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OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

“SOUTH AFRICAN RAILWAYS NG15”

SAFETY FIRST

All our locomotives are safe to run, and will give many hours of pleasure, providing the following safety procedures are followed: -

1. Please read the instructions thoroughly before running for the first time.
2. Always do a complete refill of gas, oil and water. Never refill just the gas to prolong the run.
3. Never let the engine run out of water.
4. When refilling the gas, do not have any naked flame present, and **NO SMOKING!**
5. Do not pick up the engine by the bodywork, chimney or boiler, especially when hot.
6. Only pick up the engine by the buffer beams and, when hot, use old gloves or a cloth.
7. Do not stand over the chimney. Ejected boiling water or steam may cause serious injury.
8. Do not open the smoke box door while the engine is alight.

General Hints

As with all operating machinery, whether model or full size, wear will occur. In the model steam locomotive much can be done to help prolong its life and decrease the amount of time required in the workshop for servicing.

Keep the engine as clean as possible, and the motion free from dirt and garden debris. The valve gear, axles and crank pins should be oiled sparingly with light oil, e.g. “3-in -1 Oil”. Over-oiling attracts dirt and grit, which will increase wear.

Regularly check that all screws and motion bolts are firm. Do not over-tighten, as this strips threads and shears bolts. **When filling the lubricator, always use a high temperature superheat steam oil; this is available from other retailers. FAILURE TO USE THE CORRECT GRADE OF OIL CAN LEAD TO BLOCKED STEAM PIPES, AND WILL INVALIDATE THE GUARANTEE.**

When running your engine avoid excessive speed and acceleration, both will cause premature wear in the valve gear. Prototypically, narrow gauge locomotives ran at a speed of between 10 and 20 M.P.H., and never exceeded 25 m.p.h.

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Positions of Fillers and Drains etc.

The cab roof lifts up then tilts over to the right hand side to give access to boiler water filler and the lubricator.

The lubricator is in the nearside of the cab. The filler cap has a “T” bar in it to aid removal. The lubricator drain is directly beneath the lubricator. To drain, un-screw the drain valve through about ½ a turn. The lubricator is also fitted with a needle valve which allows the amount of oil fed into the steam line to be controlled. When the model is new the valve should be unscrewed about 2 turns. If you find the loco is getting heavily covered in oil you may start to reduce the amount of the opening of the valve. As the loco runs in the valve opening can be reduced but must always be at least 1 turn open. A good sign is that there is a light film of oil on the top of the chimney at the end of the run.

The boiler water filler is on top of the steam turret on the boiler in the middle of the cab. Undo the knurled cap to fill with water. The main steam regulator valve is the wheel valve on the rear of the boiler-filling turret.

The water glass blow down valve is under the footplate, just in front of the lubricator blow down drain valve. To open the valve, turn the lever through about one turn.

The direction control is the lever in the offside cab door. To operate pull gently outwards and move to the desired direction. The control is “gated”, and will therefore hold itself in the full forward or reverse position.

The gas inlet valve is on the top of the gas tank turret, in the water tank in the tender; the gas control valve is attached to this turret, and can be operated through the front plate of the tender.

The water pump is in the tender, in the water tank. Its operating handle is in the accessory pack supplied with the loco.

Preparation for Running

The NG15 is fitted with a water gauge; this allows the driver to keep the model in steam continuously for longer periods of time than the usual single fill system. This is done using the water pump in the tender with the extension handle supplied in the accessory pack. The initial fill up with gas, oil and water is the same as for a basic run, but then to carry on and run for longer periods requires supervision of the boiler water level, topping up of the lubricator and refilling of the gas. These procedures will be explained in another section after the Running section instructions.

To connect the tender to the Locomotive

The connection bar on the loco has two holes, the outer one when running over curves of a radius from R3 (4 feet) to 2 meters (6 feet 6 inches). The inner hole when being run over curves of over 2 metres (6 feet 6 inches).

First connect the tender pin to the appropriate hole on the loco connection bar. Then push the twin gas jet unit into the two burners. These may need a slight bend in the copper pipe to ensure a firm fit. Ensure that the flexible gas pipe is not kinked in any place, including in the tender space, as this will restrict the gas flow. Next take the 4mm diameter black tube supplied for the tender hand pump connection to the boiler. First push one end into the Speedy Fit connector on the back of the boiler then the other end into the connector on the tender. The resulting shape of the pipe should be a gentle curve. If it needs to be, the pipe can be cut to a shorter length. If you at anytime damage the

pipe, contact us and we will send you a new length free of charge. The final pipe to connect is the clear bluish silicone pipe from the spring loaded valve on the boiler to the push over spigot on the front of the tender. This is the steam supply to reheat the tender water to keep the gas at a warm temperature.

