

Railtalk Magazine

Issue 3
December 06



**DRS
Class 20's**

⋮ **Remembrance
Unit** ⋮

**Southern's
Services**

Railtalk Magazine

Front cover

185 134 leaves
Barnaby just as the
sun is setting on the
4th of November.

Class 47



About the magazine

Railtalk is the monthly
magazine from Railtalk forums.

Site/forum

For more information please
contact any admin on Railtalk

Railtalk.net

Picture submissions

Pictures and news can be
entered through the forum, or by
email us at entries@railtalk.net

Railtalk Magazine team

Andy - Editor
James U - Co Editor

Robert K- Head of news
James P - Head of freight news

When is it published

Railtalk magazine is published,
the Sunday closest to the end of
each month.

Railtalk magazine is published
by Railtalk forums.

© Railtalk



Jops maybe returning to the mainline, 458026 is pictured here at Clapham on the 27/10/2006. **Tom Loader**



37406 is seen working 1Z37 to Gloucester past Coedkernew - 04/11/2006

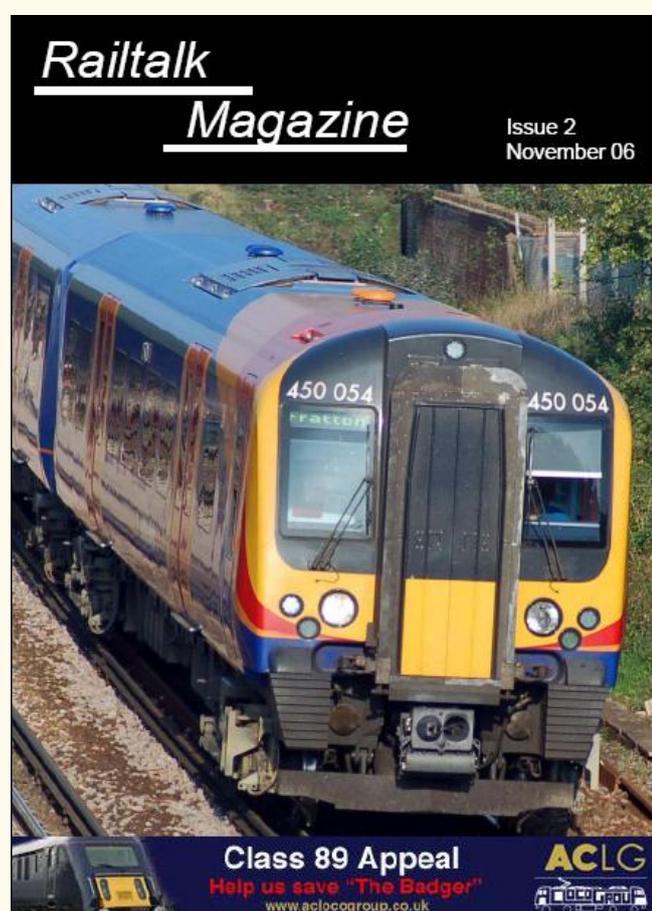
Jonathan Lewis



Welcome to issue 3 of Railtalk Magazine. Issue 2 was a great success with about 100 readers. Most of the problems were sorted from issue 1 and it was a better issue. Remember we want this to be your magazine, if there is anything you want to say or write for the next edition please let us know.

Many thanks to all who have contributed this month Yorkie, John Day, Robert K, David Dawson, Juliang, Tom Loader and Chris Nevard.

Big news! You can now send us your email address so that we can email you the latest edition as soon as it is out. This means that you will never miss another issue ever again. Just contact me or an administrator for more information.



1F71 15:39 Edinburgh-Leeds waits for its booked departure time at Carlisle on a diverted GNER service. In a bizarre new timetable experiment by Network Rail, GNER's HSTs have been timed to wait for up to 25 minutes until an all-stations 'Pacer' has had a chance to go in front. The HSTs have then followed, slowing and stopping for many signals en-route. The reasons for this are unclear. It is thought that, if NR decides to implement this policy across the network, journey times could increase by up to 200% on long distance journeys. **Yorkie**

As winter is arriving fast it means that is it time for the RHTT s to come out. This year DRS (direct rail service) are basing 5 of there class 20 loco s at York. No. 20301, 20302, 20303, 20304 and 20305. The locos work on the RHTT s out of Thrall York.

