

East German Steam in the 1970s: A Comprehensive Guide to the Final Years of East German Steam Locomotives

During the 1970s, steam locomotives in East Germany were a common sight on the country's railways, despite the increasing use of diesel and electric locomotives. In fact, steam locomotives still accounted for a significant portion of the motive power on the East German railway network during this decade. In this article, we take a comprehensive look at East German steam locomotives in the 1970s, including their various classes, uses, and the reasons for their eventual decline.

Development and Classes of East German Steam Locomotives

The development of steam locomotives in East Germany began after World War II, when the country was divided into East and West Germany. The East German railway network, known as the Deutsche Reichsbahn der DDR (DR), inherited a large number of steam locomotives from the pre-war era. These locomotives were of various classes and designs, including many that had been built in East Germany itself.



East German Steam in the 1970s by George Woods

★★★★☆ 4.2 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 75624 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 132 pages



During the 1950s and 1960s, the DR continued to build new steam locomotives, primarily for use on branch lines and secondary routes. These locomotives were typically smaller and less powerful than the pre-war designs, but they were more efficient and better suited to the demands of the post-war railway network.

By the 1970s, the DR had standardized its steam locomotive fleet around a few main classes, including the BR 50, BR 52, and BR 86. These locomotives were used for a variety of purposes, including passenger and freight trains, as well as shunting and yard duties.

Uses of East German Steam Locomotives

In the 1970s, steam locomotives in East Germany were used for a variety of purposes, both on main lines and branch lines. On main lines, steam locomotives were primarily used for freight trains, although they were also used for some passenger trains. On branch lines, steam locomotives were the primary source of motive power for both passenger and freight trains.

Steam locomotives were also used for shunting and yard duties in East Germany. These locomotives were typically smaller and less powerful than the locomotives used on main lines, but they were well-suited for the demands of yard work.

Decline of East German Steam Locomotives

The use of steam locomotives in East Germany declined rapidly during the 1970s. This was due to a number of factors, including the increasing use of

diesel and electric locomotives, the rising cost of coal, and the need for more efficient and reliable motive power.

By the end of the 1970s, steam locomotives had been largely replaced by diesel and electric locomotives on the East German railway network. However, a few steam locomotives remained in use on branch lines and for special purposes.

Preservation of East German Steam Locomotives

Today, a number of East German steam locomotives have been preserved in museums and heritage railways around the world. These locomotives serve as a reminder of the important role that steam locomotives played in the development of the East German railway network.

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Steam locomotives were a common sight on the East German railway network during the 1970s. These locomotives were used for a variety of purposes, both on main lines and branch lines. However, the use of steam locomotives declined rapidly during the 1970s, due to the increasing use of diesel and electric locomotives. Today, a number of East German steam locomotives have been preserved in museums and heritage railways around the world, serving as a reminder of the important role that these locomotives played in the development of the East German railway network.

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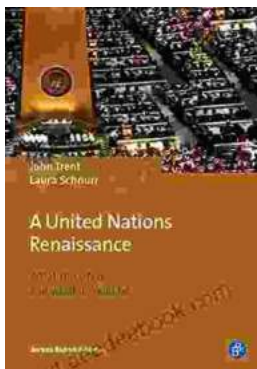


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