

GWR Siphon C

Manufactured by: Scorpio Models, 3 Meads Close, NEWPORT, NP19 4NR.

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[rate](#) this kit as: 2-4-2

One variety of this numerous class of vans.



What's in the Box?

The kit arrives as a large flat pack with the etches taped to some stout card and a couple of bags of bits and pieces, including a good many white

metal castings. The instructions run to 9 pages, 2 of them contain a total of 32 short paragraphs containing rather terse instructions, 3 contain diagrams of the etched sheet with numbered parts.

There is a good scale drawing and several pages of diagrams to shew how various parts work. Reading the instructions suggested that this would be a good kit, it has some clever ideas on fold-ups and the laminations are well thought out; a great pity that the reality did not come up to expectations. What should have been an excellent kit turned out to be have some serious problems. Here is one completed side and one set of parts ready for construction. Good bending bars are absolutely essential to get the sole bars correctly shaped but all the parts fit well and, with care, go to make up a good, strong unit. I fitted all the parts that I could while still 'in the flat'.

The ends too are made up from several laminations and again, I fitted as many parts as possible while it was flat on the bench. Both the sides and ends appear



to be accurate renditions. However, fitting one to the other is tricky. However, it allowed me to use a tool I have had a while but not used yet.

This little gizmo enabled me to hold the parts at right angles while they were tack soldered together, checked and then soldered up solid. Once



that was done I added some brass angle for strengthening as I considered that the edge joint would fail if flexed much during assembly.

The ends took a while to get to fit as the etching does not extend to making provision for the sides to fit snugly against the roof-line fold-over. Nevertheless, with care, good joints can be made that line up and are robust.



The body ready for the underframe etch to be "dropped in" as the instructions call it. The problem is that the part has been designed to fit inside a body that does not have an extra piece laminated in to represent the lower planks. It is therefore necessary to remove about 0.5mm from each side. Damned annoying and unnecessary.



Once over that hurdle, the rest of the underframe goes together easily. Here one can see the level of detail provided, most



of it well thought out. However, I suspect that this is a hand drawn master and so some of the smaller parts tend to be on the crude side compared with the crispness that seems to be the norm for CAD.

The kit provided some white metal castings for the door handles. They clearly were made from exceptionally good masters, as were the end-door hinges and springs, among others. It is a pity that the standard of casting did not

live up to the masters. I scrapped the door handles and used some cast brass door handles from Slater's instead.



The footboard supports provided are based on etched parts and wire, probably adequate but somewhat delicate in my view so I used Slater's step supports instead suitably modified by filing off the fixing pins and rivet heads, bending them straight and then fitting them through the etched holes in the sole bars, bending them up from behind and soldering in place.



The lower steps proved to be a great disappointment. Each one is made by an ingenious

fold up from a single piece of etch that gives an excellent representation of the thick wooden step board with rounded edges and corners. Unfortunately, the drafting appears to be wrong and the cut-outs for the axle boxes did not line up at all. As can be seen from the above two pictures.

There was no way I could see that they could be modified to fit and so I scrapped them. I used some brass U channel with one side milled off instead. However, this sort of error makes me question how would a beginner have coped I wonder? (The manufacturer in a response to a published version this in the Gazette states that I had made an error in interpreting the instructions, not at all beyond the bounds of possibility. I have since contacted them to discuss this but received no reply.)

The end detail is quite comprehensive here awaiting only lamp irons, door hinges and bottom door bump stops. I also added some cross pieces at just under roof level to prevent bowing of the sides, which can be seen in this picture.



Now largely complete and awaiting some final parts fixing. The kit provided for sprung buffers using white metal housings and lost wax brass buffers to be sprung from behind with wire. The latter were very poorly cast (though again, from excellent masters) so they were scrapped and replaced with some internally sprung ones from Hayward.

Here it is completed and waiting to go to the paint shop. This batch of vehicles were dual fitted so in addition to replacing the white metal vacuum and steam pipes, a set of Westinghouse pipes were added along with CPL couplings as I did not like the lost wax cast one supplied.



The roof has the rain strips etched in so care is needed in shaping it but it has been etched to the correct size. It is off to Ian's paint shop soon to be finished in ex-works.



The kit makes up into a good representation of a Siphon C but, for me, let down by the lower step boards and poor quality castings, most certainly not for the beginner.

The manufacturers were sent this review and, though they said they wanted to respond, some three weeks later I had heard nothing.

Finally finished and painted.