The Railway Herald

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The complimentary UK railway journal for the railway enthusiast

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Upgraded Simulators for Virgin Trains
Launch of RAIB at Derby
Improvements for Selhurst Depot

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Issue 21
21 October 2005

Editor's comment

Although we hope that incidents such as Heck, Ufton Nervet and Hatfield never happen again, it is encouraging, in the current blame culture that encompasses most industries today, to report on the new dedicated Rail Accident Investigation Branch for the rail industry. The RAIBs sole purpose is to investigate and discover the cause of railway accidents, rather than lay the blame. Similar branches in the Air and Maritime industries have proved a success, let us hope that the new RAIB achieves the same. We wish the entire RAIB team well and hope they are not required at major incidents too often.

Can I remind readers that we are continually looking for high quality, up to date digital photos to illustrate the current day railway scene, simply drop us an email.

Also, we now have two subscription lists, one is as normal with the PDF file attached to the e-mail, the other provides readers with a link to download it in your own time. If you would like to change between the two, please just let us know!

Submissions

We welcome submissions from all readers, especially photographs from those enthusiasts with a digital camera! Pictures should be sent to the the editor at *editor@railwayherald.co.uk*

Good quality scans of colour slides and prints are also acceptable.

Please note that as the Herald is free and compiled on a voluntary basis, we are unable to offer any financial return.

Where possible we always try to use photographs taken within the production week (i.e the next issue will, where possible, only include images taken between the publication date of this issue and the following Friday.

Publication

The **Railway Herald** is due to be published every Friday and is available by e-mail subscription from subscriptions@railwayherald.co.uk E-mail address are never given out and should you chose to cease your subscription in the future, pleas e just contact us.

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Our 'occasional' reviews column returns with a look at the new PC-based railway simulator from Just Trains - Trainz Railway Simulator 2006.

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Following £50 million upgrade of facilities at Southern's Selhurst depot, we take a look at the work that has been carried out over the past three years.

How you can help...

We are being continually asked how readers can get involved with the Railway Herald. We welcome readers contributions for the journal in both pictorial and written formats.

Contributions are welcome for all our pages, especially our news and notable workings columns and should be sent to the editor, by e-mail at *editor@railwayherald.co.uk*

Editorial address

Please note our editorial e-mail address that all submissions, both written and pictorial should be sent to is: *editor@railwayherald.co.uk*

FRONT COVER: FM Rail supplied motive power to the Severn Valley Railway over the weekend of 14th-16th October. A wide variety of traction was in use including Class 31 No. 31602, Class 33 No. 33103 and Class 45 No. 45112 from FM Rail, Class 52 No. D1015 Western Champion from the Diesel Traction Group and the resident Class 50 No. D444, Class 52 No. D1013 Western Ranger and Class 73 No. E6006. Class 31 No. 31602 passes New House Farm on the 15.50 Bridgnorth to Kidderminster on 15th October. RICHARD W. JONES

BELOW: DRS Class 37/2 No. 37218 heads westbound at Longniddry on 18th October after running as 1Z99 from Carlisle to Dunbar. The train locomotives of the Carlisle - Torness 'flask' train, Nos. 37611 and 37605 had been declared a failure and were assisted into the loop at Dunbar by an EWS locomotive. JIM YOUNG

£12m Allington Chord opens to traffic

The £12m project to build just 450 metres of new railway reached completion on 13 October when the new Allington Chord, linking Grantham with Skegness was officially opened.

The new chord will allow services running between Nottingham, Sleaford and Skegness to call at Grantham without having to cross the East Coast Main Line.

The project, which has been completed on time and within budget, gives better flexibility for local services and should improve performance and reliability on the East Coast route. When combined with other improvements, the new track will also increase capacity on the East Coast Main Line.

Until the opening of the new chord, trains between Nottingham and Skegness via Grantham had to travel on the East Coast Main Line between Grantham and Barkston South Junction, taking up space on the East Coast Main Line. Allington Chord removes the need for them to use the ECML, providing a dedicated route to and from Grantham station on the Nottingham branch line. The first train over the chord was the 06.43 Grantham to Skegness, Central Trains service on 3 October.

