

RADIO CONTROL **Caraction**

July/August 2026

BACKYARD DOMINATOR

TEKNO'S MT48 2.0 TAKES BACKYARD BASHING SERIOUSLY



S-CHASSIS RACER

THE 4-TEC 2.0 GIVES NISSAN'S 240SX SOME BRUSHLESS BITE

- > **Tamiya EV0:** Hornet & Lunch Box Get Modern Performance Upgrades
- > **Associated B7.1D:** Team Associated Sharpens Its Dirt Racing Formula Again
- > **Monster Truck Racing 101:** Everything You Need to Start Racing Monster Trucks
- > **How to Paint a Hard Body:** Simple Tips for a Better Hard-Body Paint Job

1/10 SCALE R/C 4x4x4 PICK-UP TRUCK

CLOD BUSTER

ITEM 58762 L:480mm

4WD

ASSEMBLY KIT

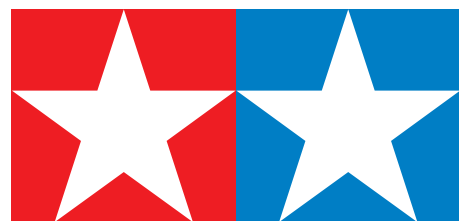
2026

The original Clod Buster returns to the Tamiya catalog! The original Clod Buster first made its appearance into hobby stores in 1987. Since then, it has gone through different iterations in the form of different color schemes and sticker designs. This version celebrates the original red body color scheme with the classic sticker design with an optional twist!



- 1/10 scale R/C model assembly kit. Length: 480mm, height: 380mm.
- Injection molded RED polystyrene body.
- The front grille design is changed from the original Clod Buster. (item 58065)
- Comes with new additional stickers which have additional illustrations of a female character.
- With the updated front sections, LED lights (sold separately) can be installed.
- Features the same 4WD & 4WS chassis as the Super Clod Buster.
- TEU-201BK Electronic Speed Controller is included.
- Required to complete: 2-channel radio, steering servo, 7.2-7.4volt battery with compatible charger, and Tamiya TS paint.





TAMIYA



TAMIYAUSA OFFICIAL

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NUMBER 4
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One of the things the RC Car Action team has always liked about RC is how easy it is to move from one part of the hobby to another. One weekend might be spent at the track, while the next could involve painting a body, building a kit, or simply running something around for fun. This issue reflects a lot of that variety.

The Traxxas 4-Tec 2.0 Nissan 240SX Brushless immediately caught our attention. It combines a familiar chassis with one of the most recognizable cars from the tuner era, along with enough brushless power to keep things interesting. On the opposite end of the spectrum is Tekno's MT48 2.0, a big, serious monster truck built for drivers who aren't afraid to use their RCs hard.

Tamiya also brings back two names that many longtime hobbyists grew up with in the Hornet EVO and Lunch Box EVO. It's always interesting to see how Tamiya updates its classics, especially when the new versions still manage to look and feel connected to the originals.

For racers, this issue also takes a look at the Team Associated B7.1D. And if monster truck racing has been on your radar, the guide to getting started should help explain what you need before heading to the track.

There's also a feature on painting a hard body, a subject that can make a big difference in any scale build. It takes more preparation than a typical polycarbonate shell, but a good paint job can completely change the finished vehicle.

That mix is part of what makes putting together an issue like this so much fun. Racing, building, painting, bashing—it all falls under the same hobby, and there's always another direction to explore.

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!

— The *RC Car Action* Editorial Team



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NEW 3S BRUSHLESS
HORSEPOWER



GTR SHOCKS



METAL-GEAR SERVO



NEW CLIPLESS BODY

Velineon 3S
BRUSHLESS **50+**
MPH



Velineon 3S
BRUSHLESS **60+**
MPH



TRAXXAS

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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!

SPIKES DIRTY DEEDS

KENNETH SUTHERLAND « FLORENCE, OR

We're big fans of builds that start with a crazy idea, and Kenneth Sutherland's rat rod certainly qualifies. Kenneth, from Florence, Oregon, tells us more about his creation: "This was inspired by me staring at a set of slicks and a rat rod Lexan body for far too long while listening to some good ol' rock and roll. I thought to myself, what would AC/DC's 'work truck' look like?" Built on an ECX Circuit Stadium chassis with a Pro-Line Rat Rod

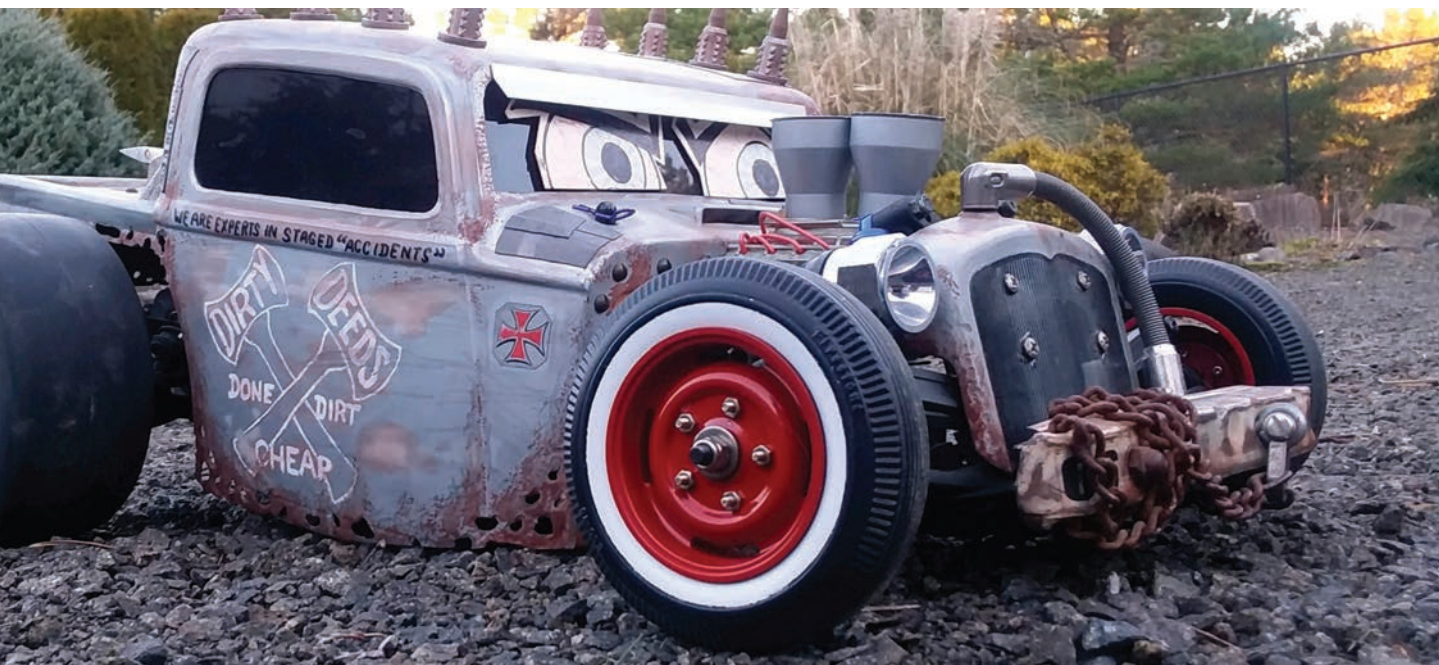
body, the truck is packed with homemade details. Speaker cabinet spikes cover the roof, aircraft fittings became headlight housings, and real white oak makes up the bed slats. Kenneth even fabricated the double-headed axe from aluminum and maple. Add the heavily weathered paint and Funny Car slicks, and the result looks just as wild as the idea that started it. Nice work, Kenneth—this one has attitude to spare.





BUILD HIGHLIGHTS

- Chassis: ECX Circuit Stadium
- Body: Pro-Line Rat Rod
- Motor: Dynamite 20T
- Speed Control: Dynamite Tazer 15T
- Batteries: Various
- Radio System: Spektrum
- Wheels & Tires: Traxxas Funny Car slicks (rear), Monogram 1/8-scale whitewalls with 5-lug 4-slot wheels painted Ferrari Red (front)
- Shocks: Unbranded front, Axial rear
- Axles: ECX
- Paint: Multi-stage paint inside and out, partially sanded through with four different washes
- Graphics: Hand-painted
- Scale Accessories: Speaker cabinet roof spikes, adhesive-backed ceiling fan balancing weight repair panels, blacked-out windows, aircraft fitting headlight housings with flashlight reflectors, white oak bed slats with brass hardware, handmade double-headed aluminum axe with maple handle, spring radiator hose with aircraft fittings, aircraft fitting firewall horns, Disneyland toy motor



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S-CHASSIS SPEED

THE ICONIC NISSAN 240SX ARRIVES WITH TRAXXAS' LATEST BRUSHLESS POWER SYSTEM

Text by Jerry Tsai | Images Courtesy of Traxxas



The Traxxas 4-Tec 2.0 has built a solid reputation as an easy-to-drive AWD touring car that delivers impressive speed without demanding a lot of maintenance. Now, Traxxas has paired the platform with one of Nissan's most recognizable sport coupes, the 240SX, while introducing an all-new brushless power system that gives this latest version a performance boost over earlier models.



AT A GLANCE



TYPE
Off-road



SCALE
1/10



DRIVETRAIN
4WD



POWER
Electric
Brushless



BUILD
RTR



PRICE
\$349.95



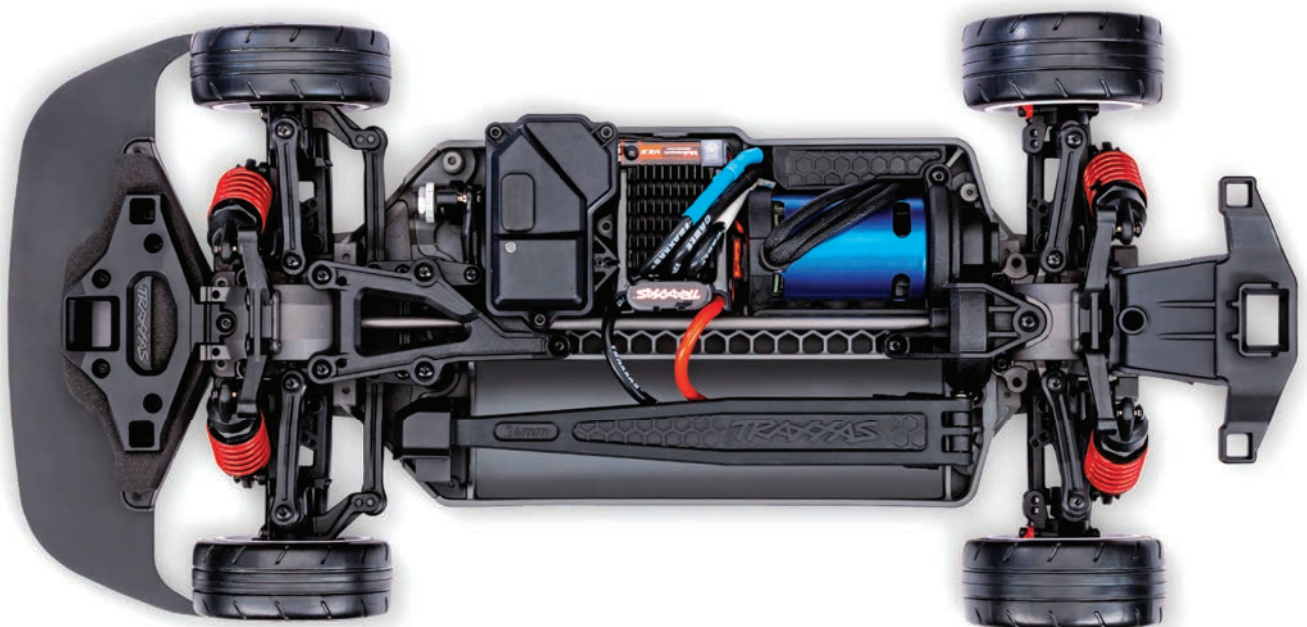


The officially licensed Nissan 240SX body does an excellent job capturing the look of the full-size car. A clipless mounting system keeps the body free of traditional post holes, making the finish look much cleaner. The body also features injection-molded details including the grille, front splitter, side mirrors, and rear spoiler, while replica brake discs with bright red calipers add another layer of realism behind the six-

spoke tuner wheels. It's a sharp-looking package right out of the box.

