

Rasender Roland

Two years ago, the class Mh 53 steam locomotive received its new green livery. For LGB, it was an ideal opportunity to release a model of the island's technological "landmark" - the "Rasender Roland" or "Racing Roland" loco - as it looks today.



The railroad age began on Rügen - the largest of Germany's islands - as early as 1895 when the Rügen Narrow-Gauge Railroad was opened. By 1899, the narrow-gauge network with its track gauge of 750 millimeters (29.5 in) had already reached its maximum length of almost 100 kilometers (62.1 miles), with the network consisting of three lines: First of all, there was the eastern line serving Put-



Elegant appearance:

The water tanks are integrated into the frame of the Lenz type M loco.

bus, Binz, and Göhren, which is still in operation today and was extended to Lauterbach Mole in 1999 by means of a three-rail track laid on the existing standard-gauge line. This means it can look forward to a secure future. However, that was not always the case. During the mid-1970s, this line was also threatened with closure due to the increasing use of automobiles but the Rostock district council stepped in to prevent this



and placed the line under a preservation order in 1976. The next line was the western line from Putbus to Altefähr, the first section of which opened in 1896. Although passenger traffic on this line never reached the same volume as on the eastern line, this section was of great importance for freight traffic. However, as freight transport increasingly switched to road traffic from the 1960s onwards, the line – whose mainte-

nance was also severely neglected in the post-war years – became less important, so much so that it was discontinued in 1967 and subsequently removed. The first section of the northern line from Bergen to Altenkirchen also opened in 1896. This was followed by the branch to Bug in 1918, which was mainly built to serve the naval aviation school located there. However, this branch had already been dismantled again by 1939. Another

special feature on the northern line was that the Rassower Strom waterway to the north of the island was crossed by the Wittow ferry, which hindered operations almost from the start. If the tide was low or there was sea ice, operations had to be suspended. It also transpired that the two ferries were so underpowered that they could drift off course in strong currents. However, transport volumes on the northern line remained ➔



Attraction on Rügen: Since the summer of 2020, the steam loco, road number 53 Mh, has been operating in a beautiful dark green paint scheme and is now one of the absolute favorite motifs, after the chalk cliffs, for the many visitors to the largest German island.

low, and the costly ferry traffic led to economic losses. Just like the western line, traffic increasingly switched to road transport, with the result that the line was closed in stages and finally dismantled by 1970. The White Fleet based in Stralsund continued to operate the ferries for passengers and road vehicles until 1996.

The operation of this railroad also had its ups and downs: After its construction, Lenz & Co took over the management of the railroad, which was then called the “Rügensche Kleinbahn”, as had been contractually agreed. In 1910, the light railroad department of the provincial administration of Pomerania took over the management of the

railroad. However, just ten years later, the railroad was transferred to another operator, the “Vereinigung vorpommerscher Kleinbahnen GmbH.” During the period after the First World War, operations had to be temporarily suspended due to a lack of coal deliveries. The railroad slowly recovered until it was merged with 23 other light railroads in

RüBB Baggage Car (item 30325)

Robust: The type KD4 baggage car is still in use today on the Rügen Bäder Railroad (RüBB). The sliding wall doors on the model can be opened.



1937 to form the “Pommersche Landesbahnen” (Pomeranian State Railways). After the Second World War – in 1949 – all railroads were nationalized and taken over by the GDR State Railroad (DR). As more and more passengers started to travel on the light railroad due to a sharp increase in vacation traffic, cars had to be transferred from the Saxon narrow-gauge railroads to meet the additional demand. However, capacities for freight transport and locos also had to be increased with the help of vehicles from Saxony. However, this positive trend came to an end in the mid-1960s, not least due to the increased use of automobiles. Wear and tear caused by prolonged operation without sufficient maintenance led to economic

HIGHLIGHTS

Rügen Bäder Railroad Road Number 53 Mh Steam Locomotive, item 28006, era VI

- 1 Prototypical paint scheme and lettering of era VI (in the current dark green since summer 2020)
- 2 High-efficiency propulsion, steam exhaust and cylinder steam synchronized with the wheels
- 3 Equipped with an mfx/DCC decoder with numerous light and sound functions; running gear lighting, cab lighting and flickering of the boiler fire in the firebox can be controlled digitally.
- 4 Many separately applied details, cab doors and smokebox door can be opened; operation on R1 curves (600 mm/23.6 in radius) guaranteed.
- 5 Matching cars – passenger car item 35361, baggage car item 30325, and an observation car item 32354 – as a bonus.

Details: Wheel-synchronised steam output and cylinder steam, flickering of the boiler fire in the firebox - the model of the 53 Mh has a lot to offer.



problems, which then resulted in the line closures mentioned above. After German reunification, the railroad's continued existence was once again in jeopardy when Deutsche Bahn (DB AG), which resulted from the merger of DB and DR, wanted to divest itself of all narrow-gauge railroads in the East. To ensure the railroad's preservation and continued operation, the private railroad company Karsdorfer Eisenbahngesellschaft founded the “Rügensche Kleinbahn GmbH & Co” in 1996. However, KEG went bankrupt by 2004, which led to a prolonged dispute between the new owners and the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern transport company over the management of the railroad. Finally, the Pressnitz Valley Railway took over complete responsibility and management in 2008, and the railroad has operated under the name “Rügensche Bäderbahn” or Rügen Bäder Railroad →

RüBB Passenger Car (item 35361)

Refined: The doors can also be opened on model of the passenger car. The complete interior details (seats, baggage rack) are authentically realized.





