

Heljan model of 45133 – review and modifications

Heljan OO gauge Class 45s models had arrived at retailers in October 2022, including the first ever models of Class 45/1 locos with the correct bodyside and roof details, including a model of 45133 (without headlights), shown below (Cat. No.45402).



So what is the model like and what if you wanted the model to represent 45133 in its current preserved condition, with headlights?

Well, there has been a great deal said in the railway press about the pros and cons of the model, particularly when compared with the Bachmann offering, generating lots of debate around the shape of the cab front windows and the shade of BR blue used. However, Heljan must be commended on producing a model with the correct Class 45/1 roof and bodyside detailing, which Bachmann so far have failed to do. In my view, the chassis of the Heljan model is superb, with depth to the bogie side frame detail and with fully detailed bufferbeams, including fitted pipework and ETH equipment. There is also a much smaller gap between the body and bogies than on the Bachmann version. There are just



two items on the model which should not be present on a 45/1 (indicated on the picture left) – the first is the boiler water drain/filler cock on both sides at the No.2 end of the bodyshell. The second are the additional steps on the bogies, where

the bodyside water filler steps used to be on steam heat locos. These can be removed quite easily without the need for retouching the paintwork.

Now, remove the four small securing screws located under the chassis and the body lifts off, without the need to disconnect any wiring. Looking at the chassis, you will then appreciate the ample space to fit DCC sound if required (DCC chips featuring actual 45133 sound recordings are still available from howesmodels.co.uk). Also note the superbly detailed cab interiors, complete with cab heaters and safety notices on the bulkhead. The model also features cab lights to illuminate all this great detail!



If you want to fit headlights to your model, so it represents 45133 in the last few months of BR service and in preservation, the good news is that this is fairly straightforward to do, as all the lighting for headlights is already present on the chassis.

You just need to make a hole in the nose end and fit a suitable headlight surround on the front!



On the picture above left you can see (indicated by a red box) the centre hole in the light fitting on the chassis, which already has a LED light fitted behind it. This hole lines up with the centre hole in the fitting glued inside the nose end (pictured above middle). Carefully remove this nose fitting with a scalpel and you can see there is no hole between the marker lights to allow the centre headlight to shine through (pictured above right).

To let the light through, drill a 2mm hole in the centre of the nose, with the bottom of the hole lining up with the bottom of the marker lights, then reattach the fittings inside the nose.



The headlight surrounds I used were 'Hornby X6865 Class 31 Decorative Headlight Cowling (Pk2)' (pictured above right), which are available from newmodellershops.co.uk or petersspares.com. These are a close colour match to the yellow end of the Heljan model, so do not need painting. They will just need the little pips cutting off the back and then they can be glued onto the front of the nose with a tiny bit of superglue, making sure they line up with the holes you have drilled. Lastly, glaze the headlight with a piece of clear plastic dowel inserted into the hole, or with a dab of PVA glue, which dries clear. All that is left then is to place the body back on the chassis and replace the securing screws. The finished headlights then really look the part and work very well!



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