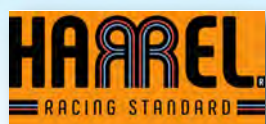


King Of The Road?

Ric Woods
investigates the
HARREL slot car
track system



Predictably enough, I'm going to start by quoting the old adage that you can wait for hours for a bus, then two will turn up at once. It seems that the same phenomenon is occurring in the slot car world, this time with new track systems.

Visitors to Gaydon may have noticed the Harrel layout, almost discreetly in a corner of the room, where anyone could sample the system for themselves. Indeed, my colleague and I abandoned our own stand for a few minutes and were genuinely impressed with what we

found. Firstly, the very high quality connectors, which aim to eliminate the need for booster cables. Then there were the coloured plastic slot mouldings that neatly solve the problem of lane marking, the stainless steel rails and, most importantly, the smooth yet grippy wooden track surface. With such quality in evidence, this was clearly no 'bargain basement' product. It is a brave move in these times to commit to such a project, so we wanted to find out more from the man in charge, Harald Dannert.

Please could you give us some of the history of Harrel?

I am the managing director and owner of PKKT Kunststofftechnik, a high-tech company for plastic injection moulding. Initially, the development of Harrel and prototype construction was carried out within this company. Once the Harrel system was in series production, it was clear that manufacturing and sales would have to be outsourced.

I founded Harrel GmbH & Co. in 2018 and after a short search found and bought a suitable company



building. Within six months everything was prepared especially for the production, storage and the dispatch of the Harrel construction units.

How did the idea to make a new kind of track come about?

I had already been infected with the slot racing virus as a child, but it had not occupied any space in my life for a long time. It was not until the chance purchase of a Carrera track in 2004 that my interest was awakened. However, the urge for perfectionism was greater than anything he could buy. Why should you continue to drive on toy roads with perfect, professional slot cars?

Did you identify a market for very high quality track pieces?

Basically, during the development I thought that everyone who is involved in this hobby wants to move their cars perfectly. This means that a system that is very stable and dimensionally durable can already be used during

construction. Above all, without additional power supplies.

We have opened a new segment with Harrel and are absolutely sure that the customers are there, even if it takes a little longer to save the money.

Was it a priority to be able to connect Harrel track to Carrera track?

I also started with Carrera. And it's perfect as a toy. All those who already have a Carrera track – and here I am thinking especially of the digital systems – can continue to use the existing track with our adapters because of the same track distances and dimensions. Digital switches can be integrated in this way and the investment is not so high in the beginning. It was important to me to offer this service to my customers.

How is it going with the sales of the track so far?

The sales launch was in August 2019 via our online shop on Harrel-rs.com. There are two ordering options. On the one hand you can order the

individual parts in the shop and on the other hand you can also plan your own route with the help of the "route planner". The parts list will then be displayed and you can order the desired configuration directly from the shop.

The interest is very high and the sales are going well.

Please can you give us an estimate of the cost of Harrel track?

The individual modules cost between EUR 65.00 and EUR 75.00, depending on the model.

It's difficult to argue with Harald's comment about toy roads and professional slot cars! It's so easy to be lured into buying shiny new cars instead of the boring black or grey bits that they run on. If you can afford it, Harrel track comes across as being more of a long-term investment in your hobby with a very well thought-out and beautifully-constructed system that deserves every success. More details from www.harrel-rs.com.