Always service the engine in the following order; first gas, oil then water.

To fill the gas tank: invert the gas can and apply the nipple to the gas inlet valve on the top of the tank turret. It is advisable to support the tender whilst filling, to prevent the tender from tipping over. You will know when the tank is full; gas will blow back from the inlet valve in a strong jet. A small amount of gas and air will escape during filling, but the difference between this and when the tank is full is always clear. Always keep the gas can vertical when filling the gas tank. The tender must then be filled with water up to about a third of the way up the gas tank. If the ambient temperature is below 20C (72F) warm water will need to be used to ensure the gas vaporises properly. ***HAND HOT*** water only must be used, ***NOT*** boiling water. This will cause undue stress on the gas tank and result in too high pressures for the firing system.

Filling the lubricator: as you will read in the instructions for the end of the run, the lubricator should be empty of oil and water with the valve left in the open position. Now close the valve and remove the lubricator filler cap. Fill up the lubricator with steam oil to about ¼ of an inch below the top. Leave the filler cap off for the present, so that any trapped air can escape. It can be refitted after you have filled up the boiler.

To fill the boiler: remove the filler cap and also open the water level check valve. Fill up the boiler to about ¾ full – ideally use filtered rainwater or distilled water using the large syringe provided. This level gives a good head of steam space while giving a good full boiler for the run. Replace the boiler filler cap, check that the lubricator does not need topping up, and then replace its filler cap also. Filler caps should be firm finger tight. They are sealed with a trapped ‘O’ ring and, therefore should not be over-tightened.

Lighting Up

Open the smoke box door; just pull it open by the door handle. Light your lighter/match etc. and gently open the gas control valve until a gentle hiss is heard in the burner. Apply your light into the smokebox and the flame should ‘pop’ down the fire tubes and ignite the burners inside the fire tubes.

If the gas valve is opened too much the flame will not pop back; it will either fail to ignite, will roar in flames out of the smokebox, or there will be a ball of flame around the front of the engine, which will then blow the whole fire out (after giving the driver a fright)! When the fire sound has stabilised, after about 30 seconds the gas can be turned up until a healthy roar is heard. The smoke box door may be shut after about two minutes. Now leave the locomotive to raise steam, at least 60-70psi will be required to clear the loco of any condensed water and get it to move off.

Running

When the engine has raised about 60-70 psi, you are ready to start running. Before commencing your first run of the day, it is advisable to put a cloth loosely over the chimney for a few minutes, as condensed water will be ejected from the chimney. This is quite normal; the motion of the engine will be jerky until all condensate has been ejected. **DO NOT stand over the chimney as ejected boiling water/steam could cause serious scalding.**

The NG15 is fitted with cylinder drain valves; these are situated under each cylinder with a small lever at the front to operate them. The vertical position is closed and the horizontal position is open. It is advisable to use a pair of pliers to operate the levers as they get very hot. Open the valves at the beginning of the run to clear any water out of the cylinders. When you have been running for a couple of minutes all the water should have been blown out and the drain valves can be closed.

Now to start running. Place the direction lever into the desired direction of travel, and then open the main steam valve. The engine should start to move off. When starting from cold it will be jerky, this is normal, as it has to clear the condensate from the system. The more the main steam valve is opened, the faster the engine will go; our advice is to start slowly and learn the road with your engine

After a minute or so, remove the cloth and continue running. In running it is correct practice to balance the boiler pressure against the load being pulled and the track conditions. With a light load and level track the pressure may need to be only 45-50 p.s.i. therefore, turn the gas control down to keep this pressure. When running a heavy train with steep gradients, increase the pressure by turning up the gas. The ideal running pressure can be learnt by experience and is one of the pleasures of running a live steam engine. There is no need to have the safety valve constantly blowing off (it is what its name implies – a safety vent for excess steam pressure).

When the locomotive slows as the pressure falls at the end of a run, stop the engine. Gently open the lubricator valve and blow out any condensed water. If you intend to continue running, close the drain when you see oil coming out of it and carry out a general refill. If it is the last run of the day, leave the lubricator drain valve open and blow the lubricator completely clean.

