

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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2005

Welcome to the second Powerline Update for 2005. This year and the future is shaping up to be a very interesting time for the hobby both locally and overseas. There have been numerous changes in the hobby, changes of ownership, companies going into bankruptcy, new product lines being released, new ranges being produced and new products with new features and a level of detail that has to be seen, and heard, to be believed. On top of this have been advances in technology that has changed tooling, product finish, model detail and a growth in the use of DCC. The result is increased competition, new products, better products, bigger ranges, more products and an increase in opportunity cost for the modeller. Roco has gone into bankruptcy and a receiver appointed, Walthers have bought the assets of Life Like, other US manufacturers are up for sale, a large well known USA retailer is about to go into receivership as I write this column and rumours abound of a production crisis in China.

In Australia similar is happening with new products, new ranges, more production, more choices and the old rumour mill on the survival of manufacturers and shops. Rest assured Powerline Models Pty Ltd will continue to trade, it will continue to produce product and contrary to rumours is staying in business. The T-Class is on track, the Linkline V-Class is on track, other products in our range are being slotted in for new production runs and new plans and productions are being reviewed. The G2 has not been scrapped, the 48 Class has not been shelved and product we are currently out of will be re-run in the near future. On top of that Powerline Models Pty Ltd is still planning a few surprises that include possible new product.

These are interesting times indeed and you the enthusiast and the modellers will ultimately decide what the future holds by whom you support and where you spend your hard earned hobby dollars. Manufacturers and producers are sinking a lot of capital into new and up graded product, new product seems to be appearing every day and retailers are finding it hard keeping up with what is new and keeping their doors open against the internet wave. Many retailers have diversified and stock other hobbies as well resulting in the decline of railway shops, of which there are almost none left in Australia, and the increase of toy and hobby retailers. The current out come; Internet businesses that sells but gives no service, a decline in shops that specialise in model trains, an increase in the number of manufacturers and producers, and an increase in new Australian product.

In reality the Australian modellers has never had it so good.

The T-Class.

Standard Features.

Full Metal Chassis
5 Pole Skew wound can motor
Twin flywheels
RP25 wheels
All wheel drive
All wheel pick up
Kadee® metal knuckle couplers
Powerline couplers
Separately applied detail
Brass etch grills
DCC decoder runs on DC and DCC.

Yes all the above come standard in the Powerline T Class. Plus you also get the body detail and finish that modellers have grown to expect from Powerline Models Pty Ltd. Many in the hobby, plus some magazines, have not picked up on these features and failed to mention or highlight them but this model will be as good, if not better, than any other on the Australian HO ready to run plastic mass produced market. Make no mistake this is a new beginning and a sign of things to come.

Liveries in place for 2005.

In November/December 2005 Powerline Models Pty Ltd plans to release the following T Class locomotives.

T Class Series 2 High Cab

PT2-1 Victorian Railways
PT2-2 V/line
PT2-4 WCR

T Class Series 3 Low Nose

PT3-1 Victorian Railways
PT3-2 V/line
PT3-6 Freight Australia

Introductory Offer

A \$50.00 deposit per locomotive with Powerline Models Pty Ltd for an advanced order of a T Class secures and guarantees that order and the introductory price of \$198.00. Yes \$198.00 for the Powerline T Class with all its standard features. Orders are being accepted now by Powerline Models Pty Ltd. This offer will expire November 2005.

Powerline Retailers are also able to guarantee and secure T Class orders with a \$50.00 deposit per locomotive. Retailers can take orders and do the regular back order but there is no guarantee on supply as orders with deposits will be supplied and guaranteed. Back orders without deposits will get what is left and available on a first come first served basis.

DO NOT BUY ANY OTHER T CLASS UNTIL YOU SEE OUR T CLASS You will be glad you did.

The 48 Class

The 48 Class continues to soldier on, both in real life and in model form. Powerline Models Pty Ltd has been producing this locomotive in various guises and liveries since 1991 to the present. It has proved to be reliable, smooth running at low speed and ideal for shunting. Powerline Models Pty Ltd will continue to produce the 48 Class but do not be surprised if there are a few changes in the future.

