

# 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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2006 is now well upon us and it would appear that for the Australian Modeller, Pandora's Box is open. New surprises, new announcements and new models are appearing all around us. The question now upon the lips of modellers is not what is going to be produced now but what is not going to be produced or what could possibly be added to the list of planned or projected new models.

The Powerline Team has been keeping its plans very much under wraps with production now coming out of Australia, China, Brazil and India to name a few. Production planned and to be released in the future includes up grades to the existing range, new liveries and artwork, new rolling stock and new locomotives. The T Class sets a new bench mark on the Australian market place and also heralds in a new era for Powerline Models Pty Ltd.

## The T-Class Story.

### **In the Beginning.**

There has been much debate about when the T Class was actually planned. Well the very beginning of the Powerline Models Pty Ltd T Class is actually back in the early 1980s, about 1984, when Brian Comport produced the T Class series 2 and series 3 locomotives as a white metal kit with a limited production of ready to run models. It was then he had it in his mind to produce the T Class. In the later half of the 1990s, about 1996-1997, when Brian Comport first became involved in Powerline Models Pty Ltd the idea again arose. Later in about 2000, after Powerline Models Pty Ltd moved to Melbourne, the idea moved into project faze when planning began. Plans were changed, up dated and modifications made until a finished design was settled on and tooling commenced. The vision was an affordable, detailed, well finished, accurate and quality model that ran, looked and performed well. Unfortunately the best laid plans can face hurdles and hiccups and a late 2005 release date now appears to be an early 2006 release date.

### **PRE Production Samples**

Pre production samples of the Powerline T Class have been in Australia since about May 2005 and have visited various exhibitions and displays across Australia. All those who have seen the locomotive in front of them have openly commented on how well it runs and how good it looks. Commonly referred to as silver streaks the samples released in 2005 were never painted and finished models but fully finished and assembled test beds to be used and abused.

### **The model**

Great attention has gone into the planning and production of this model. It is the first model to be produced from concept to finished and on the shelf ready to run model by the current owners and managers of Powerline Models Pty Ltd. From the ground up this is a new model by a new team. Virtually nothing has been borrowed, utilised or taken from any other model meaning this locomotive's components have nothing in common with any other model in the range. The Powerline T Class marks a new beginning for Powerline Models Pty Ltd and there is more to come.

### **The mechanism.**

The T Class comes standard with a world class mechanism. This mechanism incorporates what modellers now tend to expect with some refinements and additional new technology as standard. The mechanism starts off with a 5 pole skew wound can motor mated to twin brass flywheels, these in turn drive refined bogies that are all wheel drive, all wheel pick up and contain RP25 wheels. All this is contained in a purpose built and refined full metal chassis to maximise weight for traction. This new mechanism reflects the future of models to come from Powerline and the direction of up grades for previous productions.

## The Body

State of the art tooling resulting in clean, crisp and well detailed plastic components and a finely finished locomotive from Powerline Models Pty Ltd. The T Class body is a world class product from the basic body through to the detailed parts. Powerline Models Pty Ltd has selected locomotives it could physically examine to map down the various features that make a T Class locomotive a series 2 or a series 3. Noting that virtually every locomotive is different or distinct from any other in some way, a balance was struck to best represent the T Class locomotive in series 2 guise and in series 3 guise whilst also allowing for design, tooling and cost limitations. The results have been most pleasing as many have noted and seen for themselves.

## The Detail.

Separately applied brass etch steps, brass etch grills, brass etch mirrors, plastic hoses and window wipers set the scene for a finely detailed model.

## The livery and artwork

Powerline Models Pty Ltd has always finished its models off well with good paint work, fine lining and attention to artwork finish on its models. Recent examples of the 48 Class (Tuscan, Candy, Red Terror, Silverton and Austrac) show a very high level of finish as do other models including the Freight Australia G Class. The new T Class is no different with artwork, colour matching and finish being well attended to by the Powerline Team. Each model produced is match to an actual photograph so that the model represents that locomotive at a point in time because on the railways no one locomotive remained that same for any length of time. Sun fade, maintenance, accidents, modifications, touch ups, refits, repairs, different facilities, different paint manufacturers and paint batches, driving crews and changing ownership has seen to that.