- The location of all other DRS class 20s:
- 20306 Stowmarket
 - 20307 Stowmarket
 - 20308 Stowmarket
 - 20309 Stowmarket
 - 20310 Stowmarket
 - 20311 Stowmarket
 - 20312 Stowmarket
 - 20313 In general flasks traffic
 - 20314 Stowmarket
 - 20315 Glasgow works
 - 20905 Stowmarket



Above: 20304 waits outside Thrall (York) to lead the 3S21 York Thrall - Glyberdyke Cannon

Bellow: 20301 and 20305 work 3S11 York - Chesterfield RHTT throught Church Fenton **Pictures: John Day**



Remember the Remembrance Unit?



© James Paice—Who's this getting in the way of this shot?

A year back, South West Trains put this class 455/8 in to a unique and very moving livery.

This livery is a remembrance red poppy livery.

Often people use the railways in their life to get from A to B or for leisure purposes and therefore it generally becomes a part of their life however much or little they actually want this.

The poppy livery may seem a beautiful attraction to many like the one in Cotes Du Rhone red wine Livery.

Others however know the poppy symbolises those who died in the 2nd world war and 1st world war. People who are affected see this train as a great sign of respect and can fully

acknowledge the significance of the unit.

Although there are trains full of Colours and advertising wines and lego-land etc. we must remember a true piece of British and whole world History, that not even the transport industry can ignore.

Don't forget to check out the forum at:

WWW.RAILTALK.NET/FORUM

For all the latest News



Above: 47145 takes a Stoneblower to Ashford - **Juliang**

Below: 66026 caked in dirt is highlighted by the evening sun at Newport, 4th November 2006 -

David Dawson



50049 leads 2Z37 Gloucester-Cardiff past Gatcombe on the 11 of November - **Jonathan Lewis**



43072 stands at Leicester in the only sun of the day, 25th November - **David Dawson**



Enhanced driving simulator leads way for driver training and development

Virgin Trains has just commissioned the latest technology in driver training simulation, following the upgrading of the Pendolino simulator at its training centre in Crewe. The simulator was delivered in early 2000 as part of the contract for the new electric Pendolino tilting trains, which now operate Virgin's West Coast services from London Euston to the West Midlands, the North West and Scotland.

The upgrade to the Pendolino simulator has cost around £150k and allows Virgin Trains to use the latest in computer technology to create real life scenarios in a safe classroom environment. Used alongside two Voyager simulators, the Pendolino simulator is used as part of the training package for new drivers. It will also be used from next year as part of the on-going assessment that drivers have to undertake. The upgrade of the Pendolino simulator has been undertaken by CORYS T.E.S.S. and they also provide on-site support. The upgraded simulator now features a three-channel projection system, which is a first for the UK rail industry.

Over 1,000 drivers have been trained on the simulators since 2000, but with advances in computer technology the processing capabilities and graphics package have now been enhanced. For the first time the Pendolino simulator features a panoramic 120 degree cab view, which provides detailed graphics of track and surrounding area."

Virgin Trains' Colin Campbell, Head of Operational Development said: "Drivers have to be competent in dealing with a multitude of situations, but are unlikely to experience some of them for real. The simulator will allow us to replicate these scenarios in the classroom."

For the first time the Pendolino simulator has been programmed to replicate the effects of degraded systems on board the train. The graphic effects can even simulate – with sound effects - driving rain, various densities of falling snow and even the effects of a brick being thrown off a bridge, breaking the train's windscreen.

Instructors can place obstructions on the track, instantly change weather conditions or even mimic the effects of leaves on the track. They can also replicate the effects of the failure of any of the train's power, electrical or air systems.

The control workstation provides visual contact allowing the instructor to see how the driver reacts to created scenarios. A voice communication system is also fitted.

An audio and visual record of each training session is produced and can be saved to DVD to enable debriefing to be carried out. The DVD's also form part of a driver's training record.

Colin Campbell added: "The driving simulation equipment is more than just a tool to teach new drivers how to drive a train. It will also be used as part of the on-going training and monitoring of drivers competencies. It allows us to create scenarios that drivers may not experience out on the main line and then monitor how they deal with the incident."



Two first transpenine, class 158 have now been converted into class 159 s. Both 159101 and 159102 are with south west trains based at Salisbury.

Left: 159102 is pictured here on the first day of working passing Chertsey.

Picture: Chris Nevard

GNER to be stripped of East Coast Main Line licence

The government has agreed to tear up GNER's £1.3 billion franchise to run the East Coast main line. The Department of Transport (DfT) has decided to re-let the contract for the service, which includes train services between Edinburgh and London.

But in order to avoid any impact on passengers, the DfT has agreed to let GNER to continue to run it for a further two years on a new fixed-management-contract basis, according to a report today. Talks are under way to agree the terms of the new arrangement, which is expected to run for between 18 and 24 months until a new invitation to tender can be produced and a train operating company selected.

