

Small Plant & Machinery



Steven Downes highlights models of interest to collectors

For years, Norscot has been the exclusive producer of 1:50th scale Caterpillar models and, in 2012, Caterpillar awarded a licence to Tonkin Replicas, a company well known for producing fine truck models but with no experience of construction equipment.

The collector world has waited to see how their first release would stack up against the many manufacturers already producing exceptional plant models and now, the wait is finally over with the release of the Caterpillar 988K replica, an excellent introduction celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2013.

Caterpillar 988K

The 988K is a heavy model with plenty of metal used throughout, from the authentic shape of the body castings to the all metal safety railings.

The range of movement of the loader arms is very good with a finely detailed bucket and replicated cabin interior, complete with CAT printing on the seat back.

Flexible hoses have been added throughout and the paint finish is of a very high standard with crisply-applied Caterpillar markings. If future releases are to the same levels of quality and detail, the Caterpillar fans out there should be very happy indeed.

Maker: Tonkin Replicas. **Scale:** 1:50th.
Price: £100.



Mecalac 714MW

The 1:50th scale Mecalac 714MW from Conrad is a versatile machine, equally suited to a number of uses including trench digging, loading and handling duties.

With a working blade and outriggers, the undercarriage also features twin-axle steering while the 360-degree rotating superstructure and digging boom have been authentically modelled, complete with coupler and three different work tools, here pictured in the SRBG company decoration, a division of the VINCI Group. (www.webshop-vinci.com/en)

Maker: Conrad.
Scale: 1:50th.
Price: £70.



JCB 467 wheel loader

It has been a long wait for a new 1:50th scale JCB model, but the wait is finally over. The 467 wheel loader is the flagship machine in the product line.

The model from Motorart is packed with fine detailing including all metal grab handles

and safety railings with opening side engine panels revealing a fully decorated interior.

With an articulating chassis, replicated cabin and good movement of the loader arms, the model is finished in the latest corporate design and will soon be joined by the updated JS220 tracked excavator.

Maker: Motorart.
Scale: 1:50th.
Price: £90.



EC480D tracked excavator



One surprise in 2012 was that Motorart had once again become the exclusive provider of Volvo construction models with over ten new items planned for release throughout 2013.

One recent release is the 1:50th scale EC480D tracked excavator which is nicely detailed with linked tracks, authentically replicated track frames and a nicely engineered cabin interior.

The digging equipment looks good with all the hydraulic piping added, including the auxiliary circuit with a rugged bucket although the use of plastic rams on the model is a real let down, while the opening engine bay houses an un-decorated engine casting which is again unusual considering their previous releases.

Maker: Motorart.
Scale: 1:50th.
Price: £100.

470G tracked excavator

The John Deere construction range received an addition in the form of the 470G tracked excavator, a successor to the previous 450 model featuring similar levels of detail including linked tracks, opening engine cover, safety railings and hose detailing.

Ertl is known more for its toy range so this is firmly placed in the toy category while having enough detail and functionality to not look out of place in an enthusiast's collection. The paint finish and printing is good and with a little touching up of the large silver rivets, the model could look very presentable.

Maker: Ertl.
Scale: 1:50th.
Price: £45.



CUSTOM CORNER

One machine which is common within the UK is the small coal shovel, a machine which is unlikely to be mass-produced due to its limited appeal.

Gaz Evans has created a coal shovel conversion kit for the Cat 320D/323D or similar sized base model consisting of resin boom and stick with a white metal bottom dump bucket.



All hydraulic piping is included and the end result is a very unique model, here built on the Cat 320D from Norscot.

IN DEVELOPMENT...

The Caterpillar 776 off-road tractor with Mega MET-185 low bed trailer, an ideal solution for moving plant equipment around the mine site, will be produced in the first half of 2014 by CCM as part of its vintage Caterpillar range. The model will feature a fully replicated engine and drivetrain with working steering,

functional kingpin hitch and authentic cabin interior. It will be limited to 500 pieces worldwide.
Maker: CCM. **Scale:** 1:48.



Do you remember?

With a short stick and large bucket, there is no mistaking the main use for this Demag H55 beauty as a mass-excavation machine. At the time of release, the tracks looked great while the all metal construction and great range of movement demonstrated the engineering prowess of German manufacturer NZG.

It is certainly one of my favourite early excavator pieces which I purchased 17 years ago.

Maker: NZG. **Scale:** 1:50.