The current locomotives available are:

P230B Tuscan 4897 & 48116
P232A Candy 48107, 48121 & 48125
P233A Red Terror 4894 & 4895
P234Y Silverton 48s35 & 48s37
P239 Austrac 4814 & 4836

These locomotives are in stock, available and you should be able to find them on the shelf in any good hobby store. Kadee ® adaptors are available and easy to fit. RP-25 wheels blackened or nickel plated are also available as well as spare parts such as hand rails, windows, Flettner vents, motors, traction tyres and bogies.

NQR bodies are also available but not kept on hand. When ordering these please allow some time for us to retrieve the requested body from storage. Those wanting the ready to run locomotives with the NQR bodies should allow a fraction more time as these items have to be sourced and assembled, which takes time.

RTR N Scale X Class

Still limited stocks available.

PNX-1 Freight Australia
PNX-12 Victorian Railways

SOLD OUT

PNX-11 Freight Victoria

PNX-1 and PNX-12 are both now available and can be purchased from your local Powerline retailer. PNX-1 (Freight Australia) is currently down to less than 12 units still left available. There are no plans currently to re-run PNX-1 or PNX-11 for now as Powerline move onto new production runs of different liveries. So once sold out that will be all for the near future, thus PNX-11 (Freight Victoria) is no longer available.

PNX-12 is the current X-Class production run in VR blue and yellow. This livery project struck a delay in the decal process due to alignment and the shade of yellow required. None the less our sub-contractors pulled through resulting in a satisfactory locomotive. Demand for this locomotive has been strong and we expect the limited production run to sell well.

The X-Class in N-Scale by Powerline Models Pty Ltd features a one piece resin body, an Atlas SD-9 mechanism, Micro-Trains ® MAGNE-MATIC 1016 Knuckle couplers, correct decals, brass hand rails and all assembled and finished by hand. Each and every locomotive is different due to paint, livery, logo and locomotive number differences available.

Why did Powerline Models Pty Ltd produce an N-Scale X-Class?

Powerline had thought for some time about going into N-Scale but the opportunity had never been quite right. Plans for the T-Class followed by an X-Class had been on the board since 2000 and before. In fact the X-Class is a locomotive favoured by a Powerline Director. Thus when Austrain announced they would do the X-Class and the opportunity arose to do an N-Scale one, Powerline decided to change tracks from doing an HO-Scale X-Class to an N-Scale X-Class. So then plans were put in place to enter the N-scale market and do an X-Class. With the assistance of some well know modellers and their expertise the project became a finished product on the shelves and in shops.

The Next X.

Yes Powerline are also about to release the next series of X-Class in N-Scale. This is a whole new body and fitment to an Atlas SD9 mechanism utilising the same techniques and successful applications used on the previous series of X-Class in N-Scale. So that is a new X-Class with an Atlas mechanism, Micro Trains ® MAGNE-MATIC ® couplers, 5 pole motor, twin flywheels, a resin body made here in Australia, paint made here in Australia and decals made here in Australia. The end result is a hand assembled and finished ready to run model. It will also be an improvement on the previous model. The first finished models are expected to be available in 2005. The liveries to be done are the as for the previous X-Class with a view to do all possible liveries over time.

Are there plans to do more in N-Scale?

Yes there is and yet another new model could be available as early as late in 2005.

V-Class Steam Locomotive from Link Line

In 2005 Link Line is to release a 2-8-0 steam locomotive. This locomotive is to be similar to locomotives that operated in Australia and can be modified to suit locomotives that ran in NSW and Victoria. It is not intended to be for the modellers but more a steam locomotive for beginners, starters and young enthusiasts. The expected retail price is to be around the \$150.00. to \$160.00 A release date is yet to be set but it will be in 2005 before Christmas.

