

Railtalk Magazine

Issue 6
March 07

Railtalk magazine is brought to you monthly with all the latest News and Pictures



Pendolino
crash



Class 455
Refurbishment



Sheffield
Supertrams



Chasing
73136

Front cover

73136 pictured working on shunting the 442s at Eastleigh works. It had been hired by GBRF for the duties.



About the magazine

Railtalk is the monthly magazine from Railtalk forums. Covering news and pictures.

Content

P4 - Latest Pictures
P6 - Rail Tour Periodical
P8 - South West News
P10 - Rail Operator News

Site/Forum

For more information please contact any admin on Railtalk.

Railtalk.net

Submissions

Pictures and news can be entered through the forum, or by email us at entries@railtalk.net. Please give a description and your name and the date.

Railtalk magazine team

Andy - 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.

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90020 calls at Stafford with the 1818 to Manchester Piccadilly.
(2 February 2007) **James Power**

Pendolino crash horror, points to Potters Bar again!

Tragedy struck the 17.15 Euston to Glasgow Pendolino, 390033, on the 23rd Feb, when near Tebay in the Cumbrian hills it derailed and slid down an embankment. Sadly one person has died and several more were injured, but the train stood up very well to the incident and has saved many lives.

Early indications are that there may have been a faulty set of points to blame, similar to the Potters Bar incident, however this is not yet confirmed and the investigation is continuing. It is interesting to note that at an early stage Network Rail have ordered an examination of 700 sets of points across the network.

Because of the remote access to the location rescue and recovery will be extremely difficult.



Welcome

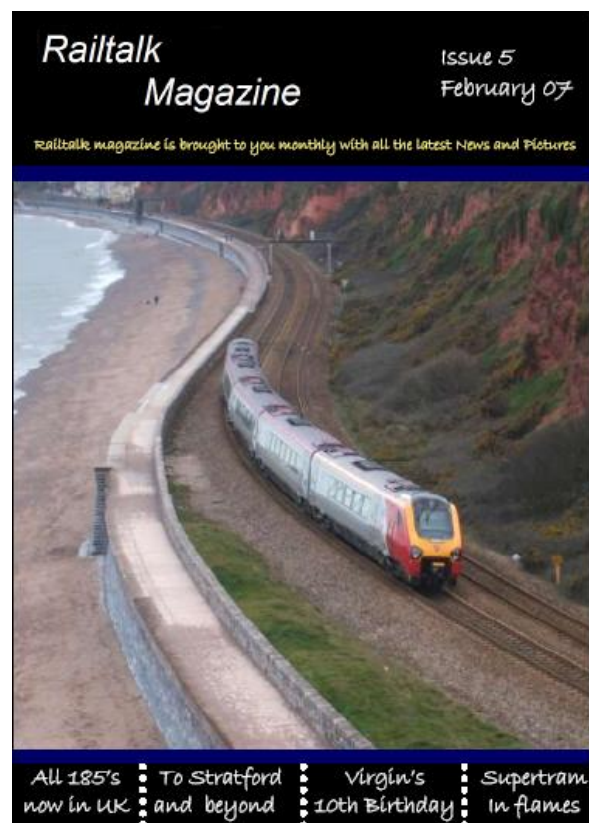
Welcome to issue 6 of Railtalk Magazine, if there is anything you want to say or write for the next edition please let us know.

Many thanks to all who have contributed this month. Remember any news, articles can be sent to the address on page 2.

You can send us your email address so that we can email you as soon as a new issue is out. This means that you will never miss another issue ever again. Just contact an administrator or see the website for more information.

We have changed the layout slightly from this month, let us know your thoughts and remember we are always looking for a wide range of pictures. Your pictures do not have to be digital, if you want to send us slides just contact us for details.

