

Issue 9
June 2007

Railtalk

Magazine

Railtalk Magazine is brought to you monthly with all the latest news and pictures



ONE Class
315

• More Network Rail
• Stations

• Wrong shade of
• blue

• Chinese
• 200kph trains

Front cover

A scene of yesteryear was recreated when "Three to the sea" went for a stroll at the Midland Railway Centre's Chopperfest event in May.



About the magazine

Railtalk is the monthly magazine from Railtalk forums. Featuring news and articles from members and guests.

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Site/Forum

For more information on our website or joining our forum, please contact the editor at admin@railtalk.net

Submissions

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

Railtalk editorial team

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Class47
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James P

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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The month's review

Another month has come and gone, many more galas, events and tours to see. Here at Railtalk we try to give you a fair selection each month of what's been happening around the regions, but if you want something else covered, then let us know. That's why we're here.

We have always said, right from the start that this is your magazine, your news and your pictures, so please send them in, it doesn't matter if you think that there not very good, let us see. The preserved-steam forum is up and running, so please if you get a spare couple of minutes, have a look at our new project. www.preserved-steam.co.uk. Regarding the Railtalk forum, if you want us to change it, or add a new section think it's lacking a certain something, then tell us, without your feedback, we are not going to know.

Congratulations to the CFPS for running an excellent tour on the 2nd June, its going to be a busy time for the 40 boys now, they have several trips on the cards.

Congratulations also to Neil and Jen for their recent arrival, Samuel. He'll soon be out spotting with the lads and could be a source of cheap travel if you get a family railcard Neil. (PS. I'm not dressing up as mother again)!!

That's all for now folks, keep those pic's coming and thanks to the Railtalk Editors for all their hard work.



The Railtalk Team Changes

Here at Railtalk, we do try to keep our readers informed in all sectors of the railway. Therefore, from the release of this magazine onwards we have appointed James P in charge of Freight and Locomotive aspects of the railway, therefore if you need to or want to have your say about anything related to Freight, or you have a question, contact James on: 73109@railtalk.net.



Also at Railtalk, we have appointed Robert K as our Modern Rail Officer. Robert is in charge of Modern Rail aspects of the railway, therefore if you need to or want to have your say about anything related to Modern Rail, or you have a question, contact Robert on: one_class360@railtalk.net



A pair of One Great Eastern class 360 units, both in the old first livery. Pictured here heading through stratford.
Robert K



The Editorial bit

Welcome to issue 9 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 etc 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 a member of the editorial team or see the website for more information.

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, or scanned pictures, just contact us for details.

Also if you have any news or information please send this into us. If you want send information into us in a different way please email the editorial team for other ways of contacting us.

If you missed issue 8, just click on the picture to the right. This will take you to the last issue. If you want any earlier issues please visit the website and all back issues will be found on there.

Andy Patten, Editor



Steam Loco 71000 "Duke of Gloucester" approaches Clapham Junction with 1Z70 Victoria - Cranmore Railtour operated by Steam Dreams.

Julian G

Railtours

What a busy Bank Holiday Monday May 7th was, especially for East Coast action.

Right: EPS Class 37's pass Colton Jct, with a Pathfinder railtour, just moments after 34067 Tangmere (below) steamed through on the Scarborough Flyer. [Andy](#)

Bottom: This was in addition to 47815 and 47847 which were on the superbly repainted Mk3 CargoD set with a Compass Railtour. [Class47](#)





What a fantastic sight, 37603 at Copmanthorpe with the return Pathfinder charter working on Bank Holiday Monday 7th May [Class 47](#)



How varied and interesting our railway can be. Three shots here that show not all is lost in this country, at a time when many are taking trips abroad to see "proper locos".

Left: 67002 arrives into Doncaster with an errant Class 91 91102 Durham Cathedral and its train from London Kings X, on the 26th May.

Middle: Lets hope that these beasts carry on for a lot longer, they certainly prove popular amongst many enthusiasts. Class 60, 60036 passes through Barnetby with a Scunthorpe - Immingham iron ore working.

Bottom: A fairly new flow of coal has started on the East Coast, using GBRF Class 66's. Here 66711 passes Copmanthorpe, just south of York, on Monday 7th May.

[All: Class 47](#)



Llandudno Jct , 2nd June, and 57311 Parker works the Holyhead - Crewe morning service. Currently on a Saturday there are two workings in each direction.

[David Dawson](#)



Class 334 037 + Class 334 010 10.57 2E69
Airdrie -
Balloch Departs Bowling. 03.05.07.

