

# Roundhouse Engineering

## “Merseysider” 0-4-0 battery electric diesel



**B**uilt in 1964 by Ruston & Hornsby for the the Park Gate steelworks in Rotherham, ‘Merseysider’ is a 0-4-0 diesel electric locomotive acquired by the Talylyn Railway in 1969 and given the number 8 in the stock list. During it’s time in Wales, the locomotive received a new superstructure. It was sold by the line in 2016.

Roundhouse’s model is a faithful recreation of the prototype. The metal bodywork is well detailed with all the louvres, handrails and bolt-heads on the footplate in place whilst retaining the ruggedness that outdoor operation demands.

The cab roof is removable for access to the on/off switch and charging socket for the built-in 7.2v cells. Access to these is easy, yet they are kept away from dirt and rain, partly thanks to the glazed windows.

Models are supplied ready fitted with 2.4Ghz radio control, a manual option isn’t available but I’m not sure this is going to worry many people. This is a scale model and wouldn’t be enhanced by switches sticking out of the sides.

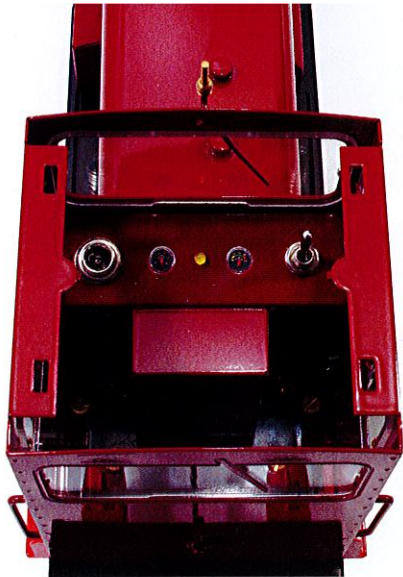
On the test model, the handset is a car type with trigger for forward and reverse and side wheel for speed control. These can be a bit of a love or hate format. For a locomotive, they work fine and despite being more used to the two

sticks version, I quickly got the hang of it. The speed wheel is sprung so you do need to keep hold of it or the model will stop. If you turn the controller off while the loco is moving it will continue at the speed you have set, fine on a continuous run but on an end to end layout, personally, I might look at a different style of transmitter.

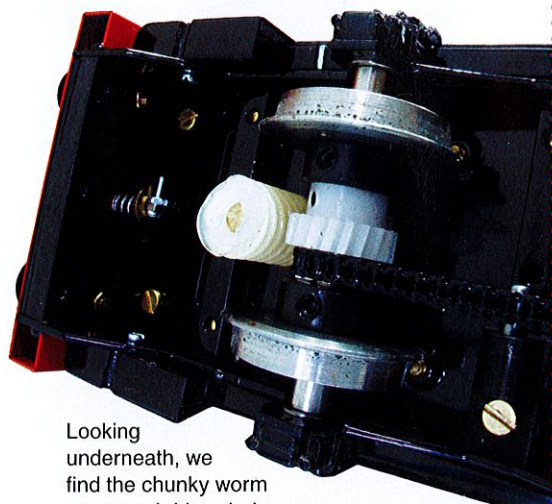
Reguageable between 32 and 45mm by undoing Allen bolts on the wheels and using the supplied gauge, the tests were carried out on 32mm at Barley Pit Works. A quick run without a load proved the model has an impressive turn of speed, but will happily run at the prototypes more normal fast walking







Removing the roof gives access to the on/off switch and charging socket.



Looking underneath, we find the chunky worm gears and drive chain.

pace. The battery was supplied charged, and in half an hour of testing, it showed no sign of running down. Drive is exceptionally smooth, with no stuttering or cogging.

Looking underneath, power transmission from the motor is via a chunky worm gear with the wheels connected via chains. No guard is fitted so it will be worth owners cleaning dirt, bits of plant and dead insects out as part of the maintenance regime.

Haulage power is excellent. Everything we hung on the back it pulled and there was obviously power to spare. The weight and grip from the four-wheel drive chassis means it could be a rescue locomotive capable to moving reasonable trains.

