

RADIO CONTROL **Car Action**

SMALL SCALE **BIG ATTITUDE**

TRAXXAS DELIVERS BIGTIME
WITH THE 55+ MPH MINI XRT



HOT HATCH THROWBACK
TAMIYA VOLKSWAGEN GOLF II GTI 16V

THE MODEL MOTORSPORTS AUTHORITY

JULY 2025 \$9.99 US \$11.99 CAN



- > Monster Mash! Losi's All-New LMT 2.0 Grave Digger
- > Special Project: Custom Tamiya Avante Mk.II Black Special
- > On the Test Bench: Hitec Dual LiPo Charger & Battery Workstation
- > RC Car Action Retro Reviews from 1995 & 2000

1/10 scale R/C model assembly kit.

VOLKSWAGEN GOLF II GTI 16V

ITEM 58748 L:383mm **2WD** **ASSEMBLY KIT**

The FF drivetrain Golf is one of Volkswagen's most iconic cars. From its first appearance in 1974, the Volkswagen Golf has continued to develop and lead the worldwide compact car class. In 1986, the Golf II GTI 16V was added to the second-generation model Golf II lineup which had made its debut in 1983. With a 1,781cc inline-4 DOHC 16-valve engine, a tuned car took part in global rally races, in 1986 becoming class champion. This R/C model assembly kit recreates that car, with the iconic form captured by a polycarbonate body and separate parts for headlight cases plus side mirrors. Stickers are included to add further detail to the body.



The MB-01 Chassis

The compact, 2WD MB-01 chassis gives a choice of three types of wheelbase, and front- or rear-wheel drive system. This model employs a front-wheel drive setup. Without removing battery pack, motor and R/C equipment setups from the center frame, simply change attachment directions of final gears and steering linkage to switch between front- and rear-wheel drive; low or high motor position can be chosen for rear-wheel drive cars. The 4-wheel double wishbone suspension features symmetrical structure and friction dampers. Unitized sections such as motor mount, final gears and suspension facilitate ease of assembly and effective maintenance.



Headlights can be lit up with separately sold LEDs. The front bumper is a separately molded part.



Blocky side mirrors have stickers to recreate the mirror surface.



Taillights are also compatible with separately sold LEDs, and the rear bumper too is a separate part.

Specifications

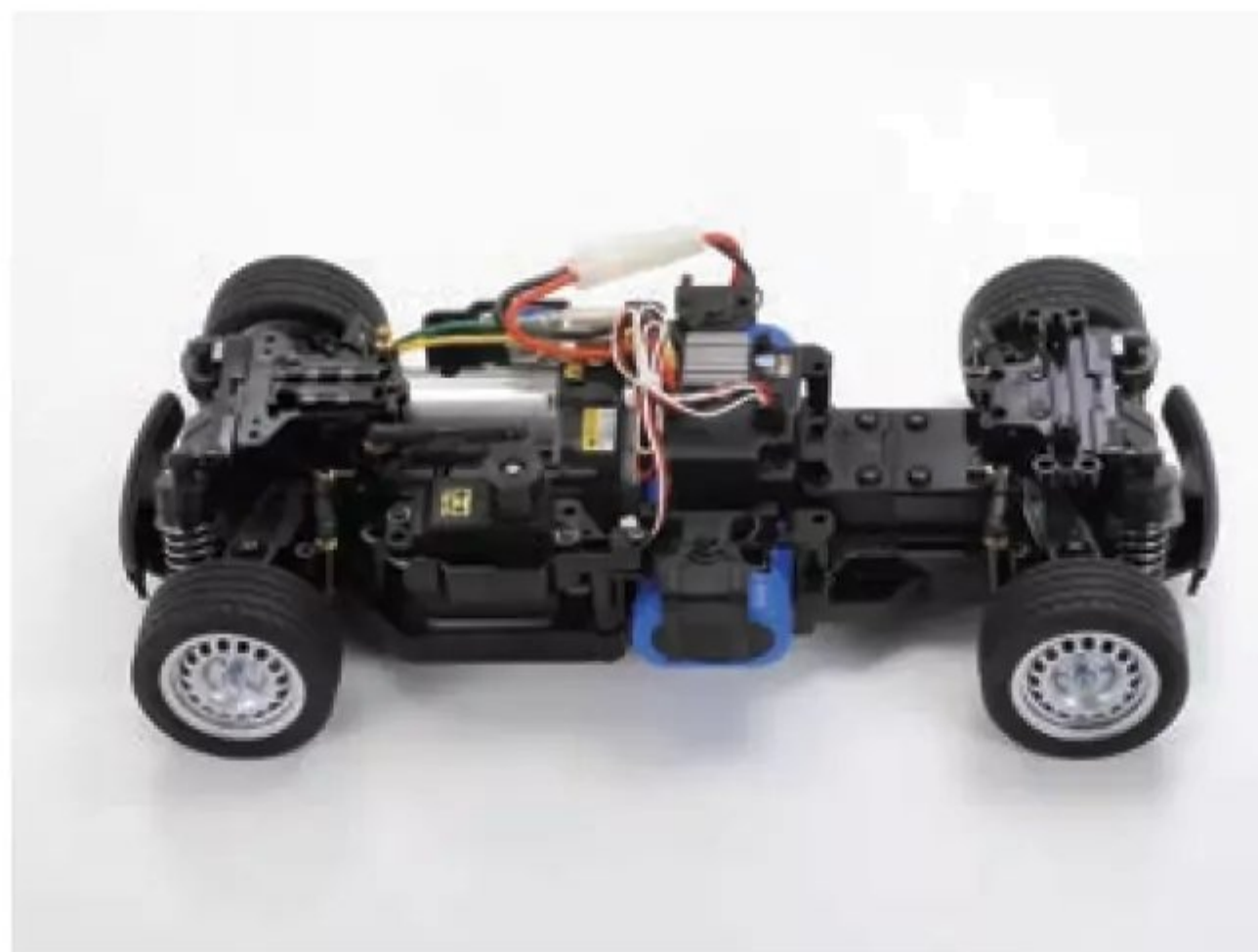
★Length: 383mm, width: 170mm, height: 138mm ★Wheelbase: 239mm (Long) ★Tread: 140mm (front & rear) ★Tire width/diameter: 25/59mm (front and rear) ★Bathtub type chassis ★Front-wheel drive ★4-bevel differential gear ★3-piece steering tie-rod ★4-wheel double wishbone suspension ★Friction dampers ★Gear ratio = 5.83:1 (using kit 29T pinion) ★Type 540 motor ★ESC included..

Separately Required Items

★ 2-channel radio, steering servo, 7.2-7.4volt battery with compatible charger and Tamiya PS paint.



Dish wheels are paired with treaded 60D radial tires. Stickers recreate black fender arches.



The compact MB-01 chassis. For this model, it is assembled with a long wheelbase: 239mm.



The servo is installed in the front-left of the model.



The four-wheel double wishbone suspension uses symmetrical arms.



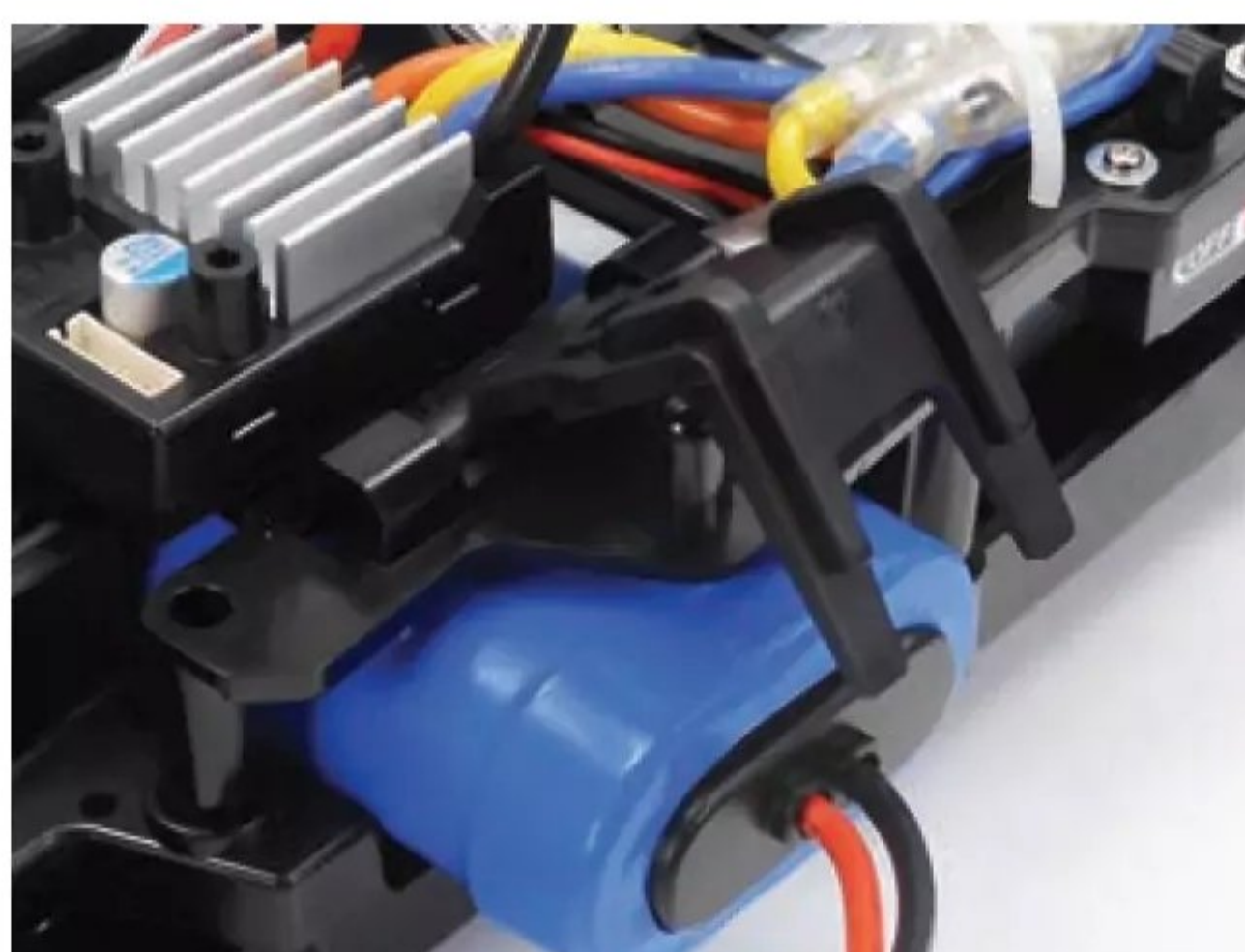
The motor resides in the front-right, with power going to the wheels via propeller shaft and the front differential.



The motor mount is assembled as a unit, and secured to the chassis using two screws.



The 4-bevel gear differential is the same as that on the TT-02; this chassis is compatible with TT-02 Hop-Up Option differentials.



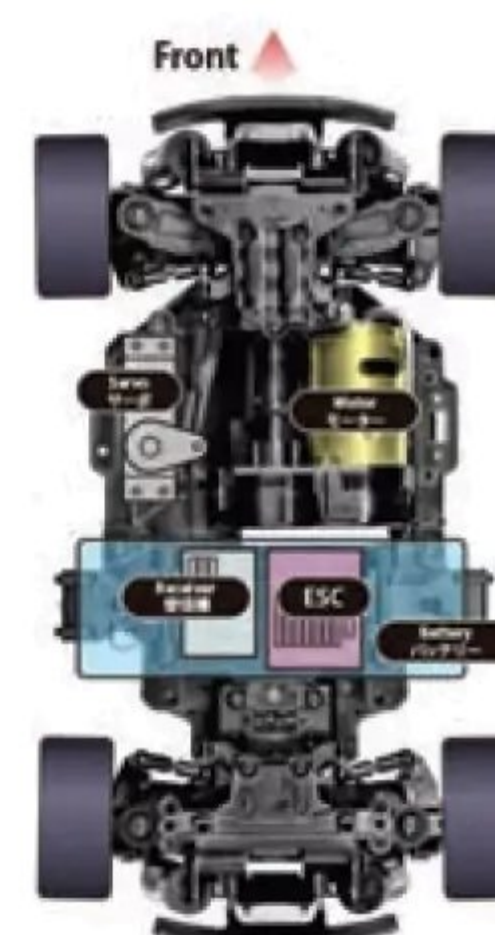
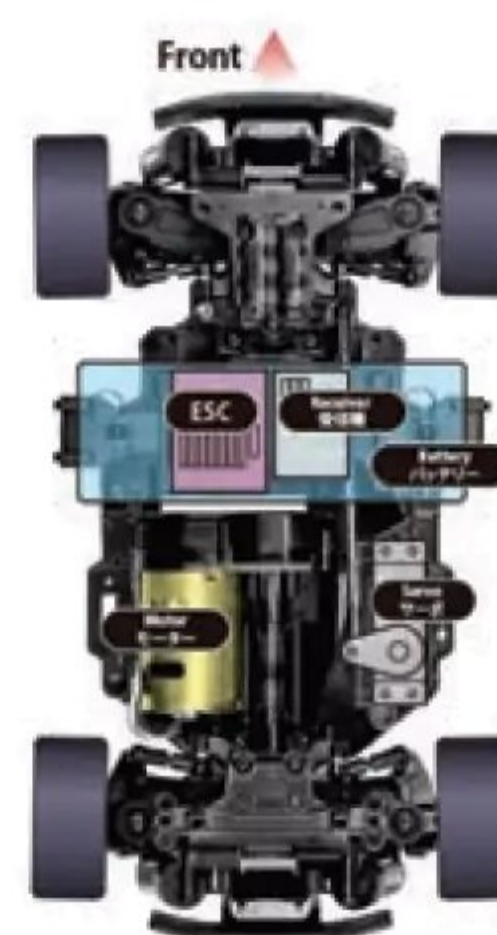
The flip-up battery holder gives quick access.



The sub-deck spacer makes the chassis wheelbase 239mm.



Coil sprung dampers come as standard.



This versatile chassis can be assembled into three wheelbases and two drivetrain layouts.

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NUMBER 7
JULY 2025***



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We are excited to bring you another packed issue filled with standout builds, compelling stories, and RC gear worth talking about—all while continuing to celebrate the legacy of Radio Control Car Action with a mix of new tech, performance testing, and a look back at how far the RC scene has come.

On the cover is the Traxxas Mini XRT, a compact platform that carries serious performance in a sub-1/10-scale package. This small truck packs a punch and delivers the speed and durability we've come to expect from the Traxxas name.

Also in this issue, we take a close look at Tamiya's new Volkswagen Golf II GTI 16V, built on the innovatively flexible BT-01 chassis. Tamiya fans will want to dig into this one—this kit brings fresh engineering while capturing the classic styling of the Mk2 hot hatch.

Monster truck enthusiasts won't want to miss our deep dive into the Losi LMT 2.0. RC monster truck expert Kevin Hetmanski gives us his insights into what's new, what's improved, and what you can expect out on the track.

On the Test Bench this time around are two powerful tools for anyone serious about battery maintenance and performance: the Hitec RDX2 1000 Dual LiPo Balance Charger and the AD350 Battery Workstation Analyzer & Discharger. We put them to work to see what they can really do.

Lastly, we go retro and crack open the RC Car Action archives with a look back at a couple of reviews from 1995 and 2000. With our 40th anniversary on the horizon, you'll be seeing more classic content in upcoming issues.

As always, we want to see what you're running. Submit your rides to our Readers Rides section at RCCarAction.com for a chance to be featured in an upcoming issue!

Until next time,
Jerry Tsai
Editorial Director



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for the Traxxas XRT

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Rear Skid Plate



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EDITORIAL

Editorial Director

Jerry Tsai

Contributors

Kevin Hetmanski

Joel Navarro

James York

DESIGN/PRODUCTION

Managing Editor

Karl Funke

Art Director

Jeff Chen

DIGITAL MEDIA

Web Development

Cirrata Services

Online News Editor

Trevor "Chilly" Duncan

Social Media Contributor

Michael Wiene

PUBLISHING

Group Publishers

Louis V. DeFrancesco Jr.

Yvonne M. DeFrancesco

DIGITAL + PRINT CIRCULATION

Circulation Managers

Charles Mast

Natalie Prisco

Dawn Page

Circulation Assistant

Brandon Mast

Newsstand Manager

Matt Kexel

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57 Danbury Road, Suite 202, Wilton, CT 06897 USA

Email rcca@airage.com

REPRINTS AND LICENSING

Wright's Media

airage@wrightsmedia.com

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P/N: CPR-C15013543 | MSRP: \$4.99 | URL: cowrc.com

2. UpGrade RC - Rock Claw A/T 1.9" Class 2 Tires

Designed for serious crawling performance with scale realism in mind, the UpGrade RC Rock Claw A/T 1.9" Class 2 Tires deliver traction and control in the most demanding conditions. Offered in soft or super-soft compounds and paired with soft foam inserts, they're a ready-to-mount upgrade for any 1.9" wheel crawler build.

P/N: UPG-10006-S
MSRP: \$32.99
URL: amainhobbies.com



3. IERC - C1 Merge V2 Class 1 Chassis

The IERC C1 Merge V2 Chassis is a refined Class 1 kit with improved front towers, raised X-mount for better compression, and added adjustability for panhard and shock mounts. It supports multiple body styles and servo setups, now featuring dual 67.5mm aluminum standoffs for enhanced rigidity and performance.

MSRP: From \$60
URL: iercscaler.com

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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!

85 DODGE RAM

GARY DAVIS « DASSEL, MN

We're big fans of realistic-looking pickups, and Gary Davis' '85 Dodge Ram stopped us in our tracks. Built on a Traxxas 4Tec 2.0 chassis, this scratch-built body isn't something you'll find at a hobby store. Gary shaped the body from styrene and PVC board, adding bracelet wire trim and working in hand-crafted camping gear in the bed—right down to a cooler with a functioning lid to access the body clips. Even the pavement under the truck is made from treadmill rubber, complete with hand-painted stripes and scenery props built from aluminum wire and wood. Brushed-on Walmart hobby paint gives the rig its worn, sun-faded look, and the carved plastic driver tops it all off. This is one of the most creative builds we've seen—awesome work, Gary!





BUILD HIGHLIGHTS

- Chassis: Traxxas 4Tec 2.0
- Body: Scratch built 1985 Dodge Ram
- Motor: Traxxas
- Speed Control: Traxxas
- Battery: Venom 5000 mAh
- Wheels & Tires: Traxxas trailer wheels
- Shocks: Traxxas
- Axles: Traxxas
- Paint: Walmart hobby paint
- Radio System: Traxxas
- Other Options: Scratch built tools and equipment. The driver is built from carved plastic and cotton for the beard. The background scenery props for the parking lot are hand built by soldering aluminum wire for the cart corral and using wood and PVC plastic for the light poles. The pavement is treadmill rubber with vinyl stripes. The running boards are aluminum L channel.

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WANDER ROVER

AMARINDER SINGH GURGAON « HARYANA, INDIA

We love when a rig strikes the perfect balance between trail capability and scale realism, and Amarinder Singh's "Wander Rover" nails it. Built on an Axial SCX10.2 Raw Builder's Kit, this Range Rover Classic isn't just for show—it's ready for the rocks. The Xtra Speed body is painted in Tamiya Light Sand with black and orange accents, and there's a long list of custom-made details that

take this build to the next level: a 3D-printed RC Jeep, UHF radio, and even working subwoofers with Bluetooth. Sourcing parts wasn't easy—Amarinder overcame high import duties in India by designing and fabricating many of the components himself. From cantilever rear shocks to a reversed gearbox setup for a clean interior, every detail is dialed. This Rover's as refined as it is rugged—well done!