[Jonathan McGurk](#)



Above: Class 66, 66247 trundles through sunny Barnetby on Friday 1st June. [Andy P.](#)

Below: Freightliner's finest?, many would say so, a pair of Class 86's 86639 leading, pass through Stratford. [Robert K.](#)





Above: With the imminent closure of Thornaby Traction Maintenance Depot, what will happen to long term resident "bubble car", 55012, pictured here 13 May, looking reasonably intact.

Left: 08393 and an unknown RMC Roadstone, stand between duties at Peak Forest, 12th May.

Bottom: Also on the 12th May, sunshine after the showers, Three Class 60's, 60015, 60083 and 60021, stabled at Peak Forest in the company of some Class 66's. Excellent lighting conditions together with a very dark sky make a wonderful sight.

All: Class47





Above: Class 376 Electrostar 376031 departs London Bridge 31st May. [Andy P.](#)

Below: Class 165 Turbo 165112 flies through Acton Main Line, in the new First "Dynamic Lines" livery on its way to Paddington. [Andy P.](#)





'one' wonders about the new voice!

Passengers onboard the services run by class 321, 317/5, 317/8 and 317/7 type trains, will now be less prone to boarding the wrong train, alighting at the wrong station, or being disturbed by other passengers who are in a state of panic. Because they wonder whether the train really is stopping at their station!

Now one more of the 'one' franchises excellent advances has changed the life of passengers. The addition of an automatic announcer and screens displaying all necessary information have appeared on the aforementioned fleets.

Perhaps 'one' have made this enhancement, but is the voice really suitable for onboard a train?

Every 10 minutes or so you will be confronted by the 'abrupt' Essex voice telling you where you are arriving.

Some may say this is very un-professional and that they should have had it done more like South West Trains.

Others may say that although it isn't the most ideal voice for professionalism, it is certainly not an uncommon dialect for most of the local passengers, as they would be extremely accustomed to this sort of voice therefore making it a lot more comfortable when onboard the trains.

London Underground 1992 Tube Stock

Discussing the stock the other day, it has been noticed by many that the 1992 stock seems to be one of the only tube stocks that appears to have no sense of deceleration and just a very powerful brake.

It appears that when entering the station it continues at speed then suddenly brakes. A good place to experience this is Bank or London Liverpool Street stations.

The stock which works the Waterloo and City and Central lines is edging 15 years now since introduction and is still in pretty good condition.

Ironically, the same stock operates the longest and shortest London Underground lines. The Waterloo and City Line operates the 1992 stock (Or BR Class 492 stock) in 4car trains and has 5 units which have been fully refurbished. Whilst the central line operates 2x 4car trains to make one train.

The Central Line runs right through the heart of London and to both the Western and Eastern extents of the travel card zones.

ONE Class 315

Can 'one' get it right with the class 315 fleet?

The un-refurbished class 315 fleet are looking appalling of recent due to the usage and the wear and abuse they are given.

One seem unable to effectively distribute the refurbished and un-refurbished trains between the West Anglia and Great Eastern.

It appeared at first that one gave all the refurbished class 315 fleet to the Great Eastern, London Liverpool Street to Shenfield route, however after complaints from the West Anglia route, they put the un-refurbished class 315s on the Great Eastern and the refurbished ones on the West Anglia.

It would appear 'one' don't know how to split a fleet. Soon however the entire fleet will be refurbished so the dilemma of where the un-refurbished fleet are directed will be over

"One" have done well to refurbish the class 315s at present, however it would be nice to see them all complete by the end of the year.

8004

DOES 458004 still work?

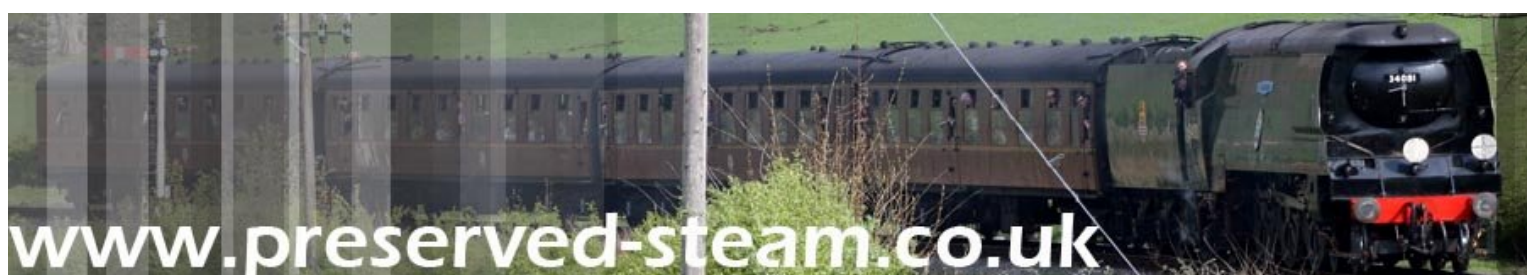
This is the question many have been asking for a long time. 8004 has not been seen in service for a very long time. Many doubt its eventual return.

