

04-02-2000

April Fool Joke 2000:

As in the year before, I also made up my Lego® April fool joke in 2000. This time there had to be done much more work in preparation of the publication than last year. Enjoy some of the pics which are documenting the making of this joke.

I hope I have nobody bounced too bad with it. And I want to apologize at Lego Company for the use of their Lego® logo. (That's not permitted regularly, but I supposed this to be a clear case of ironical use and I'm claiming freedom of art for it). Of course the logo has been deleted in the following pictures now.



This is the faked Lego® catalogue I published the day before April the first. Indeed it was published at 00:00 on April 1st New Zealand time.... It shows the new train program of new more realistic train stuff, non juniorized buildings and a digital train control. In the text there are mentioned remote controlled signals and further supplements any train modeller should like.



On the second page of the catalog one could find some additional train cars and a couple of much requested supplements for Lego® trains like the half and quarter section of straight track and remote controlled points. I liked this page most, when I designed the catalogue, because I'm still a little proud about the picture used as background. I tried to imitate the style Lego® catalogues are made up, and I think this effort went quite well.



A "close-up" of the big wheeled electric engine with fake number 4460. These wheels are from a LGB garden train. The pantograph consists just out of original Lego® bricks but uses two cutted off "tubes" (like the ones from top of set 7813) to connect the part on the very top with the parts below.



This fake station 4424 was my attempt to build a cool building in a kind of early nineties Lego® style. Take a look at the extensive use of rare parts: grey chest from 6011, red pillow of the lamp and red bench from fabuland, black train roof front from metroliner, blue windows, brown walls etc.



The fifth picture showed the new fake 4450 passenger train set. It's modelled after a fast German luxury train out of the thirties: the RHEINGOLD Express. The engine is built completely in dark grey. The waggons have grey baseplates from 4558, but the wheel holders and the buffers are painted in grey to give the set some more exclusive bricks. The doors of the passenger cars are not painted, but the have insulation tape, in exact coulour of blue Lego® bricks and in a height of exactly two bricks. The white stickers used at all these models could be bought in shops which are speciallied in selling the LGB garentrain.



I tried to build a dark grey engine since over a year, but only the new Star Wars Lego® sets made it possible to create this model. I bought sets for far over 200 \$ to realise it. Here is the very beginning of the engine. The big spoke wheels are definitely no Lego® parts, but by Playmobil®, a toy company which produces here in Germany. The very same type of wheels is used in LGB garden train waggon.

The wheel count 2-8-2 led me automatically to the old express steam engine P10 built by BORSIG for the railway of Prussia, later named as BR 39 in the German "Reichsbahn". As far as I know, it was one out of two engines in Germany which had a tender combined with this wheel combination. I really got excited when I learned that BORSIG painted and produced their engines in dark grey instead of typical German colour black with red wheels. So this was fitting very well.



This has been a quite advanced state of building process: but the steam pipes are still attached to the baseplate and the wheels have no connecting rods and no Lego® stud in the center. And there are still some dark grey sloped bricks missing in the roof of the drivers cabin.



Next step: the engine is finished: the drivers cabin has been redesigned as well as the front of the engine. the rods are attached to the wheels, which have a middle stud now. Only stickers are still missing.



Fascinating outside picture taken at the spoke wheel of a big steam locomotive (BR 03, 4-6-4), which is permanently parking in front of the train station of my hometown Brunswick. I photographed this picture for possible use as backdrop for the catalogue. But finally I decided to use a pseudo-old photo which showed the big wheels without Lego® model.



This picture shows the waggons of the Rheingold Express 4450. At this time of building process they have been both identical. Later one of the waggons got two small 2x3x1 windows in exchange for a 4x3x1 one. There are no stickers attached so far. When finished there have been attached two kind of stickers: self made ones (with black letters on transparent) on the yellow plates telling the trains starting and destination stations (Basel-Amsterdam) and white ones with DB (Deutsche Bahn = German railrod company) logo.



Picture of the completed Rheingold Express 4450 with a small brown platform. The brown plates are from a 1998 promotional shell set. I used each two of those sets for this train set and the brown boxcar of the waggon set.



The additional luggage cars of the real Rheingold have been completely blue coloured, like this one (numbered as 4432). It has painted wheel holders and buffers too and uses a short grey baseplate: I used a broken baseplate, which I shortened, because it was too heavy damaged to be glued again. I rather like the details e.g. the use of sand colour bricks as boxes and the pallet with railing nearly more than the blue car itself.



A better picture of the heavy electric engine 4460. In this picture it was only prepared for motorisation. But now the spoke wheels with metal ring are used for currency submission to two 9V technic motors which drive all eight big wheels from inside the engine by an vertical axle which works as bogie also.



Detail of the electric engines roof: this fragile looking pantograph is built only by Lego® parts and of course nothing is glued!



Mechanical power transmission of 4460. You can see two 9V motors driving a horizontal shaft by a rubber band. From here the speed is reduced once more to a third and with this speed the vertical shaft drives the wheel sets. The wheels are still using the original LGB metal shafts. The tooth gears are attached with help of some layers of tape to enlarge the diameter of the steel axle (see picture below). The electrical connection is shown more detailed in the next picture also.



The electrical connection is made very simple with some steel balls, which are softly pressed by a small sponge (like you use them for ear protection) to the flange of the LGB-wheels. The balls (from a roller bearing of a bicycle) fit fine into a 1x1x1 brick with stud on side. From outside this stud the connection cable is lead through a small bore in the sponge in direction to the ball (which lies where the small arrow is on the photo). The end of the cable is made free from insulation for ca. 4 mm and the fine copper cord is spliced to a kind of brush. This avoids the cable from slipping out and gives save electrical connection. At last a knot bears any unexpected forces which possibly pull on the cable.



The train station with fake number 4424 in a better picture. As mentioned above take a closer look at all the rare bricks used here.



No Lego® catalogue without some freight cars: this one belongs to faked waggon set 4479. It bears a big roll of cable. The brown railing is from one out of many Star Wars Lego® parts used in this hoax catalogue.



Second waggon of the set: horse transport car made by mainly green Lego® bricks.



Flatbed car with a "John Deere" oldtimer tractor. This car uses the still quite rare bricks in tan colour.

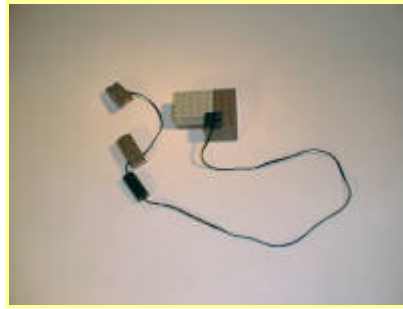


And as last waggon a mixture out of boxcar and caboose to complete the faked train set. Waggons like this have been typically used in early German trains. The green doors with brown frame are from the big figs set 232 bungalow.



This picture shows the whole train car set 4479. Cable carrier, horse transport, flatbed with tractor

and brown boxcar.



Just a 9V Lego® Technic Motor and a few dark grey bricks have been the digital control unit of the remote points.



The heart of the digital trains: again a pair of 9V motors of technic and train have been used for faking a digital controlled train motor.



Shooting indoor pictures with a digital camera is a question of as much light as possible! Especially when the camera is older than two years and has a not too strong flash, it's quite difficult to take good pictures (I use a Olympus 820L for all pictures on my pages).



One of the seldom succeeded good pictures out of far over 500 (!) which have been taken in total for this April fool joke. It shows some more details on the train station and some of the rolling stock.

**I hope you have had fun with my fooling page! And be prepared for next year:
I will look forward for April the first again!**