The new cord at Allington also moves GNER a step closer to being able to run another 6 trains a day in each direction between London and Leeds, giving a half-hour interval service between to the two cities throughout the day.

This increase in services, which is part of GNER's new franchise contract with Government, would give West Yorkshire a similar number of trains to/from London as other major city regions including Greater Manchester (to/from Manchester Piccadilly station) and the Tyne-Wear region (to/from Newcastle Central station).

Despite GNER's desire to increase the number of trains and introduce them as soon as possible, the improvements still require approval from the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR). That decision is expected by February next year, with the services starting from December 2006.

ABOVE: FM Rail Class 47 No. 47712 hauls Railtrack liveried Class 73/2s Nos. 73212 and 73213 through Stourbridge Junction on 17 October 2005, whilst en-route from Kidderminster on the Severn Valley Railway to Derby. MARK BARBER

Make or Break for DPS?

The Deltic Preservation Society has announced that it is to run a railtour on 28 December.

After a period of consultation with its membership following the cancellation of the 1st October railtour, the Society is run the railtour with ticket prices aimed to suit 'day out' railtourers.

Tickets for the train, which will start from the Midlands, are priced from £29 for a standard class ticket, although the keen pricing of the train means there will be no child discount.

The train will depart from Derby around 09.00 and return by approximately 19.00 giving passengers from further afield ample time to get to and from the departure points.

Picking up points will be Chesterfield, Sheffield and York, before the tour takes to the Pennines for a run to Manchester via Copy Pit.

This is the final opportunity to travel behind a 'Deltic' on the main line before it becomes necessary to fit OTMR. That decision will be made by the DPS as a direct result of the success of this tour. Should the outcome be positive then the first locomotive to be fitted with the new 'black boxes' should be No. D9009 Alycidon, with D9015 Tulyar following if financially viable.

The net result is that 55019 Royal Highland Fusilier is not likely to see main line action for several years.

A booking form and fare details may be downloaded from the Society website *http://www.thedps.co.uk* or by writing to DPS RAILTOURS, 49 Wallace Binder Close, Maldon, Essex, CM9 6LG enclosing a SAE.

Telephone booking facilities are also available between 1900 and 2130 Monday to Friday on (01621) 857425.

GNER celebrates 50 years since appearance of DELTIC

GNER joined with the Deltic Preservation Society at London Kings Cross on 24th October to commemorate 50 years since the appearance of the prototype DELTIC from Vulcan Foundry.

The event saw the dedication of one of GNER's HST Power Cars, No. 43167, Deltic 50 1965 - 2005. In a rare move by GNER, the nameplate is of the cast variety.

LEFT: Murray Brown, Chairman of the DPS, joins Christopher Garnett, Chief Executive of Great North Eastern Railway and Alan Vessey of Napier Power Heritage Trust at London Kings Cross on 24th October. INSET: The new nameplate. BOTH: BRIAN MORRISON

Big changes for Midlands Rail Network

The Department for Transport has announced major changes to the rail network through the Midlands area.

Back in October 2004, the Secretary of State announced that following expiry of the current Central Trains franchise, the existing services would be distributed amongst other train operators in the region.

Central Trains currently provides local services throughout the East and West Midlands and long distance services from the Midlands to South Wales, the North West, East Anglia and the East Coast.

The idea is to create a franchise structure for the region that will encourage a better working relationship between the operating TOC and Network Rail which will hopefully lead to improvements in performance.

A number of organisations have had an input into the new franchise map for the Midlands, including TOCs, PTEs, ATOC and Network Rail.

The new franchises which will be introduced at the next round of renewals, will have closer regional identities than the old Central Trains franchise.

A total of three new franchises will replace the four existing ones, with new franchises being created to serve the East Midlands and the West Midlands.

The East Midlands franchise will operate inter-city services to and from London St Pancras as now plus regional and local services in the East Midlands.

The West Midlands franchise will operate local and regional services in the West Midlands and the West Coast Main Line outer suburban services to and from London Euston that are currently operated by Silverlink County.