Continuous Running

To run for longer periods of time than the normal “one fill” system you will need to use the tender hand pump to fill the boiler. For the first fill service in the normal way. Then run for about 15 minutes, now have a look at the water level. You will probably need to pump some water into the boiler. Keep an eye on the water gauge and try to run between $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$ of a glass.

After another 15 minutes running you will need to refill the lubricator and top up the gas tank. Also check the water level and top up if necessary. Stop the loco in a convenient location, away from other locomotives and turn off the gas. Now top up the gas tank. Blow around the engine so there is no residual gas about, the re-light the fire. To refill the lubricator first put the loco in neutral (mid gear). Open the under floor drain valve then gently open the steam regulator. When the lubricator has been blown clean, close the regulator and remove the lubricator cap. Now close the drain valve and refill with superheat steam oil to the correct level. All this time the engine has had the fire alight and will have a good head of steam, so now carry on running.

Keep an eye on the water level at all times and try to refill the gas tank and lubricator every 20 minutes to half an hour.

End of Run

As previously mentioned, the locomotive will slow (due to pressure dropping) when the fire has gone out, stop at a convenient place and open the lubricator drain valve. Blow out all condensed water and the remaining oil. Leave the drain valve open and allow all the remaining steam to blow out. The locomotive should be allowed to cool. When cool, clean the engine, check the motion and oil if necessary. The locomotive should always be put away in a clean condition as it attracts less dust and is always ready for the next run (or to be shown to an admiring friend). Always leave the lubricator drain valve and the steam regulator open so that the boiler will not be strained if subject to any temperature change. It is advisable to store the locomotive where any residual drips of oil or water do not matter.

Blocked Gas Jets

If the gas jet becomes blocked with particles of dirt within the gas, the jet will have to be removed and cleaned. With a spanner or pliers carefully undo the pipe union on the gas control valve. Remove the pipe and jet holder assembly from the burner. Holding the jet holder gently in a vice, unscrew the jet. To clear, place the jet nozzle against the inverted gas can nozzle and clear the jet with a blast of gas. Under no circumstances use a pricker wire, this will damage the jet hole. Replace the jet in the holder, ideally using a thread sealant sparingly on the threads. Ensure it is tightened up firmly. Replace the assembly into the burner and re-connect the pipe to the control valve. Ensure this is done up tightly, test **CAREFULLY** for gas leaks, first with a 50/50 mixture of washing up liquid and water, and then if no bubbles are showing, with a flame and the gas “just on”. Tighten if required.

Gauge Changing

All NG15 locomotives are supplied set to 45mm gauge, but a “gauge change” kit is supplied with each engine. This will allow you to run on either 32mm or 45mm gauge track. All wheels are insulated as standard. To change the gauge, lay the engine gently on its side, on a thick cloth, loosen all the grub screws in the boss on the back of the wheels using the Allen key provided. The axles are dimpled for each gauge, so you do not have to measure for the right gauge. Slide the wheels to the gauge required and tighten up the grub screws. **These should be checked as a routine at the start of each running session.**

Tender Coupling

As supplied the rear tender coupling is body mounted. Should you have problems with close coupled stock de-railing it is possible to remove the chopper coupling from the rear buffer beam and mount it on the bracket supplied and then mount this bracket to the rear truck of the tender, using the pre-drilled holes and spare nuts and bolts provided. By doing this it will keep the coupling more in the centre of the track, and should prevent de-railing.

As with all comprehensive models, we strongly recommend a full demonstration (by our agents) before purchase, enabling you to get the best out of your model right from the start.

HAPPY STEAMING!

LOCOMOTIVE ORIGINAL PACKAGING

WE WISH TO ADVISE YOU THAT IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT ALL ORIGINAL LOCOMOTIVE PACKAGING, BOTH OUTER AND INNER BOXES AND ANY OTHER TYPES SUCH AS SHAPED POLYSTYRENE, SHOULD BE RETAINED.

SHOULD YOU NEED TO RETURN YOUR MODEL FOR ANY REASON, EITHER FOR SERVICE OR WARRANTY WORK, IT MUST BE SECURELY PACKED IN ITS ORIGINAL PACKAGING SO AS TO PREVENT DAMAGE IN TRANSIT.

IF THE MODEL IS PACKED IN ANY OTHER WAY WE CANNOT BE HELD LIABLE FOR ANY DAMAGE CAUSED BY IMPROPER PACKING.