## The DCC Decoder

Powerline Models Pty Ltd will be releasing the T Class as a DCC Equipped locomotive, that is with a decoder fitted. The recently proposed decoder to replace the previous smart decoder, or automatically switchable from conventional DC to DCC, is a manually switched decoder. You physically switch the decoder from standard DC operation to DCC operation, which effectively eliminates any of the issues associated with the automatically switchable decoders.. It must be noted though that when switched to DCC mode the decoder will be able to detect and auto switch between DCC and convention DC operation. So those that still want that ability and it associated functions will still have it.

There were no problems with the original decoder as such but it was felt that the inherent detection issues of the decoder must be addressed for improved DC operation. Masks and programming as used by all manufacturers to cover up the issues was thought to be inadequate or to diminish the shunting operation of the locomotive whilst operating on a DC layout. So like another well known, and world leading manufacturer, it was decided we should employ a switch.

Our decoder complies with NMRA requirements and is compatible and will operate on all NMRA compliant systems. Systems we recommend include NCE, Lentz, Atlas Master and Uhlenbrock. The programming and functions of our decoder are the same or similar to other leading brands as is its quality.

## The delay

The original date officially announced by Powerline Models Pty Ltd for the release of the T Class was December 2006 in time for Christmas. Unfortunately even the best laid plans come undone and this date could not be met. This was mainly due to the DCC decoder, the push to make it better and the fact that there is a component supply issue for decoders. It was thought best to fix it and get it right now rather than rush the locomotive out now and fix it later or in another production run. The wait is considered well worth it as the team at Powerline and all who have seen the T Class believe it will set a new bench mark in quality, finish and accuracy.

## First production Run liveries.

Powerline Models Pty Ltd has announced the liveries it will be doing but recently went a step further by allowing for variations within the liveries themselves. Note that T384 has been replaced by T393. Anyone with an order for T384 will automatically be issued with T393 but can change there order, if the so wish, any time up till the end of December 2005.

### T Class Series 2 High Cab

PT2-1 Victorian Railways  
T357 early VR  
T359 later VR

PT2-2 V/line  
T366 early V/Line  
T364 later V/Line

PT2-4 WCR  
T363 as WCR

### T Class Series 3 Low Nose

PT3-1 Victorian Railways  
T367 early VR  
T395 later VR

PT3-2 V/line  
T393 early V/Line  
T375 later V/line

PT3-6 Freight Australia  
P388 Short wings  
T400 inspection hole

The use of the words early and later are generalisations relating to changes in locomotive and livery over a period. Changes can be as subtle as handrail colour, valence colour, the radio equipped logo, builders plates and minor changes in livery application or major appearance changes like with or without staff exchange pockets. Generally speaking liveries have been matched from photographs. It must also be noted that during the life of the T Class that different paint brands have been used, that colours did change from paint batch to paint batch and that if taken to the finest detail each T Class in the Victorian fleet would be a virtual individual.

### **Standard Features.**

Full cast metal Chassis  
Centrally mounted motor  
5 Pole Skew wound can motor  
Twin brass flywheels  
RP25 wheels  
All wheel drive  
All wheel pick up  
Kadee® metal knuckle couplers  
Powerline couplers  
Well detailed body  
Separately applied detail  
Brass etch grills  
Brass etch steps  
Metal hand rails  
Sprung bogies  
Interior cab detail  
DCC decoder runs on DC and DCC.

Yes all the above come standard on the T Class by Powerline Models Pty Ltd. Plus you also get the body detail , accuracy, artwork, paint livery 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, then 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.

