

BIG CAT SOUND

'OO' & 'N' GAUGE

- Price: £15 (sound file only)
- Cat No: ZS68ASL
- Site: www.digitrains.co.uk
- DCC: 21-pin



DIGITRAINS has launched a new Class 68 ActiveDrive digital sound project for ZIMO decoders.

Developed by John Gay, it offers an impressive audio suite from coupling and buffering up sounds to compressor, warning horns and notable engine transitions. For review, Dapol's 'OO' gauge

Class 68 68008 Avenger in Direct Rail Services (DRS) livery was supplied pre-installed with a ZIMO MX644C 21-pin MTC sound decoder, Rail Exclusive 'Chunky Boom Box' speaker (Cat No. SP55X20X10) and LaisDCC stay alive kit (872007). From the outset, this project

certainly captures the considerable presence of the real thing, with that distinctive sound of the Caterpillar engine. Audio reproduction was superb with no hint of distortion.

To get things moving, F11 triggers the TPWS/AWS start-up audio, ahead of selecting F1 to fire up the engine sounds. F0 activates the directional headlights – if operating as a light engine, pressing F10

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TRS Trains water-based smoke generators

- Price: from £100 (excluding decoder)
- Site: www.facebook.com/trs.trains/
- Email: trstrains@yahoo.com

TRS Trains is a new name in modelling and is offering a custom digital controlled smoke generator and sound installation as part of its range of services. Interestingly, this isn't using conventional smoke generators such as the oil-filled Seuthe type – the TRS Trains products make steam with bottled water with the exhaust effect synchronised to the sounds of the locomotive for added realism.

Our sample model was a Hornby Stanier 'Princess Coronation' 4-6-2 for 'OO' gauge, although TRS Trains can install these smoke generators in almost any locomotive in both 'OO' and 'O' gauge. The smallest locomotive it has tackled yet is an EFE Rail Hunslet J94' 0-6-0ST.

The smoke generator installation is invisible from the outside with the decoder and speaker positioned



in the tender and the smoke generator and working lamps on the locomotive. The smoke generator is filled via an opening in the top of the boiler backhead in the cab using a pipette and, as we said, with nothing more exotic than bottled water. The filling process is straightforward and requires the locomotive to be tilted forward for access and the addition of two pipettes of water. The right type of pipette is supplied with the model making

it easy to get up and running.

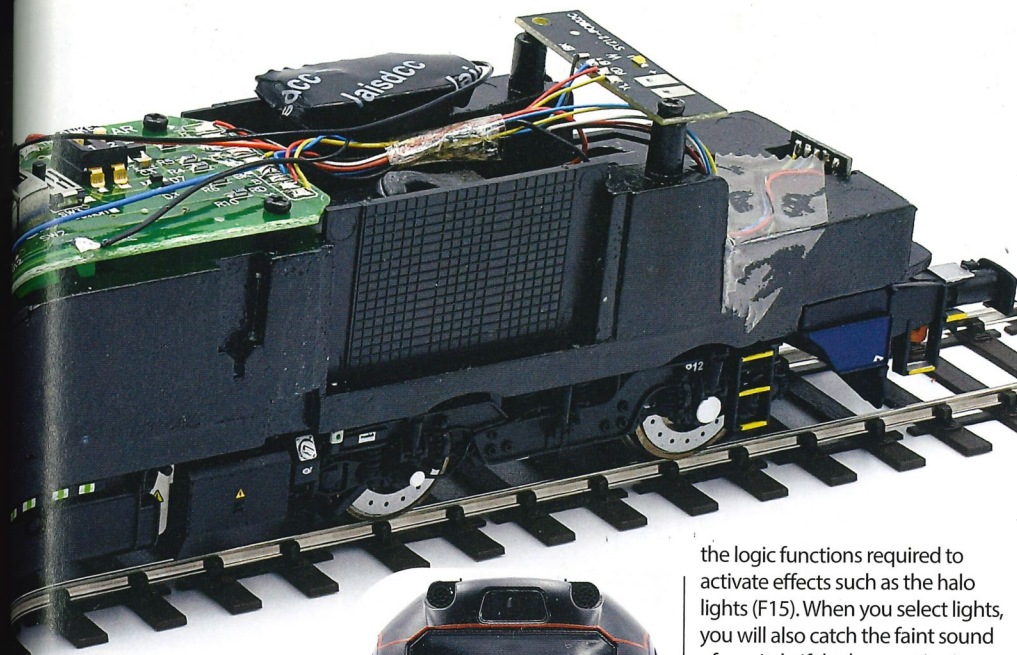
Having filled our 'Coronation' sample with water, we were impressed to see that the steam effect was instant when it was turned on with Function 20 on a digital handset – there was no wait for elements to heat, just immediate steam. On start-up, the steam effect creates a vertical column from the chimney, but when you start moving, the steam pulses with the exhaust beat of the locomotive to represent individual

cylinder movements. You can also intensify the steam effect by turning the Blower function on with F8 – a neat feature that increases the flow of steam.

In service, the steam effect is clean and mess free whereas oil based smoke generators can leave a film behind over a model, but there is none of that from the water-based design shown here.