A new CrossCountry franchise will be created incorporating the current Central Trains inter-regional Nottingham to Cardiff, Nottingham to Hereford and Birmingham to Stansted Airport

ABOVE: The new changes to the East and West Midlands rail network will extend further, with services into London St Pancras, currently operated by Midland Mainline becoming part of the new East Midlands franchise. One of the new Bombardier built Class 222 'Meridian' sets, No. 222010 calls at Luton Airport Parkway with a London St Pancras bound service. RICHARD TUPLIN

BELOW: How the Midlands will look under the new franchise arrangements. The biggest change is the merger of the eastern half of the current Central Trains franchise with Midland Mainline and the arrival of the CrossCountry franchise into East Anglia, serving Stansted Airport from Birmingham New Street, together with new links to Hereford and Cardiff via Gloucester and Lydney. MAP COURTESY OF DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT

services into the existing Cross Country network.

The Department for Transport is currently considering whether there would be improvements to customers and operational flexibility by transferring two service groups to adjacent exisiting franchises.

The services which would be affected by this arrangement are Liverpool - Nottingham and those to and from Birmingham Snow Hill.

It is being considered that the Liverpool - Nottingham service (currently a Liverpool - Norwich via Sheffield, operated by Central Trains) could be better served by TransPennine Express, whilst the latter routes into and out of Birmingham Snow Hill could be operated by Chiltern Railways.

In order to confirm that these changes represent better value for money, they will be included as options within the new East and West Midlands franchises respectively.

Discussions are still taking place on the possible transfer to Transport for London (TfL) of the London inner-suburban services operated by Silverlink Metro but no final decision has yet been made.

In order to allow time for the development of the detailed specification for the three new franchises and time for full procurement competitions to take place, there will be interim Central Trains and Silverlink franchises extending from their current expiry dates in 2006 to Autumn 2007. These interim franchises will operate services broadly comparable to those operating today.

Further arrangements will be put in place for the timing of the new East Midlands franchise to match the expiry of the current Midland Mainline franchise.

Service Operators

So, just who will operate which service group's under the newly announced East and West Midlands franchises?

East Midlands franchise

St Pancras - Derby / Nottingham / Sheffield / Leeds
Liverpool - Norwich *(Liverpool - Nottingham may be operated by TPE if this demonstrates better value for money)*
Matlock - Derby
Crewe - Skegness
Leicester - Loughborough - Lincoln
Worksop - Nottingham
Cleethorpes - Lincoln - Newark / Nottingham
Doncaster - Lincoln - Peterborough

West Midlands franchise

The services below, detail those which are currently allocated to the new West Midlands franchise. However, some of these services are subject to recommendations in the West Midlands Route Utilisation Study.

Euston - Northampton
Bedford - Bletchley
Watford Jn. - St Albans Abbey
Birmingham - Liverpool / Preston
Birmingham - Coventry / Northampton
Birmingham - Leicester
Birmingham - Wolverhampton
Birmingham - Shrewsbury
Coventry - Nuneaton
Walsall - Wolverhampton - Wellington
Lichfield - Redditch
Stafford - Rugeley - Walsall - Birmingham
Stafford - Stoke-on-Trent
Stafford - Nuneaton
Stratford / Shirley / Leamington / Dorridge - Birmingham Snow Hill - Stourbridge Jn / Kidderminster / Worcester / Great Malvern *(May be operated by Chiltern Railways if this offers better value for money)*
Stourbridge Jn. - Stourbridge Town *(Maybe operated by Chiltern Railways if this offers better value for money)*

CrossCountry franchise

The new CrossCountry franchise, which will be re-let in Autumn 2007 is currently expected to be broadly the same as the current franchise, with the addition of three 'key' ex-Central Trains inter-regional routes.