### **Introductory Offer \$198.00 per T Class Locomotive extended.**

Due to the delay in producing the T Class the \$50.00 deposit per locomotive with Powerline Models Pty Ltd for an advanced order of a T Class has been extended. In fact the offer will stay open until the production and delivery of the T Class has been set down and locked in. Once a delivery date has been set the final advanced order acceptance date will be announced and set. Powerline Models Pty Ltd expects to announce the release date and the expiry date of the special offer in march 2006. The advanced order along with a \$50 deposit per locomotive 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. All orders plus \$50.00 deposit per locomotive should be made as soon as possible to secure and lock in your order, those who leave it too late will miss out. The outstanding balance of \$148.00 is not due and payable until the locomotives are in Australia and ready to be delivered. Notices will go out when the locomotives have arrived in Australia and delivery to customers will occur after the locomotives have been paid for in full.

Powerline Retailers are also able to guarantee and secure T Class orders with a \$50.00 deposit per locomotive. The collecting of the deposit and the full payment will be the responsibility, and at the discretion of, the retailers. 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.

### **T Class in Stores**

The Powerline Models Pty Ltd T Class series 2 and series 3 locomotives will be available from all Powerline Retailers that have placed orders for them. For those who want to look, admire and try before they buy a list of Powerline Retailers who will have stock of the T Class will be available after the release of the T Class. This list will come directly from known back orders and advanced orders made by retailers. Powerline Retailers are also able to accept advanced orders for the T Class on their own terms. The price per locomotive after the advanced order special expires will rise.

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

## **V-Class Steam Locomotive from Link Line**

Available and in stores since December 2005, the Link Line 2-8-0 steam locomotive painted up as a Victorian Railways V-Class is a competitively priced locomotive for all. This locomotive is 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 \$155.00. to \$165.00

The first production run is in the livery of the Victorian Railway V-Class, in its later years when they had been converted to simplex cylinders. 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. Feedback from all who have seen and know of it has been more than positive. A dress up kit is expected to be available soon.

The Victorian V Class steam locomotive was used extensively for coal trains and on the Wonthaggi line and ran up till the late 1920s.

This the first of many planned projects to come from our Brazilian manufacturer.

## **Stainless Steel Coaches**

Three stainless steel coaches of a type similar to those used on the Southern Aurora, Indian Pacific and The Overland are to be available any time now. Produced by Frateschi in Brazil and sold under the Linkline banner these coaches represent a good economical product for the Australian market place. These coaches will fill a void left by the Lima range of coaches and at a better price. This will give starters, beginner and novices in this great hobby some coaches to run behind their locomotives and modellers something to tinker with, detail and improve.

BGB Models produce a range of decals that would be great, and easy, to add that special touch to these coaches. They include D7 Vineland name plates, D54 Overland basic set, D55 Overland set, D56 GSR The Overland name set, D129 Ghan Sleeping Car names, D146 Ghan Name boards, D147 Indian Pacific Name boards, GSR name boards and D174 GSR Name boards.

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## **RTR N Scale X Class**

PNX-12 is currently available and can be purchased from your local Powerline retailer. 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

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. These are not perfect locomotives or intended to be highly detailed and finished perfect models. These are handcrafted and finished locomotives for N Scalers and modellers. These are not crisp, clean and plastic looking models but locomotives of character like the real locomotives.

The next, third, batch of PNX-12 N-Scale VR X-Class have been released. There will be another 2 batches to follow and that will be the end of the VR X-Class.

## **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 as per 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 early 2006.

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## **MHG**

P500 NSW Black MHG and P504 LAB 550 in Tuscan are now in stock and available with a delivery delay of about 3-4 days. Stock has been sent out to stores. There are some delivery delays at present as production runs have been limited and done based on orders and demand only.

