

# HM Review

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## Norscot Scale Models

*Diecast replicas for the adult heavy equipment collector.*



Caterpillar Tractor Company Inc. known today simply as CAT originated in the early 1900s when Benjamin Holt, a pioneer tractor designer, swapped the heavy steel wheels from one of his large steam tractors with a continuous belt made from a series of redwood planks that were bolted to a chain.

Holt Manufacturing Company photographer Charles Clements is reported to have said the tractor crawled like a caterpillar, but this is disputed by a number of sources. Regardless of the origin of the name, Holt was quick to seize the metaphor and named his new traction engine design the Caterpillar.

Norscot scale models, founded in 1970, is located near Milwaukee, Wisconsin and specializes in promotional items for large businesses. Because of its specialty background, Norscot also holds the design and manufacturing rights for a number of miniature products offered by various companies to include CAT. What this means to the collector is they can obtain extremely accurate models, with all the correct markings, at a very affordable price. And what is most important to many collectors — myself included — is the products are licensed by the manufacturer of the full-scale equipment. To a collector, the difference between a licensed product and a knock-off or counterfeit copy is significant.

I think everyone has seen a CAT D8T working at one time or another. These pieces of industrial equipment are most commonly referred to as a bulldozer. The full-scale D8T is a behemoth of a machine. The D8T weighs in at 84,850lbs and is powered by a 928ci motor rated at 310hp at the transmission. This machine is designed for one purpose, and that is to move piles of mother-nature.

The Norscot model #55299 accurately duplicates the full-scale D8T in 1/50 scale. The first thing one sees is the high-idler track wheels. The purpose of the high-idler wheel is for maintenance on the full-scale machine. All the mechanic has to do is release the tracks, and the

transmission and drive is removable from the rear. This is a feature unique to CATs, and although it's not functional on the model, it has been faithfully reproduced. Moving on, the model features movable tracks with individual links. The blade raises and lowers, plus tilts fore and aft. Mounted on back is a single shank ripper that can be raised and lowered. The interior cab detail is minimal, but there's not much to the full-scale either. The D8T is a working tool, not a luxury automobile. Decaling is minimal (like on the full-scale machine) but is accurate in design and placement.

At first I was a bit taken back by the monochromatic paint scheme, to include the track links painted CAT yellow. I'd never seen yellow tracks on a diecast model before and at first I thought this might be a cost cutting measure, but a trip to the local CAT dealer

proved the yellow is accurate. At the factory the tracks on all CAT

tractors are painted as a corrosion preventative. In some cases the tracks are painted black, but just as often they are painted yellow. Since the Norscot model represents a machine not yet put into service, the tracks painted the same color as the chassis is accurate. Although, since this quickly wears away, even when sitting in a lot waiting for a buyer, rusty metal would most



*I don't believe it's possible that a person could pass a construction site and not see a full-scale CAT D8T in operation.*

likely be more universally accepted.

All-in-all the Norscot scale models CAT D8T is a well done machine any collector of heavy equipment would be proud to own.

Exactly like the D8T "dozer", everyone who has ever driven past a construction site has seen a CAT Excavator in operation, but these are most frequently seen with the big 3.5 cubic yard scoop attached. Offered as a chassis with an articulated hydraulic arm, the full-scale 336D is powered by a 537ci motor that is rated at 268hp. With an operating weight of 80,400lbs, the 336D is only slightly smaller than the D8T.

The Norscot 1/50 CAT 336D Tracked Excavator with Scrap Shear #55283 is something of a specialty offering. The model features a base 336D excavator chassis. The tractor links are individually fitted and are moveable, and they are finished in black. The arm rotates 360 degrees on the chassis and is adjustable for height and angle. The hydraulic lines are present along with all the proper decaling. The operator's compartment is basic, featuring a seat and a couple of controls, but there is not much more to the full-scale 336D.

It wasn't until the full-scale CAT excavator was researched that the variety of attachments available to fit the articulated arm was revealed. CAT has moved on from simple excavation, and one of the roles of the 336D is now demolition.

Norscot has duplicated one of the demolition attachments, the scrap shear, perfectly. Finished in gloss black, the unit can be adjusted for angle, it rotates a full 360



*From any angle, the Norscot scale models CAT D8T looks good. The model features a positionable ripper hook in back and up front a blade that is adjustable in height and angle. The monochromatic paint scheme is accurate.*

degrees, and the jaws open and close. When positioned in combination with the rotating arm any possible working scenario can be duplicated.

Offered in 1/50, the CAT equipment is not a perfect match for O-Scale railroading's 1/48, but it's close enough to satisfy all but the most persnickety slide rule carrying rivet counters, and the models would look great in any scene depicting a construction site.

Like all of the Norscot scale models offerings, the CAT models are not toys, but detailed diecast collectibles and the majority of these models will most likely end up on the collectors' shelves.

America moves on its industrial might, and the Norscot scale models CAT offerings are part of the company's many products that scream Americana.

Norscot scale models, like many other diecast collectibles and other scale offerings, are available in this country through b2b Replicas. **HM**

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