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- > Customized Traxxas Slash 2WD Mid-Motor Basher
- > Tamiya's Motul Autech Z TT-02 Super GT Contender
- > Special Project: Trail Buds RC x SBW Land Cruiser 80
- > First Look: Axial's AXP8 Gilamon 2.2 Trail Buggy



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Thanks for joining us for another action-packed issue of RC Car Action! Whether you're tearing up the track, hitting the trails, customizing your rigs, or hunting for the latest RC gear, we've got something for every enthusiast in this issue.

Leading the charge this month is the Tekno ET48 2.2, a truggy that's redefining the category with cutting-edge performance. We also dive into a highly customized Traxxas Slash 2WD Basher that's decked-out with upgrades from ChuckworksRC and Pro-Line Racing to take this backyard beast to the next level.

On the scale scene, we check out Tamiya's TT-02-based Motul Autech Z, a stunningly detailed racecar that brings realism and performance together. Rally fans will appreciate our in-depth look at the Carisma 1/24 Subaru Impreza GT24 Spec 2.0, a small-scale dynamo ready to rip through tight corners and rough terrain.

Ever wondered if toy-grade RCs are worth a second look? We examine that question by going hands-on with Jada Toys' Back to the Future RC Time Machine. It's not hobby-grade by any means, but it could be a great building block for a cool custom RC project.

And that's not all—this issue is packed with first-look drops from Pro-Line Racing and Axial, along with plenty of inspiration to fuel your RC obsession.

As always, we love seeing your builds and setups. If you've got an RC you're proud of, submit it to our Readers Rides section at RCCarAction.com. Who knows—you might see your ride featured in an upcoming issue.

Until next time,
Jerry Tsai
Editorial Director

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Front A-arms for 4S v2 versions of
the ARRMA Kraton & Outcast

Mud Guards for 4S v2 versions
of the ARRMA Kraton & Outcast



Rear A-arms for 4S v2 versions of
the ARRMA Kraton & Outcast



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HD v2 Wing Mounts for the
ARRMA Kraton EXB v2



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New and noteworthy items

1. Traxxas - TRX-4 Stainless Bearing Kit

Enhance performance and reduce maintenance with this stainless-steel bearing kit. Durable black seals provide superior protection in harsh conditions. Ideal for wet and dirty environments, these premium bearings ensure longevity. Organized compartments and labeled sections make identification easy, keeping everything neatly stored for hassle-free maintenance and upgrades.

P/N: 8214

MSRP: \$99.95

URL: traxxas.com



2. Pro-Line Racing - 1/10 Pro-Spec [70mm-75mm] Scaler Shocks

Pro-Line's Pro-Spec Scaler Shocks offer next-gen RC shock technology with CNC-machined aluminum components and hard chrome-coated steel shafts. X-Ring seals ensure smooth, leak-free performance. Featuring chrome and blue anodizing, they measure 70mm extended, 54mm collapsed, and include longer shock ends. Perfect for scale crawlers, they come pre-built—just add oil.

P/N: PRO631600

MSRP: \$57.99

URL: prolineracing.com



3. RPM R/C Products - Tail Light Set for the Short Course Trucks

RPM's true-to-scale taillight set completes your short course truck's night-running setup! Designed to bolt onto RPM rear bumpers, it enhances realism and visibility. The kit includes red lenses, housings, and mounting plates (LEDs not included). Compatible with multiple models including Traxxas Slash, Associated SC10 and more, it can also be customized for amber marker lights.

P/N: 81030

MSRP: \$9.95

URL: rpmrcproducts.com

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READERS RIDES

A NEW WAY TO SUBMIT YOUR RIDE!

We now have an easy new way to submit your Readers Rides to RC Car Action online. Just go to Rccaraction.com/readers-ride-entry-form/ to fill in your vehicle's info and upload your pix directly to us! As a bonus, it will generate a shareable link that you can send to your friends or share on social media to show off your ride to everyone!

SWEET TJ

PEDAR STALEY « CHESAPEAKE, VA

We love a good TJ build, and Pedar's "Sweet TJ" is a solid example of a well-thought-out scale crawler. Starting with an RC4WD SWB chassis, he went with an Injora 275-inch Jeep TJ body, giving it a rugged yet realistic look. The body was first primed white before getting its tan finish, while the interior received some extra attention with cloth-wrapped seats, painted dash details, and even felt sticker sheets for carpet. The roll cage, originally made for a four-door Jeep, was cut down to fit and painted blue to match the deep-dish wheels. Under the hood, a Hobbywing Fusion 1800 provides smooth, reliable power, while 1.9 Mud Slingers, cut for extra bite, keep it planted on the rocks. With a Harrison Ford driver figure and a black lab riding along, this build has a ton of personality and trail-ready style. Great work, Pedar!





BUILD HIGHLIGHTS

- Chassis: RC4WD SWB
- Body: Injora 275mm Jeep TJ body
- Motor: Hobbywing Fusion 1800
- Speed Control: Hobbywing Fusion 1800
- Battery: Tattu 1300 mAh 11.1 75c
- Wheels & Tires: 1.9 deep dish-wheels painted blue, Amazon 1.9 Mud Slinger tires
- Shocks: 100mm dual-rate
- Axles: RC4WD Yota 2
- Paint: Ace Hardware rattle can
- Graphics: Rubicon decals and misc. RC4WD decals
- Lighting: eBay head- & taillights
- Radio System: Flysky
- Other Options: Injora roll cage cut and painted blue, Harrison Ford driver figure, black lab, fuel can

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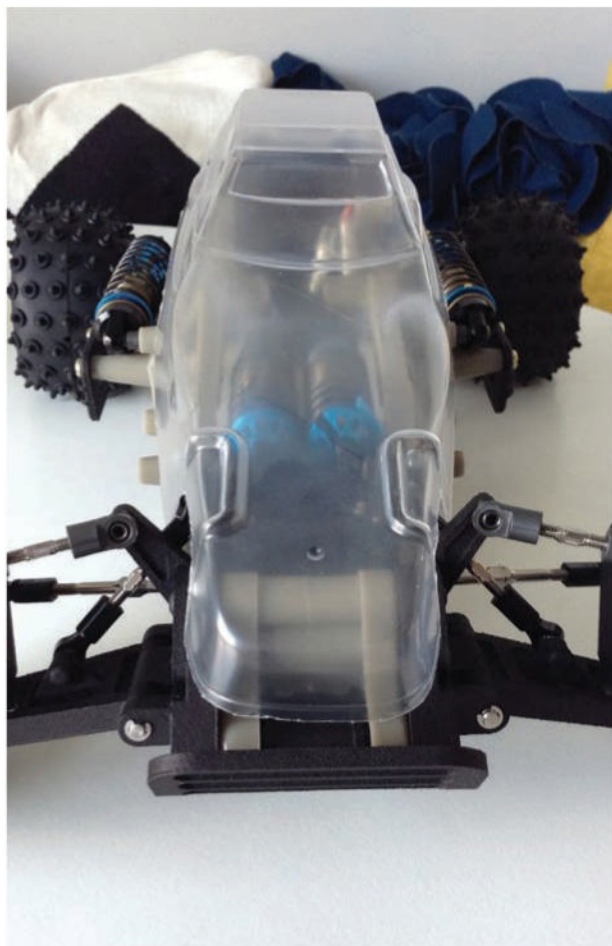
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**WIN A PRO-LINE
PRIZE PACK!**



The special "P-L" logo marks the Readers Ride of the Month. If you see it on your vehicle, you win a Pro-Line prize pack that includes a T-shirt, cap, and Pro-Line body.

To submit your vehicle, email your high-resolution JPEG images and a description to readersrides@airage.com. Readers Rides is also on Facebook! Visit [facebook.com/rccraction](https://www.facebook.com/rccraction) and post your ride; we'll message you if we want to feature it here in the mag.



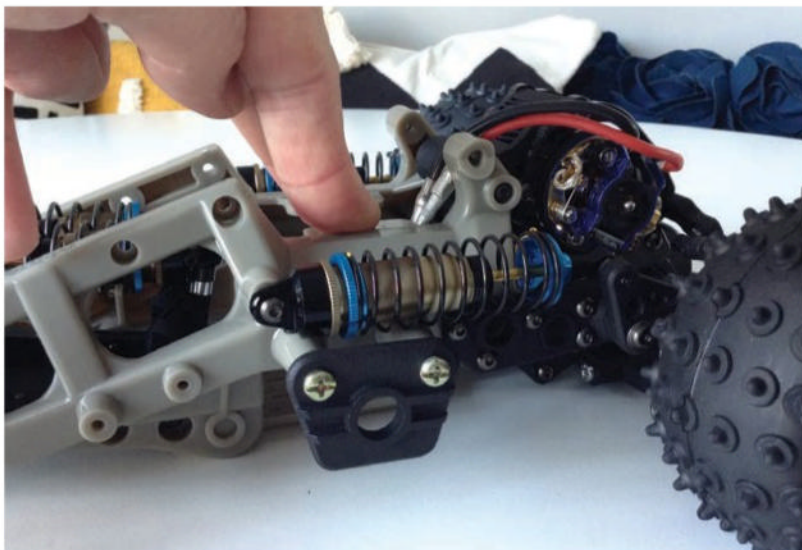
FROG-EVO

JOHN JAMES « UNITED KINGDOM

This is a refreshing take on a classic. Jon's Frog-Evo is a fully reversible build with no permanent modifications, yet it features a true buggy-style wishbone suspension, improved steering, and a better transmission—all while keeping the unmistakable Frog identity. The rear pushrod suspension setup replaces the original horizontal dampers, allowing for a more functional wishbone design.

Up front, Jon tackled the lack of dampers with a clever

horizontal mounting system hidden within the frame rails. Steering clearance was a major challenge, but after countless tweaks he found the perfect balance. The M-06 transmission, flipped and canted as in the Frog's original layout, ties it all together. With a ball diff, a TZ Super Stock motor, and nearly every part custom-designed and 3D-printed, this Frog is a whole new breed. Fantastic work, Jon!