BUILD HIGHLIGHTS

- Chassis: Axial SCX10.2 Raw Builder's Kit
- Body: Xtraspeed Range Rover Classic
- Motor: Novak Brushless 21.T Crawler Motor
- Speed Control: Novak The Goat Brushless Crawler ESC
- Battery: Orange Lipo 2S
- Wheels & Tires: Injora Rims 1.9 Aluminum, Wjee 1.9 X 1.2 X 3.9 M/T Tires; Associated Electric Knight Runner hubs
- Shocks: Front RC4wd Scale shocks, Rear Xtraspeed Cantilever Shocks
- Axles: Axial AR 44
- Paint: Tamiya Color TS-46 Light Sand, TS-14 Black, X-26 Clear Orange, X-27 Clear Red
- Graphics: Associated Electric Knight Runner stickers
- Lighting System: Xtraspeed
- Radio System: Spektrum DX3
- Other Options: Custom 3D Printed 1/100 Scale RC Jeep with Tx/Rx, Custom 3D Printed Scale UHF Radio, Custom Subwoofers with Bluetooth power back up, RC4WD Orange 20KG Servo, GPM Scale Steering Stabilizer (Rancho), GPM 25T Servo Horn, Injora Metal Shock Mount (front), Injora Metal Gear Box Mount, Treal Metal Chassis Brace, Custom Brass Hex hub 6mm, 3D Printed Body Mounts with brass inserts, Reversed gearbox position to accommodate interior



BLUE 4RUNNER

PEDAR STALEY « CHESAPEAKE, VA

We're suckers for clean scale trucks, and Pedar Staley's blue 4Runner checks all the right boxes. Built on RC4WD's 4Runner chassis and body, this rig runs a Holmes Hobby 8-turn motor and ESC paired with a 3S Tattu LiPo. The stance is spot-on thanks to Injora deep dish wheels wrapped in 1.7 Pitbulls, and the red pinstripe pops against the Lowe's rattle can blue. But it's the

details that really make this build stand out—cloth-wrapped seats, a custom safari top, felt flooring, and a scale V8 under the hood. RC4WD Yota2 axles and Rancho diff covers keep things tough on the trail, while a Crazy Kenny anti-wrap bar and scale steering stabilizer finish it off. Pedar clearly put in the work—this 4Runner is as dialed as it is stylish.



BUILD HIGHLIGHTS

- Chassis: : RC4wd 4Runner
- Body: RC4wd 4Runner
- Motor: Holmes Hobby 8-turn
- Speed Control: Holmes Hobby
- Battery: Tattu 1300 mah 11.1 3S
- Wheels & Tires: 1.9 Injora deep dish, 1.7 Pitbulls
- Shocks: RC4WD 80mm scale shocks
- Axles: RC4WD Scale Yota2 axles
- Paint: Lowe's rattle can
- Lighting System: eBay
- Radio System: FlySky
- Other Options: 3D printed CB pop bottle, cloth wrapped seats RC4WD visor, radio antenna, felt flooring, RC4WD R4 scale transmission, Shrink RC body mounts, Crazy Kenny crap safari top, custom made anti wrap bar, RC4WD rancho diff covers, RC4WD metal front bumper with D rings, scale steering stabilizer, radiator with dual fans, scale V8 motor and dressed up engine bay





BLACK BEAST

ANTHONY MURPHY « FLORAL PARK, NY

Anthony Murphy's "Black Beast" is a slick street eliminator that brings muscle car style to Traxxas performance. Starting with a Rustler 2WD chassis, Anthony dropped on a JConcepts '67 Camaro body, giving it an aggressive drag-ready look that turns heads. Under the hood, it's all business—a Velineon 3500 motor and

VXL-3S ESC push power to Traxxas Drag Slash wheels wrapped in sticky rubber. A Traxxas 5000mAh 3S LiPo brings the juice, making this car a serious contender on the streets. It's a no-nonsense build that blends old-school style with modern speed. Awesome job, Anthony—this Camaro is built to move.



BUILD HIGHLIGHTS

- Chassis: Traxxas Rustler 2WD
- Body: JConcepts '67 Camaro Street Eliminator
- Motor: Traxxas Venineon 3500
- Speed Control: Traxxas VXL 3s
- Battery: Traxxas 5000 mAh 3s LiPo
- Wheels & Tires: Traxxas Drag Slash wheels with mixed tires
- Shocks: Traxxas
- Axles: Traxxas
- Radio system: Traxxas

SMALL SCALE BIG A



TITITUDE





SKILL LEVEL

AT A GLANCE

 **TYPE**
Off-Road

 **DRIVETRAIN**
4WD

 **POWER**
Electric

 **BUILD**
RTR

 **PRICE**
\$369.95

TRAXXAS DELIVERS BIGTIME WITH THE 55+ MPH MINI XRT

Text by Jerry Tsai
Images by Michael Wiene

Who says smaller vehicles can't be just as capable as their full-sized counterparts? Certainly not Traxxas. Hot on the heels of the Mini Maxx, which continues to impress in the sub-1/10-scale category, Traxxas is back with another downsized powerhouse—this time giving the XRT the mini treatment.

Introducing the Mini XRT, a new 1/16(-ish)-scale platform that distills the high-performance DNA of its larger sibling into a more compact, go-anywhere package. With its aggressive styling, wide stance, and serious speed—over 55 mph with optional gearing and a 3-cell LiPo—this scaled-down beast delivers big thrills in small spaces.



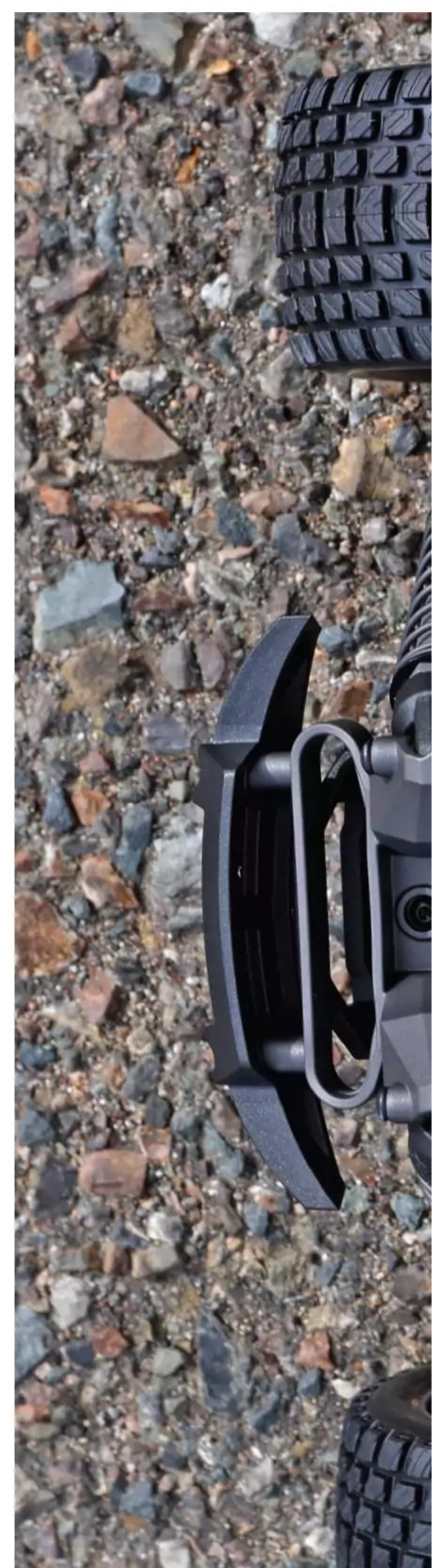
Like its big brother, the XRT, Mini XRT is built for high-speed action and can shrug off rough impacts, all in a smaller, more portable size.

BIG POWER

At the heart of the Mini XRT is a Velineon 3500kV brushless motor, a powerhouse in its class that's paired with the waterproof VXL-3s electronic speed control. This combo delivers fast throttle response and plenty of top end for such a small vehicle.

Straight out of the box with the included 2S LiPo battery and charger, the Mini XRT provides impressive acceleration and runtime. Swap in a 3S pack and install the optional pinion gear, and the Mini XRT unlocks its full potential with pavement-scorching speed.

Mounted on 2.6-inch graphite gray XRT wheels, Gravix hybrid tires deliver all-terrain grip with racing-inspired style.



SHOCK & AWE

Handling is just as important as horsepower, and the Mini XRT doesn't cut corners. It features oil-filled Ultra Shocks on all four corners—something rare for a vehicle in this scale—mounted to WideMaxx-style suspension arms that widen the track for added stability. This setup gives the truck excellent composure over bumps and jumps and keeps it firmly planted whether you're driving on dirt, pavement, or even loose gravel. The full-time 4WD drivetrain

features metal-gear differentials front and rear, along with sealed ball bearings for durability and smooth operation.

One of the Mini XRT's standout features is its modular chassis construction. The front and rear assemblies can be removed as complete modules, making repairs and maintenance more accessible. Inside, a deep battery tray with a secure clip system ensures the pack stays in place, even during hard landings or rollovers.



The reinforced wheelie bar shields the wing during extended wheelies—and doubles as a handy carry handle.



The chassis layout is clean and well-balanced, contributing to the Mini XRT's responsive handling.

ELECTRONICS

The compact truck includes the proven Traxxas TQi 2.4GHz radio system and is compatible with the optional Traxxas Link Wireless Module. When paired with the Traxxas Link app, drivers can fine-tune settings and view telemetry data in real time. Stability Management (TSM) comes standard, helping to keep the Mini XRT under control during aggressive driving and on slick surfaces.

For control inputs, the Mini XRT is equipped with a robust 2065R metal-gear servo that's protected by dual bellcranks and a heavy-duty servo saver. It offers precise steering response and reliability—especially important when the truck is being pushed to its limits.

GROUND CONTROL

The Mini XRT rolls on low-profile Gravix tires with foam inserts that are mounted to 2.6" graphite gray mini XRT wheels, which deliver a combination of sharp aesthetics and functional performance. These tires offer solid grip on a wide range of surfaces, from pavement to hard-packed dirt, helping the truck maintain control under acceleration and through corners. The wheels themselves are tough and lightweight, designed to withstand hard landings and





The Traxxas VXL-3 system delivers brushless power and efficient performance, perfectly matched to the Mini XRT's high-speed potential.



Oil-filled 1/10-scale Ultra Shocks front and rear provide the Mini XRT with impressive suspension travel and off-road control.



The functional rear wing reduces drag while generating downforce for high-speed stability.

repeated abuse without compromising performance.

CLIPLESS BODY

Up top, the Mini XRT features a clipless body mounting system, a premium feature borrowed from Traxxas' larger high-performance platforms. This setup allows the body to snap securely into place with no body clips to fumble with, making battery changes and chassis access quick and easy. Not only is it practical, but the clipless system gives the truck a clean, uninterrupted silhouette that adds

The Traxxas Mini XRT packs bold performance into a compact, take-anywhere platform.



to its sleek, modern look.

The body is sculpted for both form and function, with aggressive front vents, side contours, and a vented rear section that help manage airflow and reduce drag. A low-slung front splitter and wide rear wing enhance downforce at speed, keeping the truck planted during high-speed runs. Together, the Mini XRT's tire and body setups give it a serious race-truck vibe backed by real-world performance that lives up to its appearance.





TRAXXAS MINI XRT VEHICLE SPECS

P/N: 108076-1
MSRP: \$369.95
URL: [traxxas.com](https://www.traxxas.com)

Scale: 1/16 (estimated)
Chassis: Modular Composite Chassis
Shocks: Oil-filled Ultra Shocks
Suspension: 4-wheel independent
Drivetrain: 4WD
Body: Decorated, clipless
Wheels: 2.6" graphite gray mini XRT wheels
Tires: Gravix tires with foam inserts
Motor: Velineon 3500kV sensorless brushless
ESC: Velineon VXL-3s
Requires: Four AA alkaline batteries

FINAL WORD

Whether you're looking to blast around the backyard, carve up a skate park, or test your skills on a homemade track, the Traxxas Mini XRT delivers big performance in a portable package. It brings real brushless power, rugged construction, and thoughtful engineering to the mini scene—no compromises necessary. For RC enthusiasts who want the speed and excitement of a full-blown race truck in a take-anywhere size, the Mini XRT hits the sweet spot.

HOT HATCH THIS



AT A GLANCE



TYPE

On-Road



SCALE

1/10



DRIVETRAIN

2WD



POWER

Electric



BUILD

RTR



PRICE

\$192



TH ROWBACK

TAMIYA VOLKSWAGEN GOLF II GTI 16V & ITS CLEVER MB-01 CHASSIS



Text by James York

Images Courtesy of Tamiya

Tamiya has given the iconic Volkswagen Golf II GTI 16V a new lease on RC life, pairing the unmistakable '80s hot hatch body with its latest front-wheel-drive platform: the MB-01 chassis. This release isn't just a nostalgic nod to one of Europe's most beloved performance compacts—it also marks the continued rollout of Tamiya's modular and versatile M-chassis evolution.

FEATURES

Realistic details include a separately molded front bumper and optional LED-compatible headlights.



ACCURATELY DETAILED

The Golf II body captures the boxy charm and performance cues of the life-size 16V model. It features a clear polycarbonate shell with molded plastic parts for the mirrors and rear wing.

The front end is defined by dual round headlights, a narrow grille, and exacting bumper detail, all brought to life with a comprehensive decal sheet that includes window trim, GTI badging, turn signals, and rear lights. Paired with a suggested red paint job and white mesh-style wheels, it hits all the right styling notes for GTI enthusiasts.

Dish-style wheels are matched with treaded 60D radial tires, while included stickers replicate the black fender arches for added realism.



The four-wheel double wishbone suspension features symmetrical arms for balanced performance and scale accuracy.



A sub-deck spacer is used to set the chassis wheelbase at 239mm, matching the Golf II GTI's proportions.

FLEXIBLE CHASSIS

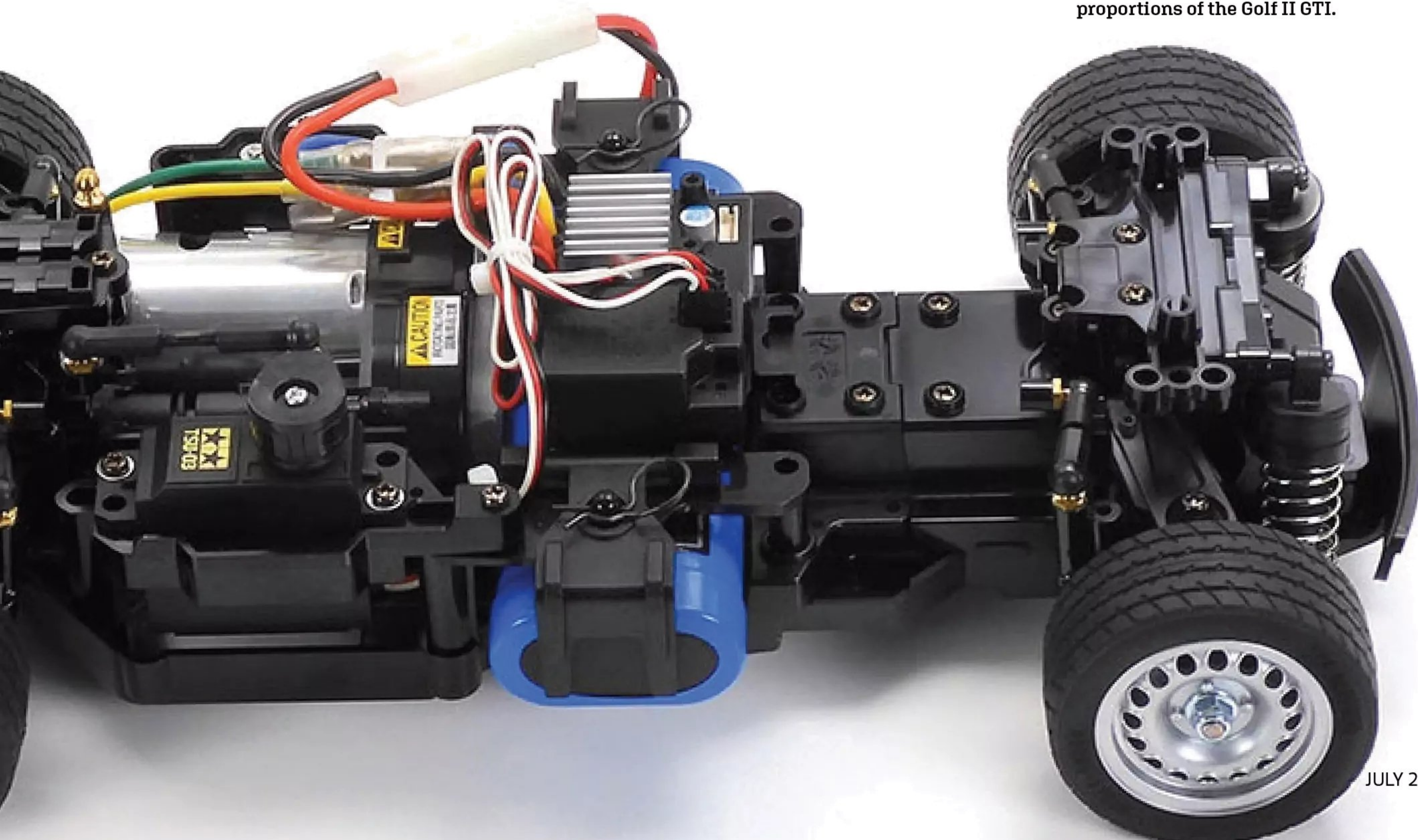
The MB-01 is a compact 2WD chassis that offers the option to run either front- or rear-wheel drive. Switching between FWD and RWD is straightforward—you don't need to remove the battery, motor, or electronics. Just reconfigure the final gear orientation and steering linkage to change drive direction.

RWD setups also allow for a choice between low and high motor mounting positions. The chassis uses a symmetrical double-wishbone suspension with friction dampers

at all four corners, and modular components like the motor mount, gearbox, and suspension arms make both assembly and maintenance easy.

The MB-01 is designed around a sturdy monocoque frame that emphasizes easy assembly, balance, and adjustability. It features symmetrical suspension arms and interchangeable wheelbase settings (210mm, 225mm, 239mm) using repositionable suspension mounts. This means the chassis can accommodate a wide range of Tamiya

The compact MB-01 chassis is configured with a 239mm long wheelbase to suit the proportions of the Golf II GTI.



M-chassis bodies across its “S,” “M,” and “L” settings. The Golf GTI comes set to the 239mm “M” wheelbase configuration.

