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the BUGATTI revue

Bugatti 'Type 0', 1898

The original Bugatti model with which it all began…

By Nik Levecque





In 1898, seventeen-year-old Ettore Bugatti worked as an apprentice at Prinetti & Stucchi in Milan, where bicycles and light motorcycles were manufactured. They held a license to produce and sell engines in Italy from the French De Dion-Bouton. These single-cylinder engines were used, among other things, for the three-wheeled vehicles popular at the time. They saw potential for further development, and the young, talented Ettore Bugatti was tasked with preparing such a three-wheeler for a race of the newly founded Italian Automobile Club.

To make it more performant, he fitted a second single-cylinder engine, which was no easy feat for the time in terms of synchronizing ignition and drive.

In 1899, Ettore Bugatti himself drove in the race at Reggio Emilia and beat competitors with much more powerful engines. It was the very first success in the story of the legendary Bugatti brand.

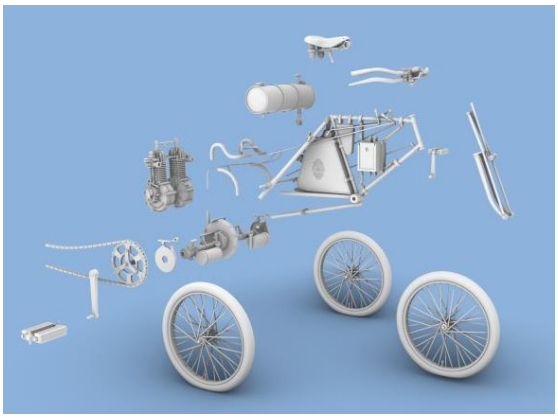


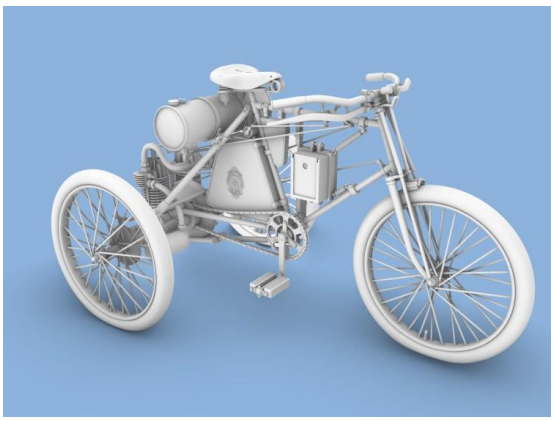


The French tire manufacturer Dunlop stated in a newspaper advertisement that Bugatti covered the distance of 85 km in 78 minutes, which amounts to a good 65 km/h. That was an unprecedented average for that time!

All vehicles designed by Ettore Bugatti were given a model number, the best known of which are the 13, 35, and 57.
The modified Prinetti & Stucchi is considered the very first Bugatti, and only received its model number when a Type 1 already existed, so that became Type 0…!

The model
It concerns a 3D-printed kit, which I had printed at a scale of 1/20, given that this is the scale at which I am building my collection.

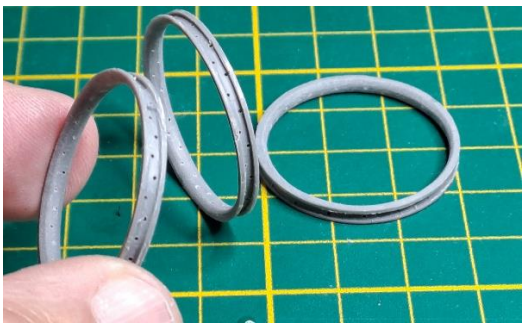




Many parts were not really satisfactory, so I remade them completely from scratch. Below is an example of a printed wheel (left) and a scratch-made wheel (right).







At the end of the nineteenth century, carbon was not yet added to the rubber, giving the tires a white-beige color. Those tires are made from DIY rubber O-rings, and the rims are made from 30mm diameter PVC drainpipe.