BUILD HIGHLIGHTS

- Chassis: Tamiya Frog
- Body: Tamiya Frog
- Motor: Tamiya TZ Super Stock
- Speed Control: Hobbywing QuicRun 1060
- Battery: Tindling 5200mAh 7.4V 50A
- Wheels & Tires: Kyosho Tomahawk wheels front and rear, Kyosho Tomahawk front tires, Tamiya balloon spike rear tires
- Shocks: Tamiya Big Bore Buggy dampers front and rear
- Axles: Tamiya CC-01 and Monster Beetle axles
- Paint: Tamiya PC paints
- Graphics: Various Tamiya



TRAXXAS SLASH BASHER

MATTHEW MENG « NEWNAN, GA

Matthew's Traxxas Slash is all about fun and nostalgia. After a 20-year break from the hobby, he jumped back in with this brushless 2WD Slash kit—thanks to a Christmas gift from his high-school best friend. The metallic blue and orange paint scheme paired with translucent blue windows gives it a slick look, while an Amazon LED kit maintains visibility after dark. This Slash is a true family

project, with each of Matthew's eight kids helping with the build. For now he's keeping it stock, enjoying front-yard bashing sessions—but upgrades might come later. Having owned an original Stampede, he's always appreciated Traxxas durability, and this Slash continues the tradition. Looks great, Matthew—keep having fun with it!



BUILD HIGHLIGHTS

- Chassis: : Traxxas Slash 2WD
- Body: Traxxas Slash 2WD
- Motor: Traxxas brushless
- Speed Control: Traxxas brushless
- Battery: Zeee 2S 7.4V LiPo 5200mAh 80C Hard Case
- Wheels & Tires: Traxxas
- Shocks: Traxxas
- Paint: Tamiya metallic blue and metallic orange with translucent blue windows
- Lighting: LED light kit from Amazon
- Radio System: Traxxas





CHUPACABRA

BEN WILLIAMS « WASHINGTON TERRACE, UT

There's something special about a rescue build, and Ben's "Chupacabra" is a prime example of turning a yard-sale find into a serious trail beast. Starting as a beat-up skidder, this Team Associated Gatekeeper rock crawler was given new life with a mix of spare parts and a few "unnecessary purchases" (according to Ben's wife). The rig now sits on Axial AR44 axles and a set of Yeah Racing Springers doubled up with

Desert Lizards for maximum articulation. Power comes from an RC4WD 55-turn brushed motor paired with a Hobbywing 1060 ESC, while the RC4WD Warn winch and Injora light system ensure it's ready for action. Rolling on Mickey Thompson Baja Claws wrapped around Injora beadlocks, the Chupacabra is proof that, with a little ingenuity, even a forgotten crawler can come back stronger than ever!



BUILD HIGHLIGHTS

- Chassis: Team Associated Gatekeeper
- Body: Team Associated Gatekeeper
- Motor: RC4WD 55-turn brushed
- Speed Control: Hobbywing 1060 brushed
- Battery: Venom 5000 mAh
- Wheels & Tires: RC4WD Mickey Thompson Baja Claw tires on Injora 1.9 deep-dish beadlocks
- Shocks: Yeah Racing Springers doubled up with Desert Lizards
- Axles: Axial AR44
- Graphics: Cricut vinyl and misc. stickers
- Lighting: Injora lighting system with two drive lights, light bar, chase bar
- Radio System: Flysky FS-GT5
- Other Options: RC4WD Warn winch

1/10 scale R/C model assembly kit.

FIGHTER NXGEN

ITEM 58741 L:385mm **4WD**

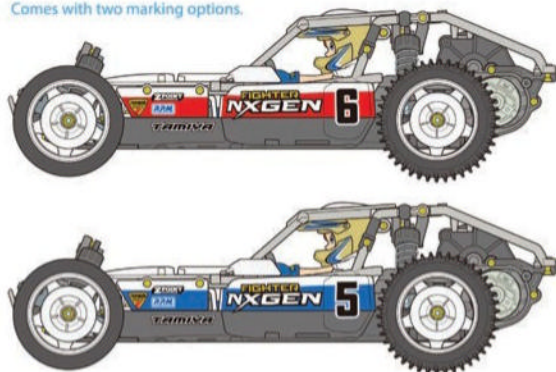
 **ASSEMBLY KIT**

The Fighter Buggy R/C series of products was developed by Tamiya for use in the popular German buggy races for beginners which started in 1996 and organized by Tamiya's leading importer in Europe. It has been 10 years since a new product was developed for this series and thanks to our design team, we have come up with the next big thing for beginners!

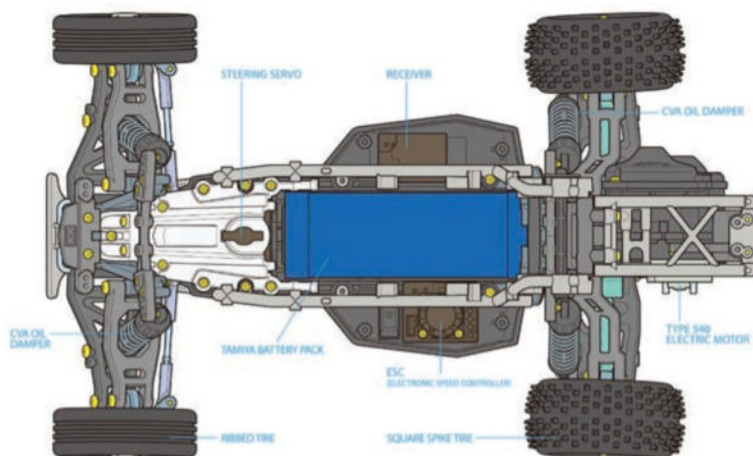
Enter Fighter NXGEN! This is an R/C model assembly kit inspired by full size single seater racing buggies popular in the United States of America. The new DT-04 - a 2WD rear-wheel drive buggy chassis - of course offers ease of assembly and lively performance, which is a characteristic of this series. The product name "NXGEN" is based upon the English word "Next Generation" and as you can guess from the name, it gives improved off-road performance, and a wealth of setup possibilities compared to its predecessors. Also, front and rear suspension arms, gears and gearbox are shared from DT-02 and DT-03 chassis cars. Furthermore, many option parts from DT-02 and DT-03 chassis can be used for this new chassis iteration.

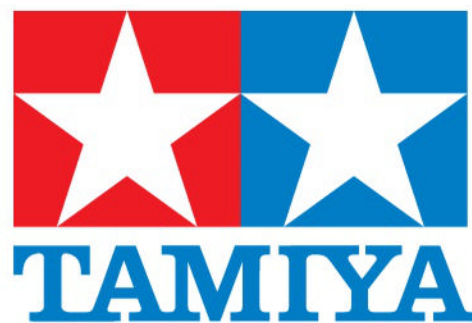
The body is a piece to behold as it is comprised of injection molded white polycarbonate. Like the BBX (item 58719), the body components are modular pieces that are screwed onto the main chassis. Unlike the BBX, the body components as previously mentioned are injection molded white polycarbonate rather than vacuum formed clear sheet polycarbonate. The result is an easier assembly process for beginners and veterans alike without having to paint the body. All that is needed is the application of stickers!

Comes with two marking options.



• Comes with two sticker marking options and one driver figure.





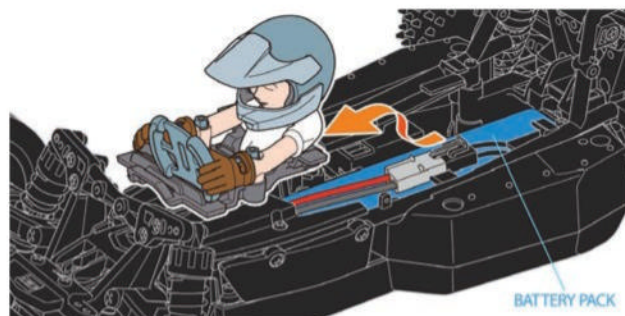
Length: 385mm (with 265mm wheelbase) / 395mm (with 280mm wheelbase), height: 120mm, width: 248mm.

- The distinctive body features multiple body panels connected to pipe frames; a design inspired by full size racing buggies.
- The chassis has an inline battery pack position, and a rear-mounted motor to give the rear wheels plenty of traction.
- The sealed gearbox has a built-in gear differential for smooth cornering and helps keep out dust and dirt.
- Side pontoons have the ESC mounted on the left and the receiver on the right.
- Features 4-wheel independent double wishbone suspension with long arms and employs CVA oil bypass dampers.
- Front suspension arms have a skid angle of 22.5 degrees.
- The 3-piece steering tie-rod gives true steering feel. (It is the first time to employ a 3-piece steering tie-rod design in this series.)

- Ribbed tires are on the front, and grippy square spike tires on the rear.
- Features hex hubs on the front and rear to allow attachment of different wheels.
- Features injection molded polycarbonate, glass filled nylon, and nylon parts. (PC, PA-GF, and PA respectively)
- Rear damper attachment positions and rear upper arms can be changed for tuning the car.
- Includes: 540-size Tamiya Torque Tuned brushed motor and Hobbywing produced ESC.
- Required to complete: 2-channel radio, steering servo, 7.2-7.4volt battery with compatible charger, and Tamiya paints to paint the driver figure.



- Two wheelbases can be selected: 265mm for emphasis on handling or 280mm for emphasis on stability. Reassemble the front section (suspension arms) to switch between two different wheelbases.



- Access the battery pack from the car top. Turn the hood lever and remove the side pins then lift the roof. After that, slide the driver figure forward to access the battery.

SPECIAL PROJECT: MID MOTOR



MACHINE



A HIGHLY CUSTOMIZED TRAXXAS SLASH 2WD BASHER

Text & Images by Jerry Tsai

Competitive racing is fun, but I prefer casual RC bashing at the park or around the neighborhood. Like many other RC enthusiasts, my go-to ride is the Traxxas Slash 2WD—it's quick, reliable, and fun. After a few months I decided on a complete overhaul—not out of necessity but because I love modifying my RCs.