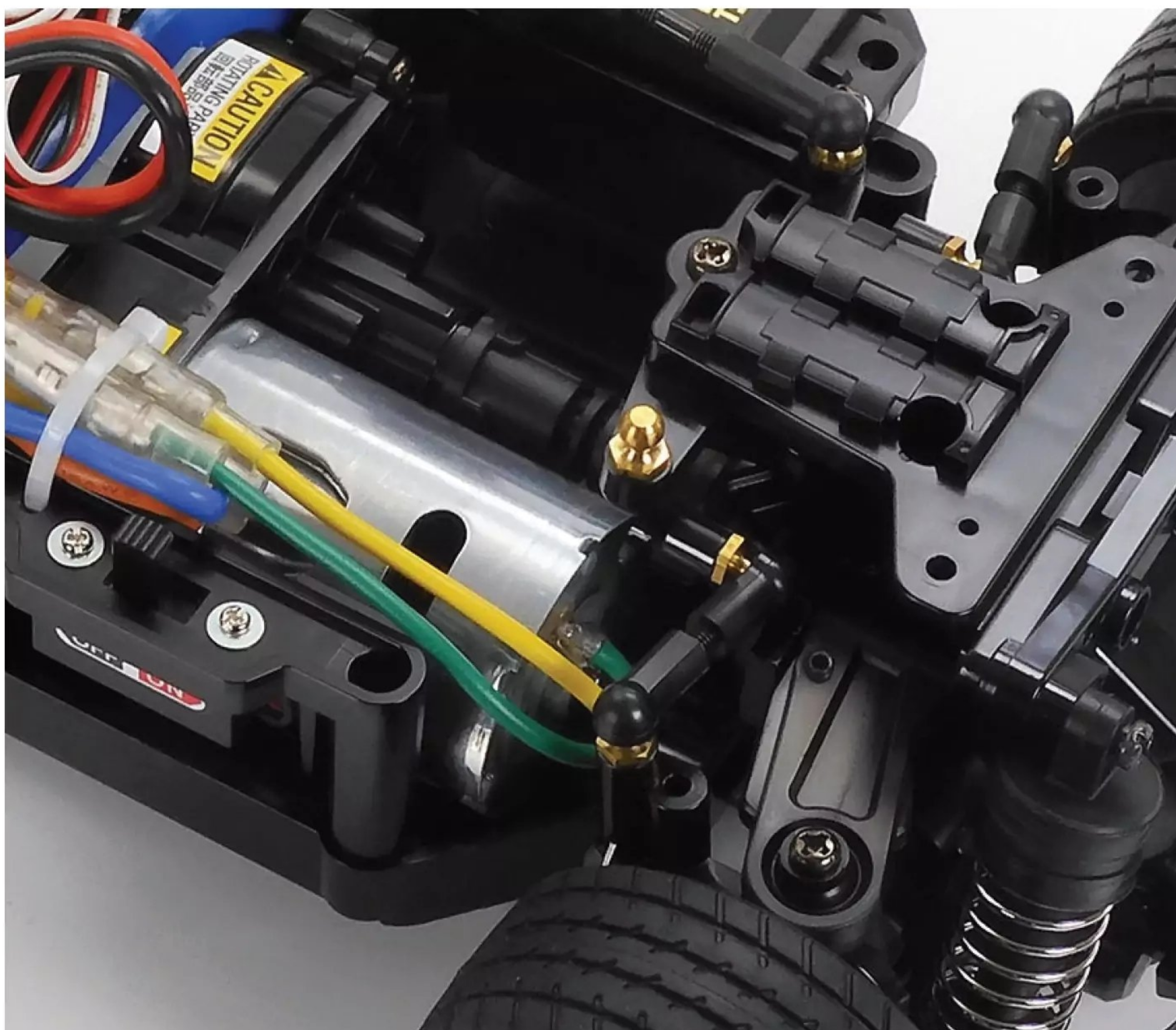
Tamiya reworked the steering design on the MB-01, placing the servo transversely for a more direct and symmetrical linkage layout. This improves steering response and reduces bump steer, especially when compared to earlier M-05 and M-06 designs. The double-wishbone suspension front and rear provides good geometry for a kit in this category, and there’s ample room to upgrade with oil-filled dampers, adjustable turnbuckles, and aluminum parts if desired.

The drivetrain includes gear differentials, which are compatible with optional TT-02 ball differentials for smoother power delivery. Like many Tamiya kits, the MB-01 includes plastic bushings by default, but it’s highly recommended to install a full set of ball bearings during assembly for better performance and reduced drivetrain wear.

REQUIRED FOR ASSEMBLY

The included brushed 540 Torque Tuned motor is mounted at the very front of the chassis in this build, helping shift weight over the front wheels for authentic FWD behavior. On the road, that results in

The motor is mounted front-right, delivering power to the front wheels through a propeller shaft and front differential.



Taillights are LED-compatible with optional units, and the rear bumper is molded separately for added realism.

The iconic lines of the Golf II GTI are faithfully recreated with detailed styling.



a predictable handling feel—mild understeer on-throttle, quick rotation off-throttle, and solid front-end grip. It’s a great setup for tighter courses, parking lots, or driveway driving.

A Hobbywing produced THW 1060 brushed motor ESC is included in the kit, but builders will need to supply their own two-channel radio system, steering servo, and battery. The chassis accepts standard-sized electronics, and its simple layout makes installation straightforward.

**TAMIYA VOLKSWAGEN GOLF
GTI 16V MB-01
VEHICLE SPECS**

P/N: 58748
MSRP: \$192
URL: tamiyausa.com

Scale: 1/10
Chassis: ABS plastic
Shocks: Friction type
Suspension: 4-wheel independent
Drivetrain: 4WD
Body: Polycarbonate
Wheels: Porous dish
Tires: Radial
Motor: 540 Torque Tuned brushed
ESC: Hobbywing THW 1060 Brushed Motor ESC included
Requires: 2-channel radio, steering servo, 7.2-7.4V battery & battery charger, and paint

FINAL WORD

With the MB-01, Tamiya has created a truly modern modular Mini chassis—one that can grow and change as your collection or interests evolve. The Volkswagen Golf II GTI 16V kit is a perfect entry point for the platform: a detailed and iconic body paired with a nimble, configurable chassis that’s approachable for new builders and fun for experienced hobbyists.

If you’re looking for something that blends scale realism, driving fun, and the potential for long-term tuning, this kit delivers. It’s a sharp-looking tribute to the hot hatch heyday—and a smart introduction to Tamiya’s newest generation of on-road kits.

LOSI LMT 2.0



TOUGHER, SMARTER & MORE CAPABLE THAN EVER

Text & Images by Kevin Hetmanski

My journey with solid axle monster trucks began back in 1987 with the release of the legendary Tamiya Clod Buster. Like many, I started with project builds in my early days, but things truly shifted into high gear when I joined Radio Control Car Action magazine as an editor. The role opened doors—and fueled ideas—that eventually led me to design and manufacture custom parts and, ultimately, entire trucks from the ground up.

Fast forward to 2020, and those years of creativity and hands-on experience culminated in the release of the Losi LMT 1.0—a truck I helped design, test, and set up alongside an incredibly talented team at Horizon Hobby. It set a new benchmark for production radio-controlled solid axle monster trucks.

But now, Horizon Hobby has taken things even further. Introducing the Losi LMT 2.0—a machine that not only builds on the DNA of the original but redefines what a solid axle monster truck can be. With features like upgraded differentials, a more powerful steering servo, a longer wheelbase, and the revolutionary new DRIVE technology, the LMT 2.0 delivers next-level performance and realism. I know—sounds awesome, right? Let's take a deep dive into one of the most impressive solid axle monster trucks that you'll ever see.



AT A GLANCE



TYPE
Solid axle
Monster Truck



SCALE
1/8



DRIVETRAIN
4WD



POWER
Brushless



BUILD
RTR



PRICE
\$749.99



You can choose from a Grave Digger or Son Uva Digger monster truck. They look just as good as the real thing.

TWO FLAVORS OF FUN

Horizon Hobby stuck with the licensed Monster Jam Grave Digger (green) and Son Uva Digger (blue) trucks for this round of the LMT. You're getting bodies that look just like the ones used on the full-size Monster Jam trucks, and you're also getting the latest trim scheme on both. Screws secure them to scale multi-piece roll cages that are color-matched to the bodies that they support.

Like the 1.0 version, the body flips up to give you access to the components inside the chassis, but the 2.0 body flips forward and uses some body clips like before, and this setup also has an easy-to-use twist lock to ensure the body doesn't move at

New BKT replica tires come on the Losi LMT 2.0, and they come mounted on scale wheels that have removable beadlock rings.





The new twist lock system on the back of the body is the key to ease of use when it comes to flipping the body up.



The truck's flip-up body makes it easy to install the batteries or adjust the speed control.

all during use. Depending on what you're doing with the truck, the twist lock alone can be used and the body clips can be ditched. The scale realism of the truck is enhanced by a driver figure in a driver compartment and functional LED lights on the front of the body.

LICENSED BKT TIRES

Further scale enhancement comes from officially licensed BKT tires. The tires have the same tread pattern, sidewall features, and bright white BKT logos like you see on full-size Monster Jam trucks. The new 2.6" wheels now

have the same diameter on both sides to give them more of a scale look, which is something that a lot of people will be happy about.

Horizon was able to make that happen by using new removable wider wheel spacers that get the wheel further away from the front axle's hub, so there's no longer need for a larger diameter for clearance. The 0.8-inch wider overall width of the truck adds stability but at the same time will increase scrub radius on the front axle.

Dual large-diameter breather holes in the wheels let air escape when the tire is compressed. The faux beadlocks are color-matched to the vehicle that you purchased. Don't like that color? You can simply remove them from the wheel and paint them whatever color you like, or you can buy black or white rings. 17mm wheel hexes are used to drive the wheels, which is a great way to spread the load and keep the wheel spacers from stripping when massive power is applied.

Want to use aftermarket wheels with 12mm hexes? Horizon thought of that and they offer 12mm hexes as an option. A word of advice: If you do switch to a 12mm setup, you may want to open the center of the wheel slightly to make up for the larger-than-normal 5mm threaded shafts. If you don't, the plastic can

be compressed by the wheel nut and lock the wheel onto the threads. The nuts are also larger and may not fit the different wheels. You can grind down the flange a little to make them fit or buy some new non-flanged 5mm nuts.

MULTI-PIECE VERTICAL PLATE CHASSIS

The Losi LMT 2.0 retains the multi-piece vertical plate chassis design it had before, but this one is longer to accommodate the new 15-inch wheelbase; the color is also different. The Grave Digger chassis is powdercoated green while the Son Uva Digger chassis is blue. The coloring does a great job of enhancing the scale appearance of the truck and goes really well with the included roll cage.

As much as I love how the powdercoated chassis plates make the truck look, it will make it difficult later on for those who want to change up the look or identity of their truck. The ends of the chassis have been massaged to accommodate the dual-shock setup, and the front plates are a little shorter, which provides room for the flip-up body. The speed control and receiver box are now neatly tucked in between the frame rails instead of side-by-side like they were before.

You'll also notice a new battery tray that can handle shorty, 2S, 3S, and now 4S LiPo packs. The space for the shorty pack is lower than the rest of the battery tray, and a foam block is used to fill that space when not in use to give support to the larger packs above. Scale accessories like sponsor plates, headers, and a fuel cell are still included, and the headers and fuel cell can be painted to

further enhance the look.

Finishing off the chassis is a wheelie bump instead of a wheelie bar, and it looks just like the ones used on full-size monster trucks. With DRIVE technology controlling wheelies, the bump doesn't get much of a workout but can supply chassis support when need be.

DUAL SCALE SHOCKS

In the world of hobby-grade RC, we're used to seeing coilover shocks on high-performance vehicles, but full-size Monster Jam trucks don't have coilover shocks. The Horizon Hobby engineers came up with a clever way to give the shocks on the LMT 2.0 that same look. Both shocks have oil inside but one has a shock piston for damping and the other has an internal spring. The shocks have a heavy-duty rod ends, bump stops, dual O-ring seals, shock shafts with lock nuts to secure the pistons/spring mount, and emulsion-style-only shock caps.

The damping shock has a piston like we're used to seeing, while the shock with the internal spring has a plastic puck with four fingers that keep the spring centered in the shock body, and in a way acts like a shock piston thanks to four small grooves on the sides. The only downside to this design is that it's much harder to set the truck's ride height, which is done through spacers inside the shock body that preload the spring.

The good news is that once you have the ride height set, you don't really need to adjust it afterward. Losi will be offering different rate springs so you can adjust accordingly depending on how much

weight you have in the chassis. Also included are scale shock accumulators that fit into grooves in the shock bodies, and those grooves keep them from moving up and down but they're allowed to rotate in place.

Full-size monster trucks have custom pieces that tie the accumulators from each shock to the shock bodies and keep them in place. It's a cool-looking and functional piece that I'll eventually design and make on my 3D printer for my truck. Both shocks are filled with 30wt shock oil, which feels more like 60wt when you have two shocks working together. That's pretty thick for a truck like this with shocks mounted directly to the axle (and no leverage acting on them), but it's necessary for





The battery tray is capable of holding up to a 4S LiPo, and it can also fit a shorty-style LiPo. A large foam block takes up the shorty LiPo space when using standard batteries to provide extra support.

The chassis of each truck offered is powdercoated to match the body and the look of the chassis on the full-size truck. That green really enhances the look.

the tricks that this truck is able to do. I'm a mechanical person, and the look of this dual-shock setup is right up my alley. Add some paint to the accumulators and elevate the look that much more.

SCALE SWAYBAR

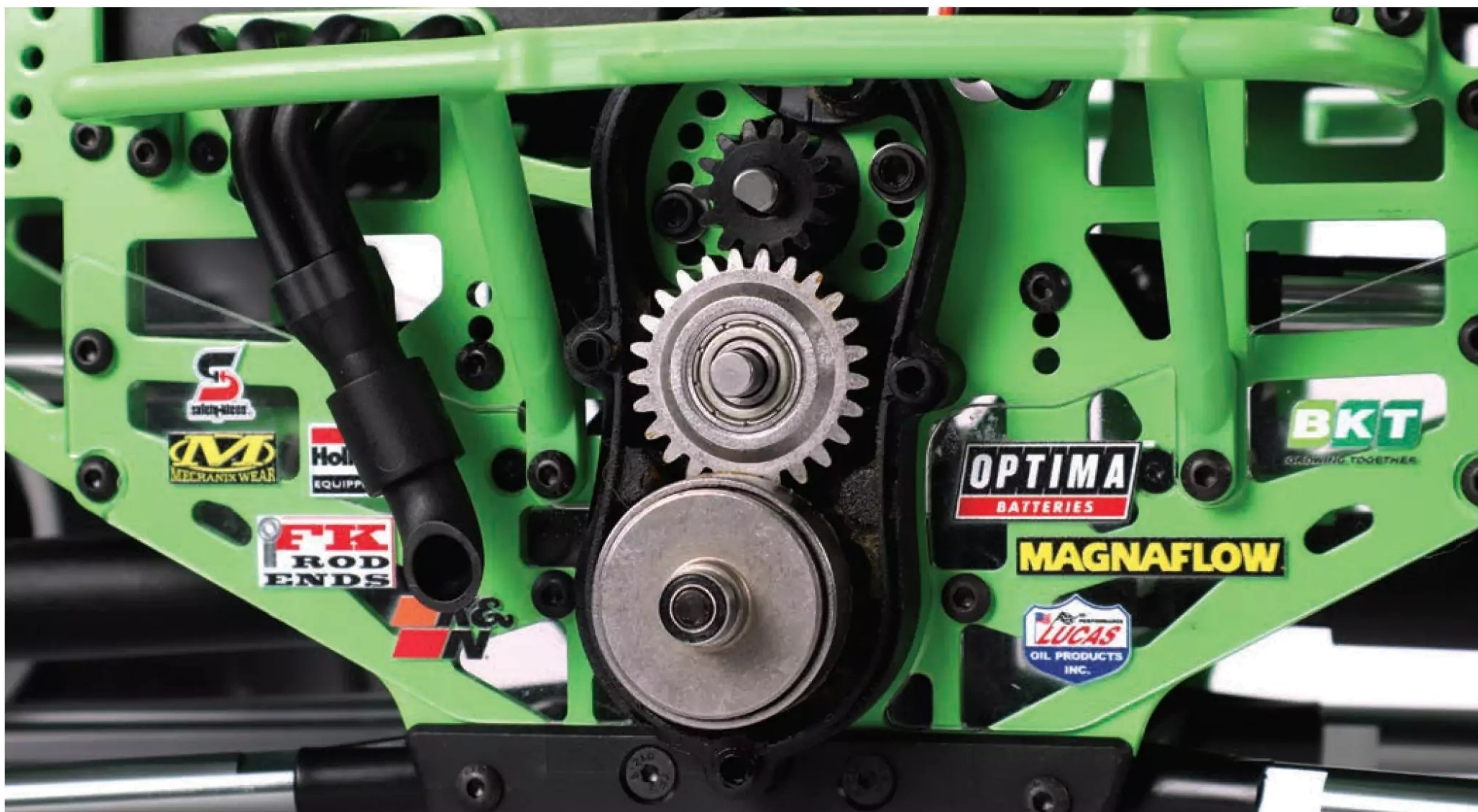
The Losi LMT 2.0 has an updated sway bar that's nothing like the one before. This time the team focused on a torsional-

type sway bar that looks more realistic, and it's made up of several pieces. Arms on the ends replicate the ones found on full-size monster trucks. Those arms are keyed to a metal adapter that connects them to the center bar. The assembly rides on plastic bushings like before. Horizon Hobby will be offering optional center bars so you can adjust the stiffness of the sway bar. For those who want more adjustment, you

can still use the 1.0 bar in the chassis and by using that sway bar; you'll have something that's easier to adjust and can have a lot more tuning options.

ADJUSTABLE SERVO SAVER

Almost all RC vehicles come with a servo saver that's designed to protect the gears of the servo, and that is done through use of a spring. Some servo savers are high-



The entire drivetrain is made up of beefy metal gears that are ready for abuse.

performance units that allow you to adjust the preload, which can technically adjust the feel of it. The servo saver that comes with the Losi LMT 2.0 is unlike anything I've seen before in my 40 years in the hobby. This servo saver is truly adjustable and can be dialed in for freestyle tricks, general bashing, or racing.

It starts off with a metal wedge that mounts to the output of the servo, and that mates with a plastic servo arm that has a similar wedge. When twisted, those two wedges act on each other and that pushes the servo arm against the spring. Stacked on top of the servo arm are several Belleville washers, which are conical-shaped springs that offer a clever way to tune the stiffness of the servo saver.

Their orientation and stacking pattern significantly affect how they perform. When stacked in the same direction (nested), they increase overall stiffness and load capacity.

When stacked in alternating directions (opposed), they allow for more deflection and a softer spring effect. By mixing these configurations, you can precisely adjust how much force the servo saver can absorb before deflecting, offering fine control over protection and responsiveness in your setup. Impressive stuff for a servo saver.

METAL GEAR TRANSMISSION

Like the truck before, the LMT 2.0 has the motor mounted perpendicular to the center line. That helps reduce torque twist, and, depending on how you have the rotation set, the motor can apply pressure to the front or rear shocks under acceleration, therefore applying a slight amount of pressure to the tires.

The chassis has set mounting holes for the motor, and they are matched to the available Mod 1 pinion gears for the truck. This allows you to

quickly and easily set the mesh between the pinion and idler gear inside the external transmission housing. The idler gear is supported by large bearings and that connects to an assembly on the bevel gear shaft at the bottom. The assembly includes Losi's Cush Drive, which is a rubber damper used to absorb shock when the driveline takes a hit, and another gear. Then things move inside the chassis plates where you'll find another housing, but this time the only thing inside is a differential. This version of the truck has an updated, stronger unit that's been borrowed from the TLR 8IGHT-X buggy.

The HD differential housing has an updated design, and inside it you can use metal support plates to keep the bevel gear shafts in place. The differential is sealed to allow for tuning using silicon oil, and it comes from the factory filled with 100k fluid. Beefy plastic body slider driveshafts

connect the center diff to the front and rear axles; the universals are constructed out of metal to increase strength. The axle housings may look the same, but these are the result of several changes made to the first version to keep the axle housings from breaking during extreme use.