Andy Patten
Editor



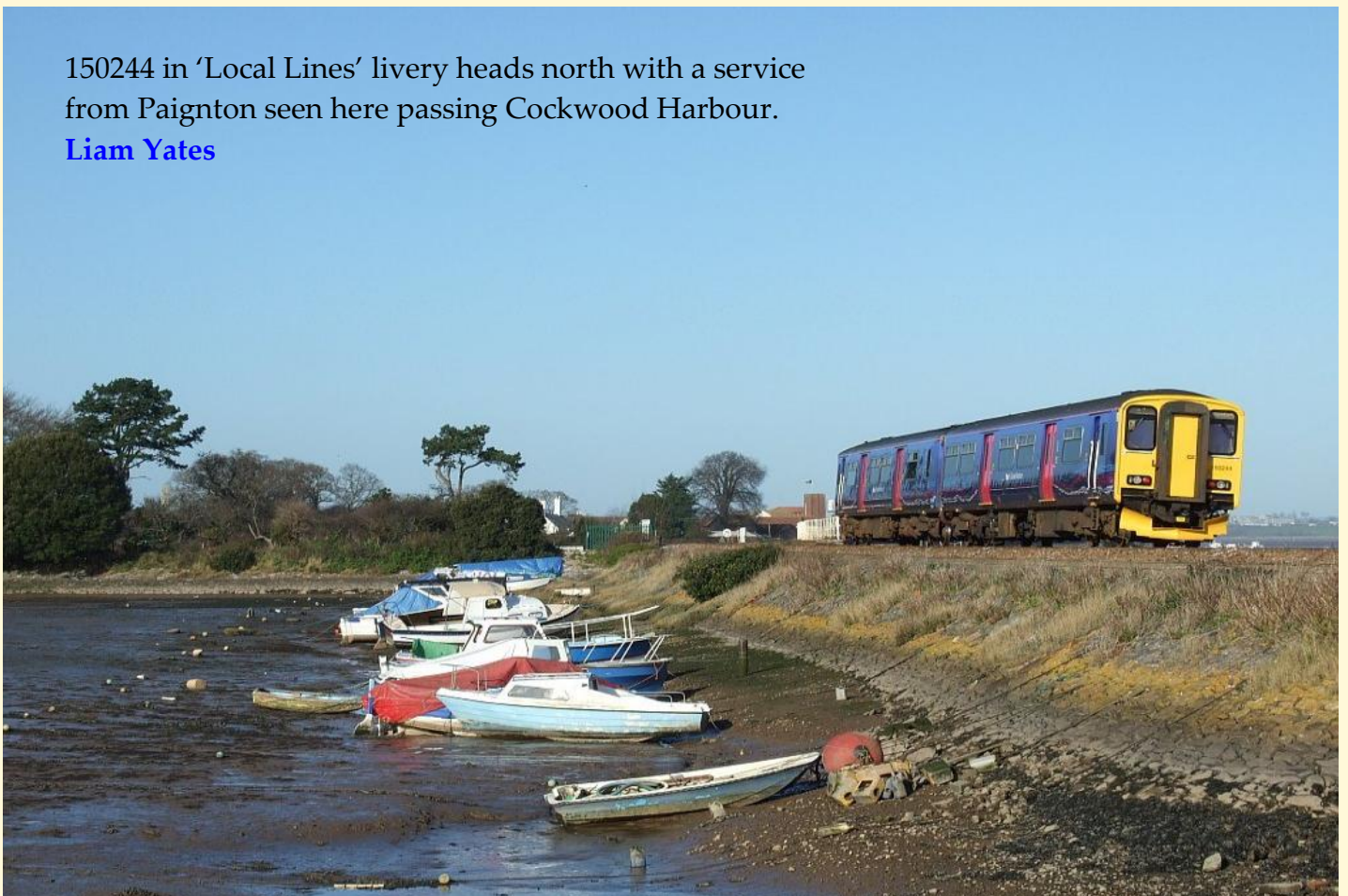
43083 (with 43007 on the rear) passes through Spondon working the 1027 Sheffield - London St Pancras Midland Mainline HST service. (3 February 2007) [James Power](#)



Above: 156403 passes through Spondon with a Derby - Nottingham service. [James Power](#)

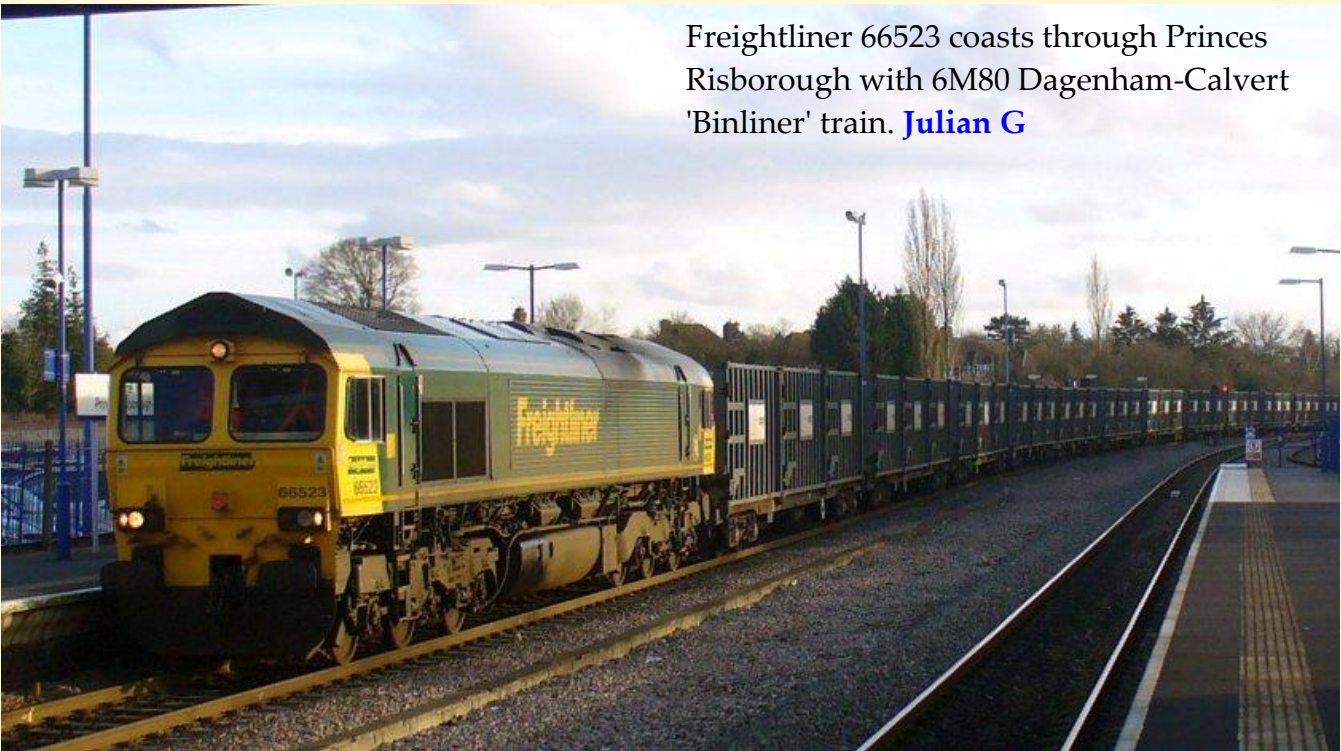
150244 in 'Local Lines' livery heads north with a service from Paignton seen here passing Cockwood Harbour.

