

## LNER (CGR) 15T Van Dia 15

Manufactured by D&S Models

The kit comes as a flat pack (so no box for those of you too mean to get proper stock boxes!) with a single zeroxed sheet of instructions for 4mm scale and a slip of paper "Provisional Instructions for 7mm Kit". This basically, tells one to "amend any sizes given to suit". The instructions, while not useless, are, in my view, totally inadequate for anyone with little or no experience of building etched kits. (However, Dan Pinnock of D&S is helpful and supportive.) That said, with some care this kit builds into a fine model. My other gripe is that there is no roof included but the size of the brass required is given in the provisional 7mm instructions.

I began with the sides and ends on the basis that as much as possible should be done before building the body as a box. The doors are quite complex but the etching is well done and the parts fit together nicely. Time taken to study the

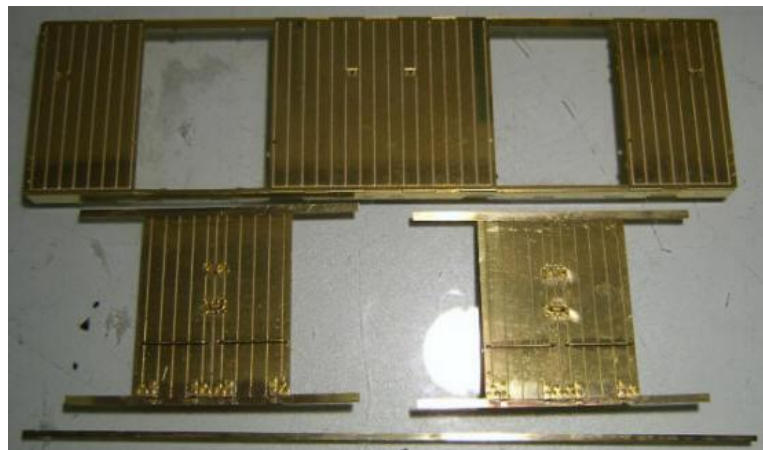


drawing and the parts is essential but, once figured out, is not difficult. The long folds on each side, and especially the solebars, were done using my newly acquired "Hold & Fold". This excellent tool has enabled me to make 1 and 2mm folds over long sections perfectly straight and at right angles with no cockling.

Here are the parts for the sides with the folds made on the body side and the solebars. The handrails on the doors were bent up in one of Bill Bedford's etched jigs and so are all exactly the same size.

The door modules complete ready to be fitted to the side.

As usual, I used an RSU and C&L 179° solder cream.



Once the doors have been assembled, they can be fitted to the sides and then cleaned up ready for assembling the body.

The ends need only the coupling plate fixing prior to this, leaving the white metal castings until nearer the end. Eventually they would be fixed in place with Loctite 480.



The completed sides and ends ready for assembly of the body.

A small engineer's square is essential, both while tacking and then seaming once satisfied that the joint is square and true. I use a

steel plate as the negative terminal for the RSU so ensuring the base is flat and square was not a problem. Nevertheless, it also was checked on a sheet of plate glass; an item every serious modeller should have on the bench.

Next, the under frame and wheel units. Each axle is held in an identical, fold-up, unit, one of which is compensated by cutting down a pair of ears to give some degree of movement. I filed them down about 1mm but later increased it to give more movement. One advantage of this method is that the units are removable for painting and the brake blocks move with the wheels. A nice design feature. The solebars need a neatly etched overlay sweating on and then a handrail (that is really a tow hook) fitting before assembly to the sides. Here are the parts ready for final assembly.



The solebars fit into slots on the base of the van

sides so, provided that the body is square, the under frame will be too.



The completed van waiting to go to my customer's paint shop.

The original vehicles had roof hatches as well and these are partly catered for in the kit (the actual hatches though, like the roof, are not provided and need to be made) but these were largely removed prior to BR days, which is the period my client asked for it to be built.

There are a few pitfalls. Getting the compensation to work requires some work with files on the tops of the axle boxes, the bottom of the springs and the inside faces of the spring castings. It is also necessary to use some 1mm wire for the pivot as the holes for it are (at least on this model) overlarge and cause the unit to sit too low. However, this is a common problem with centrally pivoted compensation units and I always now use the heaviest gauge of wire that will fit the holes, despite what the instructions may say. This is reasonable since etching has its limitations. I think the white metal vac pipes are rather fragile but then, I am anti white metal anyway.

Overall a good kit that goes together well and not beyond the bounds of anyone with a modicum of experience. It may possibly be one for the determined beginner, though the inadequate instructions would make it hard for them.