NEW BRUSHLESS PERFORMANCE

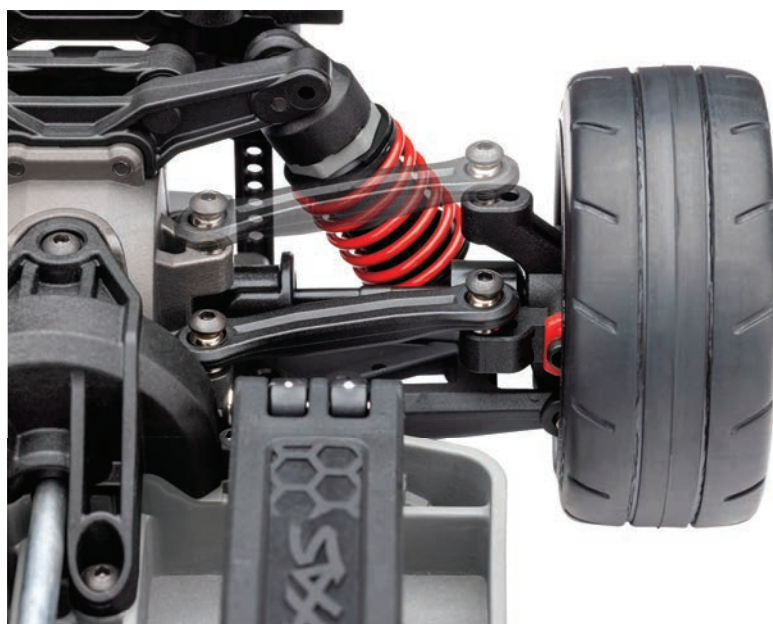
The biggest news, however, sits underneath the body. Power comes from Traxxas' new Velineon V3300 brushless motor and waterproof VX3 electronic speed control. Designed specifically for 1/10-scale on-road vehicles, the 3300kV motor uses ultra-high-temperature



sintered neodymium magnets, high-speed ball bearings, a 5mm output shaft, and an internal cooling fan to improve durability and maintain performance during extended runs. The system is compatible with 2S and 3S LiPo batteries exclusively, with no NiMH option.

Performance is exactly what most drivers are looking for in a street car. Install a 2S LiPo and the 240SX is capable of speeds over 35 mph. Step up to a 3S pack and top speed climbs past 50 mph, all without changing the gearing. That gives owners plenty of room to grow without immediately reaching for optional parts.

The VX3 speed control keeps operation simple with Traxxas' familiar EZ-Set one-button programming. Three selectable drive profiles let you tailor the car to your experience level or driving style. Sport Mode provides forward, brake, and reverse, Race Mode removes reverse for competition driving, and the patented Training Mode cuts power to 50 percent to help new drivers build confidence before unleashing the car's full



performance. The ESC also supports real-time telemetry through the Traxxas Link system for drivers who want to monitor vehicle data.

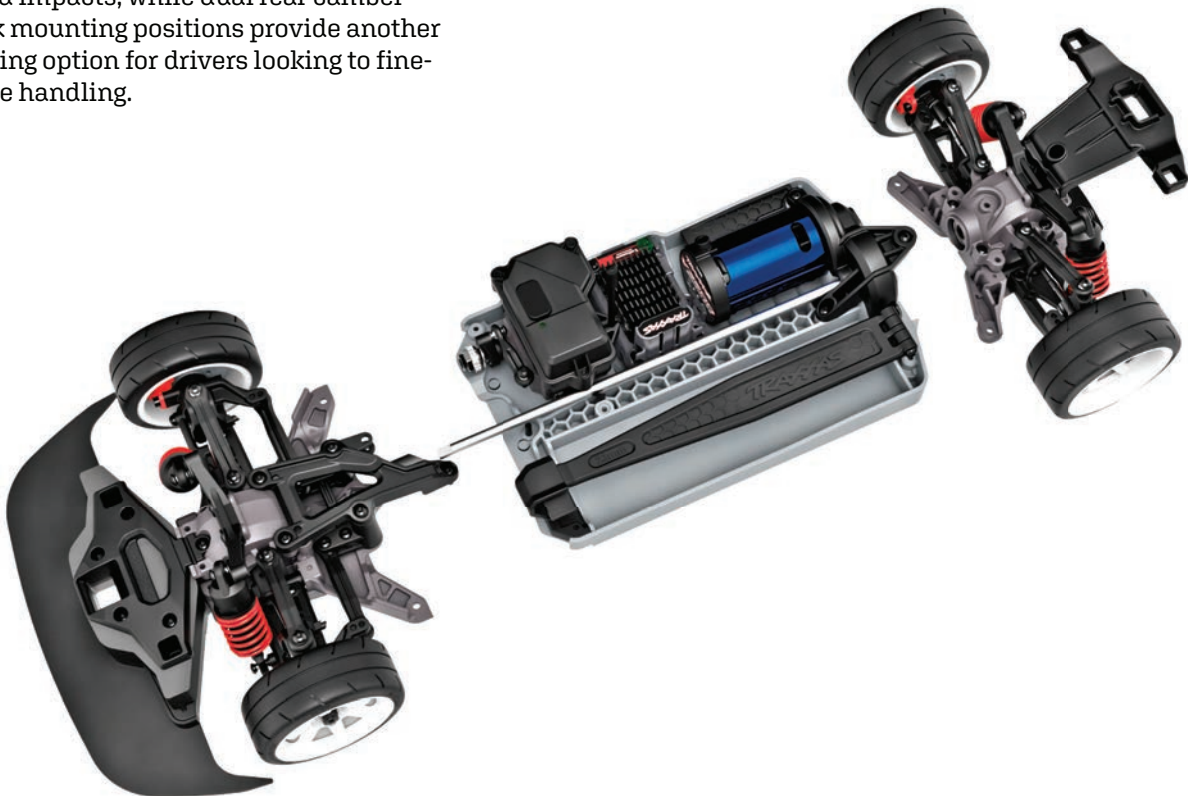
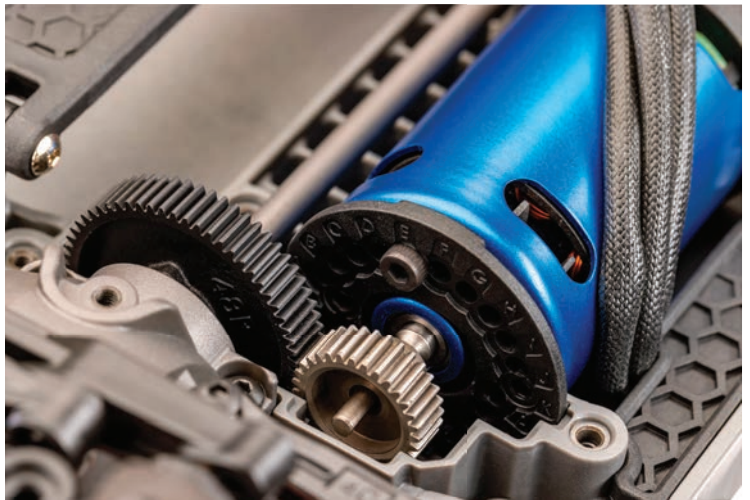
PROVEN CHASSIS

Underneath, the proven 4-Tec 2.0 chassis continues to be one of the platform's biggest strengths. The modular Low-CG chassis keeps weight close to the pavement for predictable handling while increasing rigidity and making maintenance easier. A swiveling battery hold-down accepts different battery heights and locks securely without loose body clips or hardware.

The shaft-driven full-time 4WD drivetrain uses a steel center driveshaft with center bearing support, direct drive, sealed steel-gear differentials, and rubber-sealed ball bearings throughout. It's a straightforward, durable setup that's well suited for high-speed street driving.

BUILT TO HANDLE SPEED

Suspension duties are handled by fully adjustable oil-filled Ultra Shocks with X-ring technology and responsive red powdercoated springs. Captured suspension links help prevent components from popping loose during hard impacts, while dual rear camber-link mounting positions provide another tuning option for drivers looking to fine-tune handling.





Steering comes from a waterproof 2057 metal-gear servo with a full metal gear train and integrated servo saver for improved durability and precision. The included TQi Sport 2.4GHz radio system also features Traxxas Stability Management (TSM). Rather than taking control away from the driver, TSM helps improve acceleration and braking on slick pavement while maintaining steering control during aggressive throttle inputs and powerslides. If you'd rather rely entirely on your own driving, TSM can be adjusted or switched off directly from the transmitter.

FINAL WORD

The 4-Tec 2.0 Nissan 240SX Brushless is more than just another body option. The updated V3300/VX3 brushless system gives the platform a fresh dose of performance, while the proven AWD chassis, Ultra Shocks, and clipless licensed body make it an attractive package for anyone looking to spend more time driving than wrenching. Whether you're making high-speed passes through an empty parking lot or carving smooth sweepers at your local track, the latest 4-Tec 2.0 delivers the speed, handling, and everyday durability that have made the platform one of Traxxas' most popular on-road offerings.

VEHICLE SPECS TRAXXAS 4-TEC 2.0 NISSAN 240SX BRUSHLESS

P/N: 93424-4
MSRP: \$349.95
URL: traxxas.com

Scale: 1/10

Chassis: Low-CG modular composite

Shocks: Fully adjustable oil-filled Ultra Shocks with X-ring technology

Suspension: Independent front and rear

Drivetrain: Full-time shaft-driven 4WD

Body: Officially licensed Nissan 240SX clipless body with injection-molded details

Transmission: Direct drive with steel center driveshaft and sealed steel-gear differentials

Motor: Velineon V3300 3300kV brushless

ESC: Velineon VX3 waterproof

Radio: TQi Sport 2.4GHz 2-channel with Traxxas Stability Management

Servo: 2057 waterproof metal-gear

Wheels: Six-spoke tuner style

Tires: Staggered high-performance street

Top Speed: 35+ mph on 2S LiPo, 50+ mph on 3S LiPo

Requires: 2S or 3S LiPo battery and compatible charger



EVOLUTION COMPLETE



TAMIYA'S ICONIC LUNCH BOX & HORNET RETURN WITH LONG-AWAITED PERFORMANCE UPGRADES

Text by Jerry Tsai
Images Courtesy of Tamiya

For decades, the Lunch Box and Hornet have held a special place in the hobby. They were among the first kits for countless RC enthusiasts, and even today they remain some of Tamiya's most recognizable vehicles. Their charm has never been about outright speed or cutting-edge engineering.

Instead, it comes from their unmistakable styling, approachable builds, and the memories they create.

While both models have remained in production through re-releases over the years, enthusiasts have long wished for factory updates that would improve their driving manners without losing the character that made them famous. Rather than replacing these classics, many owners upgraded them with aftermarket shocks, bearings, suspension parts, and steering modifications.

Now Tamiya has done the work itself.

With the introduction of the Lunch Box EVO and Hornet EVO, two of the company's most beloved kits finally receive meaningful mechanical improvements while preserving the look and personality that made them legends in the first place.



LUNCH BOX GROWS UP

The original Lunch Box is famous for one thing above all else—its hilarious driving style. It wheelies on command, leans dramatically in corners, and has always prioritized fun over precision.

The EVO keeps that playful personality but makes the truck considerably more capable. Tamiya stretched both the wheelbase and track width by 10mm to improve stability and traction. The biggest change, however, is underneath. Gone is the original front suspension in favor of a modern double-wishbone setup, while the rear now uses a three-link solid axle arrangement. A front strut brace, stabilizers, improved steering geometry, lower body mounting position, and full ball bearings all contribute to a truck that should corner flatter and feel far more predictable without losing its trademark wheelie-happy attitude.