For this build, I went looking for

ChuckworksRC, a chassis maker specializing in transforming Traxxas RC vehicles. Their key innovation is converting rear-motor layouts to mid-motor configurations for better balance. The company's founder, Chuck, developed his designs after struggling with his Slash 2WD's tendency to roll over and struggle on jumps. His mid-motor design solved those issues, leading to a line of custom chassis.



This Traxxas Slash 2WD was re-skinned using Pro-Line's 2017 Ford F-150 Raptor True Scale body for a completely new look.

SLICE SCT4 CHASSIS

ChuckworksRC offers chassis for different applications, from racing to drag setups, but I chose the Slice SCT4, designed for rough terrain and big jumps. The chassis consists of CNC-machined composite plates, durable polymer, aluminum parts, and steel hardware. It's compatible with any 2WD Traxxas transmission and most hop-up parts. The SCT4 maintains track performance but is tuned for bashing.

BASE MODEL & ELECTRONICS

My build started with an older Traxxas Slash 2WD



We went with Pro-Line's BFGoodrich Baja T/A KR2 SC tires and Raid Black wheels for this custom build.



On Board Audio (OBA) model I had kicking around. The original kit includes a pre-painted short course truck body, TQ 2.4GHz transmitter, Power Cell 7-cell NiMH battery, and a 4-amp peak-detecting charger. I kept most of the electronics stock but swapped the battery for a 5800mAh 7.4V 2-cell LiPo for extra power. Traxxas' OBA system mimics the roar of a 900-horsepower V8 short course truck, synched to throttle inputs, making for an immersive experience.

CHASSIS INSTALLATION

Disassembly was straightforward thanks to the Slash's intuitive design. ChuckworksRC provides all necessary parts and instructions, although I found the images could be clearer. Some hardware was missing, but I used an RCScrewZ Traxxas Slash 2WD Stainless Screw Kit as a workaround. Chuck's customer service was excellent, promptly responding to my questions. Assembly went smoothly, and soon I was ready for upgrades.

PERFORMANCE UPGRADES

I turned to Pro-Line Racing for suspension and drivetrain



As far as we know, the Traxxas On Board Audio unit is out of production. Luckily we found a second-hand system on eBay. This unit helps drive the attached speakers to deliver monster V8 sound effects.

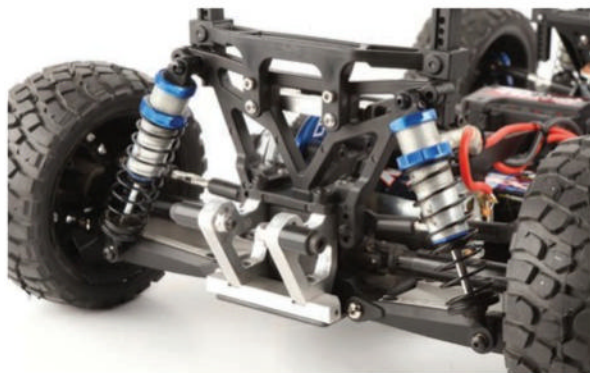


The ChuckworksRC chassis moves the motor and gearbox amidships for improved weight distribution.

"THE OBA SYSTEM
TURNED HEADS AS
THE TRUCK SOUNDED
LIKE A FULL-SCALE
BAJA RACER..."



You're looking at a full Pro-Line suspension package that includes Pro-Spec shocks, ProTrac shock towers, and PRO-Arms.



Pro-Line arms, shocks, and aluminum caster blocks give this Slash nimble steering characteristics.

improvements. To enhance damping and provide a smoother ride, I installed Pro-Spec aluminum shocks along with ProTrac shock towers. For added durability in high-stress areas, I upgraded to PRO-Arms and aluminum caster blocks.

The transmission also saw a significant upgrade with the Pro-Line PRO-Series 32P transmission, featuring hardened steel gears, a 32P 56-tooth spur gear, an aluminum motor mount, and a clear gear cover. To complete the new transmission setup, I opted for a Robinson Racing 32P 15T pinion gear, ensuring improved

performance and durability.

The SCT4 chassis repositions the gearbox and motor forward, improving weight distribution for better balance in turns and jumps. Some sanding was required to fit the Pro-Line gearbox.

WHEELS & TIRES

Since I was knee-deep in Pro-Line parts already, it was only natural that I went with their wheels and tires as well. I opted for pre-mounted BFGoodrich Baja T/A KR2 SC tires in Pro-Line's M2 compound, paired with Raid Black 6x30



removable hex wheels.

BODY & AESTHETICS

For a fresh look, I replaced the stock body with a Pro-Line 2017 Ford F-150 Raptor True Scale body. I painted it using a mix of gloss and matte finishes for a realistic appearance, with extra details from RC decal maker Mr. Hop-Up.

PERFORMANCE TEST

With the SCT4 complete, I took it to the park. The OBA system turned heads as the truck sounded like a full-scale Baja racer. Handling was noticeably improved—the lower center of gravity reduced rollovers, and the mid-motor layout enhanced cornering and jump stability. The Pro-Line suspension and bulletproof transmission let me tackle any terrain with confidence.



Thanks to the ChuckworksRC chassis and Pro-Line upgrades, this modified Traxxas Slash 2WD is a different beast entirely.

FINAL WORD

The SCT4 fulfilled Chuck's goal of creating a more stable, balanced Slash. It's a fantastic bashing truck, but there's room for more. Next, I plan to upgrade to a brushless motor and ESC for even more power. Until then, this mid-motor Raptor remains a blast to drive.

Sources

Traxxas
traxxas.com

ChuckworksRC
chuckworksrc.com

Pro-Line Racing
prolineracing.com

SUPER Z



AT A GLANCE



TYPE

On-Road



SCALE

1/10



DRIVETRAIN

4WD



POWER

Electric



BUILD

RTR



PRICE

\$189



TAMIYA'S MOTUL AUTECH Z TT-02 SUPER GT CONTENDER

Text by Jerry Tsai
Images Courtesy of Tamiya

Tamiya has once again delivered a stunning RC kit with their latest release, the Motul Autech Z, a 1/10-scale replica of the Nismo-run racecar that competes in the 2023 Super GT series.

This high-performance machine takes its inspiration from the Nissan Z road car but

is a beast all its own, sporting a carbon fiber body and a turbocharged, 2.0-liter four-cylinder engine pushing more than 550 horsepower. It made an immediate impact in real-world racing, winning the opening round at Okayama—and now, you can bring that speed and precision to your RC collection.



Parts such as aerodynamic canards and headlight cases are accurately molded as separate polycarbonate parts for enhanced detail.

THE VERSATILE TT-02 CHASSIS

Tamiya's TT-02 chassis is a great platform for both beginners and seasoned RC hobbyists. As a shaft-driven 4WD system, it offers a well-balanced layout, with the battery positioned on the left and the motor on the right to optimize stability. The identical left and right suspension arms and uprights make assembly straightforward, and maintenance-friendly gearboxes ensure minimal downtime between runs.

One of the standout features of the TT-02 is its

Rare for RC cars, even ones made by Tamiya, are fully licensed Volk Racing TE37 wheels. Fans of JDM wheels are sure to like this detail.