## **More to Come**

Powerline Models Pty Ltd still has more plans and projects plus new liveries and production re-runs to come. More new locomotives and rolling stock are planned for production over the next few years. Although nothing has been officially announced, Powerline Models Pty Ltd and its contractors are working on many new projects and some may see release as early as early 2006 and more will follow. The T Class is only the beginning of the many new products to come that have been in the pipeline at Powerline Models Pty Ltd since 2000 and have been products Brian Comport has contemplated making since the mid 1980s. The new Powerline policy has been not to make any announcements until the product is finished and in production or is about to be produced. This is the case with the T Class and will generally be the case for future productions. The reason for this is to avoid the issues of the past like previous Powerline production plans under previous management including the 36 Class steam locomotive of 1992, the Xplorer of 1997 and many other planned productions that disappeared. Everything takes time and hopefully now we can see it all come to fruition.

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.

## **Existing Product**

Many Emails have asked about the future and possible re-run of various locomotives. The simplest answer is that Powerline Models Pty Ltd will not be shelving, scrapping, discontinuing or forgetting about any of its locomotives. There are plans to re-do and to re-run many locomotives. This includes the 81 Class, the 48 Class, the BL Class, the G Class mark 1 and the G Class Mk2. Yes the mark 2 G Class is planned for a production run and more.

Changes to the existing range have been in the planning stage for some time now concerning upgrading and improving the models. The aim of Powerline Models Pty Ltd is still to produce a quality product at an affordable price. Our mission is to foster interest and growth in the hobby of model trains.

Powerline Models Pty Ltd has been setting the standard in Australian model trains since 1987 and will continue to do so as we improve, upgrade and expand our range of model trains.

## **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  
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.

## **48 Class.**

There is still a range of 48 Class locomotives available. These include:

P230B Tuscan 4897 & 48116  
P232A Candy 48107, 48121 & 14125  
P233A Red Terror 4894 & 4895  
P234Y Silverton48s35 & 48s37  
P239 Austrac 4814 & 4836

## **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.

Rail Motor Models have good range of kits available to complement most Victorian modellers and layouts. The range includes the Quarry, Phosphate, Cement, Briquette, Sand, Rulite, Dolomite and Soda Ash wagons. All are available, in stock and in store at your local hobby shop. To finish these kits off you will need glue, paint, bogies and couplers as well as any extra details you may wish to alter or add to the wagon. A rake of these will look the part behind a T Class.

Another very interesting development at Rail Motor Models is a new range AOOX wagons they are producing right here in Australia ready to run. From the samples I have seen to date they will be an excellent model but one that will require generous curves.

## **NEW MAGAZINE.**

An Update on the new magazine is that the first issue will be released in early 2006. This magazine will be for model train enthusiasts and modellers in Australia. It will be about 40pages in size with a break down of approximately 25% advertising and 75% articles and features. It will not be dedicated to any particular proto-type, gauge or nationality but its diversity will depend on the quality and type of articles received. The aim of the magazine will be to promote the hobby of model trains, foster interest in this the worlds greatest hobby and promote or advertise model train product that is available from any or all hobby shops. The magazine will be free at selected hobby stores and exhibitions.

## **Exhibitions**

### **Warrnambool**

The first exhibition for 2006.

### **Corio**

Bush fires at Anarchie saw the venue for the 2006 exhibition become the Command Centre. and assembly point for the SES and CFA. The loss of a venue was a last minute hurdle that for some may have resulted in a cancelled exhibition but the Corio Club team sprang into action, finding a new venue and getting the new details out. The West Geelong Town Hall became the new venue.

### **Max Miller**

It is with great sadness that we belatedly announce the death of Max. Max was a gentleman and an intricate part of the BGM team. Along with Brian Chester, Max and the BGM display were present at many exhibitions in Victoria and South Australia. For years it has been the norm to see Max behind the BGM stand assembling one of the numerous steam locomotives produced by BGM and making it all look so easy. The Warrnambool Exhibition was the last for Max and ironically I must note it was not a BGM locomotive he was assembling as I took his photograph. Brian Chester has lost more then a business partner and the BGM stand will seem alien and almost empty without Max. The Brotherhood Of eXhibitionists (BOX) has lost a life long member and friend.

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## **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.

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## **Powerline Update back issues**

Back issues of the Powerline Update are available on the Internet at the Powerline web site [www.powerline.com.au](http://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](http://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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