Change to the existing franchise agreement was needed because of financial problems at GNER's parent company Sea Containers.

It filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in the United States last month and has outstanding debts of in excess of £350 million.

An agreement with GNER is expected shortly because the company's financial situation is unsustainable under the terms of the current franchise, for which Christopher Garnett, GNER's former chief executive, admitted the group had overbid. GNER is understood to be perilously close to being in breach of its liquidity ratio, the amount of cash that it is legally required to retain to honour its franchise agreement. "It's a fix," one rail industry source said. "It is at least one year's work to write the invitation to tender and complete the bidding process and the Government would prefer a negotiated solution than to take the franchise back by force."

The decision to allow GNER to continue to operate the franchise is bound to stoke anger from other UK rail operators facing similar pressures

Scotrail in trouble too

LABOUR leaders agreed on an uneasy compromise deal yesterday in an attempt to head off a demand from activists to re-nationalise Scotland's railways.

Labour will now go into next year's election with a policy of putting the privately run ScotRail into a not-for-profit trust.

Tom McCabe, the Finance Minister, accepted the not-for-profit trust idea to avoid a rebellion from the unions, who had called for an end to the private control of Scotland's railways.

He said two-thirds of the money ScotRail receives comes from a public subsidy and was underwritten by the taxpayer yet, despite this, ScotRail could not be re-nationalised without Westminster amending the 1993 Railways Act.

"ScotRail should be moved out of private hands when the current franchise [held by First Group until 2011] expires".

Virgin's Pendolino trains are lighting up Christmas across Britain

Virgin's state-of-the art Pendolino trains are generating enough electricity each year to power a set of domestic Christmas tree lights throughout December in every household across Britain. During December alone, the trains will generate enough power to light over two million sets of Christmas tree lights for the entire month.

The 125mph Pendolino trains are saving energy and reducing pollution as they return energy to the electrical feeder stations every time they brake. The 53 tilting trains, built and maintained by ALSTOM, are fitted with electronic control systems that cause the traction motors to provide braking effort by generating electricity back into the supply system. The generated electricity which is put back into the supply system achieves an overall energy saving of 17 percent.

The Pendolino trains are now used over all of the West Coast routes from London Euston to the West Midlands, Liverpool, Manchester, Cumbria and Scotland.

Research by Virgin Trains and ALSTOM shows that, based on data from Pendolino trains operating over the Manchester to London route, the Pendolino fleet, which covers around 13 million miles a year, is generating around 55 million kWh of power a year, which is returned to the National Grid. This is enough to provide the electricity to power 13,750 homes for a year.

On a typical London to Manchester journey, a Pendolino will return around 750kWh of electricity to the power supply system for re-use, and Virgin's drivers are trained in economic and energy saving driving techniques.

Regenerative braking used on the Pendolino trains also reduces the use of the friction brakes, dramatically reducing brake-pad dust and pollution, to provide a double environmental benefit. Virgin West Coast Managing Director Charles Belcher said: "Our Pendolino trains are providing valuable benefits to the environment. We know that our passengers care about the environment and they can travel in the knowledge that by choosing to travel by train, they are doing their bit to save the planet and reduce consumption of energy."



Midland mainline- eco friendly or not ????

On the 11th November power car 43060 was allowed to leave Sheffield in a very poorly state.

The poor old thing was rattling and smoke was pouring out of everywhere it shouldn't, by the time it got to derby it was clear that all was not well as it had "thrown up" all over the place.

The outside was covered in grey oil, that was dripping down on to the track. A team of cleaners were summoned to clear up the mess but as you can see in the picture, it was still covered in oil, when it returned north at Leicester in the afternoon.

Then our colleague, Dave Dawson, took this picture of 43072 leaving Leicester on the 25th November, again not looking in the best of health.

My question to Midland Mainline is, why send out power cars that are clearly not well, and if you are short of them then surely run them dead rather than pollute the environment.





After the shaky launch of the ONE Greater Anglia Franchise with National Express taking on the challenging venture comprising of the combination of all services from Liverpool Street going under one company, it was rumoured and even stated that if National Express didn't begin to get a hold of the company, First group would make a welcome return to Great Eastern and possibly take over the entire Greater Anglia.

The target date for National Express to have „sorted themselves out was 2007 however this is now not going to happen, as National Express have met the targets set and are now working towards a much more challenging target: House Branding everything by next year. National Express aim to have much of the Network in ONE house colours by next year, and this may earn them an extension to the Franchise.

Although the current franchise is scheduled to end in 2011, many doubt this because this would be too near to the Olympic Games.