This time around the center portion is made up of just two pieces to eliminate a sharp weak point from before. Also included are larger 6x15x5mm pinion bearings; the lower link mounts have been spread to allow more material to secure them, and the screws that hold some of the end pieces on the axle have been changed to 2mm cap heads. Inside the housing is the same updated 100k filled differential from the center section and steel universals in front, while dogbones can be found in the rear.

UPDATED ELECTRONICS

Horizon still includes

Spektrum's DX3 radio, but the function of the A/B button has been updated to control the truck's DRIVE system. The radio also includes a battery level indicator, throttle limit switch and target angle, brake rate, steering trim, and roll trim adjustments. It's paired to a Spektrum six-channel that houses the gyros and so on to control the DRIVE system. You still get a 4S capable Spektrum 130-amp speed control, but this time it's a much better looking black and has an adjustable 6- to 7.4-volt BEC.

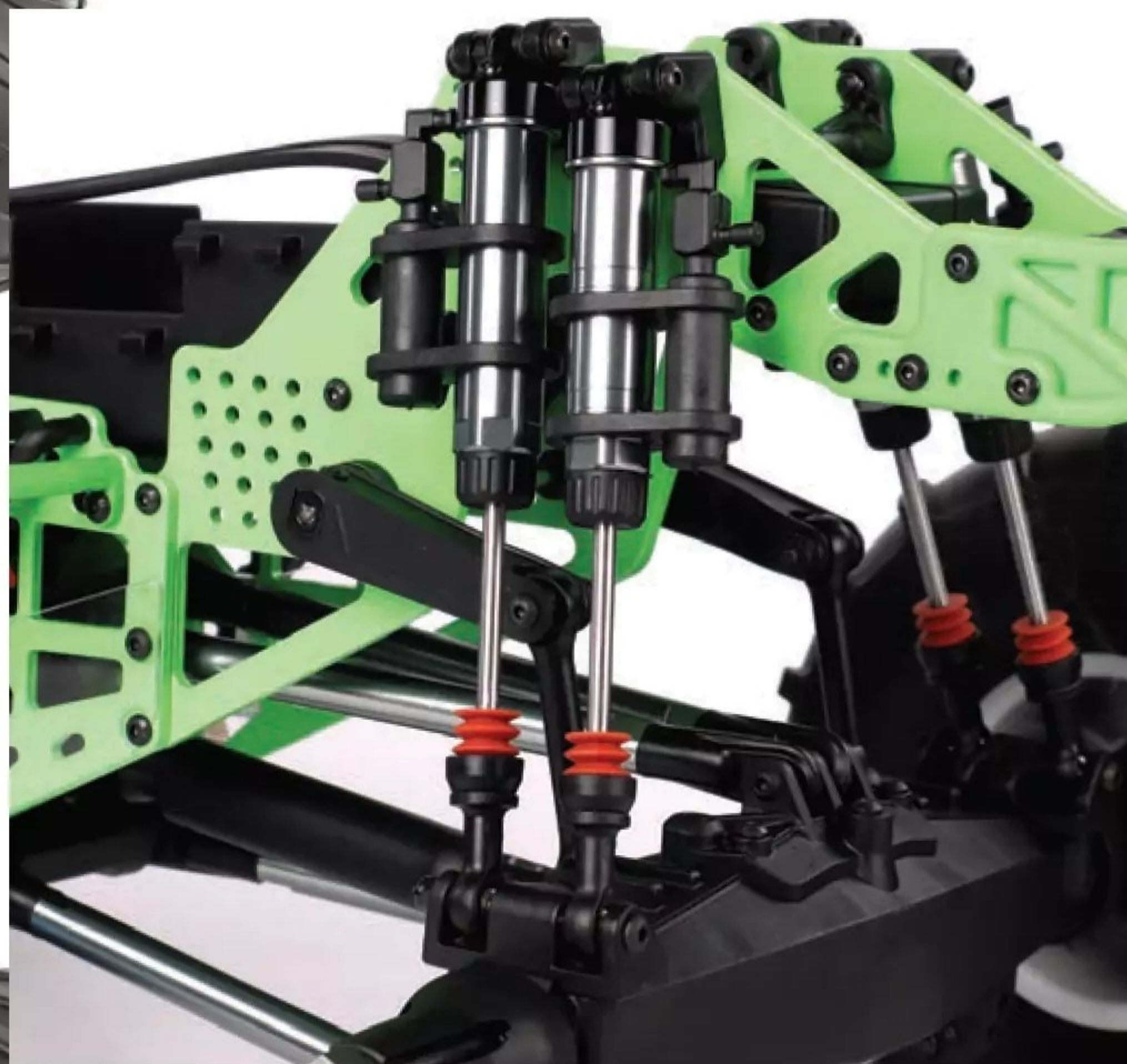
You can still find a 550-size brushless motor in the chassis, but the kV has been lowered to 2800kV from 3150kV for improved torque, and it too has black features now. Horizon stepped things up a bit in the servo department. A stronger one was needed to improve the performance of the heavy truck, and at the same time it's necessary to perform the tricks that are now able to happen

thanks to the DRIVE technology. The torque has been bumped up to 270 oz-in from 201.4 oz-in and it still has metal gears inside. Also new is a metal top to the servo case, and the output spline has been changed to 25T. This servo can also handle up to 8.4 volts, which is pretty impressive for a ready-to-run unit.

PERFORMANCE

Normally I run my solid axle monster trucks in my yard or on a track, but in this case I threw the Losi LMT 2.0 in my truck and headed to a local school where I can run on a variety of surfaces. I set myself up at a picnic table and was immediately happy thanks to the new flip-up body system. I liked what Losi had done before because it hid all of the body clips, but in order for me to use it easily, I had to flip the truck upside down (and depending on the surface scratch up the top of the body) in order to get the body clips off and back on. With the new twist lock system in place I can leave the truck on its tires, and that is a welcome change.

The lower link mounts on the new axle housings are spread wider than before to allow more material to be used around the screws.



The dual shocks on each corner look fantastic, and one has an internal spring to support the weight of the chassis.

Sure, it has two body clips, and those would be easier to get to when the truck's upside-down, but I don't hammer on my stuff and the twist lock alone will be all I need to keep the body in place. I'm not going to say that the product development team at Horizon Hobby set this truck up for freestyle stunts right out of the box because I wasn't there, and I don't know what their intentions were, but I can tell you from my experience and seeing what they did setup-wise this truck is basically set up for freestyle stunts.

So, let's start with some wheelies, stoppies, and bicycle stunts. I put the radio into wheelie mode and headed over to the baseball field where I was greeted by hard-packed loose dirt. That surface and the low-profile tread of the tires didn't get along at all. The tires struggled to get enough grip to get the front or rear of the truck in the air. So with that I went over to the parking lot where I would have an abundance of traction, and this time the magic happened. Now, the DRIVE system doesn't do the trick for you. It does, however, aid in making it happen. This time wheelies were very easy

but sketchy at first. It took some time to get my finger and dial on the Spektrum DX3 radio to the point where I could perform wheelies without crashing. At first the DRIVE system was working hard to keep the truck in the air, but it smoothed out after some adjustments. The same could be said for performing stoppies.

One more bump down on the Spektrum DX3 AB button and I was ready to do bicycle tricks, and those were a little more difficult. This time crashes happened a lot before I could master the trick, but, like the wheelies, once I had the radio and my hands dialed in bicycles were pretty easy to perform. I put the radio into unlimited mode and made my way around the schoolyard. This time the dirt in the baseball field was a blast thanks to the lack of traction. Spinning the tires and drifting around never gets old to me.

Driving around doing some bashing also showed the truck's improved torque and slightly lower top speed. When it comes to bashing, I'm good with having more torque, and I don't need to be a speed demon. There were

various obstacles around the area where I was able to goose the throttle and get that front end to pop up.

Eventually I used my brain and realized that putting the truck back into wheelie mode would let the truck pull and hold wheelies off those bumps, and it did. I really enjoyed this while running over speed bumps. You can't have a truck like this and not jump it, so it was time to put the radio back into unlimited mode and put the truck onto a spot that had a nice natural jump. The suspension is pretty stiff due to the dual shocks and thick fluid from the factory, and that made getting air time pretty easy, but the landings were a bit of a handful. That's to be expected with a slow-to-react suspension.

I used a Spektrum LiPo battery for testing, and I did that mainly because the radio has a built-in indicator that lets you know roughly how much voltage you have left in the tank. This is a feature that I really enjoy. When the battery starts to get low, you know to keep the truck close for when the speed control goes into LiPo mode. Then you don't have a long walk of shame to do.

SPEKTRUM DRIVE TECHNOLOGY

Spektrum's new DRIVE technology is hands-down the most interesting thing about the new Losi LMT 2.0. It combines a lot of features like the new servo, new servo saver, updated radio, special receiver, motor kV, shock oil thickness and more to make it easier for the end user to pull a wheelie, make a stoppie, or bicycle the truck more easily and for longer than you could without the technology.

The DRIVE system doesn't

perform the tricks for you; it supports you. It may take some time to fine-tune the system to match the surface you're on and how your hands and fingers interact with it. A lot of people have been asking whether the Losi LMT 2.0 can be raced with the Spektrum DRIVE technology installed—and the answer is yes. Just switch the system to Unlimited Mode and you're good to go.

The system does not enhance the truck's on-track

performance in any way. Another common question is whether the DRIVE system can be installed in other solid axle monster trucks. The answer is also yes. All you really need is the LMT 2.0 radio and receiver. However, it's important to remember that vehicle setup plays a key role in how the system performs. You may need to make adjustments to ensure the truck can execute its tricks properly.



Horizon Hobby takes monster trucks to the next level with the Losi LMT 2.0—a head-turner from the moment you see it.

LOSI LMT 2.0 VEHICLE SPECS

P/N: LOS04028T1 (green)
 LOS04028T2 (blue)
 MSRP: \$749.99
 URL: losi.com

Chassis: Powdercoated aluminum plate
Shocks: Scale oil-filled w/internal spring
Suspension: 4-link
Drivetrain: 4WD
Body: Grave Digger/Son Uva Digger replica
Wheels: Scale 2.6" with beadlocks
Tires: Scale BKT monster truck replica
Motor: 2800kV 550-size brushless
ESC: 130-amp
Requires: 2-4S LiPo and charger

The Spektrum 130-amp speed control looks great in black and has a lot of adjustment built into it.



FINAL WORD

Horizon Hobby has truly raised the bar with the Losi LMT 2.0. From the moment you set eyes on it, the truck commands attention—and that's before you even pop the body off to appreciate the impressive scale detailing underneath. Every design upgrade feels purposeful, every enhancement well-thought-out.

Let's talk performance. I may not be the kind of driver who lives for stunts, but the new DRIVE system has completely changed the game. Tricks that once took some amount of skill now feel almost effortless—and what's more, they're fun to do. Versatility

is where the LMT 2.0 really shines. Right out of the box, it's a freestyle powerhouse.

Want to bash? A few simple tweaks and you're good to go. Feeling the need for speed? Dial it in a bit more and you've got a competitive race rig. This isn't a one-note truck—it's a multi-talented machine that adapts to your driving style. It's clear that Horizon Hobby has been listening to its customers and paying attention to what they're doing with their LMTs, and they've responded with a truck that's tougher, smarter, and more capable than ever. I was proud of what we accomplished with the original LMT, but the 2.0? I'm absolutely blown away.

TEST BENCH

**RC PRODUCTS
TESTED & EVALUATED**

Text & Images by Joel Navarro



HITECRDX2 1000 DUAL LIPO BALANCE CHARGER & AD350 BATTERY WORKSTATION ANALYZER & DISCHARGER

Throughout your time in RC, the cars you drive will come and go with every new iteration that comes out, but one of the things that stays with you through good race days and bad is your charger.

Hitec is one of the names that has been in the RC game for over 50 years, and the evolution of their high-caliber electronics continues today with their servo and chargers. The RDX2 1000 is their latest flagship offering—a do-it-all charger that

performs at the highest level whether at the track or out in the field.

Loaded with features that include easy-to-use operation, a tire warmer power supply output, an ultra large cooling fan, parallel-port 35 amp charging, and, when paired with the optional AD350 discharger, it can discharge batteries up to 40 amps. We put the RDX2 through its paces in extreme racing conditions, so let's see how it performed!





CHARGER FEATURES

Twin Channel Charger—The dual ports located on the front of the RDX2 allow you to simultaneously charge two batteries up to 20 amps at the same time allowing you to quickly get up and running when you arrive at the track.

Cycle Charging—If you want to improve resistance numbers on one of your race packs, you can set the RDX2 to cycle your battery up to five times at the charge/discharge amps of your choosing. No matter the number of cycles you choose, the process will all be performed automatically until done.

Parallel Charging Mode—Independently, each channel on the RDX2 can charge up to 20 amps per channel, but when you pair the channels in parallel mode you can quickly charge to full with 35 amps of available power. In parallel

mode you will be limited to charging only one battery at a time.

Tire Warmer Power Supply—The adjustable power supply feature for an optional tire warmer unit allows you to set the exact voltage needed feeding off the A-channel of the RDX2 while using the B-channel simultaneously to charge your batteries.

Large Cooling Fan—Both the RDX2 and AD350 Discharger have large cooling fans and exhaust ports that can move large amounts of air through them to keep everything cool even on the hottest outdoor race days.

External Discharge Port Connections—To fully unlock the discharge and analyze features of the RDX2 1000, you'll need to purchase the AD350 Discharger, and it seamlessly connects to the

dedicated port on the side of the RDX2.

ON THE BENCH

Before writing a word of this review, I tested the RDX2 1000 charger for a good month by putting it through its paces at the track and on the trail. In racing situations, I regularly run at 1/10 and 1/8 scale tracks, where the demand is ultra-high trying to squeeze every bit of performance out of your batteries.

At my home 1/10-scale track, SDRC Raceway in Miramar, Calif., the RDX2 set up quickly in my pit area when I arrived late at Wednesday night club racing, allowing me to instantly get my race packs charging while I set up the rest of my pit area and prepped my cars. I needed my 2S LiPo packs to get up to speed right away and yield max punch from the first charge. I set up the RDX2 in



Behind the RDX2 the power hook ups for AC and DC sources as well as the USB Type-C PC Connect plug. Note the large fan that keeps everything nice and cool during operation.

parallel mode that allows max charging of 35 amps and 40 amp discharge with the AD350 discharger connected.

Not going too crazy, I decided on 30-amp charge and 30-amp discharge for one cycle. On the track, the battery felt snappy right from the get-go, which is critical in the intensely competitive 21.5 2WD Buggy class when trying to find tenths of seconds on every lap. On the other end of the spectrum, my 13.5 4WD buggy felt explosive off the line, getting up to top speed quickly coming out of every turn, and it was able to easily clear the big triple jump that saves a few tenths every lap versus jumping it double then single.



On the front end of the RDX2 you'll find XT60 plus for the charge cables, cell balance plugs, and a temperature sensor port used when charging NiMH/NiCd cells.

The next race day was at The Dirt Raceway for some 1/8 racing action. Summer racing is popular in Southern California, with perfect weather almost every day. Not needing such extreme charging techniques because of their massive power, I went a more mild route when charging my 4S LiPo batteries for my electric buggy and truggy. Programming the RDX2 for one cycle, I set the charge and discharge at 15 amps. On this particular day outside temps were reaching 95 degrees, which not only stresses electronics in the cars while running but also electronics in the pits.



Both the RDX2 and AD350 didn't break a sweat thanks to their massive internal fans and exhaust ports that were efficiently moving huge amounts of air through both, keeping them cool all day. As I switched gears for the next RC outing, my girlfriend and I hit up our favorite rock-crawling spot in Oceanside, Calif., on the banks of the San Luis Rey River next to the airport. With the RDX2 connected to my car battery, we effortlessly charged pack after

The optional AD350 unlocks the full potential of the RDX2 1000, allowing discharge rates of up to 40 amps and dramatically dropping the internal resistance of your batteries.



pack as we forged new lines on the rock-embedded concrete surface with our crawlers.

FINAL WORD

In all my years racing since the early '90s, one of my favorite tools in the pit has always been my charger. Whether it's a mellow day of practice or a higher-pressure race day, I always rely on my charger to keep my race program powered. This story continues with the Hitec RDX2 1000, as it kept any battery I charged on it performing at its peak.

The true test for the RDX2 was multiple outdoor racing days, where I thought for sure it would overheat while charging large 4S batteries. But it passed with flying colors thanks to its large cooling fan and stayed ultra-cool all day. The AD350 Discharger and Analyzer isn't totally necessary for your everyday charging, but if you do participate in the crazy world of stock racing it's a must, and it very effectively does its job to help give you the edge over the competition.

In my 30 years of racing I have gone through many chargers, some of those being from Hitec, and it's amazing to see how far they've come with charger technology. If you're in the market for a charger that can do it all, the RDX2 1000 and AD350 Discharger should be high on your list of consideration.

Hitec

**RDX2 1000 Dual LiPo
Balance Charger
P/N: HRC44401
MSRP: \$279**

**AD350 Discharger
and Analyzer SPECS
P/N: HRC44405
\$149 (AD350 Discharger)**

URL: hitecrd.com

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- ✓ The juiciest air-chilled chicken, tastiest pork, and so much more.
- ✓ Every bite is a 100% guaranteed gourmet experience you'll crave.



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- 4 Boneless Pork Chops (5 oz.)
- 4 Gourmet Jumbo Franks (3 oz.)
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- 4 Caramel Apple Tartlets (4 oz.)
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SPECIAL PROJECT: ***BLACK*** ***SPECIAL***

RCCA'S EDITOR'S CUSTOM TAMIYA AVANTE MK.II

Text by James York
Images by Jerry Tsai

At RC Car Action, we're all about personalizing the RC experience. Whether it's a set of aftermarket wheels or a complete scratch-built chassis, customization is at the heart of the hobby. While we love showcasing the latest and greatest builds from around the hobby-sphere, we thought it would be fun to turn the camera inward for a change. What RC rides sit on the shelves—or get regular dirt time—with our own editors? This time, we're diving

into one of Editorial Director Jerry Tsai's favorite off-road buggies.

Jerry's all-time favorite? The Tamiya Avante. The original Avante was (and still is) an engineering feat that can't be replaced, but Tamiya has since released kits that prolong the Avante family tree. One such model is the Avante Mk.II. Jerry's custom-built Avante Mk.II "Black Special" is a machine that merges nostalgia with real-world usability.