[Liam Yates](#)





Above: Will this become a thing of the past. A DVT and Mk. 4 stock in GNER livery snaking its way into Glasgow Central. [Jonathan McGurk](#)



Freightliner 66523 coasts through Princes Risborough with 6M80 Dagenham-Calvert 'Binliner' train. [Julian G](#)

Rail Tour Periodical



Right: 47853 leads
1Z91 Kings Cross -
Buxton "Blue Pullman"
through Spondon.
(3 February 2007)

[James Power](#)

Below: 37410 on the
head of the Buffer
Puffer 4 Pathfinder
Tour.

(20th January 2007)

[Jonathan McGurk](#)



Costwold Rail 47810 "Captain Sensible" approaches Portslade with a Gloucester -Brighton RailTour. [Julian G](#)



The Class 450 “REVOLUTION”

Having had the online meet the manager session, to which many complaints were made about the recent allocation of class 450 Desiro trains on the Portsmouth lines, it has been finally established, the line will not have any more fleet changes even regarding these complaints.

The Portsmouth line having been robbed of its class 444 trains, was given class 450 trains with promises of longer formations, resulting in more capacity.

Most diagrams / timetables have improved, and this is much appreciated by a good number, however it has been noted that previous 5 / 10 car diagrams have recently been worked by 4 car units.

Although most people making complaints don't seem to understand it, there are currently engineering works at Fratton, which are resulting in stock changes to what is diagrammed, and it has been said that on the completion of these engineering works, the trains will inevitably be sorted, and some diagrams will revert to class 444 operation.



Announcements and and change!

Regular South West Trains Users, particularly those who frequently use the class 455 fleet, will understand the title, as they will notice that the new woman announcer has not been finely tuned and is still suffering minor problems. One of which is the station calling list, during which she has a tendency to announce something along the lines of “and and Strawberry Hill”, this error has also been noted on the next station announcement “this train is for London Waterloo, and and the next station is Richmond” is an example.

Other problems have included the destination screens: Strawberry Hill was one of many errors noticed.

South West Trains have been trying to rectify these errors, however some are still apparent, some what months after the change.

Ta-ra Two Car Wonders!

South West Trains have recently finished using their 2-car class 158 units and 9 2-car class 170 units.

There were many reasons for the withdrawal of these units, for explanations it is best to ask South West Trains Themselves, however they have proved to be good at supplying the services they were diagrammed for.

South West Trains is a particularly aware Train Operating Company, therefore they have worked for a long time now on capacity issues.

2car units travelling in to and out of London Waterloo is not capacity friendly and therefore by replacing these 2-car units with longer and more space efficient class 159/1 units has been a good decision made by South West Trains.

It is now that we turn our attention to see what TransPennine express are making of these units as they are transferred there.

Desiro and there nicknames

Many have been slow to try and give class 450, 444, 360, 350 and 185 type trains a nickname, however after making general enquiries there are no nicknames recognised by any of the TOCs describing / naming their desiro fleets.

Names such as New Trains, Doodlebugs, Desiros (with many pronunciations) are staff's general nicknames given, however other ones made up have been short-lived or criticised and not spread.

It is a matter of time before a train operating company makes a name for their trains, however during this time, it is safe to simply refer to them as "Desiros".

If you have any names for them that you would like to share with us at Railtalk to publish in the next issue of the magazine, we request you e-mail swt450@railtalk.net and make the subject line "Desiro Nickname" stating the nicknames you have heard or have made, and why you think it is appropriate.

It's all a matter of opinion... Really

Although many are quick to jump to the conclusion that a Desiro with a corridor connection is better, some may take the time to consider the implications a flat end and a corridor connection may have.

To state the obvious, a flat end, will not allow passengers, revenue staff or buffet staff to walk between units whilst en route. However, how often does a buffet trolley pass through an outer suburban train on 'one' or Silverlink for that matter? How often does the guard need to walk through the train on 'one' or Silverlink? Answer to both... they don't!

Revenue staff on 'one' are few actually on the trains, however when they do board the trains, they are able to use the 30 - 60 seconds at the station effectively and get off one set of doors and walk 2 metres to the next set of doors!

It is obvious a flat cab with a side to side wind screen would be much more desirable than one with a bulky corridor connection shoved in the middle.

