

## Williams Models GNR 8 Ton Van Kit

Although I have used individual parts (buffers, brake parts, couplings, etc.) from this supplier to assist in scratch building, this was my first complete kit from Williams Models.

As soon as I unpacked the contents of the substantial box, it was evident that the quality I had come to expect from my experience with the castings and etchings was reflected throughout the entire kit. All the parts, resin, brass and whitmetal were crisply detailed with little or no 'flash' to be removed.

The thorough instruction sheet included extensive prototype information, demonstrating the effort which had been put into ensuring the resulting model would be as accurate as is possible. The only point with which I would raise issue is the matter of the LNER era livery : This is stated as red oxide which would only be appropriate for an AVB-fitted van. The kit is for a non-fitted van, so the appropriate LNER livery should be grey. In the GNR era the 'brown' livery would be correct for both fitted and non-fitted vans.

The body consists of just two resin castings. One incorporates the sides, ends, floor and solebars, the other is the roof. The solebar has cast in location marks for attachments such as horse hooks and brake lever guide, while the roof is finished with a textured canvas pattern and various ripples to represent the kind of distortion which appears with age, through 'racking' of the roof timbers.

The underside of the floor has location pockets for the positive location of brake hangers.

The running gear is equally well-designed for ease of assembly : The W-irons and V-hangers being an integral part of an inner solebar of laser cut steel which fits behind the resin solebar. The axleboxes are cast brass and are sprung. Just a little 'easing' with a needle file was required to have the axleboxes sliding smoothly in their guides and the holes for the axles required a little drilling but all this is well documented in the instruction sheet. The cast whitmetal springs are positively located by spigots which fit neatly into laser-cut holes in the W-irons.

The only potentially 'tricky' part of the assembly is the requirement to soft-solder the two sides of the steel W-iron assemblies to the steel stretchers. The V-hangers are incorporated into these sections and it is necessary to fit the whitmetal brake cross shaft parts into the V-hangers before soldering. A gas blow torch was used and the V-hangers and whitmetal parts were wrapped in wet kitchen paper towel to protect them.

The most 'fiddly' task and one which took me a considerable amount of time, was fitting the keeper plates to the W-irons with the tiny 14BA nuts and bolts!

This is a well-detailed model, the kit includes wheels (Slaters) and all you need to add to complete are glue, paints and transfers (GNR available from Williams Model and LNER from GRS). It can easily be constructed in an afternoon and goes together a lot more easily than quite a few 4mm scale kits I have encountered.

At £115 the kit is not only good value but an ideal 'first' model for a newcomer to gauge 3 : It would be difficult not to produce a satisfying model given the accuracy of the components and ease of assembly.

John Candy (April 2009)

**Assembled kit awaiting painting (the roof vents are optional and not included in the kit).**