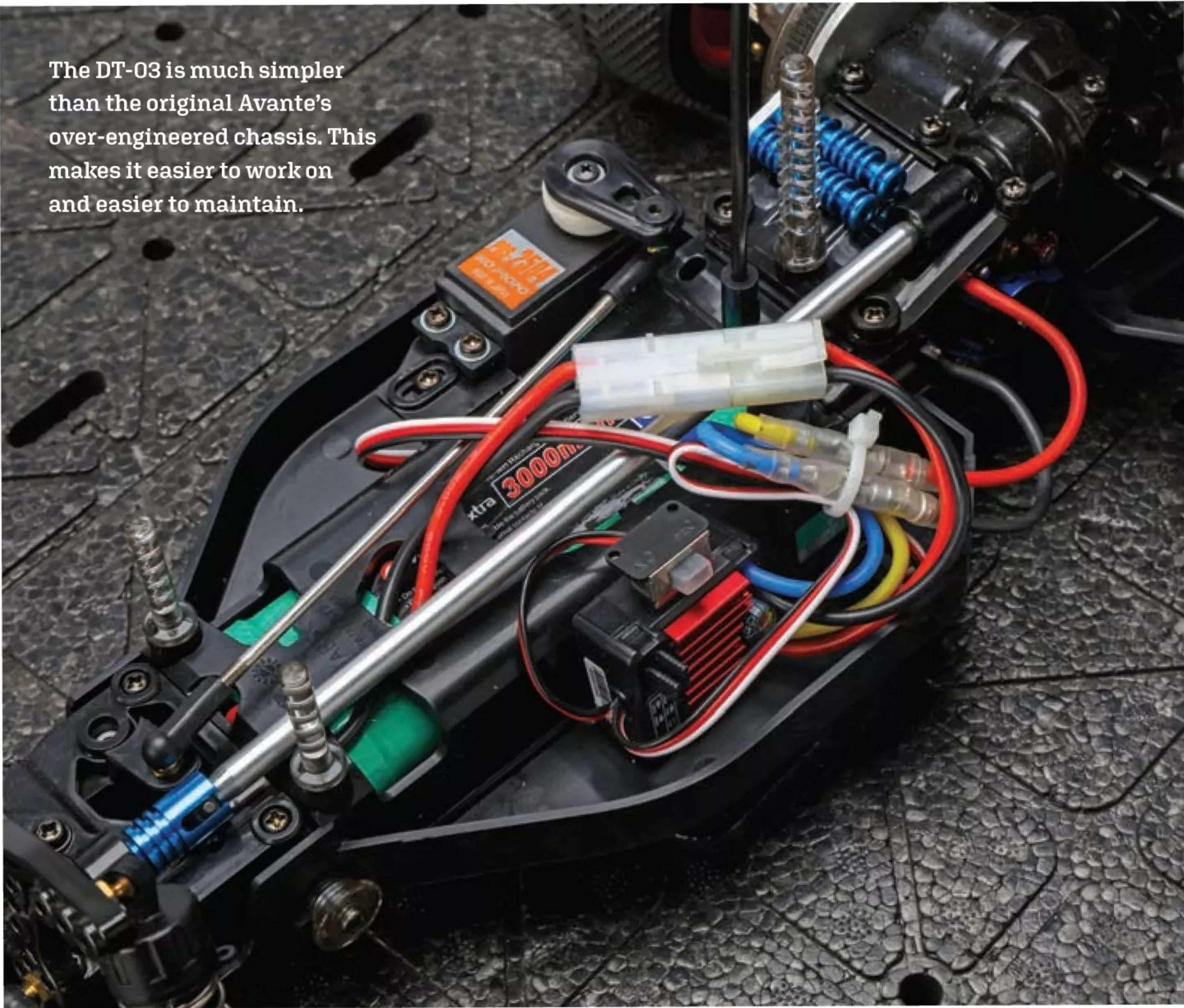
FEELING NOSTALGIC

“The Avante has always had a grip on me,” Jerry shares. “The original 1988 model hit hobby shop shelves when I was in middle school. I still remember seeing it for the first time—its futuristic looks were unlike anything else. It looked like an F1 car and a fighter jet had an off-road baby.”

That admiration didn’t fade. Eventually, Jerry worked hard and saved enough to pick up an original Avante, build it, and run it every day. “It was complex, expensive, and prone to breaking—especially on landings or light impacts. Still, it was my favorite.”

Obtaining rare out of production Tamiya Hop-Up parts including the clear plastic pieces seen here as well as the blue aluminum heat sinks were an epic journey but worth the effort.





The DT-03 is much simpler than the original Avante's over-engineered chassis. This makes it easier to work on and easier to maintain.

Years later, when Tamiya re-released the Avante in 2011, he jumped at the chance to relive those memories. But this time he was cautious. The high price tag and fragile nature of the design made him think twice about putting the 2011 re-release through too much abuse.

Enter the Avante Mk.II. "It's not the same car mechanically," Jerry says. "It shares the name and takes design cues from the original, but it's built on the DT-03 chassis, which is far more rugged. It can take hits that would've shattered the old one. So I figured—why not have my fun with the Mk.II



TAMIYA HAS SINCE RELEASED KITS THAT PROLONG THE AVANTE FAMILY TREE. ONE SUCH MODEL IS THE AVANTE MK.II.



Recreating the iconic Avante Black Special look only took some black, silver and smoke Tamiya Color paint as well as a set of neon pink wheels. The results are sharp.

and keep the 2011 Avante as a display piece?”

AN INSPIRATION

And that’s exactly what he did. But being a long-time hobbyist with a flair for visual continuity, Jerry couldn’t leave the Mk.II stock. One of his favorite versions of the original Avante was the Avante Black Special—an ultra-slick edition with a blacked-out body and neon pink wheels. That became the inspiration for his modern build.

“Both the original Black Special and the Mk.II actually started life as Tamiya Mini 4WD cars,” Jerry explains. “That’s another hobby of mine, so it just made sense to bring the look of the Black Special to my Mk.II.”

The transformation involved Tamiya Color sprays—black with silver accents for the body and smoked tint for the wing. Decals were a mix of those included with the Mk.II and reproductions of the original Avante graphics from MCI Racing. The stock tires were re-mounted on hot pink Tamiya

dish wheels to complete the Black Special tribute.

THE MECHANICALS

But the build wasn’t just skin deep. Jerry added a handful of carefully selected hop-ups to improve durability and drivability without straying too far from the car’s vintage spirit. Highlights include a Tamiya DF-03 heat sink bar, slipper clutch, center one-way set, and a smoked gear cover.

For electronics, he stayed firmly in the old-school camp

with a brushed Tamiya Super Stock TZ 23T motor and a NiMH battery, all wired up with classic Tamiya connectors. A Hobbywing Quicrun 1060 brushed ESC provides control, while a KO Propo EX-2 radio system with matching KR-241FH receiver and PDS-2504 servo keeps things precise.

"I wanted it to feel like the RCs I grew up with," he says. "Brushed

motor, NiMH battery, Tamiya plugs—the works. That's how I remember it." And how does it perform? "It's a blast to drive. I take it out to parks and parking lots just to cruise around. It gives me my Avante fix, but I'm not worried about breaking rare parts. That's the real beauty of the Mk.II—it's fun, tough, and still looks the part."

FINAL WORD

Jerry's Avante Mk.II "Black Special" might not have the intricate, fragile layout of the original, but that's part of the point. It's a modern machine that lets him enjoy the magic of the Avante anytime he wants—with far fewer repair bills. That's a ride worth holding onto.



The buggy's suspension was lowered to give it a more aggressive stance.

Radio Control Car Action

RETRO REVIEWS

As RC Car Action approaches its 40th anniversary next year, we're taking a nostalgic journey through the pages of our past. As the first—and longest-running—media outlet dedicated to the radio control hobby, RC Car Action has chronicled decades of innovation, trends, and unforgettable builds.

In this installment of RC Car Action Retro Reviews, we visit the archives and crack open the July 1995 and July 2000 issues to revisit a pair of standout reviews from 25 and 30 years ago. It's both entertaining and enlightening to see what's stood the

test of time—and what now reads as pure RC nostalgia.

First, we rewind to July 2000 for a look at Bad Monkey Jr., a custom monster truck build by Mark Filipowicz, covered by none other than Kevin Hetmanski—a name still familiar to readers today. Then, we go back another five years to spotlight Team Losi's Double-XT, RC Car Action's Truck of the Year in 1995. Talk about nostalgia!

As we count down to our 40th birthday, we look forward to sharing more gems from the RC Car Action archive. Until then, enjoy this blast from the past!



100 CUSTOM-BUILT RC TRUCK

action

NITRO BURNING
DIRT MACHINE
FIRST TEST—page 56

YOU VOTED—
NOW SEE
WHO WON!

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TRANSMITTER, ESC, BODY, BATTERY, DRIVER AND MORE

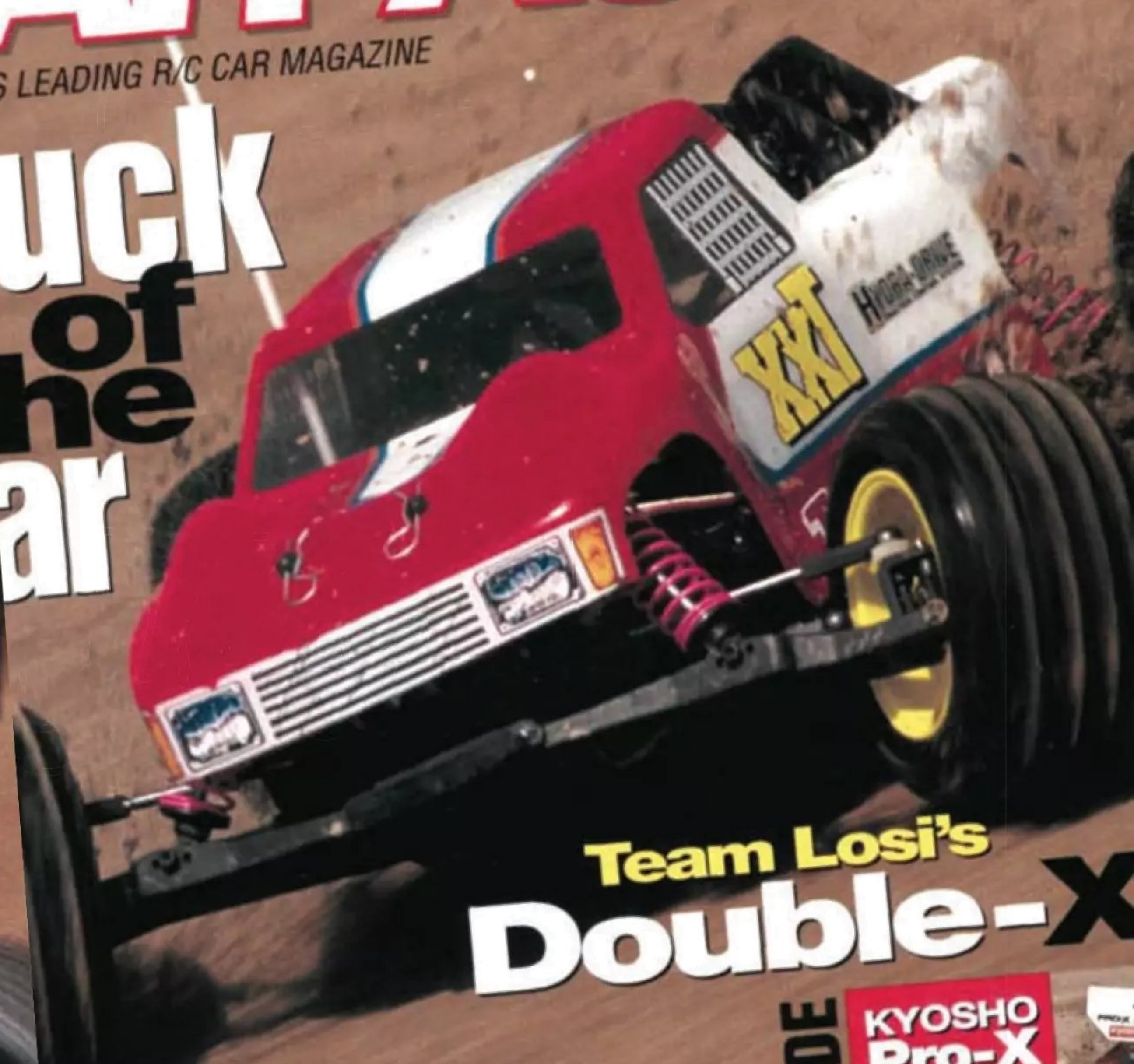


Radio Control CAR ACTION

THE WORLD'S LEADING R/C CAR MAGAZINE

Truck of the Year

34 Extreme
Mods!
p.62



Team Losi's
Double-X

HOW TO Make
Wings & Spoilers

RAGIN' RACING



What's
new in
the pits

TESTED INSIDE

KYOSHO
Pro-X



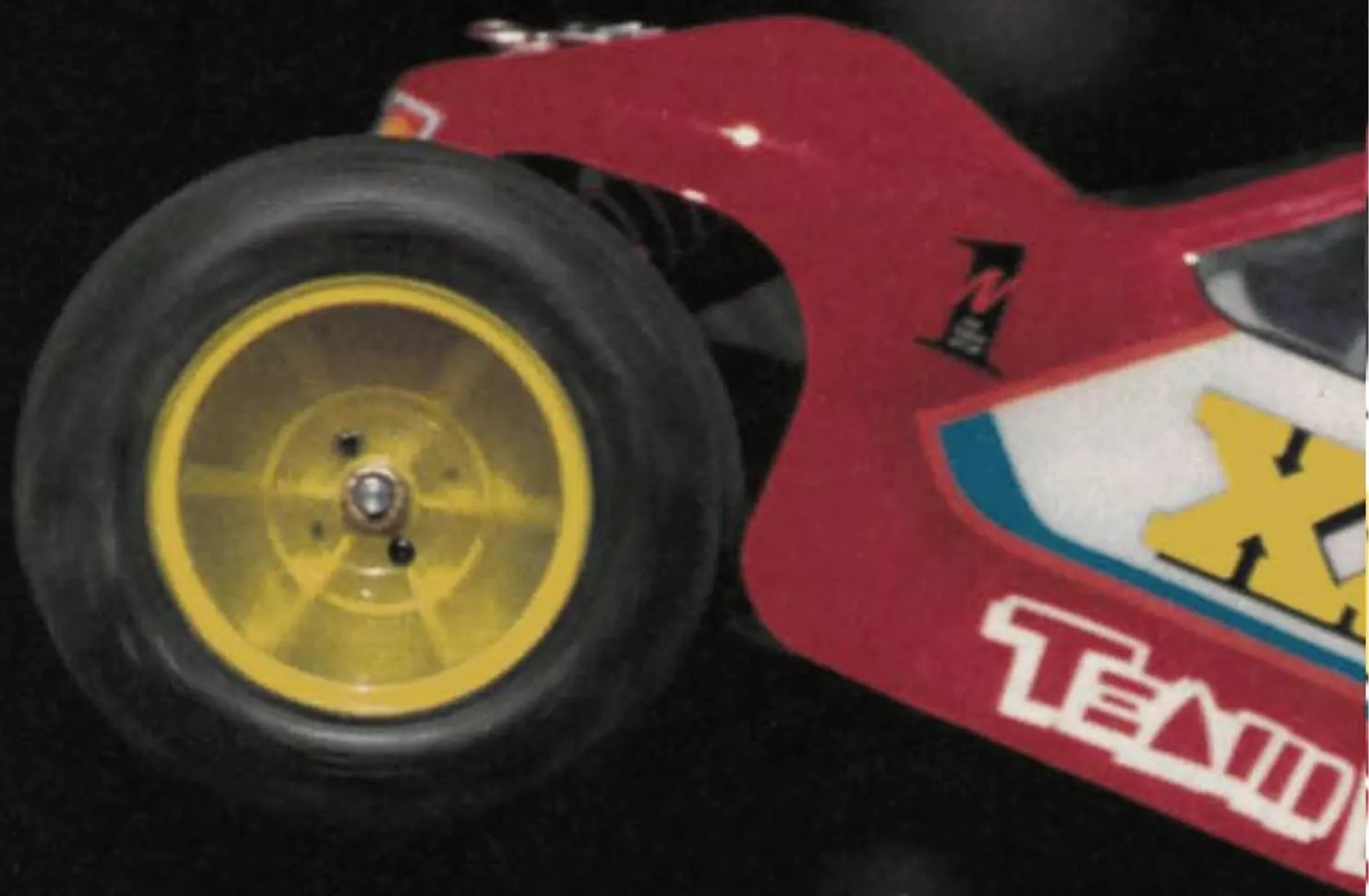
S&K
ELC
2000

DYNAMITE
Pro-Start

SCHUMACHER
Active
Caster
System

TRUCK OF THE YEAR

Radio Control Car Action



by George Gonzalez

ONCE AGAIN, election season was upon us. As usual, it was difficult to choose which truck would earn the honor of becoming *R/C Car Action* magazine's Truck of the Year. The sophistication that distinguishes most of today's pro-level racing trucks made choosing one over the others a real challenge.

But the folks at Team Losi* weren't surprised when they heard the news.... After all, the

Double-XT is the current ROAR and NORRCA National Championship-winning truck, and its design is based on that of the highly successful Double-X buggy. The Double-XT is the result of months of intense research and development by the Team Losi design staff and the factory racing team. It represents the cutting edge of 1/10-scale electric R/C racing technology, and we are pleased to name it our 1995 Truck of the Year.

RADIO CONTROL CAR ACTION

THE ROAR
AND NORRCA
NATIONAL
CHAMPIONSHIP
WINNING TRUCK
IS HONORED

RETRO REVIEWS



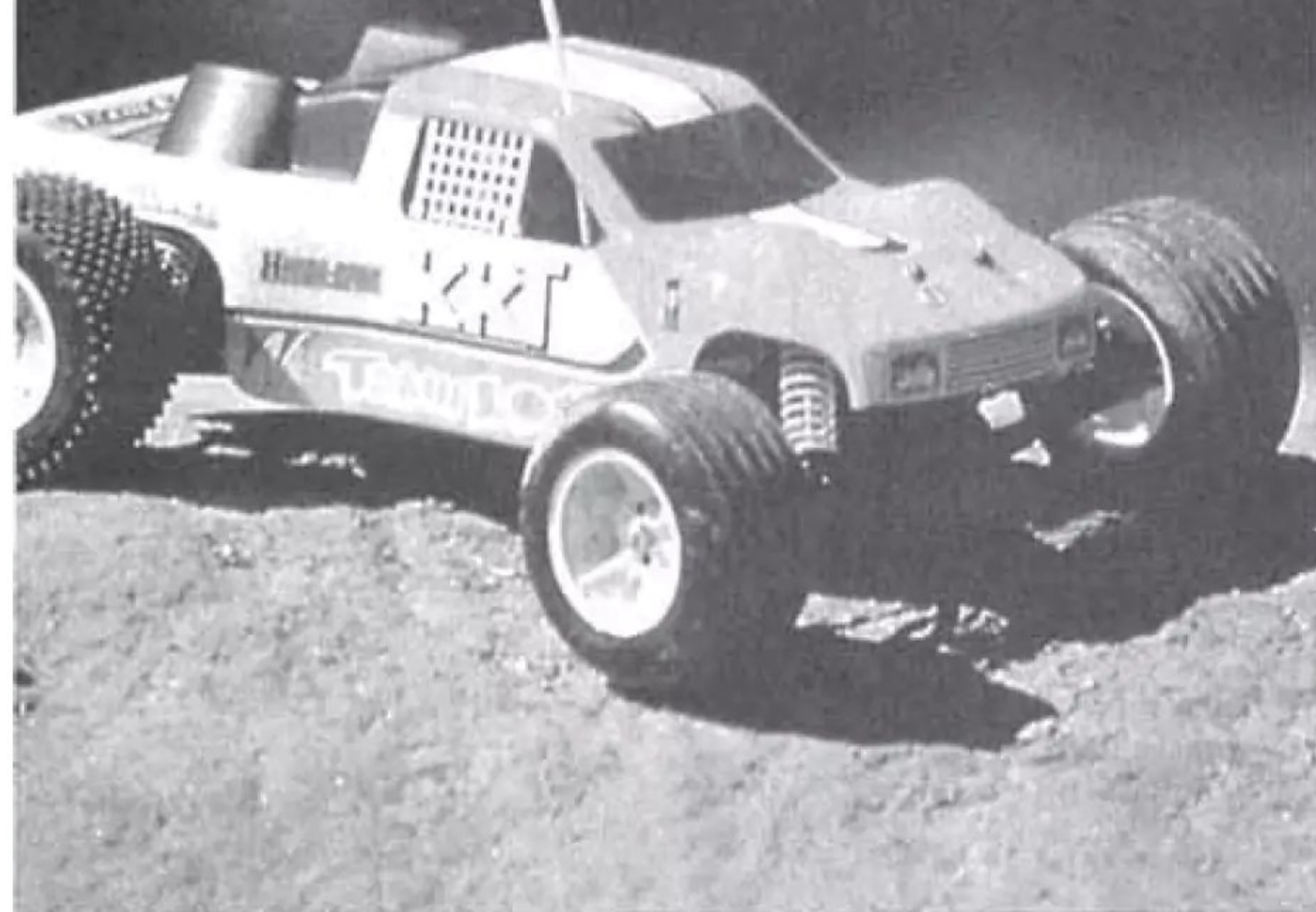
PHOTOS BY JOHN HOWELL

TEAM LOSI

Double-XT

JULY 1995

TRUCK of the YEAR



THE KIT

By far the truck's most convenient feature is its modular design. As with the buggy, you can easily remove the tranny by removing four screws; remove two more screws and the entire rear end is in your hand. The truck's swing-away front end allows easy access to the steering servo and bellcrank assembly. The modular design really helps when maintenance time comes around, and cleanup has never been so simple and thorough.