The 458 juniper fleet were withdrawn and then stored and then put back in to traffic numerous times and at present are in traffic on the Reading line, however frequently can be found on the Alton and Weybridge lines.

8004 was taken out of service and it is believed that it was rewired to act as a test for if First ScotRail should want the class 458 fleet. However when this train was rewired, it was so expensive that the idea of sending the fleet to Scotland was abandoned.

The unit has been at Wimbledon for a long time now, however not in use. There are currently doubts it will return to service, but some believe it will be rectified and then returned.

The class 458 fleet of 30 units is becoming increasingly reliable as time goes on and fewer anomalies can be found forming 458 diagrams. There is a question as to whether 8004 would be required back in traffic. Only time will tell and seeing as there is a Alstom Juniper part of Wimbledon, 8004 will not be required for spares neither will any other class 458 yet.



This section shows you locations that you can go across the UK, where you can take pictures that you would not normally go. These could be places that are about a 2 minute walk from a station to places that are about 3 miles away from stations. These are places that most photographers would never think of going. So this section shows if you put some effort into things. The pictures that you can get are for better than just sitting on a platform.



Above: This is one locations, these pictures are taken from Northam Bridge near Southampton, Hampshire. This place is next to Northam Traincare about 5 to 10 minuet walk from Southampton Central.

Below: Another example is Southampton Footbridge which can be found south of Southampton Central Station. All: James P.



But there are some stations where you are better off staying on the station like at Eastleigh Station. These could be because there maybe no good places anywhere else, or it could not be safe. But if you are going out some where photographing, we would suggest looking at the area before you go. This could be done by using maps, "Google earth" or "Windows live one". Or asking people who have already visited about it.



Your Locations

If you of any good locations that you would not mind to share with others please send it into us. We love to see the weird and wonderful locations that people would not dream of going.

Railtalk

Magazine

We are still looking for regular contributors for the magazine. If you would like to contribute pictures or news please contact one of the editorial team.

editor@railtalk.net

More Network Rail Stations

Network Rail is planning to take control of stations and owning new rolling stock, according to senior railway executives.

Under proposals submitted to the Rail Regulator last month, Network Rail has suggested it could take control of the management of major stations across Britain, including Newcastle, and York while taking over the maintenance of the rest of the 2,500-strong portfolio.

First out for Cross Country but still in running for East Midlands

THE Department for Transport has undermined FirstGroup's ambition to create a UK-wide rail network by dropping First from a list of bidders for the £300m Cross Country franchise.

First was competing with National Express, Arriva and the incumbent Virgin Trains, jointly owned by Brian Souter's Stagecoach Group and Sir Richard Branson, to run the routes which span the UK.

Arriva, Virgin and National Express have all confirmed that they are still in the running to manage the 20-million passenger franchise, but First last night refused to comment. The Department for Transport is expected to select a winner this summer.

The Silverlink Franchise



Perhaps you know Silverlink for the infamous Class 313 and 508 operated metro services, often covered in graffiti, etchings and filled with a combination of vulgar Fragrances. Perhaps you know them for often being unable to provide a driver on the services from Euston platform 11, or perhaps you are a more optimistic person, and remember the introduction of the fleet of class 350EMUs, the refurbishment of the class 321/4 EMUs, the replacement of a class 313 on the St Albans Abbey line with a class 321/4 and the generally good well timed service.

The Future...

In November this year, Silverlink will cease to exist as part of the franchise (previously known as Silverlink Metro) will go to London Lines, whilst the Silverlink County part and a substantial amount of Central Trains will go to a new operator.

The County lines are currently 'up for grabs' to GoVia the current operator of Southern Railway, or Serco/NedRail who currently operate Northern Rail.

Some brief informative points about the new franchise and fleet:

Nowhere in the new franchise is the requirement for new trains, although there is rumour that if GoVia get the franchise, they will introduce a new electrostar type train.

The new franchise does require more efficient use of the 'new' Class 350 fleet.

We all 'look forward' to November and wonder what it will bring.

Robert K

EWS takeover on the cards?

Deutsche Bahn AG (DB), and English Welsh & Scottish Railway Holdings Limited (EWS), Britain's largest rail freight operator, announced today that they are in discussions about plans to develop a stronger European rail freight network. The talks cover the full range of co-operation options such as joint projects or the acquisition of EWS Shares by DB AG.