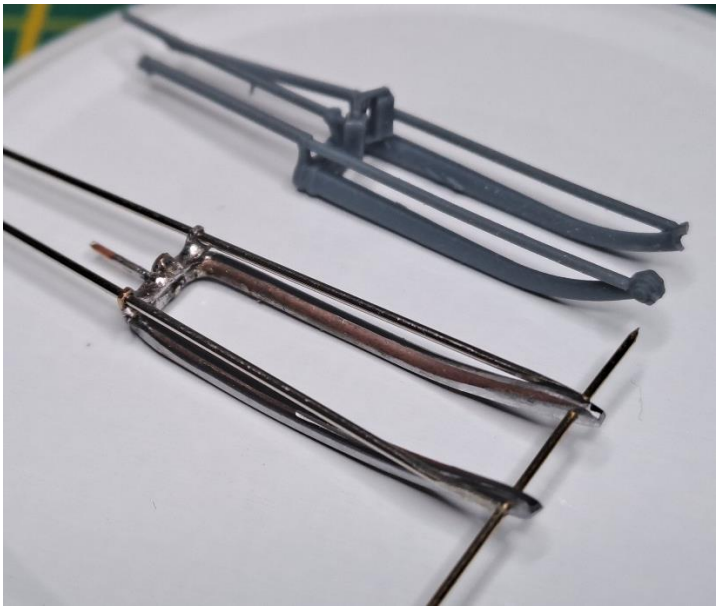


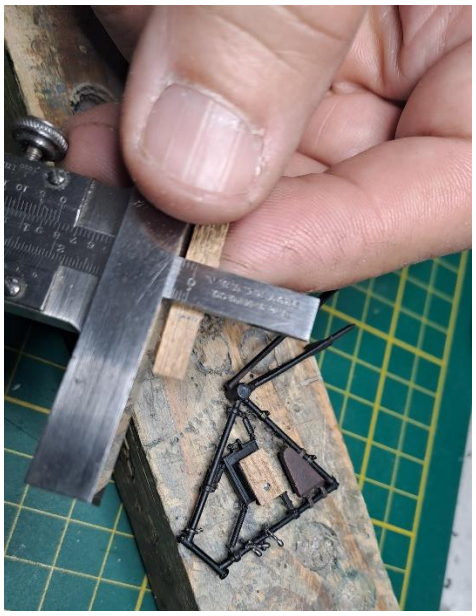
The 'print lines' were too clearly visible on the surface of the printed fuel tank, so I replaced that tank with a brass one from the interior of a sink.





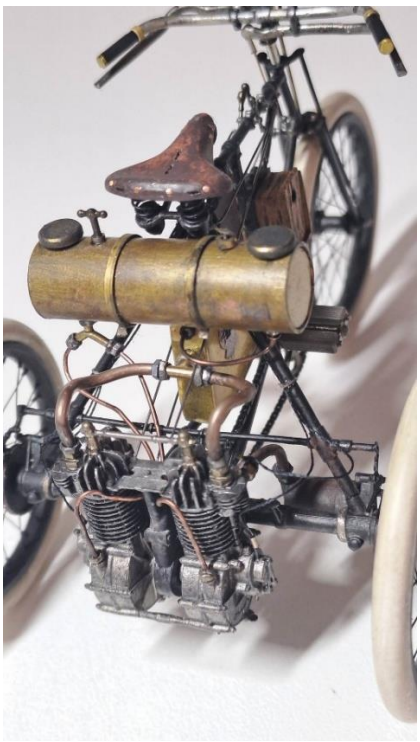
The Prinetti & Stucchi logo was printed on a color printer.