Molded out of Losi's super-rigid Stiffezell material, the Double-XT's chassis is a longer version of the "Losi-G" (low center of gravity) chassis. It features the same 30-degree front kick-up angle and raised sides as the Double-X chassis. These raised sides give the truck approximately 1/2 inch of extra ground clearance on each side and that helps to prevent the chassis from dragging on the track during hard cornering, or when negotiating rough terrain.

The Double-XT's silky-smooth steering-bellcrank system features a built-in servo-saver and feels super-tight without a hint of slop—absolutely topnotch. The chassis also features an extra-long battery compartment that allows you to position the battery either forward for more steering, or toward the rear for more rear traction.

Super-long suspension arms, which are molded out of the same super-rigid material as the chassis, are on all four corners. The front arms are attached to the front bulkhead by means of hinge pins, and they're secured at the ends with a molded hinge-pin brace; the hinge-pin brace is attached with E-clips and keeps the front suspen-

sion tight. The outside camber-link can be mounted on the top, instead of on the side, of the new spindle-carriers. This makes front camber-link adjustment much more manageable. Losi's Hard Body hard-anodized aluminum shocks are included, as is a complete set of Losi Pink springs with a soft, 2.3 rating.

The rear pivot support is molded into the suspension arm mounts and gives the arms 4 degrees of anti-squat. The molded rear hub carriers provide 3.5 degrees of toe-in. Optional pivot supports and rear hub carriers

are available in various degrees of anti-squat and rear toe-in. The molded front and rear shock towers are extremely rigid and offer a multitude of camber-rod mounting holes for a virtually unlimited range of "adjustability."

The Double-XT's super-smooth tranny features a new laydown design with a slightly lower center of gravity than the previous retrofit gearboxes. A lower 2.61:1 final drive ratio is used on the truck (the buggy's final drive ratio is 2.19:1). The lower final gear ratio is better suited to the truck's taller tires.

Losi's patented Hydra Drive system is standard, as is an 88-tooth, 48-pitch spur gear. The truck also includes a set of universal dogbones that transfer the power to the ground smoothly and without binding.

Gold-compound step pins are included for the rear, and a set of HT-ribbed tires are included for the front. The same one-piece nylon rear wheels as are found on the truck's predecessor, the LX-T, are carried over to the Double-XT, but a set of new, offset wheels are used up front to compensate for the truck's super-wide stance. The truck also includes an eye-catching new body that fits so tightly that it looks like it has been vacuum-formed over the chassis.

BLUEPRINTING A WINNER

The Double-XT's instruction manual is among the best in the business. The pages are filled with excellent illustrations, exploded-view diagrams and life-size parts-identification charts that make building the truck an enjoyable experience.

The parts are well-organized in numbered bags, and each bag includes all the

Specifications

Scale 1/10
List price \$349.95

DIMENSIONS

Overall length 15.5 in.
Wheelbase 11 in.
Front width 12 in.
Rear width 12.6 in.

WEIGHT (gross, ready to run) ... 4lb., 2 oz.

CHASSIS

Type 3-piece modular
Material Molded composite Stiffezell

DRIVE TRAIN

Type Sealed gear drive with 2.61:1 reduction
Primary Pinion/spur
Transmission 3-gear Double-X tranny
Differential Racing ball diff
Slipper clutch Friction with Hydra Drive
Bearings/bushings Sealed ball bearings

SUSPENSION (F/R)

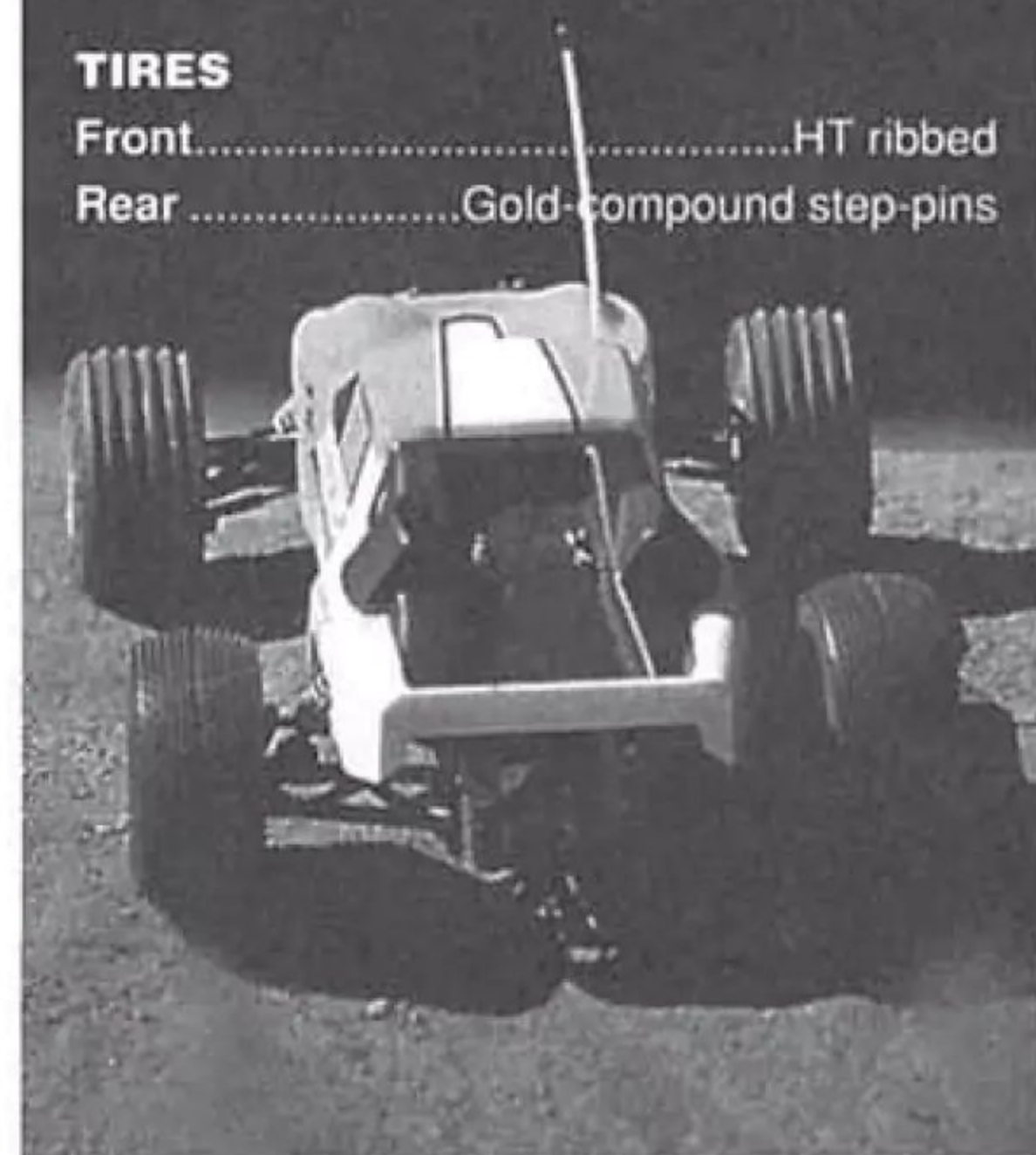
Type Independent A-arm with adjustable camber link
Damping Oil-filled, coil-over shocks

WHEELS (F/R)

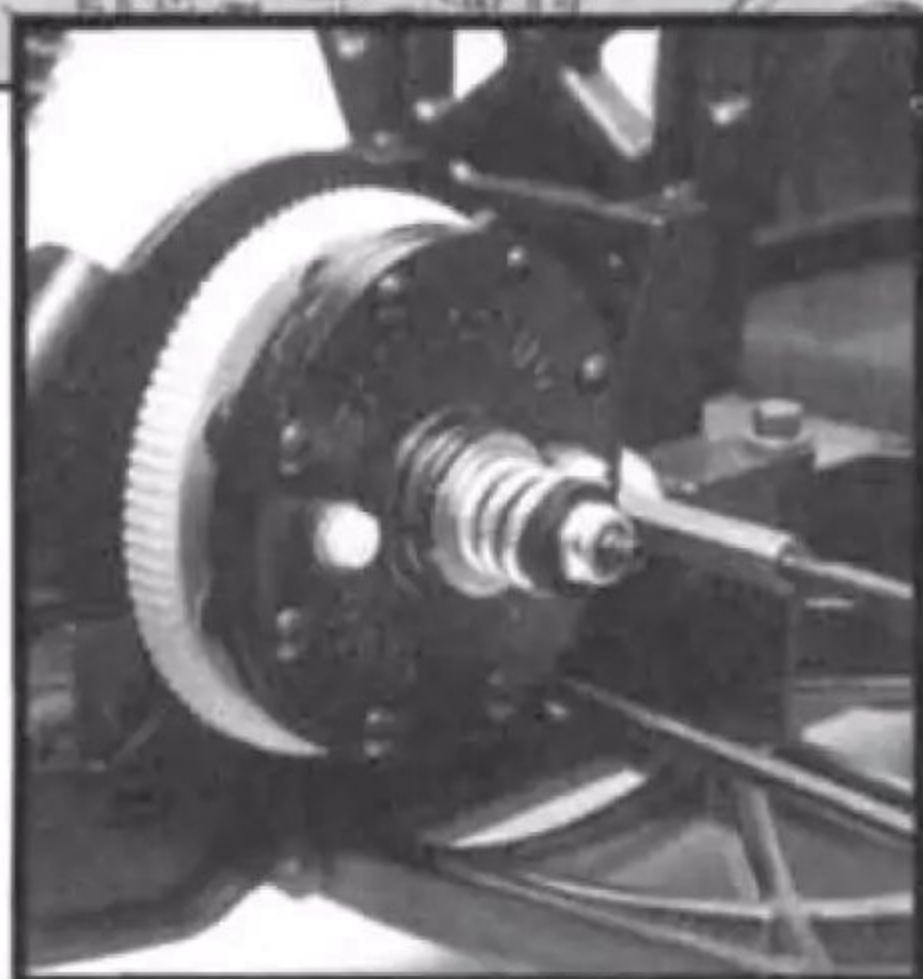
Type One-piece plastic with Lexan dirt shields
Dimensions (DxW) 2.2x2 in.

TIRES

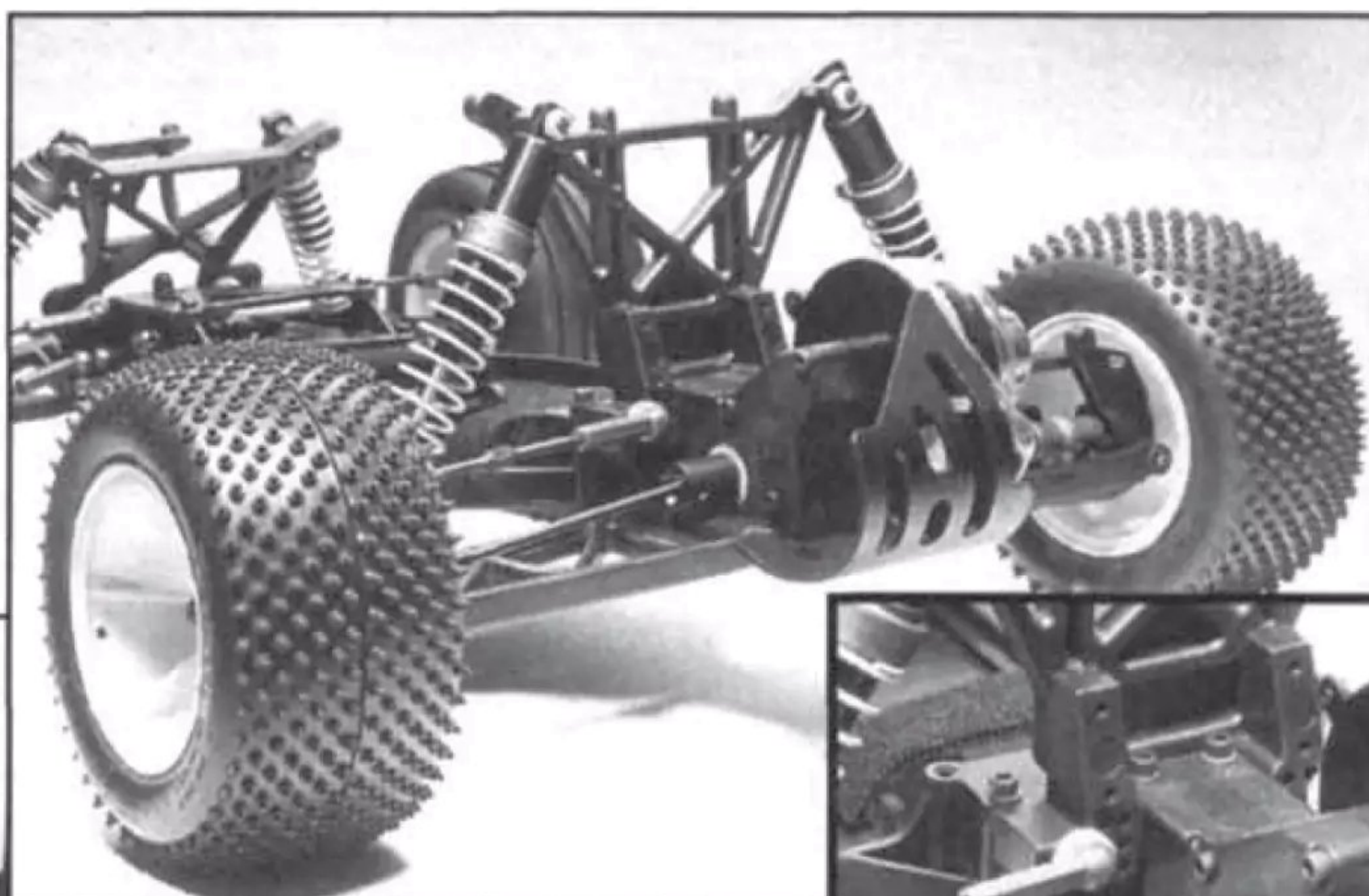
Front HT ribbed
Rear Gold-compound step-pins



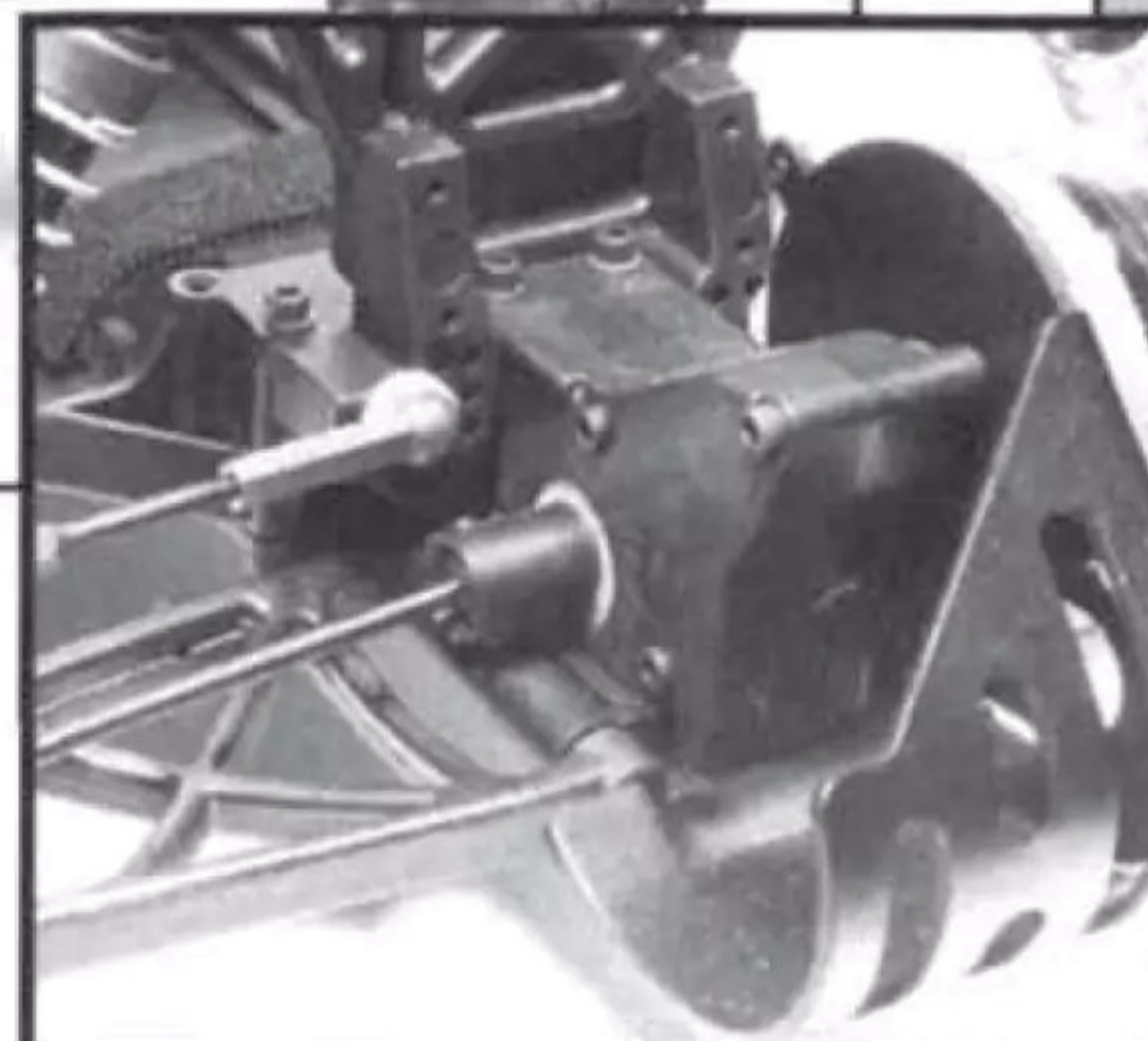
necessary parts and screws to complete a particular section in the instruction manual (no sifting through screw bags, or left-over parts with this kit!). The manual also includes a glossary of R/C terms and an informative section titled, "Tips from the Team." This section includes tips on: front toe-in/out; rear toe-in/anti-squat; front and rear ride height; shock and camber rod mounting locations; ackerman and adjusting the ball diff and slipper/Hydra Drive. Such information is crucial for beginners



