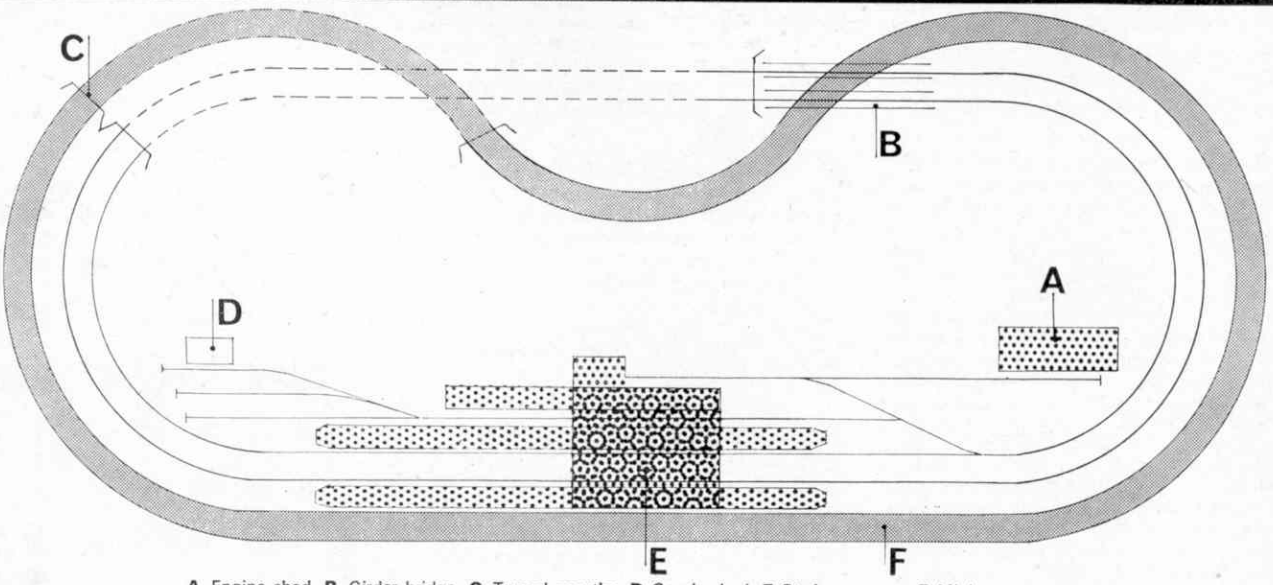
The left-hand side of the large railway/roadway layout with the Tri-ang Hornby Hymek locomotive in the foreground

LOCOMOTIVES AND A LAYOUT



A Engine shed. **B** Girder bridge. **C** Tunnel mouths. **D** Goods shed. **E** Station canopy. **F** Minic motorway

THE Tri-ang Toy Fair, held in Haymarket, London, every year, is the first opportunity that many dealers have of examining for themselves the many new products that are to appear during the coming year. It is also an excellent occasion to discover any changes that have occurred to existing items.

This year, the highlights of the exhibits in the Rovex Scale Models room were undoubtedly the four new locomotives planned to appear during the coming year, two of them have been mentioned in a previous Meccano Magazine. Of the four new locomotives in the Tri-ang Hornby range, two will be on sale very shortly, the R751 Co-Co 'English Electric' type 3, was actually included in the 1965 catalogue, although the illustration did not really do the locomotive justice. The model at the show deservedly captured the admiration of everyone who saw it. It is well up to the standard set by the AIA-AIA Brush type 2 locomotive, and the model has that characteristic 'bull nose' appearance so very typical of 'English Electric' engines. Also due to be released in the near future, is the 'English Electric' Bo-Bo locomotive, fitted with working pantographs, and which will collect current from the track in the normal way, or alternatively, from a pantograph system. A switch on the roof of the locomotive selects the method of current collection.

Although the two other new locomotives will not be available just yet, samples were on display for inspection. The 'Hall', which is very nicely detailed, will be the most eagerly awaited among enthusiasts and is complete with copper capped chimney to give that 'Swindon' flavour. The second locomotive, a Hymek Bo-Bo diesel hydraulic, also a Western Region locomotive, was on show resplendent with white window surrounds and pleasing green livery, making the selection of 'modern image' locomotives available in the Tri-ang Hornby range even more representative.