In the end it is up to the plans of the train company.

Class 455 Refurbishment

Until recently, there has been speculation that the class 455/8 units owned by South West Trains would be transferring to Southern Railway, which would enable current class 319 fleet to be transferred to First Capital Connect and the class 319 diagrams covered by the 'new' class 455/8s from South West Trains.

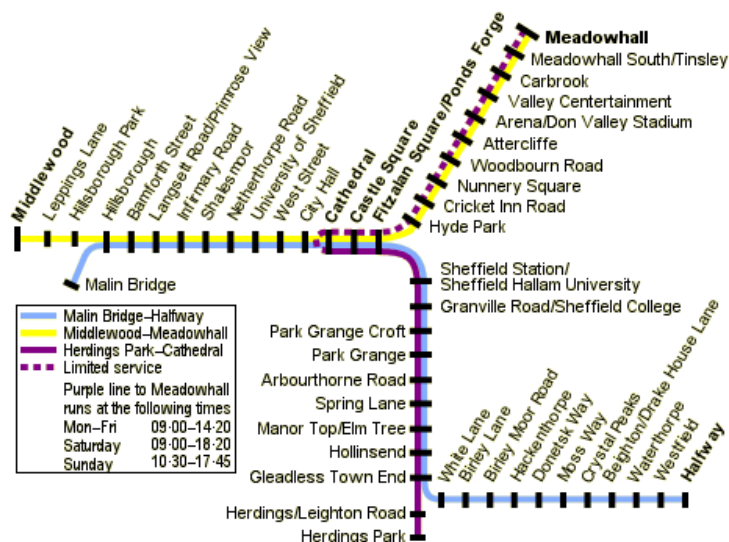
South West Trains would then be able to get new class 444 Desiros for the Portsmouth line, and draft 450 Desiros on to class ex-455/8 diagrams. This speculation was abruptly brought to a finish when the first class 455/8 unit was sent for a South West Trains Refurbishment earlier in the month.

Also it has been made very apparent by South West Trains and the users of particularly the Hounslow Loop / Weybridge lines, that class 450 Desiro trains are unsuitable for what should be class 455 diagrams, lengths of carriages being one of the main problems.



About

Sheffield's Supertram opened on 21st March 1994, the second of the new-generation street-running trams and the result of planning dating back to the 1970s. Initially known as South Yorkshire Supertram, the system was publically owned and operated to start with, but is now operated and maintained by Stagecoach and is branded 'Stagecoach Supertram'



Routes

Supertram consists of three routes radiating from Sheffield city centre to Meadowhall, Halfway and Middlewood. There are also short branches to Malin Bridge (Middlewood route) and Herdings Park (Halfway route). Each route is quite different: the Meadowhall route is all reserved track, largely using a railway alignment, and mostly serves industrial and leisure destinations; the Halfway route climbs relentlessly uphill through run-down residential areas earmarked for redevelopment to reach outer suburbs on the border with Derbyshire, using a mixture of street-running and reserved track; the Middlewood route is mostly a street tram route and runs at high frequency to the busy district of Hillsborough and the Victorian suburbs beyond.

Trams

Supertram uses 25 trams, from German tram builders Duewag (part of Siemens). Power is supplied at 750Vdc from an overhead trolley wire. All trams are now in Stagecoach livery, except for two which

carry an advert for Meadowhall shopping centre and Thompson's.

Stops

A total of 48 stops are served, including two with National Rail interchange and four Park & Ride sites. The stops range from simple raised kerbs on the street-running sections to more substantial off-street stops. The stop at Meadowhall is part of the Interchange, and shares an entrance and waiting area with the railway station.



One of Sheffield's supertrams number 118 stopped at Meadowhall.



Sheffield supertrams 112 & 123 at Meadowhall.

Arriva Trains Wales provides extra capacity on Major Rugby day

Saturday 17th March sees Wales play England in the 6 nations rugby, and ATW are planning extra services to cope with fans.

These are as follows:

Newport-Cardiff shuttles Allocated Class 50 loco various times through the day. There are also runs to Gloucester also

Allocated Class 50.

1Z50 CARDIFCEN 09:35 GLOUCESTR 10:33
2Z53 GLOUCESTR 10:58 CARDIFCEN 12:06
5N01 CANTONSDG 11:40 NEWPORT 12:12
2N01 NEWPORT 12:15 CARDIFCEN 12:31
5N11 CANTONSDG 12:10 NEWPORT 12:40
2N11 NEWPORT 12:45 CARDIFCEN 13:01
1Z51 CARDIFCEN 12:35 GLOUCESTR 13:33
5N02 CARDIFCEN 12:35 NEWPORT 12:52
2N02 NEWPORT 13:15 CARDIFCEN 13:31
5N12 CARDIFCEN 13:05 NEWPORT 13:18
2N12 NEWPORT 13:45 CARDIFCEN 14:01
5N03 CARDIFCEN 13:35 NEWPORT 13:48
2N03 NEWPORT 14:15 CARDIFCEN 14:31
5N13 CARDIFCEN 14:05 NEWPORT 14:18
2N13 NEWPORT 14:45 CARDIFCEN 15:01
5N04 CARDIFCEN 14:35 NEWPORT 14:48
2Z59 GLOUCESTR 13:58 CARDIFCEN 15:06