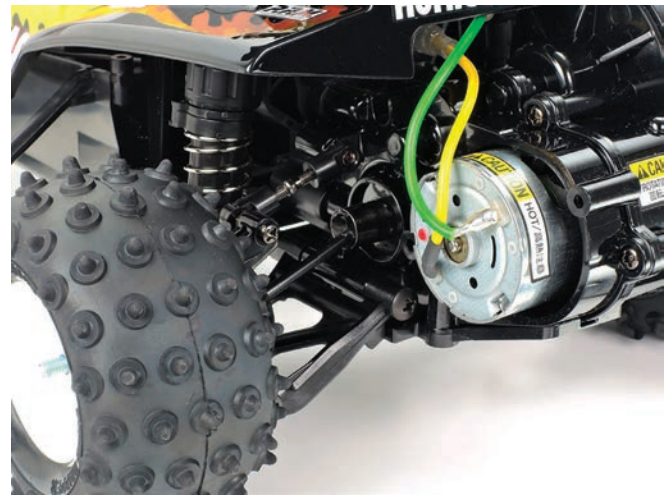
Importantly, Tamiya resisted the temptation to redesign the truck's appearance. The familiar ABS van body remains intact, complete with updated graphics that give the EVO a fresh look without straying far from the original.

HORNET EVOLVES

The Hornet's place in RC history is undeniable. Introduced in 1984, it helped define the affordable off-road buggy market and introduced countless hobbyists to kit building.

The Hornet EVO celebrates that heritage while addressing the biggest compromises of the original design. The classic bathtub chassis remains, as does the instantly recognizable polycarbonate body and yellow-and-orange graphics. Underneath, though, nearly everything that affects performance has been modernized.





The original swing-axle front suspension gives way to fully independent double wishbones at all four corners, all supported by CVA oil-filled dampers. The rear gearbox is now sealed and incorporates the proven DT-02 differential for smoother handling and better durability in dusty conditions. Full ball bearings come standard, eliminating one of the first upgrades most owners traditionally made after buying the original kit.

The result should be a buggy that retains the classic Hornet experience while being far easier to drive quickly on today's rougher tracks and trails.

BUILT FOR A NEW GENERATION

What's most impressive about these EVO models is Tamiya's restraint. Instead of replacing two beloved classics with completely new platforms, the company carefully updated the areas enthusiasts have been modifying for years. The styling, spirit, and nostalgic appeal remain intact, but the driving experience promises to be more refined right out of the box.

For longtime fans, they're the versions many have hoped to see for decades. For newcomers, they offer a chance to experience two of RC's most influential vehicles without immediately reaching for the hop-up catalog.

VEHICLE SPECS TAMIYA LUNCH BOX EVO

P/N: 58755
Scale: 1/12
Drivetrain: 2WD
Chassis: CW-01 EVO
Motor: 540 brushed
Suspension: Front double wishbone, rear 3-link solid axle
Build: Kit
MSRP: \$262

TAMIYA HORNET EVO

P/N: 58742
Scale: 1/10
Drivetrain: 2WD
Chassis: Hornet EVO
Motor: 540 brushed
Suspension: 4-wheel independent double wishbone
Build: Kit
MSRP: \$246

EMBRACING THE

SOLID AXLE MONSTER TRUCK RACING 101

Text & Images by Kevin Hetmanski



THE CHALLENGE



Name a category in RC, and chances are that someone has set up a race class for it. There is an undeniable thrill in testing your vehicle, setup, and driving skills against the competition. One category with surprising longevity is solid-axle monster trucks, which have been hitting the dirt since at least the mid-1980s.

Interestingly, these monster trucks initially shared standard racetracks with traditional

buggies and trucks before evolving into their own specialized discipline: bracket-style racing. It makes sense that they went this direction; full-size monster trucks do it and solid-axle monster trucks are pretty scale and look similar to full-size trucks, so it makes sense that the category would naturally shift to that direction.

Make no mistake—bracket racing is a high-stakes challenge. You basically get one lap to get

the job done. It requires sharp reflexes and a flawless setup to get from gate to finish line ahead of your opponent. Thanks to the release of the Losi LMT, solid-axle monster truck racing is experiencing a massive surge in popularity. If you want to join the action, here is how you can optimize your truck and maximize your chances of taking the checkered flag. I even have some stuff in here for those who run or want to run races.



Trucks race side-by-side and drivers stand side-by-side. Seeing that truck in the other lane can be a big-time distraction. You have to gather yourself up and race your race.

HOW BRACKET-STYLE RACING WORKS

Most of the racing that you see in RC takes place on a permanent track and a day can consist of practice, at least two rounds of qualifying, and mains, and the vehicles that are run are purpose-built for those conditions.

When it comes to bracket-style monster truck racing, things are very different in more than one way. The tracks are almost always temporary and built to represent what you see at a lot of monster truck shows. There are two lanes and they have a mirrored layout of one another. In most cases the only practice/qualifying you get is one run in each lane, and each run could take just a few seconds.

Once the brackets are set up using the time or points from qualifying, you go into an elimination round. Have a bad run and you can be out on the very first pass. If you do well, you have the possibility of running multiple times as you make your way up the ladder. The ladder for each class is completely run through before moving on to the next, unlike “standard” racing where you have time between races to make changes and so on before your next run.

Part of the reason for this is that some classes will run on completely different courses that are designed and made for each class. These are also considered to be scale events and the rules for each class take that into consideration, so it’s a good idea to familiarize yourself with them before setting up a truck for racing.

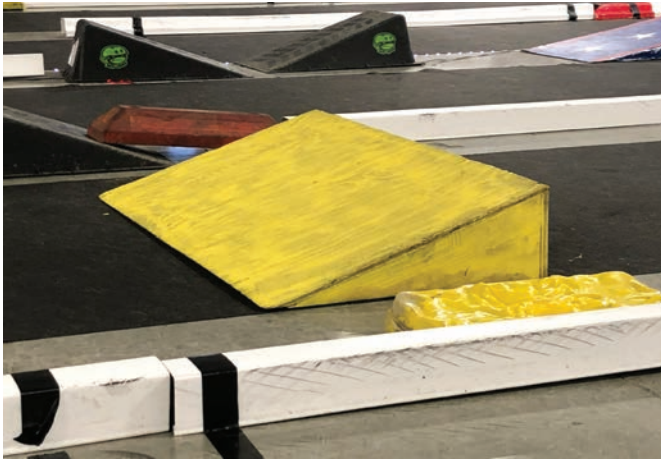
WHERE CAN YOU RACE?

There are several solid-axle monster groups on social media sites, and you can easily hit up the people there to find out where monster truck racing is happening. Then you can connect with those people and get the details. But don’t be surprised if there aren’t any groups racing near you.

The good news is, in this type of racing, that’s an easy thing to fix. You can pretty much set up a monster truck course anywhere. Grab some skateboard ramps, get some lane markers, and pick a place in a local area to set your course up. You may have to get permission to run in some places, but you’d be surprised at how easy it is to get it. In general, the size of the courses are small so you don’t need a very large area to make a race happen.



I race with the RC Monster Truck Challenge guys at RC Madness in Enfield, CT. The guys get to the track, set up their tent and computer, set the course up, and we have a great time running in the bashing area at the hobby shop. It’s an easy setup that can pretty much be done anywhere.



You can build wood ramps for your races, or make it easy on yourself and get some plastic skateboard ramps.

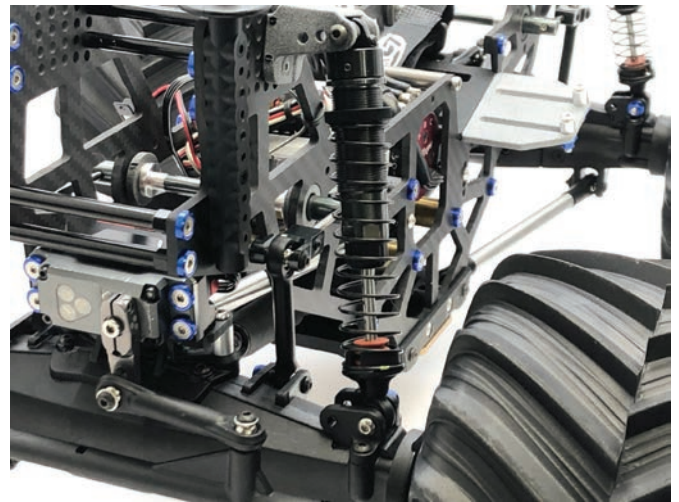


Tires are 80% of the truck's performance. Take a look or ask around during one of your local races to see what everyone is running.

GET THE RIGHT TIRES

Tires are hands-down the most important part of any race vehicle. Get the tire tread and compound right for the track that you're running on and your setup is easily 80% there. In my opinion, choosing the right monster truck tire is much harder than picking one for any other race category.

The best thing to do before you race is connect with the group on a day that they are running, and look around to see what tires they have on their trucks. Pay attention to the guys who are clearly faster than the others, and ask around and see what information they will provide. A hot setup that I see for most situations is the JConcepts Renegades in blue compound with Slamtech foams. That's a great starting point for just about any truck or surface.



Work on those shocks. If they're not moving, they're not working. Getting the shocks to work properly is a major key to success.

DON'T RUN STIFF SHOCKS

I see this a lot. Most tracks that the trucks race on are basically smooth, so it seems like people take the lack of bumps and use that as a reason to run stiff shocks. The problem is that shocks are very important to the performance of your truck. If a shock isn't moving, it's not working. You still have jumps to deal with, and the take-offs (and more importantly, the landings) require shock travel in order to deal with them properly.

Also, if you're running on a loose surface, having a stiff shock setup reduces weight transfer, which is where traction basically comes from. The truck can't pitch backwards under acceleration or forward during braking, and that changes how the truck gets off the line and into the turns in a negative way.

You also don't want to lower your truck too much. That may work when racing on a high-grip surface due to having the need for less weight transfer, but

a truck that sits a little higher will perform better on a loose track. There is however a limit to that, so be sure to experiment and see what works best for you.

CONTROL THAT POWER

When compared to, say, a 2WD 1/10-scale off-road buggy, monster trucks handle like a bus, so you need to be in control of that for as much of the run as you can. Don't overpower your truck; that's a recipe for disaster. Watch videos of solid-axle monster truck racing and you'll see what I'm talking about.

A lot of racers build too much power into their trucks, and almost every one of them uses very little throttle to get through 90% or more of the course. Then they mash the throttle, which overpowers their truck and results in a crash over the finish line. This out-of-control application of power can break your truck, and it will certainly be the reason you lost the race. As they say: "If you're spinning, you're not winning." Controlled power will



Having too much power can be a blessing or a curse. Learning how to control that power to get the best performance out of your truck will go a long way.

result in a truck that's easier to drive and one that has the ability to lay down the right amount of traction.

On a loose dirt surface that's important, and it's also important on a surface where you have too much grip. I race on very loose dirt and tight course layouts, so when it comes to power delivery on my trucks I run a 550-size motor with the highest kV rating that I can get, because it's easier to slow

a fast motor down than it is to speed up a slow motor. Depending on the track, traction and so on, you may need more speed or less controllable speed.

I also gear my trucks as high as possible without overheating the motor to reduce the torque as much as possible. I max out the timing (which is said to reduce torque), and I run a 2S LiPo. I also adjusted the expo curve to smooth out bottom-end throttle response.

All this is done to keep my truck from spinning the tires (or from pulling a wheelie on a high-grip surface) and being out of control on the very loose surfaces that I race on.

PICK YOUR CLASS

Like most forms of racing, there are different classes to choose from. Some may be interesting to you due to the scale aspect, some because of the performance aspect, or you may pick a class simply because the truck you have will fit.

The Retro class has trucks that replicate ones that raced in the '80s with stiff suspensions and scale looks. The Challenger class gives you trucks from the '90s with tubular-type chassis/roll cages and more of that fiberglass body look. Pro Mod is a run-what-you-brung type class; there's the 2.2 class, which are basically Pro Mod trucks on smaller tires; and then you have the Losi LMT Spec class, which is basically a class where you run the truck as it comes out of the box. Those are some of the

READY-TO-RUN RACE TRUCK: THE LOSI LMT

The LMT is a monster truck that you can race and do very well with right out of the box. Have version 1.0? You're good to go. The truck has a lot of adjustment built into it that will allow you to get it to work like you want it to at the track.

If you're running in any class but a Losi LMT Spec class, you'll most likely have to change the tires due to the fact that most groups don't allow the non-scale tires to be used. If you have a Losi LMT 2.0 you can use that as well, but it's a little more difficult due to its long 15-inch wheelbase. Most groups max out

the wheelbase of a truck like that at 14 inches, so modifications will have to be made in order to shorten it up.