We have been impressed by the performance and operation of the TRS Trains smoke generator and its sound choice too. The 'Coronation' shown here was powered by a ZIMO MX645R 8-pin decoder, but TRS Trains can achieve the same results with a range of decoders from the ZIMO and ESU families. If you want to know more about these custom installations, get in touch with TRS Trains – we're already 'testing the water' further with an 'O' gauge 'A4' installation. (MW)

● Visit www.keymodelworld.com/hornby-magazine-videos to see this model in action.



will illuminate the taillights. With a quick tickover underway, a quick blast of F3 (playable low horn) and you can gently open the throttle. As the engine revs increase, the locomotive begins to move. If you wish to come to a stand, shut off the throttle and depress F2 (brake) to slow down/stop. If coupled to carriages, choose Electric Train Heating mode (F8) which increases the engine revs while the locomotive remains stationary. As Dapol's 'OO' gauge Class 68 features multiple lighting options, the ZIMO MX644C decoder enables

the logic functions required to activate effects such as the halo lights (F15). When you select lights, you will also catch the faint sound of a switch. If the locomotive is working in push-pull mode, you can also turn off the headlight while 'pushing' and simply select the taillight (F10). When stabling the locomotive, F20 will activate red parking lights at each end.

Additional horn sounds (F4, F21, F22, F23) also add to the driving experience, while volume can also be altered in operation via F27/F28. For light engine movements, the light load mode (F5) can be selected, which introduces slightly more sprightly characteristics to the model's throttle response.

Digitrain's new Activedrive Class

SOUND FILE V20.11

F0	Headlights
F1	Sound on/off
F2	Brake key
F3	Horn low (playable)
F4	Horn high (playable)
F5	Light load
F6	Compressor
F7	Speed lock
F8	ETH mode (electric train heating)
F9	Flange noise
F10	Taillights
F11	TPWS and AWS startup (F1 off)/Lo-hi horn (F1 on)
F12	Wipers
F13	Buffer up
F14	Coupling
F15	Halo lights
F16	Sanders
F17	Air release
F18	Guard whistle
F19	Mute if on
F20	Parking red lights
F21	Lo-hi horn
F22	Hi-lo horn
F23	Ack. horn
F27	Volume -
F28	Volume +

68 is an incredibly immersive sound project and great fun to operate, showcasing the considerable capabilities of Dapol's highly regarded 'OO' Class 68 well and is sure to prove popular with those wishing to add authentic sound to their fleet. (MC)

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'OO' & 'O' GAUGE

DMG Electech DCC Decoder

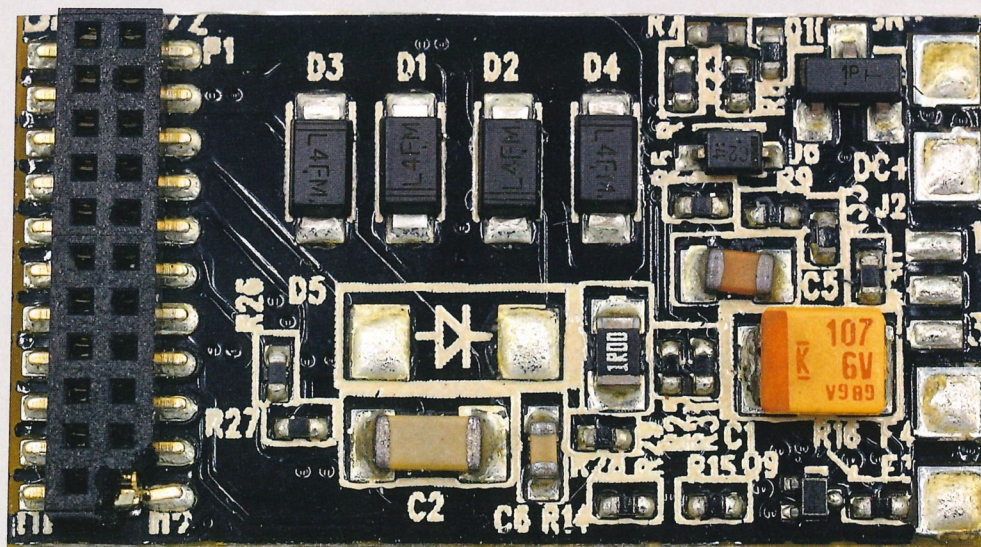
● Price: £21.95 ● Cat No: ET201-6
● Site: www.dmgselectech.co.uk ● DCC: 21-pin

DMG ELECTECH has introduced a new range of digital accessories including 8-pin and 21-pin Digital Command Control (DCC) decoders.

We received a sample of the 21-pin decoder which features six 100mA function outputs, adjustable braking, Back EMF with silent motor control and advanced consist addressing. It is rated for 1.5Amp continuous and 2Amp peak motor control.

Measuring 28mm x 15.5mm x 5mm, the 21-pin example allows users to select a raft of lighting options such as firebox flicker, ½ second flash, two ¼ second flash options, strobe effect and more through straightforward CV value changes for each of the function outputs.

Another useful pre-set function is the electronic brake set to F7. This overrides the



throttle control and will slow the locomotive down until the button is released. By default, it is set to a value of 5 (CV63) – we set it to a higher value of 50 and set CV4

(deceleration rate) to 100, which increased the coasting ability for our tests and it delivered slow, smooth braking control with the throttle returned to zero. Motor

control was smooth, responsive and silent, while directional lights and function outputs F1-F4 operated as expected.

Excellent and available now. (MC)