In 2008 it is said that the National Express Group will be reviewed and will either have to end by late 2009 or will continue to after the Olympic Games, depending on performance.



When you look at the stylish destination boards on Electrostar units, you cannot help but look back at the Desiro ones and wonder why the Desiro ones are so much technically behind those of the Electrostars...

For a start, the Desiro Destination displays work on a very basic principle and are only illuminated by LEDs and other such lights, they also have no real style to them.

Although, on the Electrostars, you can see the Destination in bright orange LED with calling stations and even the headcode, also on the front the destination scrolls across the front of the train which makes the whole destination display, as opposed to those silly abbreviations like "Windsor & Et"... what if someone thought that Et was somewhere else and wondered whether the train would be splitting at a station and half of it would go to Windsor and the other half would go to "ET..." but you don't know

quite where!

But I think the design of the Desiro goes well with the destination displays they have been given as does the design of Electrostars





Watford Junction, The most Northerly Southern served Station, and what do you get? An hourly service using 4 car trains that takes just as long if not longer than the in-direct route to places like Clapham Junction.

Not good for Southern! They should be trying to compete with Silverlink and any other forms of getting across the East of London, however partly their fault, partly not, they aren't.

Length of Platforms may seem an issue, however as far as I know 8car units WOULD definitely fit in the stations on this Service.

Although GoVia are short listed for the new West Coast Franchise and if they obtain it, I know they have promised to sort this service out.

Check out the web site: www.railtalk.net or www.railtalk.org.uk

Railtour review..... The son of Christmas cracker.

Well the weather forecast said bad weather, but who could have predicted, floods, thunder and lightening, torrential rain, winds and sunshine.

Starting at Manchester at the very early hour of 05.54, there was great interest from the start as to whether we would reach our destination, due to the flooding of the south. 40145 performed excellently from the start and picking up at various locations such as Coventry and Banbury on the way we were soon on the way south. En route to Didcot it was announced that due to the GWML being closed at Swindon, we would divert via Reading and Newbury where we would pick up the booked route again. Despite the diversion we arrived in the sun at Salisbury less than 30 mins late.

The route back was brilliant, but would have been better in daylight, with some excellent running through the outskirts of Portsmouth, up through Woking to London, then via Aylesbury and back onto the outward route.

Altogether a fantastic day out, some brilliant fast running, and a hard days slog of over 500 miles for the beautiful blue beast that normally trundles the east Lancs railway.

This engine is a credit to Martin Walker, the C.F.P.S and all who look after her. Long may she continue main line registered and I for one, can't wait for the next tour!



Grumbles

This is about my complaints or moans I have about the railways, but of course, we'd love to hear your grumbles! Just E-mail us and we'll add it to the next issue, just put grumbles as the message header.

There are enough moans that would probably be a 5000 page book. So I'll add a few for every issue and new ones as I come across any.

I'd like to start with First Great Western, not at all as a company or staff issue, its the public that use it! Let's take a HST. Coach A, everyone's nightmare and might as well not be there. When its peak hours, everyone just wants to go in there as its the only way for a seat, but they could at least talk on their phone in the vestibule rather than talk louder than 43143 screaming hard on the rear, same as the kids, I thought the turbocharger had moved into the carriage..

But on the subject of power cars on the rear or front, its not a quiet coach when its powering out from a standing start, but add the coach in the middle and everyone would be walking through the carriage.

Coach E, First say its 'operational' on school holidays, but I'd love to hear what this actually means, you can use it any day and get a free activity pack when you want!

First Class, ok about the only section I've enjoyed, but only not long ago on a weekend using my vouchers, I overheard a passenger sat round the table across from me whispering 'he doesn't look like he's a first class passenger does he?'. Ok, so I was wearing my bike coat and jeans, but if there is a strict dress code for First Class, please E-mail me!

Another thing about carriages and applies to any train, is the Watchers. Take Challenge 1 and bring a clicker and walk from Coach A on an FGW HST to Coach F for the Buffet and see how many people look up at you as you walk through, in fact, take two clickers in case the other one takes too much! Why people stare as you walk through I have no idea, just please don't do it, and if there's a problem just tell me!!

Then do a Challenge 2 and walk from Coach F to Coach A without spilling the tea (and the train must be at 125!), or worst try it on the bumpy Berks and Hants, AKA Bumpy and Horrible.

Of course, that's if you wanted to pay more than £1 for a tea that is hardly half a mug's worth in some plastic Barbie livery cup, with the „F badge that you can take home with pride (wink wink). Then again you end up in a queue with the person in front buying rolls, cakes, coffee's etc., of which the person may as well buy the whole buffet coach.

