

Benefits in summary

The KPF Zeller rolling road range is designed to deliver the same benefits, regardless of the size and length of the model.

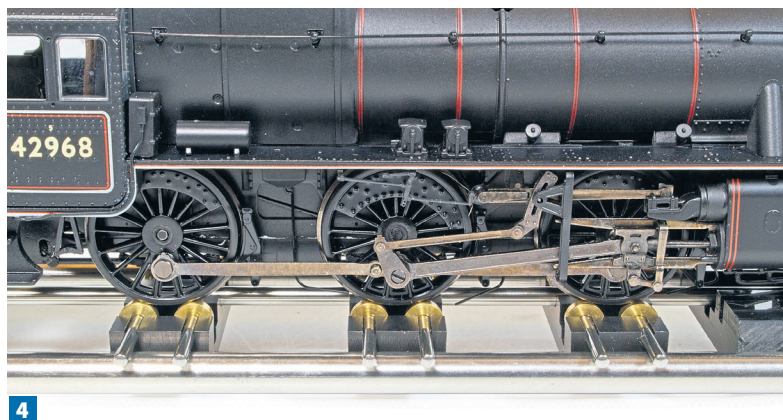
- A static test unit suitable for kit builders and professional modellers.
- Flexible: it can be used for a huge variety of different models.
- Available in different lengths to suit a modeller's collection.
- A table-top running unit for modellers without a layout – models still can be enjoyed.
- Use it to prepare models for a club night or exhibition.
- Test-run models without having to set up a stored portable layout.
- Watch the motion of a model to detect binding and tight spots.
- Run-in new models in a controlled manner for the best performance.
- Fine-tune models for fine running – other modellers will want to know how your model runs so well!
- Test models following repairs and use the rolling road for fault finding.
- Use the wheel-cleaning attachment as part of routine cleaning and maintenance.
- DCC conversion experts will find a rolling road ideal for testing installations and performance after a decoder has been fitted.
- Locomotive sound effects can be enjoyed to their fullest extent when a digital sound-equipped loco is run on a rolling road, especially if the modeller's layout is of a restricted length.

Each of the various versions is equipped with a combination of pick-up roller units and idler unit (front bogie rest) for unpowered wheels depending on the model and the length of the rolling road. For example, the standard 00/HO model is supplied with seven units together with a front bogie rest. The N gauge 'mini' is 200mm long and has six pick-up roller units. The reviewed 'Professional Standard' rolling road is equipped with a very useful mixture of front bogie rest and seven units for 00/HO together with eight units for N gauge. You will have to give careful consideration to your likely needs before making a choice of rolling road package!

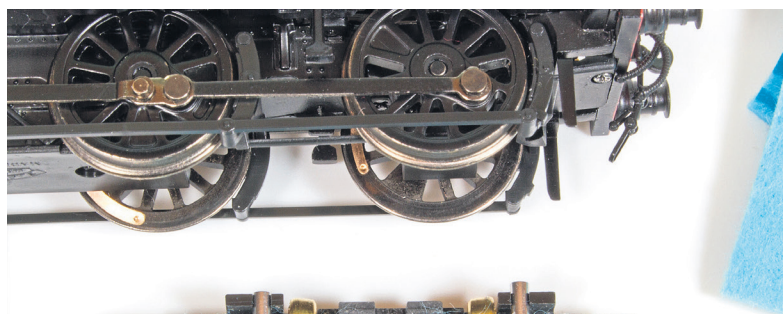
Electrical power is conducted through the two side bars to each pick-up roller unit – in effect they are power buses as well as structural elements of the rolling road. The units make contact through the ends of the roller axles, four of which are fitted to one pick-up roller unit. The rods are separated by insulating brackets, which also keep the rods the correct distance apart. The middle rod also has an important function in this regard and provides a pick-up bus for the three-rail models that are more popular in Europe than in the UK.

Flexible design

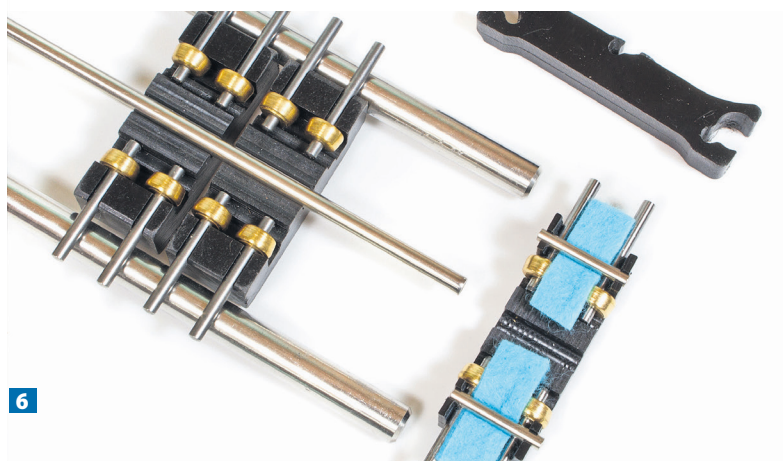
One of the big benefits of this design of rolling road is its flexibility. The pick-up roller units slide along the side bars allowing them and the front bogie rest (when supplied) to be accurately positioned to match the wheels of a particular locomotive. The rolling road worked perfectly with models ranging in size from the Bachmann Class 20 (both gauges) to large Bachmann tender steam locomotives such as the Stanier Mogul, which is shown being tested on the rolling road in this article. The pick-up roller units are also used to support the tender wheels of such models because they too may have current collection wipers and also work perfectly with four- and six-axle diesel loco models.