Of course, if you're running in a Losi LMT Spec class, the stock truck wheelbase may be okay. Just because the Losi LMT 1.0 and 2.0 come out of the box set up for "bashing" doesn't mean they can't be adjusted to work for racing. And you don't have to stop at the Losi LMT; you can also get yourself a Tamiya Clod Buster and modify that to fit a class, get a Kyosho Mad Force and tweak that to work, or you can even get yourself a crawler and make modifications to that.



Getting your hands on a Losi LMT is the fastest and easiest way to get into monster truck racing. Change up the tires and you're pretty much good to go.



Even the Losi can benefit from some tweaking. This is my 1.0 LMT, and it's very competitive on the track.

RACING DONE RIGHT

If you've already run some races or are planning on doing so in the near future, here are some things that you might want to take into consideration.

RUN A LONG COURSE

If you have the space and the time due to, say, a reduced racer turnout for the day, make the course that the trucks are going to run on as big as possible. Nothing is more of a bummer than spending a day at a race and only running a truck for just a few seconds.

LIMIT THE NUMBER OF TRUCKS

In 99.9% of RC racing only one vehicle is run per class, but for some reason in a lot of solid-axle monster truck racing groups you're allowed to run as many as four (and maybe more in some groups). Let's say that the bare minimum that you have to invest into a race truck to get it going is \$1,000; that means you must spend \$4,000 or more to be competitive.

I say that because in bracket-style racing, the more trucks you have to run, the more track

time you get and the better your chances are that you'll make it through the rounds. If everyone has one truck, it's less of an investment, it's easier to prep for the next race, and you can easily focus on that one truck, which leads to a better setup.

RUN MULTIPLE ROUNDS

If the number of people who show up for your race is low and can't fill a day, run multiple rounds. People will love that they were able to run longer than a few seconds for the day and they'll get a few chances to have some good runs. You can use a point system for each round and use that to determine an overall winner at the end of the day.

DON'T HOLD BIG EVENTS ON HOLIDAY WEEKENDS

Try to avoid having your big race on a holiday weekend. It will cost your racers more money and travel is generally not as easy during those times. People have vacation time; let them use it.

START ON TIME

You would think this is an easy one, but you wouldn't believe how many RC events I've been

to where they start a race up to many hours late. Start on time. People have things to do and having them sit around for all that time for no reason is not a good thing.

ALLOW FOR PRACTICE TIME

Get to the location early and set the course up so everyone can get some laps in and get used to the layout. Practice gives your racers more confidence in the racing that they're about to do, and it gives them more run time. A bonus is that if any problems arise, there will be plenty of time for an adjustment.

MAKE THE LANES WIDE

Solid-axle monster trucks are already a handful, so don't make them harder to deal with by making lanes that are super narrow. For example, the minimum width for 1/10-scale off-road racing is 10 feet. Why are we asking monster trucks to get around lanes that can be as small as 3 feet? If you do set your lanes up with a reasonable width, make sure the ramps also span that gap to avoid having to thread the needle when you get to a jump on the course.

basic classes available, but some groups may have different ones—and of course the rules will vary from class to class and from group to group.



I'm a big fan of the Retro class. Seeing some of these trucks takes me back to being a kid and watching those car-crushing trucks on TV. Those were some of the coolest-looking trucks ever.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Solid-axle monster truck racing is a completely different experience compared to most of the racing we see in the RC hobby. The trucks are a blast to drive, and it's hard not to appreciate their realistic, scale appearance.

What I enjoy most, though, is that it brings back the old-school spirit of tweaking, tuning, and modifying your vehicle to make it perform better.

That's something I feel has largely disappeared from many other forms of RC racing. Is it perfect? No. Is it for everyone? Probably not.

There's likely a reason it hasn't become more mainstream, but that's also part of its appeal. It's different, the trucks look incredible on the track, and there's a tremendous amount to learn if you're willing to embrace the challenge.

TEKNO MT48 2.0

**BUILT FOR THE BACKYARD BATTLEFIELD,
THE TEKNO MT48 2.0 RULES ALL**

Text & Images by Joel Navarro





AT A GLANCE



TYPE

Off-Road



SCALE

1/8



DRIVETRAIN

4WD



POWER

Electric



BUILD

Kit



PRICE

\$579

The Tekno ET48 2.0 isn't just another 1/8-scale truggy. It's a purpose-built machine engineered to blur the line between championship-winning precision and solid durability.

Every detail, from its race-inspired geometry and innovative suspension design to its quick-access differentials, 16mm big-bore shocks, and lightweight 7075 aluminum chassis, works together to deliver remarkable stability, confidence, and speed on any surface.

While many trucks force you to choose between handling and toughness, the ET48 2.0 excels at both, making brutal terrain feel surprisingly smooth. This is Tekno engineering at its finest, built to outperform expectations. With that said—let's take a look at some of the features and then put this beast to the test!

LONG ARM SUSPENSION

Although the Tekno ET48 2.0 traces its roots to championship-level engineering, its suspension is equally at home absorbing the punishment of aggressive bashing. Long suspension arms increase wheel travel and improve leverage, allowing the truck to soak up deep ruts, rocky terrain, and hard landings with impressive composure. The 16mm oversized oil-filled shocks feature threaded aluminum bodies, making preload adjustments quick and precise while allowing owners to fine-tune ride height for everything from backyard jumps to rough off-road trails.

Multiple shock mounting positions on both the towers and suspension arms let you alter damping progression, steering response, and overall chassis attitude without replacing major components. Camber, toe, and wheelbase can all be adjusted through the turnbuckles and suspension inserts, giving bashers the freedom to dial in greater straight-line stability, sharper cornering, or improved high-speed confidence.

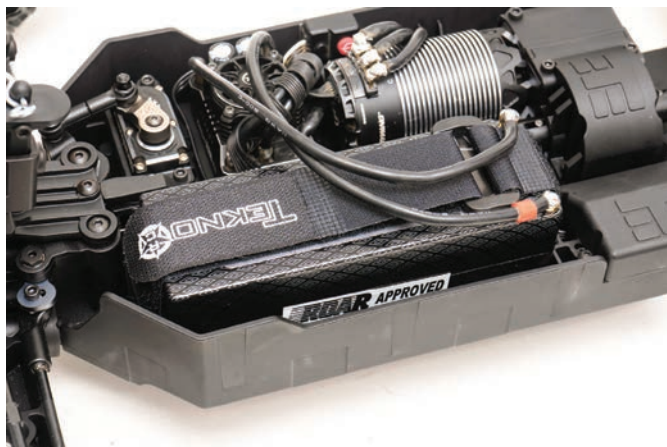
Tekno's innovative rear hub geometry offers roll center tuning by changing axle height, while the active rear toe system allows the rear suspension to generate different handling characteristics as it moves through its travel. Built-in caster within the front suspension arms contributes to a cleaner, stronger design with fewer highly stressed parts, increasing durability during repeated impacts.

Combined with sway bar options, hinge-pin inserts, and numerous geometry adjustments, the ET48 2.0 gives you a suspension package that can be tuned from a plush, forgiving setup for big-air freestyle driving to a more responsive configuration for fast dirt fields, making it an exceptionally versatile monster truck built to thrive under relentless abuse.

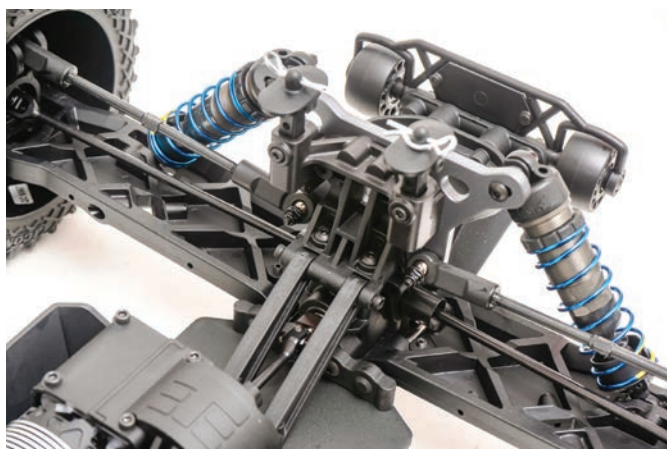
EASY ACCESS DIFFERENTIALS

The Tekno ET48 2.0 is built around a drivetrain that delivers tough durability, smooth power transfer, and extensive tuning potential, making it an outstanding platform for high-powered bashing rather than strictly competitive racing. Its full-time four-wheel-drive system features sealed front, center, and rear gear differentials that allow owners to fine-tune power distribution simply by changing silicone oil viscosity.

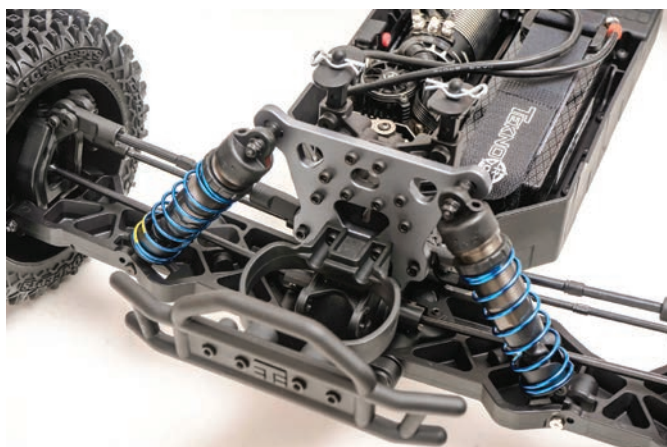
A lighter oil center differential setup provides quicker acceleration and easier wheelies, while heavier oils improve forward drive and help control ballooning tires under hard throttle. Front and rear differential tuning can also be adjusted to balance steering response, corner stability, and traction on



The battery bay can fit a multitude of different packs from 4S all the way up to a 6S.



The durable aluminum rear shock tower allows you to change shock positions and roll center heights.



A beefy front bumper keeps you well-protected from big crashes. Large 16mm big-bore shocks are used on all four corners.

everything from loose dirt to rocky terrain.

Large-capacity diff housings improve oil consistency during extended runs, while hardened steel internal gears are engineered to withstand repeated high-impact landings and aggressive brushless power. The center drivetrain uses robust steel driveshafts and precision-machined



The rear bumper doubles as a wheel bar that keeps you from looping out during a gnarly wheelie.



The receiver and spur/pinion gears are covered and well-shielded from dirt and debris during hard bash sessions.



The dual chassis brace keeps unwanted flex to a minimum while adding stability to the rear end of the truck.

components to minimize drivetrain flex while maintaining efficient power delivery.

Adjustable gear mesh through the motor mount allows a wide range of gearing combinations, letting drivers choose explosive acceleration or higher top speed depending on the terrain. The drivetrain is also designed for easy maintenance, with quick-

access differential assemblies that simplify servicing between bash sessions.

Combined with heavy duty outdrives, oversized bearings, and race-inspired engineering adapted for extreme recreational use, the ET48 2.0 gives enthusiasts the freedom to tailor its driving characteristics for everything from high-speed field runs and skatepark jumps to technical off-road trails, delivering reliable performance with the strength and adjustability needed to handle extreme abuse.

ADJUSTABLE STEERING

Built around a rugged 7075 hard anodized aluminum chassis, the Tekno ET48 2.0 is engineered to shrug off brutal abuse while providing a stable platform for high-power electronics. Its neatly arranged layout offers lots of space for a wide variety of motor, ESC, battery, and servo combinations, making it easy to tailor the truck for anything from smooth, controllable 4S setups to ferocious 6S power systems. Independent mounting positions help keep electronics organized, simplify maintenance, and allow clean wire routing for reliable performance.

Simply unscrew your electronics, no need to peel double sided tape. Up front, the precision steering system delivers crisp response through a durable rack and servo saver design that resists impacts while keeping you pointed in the right direction. Multiple steering adjustments let you fine-tune steering throw, servo saver tension, Ackermann characteristics, toe settings, and steering endpoints to match your driving style as well as the terrain. Combined with radio adjustments such as dual rate, exponential, and endpoint tuning, the ET48 2.0 can be dialed in for anything from tight backyard obstacle courses to wide open dirt fields.