Rumours are rife at the moment with some EWS staff convinced that DB already have 52% of EWS shares. The move by DB is thought to have been brought about by EWS's interest in the French freight market (EWSI). DB have long been interested in expanding to other parts of Europe especially France, and this would be "a foot in the door".

Virgin West Coast to run till 2016

Virgin Trains has applied to extend its franchise to run the West Coast Mainline by four years from 2012. It also wants to take over running major stations on its route - London Euston, Birmingham New Street, Manchester, Liverpool and Glasgow - from Network Rail. The company has called for longer franchises to enable train operators to tackle overcrowding and held out the prospect that the industry could be reorganised into a few super-regional franchises. Virgin's move sets it at logger-heads with Network Rail, which said recently it wants to run more than the 17 biggest stations it already operates, and invest in trains.

Fined £188 for catching the right train at the wrong stop

You have a valid ticket, you are on the right inter-city train and you are sitting in the right seats. So why does GNER impose a £188 fine on you?

That's the situation in which Kent mother Alison Spicer found herself on a train to London from Berwick-upon-Tweed. Her "crime" was to get on her booked train, but at the York stop, further along the line towards London.

"The inspector asked for tickets from York and I handed ours over. As soon as he looked at

them he told me they that because we had boarded in York, they were 'invalid'. I couldn't believe my ears. I explained calmly that we were sitting in the correct seats, which were reserved for our use from Berwick all the way to London."

According to GNER, advance tickets are only valid if you join the service at the stated departure station and remain on the train until it reaches your stated destination.

Ex Wessex train 158860 passes Colton Jct. with a Northern Service to York. Andy P



Virgin Cross Country confirms additional seats on West Country trains again this summer

Virgin Trains confirmed today that it will be providing thousands of additional seats on peak Summer Saturday trains serving the busy resorts of Torbay and Newquay again this year. Tickets are now on sale and seat reservations can be made. These trains have proved extremely popular in past seasons, so customers are urged to book early to get the best deal on fares.

Virgin Cross Country will use eight or nine coach High Speed Trains on these extra services, which are capable of carrying over 400 passengers each. The trains are being hired from Great North Eastern Railway (2) and Midland Mainline (2) each weekend and will be used on services to and from the key South West holiday resorts of Paignton and Newquay.

The High Speed Train operated services will run on Summer Saturdays 26 May through until 2 June. These trains will also run on Saturdays 7 July to 8 September.

If you think your going to fail, stop!

From 26th May the down Northampton flyover at Rugby is out of use to be demolished & rebuilt The blockade is on for 16 weeks.... Also whilst contractors are hard at it, the all new Hilmorton Junction will be plumbed in and given the official opening despite it already being used on several instances.

Now if that's not enough?! On nights & weekends there will only be ONE LINE OPEN EACH WAY through RUGBY for the foreseeable future Also a nice new footbridge is being put together in the old yard , new uprights cast

ready so presume this will go up during the August Bank Holiday as a large crane will be needed again.

There has been a booklet issued to all rail staff who have the misfortune to pass through Rugby, the highlight is :

Please don't fail between NUNEATON & MILTON KEYNES & COVENTRY & NORTHAMPTON as this will cause some operating difficulties!

It also says extra class 57 on standby and extra P.Way & S&T will be primed

Never trust a woman driver (or, should it read sat-nav!!!)

A 20-year-old student's car was wrecked by a train after she followed her sat nav system onto a railway track.

Paula Ceely, a second-year student at Birmingham University, was driving her Renault Clio from Redditch, Worcestershire, to see her boyfriend at his parents' home in Carmarthenshire for the first time "I put my complete trust in the sat nav and it led me right into the path of a speeding train"

(Says it all really, rely on a piece of (somewhat flawed) technology and absolve yourself of all responsibility.)

"The crossing wasn't shown on the sat nav, there were no signs at all and it wasn't lit up to warn of an oncoming train. Obviously I had never done the journey before so I was using the sat nav - completely dependent on it," she said.

"I came to this crossing at Ffynongain and there was like a metal gate, which looked like just a normal farmers' gate with a red circle on it, I thought it was a dead end at first and then there was a little sign saying, if the light is green, open the gates and drive through.

"I can't completely blame the sat nav because up until there, it did get me where I needed to go," she added.

"If maybe I had been more aware of the situation, I wouldn't have had the accident.

It's only a matter of time before we have another Ufton Nervet, this time caused by some brainless idiot following a TomTom.?"