4



5



6

4. Running in the Bachmann LMS Stanier Mogul and its lovely motion is shown in this picture. The wheels sit squarely and securely on the conical rollers.

5. A useful and interesting accessory is the driving wheel cleaning attachment, which makes wheel cleaning very straightforward and should be part of the running-in and maintenance routine. It is a modified pick-up roller unit that fits the rolling road in the same manner as a standard unit.

6. To fit the driving wheel cleaning attachment, remove the end spacer and one or two roller units.

7. Slide into place – it fits in the same way as the standard units and collects power from the side bars too.

8. The cleaning pads are securely held in place with simple clips, which are teased off with tweezers, making it easy to replace the pads once dirty.

9. A single drop of track cleaning fluid on each cleaning pad is all that is required.

10. It never ceases to amaze how much dirt collects on the driving wheels even when the layout appears to be clean and is protected by dust sheets. A cleaning attachment is a very useful addition to the KPF Zeller rolling road range.

Operation

Operation is simple but needs a little care in setting up. Place the rolling road on a flat, level surface and push the pick-up roller units roughly into the position they are needed. Power is introduced to the side bars using the supplied plugs, which plug into the end of the rolling road. Normal variable DC power (analogue) and DCC power can both be used with the rolling roads – it does not make any difference. Ensure the power is off before mounting a locomotive on to the rollers. A little care is needed to ensure the model is sitting properly on the rollers before applying power. Power should be applied gradually – too much acceleration and a loco could jump off the rollers.

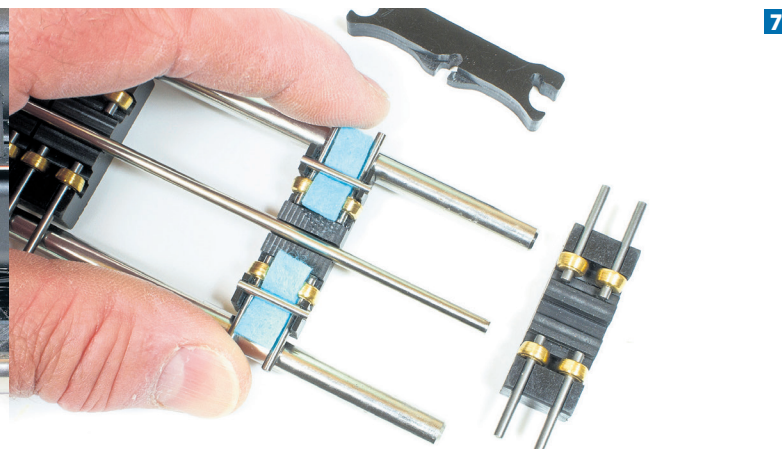
When running in new models, do not subject them to more than half power or speed until the mechanism quietens – running-in is a whole subject in its own right and one I intend to cover in a future article – it is important in obtaining the best from the high-quality mechanisms now fitted to models today. Do not

leave models unattended when running them on a rolling road – if there is likely to be a problem such as a seizure of a mechanism, you can guarantee it will happen when your back is turned!

