

## THE RAIL SIMULATOR NEWSLETTER

### WELCOME

This month's edition of Rail Times comes fresh to you hot off the press! We have an exclusive account of one of our subject matter expert's day at East Lancashire Railway, and then we give a progress report for Kuju Rail Simulator so far. Plus we have what news to expect for the months ahead.

*Sabrina*

### ***Kuju returns to the East Lancashire Railway!***

All this talk of fancy graphics and sound is fine, but the thing which makes a simulation come to life is how it feels to drive the trains. On the 25th March 2006, Adam Lucas (Subject Matter Expert) accepted a kind invitation to spend a day with Chris Bailey on the East Lancashire Railway.

So here we feature a diary account of Adams activity riding in the cab of 47402 "Gateshead".



On arriving at Bolton Street station on the ELR, I was greeted with 1960's architecture featuring curved metal and wood styled buildings adorned with Maroon and Cream colors. I reached the main platform just before 9.00am and in pulled my train for the day with driver Chris Bailey at the controls.

As part of the team who created the ELR Add On pack for Train Simulator, he used to share his spare time between virtual trains and those at the ELR, although now he finds himself taking the controls of the real thing more and more frequently. Having been a volunteer on the ELR for more than 5 years he is comfortably at home in their 'Diesel Department' operating numerous types of traction.

With the day brightening up all the time we head out of Bolton Street and onward for the gentle ride north. Passing through Summerseat - a small single platform halt set between rolling hills; Ramsbottom - featuring a busy level crossing and fully functional semaphore signal box and crossing gates.

A dual platform allows for trains to pass in their north/south directions; Irwell Vale, also a single halt but with a sense of the Scottish highlands; and finally Rawtenstall at the most north end of the line. This is a three track terminus station utilizing an island platform and shunt siding.

Once at Rawtenstall the sun had come out and people jumped out of the carriages in order to photograph the Class 47 as Chris took it around the train, and headed a short distance back up the line to the other set of points which would allow him to couple back up to the rear ready for the return trip.



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Heading back to Bury Station, with the sun fully out from behind the clouds, the surrounding historical landscape could be fully appreciated. Deep dark tunnels, disused stations, tall factory chimneys and large stone viaducts, all signs of a much busier past for the now beautiful Lancashire countryside.

Ramsbottom is the busiest stop on our journey to and from Bury. With its double platforms, waiting room, ticket office, toilets, level crossing and signal box. Much activity is afoot as we pull in for the second time of the day. Our arrival briefly held while the traffic is stopped to open the swing gate level crossing.



After returning to Bury for a short stop we were off again, but this time heading south towards Heywood. This is also the access line for stock visiting the ELR, as it connects to the national network just beyond the end of the platform.

On our way to Heywood, many bridges pass over the line as it takes a route through some cuttings. The second man is kept on his toes as a few obstacles are spotted fouling the line. A brief stop is required to get them clear and we're off again, with a satisfying roar as the Class 47 completed a hill start. Cruising back down the line from Heywood, the full scenic view of

Bury could be seen, set in a shallow sloped valley more of the towns past could still be seen in the make up of terrace houses and industrial areas.



For the second run from Bury to Rawten-stall, observation of the driving technique was made, with many shots and videos taken of Chris and his second man operating the controls. How they used the throttle and brakes on various gradients and curves, while stopping and pulling away. How the two shared observing the line and signal positions. The exchange of single line tokens between sections, and the professional co-ordination of all involved along the route.

Once our journey and train ride had come to an end, and we watched as it pulled out of the station, Chris kindly offered to take me on a tour behind the scenes of the other important work carried out at the ELR – Locomotive Restoration.



Roughly half a mile down the line from Bolton Street, set along side the Manchester Metro link, are two huge engine sheds. One used for storing carriages, and the other larger shed still in use as a work shop. Some 500m long and containing up to 8 tracks at one end, this vast building was home to no less than a dozen various steam locomotives. At the time of the visit a boiler construction company, who also share space, were carrying out work on the Flying Scotsman, which was in various states of dismantlement.

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We checked on Chris's own project and headed back to the main ELR hub.

The Diesel Depot located a few hundred yards from the main station is where all the operating locomotives are kept (as well as minor maintenance).



An array of traction could be viewed and I must have counted at least 1 loco per volunteer present, such is the keen interest of the team to keep this motive power alive for future generations to enjoy.

A quick photo shoot and I was back to my car, ready for the 6 hour drive home. I would like to thank Chris Bailey for his hospitality during the visit and continued support throughout the development of Rail Simulator via our Advisory Committee.

To read more about East Lancashire Railway and the special events they hold throughout the year, check out their website at <http://east-lanacs-rly.co.uk>

### ***Progress Report***

This month has been yet another busy period in the development of Rail Simulator – with some new additions to the team – and solid progress marked off from EA and Fund4Games.

Kuju's Rail Simulator has announced recently about AGEIA PhysX engine intending to be supported, should the user want to use that particular physics card, and 3D Canvas has been named as a 3D modeling programme compatible with Rail Simulator when launched. We have also revealed a technical video demonstrating the track laying tools within Rail Simulator and have been answering a few queries regarding this on our official UK forum!

Commercial Add On developers are a big part of the train simulation community – and progress to work with them are underway. We'll be supporting the developers with interviews and 'behind the scenes' articles with insights to how and what they're working on. Rail Simulator released with already made add on packs will provide the player with far more variety in routes and activities. More news on this to follow in within the months to follow – so keep posted!

### ***COMING SOON***

Next month we will be introducing you all to another Rail Simulator route that will feature in-game! More news to follow on the German front and of course the Rail Simulator website is to expand!