

A WORD of advice—Never make the mistake of thinking that you know everything. For the past six or so years I have been reviewing all new Dinky Toys for the Meccano Magazine and, in this time, I have seen so many innovations, gimmicks and new models, and have seen the die-cast modelling world as a whole make so many advances in design and manufacture that I had come to imagine I had seen just about everything. Nothing in this field, I thought, could surprise me—then along came Fab 1!

Fab 1, or to give it its official title, 'Lady Penelope's Fab 1', is the new Dinky model of the futuristic car owned by 'Lady Penelope Crichton-Ward' and driven by 'Parker' of the television puppet series 'Thunderbirds' (you must have heard of International Rescue!) It is, in my opinion, by far the best and most amazing toy ever to have appeared in the Dinky range or, for that matter, in any comparable range. It is, however, primarily a toy, a fact which I must stress to quiet the mutterings of serious scale model collectors, but it is a toy only because its prototype does not exist in real life. In all other respects, it's a top-quality, solidly-built model and is certainly an exact replica of the T.V. original. In fact, it's made by Dinky for Century 21 Toys Ltd., the 'owners' of the original.

The Fabulous One

**Dinky Toy News
by Chris Jelley**

But the simple fact that the new Dinky originated in a T.V. programme is a comparatively minor detail. Of far greater importance from the customer's point of view is the question, 'What special features does it have to recommend it?' Answer—'Plenty!'

Leaving aside the fact that its almost all-metal construction makes it basically very tough and strong, it carries—and shoots—a formidable armament! At the front a large rubber-tipped rocket fits onto a spring-loaded launcher, hidden beneath the bonnet and reached by hinging down the radiator, while, at the back, four 'harpoons' fit into four separate launchers, arranged in two banks of two, which are also spring-loaded. Firing is simple. To shoot the rocket, press down on the front of the model; to shoot the right bank of harpoons, press down on the right-hand side of the model at the rear; to shoot the left bank of harpoons, press down on the left-hand side of the model at the rear; to shoot all the harpoons, press down the whole back of the model; to shoot both the rocket and all the harpoons together, press down the entire model. No problems here!

Regular 'Thunderbirds' viewers will have noticed that, besides its unusual general shape, the television show's Fab 1 has two unique features—twin front



wheels and transparent 'bubble' roof. Both these features appear on the Dinky version. The canopy, itself, slides open and closed and covers a gold-plated highly-detailed interior containing, like the original, an instrumented dash-board and a centrally-mounted steering wheel in front of a single driver's seat. Behind this is a full-width passenger seat and that isn't all! Two scale figures are included, a liveried chauffeur, unruffled, in the driver's seat and an elegant lady in full evening dress with 'fur' jacket sitting sedately in the passenger seat. Believe it or not, these figures actually look just like Parker and Lady Penelope! How's that for reproduction!

Other points of note are TRIPLE jewelled headlamps, suspension, 'FAB 1' number plates and authentic pink gloss finish. Overall, the model is a big 5 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. long by 2 $\frac{1}{10}$ in. by 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. high and, as a matter of interest, weighs more than a $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. which is surely proof of its substantial nature.

When arming the model, i.e. fitting the rocket and harpoons, the model should be placed on a rigid surface such as a table or the floor and care should be taken that it is not pressed down while the rocket, etc. is being pushed home. The radiator, itself, acts as a sort of safety device and, as such, should always be in the correct upright position except when the rocket is being fired. If you follow these 'rules' you'll find that you can have great fun with the model for hours on end without any trouble.

You may, in fact, be interested in the little game of skill I invented to test the accuracy of the main rocket. It consists simply of positioning several other Dinky Toys in various positions around the floor and trying to score direct hits on these from a set 'firing' position. Points can be awarded for hitting the models, the number of points depending on the size of the model under fire. The only thing to remember is that, as the model should not be held in the hands while firing, the target cars must be equidistant from the firing position. You'll be surprised how difficult it is to hit, say, a Mini Minor from half-way across a room!

