



## An exhibition quickie

Many a clubman has been pressured into building a layout for the show. M. S. Daniels, of Macclesfield, describes his experiences.

Photographs by Alan Bryant

KEN BALL, of the Macclesfield Model Railway Group, had said to me, "I want a layout from you for inclusion in this year's exhibition in October". Now when Ken issues an order like this, the only thing to do is "jump to it" and get on with the job. With these thoughts in mind, I started a small terminal layout in EM gauge on a folding baseboard, using the principles described by Rev. Peter Denny in his articles on Leighton Buzzard. Unfortunately, I had no loco to test the track at first and when said loco arrived—disaster. There was a curve which had a "dog's-leg" in it which the loco utterly refused to go through. This fault had not shown itself when track testing with a wagon. There is a moral here, of course. It was now July, five months to the exhibition and progress was nil! I should add that the track had been glued in position, more's the pity. I went away on holiday the next week and pondered over this problem. I decided it would be quicker to shelve the original layout and start again with something much simpler, in order that I could present a layout as finished as possible for the exhibition. All this does not sound much like a quickie but does serve to explain the purpose behind the layout.

I returned from holiday and began construction during the second week in August. A framework of 2in. x 1in. supporting a soft-board top was made and the track laid taking care that all the track butted up correctly and testing with the two locos I had acquired by now, a K's M.R. Kirtley 0-6-0, made up by Colin Plant and an L.N.W.R. "Coal Tank", made up by Alan Bryant.

After all was found to be satisfactory a start was made on the "scenics". The method used was introduced to me by my friend Alan Bryant and was described by him in the RAILWAY MODELLER in his article on Port Isaac. Briefly, it consists of a framework of balsa wood, shaped to the desired contour, covered with newspaper torn into squares and glued on, with a final covering of a mixture of pulped newspaper and Polyfilla. The grass top surface is sawdust painted green. The road surface was formed by painting the ground with cream paint and limestone chippings sprinkled on top and well rolled in.

The buildings were built of card or balsa wood and covered with commercial brick and stone papers. They are based on the prototypes at Birch Vale on the Hayfield branch.

Alan built most of the rolling stock and I spent the last week before the exhibition painting it.

The layout stood up well to the rigours of exhibition running and I would add that it has taught me more about railway modelling in the three eventful months it was being built than

I had learnt in the previous 12 years I had called myself a railway modeller. My advice, therefore, to all would-be layout builders is, "Don't dream about ambitious projects with acres of trackwork but make a start on something really simple and get something running as soon as possible. You can always improve and expand from that." I say this from bitter experience. No-one can have made more false starts than I did. My "quickie" has provided the stepping-stone for my new layout, which is a close-to-prototype model of Birch Vale station which has absorbed my spare time for the last twelve months since the exhibition. A lot of this time, of course, has been taken up in collecting information about the prototype, however, with the editor's permission, I would like to make this the subject of another article.

My thanks are tendered to all who have helped to make this article possible, to the gentlemen mentioned in the article and lastly to the all-rounder, Alan Bryant, who also took the photographs.