2N04 NEWPORT 15:13 CARDIFCEN 15:29
5N14 CARDIFCEN 15:05 NEWPORT 15:18
2N14 NEWPORT 15:45 CARDIFCEN 16:01
5N05 CARDIFCEN 15:35 NEWPORT 15:48
2N05 NEWPORT 16:18 CARDIFCEN 16:34
5N15 CARDIFCEN 16:05 NEWPORT 16:18
2N15 NEWPORT 16:45 CARDIFCEN 17:01
1Z64 CARDIFCEN 19:20 NEWPORT 19:34
5Z65 NEWPORT 19:40 CARDIFCEN 20:13
2N21 CARDIFCEN 19:40 NEWPORT 19:53
2Z52 CARDIFCEN 19:45 GLOUCESTR 20:53
5N22 NEWPORT 20:00 CARDIFCEN 20:32
2N31 CARDIFCEN 20:03 NEWPORT 20:16
5N32 NEWPORT 20:25 CARDIFCEN 21:02
1Z65 CARDIFCEN 20:15 NEWPORT 20:32
5Z66 NEWPORT 20:35 CARDIFCEN 21:01
2N22 CARDIFCEN 20:35 NEWPORT 20:48
5N23 NEWPORT 20:55 CARDIFCEN 21:32
2N32 CARDIFCEN 21:03 NEWPORT 21:16
1Z66 CARDIFCEN 21:05 BHAMNEWST 23:12
5N33 NEWPORT 21:25 CARDIFCEN 22:02
1Z53 GLOUCESTR 21:05 CARDIFCEN 22:04
2N23 CARDIFCEN 21:35 NEWPORT 21:48
5N24 NEWPORT 21:55 CARDIFCEN 22:32
2N33 CARDIFCEN 22:05 NEWPORT 22:18
5N34 NEWPORT 22:25 CARDIFCEN 23:02
CARDIFCEN 22:35 NEWPORT 22:48
5N25 NEWPORT 22:55 CANTONSDG 23:25
2N34 CARDIFCEN 23:05 NEWPORT 23:18
23:24 5N35 NEWPORT 23:24 CANTONSDG 23:54

45112 is it to return quicker than thought.

Fresh from the success of its mainline, and alleged farewell outing to Holyhead on Jan 27th 45112 was to have gone into semi retirement, pending OTMR fitment.

However it appears that the peak performed better than anyone expected and it is now being considered for use by Cotswold Rail for a return trip from

Minehead on 28th May and a trip to Penzance on July 21st. Either this loco has had a fantastic recovery of its health or there are major problems ahead.

Has no one told Cotswold It doesn't like too much work.

PS. Can everyone who went on the farewell tour have a refund! Thought not.



TPE Fleet news

The 158s – Whats happening?

Its expected that the following 158s will go to Central,

158770/772-774/779, 158806/810/812/813

FGW will get/have the following

158750/760=769/771/776/778/798

Northern will get the following

158784/787/790-797

SWT will get the following

158742-744/755/777/779/781, 158800-805/807-809/811/814

TPE 170s

170301-308 will head to TPE from SWT,, and are likely to be used on Hull – MIA runs (Surprisingly, the first route to have 185s!) 170392 will move back to Southern. It is also rumoured that 170399 will move from CT to TPE and be re-numbered as 170309.

Right: Old VS New at Manchester Piccadilly.

185106 arriving with a service from Hull, with 158760 next to it. 158760 is now with First Great Western.

All Elliot Waters



185151 one off the latest in the fleet waits at Meadowhall with a service to Manchester Airport from Cleethorpes.



FNER perhaps ? or gNEXr

The second round bidders for the East Coast franchise have been announced and no surprises for guessing who they are:

First Group
National Express
Arriva
Virgin/Stagecoach



Railtalk



Life and times of 37 422

Poor old 37 422 is in trouble again, would you believe engine problems. This time it looks like broken piston rings.

422 has had many engine problems since it's F exam at Cardiff's Canton Depot in 2003, when despite needing new big end bearings, they were never fitted. In 2004 the obvious happened and the power unit was written off, 422 was sent to Toton (not renowned for their expertise in tractors) fitted another power unit, from 37 220, Of course this also

failed and then the power unit from crash victim 37 408 was fitted, this is the one that has just developed problems.

The point of all this is one that EWS clearly miss, if you constantly swap bits without servicing or maintaining them properly, they will never give you any length of time before failing.

Picture: Recently Reinstated Class 37422 "Cardiff Canton" hauls 67018+6M44 Eastleigh-Wembley Enterprise at Cromwell Road. [Juliang G](#)

What are Cotswold up to??

Cotswold Rail who also own Advenza Freight, are currently running an ad for new drivers,

Specifically .

"Train Manager - Drivers - Advenza Freight"

In the job description it states "The successful applicant must have both proven experience, a preferable knowledge of Class 08, HST-125, Class 47 and/or Class 66 locomotives"

Are we about to see an order for silver 66's ?? or HST's on freight.

FM Rail, Who gets what???