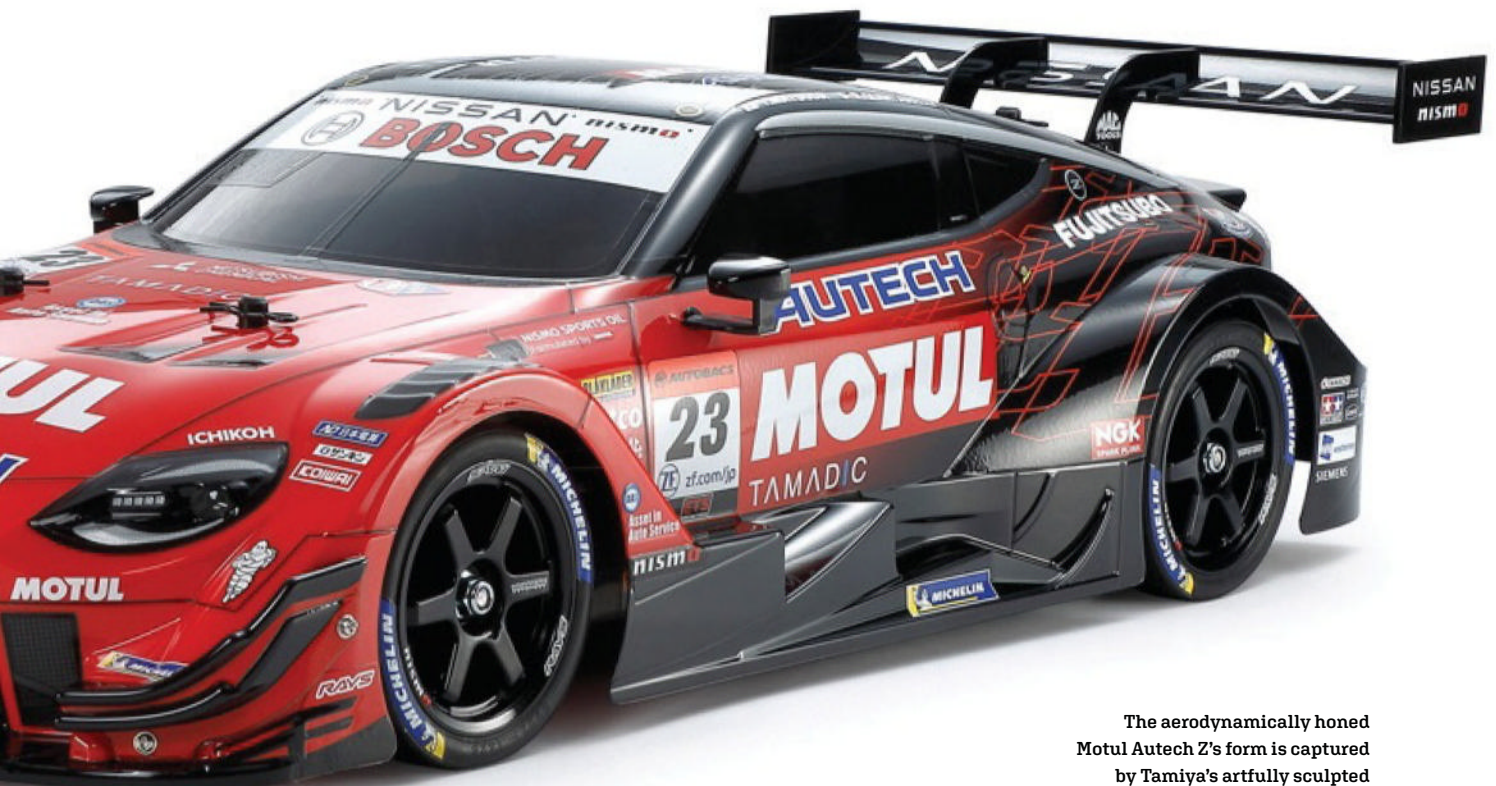
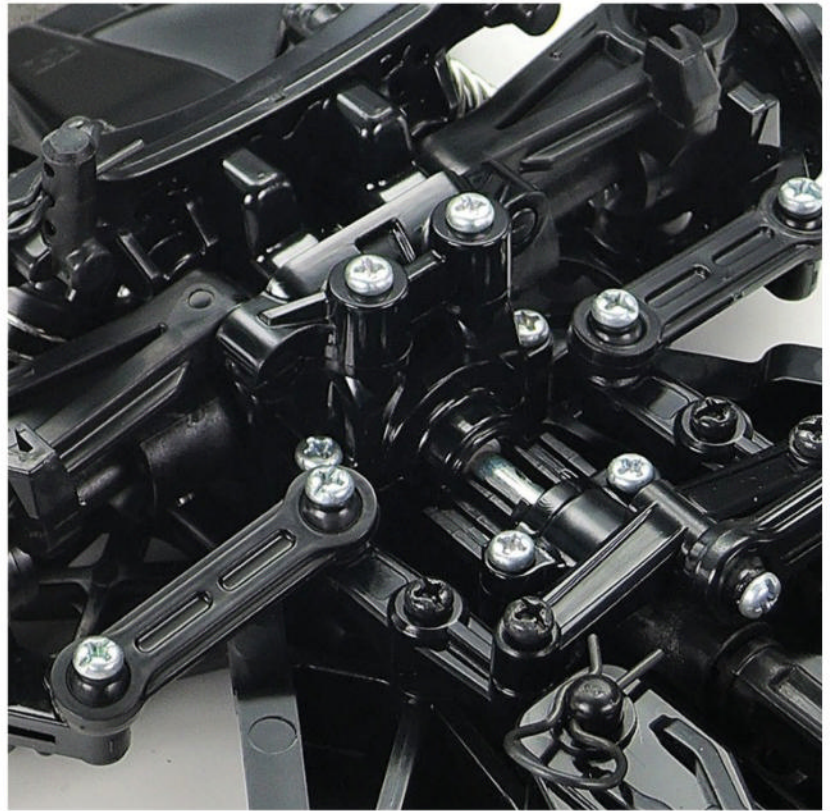


adaptability. With options for two different wheelbases, two ground clearance settings, and two tread setups, you can tweak the chassis to suit various track conditions. Additionally, 10 different gear ratio options allow for further tuning, making this a versatile platform whether you're looking for speed or control.

A DETAILED & STYLISH REPLICA

Tamiya is known for creating scale-accurate bodies, and the Motul Autech Z does not disappoint. The polycarbonate shell is both lightweight and durable, capturing the aggressive lines of the Super GT racer. Separate polycarbonate front and rear light cases and

Resin ball links in the TT-02's steering linkage joints allow for smooth and precise turns.



The aerodynamically honed Motul Autech Z's form is captured by Tamiya's artfully sculpted polycarbonate body.

aerodynamic canards add to the realism, while black ABS plastic parts provide crisp detail for the side mirrors and large rear wing.

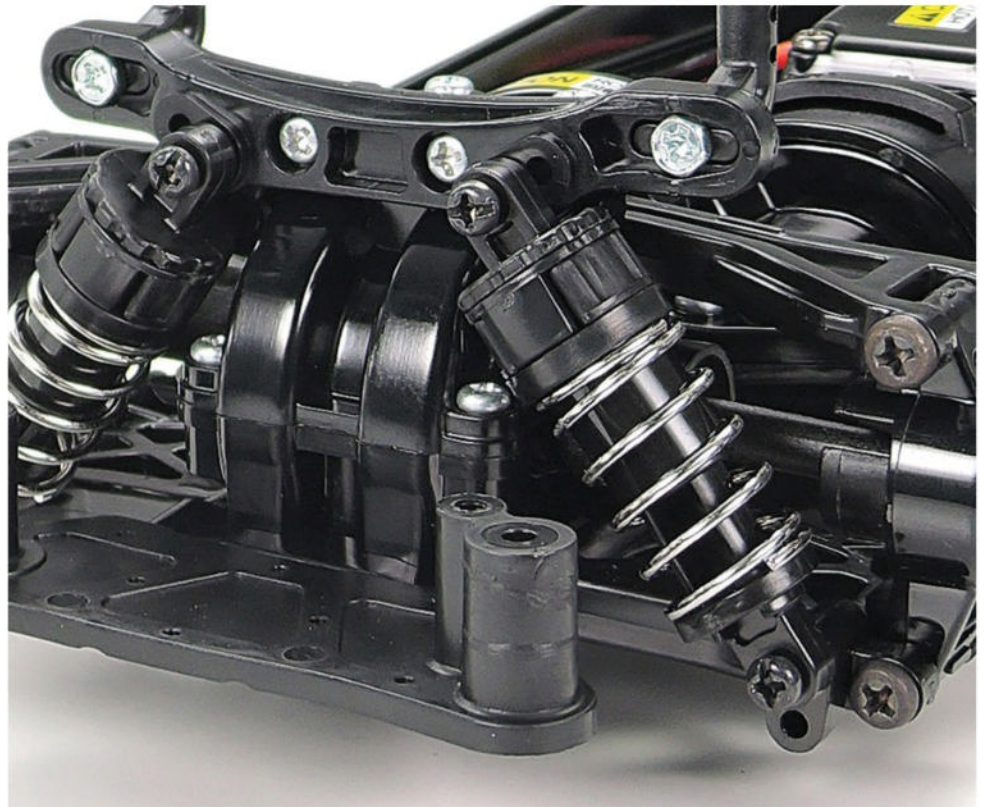
The black, six-spoke, licensed Rays Engineering TE37 wheels come wrapped in slick racing tires, ensuring grip on smooth surfaces. The kit also includes livery stickers to replicate the iconic red-and-black Motul racecar design, as well as window masking tape to help complete a clean and professional paint job.

WHAT YOU NEED TO GET IT RUNNING

As with most Tamiya kits, this is a build-it-yourself model, making it a rewarding project before you even hit the track. Building your own vehicle will also arm you with the knowledge of how to maintain and upgrade it when the time comes.

The kit comes with a 540 brushed motor and Hobbywing ESC, but you'll need to supply a two-channel radio system, steering servo, 7.2V or 7.4V battery and compatible charger. The body comes clear and requires paint for completion.

Here's a closer look at the rear double-wishbone suspension, which is equipped with friction dampers.



Intricate details such as racing side mirrors add to the Z's authentic look.



For an authentic Super GT look, the Z's rear end features long fenders and aerodynamic diffusers. Also note the rear wing's swan neck mounts.

TAMIYA MOTUL AUTECH Z TT-02 VEHICLE SPECS

P/N: 58735-A
MSRP: \$189
URL: tamiyausa.com

Scale: 1/10
Chassis: Injection-molded plastic
Shocks: Friction-type
Suspension: 4-wheel independent
Drivetrain: 4WD
Body: Unfinished Polycarbonate
Wheels: Licensed Rays Engineering TE37
Tires: Licensed Michelin racing slicks
Motor: 540 brushed
ESC: Hobbywing ESC included
Requires: 2-channel radio, steering servo, 7.2-7.4V battery & battery charger, paint

FINAL WORD

If you're an RC enthusiast who loves GT racing, the Tamiya Motul Autech Z is an excellent addition to your garage. With its scale accuracy, solid TT-02 chassis, and customization options, it delivers both a satisfying build experience and exciting performance. Whether you're new to Tamiya kits or a long-time builder, this model puts the spirit of Super GT racing right into your hands.

FIRST LOOK:

CHECK OUT THAT 4X4

PRO-LINE RACING'S 1985 TOYOTA HILUX SR5 CLEAR BODY FOR AXIAL SCX24

Text by Jerry Tsai
Images Courtesy of Pro-Line Racing



Pro-Line Racing has brought back one of the most iconic pickup trucks of the 1980s in 1/24 scale for the Axial SCX24. The 1985 Toyota HiLux SR5 Clear Body is an officially licensed replica, capturing the legendary look of Marty McFly's dream truck from "Back to the Future." Whether you're a fan of the movie, a Toyota enthusiast, or just looking for a realistic retro body for your SCX24, this release is packed with scale details and vintage styling.

Molded in durable, crystal-clear polycarbonate, the HiLux SR5 maintains all the classic design cues from its full-size counterpart, from the distinctive front grille to the flared fenders. Pro-Line has ensured that even in miniature scale, the truck retains the aggressive off-road stance that made it an icon.

The included detailed decal sheet features the signature fender stripe graphics that defined the '80s SR5, along with window masks for clean,



easy painting. The paint-then-peel overspray film makes customizing the body simple, letting you re-create a screen-accurate version or build a one-of-a-kind mini trail truck.

One key detail worth noting is that the interior shown in Pro-Line's promotional photos is from their Axial Power Wagon Body and is not included with the HiLux SR5. However, this body is perfectly suited for scale interior customization, allowing

builders to add their own personal touch to the truck.

