chelsea

Long Beach MRC
8-10th March 2003
Chelsea Town Hall
Station Street
Chelsea

(go by Train, Bus or Car)

Air conditioned and easily accessed

Good second hand stall this year

Excellent family outing for weekend

(CANCELLED DUE TO PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE)

Boxhill

AMRA
7-10th March 2003
Whitehorse Aquatic Centre
Surrey Drive
Surrey Park
Box Hill
(by car or Bus)

Bendigo

Bendigo MR Inc
18th-21st April 2003
BriT College
136 McCrae Street
Bendigo
CANCELLED

Hobsons Bay

Hobsons Bay MRC
19th-21st April 2003
Albert Park College
Danks Street
South Melbourne
(Go by Train, Tram, bus or car)
A must for Australian Modellers

Canberra

Canberra MRC
5-6th April 2003
National Hockey Centre
Mouat Street
Lyneham
Canberra
(best by car)
Canberra's best and finest
A must visit

Brisbane

AMRA
3rd-5th May 2003
RNA Show Grounds
Sheep & Wool Pavilion
Gregory Terrace
Fortitude Valley
Australia's biggest railway exhibition and
Possibly the best due to pure size and number of
Exhibits. IN QLD it is a must and interstaters
Would not be disappointed.

Adelaide

AMREI
7-9th June 2003
SA Greyhound Racing Authorities
Greyhound Park Complex
55 Cardigan Street
Angle Park
S.A
One of Australia's largest railway exhibitions.
Adelaide's finest and a must for all S.A modellers.
A great family weekend for all

Morwell

La Trobe Valley MRC
7-9th June 2003
TBA
(Go by train or car)
This year bigger and better then ever
Always a good show.
All new venue

Burwood East

Waverley MRC
7-9th June 2003
World Vision Centre
Vision Drive
Burwood East
(Best by car)
Good family day
Best show in this area.

Stawell

Grampians MRC
July 2003
Drill Hall
Sloane Street
Stawell
(Best by car)
Over the years this exhibition has created
Quite a few surprises and has proved to be
Innovative and a must visit for those willing
To make the effort.

Essendon

Metro MRC
August 2003
Ukrainian Community Hall
3-11 Russell Street

Essendon
Opposite Essendon Railway Station
(Go by car train or tram)
Good family outing.

Adamstown, Newcastle

Our Town MRC
August 2003
Basket Ball Stadium
(By train or car)
One of Australia's biggest
Always worth a visit, something for everyone
A good family day out.

Braybrook, Sunshine

Sunshine MRC
Braybrook Secondary College
August 2003.

To Exhibition Organisers And Clubs

It has been brought to our attention that Model train Clubs and Model Railway Exhibitions may come under scrutiny by the Australian Tax Office. Issues that have been rumoured surround income/revenues, exhibitions and the GST. This is a very serious matter indeed and is one that can not be ignored. We are not here to give advice or to tell clubs what to do but the issue is a growing one that will need attention. ABN numbers, a Hobby Certificate or some notice of exemption is a must. Size of the club, size of the exhibition and incorporation will not help.

Public Liability

This is a growing issue for clubs and exhibitions, which has received much attention, like from Ron Cunningham and the Australian Model Railway Magazine, and needs to be rectified. Insurance companies appear to have no scruples and will obviously do what ever is best for them and what is easiest. Insurance companies are not the only ones to blame as governments and solicitors have a lot to answer for.

Ron Cunningham suggested a master policy for model railway exhibitions that would be ideal for all exhibitions to subscribe to. Yet after some discussions with an insurance broker and a few insurance companies, this idea hit a dead end. To apply more leverage and to have more bargaining power it has been suggested that the deal with insurance include clubrooms, club assets, member's collections, clubrooms public liability and public liability for exhibitions. This way we can offer an

insurance company a package whilst also getting the best deal for clubs, club members and exhibitions. A win win situation for all.

This is a proposal that requires the co operation and support of clubs and club members to get behind the hobby and provide business to one insurance company who in turn would provide a good deal for clubs and club members whilst providing a master policy for public liability insurance for exhibitions operated by clubs. This could also add to the value of being a club member.

Note; in the hobby car, car club, movement the AOMC has organised a master policy that has chopped Public liability insurance by around 60 %.

Powerline Update back issues

Back issues of the Powerline Update are available on the Internet at the Powerline web site www.powerline.com.au or from Powerline Direct at P.O. Box 2100 North Brighton 3187. The cost off the Internet site is free for back issues but mailing out of back issues is becoming costly and we request that a stamped self addressed envelope be sent as well as an additional 45 cent stamp cover costs and speed up delivery.

Powerline Models Pty Ltd

P.O Box 2100
North Brighton 3186
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Powerline Models Pty Ltd has no responsibility for the range or level of stock carried by individual retailers and Powerline dealers or the level of service they provide.

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Articles and comments for submission.

The Powerline Update is accepting original submissions, articles and write-ups from its readers and those with a common interest.

All writings must be on topics concerning either; model trains, Australian model trains, HO scale model trains, Australian Railways, Powerline model trains, model train modifications, model train detailing, model train layouts, DCC, train and/or railway exhibitions, model train clubs, electrical issues within model trains, and issues of interest within the hobby.

Acceptance and publication of any submission will be solely at the discretion of the Powerline Update. All published submissions will have the author's name recognised. All submissions to be considered for publication must come with a name, address, phone number and contact details.

The Powerline Update will, where possible, check the accuracy or validity of any submission and will not publish any submissions that may be sensitive or questionable. The Powerline Update will also accept no responsibility for the accuracy, reliability, statements made or views and opinions expressed in any submission.

Articles should be at least 80 words and can be anything up to a page. Submissions should be in word or as a hard copy, long articles must be provided in word and as a hard copy.

Submissions can be sent as follows:

Powerline Update	E-Mail
The Editor	ian@powerline.com.au
P.O. Box 2100	Fax
East Brighton 3186	(03) 9596-3917

Please note that the Powerline Update does not pay for articles or submissions, especially considering that the Powerline Update is a free publication.

VALE

John Blakeborough

On Sunday 16th February 2003 John Blakeborough past away, his funeral was on Thursday 20th February 2003. John was a friend and fountain of knowledge to all that knew him. The people he met and the friends he made in the hobby became his extended family and stood by him till the end. His knowledge of trains and model trains was quite broad as he worked on the Victorian Railways and had keen enthusiasm for modelling. John was also a keen photographer from a young age and his employment on the railways provided him with many opportunities, many of John's photos live on made available on CD. John's fight with Parkinson's Disease was never allowed to interfere with his

hobby as John and his Nissan Bluebird soldiered on. When driving became too difficult or whenever help was required John had friends to assist him in his endeavours. Unknown to John his determination to keep active in our great hobby inspired the many people he came in contact with and often never knew. John will be missed by those who knew him and those who shared his passion.