

'00' GAUGE

★★★★○

Murphy 181 Class

RRP £80.00

Looks 10/10

Performance 9/10

Value for money 8/10

Features 9/10

Decoration 10/10

Rating 92%

# Murphy 181 Class

Irish modelling looks set to blossom with the release of high-quality '00' diesels produced by Bachmann for Murphy Models in Dublin. **BEN JONES** studies the first models to arrive.



Who would ever have thought that we'd have ready-to-run '00' Irish diesels to the same standards as current British models? However unlikely it might once have seemed, thanks to Murphy Models in Dublin and Bachmann, we now have a selection of 141/181 Class Bo-Bos in liveries from the 1960s, 1980s and 1990s/2000s. Unlike the Lima 201 Class models of a few years ago, these models have a specification equal to, if not better than, current Bachmann British '00' models including;

- All-wheel drive and pick-up
- 21-pin DCC decoder socket
- Numerous detail differences according to era, livery and class
- Switchable LED head and tail lights
- 12 different locomotives in three liveries, including two weathered models (see below)
- Extra detailing parts
- Etched metal grilles
- Sprung metal buffers

## Looks

The first two models released are 184 and 187 in current Iarnród Éireann (IÉ) orange/black with white

trim, red 'bufferbeams' and red dayglo warning panels. First impressions are extremely favourable; Bachmann has captured the shape and character of the original beautifully, most notably the around the cab. Far from being a 'box on wheels', these 'Baby GMs' feature subtly angled cabs, which have been very effectively modelled. The 'face' of the model is absolutely right and complemented by lots of separately fitted metal handrails, lamp brackets and crisply moulded

**Supremely convincing with a top-line specification and careful attention to detail. Hats off to Bachmann.**

LED light units. Pre-2005 models will have original or revised light arrangements, as seen before LED lights were fitted. The '181s' feature a group of seven small louvres below the top headlight which is not present on their predecessors - just one way to distinguish the two classes that has been accurately modelled. Another tell-tale are the



Left: The subtle angles of the GM cab have been well captured. This and the wealth of small detail make for an impressive 'face'.

Inset: Nose end louvres unique to the '181s'.

separate wire grab rail/steps at the radiator end on '141s', replaced by a ladder on the '181s'.

Other features that stand out include the neatly riveted cabside windows, walkways with moulded chequerplate surface, fine plastic handrails and the neatly louvred bodyside doors. It has not proved possible to model the see-through bodyside grilles of the prototype, but etched metal grilles have been used to good effect.

The Flexicoil bogies are packed with crisply moulded detail and match the originals closely. The bogie frames and axlebox areas have just the right amount of relief and detail. Even better is the central fuel tank/battery box unit, which is excellent with accurate moulded and separately fitted detail.

## Decoration

The IÉ orange and black is very crisply applied, and looks to be a more accurate shade of orange than the pre-production models seen on *Model Rail's* stand at the NEC in December.

Logos and numbers are accurate in shape and size and all printed decoration is crisp with no sign of

A 21-pin DCC decoder socket is provided on the chassis, in line with current Bachmann practice. Also atop the chassis are two switches allowing the head and tail lights to be switched off when hauling a train or when working in multiple. Switch 1 controls the radiator end lights. The printed circuit board (PCB) is prepared for the installation of a sound decoder. DCC Supplies offers a suitable unit loaded with authentic GM sounds.

The bag of extra parts includes a selection of bufferbeam pipes, roof-mounted horns and a push-in part to complete the front skirt. As supplied, the tension lock couplings protrude through a gap in the skirt, but these are easily removed from their NEM pocket. The front end appearance of the model is even more impressive with the extra parts fitted (see page 18).

## Verdict

Bachmann has really pulled out all the stops for Murphy Models. These 'Small GMs' are as good as any diesel model produced by the company, and significantly better than some. The models do not suffer from any of the errors of shape seen on the manufacturer's BR models



overspray or fuzzy joins between colours. Cabside numbers accurately incorporate a black drop shadow. Decoration of models in other liveries is to an equally high standard from what we've seen, including the two weathered models. Many modellers will want to go further with the weathering though, to more correctly capture the usual state of these machines!

