

Piko Raises the Bar with sound-equipped V200

Piko HO-scale DB V200 diesel locomotive

Review by John Menges
Photos by MRN Staff

Piko Expert HO scale
DB V200 Diesel
DC Version #59700, MSRP: \$129.99
AC Version #59701, MSRP: \$163.99

Piko America LLC
4610 Alvarado Canyon Road, Suite 5
San Diego, CA 92120
877-678-4449
www.piko-america.com

PIKO has a winner on its hands with this all-new Deutsche Bundesbahn (DB) V200 diesel in HO scale. Highlighting its many recent HO releases, the V200 is moderately priced, yet holds its own against similar offerings from other European manufacturers. The V200 represents a new direction for Piko, which focuses mainly on Deutsche Reichsbahn (DR) and Deutsche Bahn (DB-AG) prototypes with this entry into DB-specific models of the postwar era.

Introduced in 1953, the V200 is an iconic German diesel, one of the most-reproduced German locomotives in all scales. The V200 was the first large mainline diesel of the West German railroads. Conceived and built as a dual-purpose locomotive, V200s initially hauled express mail and passenger trains. As electrification of Germany's railroads progressed in the 1960s, the V200s migrated toward commuter trains and heavy freights. Five prototype V200s



The "DEUTSCHE BUNDESBAHN" lettering on Piko's new HO-scale V200 is actually raised script, similar to the prototype. The silver trim along the sides and the end is molded in relief too, following the appearance of the prototype.

were built and tested by Krauss-Maffei in 1953 and 1954 with great success. In 1955, Deutsche Bundesbahn ordered 50 examples of the V200, and an additional 31 more in 1958 with 61 members of this fleet coming from Krauss-Maffei and 20 from Maschinenbau Kiel (MaK).

The V200s were built with two 12-cylinder diesel engines per locomotive coupled to hydraulic transmissions. Each locomotive had a 2,200 hp rating and a maximum speed of 87 mph (140 kmh). As built, V200s

were destined for passenger service and equipped with boilers for steam heating, which were never exchanged for electric heating. In 1968, the V200s were reclassified as Class 220s by the DB in the re-numbering scheme affecting all DB equipment. DB retired its last Class 220 in 1984; though V200 examples continue to run on private and government railroads throughout Europe.

Piko's HO-scale model represents the V200 as it first entered service.

The model is part of the company's Expert line so it will appeal to beginner as well as advanced modelers. Three things struck me on first inspection of the model. First, the "Deutsche Bundesbahn" side lettering is actually raised script, instead of being painted-on like other V200 models. Second, the silver trim separating the upper and

Piko's V200 costs less than other HO-scale V200/Class 220s are going for, yet has comparable detail and matches the competition's operating characteristics.

lower sills is also raised on Piko's V200; again, not painted on the shell. This is distinctive for the first batch of V200s — later

units had the silver trim painted on the sills. Third, the cab windows reveal a nicely detailed, spacious cab interior that has the correct floor height, which is asking for installation by the operator of Preiser engine crew figures. A small parts bag comes with the model containing two sets of grab irons for each end of the locomotive, which are easily attached with or without a dab of plastic cement. All paint and lettering were uniform and clear on the model;



A glance at the underside of Piko's V200 discloses a speaker housing recessed into the fuel tank. Two screws on either side of the tank ends hold the chassis and shell together.



locomotive data inscriptions are legible under a magnifying glass.

The model has pivoting lower pilots, a design trait in recent Piko HO locomotives, which facilitates the NEM close coupling mechanism. If designed like close coupling mechanisms of other manufacturers, the pilot would require an open space to let the coupling arm move from side to side. The Piko design eliminates that, although sacrificing some reality when the model is in a curve because the pilot moves with the coupler. Likewise, the molded-on MU hoses are split in the middle to accommodate the pivoting lower pilot.


The operating characteristics of this Piko V200 model are excellent. *MRN's* sample V200 ran smoothly and quietly out of the box and maintained those properties after several hours of run time in both directions with and without a load. The model's top scale speed of 142 mph was a little high given the prototype's maximum speed of 87 mph, but it ran smoothly throughout the whole speed range.

The model features constant-intensity directional LED head and tail lights with no bleed-through observable. Three



Round noses were typical worldwide for 1950s diesel locomotive, and this German V200 certainly had its own version of this design look. This model is part of Piko's Expert line; sound-equipped versions are also available.

white headlights lead the way followed by two tail lights on the rear-facing cab, depending on direction of travel. The motor and drivetrain are standard for Piko four- and six-axle units. The V200 has a centrally mounted can motor with dual flywheels connected to cardan shafts that turn gear towers on each truck powering all axles. One axle per truck has traction tires. Piko offers both a decoder (#56121; MSRP: \$77.99) and sound module with loudspeaker (#56322; MSRP: \$134.99) for its V200 model; both items are sold separately.

Piko's V200 costs less than other HO-scale V200/Class 220s are going for, yet has comparable detail and matches the competition's operating characteristics. It will look great with any Era III rolling stock. Look for the Era IV Class 220 version to be released soon. If you have an interest in the Deutsche Bundesbahn, this model from Piko is a staple for Era III and IV layouts that you will appreciate. 

By-The-Numbers

BR V200 Diesel

Piko

HO 1:87 • Type: Diesel

Pull Power (Ozs @ Full Slip)

Pull	÷	Loco Wt	=	Efficiency
6.2		16.5		37%

Analog DC

Volts	Amps	Scale MPH
2	.07	4
6	.10	65
12	.14	142



Thin, flush-mounted windows reveal a spacious cab interior that's perfect for adding engine crew figures. Note Piko's inclusion of replicated "motors" behind the engine room windows.