The first production run will be in the livery of the Victorian Railway V-Class. Black with white lining, builders plates on the cab and tender sides and class and number plates front and rear. As a shadow the locomotive is very close to representing the V-Class and some careful changes and modifications will bring it even closer. Feed back from all who have seen and know of it has been more then positive.

This locomotive has not been kept a secret and was on display at various exhibitions across Australia from May 2005 onwards. Unfortunately an un-name publication refused to mention or comment on this locomotive when they were informed about it.

THE CL CLASS

As announced previously a limited number of hand built CL Class locomotives will be produced. These will be in the Commonwealth Railways marron and silver livery, ANR maroon and silver livery and the AN green and yellow livery. The bodies will be high impact polyurethane and produced here in Australia, the mechanism will be Powerline SM/2 mechanism totally rebuilt with blackened RP-25 wheels, all wheel pick up, all wheel drive, twin motors and modified fitment. In fact it will be a custom built mechanism especially for the CL Class. The locomotives will be hand painted and finished. The paint and decals used are all locally produced product similar to that successfully used on the N-Scale X-Class.

Those people wanting a particular locomotive number on one of the three liveries should order now so the locomotive can be custom finished to suit what they require. These locomotives are expected to start becoming available September 2005.

THE AL CLASS

Associated Distributors Pty Ltd has a limited number of AL Class bodies available. These fit onto the Powerline BL or G1 mechanism, with some modification. They can also be fitted to Athearn mechanism like the F45.

Consideration is being given to a limited run of ready to run, painted and hand finished models. Expressions of interest or advanced orders will be accepted. Yet if we receive insufficient orders the project will not go ahead.

THE MHG

Yes the MHG Van is set to make a return to the Powerline product range after a short absence. These vans will be available in October 2005. Available liveries are yet to be announced but expect at least the black, the Tuscan and the LAB 550.

New Wheels

In 2005 Powerline Models Pty Ltd is planning to release new axle wheel sets to suit the Powerline and Freightline ranges. These after market wheels will replace the P1109 wheels currently available and should be a significant improvement. The sets will be 25mm pinpoint axles with 10.5mm disc wheels and be double insulated.

Back in stock

P671, P674, P675, P161, P162, P415A, P416A, P435A, P436A and P434A

Currently out of stock

P420, P421, P422, P423, P438S, P456, P462, P464 and P678

Discontinued.

P601, P602, P603, P604, P620A, P681, P682, P683, P684, P689NR, P881, P882, P883, P820A, P822A and P884. Underlined items are discontinued and out of stock whilst there are still a limited number of non-underlined products currently available.

More to Come

Powerline Models Pty Ltd still has more plans and projects plus new liveries and production re-runs to come. More locomotives and rolling stock are planned for production over the next few years. None of the current Powerline range is to be dumped and production runs of the G Class mark 2, the 48 Class, the 81 Class and the BL Class are being planned along with some new products to add to the range. It may not happen over night but it will happen over time.

Need to find Powerline product?

A number of people have written to Powerline Models Pty Ltd complaining they cannot get a particular product or model. Unfortunately we cannot advise or control what hobby stores decide to stock but we can advise you what product is available and in stock if you contact us at:

Mail: Powerline Models Pty Ltd P.O Box 2100 North Brighton 3186

Fax: 03 9596-3917

Email: info@powerline.com.au

We prefer the customers purchase through a hobby shop and get the face-to-face contact and service that good hobby shops provide. Failing to get what you want and finding your hobby shop will not order it when you know its available, then we can advise you of a hobby shop that will have stock or that will order the product in for you. Good Hobby shops are really a pleasure to deal with. If you do not have ready access to a good Hobby shop or you live to far way from a good hobby shop, then we can help. Retail email and Email orders are available from Powerline Direct. They have a web site at www.powerline.com.au, you can contact them at sales@powerline.com.au, mail Powerline Direct at P.O Box 2100 North Brighton 3186 or fax 03 9596 3917. Powerline Direct is not a discounters and is not a full time operation, so orders can take a little time and Emails are answered within a day or two.