Birmingham - Reading / The South
Birmingham - Bristol - South West
Birmingham - North East - Scotland
Birmingham - North West - Scotland
Birmingham - Manchester
Manchester - Scotland
Cardiff - Nottingham
Hereford - Nottingham
Birmingham - Stansted

The existing Cross Country franchise is operated by Virgin Rail Group under a temporary arrangement with the Department for Transport. This franchise will be re-let in Autumn 2007 and Virgin Trains shareholders have announced their intention to rebid for the CrossCountry franchise. The DfT, now operating in place of theStrategic Rail Authority has the option, under the terms of the letter agreement, to terminate the CrossCountry franchise by giving a minimum of 1 year's notice. This option has to be exercised before 28 February 2006.

Rail Accident Investigation Branch opens its doors

ABOVE: The Secretary of State for Transport, Alistair Darling is shown around one of the RAIB's new Incident Response Vehicles at Derby on 17th October. RICHARD TUPLIN

The new line of defence in railway accident investigation was officially launched on 17th October by the Secretary of State, Alistair Darling.

The Rail Accident and Investigation Branch (RAIB) has responsibility for carrying out independent investigations into railway accidents throughout the UK.

The aim of RAIB is to improve the safety of the railways, achieving this by identifying the causes of accidents and other factors which might have made the outcome worse, and then making recommendations to prevent reoccurrence.

The investigations are entirely independent of the industry, regulatory and prosecution organisations and are focused solely on safety improvement not the apportionment of blame or liability.

The new organisation will have authority over the police in the event of a major incident, except in circumstances where there is criminal activity involved.

The remit of the RAIB is to investgate accidents on main line, metro, light rail, heritage and also some cable hauled rail systems.

The branch is based in two strategic locations, Derby and Woking, and has a team of 26 investigators across the two sites, together with a technical team and a Chief Inspector. In the event of an accident or incident, one or more investigators can be dispatched from either location to the scene.

Each inspector carries a wide array of equipment and clothing, including a digital camera for recording evidence and a laptop computer, which is equipped with a 3G communications card for sending images and data back to one of the incident control rooms.

Both Derby and Woking have an Incident Response Vehicle that is identically fitted out and equipped with a wide array of surveying, measuring and photography equipment together with evidence recovery kit. The vehicles also feature warm running water, but purely to provide a handwash facility.

Within the operations centre at Derby (which is mirrored at Woking) is a incident control room evidence room, clean room and a dirty room. The latter two providing various facilities to examine the collated evidence using the latest technology.

Cotswold Rail gets final HST set...at Tyseley!

Cotswold Rail has progressed a healthy working relationship with both Heartland Rail and Pathfinder Tours.

The result is that these three companies will be working closer together in partnership, primarily to develop and further the 'Land Cruise' excursions offered to the general public and enthusiasts alike.

Staff at the Pathfinder will be taking over the booking and promotion for Heartlands and they will work together in future to avoid such things as same-day clashes.

It is envisaged that Heartland will make full use of the HST 125 sets currently under offer from Cotswold.

ABOVE: On 12 October, Cotswold Rail utilised Class 47/8 No. 47828 to move two Class 87 locomotives from Wembley to Oxley. No. 47828 Joe Strummer approaches Wolverhampton with Nos. 87010 and 87004 in tow. RAILFOTO

HST Fleet

Set CR02 will be based at Oxley and will be used as a Day Excursion set and will include full dining facilities, for the much favoured at-seat dining option. It is the intention to paint this set to closely follow the original BR Blue colours.

The second HST set (numbered CR03) will be based out of Tyseley and will be used for general excursions as well as TOC spot-hire. It is intended that the set, which will be painted in Cotswold Silver, will replicate the role that CR01 [the Cotswold Mark 3 loco- hauled set] has achieved with the Heartland program during 2005. CR03 will not initially include a full-dining option.

The company hope that strong ties will be made with the 125 Group, which will be actively encouraged to 'get involved' with this innovative use of such well known, comfortable and reliable stock.

CR02 has been located at Wolverhampton Oxley since 16 September, while CR03 was delivered to Tyseley on 14th October, as 5Z43 from Neville Hill.