Pro-Line's 1985 Toyota HiLux SR5 Clear Body for Axial SCX24 delivers vintage styling, high-quality construction, and an easy-to-customize design, making it a must-have for mini-crawler fans. Whether you're hitting the trails or displaying it on your workbench, this body brings 1980s nostalgia to the world of micro crawling.



Pro-Line Racing
1985 Toyota HiLux SR5 Clear Body
P/N: PR0363600
MSRP: \$25.99
URL: prolineracing.com

ELEVATING EX



SKILL LEVEL

AT A GLANCE

	TYPE Off-Road
	SCALE 1/8
	DRIVETRAIN 4WD
	POWER Electric
	BUILD KIT
	PRICE \$729

EXPECTATIONS



TEKNO SETS THE STANDARD FOR TRUGGIES WITH THE ET48 2.2

Text & Images by Joel Navarro

The truggy class has come a long way since its inception. Whereas originally the electric buggy and truggy classes were thought of as “filler” classes at big 1/8-scale nitro races, they have now become some of the biggest, sometimes bigger than the nitro classes themselves. Leading the charge in truggy innovation is Tekno, and their highly anticipated ET48 2.2 truggy is finally here.

Tekno's latest line of 1/8-scale vehicles

have gotten the “2.2” treatment, and this fourth-generation truggy is no exception. Loaded with race-ready features, the drivetrain and suspension components have been dropped -2mm to boost traction in all conditions, the steering geometry has been revamped to allow greater tuning, and new split-design shock towers are just the beginning of the long list of features the ET48 2.2 has to offer. Keep reading to see how it performs. Let's hit the track!

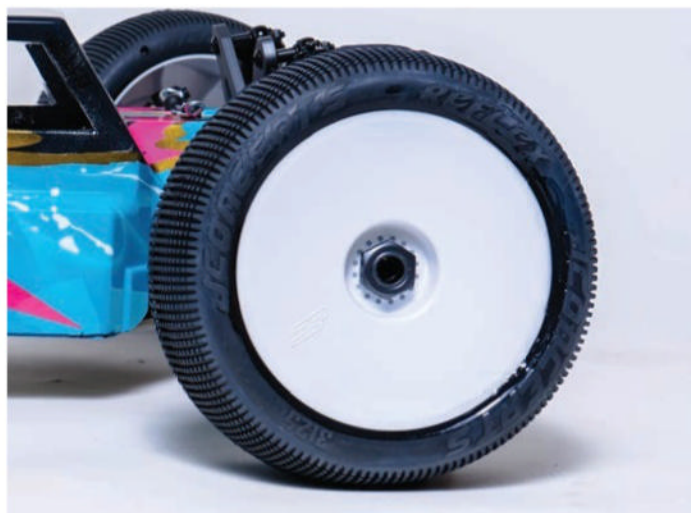


The fourth-gen ET48 gets the “2.2” treatment, and it is loaded with race-ready features.

LIGHTENED SHOCK TOWERS

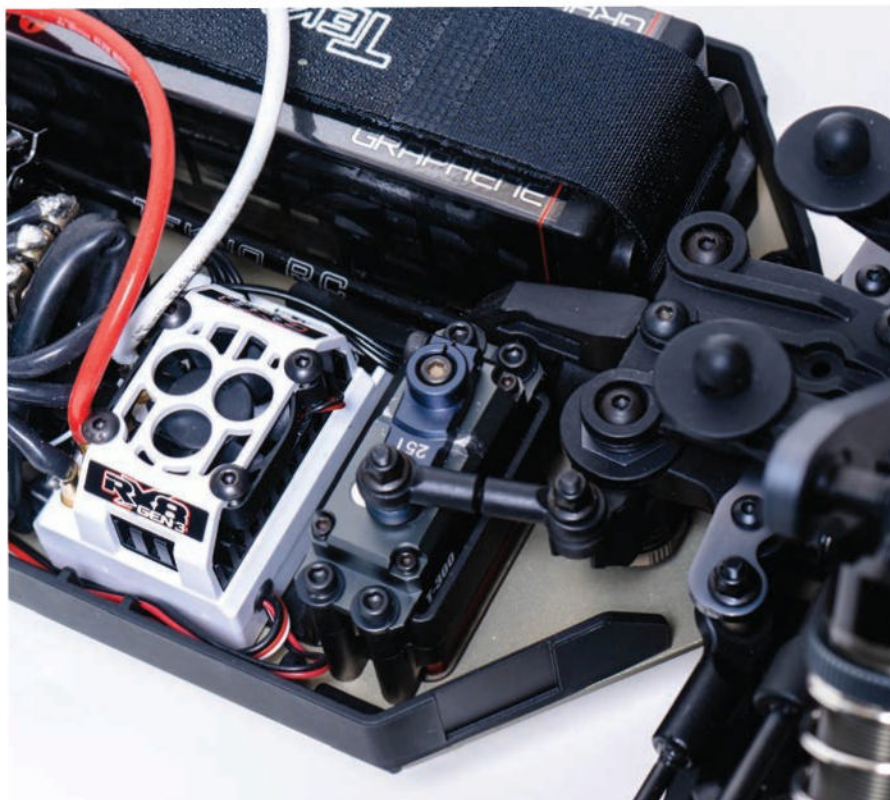
Just like its buggy brother, the ET48 2.2 gets the split shock tower treatment. In an effort to promote more flex than the previous tower, the new one aims to improve consistency on lower-grip tracks while the milled-out design helps keep the weight down. The suspension arms get an update too, making clearance for the new -2mm lower position of the universals. The inner metal hinge pin sleeves have been lengthened to provide silky-smooth action as well as to add more meat to the arm for greater durability.

Moving into the outer arm area, the rear gets revised -2 rear hubs that give you the option to run a lower or upper hinge pin to raise or lower the roll center. The



For tires, We chose a set of grippy JConcepts Reflex truggy tires in green compound.





The servo/ESC mount securely holds the servo in place for precise steering action.

front end gets the same treatment, with the 2.2 now using sturdy aluminum -2 spindles that have 18 degrees of camber built in (optional 15 or 21 degrees are available) and allow you to also change to a high or low roll center by swapping the spindle pins and sleeves.

Taking care of damping duties are massive 16mm, big-bore, oil-filled shocks that get new redesigned molded shock guides and pistons that further smooth out the action. With multiple possible positions on the arm and tower, you can adjust ride height on the fly via the spring collars on the threaded shock bodies. The sway bar assemblies now



"TEKNO HAS BEEN LEADING THE CHARGE IN TRUGGY INNOVATION, AND THE HIGHLY ANTICIPATED ET48 2.2 IS FINALLY HERE."

The new split shock towers are milled out for lightness and allow for more grip-improving flex.



use the “dead band” plastic bushings that allow you to precisely set the play between the bar and bushing before the sway bar engages.

OIL-FILLED DIFFERENTIALS

The ET48's drivetrain is all business when it comes to efficiency, and it has to be when handling the monster power you're trying to put to the ground. Rolling on steel ball bearings throughout, the oil-filled center differential transfers the power to the rear end via a steel universal and to the front end using a lightweight aluminum driveshaft.

The front and rear differential positions have been dropped -2mm like the rest of the 2.2 line of cars, pairing to the mentioned -2mm front spindles and rear hubs in an effort to enhance grip on rough tracks. New, longer 140mm

rear universal driveshafts have been dropped in to allow more reach when the suspension is traveling up and down to make bump handling more stable.

ADJUSTABLE ACKERMANN

The backbone of the ET48 is the 4mm-thick 7075 aluminum chassis that is extensively milled out to keep the weight down. New for the 2.2, along with using a full-size LiPo pack, is the ability to use a shorty LiPo battery with holes to position it forward or aft in the battery bay to change the weight bias.

The servo and speed control are both mounted on a one-piece plastic tray that you can bolt on or remove from the chassis for easier maintenance and cleaning. In the steering department, an updated Ackermann plate coupled to carbon fiber spindle plates mounted on the steering block

have infinite positions to allow you to fine-tune the turn radius of the inside-turning tire.

TEST GEAR

When it came time to choose the power package that would go in the ET48, I decided to go with Tekin. A legendary name in RC since 1983, Tekin has been producing top-shelf electronics that have claimed numerous National and World titles throughout the years. Tekin made it easy on me, being a one-stop shop offering everything you need to get going.

To take the guesswork out of choosing an ESC and brushless motor, Tekin already has these packaged up as combos, and I chose the RX8 Gen3 speed controller paired with the T8 Gen3 2000kV 1/8 Truggy brushless motor. I cool the motor with a Tekin 40mm Hiflow aluminum cooling fan.

With many hours logged by Tekin team drivers, this combo offers the perfect punch and speed needed to be competitive on today's 1/8-scale tracks. The RX8 ESC is already greatly adjustable using the settings buttons and LED lights on the speed control itself, but to take full advantage of its adjustment parameters Tekin supplied me with a HotWire 3.0 interface that you can connect to the RX8 via Bluetooth and make adjustments on your phone using the Tekin app.

Connecting all this power to the dirt, I outfitted the ET48 with a set of JConcepts Reflex tires in green compound mounted on Mono 4.0-inch wheels. A truggy demands lots of power and run time to make

it through longer races, and for that I chose Tekin's 7700mAh Power Cell LiPo battery, which has plenty of capacity to keep the power consistent. To guide the ET48 around the track I installed a Tekin T-300 Digital High Torque servo that can effortlessly turn the big truggy wheels under the highest stress situations with its max 354 oz/in of torque.

BEHIND THE WHEEL

I was expecting a lot from this hot new Tekno, this being my first truggy experience. The Dirt Raceway in Perris, California, was once again my test track, and facing a fresh layout I was ready to put the ET48 through its paces. While my battery was charging I ran

into one of my racing buddies, who runs the previous generation ET48 2.0 and has placed it on the podium many times, so I knew his truck was good. Naturally, I asked if I could take it for a spin so I could directly compare it to the 2.2.

On the track I took a few easy laps to learn the layout before I laid too heavily into the throttle. It was, once again, a masterpiece of a track from Joey Christensen, with three fast straightaways, a couple of step-up jumps, a make-or-break rhythm section, a handful of hairpin turns—and of course massive booter jumps.