Kadees for Powerline S-Trucks.

There are still people out there who ask us about the fitment of Kadees to their Powerline S-Trucks and there are many who attempt to use the Kadee ® No 5. The correct coupler for the Powerline S-Truck is the Kadee ® No 27 that simply just screws on and gives you the right height.

New Train set Box

The Powerline/Linkline range of train sets will be getting a face-lift in the form of a new box lid and new artwork. The box has been designed, produced, printed, cut and finished in Australia by an Australian company. Andrew and Stuart have done a great job and the new look will be in stores shortly.

81/BL/G Class Locomotives

There are still a number of these locomotives available including:

P204S 81 Class Stealth

P206 81 Class Freight Rail

P207 81 Class Freight Rail

P216 G1 V/Line

P216FA G1 Frt Aust

P217 G1 V/Line

P218 BL Class NR (early)

These are still in stock as I type this column. There are no plans to shelve any of these locomotives or the G2 and no plans to scrap any either. Production will continue and re-runs and new liveries will continue but the listed locomotives may well be the last of their type. Stay tuned for developments.

Associated Distributors & Rail Motor Models

Many of you will now be aware that Associated Distributors Pty Ltd is wholesaling and distributing Rail Motor Models wagon kits, not Powerline Models Pty Ltd.

POWERLINE RETAILERS

Very shortly Powerline Models Pty Ltd will be issuing window stickers to Powerline Retailers. The issuing of sticker for retailers windows will be at the discretion of Powerline Models Pty Ltd. Those with a Powerline Retailer sticker should have most of the currently available Powerline, Freightline and Linkline ranges in stock, plus some spare parts and accessories, and

be willing and able to order your additional or extra requirements promptly. They will also be able to get warranty, repair and maintenance requirements processed and acted on. All bona fides hobby and railway shops will still have the ability to order, stock and assist with matters concerning Powerline product but a sticker will be a point of reference for modellers looking for shops recognised for having Powerline products in store and in stock and willing and able to provide service where Powerline and its products are concerned. Lookout for a Hobby store with the Powerline Retailer sticker near you.

NEW MAGAZINE.

Later in 2005 a new magazine will be launched in Australia for beginners, starters and enthusiasts in this great hobby of ours. This will be a quarterly magazine not of the quality of Motive Power, Narrow Gauge Down Under or Railway Digest, all top Australian magazines, but only at a small fraction of the cost. It is aimed at promoting and nurturing this great hobby by promoting the hobby, advertizing what is available and having articles focussed on beginners, starters and people new to the hobby. Its aim will be to promote the hobby, nurture interest in the hobby, to provide information about the hobby and its different facets, to encourage and promote modelling and to promote product that is available in all good hobby shops. The magazine will have advertising, reviews, articles, news and information for all interested in model trains. This magazine will be available at exhibitions and Hobby Shops, look out for it. We wish all involved the best.

Exhibitions

Bendigo

No Bendigo this year due to lack of venue but I have heard that the exhibition will be back on again in 2006. Until recently this is an exhibition I have been visiting and attending every year for well over 20 years.

Hobart

Strictly speaking this was a toy and hobby show, not a train show strictly speaking. Non-the less it was a big show.

Brisbane

What can you say about this exhibition except that it is huge and the largest model train exhibition in Australia. A small column could not do this show justice and it would take the column just to list the displays. The venue is the RNA and the exhibition is held in sheep pavilions, yes pavilions plural, which are basically tin sheds. Ignore the tin shed and the concrete floors and you have a great exhibition. Looking at holidaying in Queensland, then go in May on their Labour Day weekend and visit a great exhibition as well.

Pakenham

This was a first time exhibition for the organisers and considering pre-exhibition events and circumstances it was a stirring effort. A will do can do attitude and the continuation and carrying on from a good start will see this exhibition improve if its beginnings are anything to go by.