With the recent break up of FM, here is what we know so far, there have been many movements and much interest for its assets , both for reuse and scrap

47145 Has moved to Carnforth not confirmed for West Coast Rail
 47712 Has moved to Carnforth not confirmed for West Coast Rail
 47709 Has moved to Carnforth not confirmed for West Coast Rail
 31128 Gloucester
 31468 In store at DY
 31601 In store at DY
 31602 In store at DY
 47355 In store at DY
 33046 Has been purchased by a private buyer
 47053 EMR (European Metal Recycling)
 47717 EMR (European Metal Recycling)
 47710 EMR (European Metal Recycling)
 47186 47201 47219 47226 47228 47280 47293 47307 47313 47314 47335 and 47360. All to EMR (European Metal Recycling)
 47701 In store at Long Marston
 86223 To store at Long Marston
 86233 To store at Long Marston
 47703 Cotswold Rail
 86235 To store at Long Marston
 73107 Secured for preservation,
 31452 Cotswold Rail
 33202 Cotswold Rail
 45112 Cotswold Rail (we think!)
 47832 Victa Westlink Rail
 47375 Still for sale
 47715 Still for sale
 56303 In use and thought to have been purchased by Jarvis
 31106 Reverted to Private Owner
 08631 Reverted to Private Owner
 31190 Reverted to Private Owner
 31289 Reverted to Private Owner
 31422 Reverted to Private Owner
 31423 Reverted to Private Owner
 33103 Reverted to Private Owner
 37255 Reverted to Private Owner

47550 Reverted to Private Owner
 31106 RVLO (RVE Derby)
 31190 RVLO (RVE Derby)
 31459 RVLO (RVE Derby)
 31461 Cotswold Rail, moved to Battlefield Line

Which leaves the following as unknown

Class 31: 31454 31301 31415 31437 & 31439

Class 33: 33019 & 33021

Class 47: 47363 47368 47489 47550 47701 47525 47526 47640 47707 47716 47744 47767 47375 47488 47780 & 47972

Class 56: 56011 56021 & 56022

Class 73: 73103 73105 73114 73104 73139 73117 & 73134

There statement is as follows

"VICTA WESTLINK RAIL PASSENGER CHARTER OPERATIONS - A STATEMENT

Regarding the Coaching stock, Victa Westlink would appear to have acquired an air-con set in a mixture of virgin and intercity livery

Victa Westlink Rail are committed to continue to operate and expand the long-established Hertfordshire Railtours programme of all-1st class full-dining day and weekend excursions, together with the the Merymaker programme of bargain-priced day trips. It is a fact that some - but certainly not all - of the Blue Pullman coaches have been purchased by a third party, but this will in no way compromise our full-dining trains, as the HRT programme over the years has never been 'tied' to one particular set of coaches. The Victa Westlink Rail core business has been - and will continue to be - the operation and development of freight traffic. Passenger charters are an important supplementary activity to this, utilising marginal locomotive and traincrew resources. This will include steam operations, where these can be demonstrated to be cost-effective. We are currently recruiting additional drivers and commercial staff, and we are engaged in positive on-going discussions with several locomotive and rolling stock providers, with a view to establishing a core fleet of diesel and electric locomotives, plus rolling stock, that will enable Victa Westlink Rail to meet our expanding freight and passenger commitments."

Chiltern Railways Passenger Helen Dunn Receives the 1000th Ticket by Text

Date: 19 Feb 2007 13:25



A ticket sent by text message to passenger Helen Dunn marked the 1000th customer to use our mobile phone E-day ticket.

Helen Dunn, from Stourbridge, received the landmark ticket in the form of a barcode sent directly to her mobile phone by an SMS text message.

Helen was presented on arrival at London Marylebone with a bottle of champagne by duty manager, Mick O-Gorman. Helen said: "I use

Chiltern Railways regularly as I can travel direct from Stourbridge and don't have to change at any other stations.

"It is so convenient and such a novelty to have your ticket sent to your mobile phone. I will definitely be using this service again — especially if I get another bottle of champagne!"

E-Day is the cheapest ticket that Chiltern Railways offers from Birmingham and Stratford-upon-Avon to London (and vice versa), costing a flat rate of £5. It can only be bought from the Chiltern Railways website 24 hours in advance of travel.

Passengers have been making the most of this innovative development in ticket technology since it launched in December for a three-month trial with the objective of making it permanent.

Neil Micklethwaite, Commercial Director for Chiltern Railways said: "It's great to see passengers — like Helen Dunn — satisfied with this mobile phone ticketing trial.

"There are many benefits to mobile ticketing but the most important to mention is that it's simple and convenient providing lower cost tickets for our passengers giving the customer even further value for money.

"We are proud that we are the first train company in the UK to provide our passengers with this service."

Doncaster Racecourse and EWS Network open bookings for St. Leger Pullman

Doncaster Racecourse and EWS Network are pleased to announce that booking has opened for the St. Leger Pullman, a stylish return train service from London to Doncaster operating on Saturday 15 September for the Ladbroke St. Leger meeting.

With many race goers planning their transport arrangements for the 2007 racing calendar now, the

early opening for booking on this train, provided by EWS Network, Britain's premier provider of passenger rail services for special occasions, will allow customers certainty in knowing transport arrangements have been made for the grand re-opening of Doncaster Racecourse.

