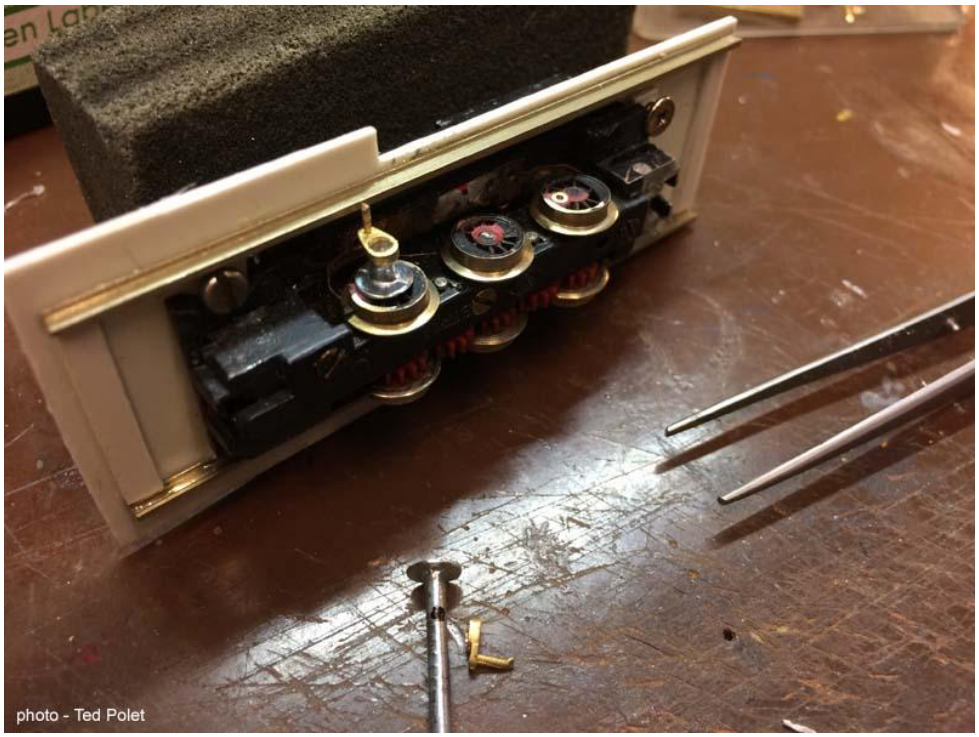
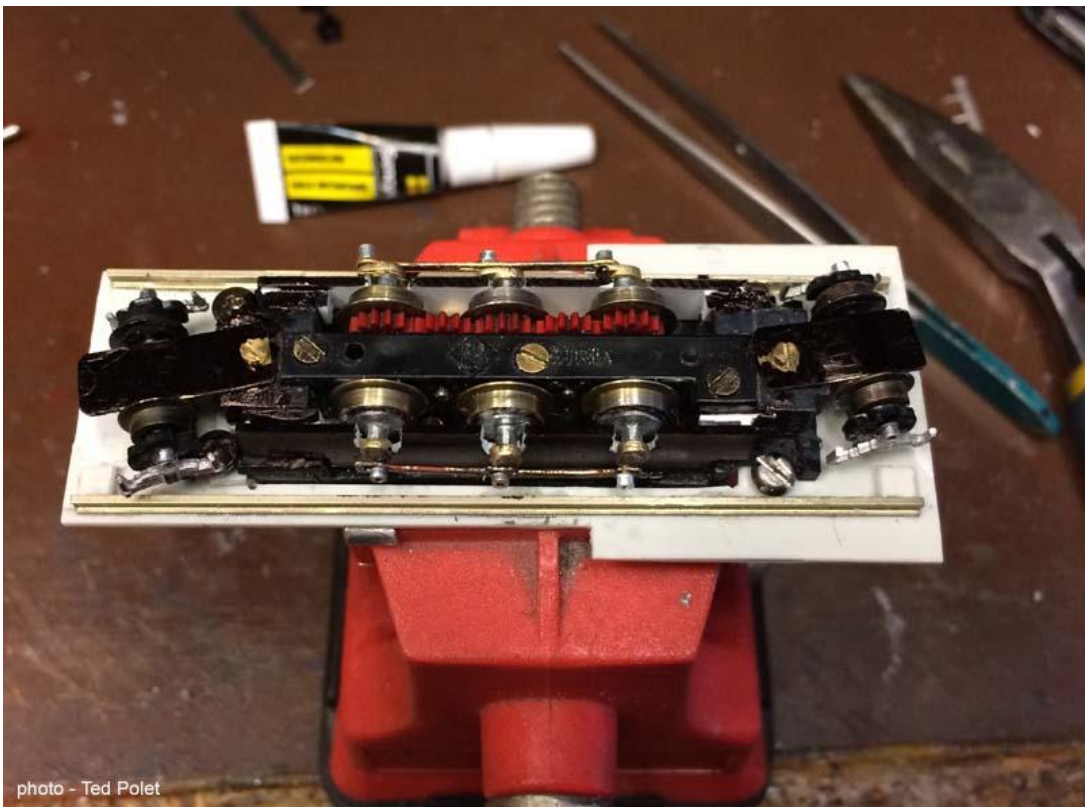
Ted Polet

Years ago I visited my friend the late Jos Bakkers. In a corner of his workbench lay the plastic body shell of a Jouef H0 diesel locomotive of the 1960s, a model of the BR shunter no. D2705, built by North British, which he gave to me. The body shell lay in the drawer for a while, until I saw Bernard Taylor on the NGRM forum working on the same model. He turned it into a heavy 2-6-2 narrow gauge locomotive, which I thought I could do as well. Below is a photo, along with my diesel locomotive 22, for comparison.

The chassis came from an old Roco steam locomotive, once received from someone else. This also became a 2-6-2, with outside frames and brass cranks. The latter are mounted on cut-down roofing felt nails, which have a large diameter flat head (photo). Later I fitted plastic outside frames, through which the cranks protrude.



The front and rear trucks were made using my tried and tested recipe: a brass strip fitted with a tube that takes the axle of the pony wheels. Using styrene and a few whitemetal details I completed the trucks.



A pair of Langley cowcatchers (for the Lynton & Barnstaple Baldwin) were then built up and glued to the ends. A lot of trouble followed with couplings, which should be suitable to my minimum curve radius of 22.5 cm.

As you can see it turned into a beast of a locomotive, which will inevitably be named "Beast" (Beathach in Scottish Gaelic). I put searchlights on it front and rear (LEDs that came from Christmas lights) and fitted footboards, sand hoppers, a brake crank and an exhaust pipe.

The next photo shows the loco in primer, with masking tape on the lights:

After further painting, the result was as shown below. Following that the Beast did running trials on coal trains, where it performed quite well.

The final details are still missing: vacuum pipes, window glazing and cab interior, number and nameplates. There is also more work to be done on the paintwork.

The Beast seemed to be a success, but six months after construction the chassis suddenly jammed, apparently due to a problem with the gears. The best solution was to replace the Roco chassis with something completely new. I put an Arnold T3 0-6-0 chassis under it, minus the (unpowered) centre wheels.

The cranks were transferred from the old chassis to the wheels of the new chassis and I made new styrene frame plates.

Now came the camouflage trick. The locomotive now had two powered axles instead of three, and I wanted to simulate a jackshaft between the wheels. The answer was simple: I glued a red disk to the black frame and pretended a large bearing was rotating over it. It looks like there is a complete jackshaft in the chassis. Since the modification the locomotive has been running perfectly. So you see that a disaster can work to your advantage!

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