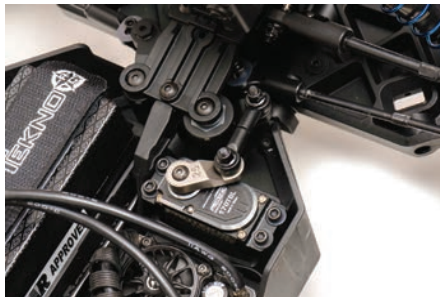
TEST GEAR

For my Tekno ET48 2.0 Monster Truck build, I picked electronics with one goal in mind: creating a powerful, reliable, and unstoppable basher that delivers the performance and durability expected from a platform of this caliber. While the ET48 2.0 carries a racing pedigree, this build focuses on unleashing its potential in the backyard, skate park, dirt, and anywhere a true monster truck should be driven.

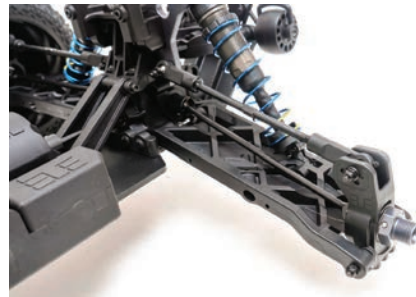
I started with the Hobbywing XR8 Pro G3 ESC and XeRun 4274 G3 2250kV motor combination for their proven reputation, efficiency, and ability to provide the smooth power delivery, punch, and thermal management needed for aggressive bashing. Powering everything is the ProTek 4S 6500 mAh



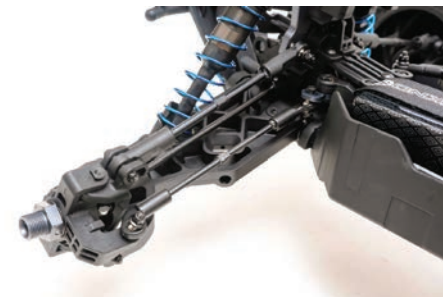
All the electronics fit nicely in the MT48 2.0 and are all bolted in, making them easy to remove for cleaning and maintenance.



Protek's 170TBL servo was a perfect match and made the most of the MT48 2.0's steering geometry and adjustability.



Hard to tell if you're looking at a race truck or a basher; the MT48 2.0's suspension is fully adjustable.



Upper links allow you to change camber while the steering linkage can be shortened or lengthened to dial in some toe-in or toe-out.



The chassis incorporates front and rear chassis guards to protect your truck from wear and tear.



Protek is known for their powerful LiPo packs and the 6500 mAh LiHV 4S pack is no exception, giving the MT48 2.0 monster horsepower.

120C HV LiPo, a battery known for delivering strong, consistent power while handling the demands of high-performance vehicles.

Steering duties are handled by the ProTek 170TBL Black Label high-torque brushless servo for its impressive speed, strength, and reliability when controlling a heavy, high-impact truck. To complete the transformation into a true monster truck, the JConcepts 2005 Chevy 1500 Single Cab body adds slick truck styling, while the JConcepts Choppers pre-mounted tires provide the aggressive appearance, traction, and durability needed for extreme driving.

BEHIND THE WHEEL

The Tekno ET48 2.0 is the kind of monster truck that begs to be driven hard, not pampered on a shelf. My secret test spot combines a perfect mix of loose dirt, scattered rocks, weathered roots, and natural jumps carved into the terrain over countless test sessions. This made it the ideal proving ground for a dedicated basher.

From the moment the tires hit the ground, the ET48 2.0 felt incredibly balanced, shrugging off rough terrain with a confidence that encouraged me to push harder with every pack. Rather than feeling nervous or twitchy at speed, the truck inspired trust, carved out sweeping turns, soaked up ugly landings, and tracked straight even after repeated launches that would unsettle lesser platforms.

It has the rugged DNA Tekno is known for, but what impressed me most was how refined that toughness felt. Every jump could be adjusted mid-air with a quick squeeze of the throttle or brake, and every hard landing was absorbed by a suspension that refused to bounce uncontrollably or slap the chassis into the dirt.

Power delivery from the Hobbywing XR8 Pro G3 ESC and the 2250kV of monster horsepower transformed the truck into an absolute missile, yet it never felt intimidating. The sensor system delivered incredibly smooth throttle response at crawling speeds

while exploding into powerful acceleration whenever the trigger was buried. Coming out of loose corners, the power remained predictable instead of violent, allowing the truck to dig for traction instead of simply spinning away horsepower.

The electronics stayed cool throughout repeated full-throttle runs, proving that this combination is just as happy surviving extended bash sessions as it is delivering peak performance. The ProTek 4S 6500 mAh was powering the whole show and delivered consistent punch from the first trigger pull to the final minutes of the run. There was no noticeable drop in power as the pack discharged, which gave the truck the same lively character throughout the entire session while providing the runtime needed to truly enjoy a day at the bash spot instead of constantly swapping batteries.

Throughout testing, the ProTek 170TBL servo performed like a champ, and it produced crisp, authoritative steering that never



VEHICLE SPECS TEKNO MT48 2.0 KIT

P/N: TKR9603
MSRP: \$579
URL: teknorc.com

Height (as tested): 7.8 in.
Length (as tested): 23.7 in.
Width (as tested): 14.96 in.
Wheelbase (as tested): 13.23 in.
Weight : 10.6 lbs.
Scale: 1/8
Chassis: 7075 aluminum
Shocks: 16mm large-bore aluminum, adjustable, oil-filled
Suspension: Independent, front and rear
Front & Rear Differentials: Fluid-filled, steel bevels
Center Differential: Fluid-filled, plastic spur
Front & Rear Driveshafts: Steel universals
Center Driveshafts: Rear steel universal/front aluminum driveshafts
Bearings: Rubber-shielded ball

Additional Parts & Upgrades (Not included with kit)

XR8 PRO G3 ESC(P/N 30113400)
Hobbywing XeRun 4274 SD G3 Motor 2250kV
(P/N 30405001)
ProTek 4S 6500mAh 120C HV LiPo (P/N PTK-5106-22)
ProTek 170TBL "Black Label" High Torque Brushless
Servo (P/N PTK-170TBL)
JConcepts 2005 Chevy 1500 Single Cab 13" Wheelbase
(P/N 0399)
JConcepts Choppers Pre-Mounted (P/N 4089-39912)
Futaba 10PX 10-Channel 2.4GHz T-FHSS Radio System
(FUT01004408-1)

hesitated when the oversized tires loaded up in deep dirt or when the truck came down on an awkward landing. Whether correcting the truck mid-corner or making split-second adjustments before takeoff, the steering remained fast, powerful, and confidence-inspiring.

Visually, the JConcepts 2005 Chevy 1500 Single Cab body gave the ET48 2.0 an aggressive, scale-inspired personality that looked right at home blasting through roots and floating over jumps, while the JConcepts Choppers tires tied the entire package together. Their tread found dependable grip across the loose dirt,

dusty hardpack, and broken terrain, delivering predictable cornering and strong forward bite without making the truck feel grabby or difficult to control. Instead of chasing lap times, this setup was built for maximum smiles, and it absolutely delivered.

Every launch, powerslide, wheelie, and rough landing reinforced the feeling that this wasn't simply a fast monster truck. It was a purpose-built bashing machine engineered to excel where the terrain is unpredictable, the jumps are improvised, and the only goal is to empty the battery with a grin that lasts long after the dust settles.

FINAL WORD

The Tekno ET48 2.0 delivered unforgettable bash sessions by combining race-bred pedigree with the toughness and attitude needed for serious backyard punishment. Built around a strong 1/8-scale race platform, it features a refined suspension layout, oversized drivetrain components, and durable aluminum chassis components that helped it handle hard launches, rough terrain, and big-air landings with confidence.

Unlike a truck focused only on lap times, the ET48 2.0 gave me the freedom to send it, crash it, and keep driving while still enjoying precise handling and predictable control. Its interchangeable parts, proven Tekno quality, and tough construction make it an excellent choice for the extreme basher wanting a premium truck that can take abuse without sacrificing performance. If you want a truck built for endless fun, the ET48 2.0 deserves a serious look!

SOURCES

Tekno	teknorc.com
Protek	amainhobbies.com
JConcepts	jconcepts.net
Hobbywing	hobbywingdirect.com
Futaba	futabausa.com

SHOWROOM

HOW TO PAINT INJECTION-MOLDED BODIES

Text & Images by Kevin Hetmanski



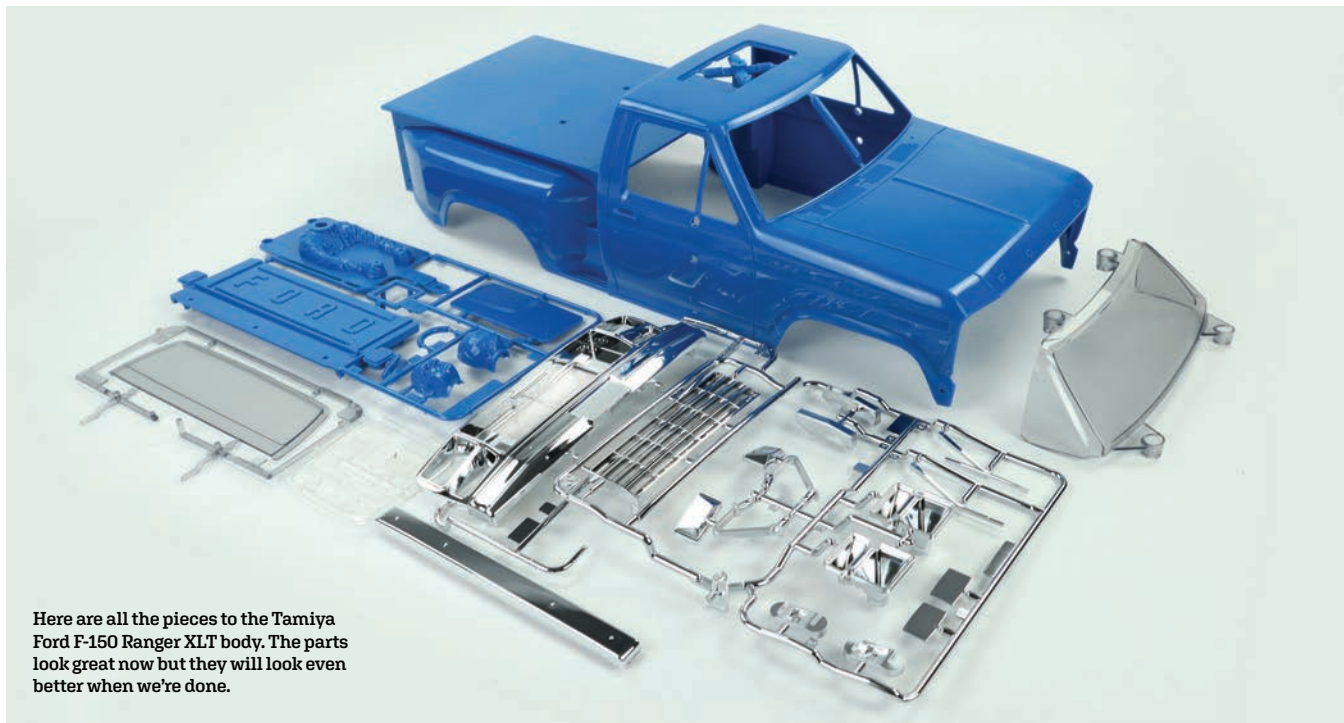
M FINISH



I love injection-molded bodies because of their crisp detail and how easy they are to modify, but painting them has always been my favorite part. For some people painting can seem intimidating, but I can assure you that getting a great finish from a spray can is not nearly as difficult as it may seem. It does, however, take time, patience, and attention to detail if you want the best possible finish.

For this issue I had the opportunity to paint a Tamiya Ford F-150 Ranger XLT hard body for my review, and I'm going to walk you through the exact process I used to complete it. With the techniques covered here, you can give any injection-molded body a paint job that will stand out anywhere you take it.

I will be driving this off-road truck for my review and it will likely pick up some damage along the way, but I still believe in going the extra mile during the paint process. Not only do I love the final result, but every body I paint helps make me better for the next one.