Silverlink takes over Willesden TMD

Silverlink trains, part of the National Express Group, takes over the management of Willesden Train Maintenance Depot (TMD) on Saturday 12 May. From that date until the end of the franchise it will maintain there its fleet of 30 electric trains which provide services on its Metro routes in and around North London. Silverlink takes over from Alstom who are withdrawing from Willesden and 23 of whose staff will transfer to Silverlink. The depot itself will be run jointly with Bletchley TMD by engineer Ian Brookes who was an apprentice at Willesden in the 1970s.

Wrong shade of blue

Network Rail, suffering the blues, were left with red faces when a station was painted the wrong shade of blue. March station needed a second lick of paint as part of work to bring colouring into line with other stations. Network Rail, carrying out the work on behalf of train operator One, hopes to finish at the station by May 11 after being forced to bring the brushes out for a second time.

A Network Rail spokeswoman said:

"We have been speaking to One about clarification on the specification, but it was not a case of anyone getting it wrong. We will work together to finish the project."

(But if nobody has got it wrong why is somebody putting it right?)



Ex Virgin trains power cars 43157 and 43121 at Wabtec Doncaster Class 47

Bulgaria taking the pee

The management of Bulgarian Railways are so considerate!
Bulgarian train drivers have been issued with rotating chairs so they can pee out of the window without having to stop. The drivers' union KNSB complained that, on some older trains, there were no toilets and they were having to pee out of the windows.
In response the management agreed to fit the special chairs so the driver can turn and pee out the window without having to get up from the controls.

Commuters fury at Connex, Australia

COMMUTERS have lashed out at Connex after claims staff hid from passengers seeking answers during a derailment this morning. A public transport group has accused Connex of neglecting thousands of commuters during the chaotic peak hour train disruption.

Commuters writing to the Herald Sun Online claimed that staff at the Oakleigh station shut their doors rather than explain to commuters what was happening.

Others said there were no staff to be seen at all.

"The biggest problem was the complete lack of communication by Connex staff of what was happening or was going to happen.

Get ready for Grand Central Launch

Grand Central, the trains group blamed by GNER for threatening its existence, is on course to launch competing services in September, ten months after it had intended to start up. The launch of Grand Central's direct London-to-Sunderland service is likely to come just weeks before GNER hands management of its services between London, Leeds, the North East and Scotland to a new operator.

In 2004 Grand Central lodged its London-to-Sunderland plan with the ORR, which gave the go-ahead early last year. However, the launch was complicated when GNER challenged the ORR's decision at a judicial review, which went in the regulator's favour.

"When the DfT let the GNER franchise, it was let, pretty well, on the assumption that Grand Central wouldn't get a path," George Muir, director-general of the Association of Train Operating Companies, said. That assumption proved to have been misplaced, as the ORR cleared the way later for Grand Central. GNER's experience has, however, improved understanding. Mr Muir said that would-be franchisees were now "much clearer what the rules of the game are".

Grand Central will become only the second company to launch scheduled services outside

the regulated franchise system, which governs services run by Virgin Trains, Stagecoach, FirstGroup, National Express and Arriva.

Hull Trains, which is now 80 per cent owned by FirstGroup, was the first to launch an open access service when it started direct services between London Kings Cross and Hull, using the East Coast mainline. The service, which also links Brough, Howden and Selby to London, carries half a million passengers a year, most of them from stations not served by GNER.

Renaissance Trains, a private group headed by former BR managers, has been pioneering efforts to launch open access services since 1997. Its directors were behind Hull Trains and now hope to win approval for a joint venture that will link Wrexham, Shrewsbury and Telford with London. They are also working on links between Glasgow and Liverpool and Glasgow and Nottingham, as well as a service linking the Humber Coast to London Stratford.

Rail experts see opportunities to reopen disused section of track. Sir Bob Reid, the former BR chairman, is supporting the EastWestRail consortium, which wants to recreate a link between Oxford and Cambridge, bypassing London.

Could it happen here?

Argentinean commuters have expressed dissatisfaction at their country's privatised rail services, by last night indulging in "arson, looting and fighting" following rush-hour delays at Buenos Aires's Constitution station.

As reported in The Guardian, enraged passengers "shattered windows, set fire to a ticket sales area, looted shops, and ripped payphones from walls", and were treated to police retaliation in the form of rubber bullets and tear gas when the anarchy "spilled out to the street".

Youths also torched a motorcycle and used metal poles in an attempt to "break down wooden doors to a security office in the station". Police commissioner Ricardo Falana said 100 officers had faced a "hail of rocks" and cuffed 16 people, including two minors, during the fracas. Train operator spokesman Fernando Jantus explained that the service was interrupted "because a train broke down just outside the station, preventing other trains from leaving". He correctly observed: "The problem happened at the worst moment."