Customers will travel in style to the Ladbroke St. Leger meeting on its return to Doncaster Racecourse as part its re-opening festival. The train will depart London King's Cross at 0830, with the return train journey leaving Doncaster at 1900.

Virgin Voyager steams into West Somerset Railway gala

A Virgin CrossCountry Voyager train will contrast the latest in West Country rail travel with the past glory of steam when it runs from Bristol to Bishops Lydeard on the West Somerset Railway during two Spring Steam Gala weekends in March.

On Saturdays and Sundays 17,18, 24 and 25 March the state-of-the-art Voyager will leave Bristol Temple Meads and call at Weston-super-Mare and Taunton before connecting with an historic steam train at Bishops Lydeard for journeys to Minehead.

Throughout each of the two weekends the Voyager will then run a shuttle service between Bishops Lydeard and Taunton for visitors to the West Somerset Railway's Spring Steam Gala before making a return trip from Taunton to Weston-super-Mare and

Bristol Temple Meads each evening.

Virgin CrossCountry Managing Director Chris Gibb said: "We are especially pleased to have been able to help the West Somerset Railway because engineering work on these two weekends has presented us with a spare Voyager and crew which enables visitors to enjoy the latest in West Country rail travel to a celebration of steam- powered history."

West Somerset Railway General Manager Paul Conibear said: "We are delighted to be working with Virgin CrossCountry on this exciting and innovative venture to raise the profile of modern and heritage rail travel in the West Country."

National fares will be available for the journey between Bristol and Taunton with a £2.50 single or £5 return fare for the shuttle service between Taunton and Bishops Lydeard.

Stagecoach-Virgin Bid shortlisted for Inter City East Coast rail Franchise

Stagecoach Group plc and the Virgin Group of Companies are pleased to confirm that they have been jointly shortlisted by the Department for Transport ("DfT") to bid for the InterCity East Coast rail franchise.

Both groups are bidding for the franchise under a 50:50 joint venture company, inter city – railways ltd. Brian Souter, Stagecoach Group Chief Executive, said: "We are delighted to have been shortlisted for what is one of the UK's flagship routes. Rail passengers will be at the heart of our innovative plans for

the franchise and we look forward to working closely with local stakeholders to develop our proposals. We are committed to providing passengers with a consistently safe, high-quality, fast, frequent and reliable service that will set a benchmark for rail travel in the UK."

Sir Richard Branson, Virgin Group Founder, added: "This is an exciting opportunity that comes at a time when we are enjoying increasing success and growth on our two existing franchises, Virgin West Coast and Virgin CrossCountry. We will put in a strong bid that is highly competitive, deliverable and will offer lasting improvements to millions of customers."



It may look different, but this is an Alstom built "pendolino" Czech style

Keep your feet on the ground or face prosecution

From Monday 5 February 2007 Merseyrail will actively target passengers who put their feet on seats in their trains and prosecute if appropriate. Teams of security staff will be out on the network equipped with CCTV "head cams" which record high quality digital pictures and sound to gather evidence for possible prosecution of offenders in the Magistrates Court.

Prosecution will be based on the existing railway byelaws which apply across the UK under the section which covers "unacceptable behaviour" (Byelaw 6) after a specific protocol was agreed with Liverpool Magistrates Court.

Class 322 refurbishment complete

Customers travelling between North Berwick and Edinburgh are now benefiting from a completed fleet overhaul, following a £3 million investment from First ScotRail.

All five Class 322 trains which operate on this route, have now undergone refurbishment, not only increasing the level of comfort in the carriages but also introducing better facilities as well as improved reliability.

The programme, which began in April 2006, was aimed at enhancing the full journey experience for customers. On-train CCTV and audio / visual passenger information systems have been fitted, designed to assist both hard of hearing and partially sighted passengers as well as improve general information provision overall.

Changes to the seating layout have increased the number of seats from 252 to 293, creating greater capacity and new floor and wall coverings have improved the overall feel and environment of the carriages.

A poster campaign, leaflets and public announcements are being used across the Merseyrail network to create awareness of the issue and give passengers an opportunity to change their habits to prevent them being taken to court.

Although "feet on seats" has always been an offence, it has not been realistic to prosecute offenders due to the problem of providing evidence in court. Up to now, a verbal warning was the only possible course of action.

This new initiative is in response to passengers feedback and part of Merseyrail's general approach to preventing anti-social behaviour in order to maintain a pleasant environment for the vast majority of passengers.

Merseyrail will be the only train company in the UK to prosecute offenders for putting their feet on seats.

First ScotRail also funded the provision of eight dedicated secure cycle storage spaces on each train, allowing customers travelling with bikes do so more easily and conveniently and illustrating the train operator's drive to improve integrated transport opportunities as well as environmentally friendly travel.

This cycle facility enhancement was recognised at the 2006 Community Rail Awards, when First ScotRail won the award in the Rolling Stock category.

A number of technical modifications have been carried out, bringing improvements to the reliability of the trains and resulting in the provision of a better service to and from North Berwick.