Loco-Hauled Charters

Whilst the HSTs will take over the majority of the Heartland program, Pathfinder have made a firm commitment to use Class 47s, which will be worked in 'multiple' to ensure that there is smooth running both for timings and also by providing a backup to the main locomotive. In the event of a failure, the 'double-heading' role will help to prevent a train being stranded. CR01, the Mark 3 loco-hauled set may see use with Pathfinder, offering the customers a smooth and comfortable journey with a huge emphasis being placed on customer care.

Mark 1s will, where appropriate, continue to be supplied by Riviera Trains, which is expected to supply additional Class 47s when required.

Cotswold HSTs

CR02 (Oxley)
43157 & 43193

CR03 (Tyseley)
43070 & 43087

All four Cotswold Rail power cars are allocated to the CRRH TOPS pool.

Loco News

- Class 73/1 No. 73141 has moved to the former Thrall Europa works at York for fitting of OTMR. The locomotive was previous located at Ludgershall.
- The cutting of Class 87 Nos. 87005 and 87015 has been completed at Caerwent.
- Freightliner Heavy Haul moved two stored power cars from Leeds Neville Hill to MoD Long Marston for long-term store on 19 October.
- DRS has named Class 37 No. 37229 Jonty Jarvis in a private ceremony at Kingmoor.

GBRailfreight use GatEx Class 73/2

ABOVE: Gatwick Express Class 73/2 No. 73208 is pictured standing in the Autumn sunlight at Tonbridge Yard on 19 October. The locomotive has been used by GBRailfreight on several occasions recently when not required by Gatwick Express. The latter operator has suffered a number of failures recently with its Class 460 EMU fleet, necessating the use of Class 73s and Mark 2 stock. PATRICK SEALE

Locos Stored by Freightliner

One of Freightliner Heavy Haul's Class 47/0s, No. 47150 has been stored at Crewe.

The locomotive's last working was the movement of a rake of Mark 3 coaches to Wilton, before it returned to Crewe 'light engine'.

Meanwhile, Class 57/0 No. 57003 and 57004 have been stored by Freightliner Intermodal at Coatbridge FLT near Glasgow.

A further Class 57/0 No. 57001 had been allocated for store, but has been subsequently repaired at Eastleigh and returned to traffic.

Virgin upgrades driver training simulators

Virgin Trains has just commissioned the latest technology in driver training simulation, following the upgrading of two train simulators at its training centre in Crewe.

The simulators were delivered in early 2000 as part of the contract for the new Voyager and Pendolino trains.

The upgrade to the CrossCountry Voyager simulators, including on-site support for five years, has cost around £1m each and allows Virgin Trains to use the latest in computer technology to create real life scenarios in a safe classroom environment. Used alongside a Pendolino simulator, the two upgraded CrossCountry Voyager simulators are used as part of the training package for new drivers.

They will also be used as part of the on-going assessment that drivers have to undertake.

For the first time the simulators have been programmed to replicate the effects of degraded systems on a four-coach Voyager or five-coach SuperVoyager train. The graphic effects can even simulate 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 saved and can be saved to CD to enable a debrief to be carried out. The CDs also form part of a driver's training record.

ABOVE: The Voyager cab simulator showing the new computer graphics as seen by the trainees. Upgrade of the Pendolino simulator is due for completion in 2006. BRIAN MORRISON

Waterloo to be domestic

Eurostar has welcomed the findings of the Government's reports into the future of Waterloo International.

The report has recommended that the terminal should be retained for rail use after Eurostar's move to St. Pancras in 2007 and transferred to domestic use. It also identified that there is a potential boost for domestical passengers as a direct result of the additional station capacity and increased number of paths throughout South London.

The report also concluded that Eurostar's maintenance depot at North Pole should remain in rail hands in the long term, following the operator's move to new facilities at Temple Mills.

Track access rights and train pathways released by the relocation are also singled out in the report as being of "significant potential value", as well as creating important extra capacity.

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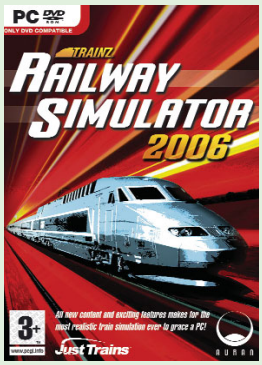

System Requirements

Operating System: Windows XP/2000, Millenium or 98.