The first thing you will notice about driving a truggy versus

This truggy was built for demanding competition bouts—but it's fun for bashing around at our favorite tracks, too.





**"THE TEKNO ET48 2.2
DOESN'T NEED MUCH TO GET
UP TO A COMPETITIVE PACE."**

a buggy is how much more grip you have everywhere thanks to the massive tires used. With the higher ride height, you can send it through a rough patch of track and the truggy will soak up punishment that might upset a buggy.

The ET48 2.0 was already thoroughly good and very successful here in the SoCal racing scene, with many drivers running it, and I now saw why. After only a handful of laps, I was able to drive the 2.0 around the track at full clip, which got me excited to fling the 2.2 around the track next. With the massive 7700mAh-capacity Tekin Power Cell LiPo charged, I strapped it in the ET48's battery bay, which is now capable of running either a shorty-style battery or full-sized 4S LiPo.

I wanted to put a setup on

the Tekin RX8 speed control and used the Tekin HotWire Bluetooth interface to put Tekno/Tekin uber-fast factory driver Jared Wiggins' program on it. Before I hit the track, I adjusted the front ride height to 32mm, the rear to 38mm, and set the camber at -2 degrees on all four corners.

Before I made any major changes, I ran the box-stock setup for the first couple of packs. Tekno wants you to be successful right out of the box and works hard with the input of all their drivers to give you an easy-to-drive and competitive initial car setup, and I have to say it felt good right from the get-go.

The track's dirt has a medium/high grip level, and even though I could feel the stock setup was meant for looser conditions, it

was still fast. The JConcepts Reflex tires were the perfect match for the ET48 and it took full advantage of all the tires had offer, accelerating and braking smoothly with no hint of twitchiness. In the tight sections, the ET48 was surprisingly light on its feet considering how big a truggy is, with tons of lateral grip on demand, and it gave a very smooth steering feel during corner entry. Jumping from the old truck to the new truck, you could definitely feel all the changes made to the new suspension. The truck felt more planted on the track, making the ET48 2.2 easy to drive fast.

I did have a shorty pack on hand and decided to install it in the forward position to give more weight bias toward the front. This really woke up the



TEKNO ET48 2.2 KIT VEHICLE SPECS

P/N: TKR9605
Street Price: \$729
URL: teknorc.com

ADDITIONAL PARTS (NOT INCLUDED)

Tekin RX8 Gen3 1/8 Competition ESC
(P/N TEKTT2302)
Tekin T8 GEN3 2000kV 1/8 Truggy
Competition Motor (P/N TEKTT2346)
Tekin Hotwire 3.0 Bluetooth USB
Interface (P/N TEKTT1452)
Tekin Power Cell 7700mAh 4S 140C LiPo
Battery (P/N TEKTT1623)
Tekin T-300 Digital High Torque
Programmable Servo (P/N TEKTT1505)
Tekin 40mm Hiflow Aluminum Cooling
Fan (P/N TEKTT3864)
JConcepts Reflex 1/8-scale Truck Tires
Green Compound (P/N 3125-02)
JConcepts Mono 4.0-inch 1/8 Truck
Wheel (P/N 3369W)
Futaba 10PX 10-Channel 2.4GHz T-FHSS
Radio System (FUT01004408-1)

steering, improving corner entry on every turn—almost too much of an improvement. I pulled up the dual-rate adjustment on my radio, turning it down to 90%, and this mellowed out the steering to a comfortable level while slightly improving corner speed due to less tire scrub. I only made slight changes throughout testing; the Tekno ET48 2.2 doesn't need much to get up to a competitive pace and put you in the mix for a spot on the box.

FINAL WORD

The truggy class has come a long way in its short life in the racing scene, and Tekno has been on the forefront of pushing the edge of performance forward every year. The ET48 2.2 is a perfect example of this. Literally feeling the progression from the previous generation ET48 2.0 by directly comparing the 2.2 on the track was a real eye-opener. From the first rip of the trigger to the last pack of the day, the ET48 2.2 was easy to drive fast and progressed to a faster pace with every adjustment I made.

Team Tekno is big, and they listen to all the input from their factory team drivers on down to the club racer, placing great importance on this feedback to further develop their vehicles. Just like all the newest race rigs in the Tekno stable, the ET48 has all the newest features from the 2.2 line, which means many of the parts will be interchangeable and easy to find. The ET48 2.2 racing truggy scores a lot of check marks when it comes to desirable features and should be high on your list when buying your next racing truck.

RALLY READY



THE CARISMA GT24 2.0 SUBARU IMPREZA WRC 1999

Text & Images by Kevin Hetmanski

In the grand scheme of things, Carisma is a relatively new company in the world of hobby-grade radio control, but it was quick to rise as a company that produces quality products. One of the company's largest categories features some of the smallest vehicles around.

The 1/24-scale GT24 Spec 2.0 chassis is the latest unit available from Carisma, and

they recently introduced it with a Subaru Impreza WRC body on top. Features of the Impreza include shaft-driven 4WD, a brushless motor, independent suspension, and more. All of which are features that you don't normally find in a vehicle of this size. And Carisma steps things up by giving you all that you need to get this great-looking vehicle up and running right out of the box.



AT A GLANCE



TYPE
Off-Road



SCALE
1/24



DRIVETRAIN
4WD



POWER
Electric



BUILD
RTR



PRICE
\$159.99



Rally fans in particular will love the true scale look of this licensed Subaru Impreza WRC.

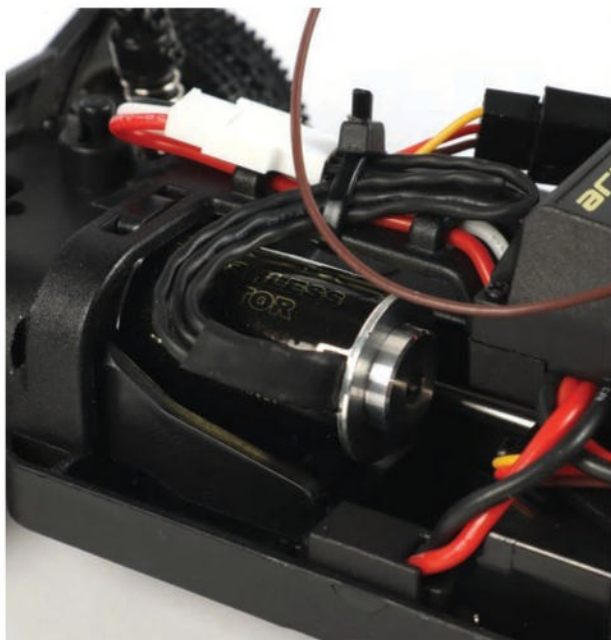
A WELL-DETAILED BODY

When it comes to smaller vehicles, my expectations are generally low when it comes to detail, but the gang at Carisma stepped up to the plate and did a great job on the included 1999 Subaru Impreza WRC. The body edges are crisp, and the lines, like the gas cap and doors, are well-detailed.

Let's take a second and talk about the body clips. Carisma went the extra mile to include body clips that people with larger fingers can easily remove and install. That's thanks to the larger-than-normal round end on the clips. Bend them up slightly and you can make them even better. Under the body are small O-rings that keep the paint from getting scratched.



The GT24's tires feature a hard rubber mini-block tread pattern that provides plenty of grip on a variety of surfaces.



The GT24 comes with a brushless motor—and it's an 8000kV unit!

ALL-TERRAIN TIRES & SCALE WHEELS

The tires on the Subaru edition of the GT24 feature a unique mini-block pattern that should provide plenty of grip on all surfaces. The rubber compound, however, is on the hard side, which takes away some grip. In the end, the tires should provide a good balance of grip and low wear. The wheels are very well done; they look like the real deal and have a great finish to them.

A SOLID PLATFORM

The base of the GT24 is a robust injection-molded plastic chassis. A wide bumper in front protects the suspension and extends to the front of the chassis to protect it from wear. The sides are angled up slightly for improved ground clearance in the turns, and counter-sunk screws keep the bottom smooth. There is, however, a

small hump below the spur gear to give it a little clearance. The edges are rounded off to keep it from grabbing onto anything.

The battery is bottom-loaded through an easy-to-open cover that's held in place by a small tab. The bottom of the chassis is also where you'll find the switch. It's a great location for ease of use, but even though that section of the chassis is indented, it exposes the switch to elements that may cause damage.

The good news is that the orientation is such that the switch is in the on position going toward the back of the chassis, which will keep it on even if it does take a hit. A long, injection-molded upper brace spans the gap between diff housings to provide extra chassis stiffness, and it provides a mounting location for the speed control/receiver combo.

FOUR-WHEEL GRIP

Shaft-driven four-wheel drive provides grip on all surfaces, and a slipper



Carisma's GT24 2.0 Subaru Impreza WRC features a compact yet well-balanced chassis.

clutch on the spur gear ensures that the entire drivetrain is protected from shock by providing a disconnect point. In a vehicle this size, I would expect to see an injection-molded driveshaft (which is totally fine), but Carisma stepped things up and included a metal shaft that'll be more durable and provide better acceleration due to the lack of flex that you would find in a plastic unit.

On each end of the center driveshaft are bevel gear-style differentials. The differential housing is a non-sealed, multi-piece unit that has the ring gear molded into one of the pieces. Very short mini dog bones connect the diffs to the outer axles. There are no wheel hexes to be found on this vehicle; instead, the outer shafts have flats that mate with the slots in the wheels. The entire drivetrain is supported by ball bearings, which is a welcome and impressive feature.

INDEPENDENT SUSPENSION

All four corners feature an independent suspension to soak up variations in whatever surface the car runs on. Camber isn't adjustable, but the fixed-length upper links set it at a pretty aggressive angle.

The weight of the chassis is supported by four "shocks" that look the part and keep the springs in place. The rear of the car comes with upper and lower A-arm-style suspension arms while the front uses a pivot ball design.

