

Training Tufnol- Mike Brown

When putting together the track connectors for the new track, I needed to isolate some sections electrically (for signalling purposes on the new track). For this is needed some rigid isolating material about 8mm x 30 mm x 1mm. The only thing that I could think of that might do the trick was a coil of about ½" wide Tufnol strip bought for my Hunslett springs (I wonder when I might get round to that job!). The problem was that the coil was quite tight and the insulators would need to be dead flat. I have heard of forming Tufnol in an oven to form curved springs, but how to straighten it! Then inspiration struck and an unofficial loan from the domestic department was furtively arranged. The strip was laid on a piece of MDF and then an electric iron was applied. Before long the strip became slightly floppy and with the help of some welding gloves was soon stroked flat. A few minutes cooling off and the job was done (see photo below). The rest of the cutting to size was now straightforward and was soon completed.

I am very pleased with the ease with which this manipulation can be done. I have been concerned how to get the springs the correct shape when I get round to the Hunslett. Now I see that I will be able to use an iron and a simple wooden former to do the job.

P.S. Subsequently we changed the method of isolation so that the Tufnol strips were no longer required – oh well.



Showing Tufnol Strip before and after.