Picturesque: The route between Göhren and Lauterbach Mole used by the “Rasender Roland” is 24.1 kilometers (15.0 miles) long.

ever since. However, the railroad is popularly known and loved – both on the island and further afield – as “Rasender Roland” or “Racing Roland”. Steam locos, some of which are over 100 years old, still run here. The cars also date from this period although they have been modernized. Let’s take a look at the class Mh locomotives, which were Lenz type “M” designs where “h” referred to superheated steam. Between 1913 and 1925, Vulcan AG in Stettin delivered ten locomotives of this type for various narrow-gauge railways, three of them for the railroad on Rügen. They

were initially delivered as wet steam locomotives, but later on as more powerful and economical superheated steam locomotives. Some of the wet steam locomotives were also converted into superheated steam locos. The superheated steam locos used on Rügen weighed 25 metric tons (27.6 short tons) and had an output of 235 HP, giving them a top speed of 30 kilometers per hour (18.6 mph), which was perfectly adequate for the trains they were intended to pull. The locomotives with a length of eight meters (26.2’) bore a certain resemblance to the Elna locomotives built

at that time, whose typical features included the water tank in the frame and the lack of side water tanks on the boiler. With the GDR State Railroad (DR), the three locomotives on Rügen were assigned the road numbers 99 4631 – 99 4633 and operated in the standard black and red DR livery. In 1992, road numbers 99 4632 and 99 4633 were fitted with new boilers and cylinders at the Görlitz railroad maintenance depot, after which they resumed operation in the original green paint scheme as road numbers Mh 52 and Mh 53 on the Rügen light railroad. The two remaining oper-

Rasender Roland (RüBB)



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35361

ational locos were subsequently painted black again although road number 99 4633 – or Mh 53 – has featured an extremely attractive dark green livery since summer 2020. The locomotives can still be seen in operation, either on Rügen or also in the Ore Mountains, which was made possible by the dedicated employees of the Pressnitz Valley Railway: They simply transported a locomotive from Rügen to Jöhstadt on the company's own low-loader truck. They did so, for example, with road number Mh 53 for the Pentecost Festival in 2022, which allowed visitors from near and far to admire this beautiful loco on the museum railroad from Jöhstadt to Steinbach...

Model locos and cars of the Rügen Bäder Railroad

A model of the class Mh steam locomotive used on the island of Rügen has been available from LGB for many years. It has been released in many versions – as a black DR loco or road number Mh 52 with a light green paint scheme. After road number Mh 53 received a new dark green paint scheme a few years ago and appeared at the Pen-

tecost Festival hosted by the Pressnitz Valley Railroad in Jöhstadt, we immediately received numerous requests from LGB fans for a model of this loco, ideally with matching cars. Well, it took a little while, but the Rügen Bäder Railroad train with this loco has been revealed as a new summer release. However, it is more than just a color variant of the familiar locomotive: The supply lines and feed valves are new, as they look completely different than on the existing locomotive. The loco also features running gear lights that can be switched on in digital operation. Another new feature is the factory-fitted smoke generator with steam exhaust and cylinder steam synchronized with the wheels, which is now standard on all new LGB steam locos. The proven drive system with its large high-performance motor is unchanged, but the mfx/DCC sound decoder is new and enables many light and sound functions in digital operation. This wonderful loco will be available in the late summer as item 28006.

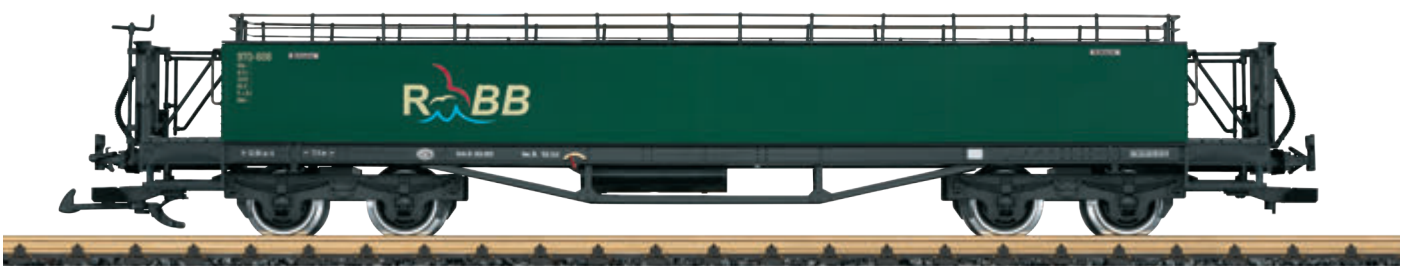
A complete train consisting of a passenger car, a baggage car, and an open observation car is also available to go with this locomotive. The passenger

car available as item 35361 is an old acquaintance that has previously been available in several versions. It is basically a model of the Saxon "Reko" or redesigned car in the green/beige color scheme of the Rügen Bäder Railroad – even the windows with the ventilation flaps are the same. Naturally, this model also comes with complete interior details, with a paint scheme and lettering that replicate how the car looks today.

However, the Rügen Bäder Railroad version of the baggage car is new – this model was previously only available as a Saxon car. The car presented as item 30325 is identical to its Saxon counterpart but features the light green paint scheme of the other cars used in Rügen. Another new addition is the Rügen Island version of the open observation car, which will be available as item 32354. This model is also based on the corresponding car from Saxony, but it features the correct paint scheme and lettering of the RüBB. This allows garden railroaders to assemble a beautiful train of the type that operates on the island of Rügen but also occasionally in the Ore Mountains when the Pressnitz Valley Railway celebrates a festival... ■

RüBB Observation Car (item 32354)

An experience: Taking a ride in the "rail convertible" is one of the highlights of the Bäder Railroad. The model reproduces the car with prototypical interior details.



Landmark: With steam loco, road number 53 Mh, and baggage, passenger, and observation cars, the new summer 2024 products recreate one of the best-known narrow-gauge classics in the loco's current paint scheme (dark green).



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