BRUSHLESS POWER

When I removed the body, I was expecting to see the standard slot car-style brushed motor that I see in a lot of mini vehicles, but the Carisma GT24 includes a 8000kV brushless

motor to spin the tires. By the way, an 8000kV motor is no joke. Having a brushless motor on board is great because they're very efficient and basically maintenance-free.

The ARC_24 unit that's mounted in the center of the chassis is a 2-in-1 combo deal that houses a speed control and receiver in one case. It can take the power of a 7.2V NiMH battery, or you can switch things up and go with a LiPo.

ADJUSTABLE MINI RADIO

The CTX-2000 radio is a small pistol-grip radio that's about as basic-looking as you can get. Four AA batteries power it up and a bright red LED lets you know when it's on. Other features include dual-rate steering, throttle and steering trim, servo reversing, and a throttle limit switch.

The throttle limit switch lets you quickly bump the power from 100% to a medium or slow speed to make the car easier to drive on various surfaces or for when you let someone who doesn't have much experience take the wheel.

FULLY RTR

Some RTR vehicles come out of the box with a list of items that you need to get it up and running. The GT24, however, comes with everything you need. You get AA batteries for the radio, a 130mAh NiMH battery for the car, a USB charger for the battery, and Carisma even includes an extra spur and pinion gear.

PERFORMANCE

My first test session with the GT24 was going to be inside my apartment, which is something that I've never done with any other RC car. Thanks to its small

size, there should be plenty of room to have some fun. Right?

Getting the GT24 up and running was very easy thanks to all the included components. I found an open USB port in my computer and connected the charger to it, and then the very tiny battery pack to the charger. Getting AA batteries for the radio is also a nice touch. The charger is a two-hour unit, but it took a little longer than I expected to charge the battery up.

While the battery was charging, I took some time to admire the job that Carisma did with the look of the Subaru Impreza body. It looks fantastic—all the decals are well-placed, and you can't go wrong with those awesome gold spoked wheels.

Installing my freshly charged battery into the GT24 was pretty easy thanks to the design of the battery door on the bottom of the chassis. I tried hard to carefully install the battery with the car on its side so I could protect that great-looking body, but that just wasn't going to happen. Sitting it on the roof was the easiest way to get the battery in.

I placed the car on the ground and was surprised to see it spinning the wheels as it quickly took off across the kitchen. Before I knew it the wall was quickly approaching, and I had to nail the brakes. They locked up solid and the car slid the rest of the way. OK, no problem; I simply bumped down the throttle speed by using the switch on top of the radio and had a much easier time getting around without hitting things. However, it was still pretty fast for indoor driving and I had to be on my toes to get the GT24 around.

It didn't take me long to move



CARISMA GT24 2.0 SUBARU IMPREZA WRC 1999 VEHICLE SPECS

P/N: 91768
MSRP: \$159.99
URL: carisma-shop.com

Scale: 1/24
Chassis: Injection-molded plastic
Shocks: Friction
Suspension: 4-wheel independent
Drivetrain: 4WD
Body: Subaru Impreza WRC polycarbonate
Wheels: Gold spoke plastic
Tires: All-terrain
Motor: 8000kv brushless
ESC: ESC/Receiver combo

This RTR kit comes with AA batteries, a NiMH battery, a USB charger, and an extra set of gears.

outside for a little run time on the driveway with the throttle limit switch back to full power. This time the fun level went way up thanks to all the open space, and holy cow is this thing fast. I'm really impressed with its top speed.

The tires were right at home and provided plenty of grip, and it's a good thing the car has some suspension articulation, because the smallest of imperfections turned into jumps for the little car. At one point I got a little too brave and actually traction-rolled after hitting a crack.

I ended up having to go down the road for a few things, so I packed up the GT24 and brought it along for some dirt time at a local baseball field. The USB charger was a welcome thing to have in this case, as I was able to charge the battery in my truck while taking care of some chores. I found some dirt at the field that was pretty smooth to run in, and in that location I had a blast spinning the tires and making my way through the dirt.

From time to time, however, I made my way off the line and hung the car up on some of the rougher stuff at slow speeds. But when the throttle was turned up, there was no issue getting through the rough stuff. It's not the smoothest vehicle when it comes to throttle or steering response, but it's not a racecar, and the more you drive it, the better you get at controlling it.

FINAL WORD

I loved the Carisma GT24 Spec 2.0 Subaru Impreza from the second I pulled it out of the box. It looks amazing, and I'm impressed with the features Carisma packed into such a small package. It's great for indoor running on rainy days, but you have to be on your toes. That said, outside is where it's at. I expected a vehicle that would be fun but slow, but that wasn't the case at all. The Carisma GT24 2.0 Subaru Impreza WRC 1999 is a blast to drive, and I had a lot of fun trying it out.

TEST BENCH

RC PRODUCTS TESTED & EVALUATED

Text by James York

Images Courtesy of Pro-Line Racing



PRO-LINE TRACK BAG WITH TOOL HOLDER

When it comes to RC racing, keeping your gear organized is just as important as having a well-tuned car. Pro-Line Racing, a trusted name in the RC world, has introduced the Pro-Line Track Bag with Tool Holder, designed to make trackside organization a breeze. This bag isn't just about storage—it's also about showing up in style while keeping all your essentials neatly packed and protected.

FEATURES

The first thing we noticed about the Pro-Line Track Bag is

its high-quality construction. Made from durable materials with luggage-quality zippers, this bag is built to withstand the wear and tear of constant use. The bold Pro-Line logo across the side makes it clear that you're serious about your gear.

Inside, the bag is supported by an inner corrugated plastic housing, which helps it keep its shape and provides an extra layer of protection for everything inside. Unlike soft-sided bags that can sag or collapse when loaded, this

structure helps maintain organization and prevents your items from getting crushed.

VERSATILE STORAGE

Measuring 23 x 11 x 8 inches, the Pro-Line Track Bag is larger than the company's Tire Bag, giving you ample space to store a variety of racing essentials. Whether you need to carry tires, tools, chargers, batteries, or spare parts, this bag can handle it all without taking up too much space. It's compact enough to fit in the trunk of your car, making it an easy



**Pro-Line Racing
Track Bag with Tool Holder**
P/N: PRO605802
MSRP: \$64.99
URL: prolineracing.com

grab-and-go option for race days.

Another standout feature is the integrated 13-slot Tool Pouch. Keeping tools organized is crucial at the track, and this built-in system ensures you're not digging through a pile of wrenches and drivers when you need to make quick adjustments. In addition, three see-through mesh pouches provide extra storage for smaller items like glue, hardware, or extra connectors. The clear design lets you see what's inside at a glance, saving time when every second counts.

DESIGNED FOR CONVENIENCE

Pro-Line has made this bag as user-friendly as possible.

The adjustable shoulder strap makes it easy to carry whether you're hauling it from the pits to the track or loading it into your vehicle. The completely open top provides quick and easy access to your gear, so you're never fumbling around when you need something fast.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT?

While the Pro-Line Track Bag is an excellent storage solution, one small improvement could make it even better: a dedicated hard base or reinforced bottom. While the inner plastic housing helps it keep its shape, a firmer base would provide even more stability, especially when carrying heavier tools and batteries. Still, this is a minor critique of an otherwise well-thought-out design.

FINAL WORD

The Pro-Line Track Bag with Tool Holder is a practical and stylish solution for racers who need reliable, organized storage for their gear. With its durable materials, smart organization, and convenient carrying features, it's a great addition to any RC enthusiast's setup. Whether you're heading to a local club race or a national competition, this bag ensures you're prepared and looking sharp.

If you're in the market for a track bag that delivers on quality, function, and style, this one is well worth considering. Pro-Line once again proves why they're a leader in the RC industry.

SPECIAL PROJECT: CAMPTEQ CRAWLER

TRAIL BUDS RC & SBW TEAM UP FOR A CUSTOM FMS FCX18 LAND CRUISER

Text & Images by Jerry Tsai

RC scale builders focus on creating rigs that look and perform like their full-size counterparts. Some modify them for better capability, while others aim to replicate real vehicles down to the smallest detail.

Johnny Lum of Trail Buds RC took the latter approach when he built a 1/18-scale FMS FCX18 Toyota Land Cruiser 80 Series

[LC80] to match Al Catalos's full-size overland rig from overland builder Sponsored by Wifey (SBW). This build wasn't just about adding accessories. Every part was designed to mirror the look of SBW's full-size Land Cruiser, from the camper top to the suspension setup.





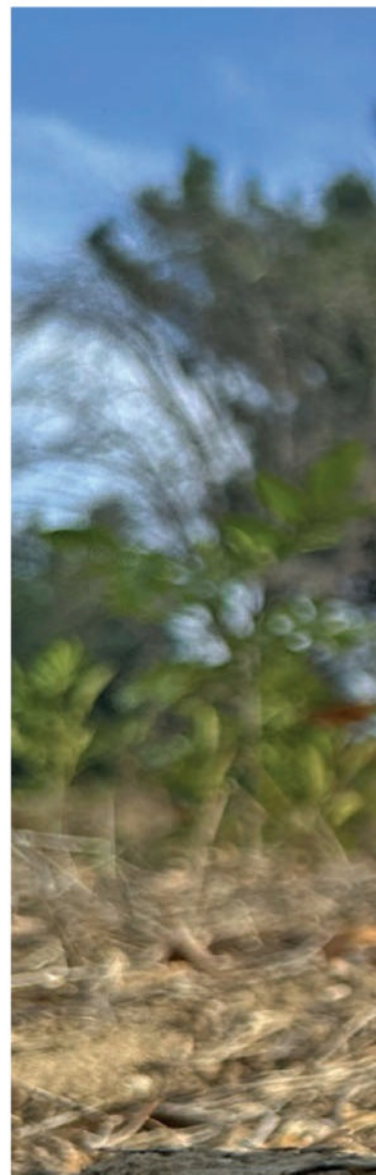
Similar to the real 80 Series Land Cruiser, the FMS FCX18 features a solid-axle suspension for go-anywhere performance.