Lights and sound were built in on the test model, the later operating at a pleasantly realistic volume. Imagine you are seeing the prototype from a distance and you get the idea. The horn isn't too blaring either – practical but to annoying, even in the hands of a big kid who insists on sounding it all the time.

Since this is a review, I suppose I ought to be picky. The bezels on the lights are a bit prominent and the front

grille too recessed compared to photos. Apart from that, nothing to complain about.

When the model was first announced, the estimated price of around £1000 was a bit of a shock. Now confirmed at £875 for the sound version or £755 for the non-sound, it's still not the cheapest four wheel diesel outline model out there, but, this is a model offering the quality Roundhouse are known for.

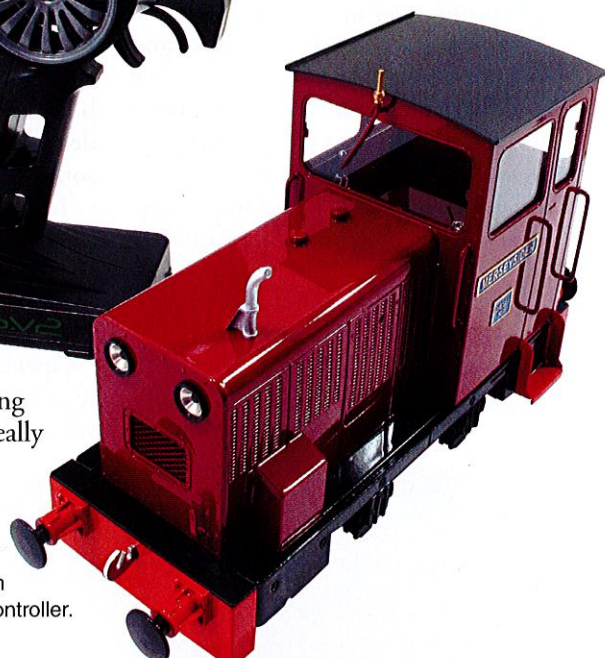
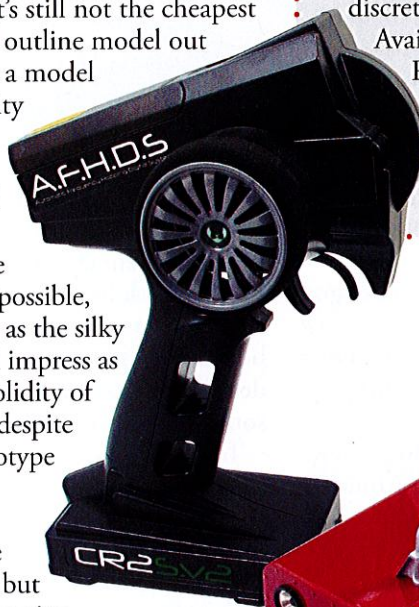
I'd recommend prospective purchasers handle the model and if possible, try operating one as the silky smooth drive will impress as will the general solidity of the construction despite the accurate prototype outline. Colours are the standard Roundhouse range and well applied, but I look forward to seeing this model out-shopped by a lining expert in the prototype colours really setting this fine machine off. ■

### TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

- Length over buffers: 229.50mm
- Width: 91.50mm
- Height from railhead: 132.50mm
- Sealed 6 NiMh AA cells (7.2 volts)
- Soundcard with diesel engine and horn effects
- Working headlights
- 2.4GHz radio control as standard
- Smart charger
- Worm gear drive
- Chain drive to rear axle
- Regaugable between 32mm and 45mm
- 4 Axle bearings
- Removable roof
- On/off switch situated in cab
- Onboard charging port
- Glazed cab windows
- Comes with both prototypical buffers and Roundhouse centre buffers to be fitted at customer discretion.

Available in any Standard Roundhouse Colour

Price: £875 (sound version) or £755 (non-sound)



The test loco was supplied with a car type controller.



The full-sized "Merseysider" at the Tallyn railway. (Photo: David Mitchell)

### Garden Rail Resource

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Please mention **Garden Rail** when contacting suppliers.