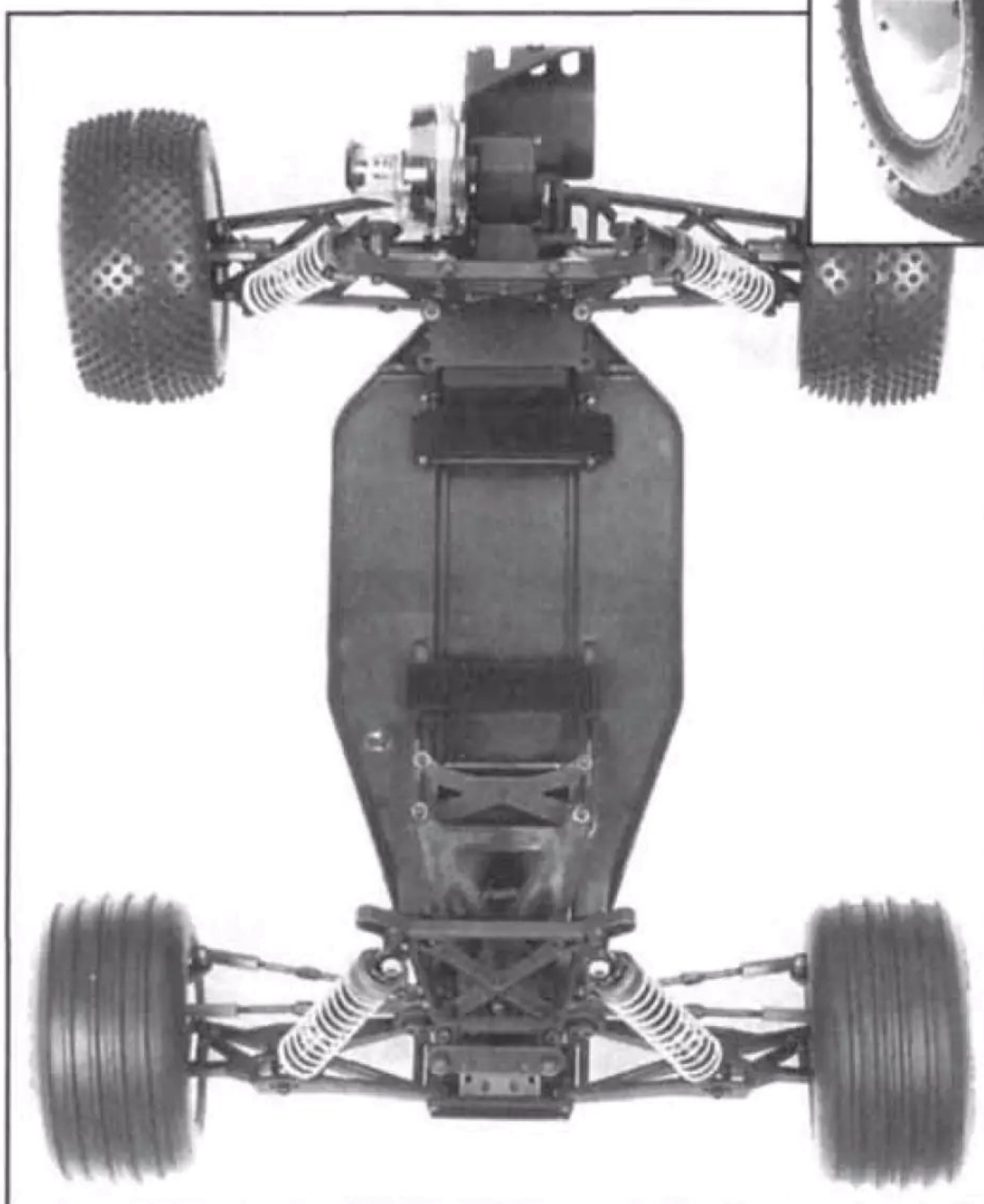
Team Losi's Hydra Drive unit is standard. By removing a few screws from the rear-end you can remove the entire rear-end assembly from the chassis.



Above: extra-long suspension arms and Hard Body shocks are also visible from the rear. Gold-compound Step Pin tires help grab rear traction.

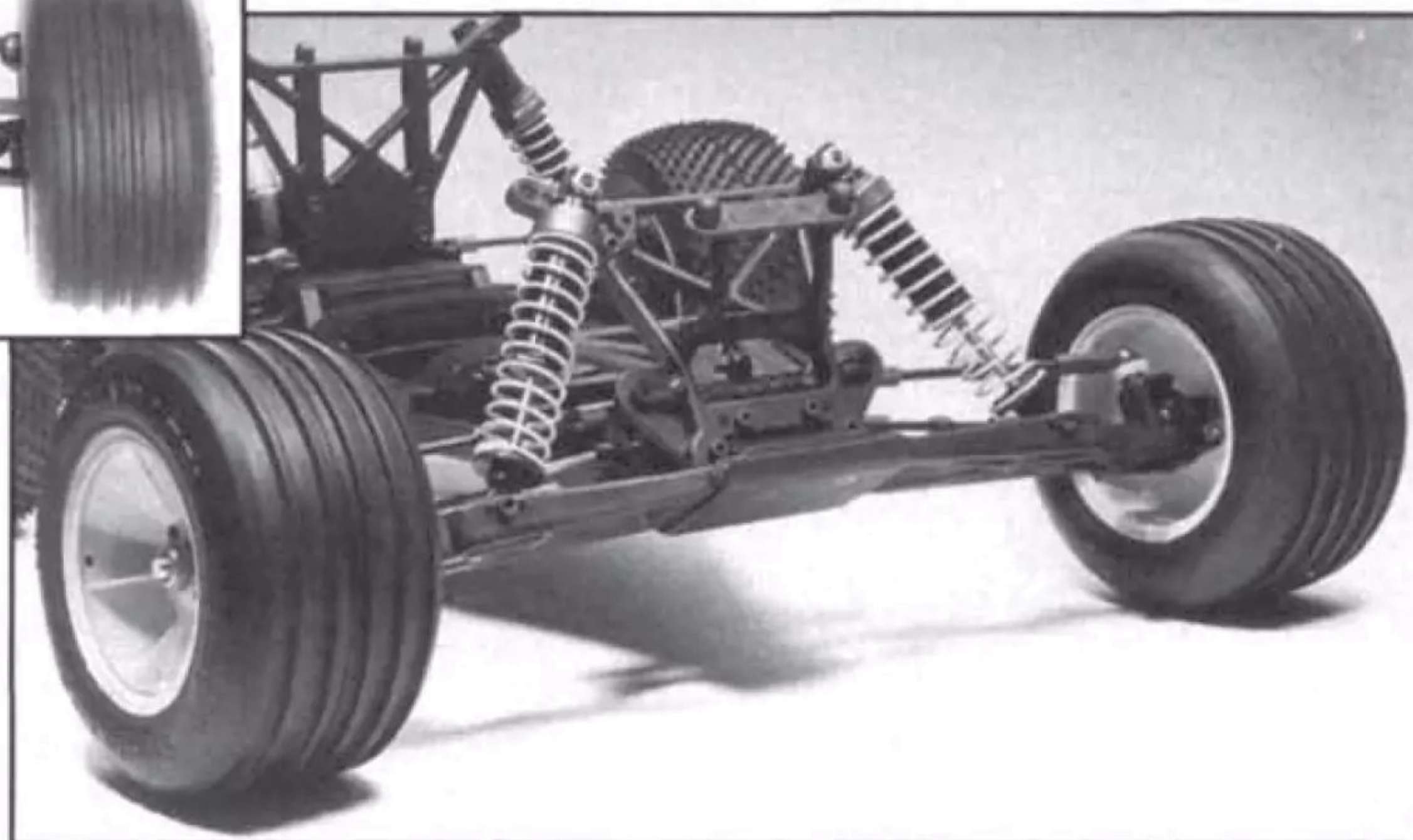


The Double-XT's tranny has a 2.61:1 drive ratio, and its case has been reconfigured for a lower center of gravity. Molded shock towers have proved extremely durable. Camber-rod placement holes abound on the rear bulkhead.



Below: from the front, you can see that the truck has long, rigid suspension arms as well as the company's hard-anodized Hard Body shocks. HT-ribbed front tires help the truck carve the right line around the track.

The Double-XT's instruction manual is among the best in the business. The pages are filled with excellent illustrations, exploded-view diagrams and life-size parts-identification charts that make building the truck an enjoyable experience.



and provides useful points of reference for experts.

The kit's parts are of the highest quality and fit together extremely well. Because of the truck's sophistication, however, beginners might need to call on a more experienced modeler for help with certain steps (especially steps that involve attaching the swing-away front end and building the diff, slipper and Hydra Drive).

Team Losi offers an excellent factory-support program, which includes the

"Tech Talk" columns in every issue of *R/C Car Action*. Every month, Team Losi reveals some hot new setup tips that have worked successfully for their factory drivers. Team Losi also uses these columns to inform racers about the latest and greatest products that enhance the truck's already superb performance. If all that's not enough, you can call Team Losi directly and talk with the factory drivers about which setup would be best for your particular track.

The Double-XT has won countless national titles around the world and is sure to win many more. I've been racing my Double-X buggy for more than a year, and I'm impressed with its handling, speed and reliability. After building and testing the Double-XT truck.... Well, you know the rest.

* Addresses are listed alphabetically in the Index of Manufacturers on page 166.

HOME BUILT

Bad Monkey Jr.

by Kevin Hetmanski

Most of the homebuilt project cars that have been featured in *RC Car Action*, no matter how highly modified, are usually based on some type of mass-produced, readily available RC vehicle. This is usually the best way to start a project, but it wasn't the path chosen by Mark Filipowicz, whose "Bad Monkey Jr." is the subject of this feature.

Mark decided to design and build an RC vehicle from scratch, drawing on his experience in full-size 4-wheeling. His truck started as an idea on January 4, 1999, and by January 2000, it was a reality.

Mark designed each of the more than 200 custom parts using state-of-the-art CAD (computer-aided design) software, and he manufactured them one at a time using many highly sophisticated commercial machines. The long list of details that went into the conception and realization of this project could fill volumes; we don't have nearly enough pages to give you the year-long play-by-play, but our Reader's Digest version still captures the key points of this most incredible project. Dig in!



The Bad Monkey has a very "busy" layout. This truck was 90-percent scratch-built, but it looks like a factory production kit, if you ask me.

RADIO CONTROL CAR ACTION

PHOTOS BY WALTER SIDAS



SPECIFICATIONS

Length: 18 in.
Width: 14 $\frac{1}{4}$ in.
Wheelbase: 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.
Weight: 19.25 lb.
Design time: 300 hours
Machining time: 330 hours
Suspension travel: 2 in.
Motors: 2 Trinity 17-turn Sapphire
Radio: Futaba Magnum FP-3PJ PCM
Servos: 2 Futaba S9204
ESC: Tekin 420-G2
Battery: 6-cell Sanyo 4400mAh D-cell saddle pack

Total cost: approximately \$4,200 for materials, components, electronics and plating.

Total time to build: one year from inspiration to completion. Mark had the design and prints done in February and started to cut metal on February 20, 1999 (his 29th birthday). The design evolved, and Mark made some changes after the first test drive on September 14, 1999. The original design had a single steering servo.

The hours noted above don't include the time spent documenting the building process, almost in almost in real time on his website. Marks says, "I couldn't even guess how much time is in the website, which got a complete



Mark's machined machine

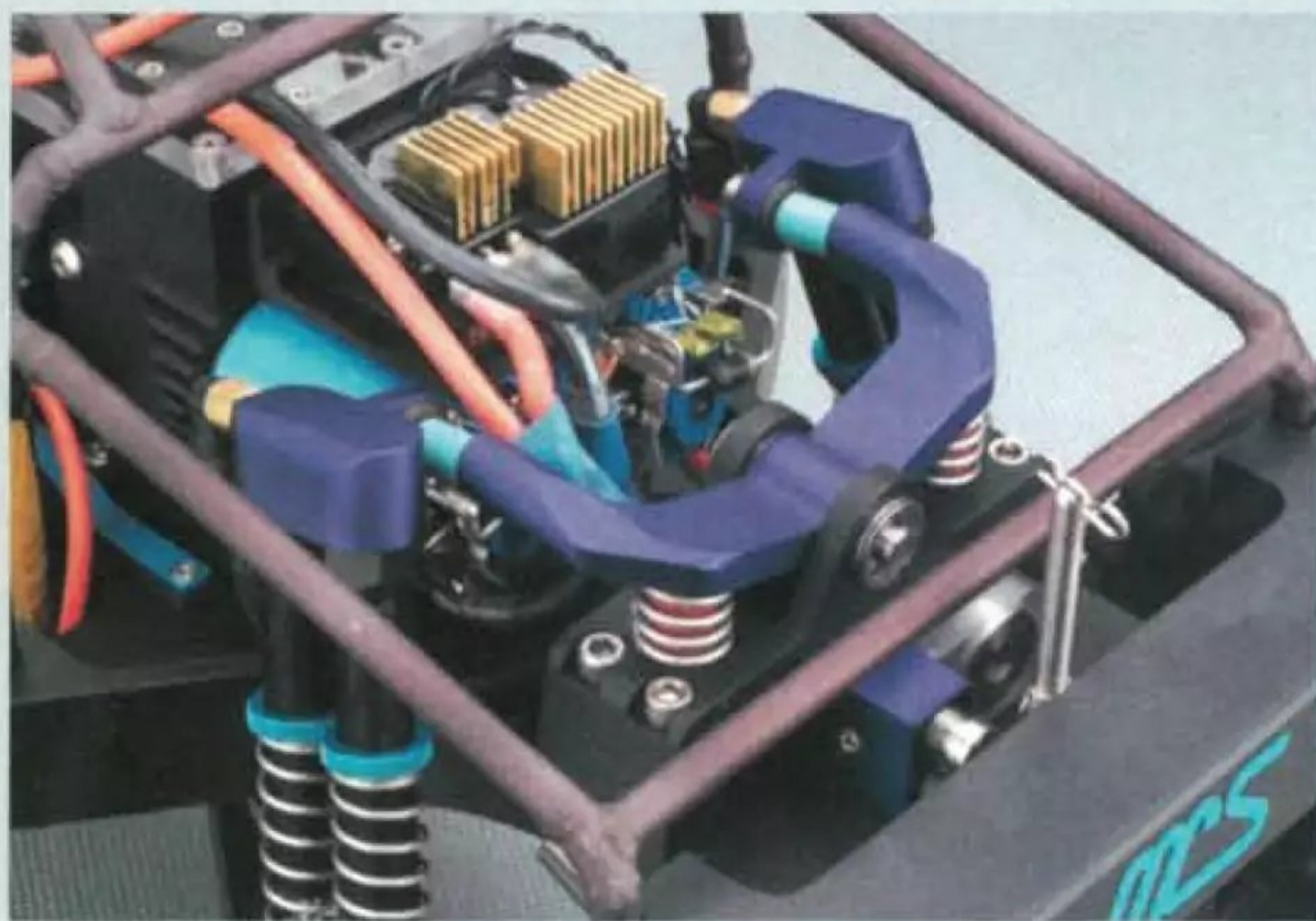
Meet Mark Filipowicz, the Bad Monkey Jr.'s creator/builder—a true craftsman.

overhaul with a new format and tons of new content on January 24, 2000."

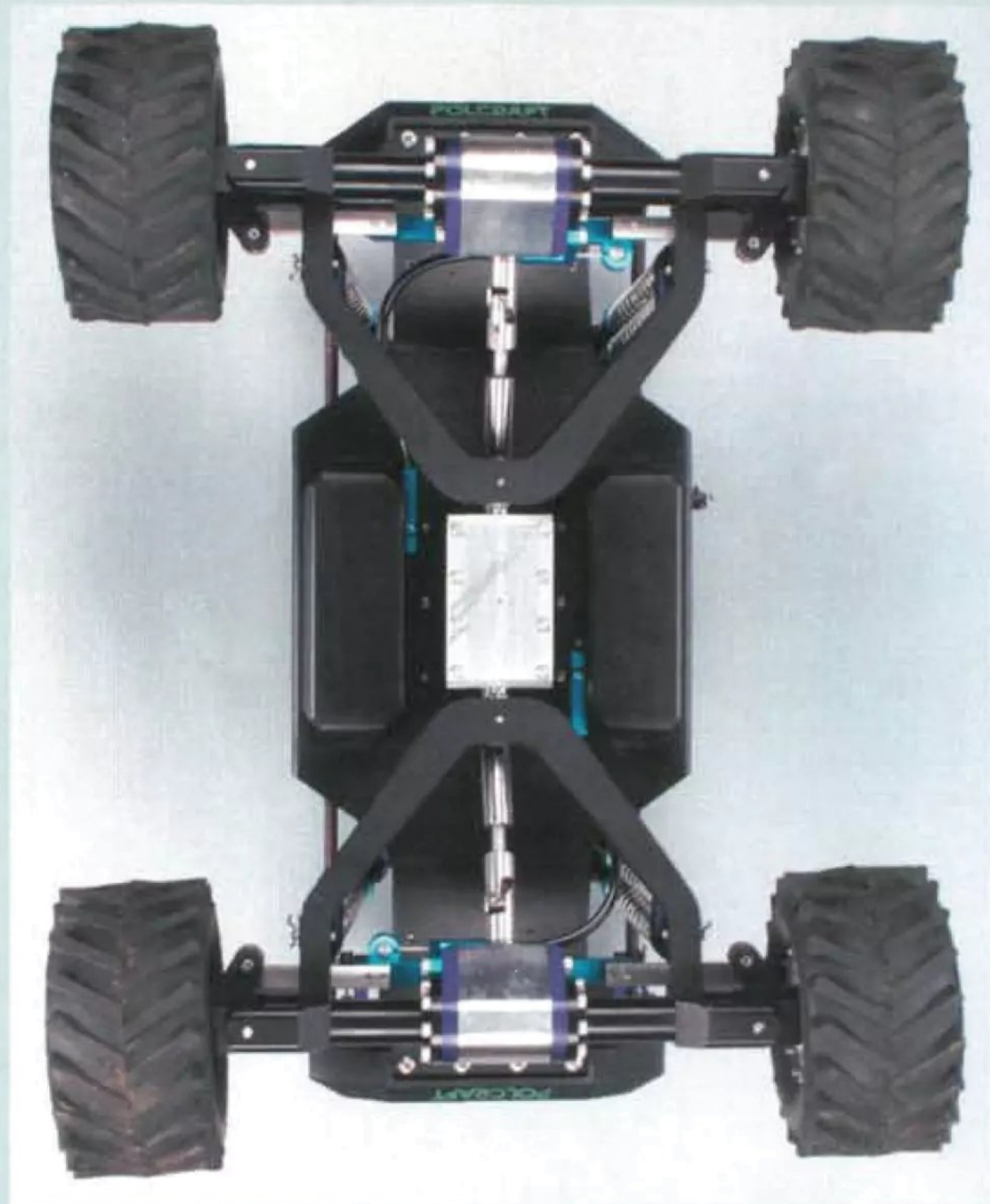
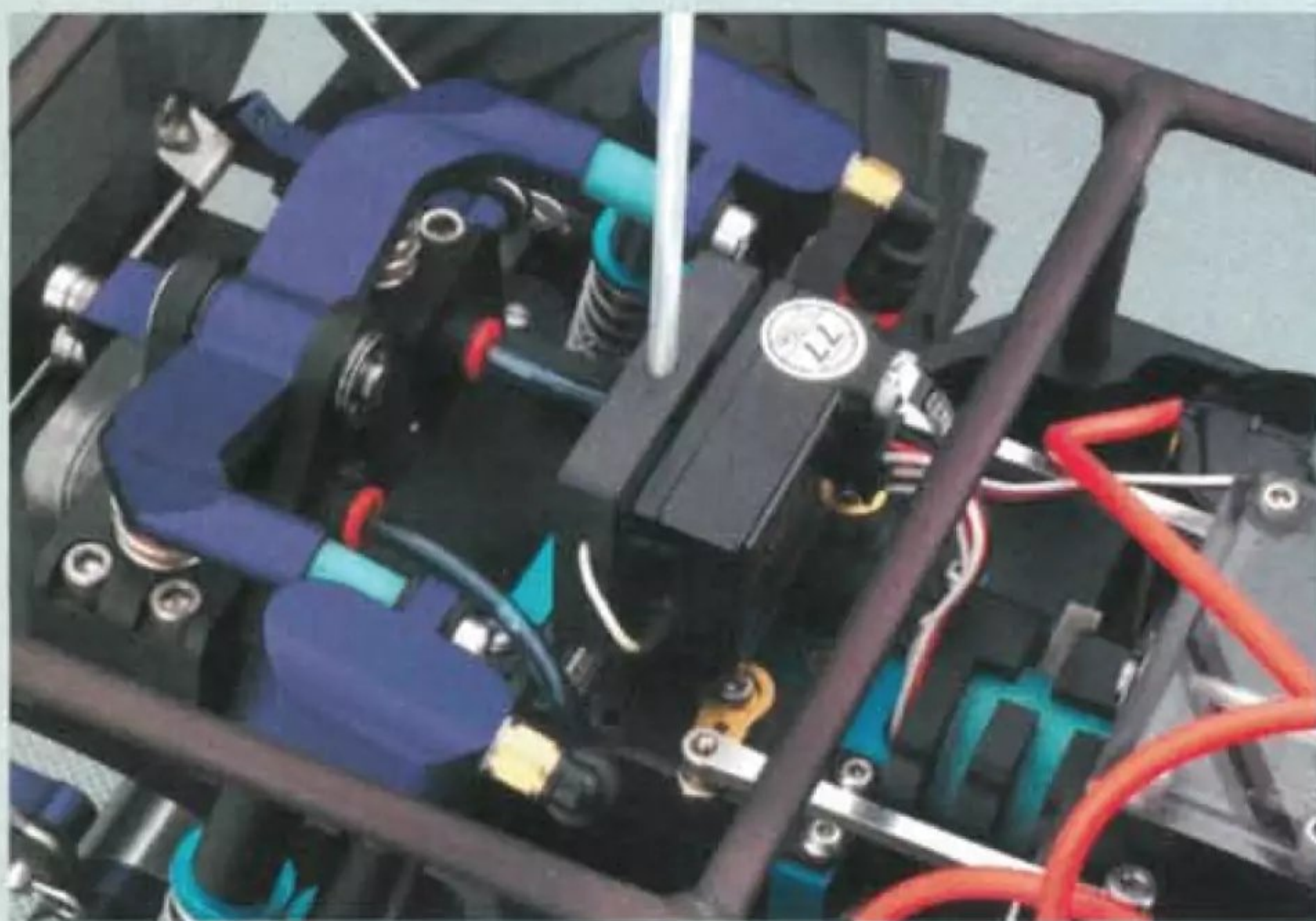
Most difficult step: "I wouldn't say anything was really difficult, but the most challenging part was by far the chassis. It took 24 solid machining hours to complete! That's a lot of time, considering I was doing it only on weekends. Because I am a machinist, my designs as an engineer are, by nature, easy to build. I would not draw something that I could not build myself."