FROM 1:1 TO 1/18 SCALE

Al originally asked Johnny to simply re-create the Campteq camper top that he has on his real LC80, but the project quickly expanded. Using RealityScan, Johnny scanned the FMS body to ensure accurate fitment for new parts. He then designed components in Autodesk Maya, using reference photos from SBW's Instagram account.

Campteq specializes in pop-up camper conversions for classic off-road vehicles, particularly the Toyota Land Cruiser 80 Series. Their camper tops are designed to replace the factory roof with a pop-up system that provides additional sleeping

This RC rig features a 3D-printed kitchen setup complete with sink, microwave, and fridge, just like the life-sized 80 Series it's modeled after.





A peek inside the scaled-down Campteq pop-top camper. Al's Supreme-branded bedding found in his full-size rig has been perfectly replicated here in 1/18 scale.

space while maintaining the vehicle's structural integrity. This allows overlanders to convert their rigs into compact, self-contained campers without the need for an external tent or roof-top setup.

The scale Campteq camper top went through twelve iterations before Johnny finalized a version that met both durability and scale accuracy requirements. He also designed a custom rear bumper, adapting it from a previous 1/10-scale build. These additions gave the RC Land Cruiser the same stance and trail capability as Al's full-size rig.



**"EVERY PART WAS
DESIGNED TO MIRROR
THE LOOK OF SBW'S
FULL-SIZE LAND
CRUISER..."**



It's hard to tell which one is RC and which one is full-size. At left, you're looking at the real Land Cruiser 80 Series that Trail Buds RC used as inspiration.



The rear bumper and ladder were originally made in 1/10 scale. The 3D file was shrunk down further to 1/18 scale for this model.

DETAILS MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

The standout feature is the fully functional Campteq camper top, which opens just like the real one. Inside, the sleeping setup includes a Supreme-branded bed cover, matching Al's overland build. The interior is designed after the full-size Land Cruiser as well, featuring a simulated kitchen sink, Icoeco fridge, and Redarc electronics display.

Regarding the latter, Redarc is an electronics company

specializing in power management solutions for overland and off-grid vehicles. Their products include dual-battery systems, solar controllers, and power inverters—essential gear for long-term vehicle-based travel. In Al's full-size Land Cruiser, Redarc components help manage onboard power for accessories like refrigerators, lights, and communication equipment. Johnny replicated this setup in the RC version by incorporating a scale, non-functioning yet realistic-looking Redarc control panel

inside the interior.

MORE THAN JUST LOOKS

Suspension tuning was another priority. Johnny 3D-printed shock spacers and collars to adjust the ride height, keeping it in line with the full-size LC80. The truck also runs three-piece beadlock wheels, allowing for real tire swaps like on a full-scale build. These functional upgrades ensure that this RC version does more than just look like an overlander—it's set up to perform like one, too.



BASE KIT:
FMS FCX18 LC80 TOYOTA LAND
CRUISER 80 RTR

Scale: 1/18
URL: fmshobby.com

For Al, this build is a direct tie to his full-size Land Cruiser. For Johnny, it was an opportunity to push scale building with accurate parts and functional upgrades. The end result is a 1/18-scale LC80 that doesn't just resemble an overlander—it operates like one. It captures the modifications, stance, and usability of the real truck, making it a fully capable RC rig in its own right.

FINAL WORD

This Trail Buds RC x SBW FMS FCX18 LC80 is a fully customized RC crawler that brings full-size overland features into 1/18 scale. From the operational camper top to the functional suspension tuning, every modification was built with real-world performance in mind.

Follow @trailbuds_rc and @sponsoredbywifey on Instagram for more projects like this.

GREAT SCOTT!



ARE TOY-GRADE Rcs WORTH PICKING UP? WE EXAMINE THE JADA TOYS BACK TO THE FUTURE RC TIME MACHINE FOR CUSTOMIZATION POSSIBILITIES

Text & Images by Jerry Tsai



Jada Toys' Back to the Future RC Time Machine brings one of the most iconic movie cars to the world of radio-controlled vehicles. While it is classified as a toy-grade RC, it still offers fans of the franchise an opportunity to drive a piece of film history.

For RC enthusiasts, this model might not have the advanced features of a hobby-grade RC, but its unique appeal and detailed design make it an interesting piece for collectors and potential customization projects.



The Time Machine features the right look and includes blue lighting that activates with the push of a button located on the rear of the car.

TOY GRADE

The RC DeLorean measures 11 inches in length and is built to 1/16 scale. It features working lights and a detachable lightning rod, replicating the look from “Back to the Future.” The car comes with a 2.4GHz two-channel radio control that unfortunately isn’t nearly as cool as the Futaba FP-T8SGA-P transmitter that’s used in the movie.

The battery is rechargeable via USB, offering up to 45 minutes of driving time per charge and powers the car up to speeds of a whiplash-inducing 6 mph with a range of about 100 feet. What can you expect? It’s toy grade after all. It is however officially licensed by Universal, making it a legit piece of movie memorabilia.

Not quite the Futaba FP-T8SGA-P transmitter that Doc Brown used in the movie, this controller, which has a passing resemblance to the movie prop, is clearly made for kids.



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The Time Machine's details are all there, ready for an industrious RC customizer to work their magic on it.



Flipping the car over reveals that this is definitely a toy-grade RC.



Jada Toys
Back to the Future RC Time Machine
Scale: 1/16
URL: jadatoys.com

For casual users and movie fans, this RC car offers straightforward fun. It is designed for users six years and older, meaning it's simple to control and doesn't require complex tuning or maintenance like a hobby-grade RC. The light-up features add a fun touch that enhances the play experience.

A CUSTOM JOB

However, for hardcore RC enthusiasts, a toy-grade model like this clearly isn't as exciting as a high-performance RC vehicle. The plastic chassis and basic drive system don't match the durability and speed of hobby-grade models. That said, the lack of a licensed hobby-grade Back to the Future RC presents an opportunity for customization.

Some RC builders might see this as a chance to repurpose the body of the Jada model onto a more advanced chassis. "If my calculations are correct, when this baby hits 88 miles per hour... you're gonna see some serious modifications," a dedicated hobbyist might say. Swapping the body onto a high-performance platform like a Tamiya, Traxxas, or Arrma chassis could allow for more speed, better handling, and custom electronics while retaining the look Doc Brown would approve of.

One challenge would be matching the body's dimensions to a suitable donor chassis. Since the DeLorean is 1/16 scale, it might be tricky to find a

perfect fit in the world of hobby RC. Many popular hobby-grade chassis are in 1/10 or 1/18, so some adjustments would be necessary. We measured the wheelbase to be about 157mm in length. Builders would also need to create custom mounting points to attach the body securely while ensuring clearance for the wheels and suspension.

For those who enjoy the movie more than hardcore RC performance, the DeLorean works just fine as it is. It's a fun, officially licensed collectible that captures the Back to the Future spirit. But for those who are serious about RC performance and customization, this could be a great starting point for a unique project. "Roads? Where we're going, we don't need roads." But you might need a Dremel and a bit of ingenuity to get this body onto a faster, more capable chassis.

FINAL WORD

Ultimately, the Jada Toys Back to the Future RC Time Machine is a well-executed replica designed for casual fun. While it may not satisfy high-end RC racers, it fills a niche as an accessible and enjoyable film collectible. For RC customizers willing to put in the effort, it could even be the foundation for a one-of-a-kind, hobby-grade Back to the Future build. After all, if there's one thing the franchise taught us: "If you put your mind to it, you can accomplish anything."



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FIRST LOOK:

AXIAL AXP8 GILAMON 2.2 TRAIL BUGGY

A NEW ERA OF AXIAL PERFORMANCE

Text by James York
Images Courtesy of Axial



Axial has just introduced the AXP8 Gilamon 2.2 Trail Buggy, an all-new platform designed for next-level performance while maintaining the brand's commitment to scale realism. Built with high-clearance portal axles, selectable drive technology, and thoughtful tuning options, the Gilamon was designed to tackle extreme terrain and technical challenges.

Performance-Driven Design
One of the Gilamon's standout

features is its AF16P high-clearance portal axles, which are designed to provide additional ground clearance and better approach angles over obstacles. But what really sets it apart is Axial Selectable Drive (ASD), a new innovation that allows the driver to remotely lock one rear wheel at a time.

This system enables the tightest turning radius possible, outperforming traditional dig setups and providing a complete

Smooth-bodied, internal spring shocks provide scale authenticity.



A suck-down winch mounted on the front axle is available for tackling steep descents.



lock—something that full-size cutting brakes can't fully achieve due to brake strength limitations. While the front axle and transmission are ASD-compatible, those components are sold separately, allowing users to upgrade as they see fit.

BUILT FOR TECHNICAL TRAILS

Beyond the drivetrain, the Gilamon is packed with features designed to tackle the toughest trails. Realistic internal spring shocks provide

scale authenticity while maintaining a smooth ride. The suck-down winch mount on the front axle gives serious crawlers another tuning option for stability on steep descents, while the built-in servo winch mount allows for functional scale recovery.

Axial has also made battery access simple to ensure quick changes on the trail. The chassis features multiple inner upper link mount locations for fine-tuning suspension geometry, and underdrive capability helps



Gilamon features 2.2-inch wheels and tires.



Driver figures sit in a highly detailed interior.



improve crawling efficiency. A five-channel receiver comes standard, allowing for future accessory expansion, and the 550-sized motor provides solid torque and power.

A PLATFORM FOR BUILDERS

While the Gilamon is designed to dominate right out of the box, it can also serve as a blank canvas for builders and customizers. Axial already has a lineup of factory hop-ups, and with the Gilamon running 2.2-inch wheels and tires there's already a large selection of aftermarket options available.

Given the modular nature of this platform, it's only a matter of time before third-party manufacturers start offering custom upgrades and performance parts.

THE BOTTOM LINE

The Axial AXP8 Gilamon 2.2 Trail Buggy is built to set new standards in RC crawling. With innovative drivetrain technology, high-clearance portal axles, and a design ready for customization, this new platform is one to watch. We're excited about this new release and can't wait to check one out up close.



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