The riot did little to improve services between Constitution and Buenos Aires's "poor southern suburbs" - the ongoing cause of passengers' discontent - since it meant the cancellation of all trains from the station.

This is the second time customers have chosen to vent their spleen at Constitution, The Guardian notes. A cancelled train last September provoked the incineration of three carriages, resulting in seven arrests.

Central Trains brings extra seats allow passengers to enjoy being beside the seaside

Longer trains introduced by Central Trains on some of its busiest weekday services are enabling passengers to sample the bracing atmosphere of Skegness, one of Britain's favourite seaside holiday resorts.

From the start of the new timetable, which began on May 21st, Central Trains - part of the National Express Group - has added extra seats to some of the weekday services between Nottingham and Skegness, including the 10.50am service.

The extra carriages on some of the Skegness

services is part of the move by Central to provide 1,000 extra seats for passengers on some of the busiest routes in the East and West Midlands, South Wales and across the wider Central Trains' network.

National Express Group has acquired nine additional fast, modern air-conditioned diesel trains to release an extra 36 carriages across the Central Trains' Network, and what's more, some of the extra trains will be kept on standby to be put into service at short notice if needed.

(Might be extra seats, but air-con, not on an ex TPE 158!!)

Tyne and Wear mishap

A passenger was recently conveyed to hospital suffering from minor injuries after falling from 2104 10.41 Newcastle Airport - Park Lane (Sunderland) service, whilst the train was stationary at Brockley Whins station.

The passenger, who was using a powered invalid wheelchair, joined the train at an excess speed and was unable to stop before crossing the width of the train and colliding with the opposite set of doors.

The force of the impact forced the doors off their runners and allowed them to gape open, with the occupant of the wheelchair being catapulted through the open door and onto the opposite running line. "Ambulance arrived 11.35, person removed from track at 11.44"

Chinese 200kph trains

Grand Centrals new Chinese 200kph trains, which are coming to York. Forget cheap toys, clothing and fireworks. Trains, planes and automobiles are China's next big exports and they're coming your way very soon.

That's the lesson drawn from my first experience on China's new high-speed train and while Peter Mandelson, the EU trade commissioner, can fret about tariffs on shoes, he'll be blown off his platforms by this one. Sleek, smart and streamlined it looks like nothing else in a Chinese station.

Rail passengers still missing out on Value fares

Virgin Trains were in Coventry today as part of a major campaign to make rail fares more transparent and also raise awareness of the value for money of rail travel. They also highlighted that on some days Virgin Trains wastes up to 10,000 cheap tickets across the country because they are not bought. That could mean some passengers are paying more than they need to for their train travel.

Prices for Value Advance single fares from Coventry start from just £8 (to Oxford) and from £12 to selected South Coast destinations. Standard Value Advance single fares from Coventry to London start from £10, with First Class Value Advance single fares starting at £29.50.

During the promotion at Coventry's busy railway station, a lucky dip gave away 'top tips' cards for getting a bargain rail ticket. Some of the cards were also winners with pairs of First Class rail travel tickets on offer and a mega-prize of a month's unlimited First Class travel on Virgin Trains for two.

Following a report by the Commons Transport Committee, which stated that "fares structures are chaotic and pricing absurd", Virgin is kick-starting a campaign to communicate its clear pricing of fares. In fact, despite the widely-held opinion that travelling by train is more costly than other modes of transport such as flying or by car, there is widespread availability of cheap, value-for-money tickets.

Confusing or what?

Recent snippets that have caught our attention :

Chiltern Railways train information:

Chiltern Railways are expecting their services to be extremely busy on Friday 1 June due to a major event taking place at Wembley Stadium. England are playing Brazil in a friendly football international.

To cater for the crowds, Chiltern Railways are running additional services between London Marylebone and Wembley Stadium for the match.

Unfortunately, due to technical difficulties, details of the extra services and adjustments to existing services are not showing on Journey Planners.

National Rail enquiries:

Watford Junction Arr 23:35 Due 01:02
London Euston Arr 23:56 Due On time

First Great Western:

SORRY, IT'S THE WRONG TYPE OF RAIN

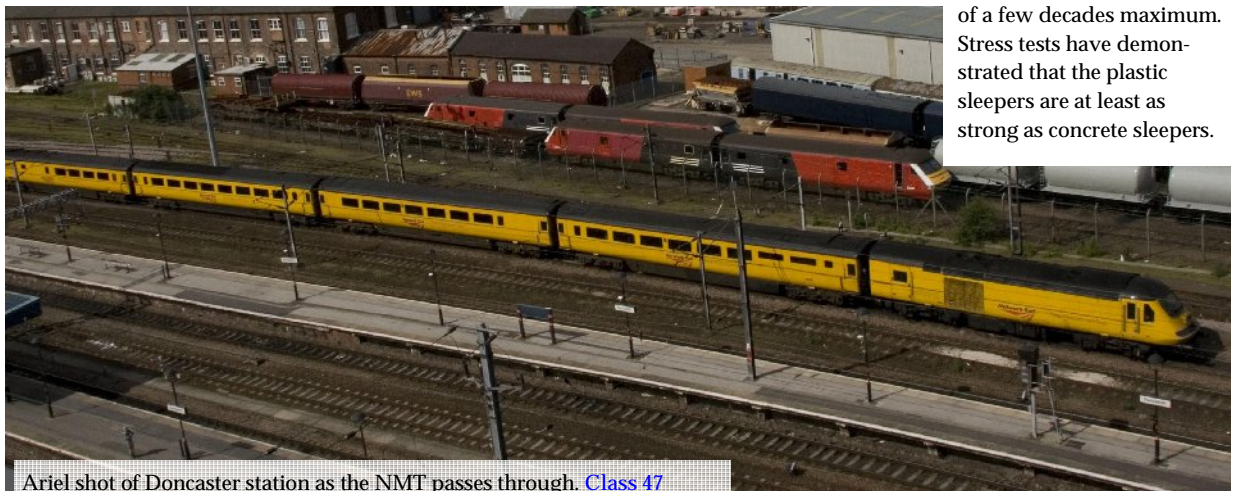
Commuters were unable to use new ticket machines at Nailsea station because they don't work when it is raining.

The touch-screen machines were installed at the station two months ago but only came into use this week. However, commuters say the screens cannot be seen clearly in bright conditions and when it rains the machines do not work at all. This is because they are touch screen and the machines are not waterproof

Recycled Railways

From plastic bag to railway sleeper.

Railway sleepers made from waste plastic, including recycled bumper scrap and old computer cases could be putting in an appearance on UK railway tracks soon. Railway sleepers made from waste plastic, including recycled bumper scrap and old computer cases could be putting in an appearance on UK railway tracks soon, writes Patrick Walter in Chemistry & Industry, the magazine of the SCI. UK company Micron, which makes sleepers from waste polystyrene and polyethylene, has already approached UK rail track operator Network Rail with the aim of forming a partnership. Polystyrene is commonly used in disposable coffee cups, and polyethylene is more likely to be seen hanging from trees in the form of carrier bags. But the longevity of this plastic means that railway sleepers made using it can potentially last for centuries. This compares to a few decades for sleepers made from wood or concrete. Wood and concrete also have other disadvantages. Concrete sleepers are very heavy and crack easily, and wooden sleepers require a lot of maintenance and chemical treatments to prevent them from rotting. In both cases, the sleepers have a lifetime of a few decades maximum. Stress tests have demonstrated that the plastic sleepers are at least as strong as concrete sleepers.



Ariel shot of Doncaster station as the NMT passes through. [Class 47](#)

Pictures with a different view



Left: Lots of signals and lampposts Class 66, 66620 approaches Barnetby on the 26th May with a working from Kingsbury. [Class 47](#)

Below: This little fellow needs no introduction and was seen lurking at Butterley recently. [Andy](#)

Bottom Left: Its not always the railway that makes the shot, as this Virgin Voyager illustrates. [Andy](#)

Bottom Right: The Midland Railway Centre at Swanwick recently had a mystery visitor. [Class47](#)



Preserved Railways



Four from the Peak Rail Diesel Gala. 12/13th May

Top Left: Looking a little sorry for itself, 68012 hopefully will return to traffic, soon.

Top Right: 37152 in Intercity livery, arrives at Rowsley, with a service from Matlock.

Bottom Left: Star of the show was D9016 Gordon Highlander, seen here passing D8 at Darley Dale.

Bottom Right. Darley Dale narrow gauge railway is based at Rowsley and well worth a visit. [All: Class47](#)



Grumbles and Praises

Without a shadow of a doubt, my highest praise, this month, has to go to the Heritage Shunter Trust, based on the Midland Railway Centre at Rowsley. During a recent visit there we had the opportunity to visit the current shed and all the shunters on site. The members that were there were all helpful and informative. We were left with no doubt that these guys are real enthusiasts and we hope that they do well in their aim of building a new shed for their entire collection. If anyone gets chance, please do make the effort to go and see these guys, and please leave a donation, it all helps.

I am pleased to see that Compass tours, and Cotswold Rail have both run excellent well priced tours recently, Cotswold still cannot run any steam tours through their associate Steamy Affairs, but that might be insignificant as Network Rail want to ban most steam for the summer as a fire risk, apparently there have been a couple of lineside fires recently.