Railways and Roadways

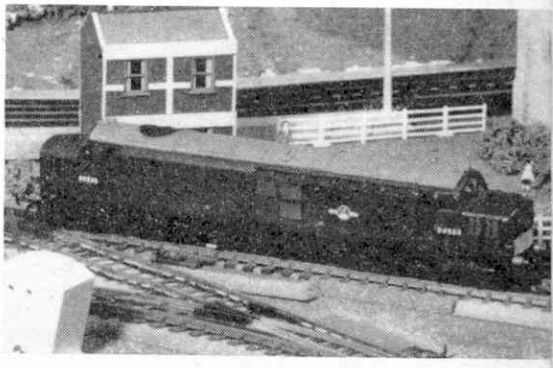
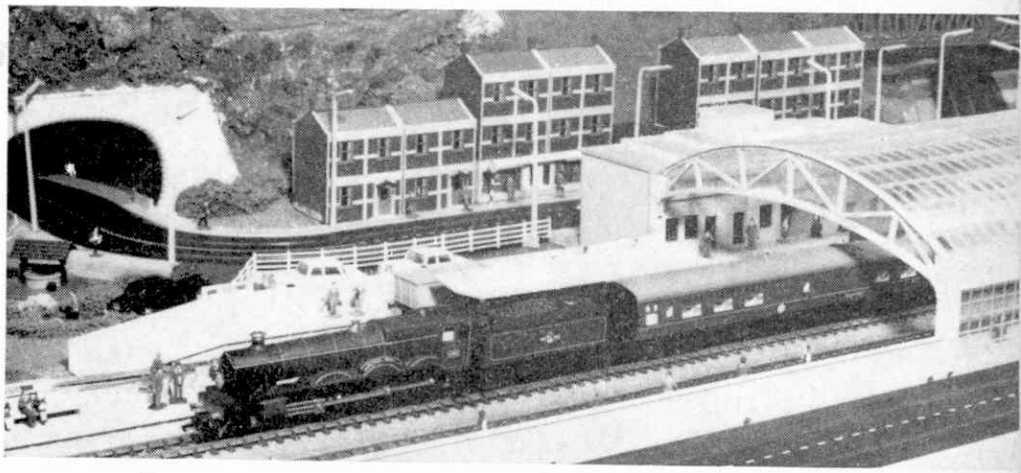
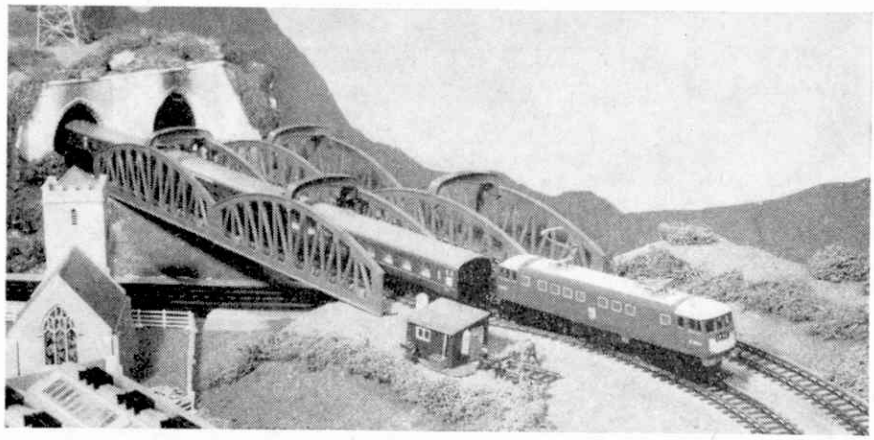
Altogether, there were *seven* layouts on show, ranging from one large railway/roadway layout, to a small Minic Motorway rally scheme. I thought the most fascinating of these, was the large railway/roadway layout which was also, I believe, shown at the Hamley's stand at the Schoolboy's and Girl's Exhibition. It measured approximately 10 ft. by 5 ft., and had a double track oval main line with a fairly comprehensive station at the front and a scenic backdrop behind. This consisted of a hill rising to the back of the layout with the track tunnelling through a double girder bridge on the right-hand side. A gradient at both ends of the layout was formed to lift the track clear of the motorway system at the back of the layout, and to allow it to pass under the girder bridge. The Minic Motorway system rather cleverly weaved its way round the back of the layout, disappearing into a tunnel on the left and at a lower level than the railway, re-appearing half way along the hill to run alongside the station before passing under the girder bridges. The scene as a whole was most effective, and was undoubtedly enhanced by the hill, which had been carefully built from King Size Colourings, cork bark, and lichen laid on a suitable framework and base, and of course with a tunnel mouth at each end and at the middle for the roadway.

Behind the layout was a backscene painted a plain blue but with a few white clouds added. Although quite simple, this effectively gave a finishing touch to the back of the layout which can often be the most difficult to model realistically. A backscene does, in addition, restrict the viewpoint to only one side of the layout. This makes the work of building scenery much easier than for those layouts viewed from all sides.

The station itself contained four platforms facing a two-siding goods yard, and a two-road engine shed. Two platform faces were formed from an island platform, one side of which was a terminal road. The canopy over the station, the goods shed, and the station buildings are formed from accessories formerly in the Hornby-Dublo range, and the layout is a good example of how these items blend with standard Tri-ang Hornby components. Behind the station is a row of houses built from kits in the Model Land series, two of which were described in the December issue. All are quite new products and are ideal for creating typical town street scenes.

All track on the layout was ballasted with the grey foam plastic which is bought in strips 16 ft. 6 in. long. This is by far the best way of laying track, especially when the sleepers are pressed down until only the tops are visible. It gives a very realistic ballast appearance as you can see from the photographs, and in addition gives smooth silent operation, completely free from that annoying drumming noise that can be heard when track is laid without any form of underlay.

Mike Rickett



Right: in this picture can be seen the new 'English Electric' type 3 locomotive running from the locomotive shed to the station
Below: the Tri-ang Hornby 'Hall' waits patiently at platform 2
Bottom: over the double girder bridge is an express train pulled by the new pantograph locomotive