You will have gathered by now that I find Fab 1 particularly fascinating, and I could actually go on writing about it for some time. Space being limited, however, I must now pass on to the other Dinky



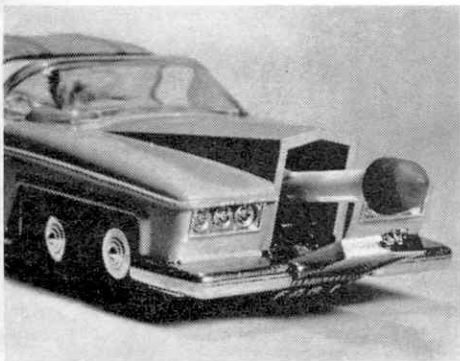
Release—No. 945 A.E.C. Fuel Tanker Esso. This is not difficult to do, as the new tanker is an extremely impressive model, as well as being one of the largest Dinky Toys to be produced for quite some time. As the accompanying pictures show, it's an articulated unit consisting of a typical modern 'tank' towed by an A.E.C. tractor unit.

The tanker section itself is die-cast and sports eight road wheels, mounted towards the rear in pairs on twin axles. On their own, however, these would not prevent the front end of the tank from dropping when the tractor is uncoupled, therefore an additional pair of small jockey wheels are provided towards the front on a collapsible 'under-carriage' that folds away when the tractor is in position. On the top of the tank is a moulded catwalk incorporating six opening man-hole covers, while two lengths of hosepipe are carried on platforms built into each side of the chassis below the tank. The hosepipe is, of course, removable and plugs into a bank of little spigots, below the nearside of the tank, which represent what, on a real-life tanker, are fuel outlet taps.

As previously mentioned, the tractor unit is based on a frequently-seen A.E.C. prototype, and it

carries clear, very well-designed casting detail, particularly in the case of the doors and radiator grille. Jewelled headlamps are fitted, in addition to windows, seats and steering wheel, but perhaps the most impressive feature of all is the release mechanism for the trailer coupling. This consists of a spring-loaded hook, in a covered 'V'-shaped recess that clips onto a lug beneath the tank. It is disengaged by pressing a small moulded button on the off-side of the tractor chassis, which is designed to look like a small fuel or oil tank.

The actual coupling operation is performed simply by backing the tractor onto the trailer so that the lug on the trailer is forced up the 'V'-shaped guide, past the hook and into the recess. The model as a whole is finished predominately in white, but with light grey catwalk and manhole covers on the tanker and with grey chassis and interior moulding on the tractor. On each side of the tank are two large 'Esso' emblems separated by a long red panel. Across the entire back of the tank is a picture of a tiger's head with, above it, the advertising slogan 'Put A Tiger In Your Tank'. This gives the final touch to what, in my opinion, is an excellent scale Dinky Toy.



Motoring News

Nuffield Production in Turkey - New Traffic Signs Booklet

The British Motor Corporation has recently announced that a new company, jointly set up by itself and Austin and Nuffield Distributors in Turkey, will begin assembly of BMC Nuffield Tractors early this year. The tractors, in dismantled form, will be imported from this country and will be assembled at the new factory near Izmir, Turkey. Already, 1500 C.K.D. (completely knocked down) packs of the famous Nuffield 10/60 Tractor have been ordered for delivery to the factory in February.

Known as Sanayi Ve Ticaret A.S., the new company was actually incorporated in August 1964. The factory, located on a 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ million sq. ft. site, will have an initial capacity for assembling up to 13,000

Austin and Nuffield cars and commercial vehicles, as well as tractors, each year.

The RAC, which has for many years pressed for a better system of signposting in this country, has issued an up-to-the-minute booklet entitled 'Know Your New British Traffic Signs'. Twelve pages thick, it gives descriptions and meanings of all the new road signs recommended in last year's Worboys Report and has been prepared with the co-operation of the Ministry of Transport and H.M. Stationery Office.

Produced in an eye-catching style, the booklet also gives colour illustrations of 156 road signs and markings under seven separate headings: Regu-

latory, Warning, Directional, Light Signals, Road Markings, Informatory and RAC Temporary Signs. All are clearly printed and very easily understood.

It is interesting to note, incidentally, that all existing 'Regulatory' signs are scheduled to be changed by the end of the year and, within the next few years, most of Britain's 1,600,000 traffic signs will have been replaced by the new designs. This therefore makes the booklet more useful than ever. It is free to all RAC members from any RAC Office but, otherwise, costs 6d.

Chris Jelley