## Mechanism and extras

A central motor powers all four axles via the usual arrangement of cardan shafts and gear towers. Current collection is via brass wipers at the rear of all eight wheels. Our samples ran quietly and smoothly and were capable of hauling up to ten coaches - more than sufficient for a locomotive of this size.

and the attention to detail across the 12 variants is exceptional. Paddy Murphy deserves huge credit for taking a risk and commissioning expensive new tooling. Bachmann has done its part by supplying a top-quality product. As Irish outline modellers, we have to support this venture by buying the models. With just 500 of each produced, you'll need to move fast to get the ones you want.

Models of this quality will persuade more modellers to consider Irish subjects and that can only be a positive development for this area of the hobby. Highly Recommended.

Next issue we'll review the '141s/181s' in 1960s CIÉ livery See [www.murphy-models.com](http://www.murphy-models.com) for information on UK and Rol stockists. **NR**

## Verdict

⊕ Cab and body shape, decoration, attention to detail and era, control and arrangement of lights, etched grilles and metal handrails, Performance

⊖ Difficult to dismantle, otherwise little of note

⊕ Summary: Exceptional

Below: Current IÉ livery is neatly applied and one of three colour options also covering the 1960s and 1980s/90s.

## Factfile: CIÉ 141/181 Class

After a disastrous flirtation with British-built diesel locomotives in the late-1950s, Irish transport company Coras Iompair Éireann (CIÉ) turned to General Motors when it required more diesels to eliminate steam traction in the Republic of Ireland.

An initial batch of single cab 950hp 'switcher' type Bo-Bos was received in 1960 and was so successful that 37 further machines were quickly ordered, this time with a cab at each end to overcome visibility problems encountered with the 121 Class. 'B' Class locomotives 141-177 were delivered in November/December 1962 and very quickly pressed into service on passenger and goods duties across the CIÉ network. The fleet allowed CIÉ to withdraw its last steam locomotives in 1963. In 1966, 12 similar, but more powerful locomotives (1,100hp) were obtained and numbered 181-192.

The '141s' and '181s' have tackled every kind of duty over the last 45 years, from double-headed Dublin-Cork expresses until the advent of the more powerful '071s' to cross-border and domestic freight and, in recent years, local freight trips and station pilot work.

Delivered in CIÉ black/brown (nicknamed 'black and tan'), the class carried plain black with white trim from the late-1960s, CIÉ brown/black in the 1970s/80s, and from the late-1980s, Irish Rail (later Iarnród Éireann) orange and black with white trim.

Today, deliveries of new railcars and a drastic reduction in Irish railfreight over the last few years have left the class short of work and the surviving locomotives are gradually being run down. As this issue went to press, around 20 of the 49 were left in traffic.

## Bachmann 141/181 Class Bo-Bo

Overview	
Manufacturer	Bachmann Europe
Scale/gauge	4mm:1ft scale '00'
Catalogue nos.	MM0184/0187
Locomotive Nos.	184/187
Body	Plastic with metal parts
Chassis	metal/plastic
Weight	311g
Min. curve radius	18in (2nd radius)
Recommended price	£80.00 (£83.50 weathered)

Electrics	
Electrical system	12V DC
Motor type	Central can motor
Lights	Directional head and tail lights
DCC ready	21-pin socket on chassis

Current Consumption	
Max speed	0.2Amp
Stalled	0.7Amp

Mechanism	
Drive system	Cardan shafts and gears to four axles
Flywheel(s)	Two
Traction tyres	No

How to dismantle See instructions

Where to oil Motor spindle and gears

Dimensions	Prototype	Scale	Model
Length over buffers	44ft 0 1/2 in	176mm	173mm
Height over exhaust	12ft 6 1/2 in	50.1mm	50.1mm
Width over handrails	9ft 6 in	38mm	37mm
Wheel diameter	3ft 4 in	13.3mm	13.25mm
Wheel back-to-backs	-	-	14.5mm

Below: Flexicoil bogies and the highly-detailed cabside with riveted window frames.