Here are all the pieces to the Tamiya Ford F-150 Ranger XLT body. The parts look great now but they will look even better when we're done.

FILL IN THE ROOF

This Tamiya body has a roof patch that gets glued in place; you can lay it flat or set it at an angle like a sunroof. I like to have a completely clean roof line, so I glued the roof patch in with CA glue then I filled the gap around it with a coat of the glue.

I use CA glue to set the patch in place over anything else because I know the glue will be strong enough to keep it there, and the glue can be used in this case as a filler to conceal the gap around the patch. I've used different types of filler to smooth out this area on other bodies, and no matter what I do, I end up seeing some shrinkage in that area after the paintwork is done.

I now use nothing but CA, because the idea is that it won't shrink and it cures very hard, so the gap should nearly be invisible when done. So far, I've been lucky with this technique.

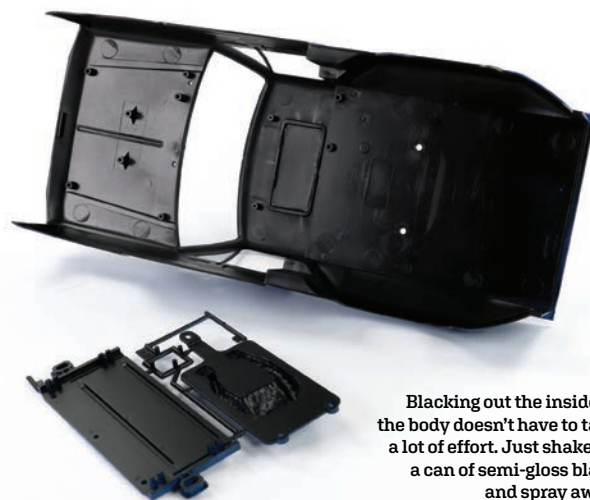


I like a clean roof on my Tamiya vehicles so I always glue the roof patch in place with CA glue, then I use the glue as a filler on the gap all around the patch.

BLACK IT OUT

Before I do anything else to the body, I paint the inside with semi-gloss black. I do this because I don't want to look through the wheel wells or windows and see the color of the plastic that the body was molded in, or overspray from the color that I'm spraying. The black paint, in my opinion, will give the body more of a scale appearance, because when you look at full-size vehicles you'll see a darker color in the wheel wells and window areas, and this gives a similar effect.

I don't spend a lot of time on this step because you're going to see it but not really, so prep of the body and finish of the paint doesn't matter. When spraying the black, you don't have to worry about overspray getting on the outside of the body, but it would be good to try to minimize that so you have



Blackening out the inside of the body doesn't have to take a lot of effort. Just shake up a can of semi-gloss black and spray away.

less smoothing out to do later. I also added black to the back of the tailgate and the underside of the driver figure.

SWITCH CUTOUT

The Tamiya Ford F-150 Ranger has a cutout in the bed for the on/off switch, so I took care of that next. If I make a mistake and mark up the body while cutting out the hole, I can fix it with the other work that has to be done later.

I started by drilling a bunch of holes into the indentation for the opening on the back side of the body, then I used side cutters to roughly cut out the rest of the material in the middle. I cleaned up the remaining material with a rotary tool set to a medium RPM and a small-diameter grinding stone to smooth out the lines. A medium-coarse standing stick was used to fine-tune the opening.



Opening the switch hole in the bed is as easy as drilling some small holes, making some cuts, then using a grinding stone and finishing up with some sanding sticks. The opening in the bed has an indent on the bottom side so you can use the edge as a guide.

BODY MASSAGE

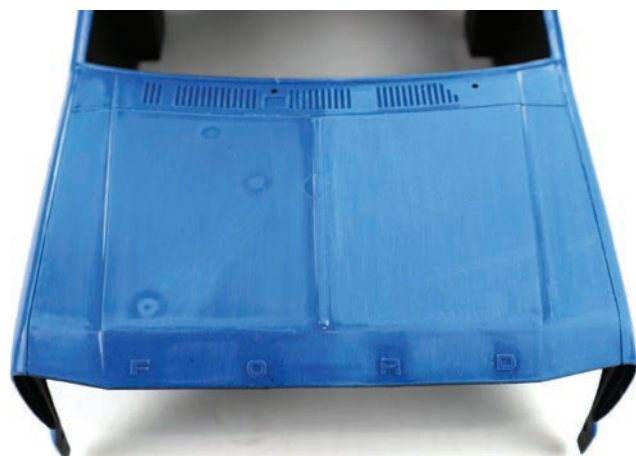
On injection-molded bodies you'll have small imperfections to remove if you want the body to look its best when you're done. These include mold lines and small dips in the surface that can occur during the molding process. If those small defects don't bother you, move on to the next step. I'm not a fan, so I spend time sanding and filling these areas to make the surfaces as flawless as possible.

The mold lines can be found in different areas, so you'll have to look for them. I generally find them along the top of the body from front to back on each side. You'll find small dips in the body basically anywhere; there's a boss for a screw below on mine, but there may be other places, so give the body a good look to make sure you catch everything. I like to start with somewhere around a 600-grit sanding sticks or paper to wet-sand the imperfections in the

body and remove the blemishes. You can adjust the grit as necessary in order to get the job done.

On my Tamiya Ford F-150 Ranger XLT body, I ended up having to get pretty aggressive to smooth some sections out. Sometimes it's just not possible to get rid of some of the dips by sanding the body—for example, if they're too deep or in a bad location—so you'll have to switch to a filler at that point. There were a surprising number of low spots on the hood and bed of my truck.

I managed to wet-sand most of them out with an aggressive 400-grit sanding, which I then followed up with finer grits up to 800 to get as many of the scratches out as I could. I also did this with the roof patch to get the body and patch surfaces to line up. I did have a few spots that needed some filler, but those were minimal. Once the problem areas are fixed, I sand the entire body with 800-grit sandpaper to scuff the factory shine and give the paint a good surface to bond to.



Some light sanding on the hood revealed some of the dips in the body's surface.



A little bit of filler was used to get the body straight. The entire surface was then scuffed with 800-grit sandpaper.

WASH THE BODY

Before you paint, you need to wash the body to get any debris, mold release, oils and so on off the surface. This will give the paint the best possible surface to stick to. I always use Dawn dish soap for this, and I go with the most basic one I can get. You don't want anything with fragrances, hand softeners and so on; straight-up soap is what you want. I grab a paper towel, fold it into a hand-sized piece, wet it, and apply a few drops of dish soap. I wet the entire body and use the paper towel to spread the soap, then scrub all surfaces. I go over the body at least two times to ensure that I touch all surfaces with the soap before rinsing it off.

I also use a new soft toothbrush to clean out the door gaps, hood gaps, vent openings and so on. Debris from the sanding process likes to collect in those areas. When rinsing, I wipe the soap from the body with my hand while the water runs on the body, and again I go over it until I'm sure all the soap has been removed. Then I rinse the body one more time.

After that, I get a lint-free towel and dry the body off right away because I don't want the water to leave any spots. I always dry with a towel instead of using compressed air or a compressor to blow it dry, because contaminants can get onto the body from that. I'll also carefully blow the water out of the tight areas with my mouth and wipe those areas dry. To ensure the body is completely dry before masking or painting, I let it sit in the sun or over an air vent to help any hidden moisture evaporate.



I always use Dawn dish soap on any injection-molded thing that I'm painting. After washing, I use a towel to get as much water off the surface as I can before letting it air dry.

MASK THE BLACK

I painted the inside of the body with semi-gloss black paint, and I want to keep it that way. To do that, I mask the inside of the body to keep overspray off it (for the most part). You don't have to do a perfect job here; we're just trying to keep as much overspray out as we can.

I pick up 1 ½ to 2-inch-wide tape for this job, and I start by masking the window openings and any small openings like the body mount holes. Then I run a full strip of tape down the side of the body, leaving about half of it (or more) hanging down. Tuck the tape into the dips and crevices of the body as you go along the side, and leave about an inch of tape past each end.

I add extra strips of tape to the top of each wheel well to complete the process. Then all that's left is to mask the ends of the body using a little of the extra tape from the side masking to fill the gap.



It's a lot of masking, but worth it to keep the black paint inside the body as black as possible.

TIME TO SPRAY

Primer and paint are the next steps for this Tamiya Ford F-150 Ranger XLT body, and both go down the same way, so we'll just talk about this part of the process once. Before anything hits the body, I give a couple sprays off to the side to make sure nothing but primer/paint lands on that body once the spray tip is facing it. You never know what could come out of that spray tip. I hold the can about four to five inches away from the body and spray, making a slight overlap with each pass. I don't really follow any strict order when I spray.

Sometimes I'll do the sides and move to the top, or

I'll hit the difficult areas first and then move on. I don't try to get full coverage on the first pass; I spray just enough to get a tack coat and then give the body a few minutes to sit before moving on to another coat. After that first tack coat with Tamiya primer/paint (other paint may act differently), I go pretty heavy, and I follow up that tack coat with two more passes.

When painting I always spray three coats with a 5-to-10-minute wait time in between, and after each round of three, I let the body sit for at least 24 hours to dry. Then I prep with 3,000-grit sandpaper, wash the body again, and repeat the paint process. In total I like to apply three coats of primer and at least six coats of paint. In this case I was concerned about the Ford letters on the front of the hood flooding with paint and I was very happy with the finish after five coats, so I called it a day.



After three coats of primer and five coats of paint, I called it done. The finish that you see here is straight out of the can. This shows you what good prep and spray technique can do.

TIME TO SHINE

The paint on the body is almost perfect, and I could get away with moving on to painting the details. However, we're pretty close to a perfect shine, so I decided to go down that path. Some scratches from the body prep process on the hood and roof were visible, and sadly there's a hint of that gap between the roof patch and roof even after all that work. I took some 6,000-grit sandpaper and used it to wet sand the marks out on the roof and hood, being careful to stay away from any edges where the paint could easily be rubbed away.

When I sand I make sure I stay on top of my progress by sanding a little then wiping the area dry with a paper towel to check my progress. I sanded the entire body until I had a uniform flat finish, then I carefully followed up the 6,000-grit with 8,000-grit sandpaper to get the surface even smoother.

Then it was time to move on to Tamiya polish; I started with the fine polish and rubbed it on all surfaces until I felt that there was no more

improvement in finish. Before moving to the finish polish, I washed the body with dish soap to make sure all of the grit from the first polish was gone. More polishing was done with the finish compound and the body was washed again before moving to the final wax stage.



Fine-grit sandpapers, polish, and some wax, along with some soft cloths, were used to make an already-shiny body even more shiny.

DO THE DETAILS

This is a step that I often see people skip. To me, not painting the details takes away from the scale realism that an injection-molded body gives you and leaves it incomplete. Before painting details such as the door handles, brake lights and so on, I give the body one more wash with soap and water to get the wax off the surface. I use wax to make sure my shine is complete, but I want to remove it to ensure that the paint I'm about to add will stick.

The body was masked and the bed was left exposed so I could give it a coat of semi-gloss black. This time I'm not looking for a perfect flat and shiny surface. I leave the paint can at room temperature, I spray from about a foot away as before, and I give the bed cover quick shots of paint to dust the color on. This will give the bed cover some texture and make up for all the sanding and filling that was done earlier.

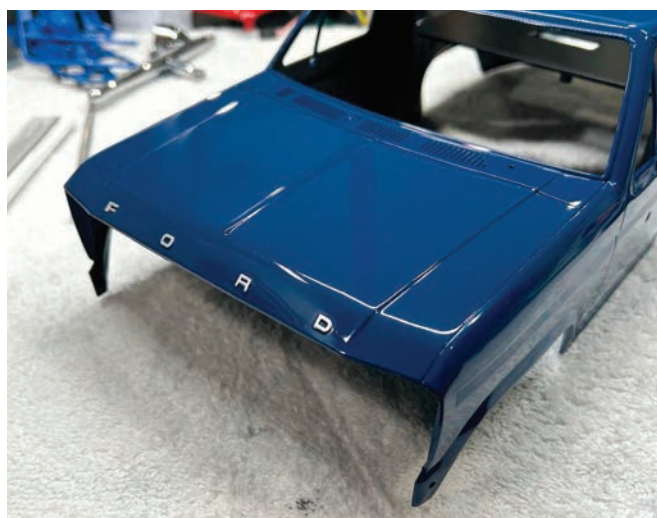
For the trim around the front windshield, I applied thin tape and followed the window trim, leaving the corners square. Then I masked the corners and used a sharp hobby blade to cut the rounded edges out. I finished masking the area with more tape and covered the majority of the body using sheets of paper out of an old yellowpages book. The trim was easily and carefully painted with silver acrylic paint and my airbrush.

