Review: Model Company (New Zealand) 7mm Malcolm Moore Kit

I sometimes get requests to build some very interesting models. Recently, a good friend asked me to assemble a couple of Malcolm Moore locos in 7mm scale for him.

“Malcolm what?”, I asked.

“You will like them, they have a Ford engine in them”, he said.

That got my attention.

92 of these 4wPM locomotives were built in Melbourne (1943-44). Initially powered by a Ford Flathead V8, at least 20 of them later found their way north to collect cane.

The kits contained white metal castings for the body, motor, underframe and canopy ends. Brass sheet is supplied to fold to form the roof. Brass angle is supplied for the roof supports.

The model is designed around a Steam Era Black Beetle, which needs some simple modification to fit and a pair of supplied white metal mounts fitted to the ends of it to allow fixing to the differential and radiator castings.

I will not bore you with building detail, except to say that even though I found the instructions somewhat awkward and incomplete, the assembly was really very straight forward and most modellers of average skill will be able to complete one to a high standard with just a plan or photo to work from. The usual care and “dry fit” should be used as these are invaluable.

The instructions note that the roof folding may be the most daunting aspect of the model and an offer is made to carry out this procedure if you return the brass sheet along with postal costs to the manufacturer. I mounted the brass in my “Hold n Fold” and bent the sheet along the centre line being careful to form a rounded bend. A good clean vice with smooth jaws would suffice.

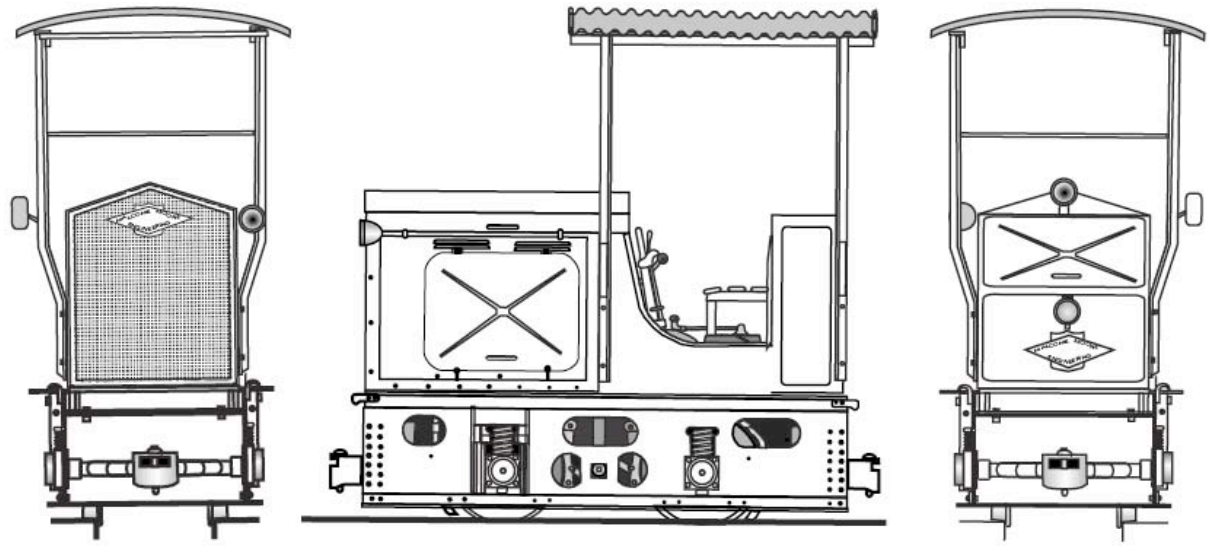
The models' owner asked for Kadee couplers to be fitted but the draught gear would have been in almost full view as they do not fit behind the end plate of the chassis. We decided that wooden buffer beams would look ok, so after shaping them from bass wood, I stained them with black acrylic paint thinned with methylated spirits.

To fit them to the model, I soldered short lengths of angle to the top inside edges of the side plates, against the lip at the top of the end plates, providing a small 1/8 by 1/8 inch flat area to glue to, which would be hidden behind the buffer beams on the completed model. Araldite fixed them in place after all of the painting was completed.

The part I always enjoy is the delivery run and a 10 minute visit to my friend’s railway took over an hour as we tested these locos extensively on several types of train and up different gradients. We found them to be strong good looking workers. They would be at home on an extensive cane railway or simply wandering about a mill or factory.

Ian McIntyre, January 2009

7mm scale Malcolm Moore loco on its home layout's Moreton Mill style lift bridge.



Moreton Central Mill, Nambour, "Sandy"
Petrol Mechanical Locomotive
Built by Malcolm Moore Engineering

Scale: 7mm = 1 foot, 1:43. Drawn by Jim Fainges, October 2003

The distinctive corrugated iron roof on Sandy is typical of changes made to stock locomotives by sugar cane railway maintenance shops. The Model Company kit comes with a stock roof but would require replacement in order to model specific locomotives on several of the cane railways.