Next project: "I'm torn between a 6-wheel Sojourner/Rover type vehicle and a puller! I could make a mean gearbox and drive train for a dedicated puller; it's a lot less work than the Rover, too."

HOME BUILT



Above: the floating shock mount has a ball-bearing pivot in the center. A spring and a silicone block on both sides of the pivot cushion the mount. You can see the adjustable one-way valve just behind the bumper. Below: how would you like to have a receiver mount as nice as this one? The servos have been neatly tucked underneath the receiver, and beefy rods connect the servos and the servo-savers.



Above: this masterpiece's underside looks very clean: see the steering cables protruding from the chassis? The telescoping drive shafts were machined out of titanium. Right: large (D-size) batteries provide the Bad Monkey with plenty of run time. Just behind the battery is the custom-made servo-saver.



CHASSIS

The chassis started life as a 25.5-pound chunk of aluminum. It took a little over 24 hours just to machine this one part. Pockets for the huge D-cell saddle pack were machined on each side, and hook-and-loop fastener straps are used to hold the batteries in place. A hole machined through the bottom of the chassis between the batteries allows the transmission to hang below the chassis where the drive shafts are connected. Both ends of the chassis have custom-machined, black-polycarbonate bumpers, and a roll cage constructed of solid aluminum rod ensures rollover protection.

DRIVE TRAIN

Two Trinity* Sapphire motors power the Bad Monkey Jr.; they are secured to a one-piece aluminum mount that's bolted to a custom-made transmission. To provide additional cooling, the mount has small fins machined into both sides.

The transmission housing is—surprise, surprise!—machined from a piece of solid aluminum, and inside it is a complete set of stainless-steel gears (about the only thing Mark didn't try to make on his own, other than the electronics). The gears ride on titanium shafts and seven, sealed, stainless-steel ball bearings. The transmission has a high gear (22.105:1) and a low gear (38.684:1) that can be shifted

when the truck is at rest. The transmission is capped with a piece of clear polycarbonate.

Universal joints are readily available at most industrial supply houses, but Mark decided to make his own out of three pieces of stainless steel. The universals are secured to custom-machined titanium drive shafts that were made to "telescope."

At the end of each drive shaft are very realistic custom-made axles. A polished, stainless-steel center section houses a ring-and-pinion gear that drives solid-titanium axle shafts. The axle tubes on either side of the center section were also machined from solid aluminum.

SUSPENSION

The truck's suspension design is unique: the axles are attached to horizontal, V-shaped suspension arms—one in the front and one in the rear. The "point" of each V-shaped arm is attached to the transmission housing just below the drive shafts with a large-diameter pivot ball. The arms' other ends are attached to both sides of the axles close to the wheels. This design allows the axles to move up and down and rotate without binding. The parts have been machined in such a way that the axles can't move from side to side. A rear swaybar keeps the truck sitting flat and can be quickly disconnected by removing the lower carriage pin.



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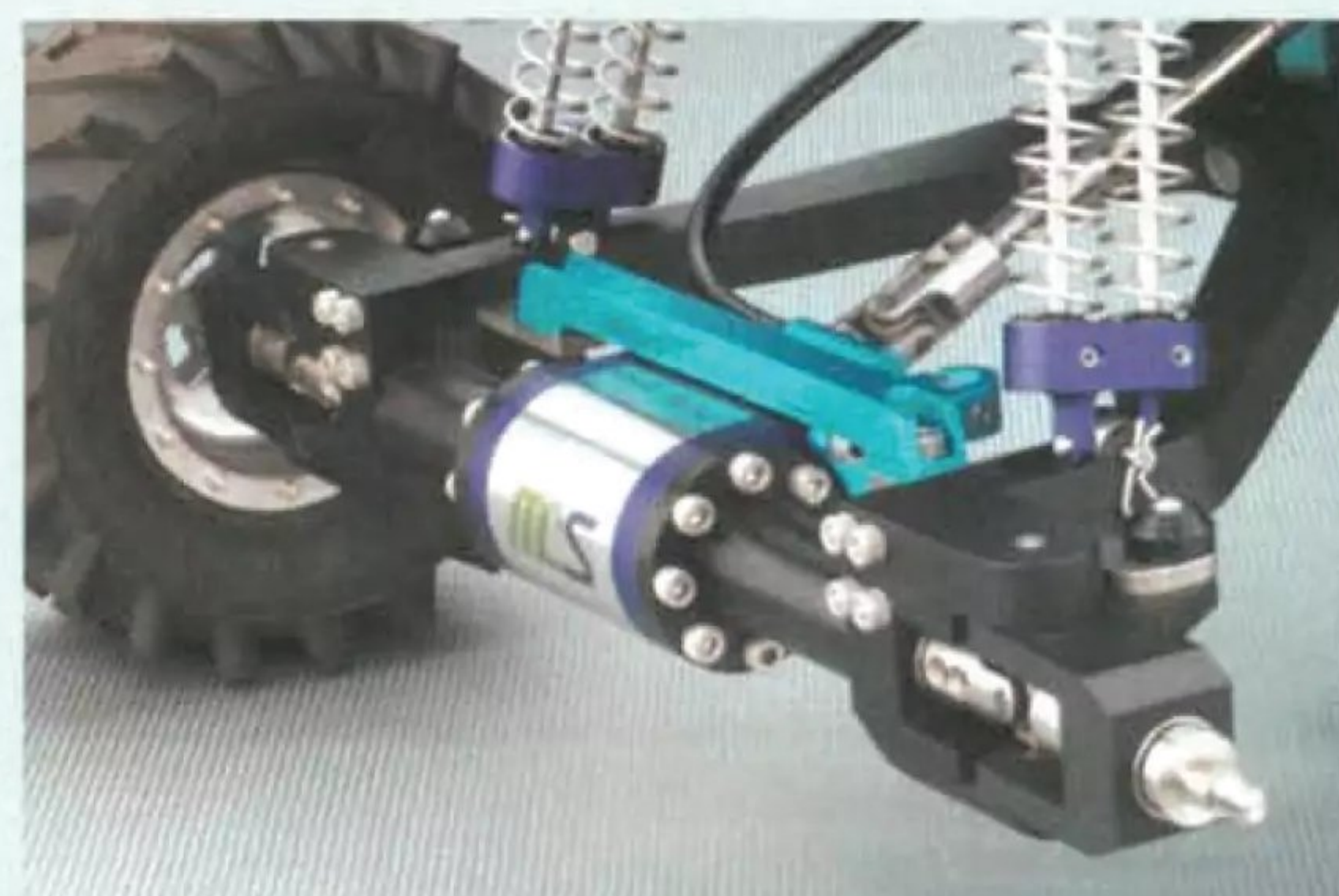
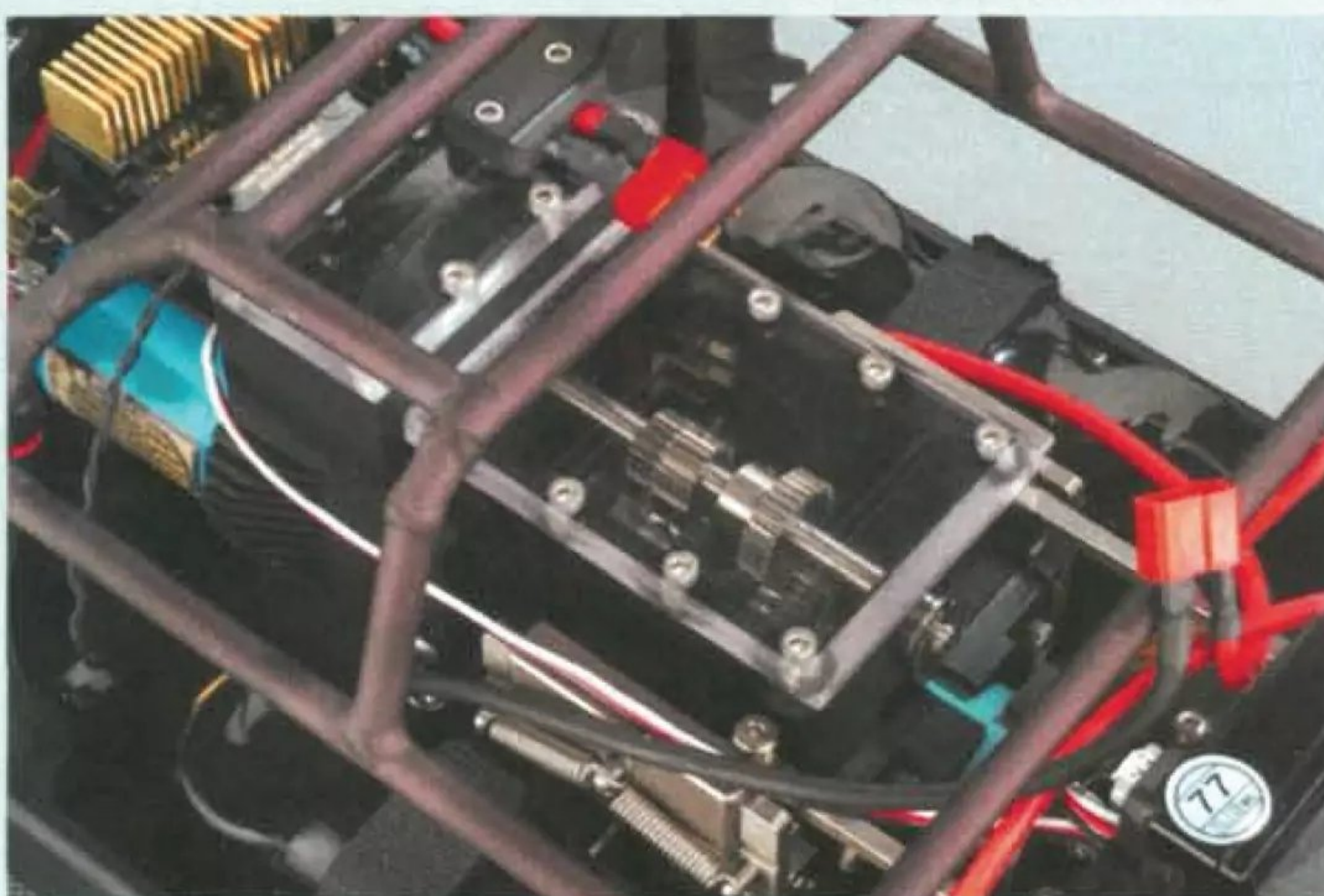
Above: don't even ask; you can't buy these rims anywhere. These are working, three-piece, bead-locking rims; to remove one tire, you have to remove 24 screws. Below: the motor mount/transmission housing; stainless-steel gears are secured to titanium shafts, and the gear assemblies rotate on sealed stainless-steel bearings. Clear covers make for easy gear inspection.



Even the swaybar looks good! It can quickly be disconnected by removing the lower carriage pin. The link can then be rotated and mounted on the frame and out of the way.



Two shocks at each wheel provide enough damping for this heavy truck; damping is adjusted by means of special, one-way valves.



These custom-machined axles look just like the real thing. The ends of the drive axles are keyed to the aluminum rims, and their center sections are made of stainless steel.

There are two shocks for each wheel. Each pair of shock bodies is threaded into a single top cap, so they're essentially one unit. The spring perches are also joined to create a "Siamese shock" effect. The shock bodies have been threaded so that the spring preload can be fine-tuned with a simple twist of the spring collars. The shocks' tops are joined to an articulated shock mount that's stabilized by two pieces of silicone rubber surrounded by a spring. A set of one-way valves allow Mark to adjust up- and down-travel damping independently. Oh, yes; with the exception of the springs, Mark made all the suspension components, including the shocks!

STEERING

Two Futaba*, S9204, high-torque, independently controlled servos turn the wheels. One servo controls the front wheels and the other controls the rears. It might not surprise you to learn that Mark also designed and machined his own servo-savers of stainless steel. The servo savers are designed to "give" only when the servos have reached a maximum torque of 131.9 oz.-in.

TIRES AND WHEELS

Mark didn't make the tires; he chose Pro-Line* Masher treads; however, he did make the machined-aluminum three-piece bead-locking

rims. The tires are held on with two rings and 24 screws, and he coated the rims with clear anodizing to keep them looking good all the time. Mark machined air holes through each wheels' center section between the spokes.

BODY

Mark tops his creation with a Dodge Ram body that Parma* custom-made especially for him; its bed has a tonneau cover. Mark machined a plug to fit the bed of the old body and sent it to Parma to be used in the molding process, and the company now offers the body—part no. 10388. Mark laid down the paint himself—not bad for a first-time airbrush job.

FINAL THOUGHTS

The Bad Monkey Jr. truck is definitely BAD! A lot of time and money went into building it, but it was time and money well spent. It's undoubtedly the most elaborate, most trick custom project to show up during *Car Action's* 15-year history. Though I've only "scratched the surface" in describing Mark's work, you can see the full story on his website: www.marksmark.net.

*Addresses are listed alphabetically in "Featured Manufacturers" on page 216. ■



Why you need dental insurance in retirement.

Many Americans are fortunate to have dental coverage for their entire working life, through employer-provided benefits. When those benefits end with retirement, paying dental bills out-of-pocket can come as a shock, leading people to put off or even go without care.

Simply put – without dental insurance, there may be **an important gap** in your healthcare coverage.

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- ▶ Look for coverage that helps pay for major services. Some plans may limit the number of procedures – or pay for preventive care only.
- ▶ Look for coverage with no deductibles. Some plans may require you to pay hundreds out of pocket before benefits are paid.
- ▶ Shop for coverage with no annual maximum on cash benefits. Some plans have annual maximums of \$1,000.

Medicare doesn't pay for dental care.¹

That's right. As good as Medicare is, it was never meant to cover everything. That means if you want protection, you need to purchase individual insurance.

Early detection can prevent small problems from becoming expensive ones.

The best way to prevent large dental bills is preventive care. The American Dental Association recommends checkups twice a year.

Previous dental work can wear out.

Even if you've had quality dental work in the past, you shouldn't take your dental health for granted. In fact, your odds of having a dental problem only go up as you age.²

Treatment is expensive — especially the services people over 50 often need.

Consider these national average costs of treatment ... \$222 for a checkup ... \$190 for a filling ... \$1,213 for a crown.³ Unexpected bills like this can be a real burden, especially if you're on a fixed income.

1 "Medicare & You," Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, 2025. 2 "Aging changes in teeth and gums", medlineplus.gov, 4/17/2022. 3 American Dental Association, Health Policy Institute, 2020 Survey of Dental Fees, Copyright 2020, American Dental Association.

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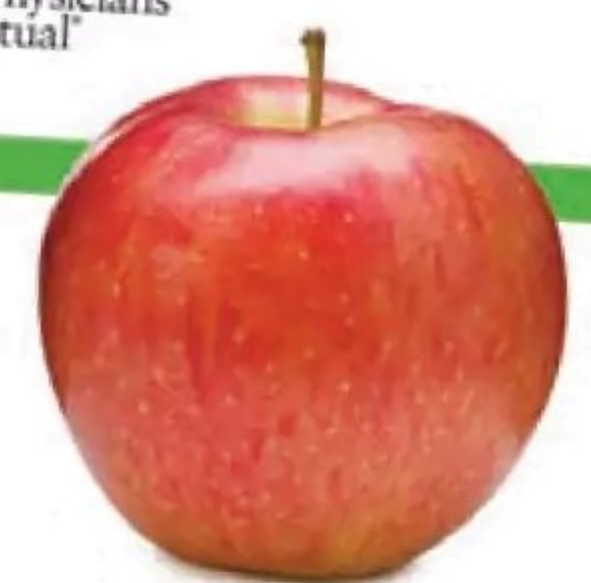
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