Having a grumble is easy, GNER wins yet again, there is a story elsewhere in this magazine about, heavy handedness on ticketing, but I can say that I've seen this for myself with certain GNER employees, contrast that with the likes of Virgin or Midland Mainline, who have some very friendly staff, even when dealing with difficult situations. Also I'm not happy with the Mk4 refurb as most of the toilets smell most of the time and most trains have at least one air-con fault. How come these carriages were more reliable, but tatty before refurbishment.

There have been some heated discussions recently regarding tour prices, with Pathfinder at the top end of the scale at approx £70.00 a trip and some of the new boys, like Spitfire and Vicat Westlink, at the lower end of the range £30.00. Also the fact that Pathfinder don't like to do part fairs. Now having been on trips with both companies, I can defiantly say that service is better and slicker with Pathfinder, but do you need all the frills?. Maybe it is a case of you get what you pay for, but I don't think that Pathfinder will change overnight.

Remember this is your column, and it would be appreciated if you could let us know what you think of us, or the railway system in general, good or bad!.

Swanage Beer Festival

On the weekend of the 11th to 13th May 2007 the Swanage Railway held there annual beer festival and diesel gala.

The Locomotives used:

BR Class 73 No 73136 Owned by Class 73 Locomotive Preservation Group.

BR Class 73 No 73208 Owned by GBRF

BR Class 52 Western Owned by The Diesel Traction Group
Severn Valley Railway

4VEP Unit 3417 Provided by South West Trains

4VEP Unit 3417 Provided the Harmans Cross - Norden shuttle service. Various different ways of hauling 3417 including push pull motion with a Class 73 Locomotive.

All James P unless stated



Above: An immaculate D1015 pulling 4VAP unit 3417

Right: Unit 3417 in excellent condition.

Bottom: 73136 "Perservance"+73208 "Kirsten"+VEP 3417 "Gordon Petitt"+20188 head for Corfe Castle after leaving Norden. [Julian G](#)



7th, 8th & 9th July
2007

40th Anniversary of the end of
Southern Steam

Join us as we commemorate the end of steam on the
Southern in 1967

Planned events: (Please note all locomotives subject to availability)

- Frequent train service throughout each day between Norden and Swanage
- Additional trains during the day on Saturday 7th July and Sunday 8th July providing a 40-minute frequency service
- Evening trains on Friday 6th & Saturday 7th July will have bar facilities and be steam hauled by visiting locos
- 40th Anniversary Day – Monday 9th July – a 40-minute frequency service all day using steam locos 30053, 34081, 73129 and 76079
- 4 visiting locomotives including:
 - USA lookalike 30075 from the East Somerset Railway
 - Caprotti Five 73129 from the Midland Railway Centre
 - Standard Four 76079 from Riley and Sons
 - Bulleid Battle of Britain Class No. 34081 '92 Squadron'
- 3 Swanage-based locomotives including:
 - Standard Tanks 80078 and 80104, owned by Southern Locomotives
 - Drummond M7 30053, owned by Drummond Locomotives

DAY ROVER FARES

provide unlimited travel all day and evening.

Adults £15 Concessions £10

EVENING ROVER FARES

provide unlimited travel after 17:00.

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SWANAGE RAILWAY COMPANY LTD, Station House, Swanage, Dorset, BH19 1HB.
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Above: This loco has fantastic weathering, making it look just as it did in BR days. 37314 on Swanwick Shed. [Andy](#)
 Below: Spoon 47635 approaches Corfe Castle with 2S17 15:10 Norden to Swanage. [Julian G](#)





Above: Not that long ago this was a fairly regular sight in the North West, 101692, still displaying Alderley Edge in the window, seen here at Butterley.
 Below: With the "Chopperfest" in full swing, a couple of Class 20's pause between turns at Swanwick. [Both Andy P](#)





Above: Looking a bit worse for wear, is 92219 pictured here at Swanwick 19th May. [Class47](#)

Below: One of the stars of "Chopperfest" at the Midland Railway Centre was DRS's Class 20,20304. [Andy P](#)





Can it really be only 2002 when all this was active.

Left: Dominating the cross country services were the Virgin HST's. This is 43086 at Warrington Bank Quay on 22nd October.

Middle Left: 86228 at Birmingham International on a service from Euston. 19th October.

Middle Right: 37706 at Crewe with an engineers train from Stoke 23rd November.

Bottom Left: TPO/mail trains were still active and where better than Carlisle to see them. 90040 22nd October.

Bottom Right: No Pendolinos yet! 87017 unusually leading due to a TDM fault on 82108.

All: [Class47](#)



