

Minerva's second 'Victory'

A relatively new name in ready-to-run 'O' gauge, Minerva Model Railways made its debut in December 2015 with the Peckett 'E' 0-4-0ST and now it has delivered its second locomotive – the utilitarian 'Victory' 0-6-0T. **MIKE WILD** takes a closer look at this new arrival.

IF YOU ARE LOOKING to make the move into 'O' gauge then one of the best places to start is with an industrial railway scene. These busy railways were compact and worked in close confines – and there is a growing number of ready-to-run products which are perfect for just this situation.

Minerva Model Railways is one of the names to beat when it comes to industrial ready-to-run motive power. Chris Klein (formerly of Ixion Models which brought us the Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0ST and Fowler 0-4-0DM for 'O') heads up the company alongside Chris Bastion with their aim being to deliver quality locomotives at respectable prices.

The Kerr Stuart 'Victory' 0-6-0T is Minerva's second locomotive, following the Peckett 'E' 0-4-0ST (HM104), and, like its predecessor, the new 0-6-0T has arrived bang on time in December 2016 as the manufacturer planned.

The 'Victory' class was a rugged

and simple creation by Kerr Stuart during the First World War. Just 10 were built in 1917 for the Inland Waterways and Docks Department and at the end of the First World War they were sold on to the Alexandra Docks Railway, Brecon and Merthyr Railway and other private collieries. Three survived in traffic long enough to enter service with the Great Western Railway (two remaining in traffic until 1954/1955 with BR) while the 'Victory' operated by the East Kent Light Railway was allocated a BR number (30948), but was withdrawn and scrapped in 1949 before receiving it.

Despite seven remaining in traffic with National Coal Board into the 1960s, none have been saved for preservation. The last was withdrawn in 1969.

THE MODEL

This class of 10 locomotives had a rugged and bulky look which suits 'O' gauge well. Our sample is delivered in plain satin black

Minerva's 'Victory' captures the bulky look of the prototypes.



Right: The 'Victory' is Minerva's second ready-to-run 'O' gauge locomotive.

THE DETAILS

Manufacturer:	www.minervamodelrailways.co.uk
Cat No:	n/a
Description:	Kerr Stuart 'Victory' 0-6-0T, black
Scale:	'O'
Price:	£282 (DCC ready)
Era:	2-5
DCC:	DCC ready, 8-pin socket
Couplings:	Working three-links



A five-pole motor with a flywheel are at the centre of the 'Victory' together with an 8-pin DCC decoder socket.

offset with red bufferbeams, safety valve and whistle picked out in bronze and the motion and wheel treads with a bright fresh metal appearance.

Neatly, Minerva supplies the 'Victory' with a number of optional components including a full set of lamp irons (plus spares), smokebox door dart, tank vents, sandboxes and different styles of toolbox. This is great, but it would have been good to have diagrams to show their location in some cases – particularly as there are two types of lamp iron. A quick search on the internet soon provides inspiration for footstep locations.

Nevertheless, this is a well appointed model delivered in a fashion which keeps the buyer's options open. It is available in plain black, green and red liveries – and aside from the builder plates, the model is fully open to customisation to suit individual requirements.

The body of the 'Victory' is injection moulded and includes a large number of separately fitted

parts including full backhead detail (although in black only), window fillers, footplate details, sandpipes and brake rigging. Sprung buffers are provided at each corner while in the centre are sprung three-link couplings which look a treat hanging from the heavy duty bufferbeams.

Correctly for an industrial locomotive, there are no brake pipes while bolt detail on the bufferbeams is excellent.

Completing the 'look' are separately fitted metal handrails throughout and flush glazing to the cab window apertures front and rear.

PERFORMANCE

On the track, our sample was sure footed and smooth running

from the word go. Inside is a five-pole motor with a large brass flywheel which aids the 'Victory' in applying its power to the wheels. Drive is to the rear axle with the leading two driven via the coupling rods of the motion.

Following running in as described in the instruction sheet, the

'Victory' was tasked with sustained operation at the head of half a dozen wagons running through a mixture of standard and double slip bullhead pointwork without issue.

Slow speed control is excellent too making this an ideal addition to an industrial fleet.

Minerva has also designed this model with digital and sound installation in mind. Removing the body is straightforward requiring four crosshead screws

to be released for access. Slide the body off and the 8-pin decoder socket – a simple but reliable design – is positioned on top of the chassis above the gearbox giving clear access while space is available in the boiler ahead of the motor to position both a decoder and speaker for sound.

OVERALL

The 'Victory' is another success of the rise in popularity of ready-to-run 'O' gauge and, moreover, it falls into a category of locomotives which aren't going to break the bank too. At £280 for a standard DCC ready model (and £390 for a DCC sound fitted version) this 0-6-0T is respectably priced for a model which sits in a niche portion of the model railway market in 7mm scale.

We think it's great and as a follow up to the Peckett 'E' 0-4-0ST makes it quite viable to begin amassing a usable and detailed collection of industrial locomotives in 'O' gauge. We can't wait to see what Minerva turns out next. (MW)