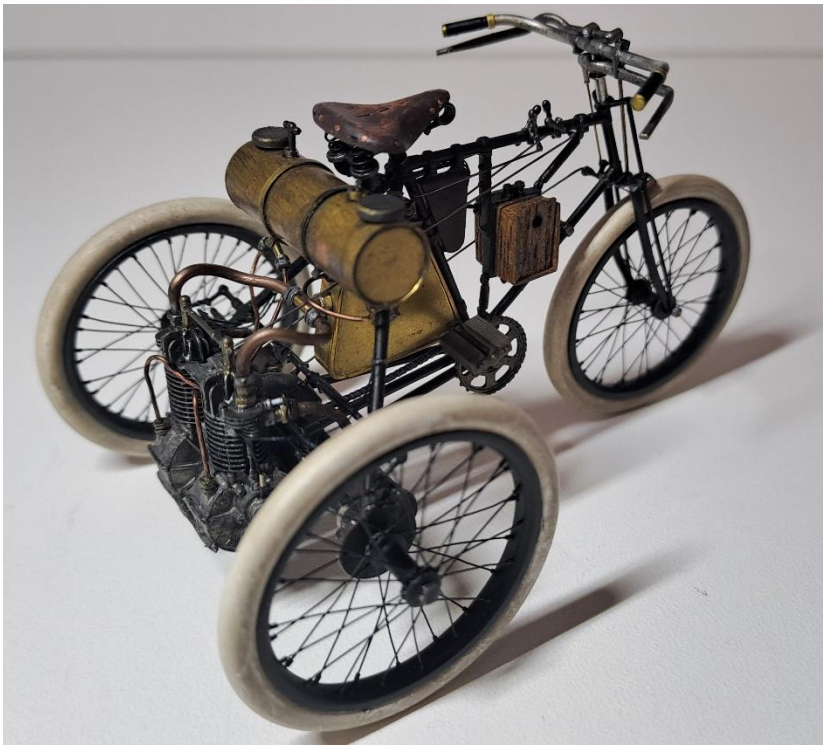


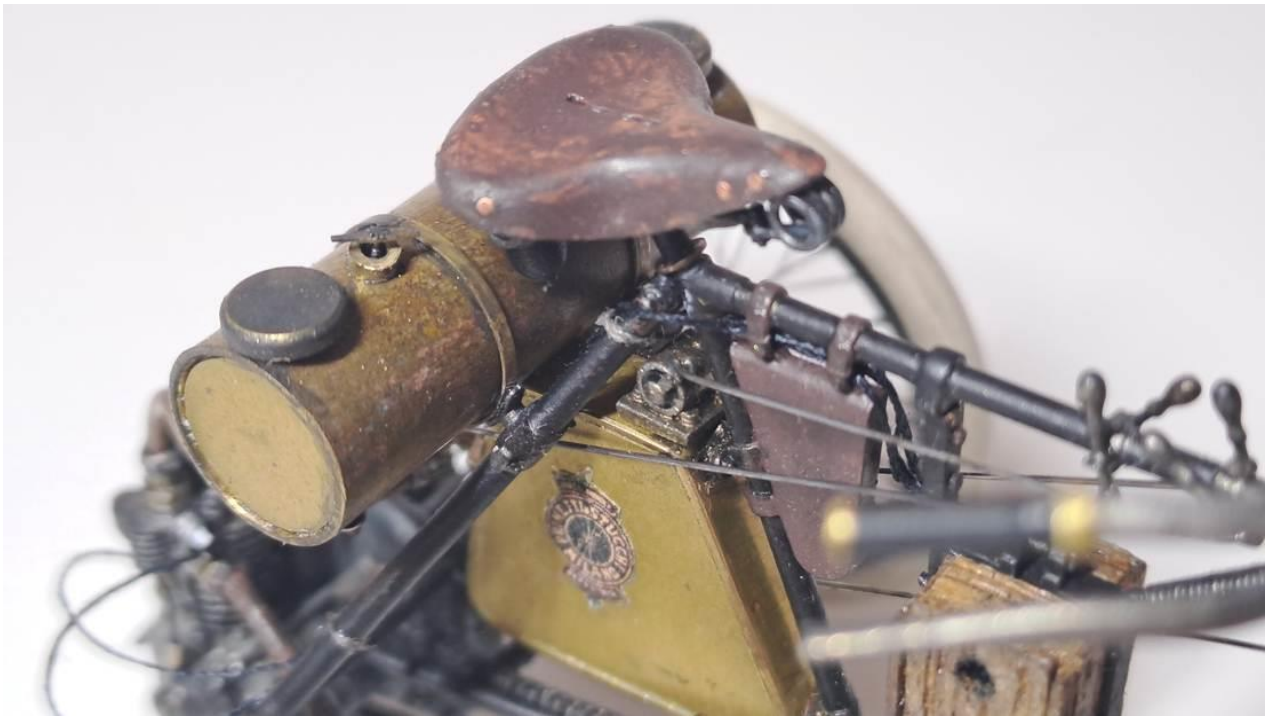


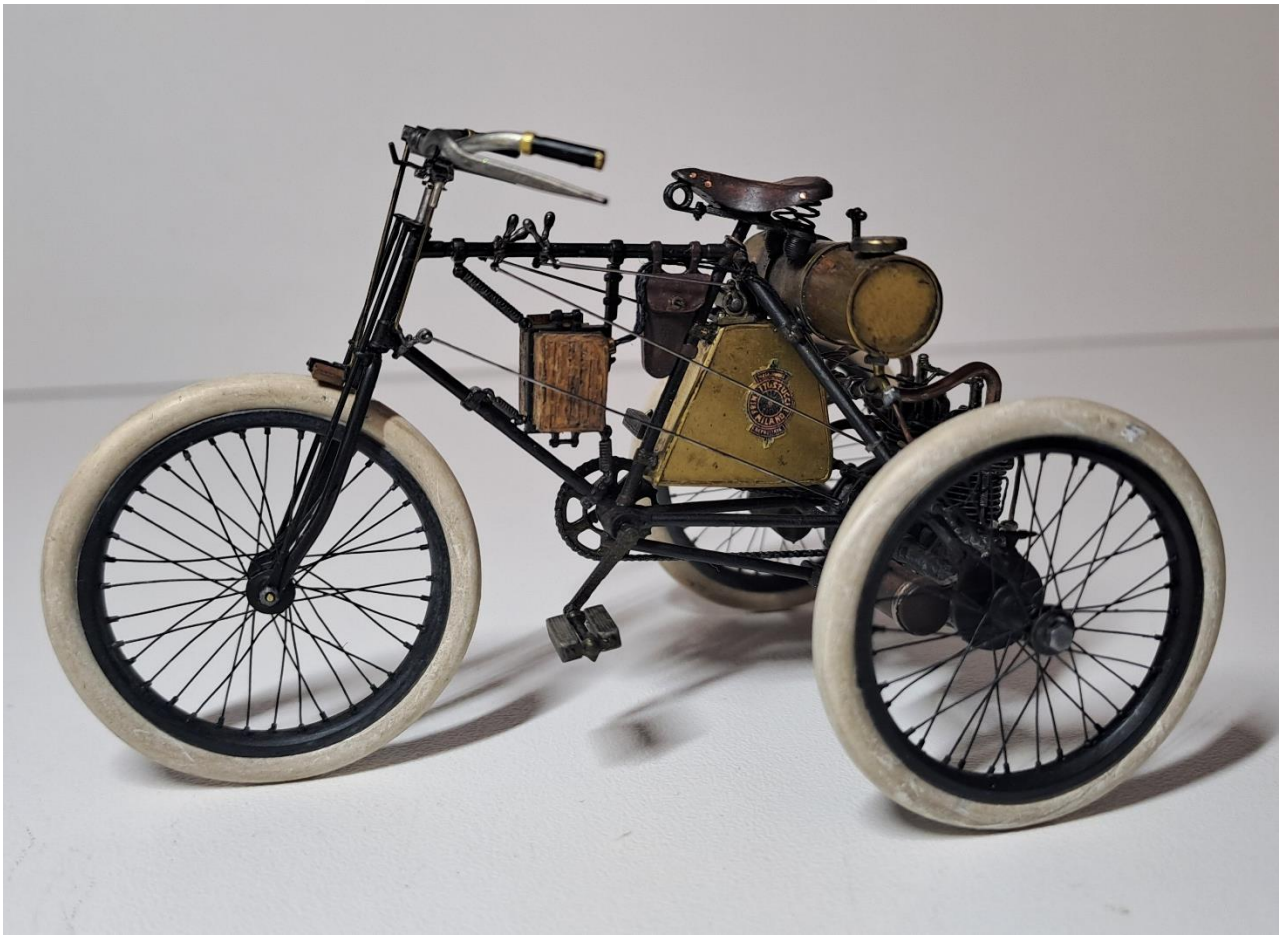
The front fork in the printed material was very fragile and was therefore also made of metal . The housing of the ignition box was made of wood veneer.

After assembly came the detailing work: all intake and exhaust lines, the controls, the brakes, and the electrical wiring. Everything is visible, so there is nothing to hide…











3 Bugattis from before World War I, all made by Nik Levecque: Type 0 (1898), Type 13 (8-Valve, 1911) and Type 18 (1912).

Nik Levecque, October 2026