Andy Mellors, First ScotRail's Engineering Director said: "With the refurbishment programme now complete, our customers can travel in greater comfort, on trains with improved facilities and better security. We are committed to improving the quality and reliability of our trains and will continue to deliver on this, for the benefit of our customers."

Silverlink

Mark Hopwood, Managing Director of Silverlink, was today joined by Roger Ford, Industry & Technology Editor of Modern Railways Magazine, guests, and staff at the Train Maintenance Depot, (TMD) at Bletchley when Roger named a train.

“Bletchley Pride”

To mark the excellent work carried out by the maintenance team at Bletchley. The Class 321 Electric Multiple Unit - the work-horse of the Silverlink County fleet since 1988 - has won the Golden Spanner award two years running as the most reliable Electric Multiple Unit (EMU) of the British Rail era, and in fact in 2006 it was the most reliable train in the country.

The skill of the technicians and engineers at Bletchley TMD has resulted in some major achievements in reliability. The fleet of 37 trains averaged 43,267 miles over the 12 months to November 2006

before developing any fault leading to a delay of more than 5 minutes (known as miles per casualty – mpc) making it not only the most reliable electric fleet operating line anywhere in Britain but also the most reliable train in the whole of mainland Britain. The 43,000 mpc, however, masks some even more spectacular results. On two occasions in 2006 Silverlink’s 321s broke all records, with a monthly mpc exceeding 100,000 miles.

Silverlink’s managing Director Mark Hopwood paid tribute to the skill and enthusiasm of the team at Bletchley: “What we celebrate at Bletchley is more than just a professional maintenance depot. It is a unique but, until now quiet and unsung, centre of excellence. Silverlink is not the only Train Company using the 20 year old trains but no other company achieves anywhere near the reliability that we at Silverlink do.



66523 heading towards Southampton with one of Freightliners new coal hoppers amongst the consist [James P](#)

Chasing 73136 Perseverance



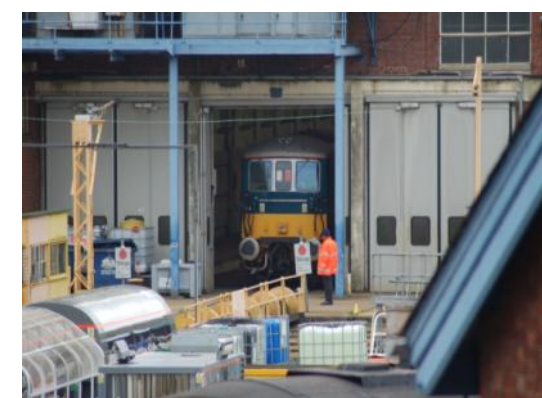
73136 Was saved from scrap in 2004 by the class 73 locomotive preservation group.

<http://www.73136.co.uk>.

Right: 73136 on hire to GBRF to shunt the 442s at Eastleigh works.



73136 was hired to GBRail freight to collect a defective HARSCO Railgrinding machine from Southampton Central on 14th February 2007. The Railgrinder was transferred to Eastleigh Works for attention.



Grumbles

I had an email this month about signing a petition about taking photos in public. It reads:

There are a number of moves promoting the requirement of 'ID' cards to allow photographers to operate in a public place.

It is a fundamental right of a UK citizen to use a camera in a public place, indeed there is no right to privacy when in a public place.

These moves have developed from paranoia and only promote suspicion towards genuine people following their hobby or profession.

Nothing wrong with signing the petition, but it would appear that our friends in higher places have the idea that we are all up to no good. Travelling back on a Saturday night train amongst the masses of undesirable yobs, you can't help but feel that because you are in the minority, you are singled out. No one would ever ban football or drinking heavily, yet I have to suffer the consequences regularly.

When I stand on a station, I am looking at what is happening as well as taking pictures, we all are. We are better lookouts than most security/police,

because most of us are already looking for the unusual, therefore why get rid of the very people who can help deter crime on the stations. As usual in this country as several others in Europe the security risk excuse almost always comes into play. So i suggest sign the petition before we all get driven into oblivion.

<http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/Photography/>

My other grumble this month is to all the news teams out there who in the tragedy of the Pendolino crash at Tebay, asked the usual stupid questions, like "It's pitch black" "what can you see" and other anti railway gems. When will we treat motorway crashes with such vigour.

Also the train varied from 6 coaches and a locomotive to 10 vehicles, with a variety of pictures being used. Messrs Woolmar and Harris both brought out for their "rail expert" appearances.

But the real tragedy in this is that if it is a points problem, as initially thought, has Network Rail learnt nothing since Potters Bar.

Praises

I'll start as i left off the Grumbles with the Pendolino Accident, A few people like Richard Branson have praised the driver and crew of the train for doing there very best to keep the train on the rails and stayed at there posts.

There also seems to be no praise for how well the coaches have survived, the first few pictures show very little bending or twisting ,

Second praise this month is for the Central Train crew, who have called off their strike. Whilst I know what it is like to deal with difficult management, to affect the passengers by striking I think is not the answer. Well done for keeping the trains running.



International

122 010-2 works the equivalent of an intermodal freight through Kolin, Czech Republic on the 22 Feb



A class 751 pauses at Kralupy
Depot on 23rd Feb



The busy scene at Praha
hlavni nadrazi 24th Feb