You can also do this with Tamiya silver spray paint;

Light passes with room temperature Tamiya semi-gloss paint provided a perfect textured and scale appearance on the Ford's bed cover.



Thin tape was applied to the window trim, and the paint in this case was applied with my airbrush.



The letters on the hood and tailgate were taken care of with a small brush and a lot of patience.

just make sure you apply as little as possible to avoid buildup. I did the letters on the front of the hood and tailgate and the door handles. I like to use acrylic paint for this step, because if I mess up, the paint is easy to wipe away with a damp towel or cotton swab.

WRAP UP

After a bit of time and effort, you'll end up with a paint job that you can truly admire and be proud of. None of the steps in this article are hard to do, they're just time-consuming. Do you need to follow every single step covered here on your own injection-molded body? Not at all. You can pick and choose the techniques that best fit your project and the finish you're trying to achieve. A lot of the methods shown here can also be applied to painting virtually any injection-molded part, making them useful skills well beyond just bodies.



After the painting, all that's left is to assemble the body and apply all the decals. Now you have an awesome-looking body that anyone will love.

6 PAINTING TIPS

WET SAND IT

When I sand a body, I always use wet/dry sandpaper and I wet-sand the surfaces. This helps extend the life of the sandpaper by keeping debris from building up on it, and that in turn keeps the sandpaper cutting the material longer, which gets the area smoother faster. I also add a few drops of dish soap to the water to “clean” the surface at the same time. Any container to hold water will do, but I love using old Chinese takeaway containers for this job.

EASY SEE SANDING

Sometimes it can be hard to tell if you removed the necessary material; you can make it easier to tell by marking the area with a marker, then you can sand/blend the area until the ink is gone. For example, this happens with mold lines on any injection-molded part, and areas can easily be missed. With the area marked up, you'll simply sand until the color from the marker disappears.

WASH YOUR HANDS

Any time I have to touch the body after washing it, I make sure my hands are as clean as possible. The body is free of contamination, and you don't want to ruin that. I also try to grab the body from an edge that won't be seen or on the underside where paint won't be flowing.

WARM THE PAINT

Warming the paint can before you spray the

body builds pressure inside for a better transfer of paint. It will flow nicely and do a better job of leveling out once it's on the surface that you're applying it to, which will reduce or eliminate the “orange peel” effect. I like to do this by putting the can into warm water, and I shake it every few minutes to ensure all the paint is warmed up.

BE COAT CONSISTENT

The Tamiya body that I painted here also included a tailgate and rear window, which means that three separate pieces have to be painted. When you apply color to the body and those pieces, make sure you apply the same amount of paint so they come out having a consistent level of color. So if the body gets three coats, the other parts need to get the same amount to ensure that the color will be the same on all three.

MAKESHIFT SPRAY BOOTH

I always spray bodies in a spray booth because it helps keep debris away from the body as it gets coated in paint and dries. This is done through a downdraft vent system that I built into what is basically a large wooden box with a door. I also have very good lighting installed so I can easily see all areas of the body. But you don't have to build a spray booth to paint an injection-molded body; you can grab a large cardboard box and use that instead. Spray the interior surface down with some water first to dampen the cardboard, and that will help keep dust from floating around.

B7.1D

**TEAM ASSOCIATED'S 2WD LEGACY RACER
ENTERS ITS NEXT ERA**

Text & Images by Joel Navarro





Born from decades of championship-proven 2WD racing heritage, the Team Associated B7.1D arrives as a refined weapon built for dirt, clay, and low-grip battles where precision matters. This latest evolution features a race-focused long-arm suspension package, adjustable KPI steering blocks, a lightweight three-gear laydown

transmission, ball differential, and updated shock towers.

Designed to deliver smoother corner speed, improved balance, and confidence through changing track conditions, the B7.1D represents the next chapter in Team Associated's legendary buggy lineage. The build is complete, so let's get to racing!



AT A GLANCE



TYPE
Off-Road



SCALE
1/10



DRIVETRAIN
2WD



POWER
Electric



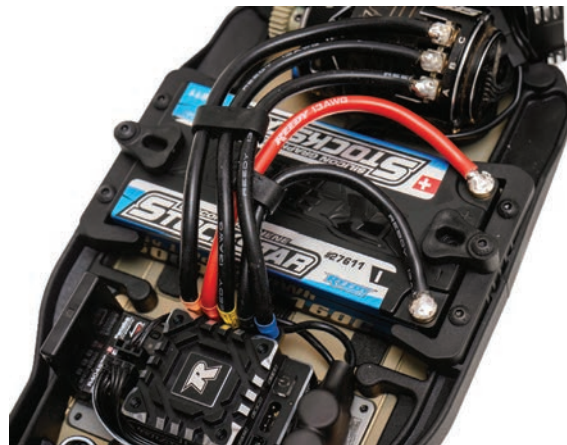
BUILD
Kit



PRICE
\$399



The motor mount side of the transmission is all business and allows easy access to gear mesh adjustments, motor swaps, and gear/pinion gear changes.



The B7.1D can fit many battery sizes, with the battery holders allowing fore/aft adjustment to alter the weight bias.



A straightforward but effective design, the dual bellcrank steering system can be height-adjusted—Ackermann adjustments being made by adding or removing blue aluminum shims.



The compact three-gear transmission reduces rotating mass and gear mesh drag. The slipper clutch can be easily adjusted via the spring-loaded adjustment nut.

REFINED BALANCED CHASSIS

The B7.1D introduces a refined 7075 aluminum chassis platform that builds upon the proven foundation of the original B7D with a focus on improved balance, durability, and tuning flexibility.

The updated chassis maintains the same 2.5mm thickness but incorporates revised features, including optional weight plate pockets that allow racers to fine-tune weight distribution for changing track conditions. Compared to the previous B7D chassis, the B7.1D's design works with a more centralized layout philosophy, helping optimize mass placement while maintaining the rigidity needed for consistent handling during high-load racing situations.

The premium 7075 aluminum

construction provides an excellent combination of strength and controlled flex to give racers a predictable feel without adding unnecessary weight. The updated chassis also benefits from Team Associated's continued development of the B7 platform, offering a stronger foundation for dirt and clay racing where traction levels and track surfaces can change dramatically throughout a race day.

Overall, the B7.1D chassis represents a subtle but meaningful evolution, improving adjustability and refinement while preserving the responsive characteristics that made the B7D a championship-level 2WD buggy.

3-GEAR TRANSMISSION

The original B7D utilized a five-gear transmission layout, while the

updated B7.1D drops in a refined three-gear laydown transmission that maintains the proven motor location while reducing internal rotating mass and drivetrain drag.

By eliminating unnecessary gear meshes, this new configuration allows more of the motor's available power to reach the rear wheels and create a more direct connection between throttle input and forward acceleration. This advantage is especially valuable in stock classes using lower-power 17.5 and 13.5 brushless motors, where efficiency gains can translate into stronger corner exit speed and improved consistency over a full race run.

The three-gear system also helps reduce parasitic friction, allowing motors to operate with less thermal load while preserving



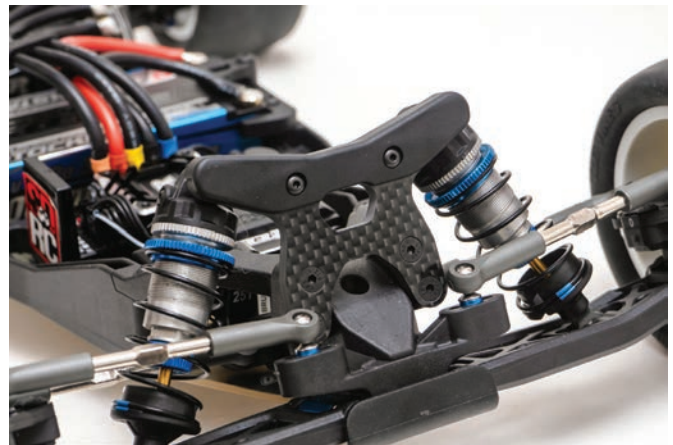
The integrated mount can fit a 30mm fan in the perfect position to effectively cool the motor.



The included 11g aluminum chassis weight neatly fits the ESC and receiver and can be removed to allow easy maintenance.



The new -2mm shock towers lower the overall CG of the B7.1D and add to its overall stability.



The front shock tower integrates a plastic guard to protect it from wear.

the buggy's balanced handling characteristics. Combined with the B7.1D's ball differential, dirt-focused suspension geometry, and updated chassis tuning, the revised drivetrain delivers a more responsive and competitive package for ultra-competitive off-road racing.

NEW SHOCK TOWERS

Compared with the previous B7D, the B7.1D introduces updated long-arm suspension components, redesigned front suspension arms with a hinge pin brace, and revised steering geometry for improved durability and more predictable corner entry.

The most noticeable change is the Gull-Dropper rear 81mm suspension arm package, which uses a 2mm lower rear shock tower and revised arm mounting

positions to reduce the center of gravity, along with the revised 71mm CVA bones to help the B7.1D carry more speed through corners while maintaining stability on rough surfaces.

The front end also benefits from a 2mm lower shock tower and updated ballstud mounting options that allow finer adjustments to chassis balance and tunability. Combined with the new transmission, the B7.1D delivers overall smoother throttle response to help it stay composed and not upset the suspension.

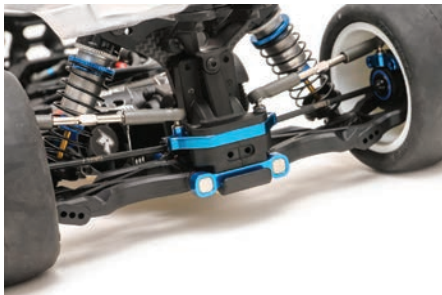
TEST GEAR

Selecting the right equipment for the Team Associated B7.1D review was about creating a balanced race package that could showcase the buggy's capabilities while allowing every component to be tested

under competitive conditions.

Lucky for me, Team Associated has its in-house Reedy brand with world-class electronics to choose from. I picked the Reedy Blackbox 610R ESC for its precise throttle response, adjustable power delivery, and advanced tuning options to give the B7.1D the control needed for detailed track evaluation. I also used the Blackbox PROgrammer 2 to unlock deeper tuning adjustments on the Blackbox 610R ESC and to help set up refinement throughout testing. Pairing it with the Reedy SP5 17.5T brushless motor provides super smooth, efficient power characteristics, along with the explosive torque needed for stock-class racing.

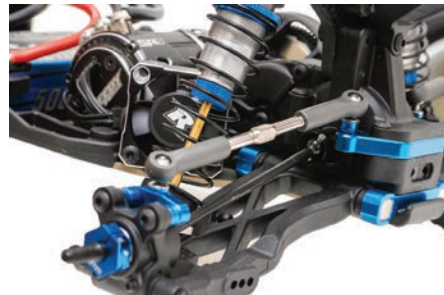
For power, I went with the Reedy Stockstar 5800mAh Shorty battery to provide consistent voltage,



The new 81mm arms, along with the 71mm CVA bones, are a notable change from the previous B7 and improve rear-end stability.



The rear hubs allow easy access to make camber link length adjustments, hub height, or different-width hex changes.



Roll center adjustments can be made at the camber link's outer or inner mounting position.



Up front, you can change the steering block height as well as the carbon fiber steering and camber plates for further suspension adjustments.



TZO One-R slicks were the ticket and gave me exceptional grip during testing and racing.



The Reedy Stockstar 5800mAh Shorty LiPo gave super low resistance numbers and gave the B7.1D tons of torque on the track.

strong punch, and a lightweight package that helps maintain the B7.1D's handling balance. For steering duties, I chose the Reedy RS1606HD low-profile brushless high-speed servo that adds another layer of precision with fast response, durable steel gears, and a solid aluminum case—ideal for precise steering inputs.