Minimum Processor: 1.8Ghz

Minimum Memory: 512Mb

Minimum Video Card Memory: 64Mb

Hard Drive Space: 3Gb

Other Requirements: DVD-ROM drive for installation

Trainz Railway Simulator 2006

PC CD-ROM

Produced By: Just Trains (*http://www.justtrains.net*)
Price: £29.99
See system requirements box

Trainz Railway Simulator 2006, is the latest release from JustTrains and developers Auran.

TRS2006 offers much more than previous versions of TRS, with significant improvements having been made as technology has also progressed.

More complex routes have been added; new ways of viewing trains has been incorporated along with better rendering, graphical interfaces, and improved sound quality. More than 50 realistic rules have been added that doubles the amount which were released on TSR2004. Wheel Slip and Coupling Breakage are added extras which were previously unavailable.

The program allows the user to drive trains from countries such as America, England, Spain, Germany, and Australia.

Actual Screenshot

Management of daily workloads and schedules is another feature which has been added in addition to driving trains on a variety of duties.

A recommendation would be to check the specification of your own computer with the basic recommendations made by JustTrains. The better your computer is compared to this, then improved game play should be noticed by the user. Good sound equipment should also allow for some exceptionally realistic noise to be produced from the game.

With each new release of Trainz the developments in technology mean Auran can push the boundaries of realism. TRS2006 is an improvement on previous versions and now gives the user even more reasons to keep them in the driving seat for longer.

Improvements at Selhurst

Southern unveiled the final step in a major £50 million investment programme at Selhurst Depot on 12 October.

The official opening of the refurbished depot was marked on 12 October, when the Rail Minister Derek Twigg visited the site and unveiled a commorative plaque.

The depot complex at Selhurst, together with Stretham Hill, maintain and provide good order rolling stock for the London end of Southern's services. Following the improvement and upgrade work that has taken place, Selhurst is now claimed to be the biggest operational depot in the country.

The key to the improvements has been the introduction of the new Bombardier products, such as the Turbostar Class 171 and the Electrostar Class 377s, which have brought with them their own maintenance requirements. Also maintained at Selhurst are the older EMUs, including Classes 455 and 456 and Thameslink Class 319s.

The upgrade work has provided a new train cleaning shed with improved staff facilities, a new carriage washing plant, nine new train parking roads with raised walkways for better access, a chemical emission toilet facility, filling for the train sanders and a new fuelling plant. The latter has been designed to provide six seperate fueling bays, allowing it to accomodate a six-car DMU.

The whole depot has been equipped with a modern CCTV system for enhanced security across the depot complex, in addition to a new train inspection shed. The latter is fitted with a fume extraction

ABOVE: An overall view of the Depot with Class 377/4s Nos. 377420 & 377402 coming off the extensive sidings as ECS for London Victoria to form a Brighton service. BRIAN MORRISON

BELOW: One of the new six-coach diesel fuellers at Selhurst Depot with a Class 171 Turbstar behind. BRIAN MORRISON

RIGHT: New Thameslink-liveried Class 319/4 No 319427 and Souhern Class 377/4 No 377417 inside the Cleaning Shed at Selhurst Depot on 12 October. Major improvements have been made to the lighting systems across the depot, but the Cleaning Shed in particular presents staff with a light and airy environment in which to work. Brian Morrison

MIDDLE: Southern-liveried Class 319/0 No 319005 under heavy maintenance inside Selhurst Depot on 18 October 2005. Brian Morrison

BOTTOM: Inside a new train maintenance shed at Selhurst Depot on 12 October 2005, Class 377/2 No 377211, Class 319/0 Noi 319009, Class 319/4 No 319453 & Class 455/8 No 455815 receive attention. Brian Morrison

Improvements at Selhurst

system for when the Turbostar units are ungoing maintenance with their engines running.

The improvements to Selhurst are not purely designed around the maintenance side of operations however, as the number of stabling sidings has also been remodelled and increased to provide space for 108 carriages (equivilent to 27 four-car units).