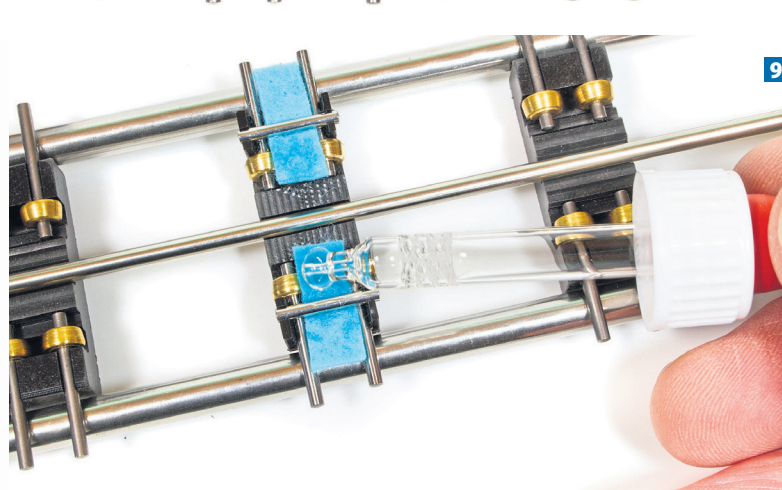
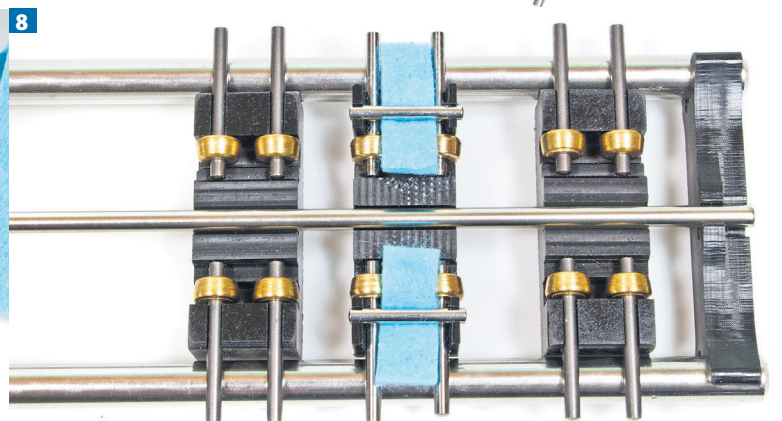
Inevitably, the rollers will start to collect dirt from extended loco running sessions in the same manner as track becomes dirty during layout operations. Ten Commandments Models tells me that KPF Zeller recommends that the pick-roller units are removed from the main side bars and placed in the cutlery tray of a dishwasher for a normal washing cycle – an interesting solution! An ultrasonic cleaner designed to clean jewellery would also be an effective cleaning method.

Driving wheel cleaning attachment

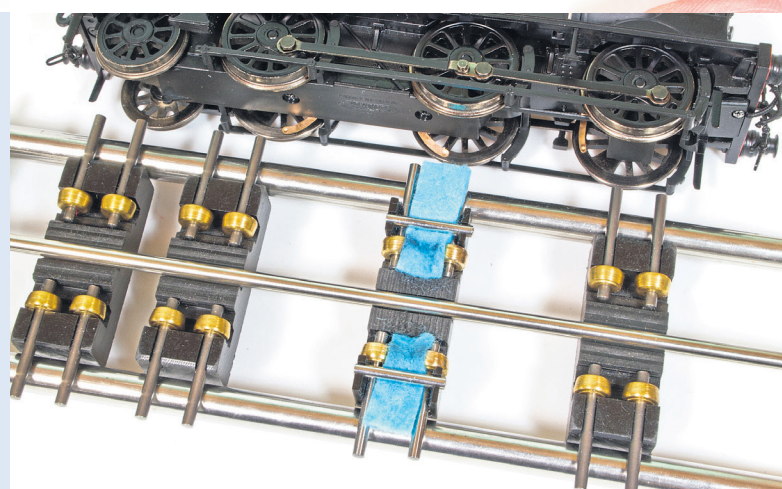
An elegant and simple accessory for the KPF Zeller rolling road range is the driving wheel cleaning attachment that easily and quickly cleans locomotive driving wheels.



7



9



10

The one designed for 00/HO gauge is demonstrated in this article and is a modified pick-up roller unit, which can be fitted with the same cleaning cloth pads as used on the KPF Zeller track cleaning cars. The wheel cleaner is fitted to the rolling road by removing the end spacer and one or two of the pick-up roller units. Slide the cleaning attachment into place and also return the pick-roller units. Refit the end spacer and plug the power back in.

The pads are soaked with a drop of track cleaning fluid dispensed from a dropper (10ml is supplied with the attachment and a drop on each pad is all that is needed) and the model mounted on the required roller units to support it. The attachment is positioned under the wheels requiring cleaning and everything carefully seated before operations commence. Each pair of wheels on one axle are cleaned one at a time. The model is run gently

on the rollers, being held by the fingers to ensure the wheels being cleaned are making contact with the cleaning pads. Remove the loco, replace the cleaning pads if necessary and mount the model again with the wheel cleaning attachment under another pair of wheels. Rinse and repeat, in effect.

I found wheel cleaning to be simple using this method and although it has the potential to be messy, placing some kitchen towel under the rolling road and starting the model running gently during cleaning prevents mess on the workbench. In all my dealings with rolling roads such as the KPF Zeller, being careful with setting up and use always delivers the best results. The wheel-cleaning attachment is far more effective than the old soaked kitchen towel and track method, which can be very messy, and also has the potential of damaging a model if one is not careful.