First Great Western's new Fast Ticket machines was a great addition for me at Chippenham as it accepts cash. However I was appalled that it doesn't say which way to insert notes, so as I put a £20 note in various times it accepted it, but I forgot which way it went in. So then I inserted the £5 note, refused it and it cancelled as I was taking too long, oh dear. 20 £1 coins thunder down as if I was at Las Vegas on a One-arm bandit machine winning the jackpot. As I jam in the coins into my Wallet, it now weighs more than the 6A61 Hanson Jumbo set from Whatley, and the queue has now disappeared and I'm none the wiser. What did First say about how it beats the queues...?

Ticket staff should also revise what their job really is. I attempted to purchase an advance return to Ipswich (to which he never knew where Ipswich was) and sold me a saver instead, forget it I thought, he doesn't know his map much, same as other ticket offices who don't know where Melksham is (or Leeds didn't know where Chippenham was).

If you've ever thought of taking part in the Olympics 100m sprint? Practice at Birmingham New Street! Last minute platform changes to the other side of the world will see you sprint from one end of the station to the other running up the stairs, doing the 100m down the long passageway (attempting to run round people) down the other stairs in 1 minute flat....only to collapse on the floor and cry to see that your 1 minute connection to Cardiff Central is 10 minutes late anyway (being Central Trains) and cry even more to see it's a 2 car Class 150, full and standing of course! I've been there done that and it's something to avoid at all costs!

As a company grumble, I'd like to nominate the Wessex announcer at Westbury and other stations with the same type, PLEASE announce Keynsham correctly! Note that it is 'Kayn-sham' not 'Keen-sham'. But I've also noticed on the Rover map for the Severn and Solent on the National Rail site, that they've spelt Avoncliff as Avoncliffe!

Try riding on the ex-Wessex Class 153, unless you want to see the Avon Valley, your better off standing. The seats are practically right on the floor and if your too short you might not have a chance at seeing anything, but if you are 6ft tall, you can just see over the window, but would struggle on a Northern 142 as your legs would be jammed in the bench seat in front.

158s are the worst for long distance. Rubbish Chapman seating, no air con and you need a BR no. 2 key to open the darn windows! Once on my travel using a free Wessex return promotion ticket last year, I was on the 0503 Westbury – Brighton in the winter, formed of a 158, only to find ALL the windows dropped down and was dark and cold, so I had to shiver all the way like being in a fridge to Salisbury until the guard decided to close them....finally. Then on hot days you may as well sit in the oven.

But anymore than 1 hour on a 158 and I ve had enough, as I once attempted by doing Manchester Piccadilly – Swansea on the Ginsters 158 (2 car of course) just managed to get a seat but by Leominster, my backside was numb, badly. By Newport it was getting worst and ridiculous and ended it at Newport (unfortunately the only best place to bail out) and decided to wait for some better traction, a HST.

If you ve ever fancied listening to music whilst you travel, take an MP3 player. The Virgin Voyagers and FGW Adelante have radios but cut out when the announcements come on. Its ok when the guard does them as its pretty quick and swift and you can get back to listening to Frank Sinatra s greatest hits on BBC Radio 2, but on an Adelante you are stuck with the Digital Dorris. When you leave a station you might be listening to Beyonce on BBC Radio 1 then all of a sudden, she starts and the radio cuts off. Then you are forced to listen to her bantering on saying welcome aboard this rickety old 180, where the priority seats are, the quiet coach, the First Class, the Refresca Café bar (which sounds like an expensive nightclub/bar you d find in Charing, London), where the toilets are, where we stop, no smoking, journey times, how fast we are going, how costly the refresca bar is.....by that time you ve stopped and passed 20 stations and missed all of that Beyonce song! I could understand it could be for those who would moan because they missed their stop and somehow missed the macho sign saying „SWINDON , but at the end of the day they weren t paying attention!

I would also watch out with some other companies who are trying to make journeys more relaxing, and put fresheners to help you drift of...along with missing your stop by 300 miles and ending up in Dundee with a penalty fare on your case! Although I did manage to fool a guard as I wanted to get off at Exeter St Davids for the Sleeper connection, next thing I woke up near Long Rock Depot, Penzance! Lucky I had an All Line Rover.



Loco hauled services still run in and out of Cardiff on rugby days. One of the most common sights is the of the pair of class 50 s. 50031 and 50049 are pared on a the Newport to Cardiff central and return shuttles.

Left: 50031 is pictures entering Newport as the sun sets behind it. **Picture: Jonathan Jebb**

Please tell us what you thought about this issue. You can also tell us if there is anything you want to see in the next issue. Just visit the forum.