Adelaide

This is the premier exhibition for South Australia and a must visit for modellers of S.A.R, C.R, ANR and AN. This is one exhibition I do not get the pleasure of attending as the boss has nominated this one as his show. Must be something about the exhibition, the people or maybe the red wine.

Morwell

Continuing on from their last successful exhibition in 2003 the La Trobe Valley Model Railway Club put on an excellent show in a comfortable environment and a good venue. For those who missed this years or the 2003 event, this exhibition has grown and now resides in what can best be called a rural equivalent to the Camberwell Civic Centre. Not quite as large but as an exhibition about the same size as the AMRA Boxhill exhibition, with more operational layouts from memory. This exhibition along with Corio and Stawell, is shaping up to be a leading rural model train exhibition. By rural I mean out side of Melbourne and even then these shows are as good as the best you see in the capital cities.

Boronia

The Glen Waverley Railway Club exhibition

Stawell

As mentioned in the Morwell column, this is one of the big shows outside of Melbourne and attracts people from S.A, NSW and within Victoria. This exhibition is bursting at the seams and mindful of last year's congestion organisers allowed a little more space but still managed to fit in a great show. Like Queensland this show is in a big shed with a concrete floor, actually the local SES hall, but again ignoring the shed and the floor this too is a great show. Unfortunately there was no drag trains this year and no Stan as well. This was the Grampian Model Railroaders 7th show and my 7th show with them, if memory serves me right Stan was the man who promoted the exhibition to us and has been there every year till this year, hope you are getting better Stan.

Exhibitions in 2005

Sunshine

Newcastle-Honeysuckle (NEW VENUE)

Hobart

SA Convention

Gold Coast (NEW EXHIBITION)

Mildura
Liverpool-Hurstville (NEW VENUE)

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 to assist organisers with additional displays, layouts and stalls.

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 50 cent stamp cover costs and speed up delivery. Access at the website is by www.powerline.com.au/1999-q1 or whichever year and quarter you require. These files are PDFs.

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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:

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Profit facts

Everyone who knows a little bit about financial reports knows generally that revenue less expenses equals profit and to increase profit you need to either raise revenues, reduce expenses or both. What many people fail to realise is that the costs of tools, dies, moulds and technology for the production of new models are not expenses but capital items that are assets on the balance sheet. Thus you can make profits on paper but not have the profits in hand.

Thus it is interesting to read about the profits of some manufacturers and producers of model trains. For example Hornby has been spoken of as having made record profits. The interesting thing with Hornby is that its capital and share price rose when it announced it was bidding for Lima and it has moved the vast majority of its manufacturing and production to China and spent a lot of money on new tools and tooling upgrades. This has resulted in cheaper manufacturing and production cost as well as a larger volume of product on the market. More products less cost equals means more to sell that is not as expensive to produce but they had to spend money on assets to do so. So the amount of money actually left over that went into the bank was not possibly equal to the profit reported.

An Interesting piece of NEWS

One weekend whilst I was out and about an individual struck up a conversation with me about model trains, after noticing I was wearing a Narrow Gauge Convention 2005 Polo shirt. It was during this conversation I was told, yes told, that Train World Pty Ltd in Melbourne owned Powerline Models Pty Ltd and that Train World had an unfair advantage and got Powerline product cheaper than other shops. I politely told the individual this was just not true and that his information was incorrect. When challenged I explained who I was and that I had worked part-time for both companies. I then wished I had said nothing as other questions and untrue comments came forth. Not one comment or question had any truth or fact behind it.

After clearing up another lot of misconceptions, and untruths, I decided to try out google on the Internet when I got home. I had never done this before, but after entering Powerline and Powerline Models I had a large list of links. Some hours later I gave up reading the links as I came to one conclusion, 95% of the comments, rumours and information from non Powerline Models Pty Ltd sources was totally untrue gossips, rumours and lies not to mention some of it was defamatory. So do not believe what you hear or what you read unless it comes directly, and I mean directly, from the source. Internet comments, news groups and the like have in the majority of cases found to be unreliable and incorrect.