To manage temperatures during extended runs, the Reedy HV 30mm Motor Fan helps maintain reliable performance. Finally, I selected TZO One-R front and rear slick buggy tires to provide a consistent tire package that helped me feel out traction, corner speed, and overall handling characteristics.

Together, these accessories create a race-ready environment designed to measure the B7.1D's performance while allowing each component to contribute to a complete and competitive 1/10-scale buggy experience.

BEHIND THE WHEEL

A race weekend at Coyote Raceway

in Victorville, California, for the third round of JBRL (Jimmy Babcock Racing League) was the perfect proving ground for a competition machine like the Team Associated B7.1D. Known for its ultra-high-grip glued racing surface, Coyote demands a buggy that can rotate quickly, maintain traction through high-speed sections, and remain predictable when heavy rubber starts to accumulate on the track surface.

The B7.1D is of course the dirt-focused version of Team Associated's championship-winning B7 platform that arrived with a strong foundation built around decades of RC racing development. For this reason, I stuck with the box stock setup to see how it would do on a high-grip track. For the race weekend, I focused on tailoring the B7.1D specifically for Coyote Raceway's demanding glued surface. The first task was adding CA glue to the front tire sidewalls of the TZO One-R slick buggy tires.

On a surface with extreme traction,

this helped calm down front-end bite during aggressive corner entry, preventing traction rolling, and reducing the tendency for the buggy to feel overly sharp. The added sidewall support gave the front tires a more consistent feel throughout long runs, allowing smoother steering input and better control when transitioning from braking to throttle.

I also lowered the chassis to a 16mm ride height, which created a balanced setup that allowed the B7.1D to stay planted without sacrificing responsiveness thanks to the lower CG. This ride height worked well in high-traction conditions by keeping weight transfer controlled and maintaining stability through fast directional changes. Another key tuning change was raising both the front and rear roll centers. This adjustment helped reduce excessive chassis roll, improved response during rapid steering inputs, and gave the B7.1D a more precise feel when attacking tight sections of the track.



The silky-smooth 13mm big-bore shocks come standard for exceptional performance.

VEHICLE SPECS TEAM ASSOCIATED B7.1D KIT

P/N: 90047
MSRP: \$399
URL: associatedelectrics.com

Scale: 1/10

Height (as tested): 3.3 in.

Length (as tested): 15.4 in.

Width (as tested): 9.8 in.

Wheelbase (as tested): 11.1 in.

Weight : 3 lbs., 4 oz.

Chassis: 2.5mm 7075 aluminum

Shocks: 13mm large-bore aluminum, adjustable, oil-filled

Suspension: Independent front and rear

Front & Rear Differentials: Rear ball diff

Rear Driveshafts: Steel universals

Bearings: Rubber-shielded ball

Additional Parts (Not included)

Reedy Blackbox 610R Competition ESC
(P/N 27016)

Reedy Sonic 540-SP5 17.5T Brushless Motor
(P/N 27480)

Reedy STOCKSTAR 5800mAh 7.4V 160C Shorty
(P/N 27612)

Reedy RS1606HD Low-Profile Brushless
Hi-Speed Servo (P/N 27171)

Reedy Blackbox PROgrammer 2 (P/N 27027)

Reedy HV 30mm Motor Fan (P/N 27457)

TZO One-R 1/10 Rear 2.2 Slick Buggy Tire
(P/N ONE-R-T1)

TZO One-R 1/10 Front 2.2 Slick Buggy Tire
(P/N ONE-2FS-T1)

Futaba 10PX 2.4GHz T-FHSS Radio System
(P/N FUT01004409-1)

The complete Reedy electronics package that powered my ride complemented the B7.1D's race-focused design. The Reedy Blackbox 610R ESC provided super smooth throttle delivery and extensive tuning capability, and it allowed the motor's power to be adjusted perfectly for the high-grip environment. With the Reedy SP5 17.5T motor's timing cranked to the max, the B7.1D delivered a strong combination of efficiency and explosive acceleration that allowed for consistent lap times.

The Reedy Stockstar 5800mAh delivered awesome power throughout qualifying and the mains while contributing to the

balanced chassis feel thanks to its LCG compact shorty design. Steering response was immediate and precise with the Reedy RS1606HD high-speed servo and gave the B7.1D the quick reactions needed when battling in close competition.

Considering all this with the TZO One-R tires, the complete B7.1D package rewarded me with excellent forward traction and predictable cornering. By the end of the weekend, the B7.1D proved to be a precise, confidence-inspiring buggy that could handle the extreme grip of Coyote Raceway, and it scored me a third-place finish on the podium—right out of the box on its very first race day!

FINAL WORD

The Team Associated RC10B7.1D proved to be much more than just another race buggy. It became a trusted weapon that delivered when the pressure was on. With its refined long-arm suspension geometry, adjustable steering options, low center of gravity, lightweight three-gear laydown transmission, ball differential, and race-focused dirt setup, the B7.1D provided the consistency and confidence needed to attack every lap.

Throughout my JBRL race weekend, the buggy's stability through rough sections, predictable cornering, and ability to put power down helped me stay competitive. The B7.1D represents decades of Team Associated racing heritage blended with modern engineering, making it an ideal choice for drivers looking for a highly tunable platform capable of chasing results. Whether you are stepping into serious competition or upgrading your current race program, the B7.1D is built to perform.

SOURCES

Team	
Associated/Reedy	associatedelectrics.com
TZO	tztires.com
Futaba	futabausa.com

TEST BENCH

**RC PRODUCTS
TESTED & EVALUATED**

Text & Images by Joel Navarro



AT A GLANCE

POWER
Electric

PRICE
\$579

HITEC RDX2 1600 DUO

INTELLIGENT POWER MEETS RACING PRECISION

Your charger is one of the most important tools in your race program, and the new Hitec RDX2 1600 Duo is built to be a true performance partner when every pack matters. With dual independent charging channels, massive 1600W DC capability, support for modern LiPo/LiHV batteries, and advanced charging features, it delivers the speed and precision racers demand.

Pair it with the Hitec AD380 Battery Analyzer & Discharger and you create a powerful race-day station capable of conditioning, testing, and optimizing packs for peak performance. Know your batteries, maximize consistency, and eliminate guesswork before the next qualifier. Let's get to racing!

CHARGER FEATURES

The Hitec RDX2 1600 Duo supports Balance, Standard, Storage, and Discharge modes for LiPo, LiHV, Li-Ion, and LiFe batteries. Balance Mode equalizes cell voltages for maximum performance and safety, while Standard Mode provides fast charging. Storage Mode automatically sets batteries to ideal storage voltage, and Discharge Mode safely reduces voltage with individual cell monitoring and balancing.

Offering more power than you'll probably need, the RDX2 1600 Duo delivers focused charging performance with 1600 watts on DC input and 500 watts using its built-in AC power supply. On DC, each channel can provide up to 32A, while intelligent power distribution automatically shifts unused wattage between ports. The 500W AC mode offers convenient high-power charging from standard wall outlets, making it equally capable at home or at the track.

The unit's built-in DC power supply basically transforms the charger into a versatile bench power source, delivering adjustable output from 5-36V at up to 32A. It powers compatible DC accessories like tire warmers and soldering irons without a separate



The RDX2 1600 Duo can handle 2S LiPo all the way to high-capacity 4S batteries with ease.



Unlock the RDX2 1600 Duo's full potential when you pair it with the AD380 Battery Analyzer & Discharger, allowing you to discharge up to 40 amps.



The RDX2 1600 Duo's separate power supply allows you to use your accessories while your batteries charge.



The two ports to the power supply are easily accessible and don't get in the way of charging.

supply, although output shares available wattage with charging functions.

An exclusive 1100W Reverse Discharge function transfers energy directly from one battery connected to Channel A to another on Channel B to dramatically reduce wasted power and heat compared with conventional discharge methods. This is ideal for racers and serious hobbyists who demand the ultimate power from their batteries.

Parallel Charging mode combines both charging channels to deliver maximum current to a single LiPo battery. Using the dedicated parallel cable, users can charge compatible 2S-8S LiPo, LiHV or Li-ion packs at adjustable rates from 33-50A, dramatically reducing charge times while intelligently

utilizing the charger's combined power output.

Re-Peak Charge mode automatically peak-charges NiMH and NiCd batteries up to three consecutive times, confirming maximum capacity. Adjustable Delta-Peak Sensitivity fine-tunes charge termination voltage, reducing false peaks on difficult packs. Combined, these advanced features raise charging accuracy, maximize performance, and help deliver consistently full, reliable battery charges every time.

Finally, the RDX2 1600 Duo's Smart Ventilation Fan automatically adjusts cooling to match charging and discharging demands to help maintain optimal operating temperatures while minimizing unnecessary fan noise. By turning on only when needed, the fan

improves efficiency, protects internal electronics during high-power operation up to 1600W DC, and contributes to long-term reliability during demanding RC charging on race days.

BEHIND THE WHEEL

The Hitec RDX2 1600 Duo paired with the AD380 Battery Analyzer & Discharger creates a powerful race day battery management system designed to keep competition packs performing at their peak from the first qualifier to the final main. The RDX2 1600 Duo brings serious charging capability with its 500 watts on AC power when I plug in at the track support, parallel charging at up to 50 amps when maximum turnaround speed is needed. Adding the AD380 took battery preparation to another level by allowing me to evaluate packs, measure capacity, monitor discharge performance, and discharge at rates up to 40 amps.

At SDRC Raceway in Miramar, California, racing 1/10-scale off-road means every fraction of a second counts, and battery consistency can be the difference between a podium finish and chasing the field. Using the AD380 before race day or between events while at home allows me to check packs under a heavy load, helping identify which batteries deliver the strongest voltage curve and most reliable punch and allowing me to number my packs and keep a notebook with each of my race pack stats.

On race day, the RDX2 1600 Duo's 50-amp parallel charging capability makes it possible to recharge competition packs quickly while maintaining a focused pit routine. Combined with high-current discharge testing at 40 amps, the system helped me maximize battery readiness by ensuring packs are properly cycled, evaluated, and prepared to deliver aggressive acceleration and consistent power throughout a heat.



Whether you're using AC or DC, you can easily plug the power into the back of the RDX2 1600 Duo. Note the two large intelligent cooling fans.



Hitec offers an attractive tilt stand (sold separately) for your RDX2 1600 Duo that puts your screens at the perfect angle for easy viewing.

The left side of the RDX2 1600 Duo has ports to plug in the AD380 Battery Analyzer & Discharger (sold separately) and a 20watt USB-C port to perform firmware updates or charge your phone.



The front end of the RDX2 1600 Duo is all business, with XT60 charger cord inputs, up to 8S balance plugs, and temperature sensor ports.



When racing moved to The Dirt Raceway in Perris, California, the RDX2 1600 Duo's challenges changed dramatically with 1/8-scale eBuggy and eTruggy competition in sweltering 95-degree SoCal weather. Large-capacity 4S LiPo batteries require a charger that can handle repeated high-power cycles without slowing down, and the RDX2 1600 Duo proved more than capable throughout the day.

Charging oversized 4S packs all day long, the RDX2 1600 Duo kept up with the pace of a busy race schedule and never broke a sweat, keeping my batteries ready for every practice run, qualifier, and main event. Its dual-port design and high output capability make managing multiple vehicles and battery rotations much easier during long race days. Whether chasing maximum punch in a 1/10-scale short-course truck or supporting the energy demands of 1/8-scale electric monsters, the combination of the RDX2 1600 Duo and AD380 provides racers with the tools to understand their batteries, protect their gear, and extract every bit of performance when it matters most.

CHARGER SPECS : HITEC RDX2 1600 DUO

P/N: HRC44402
MSRP: \$339
URL: hitecrad.com

Operating Voltage Range: 100V-240V AC
Charger Current Range: 0.1A-32A x 2 / 0.1A-50A parallel
PC interface with downloadable software
LiPo, LiFe & LiIon Cell Count: 1-8 cells
NiCd/NiMH Cell Count: 1-20 cells
Pb Lead-Acid Based Cell Count: 3/6/12 cells
Charge Circuit Power: 500W AC / 1600W DC
Discharge Circuit Power: 45W
Dimensions: 7.09 x 5.35 x 4.41 in.
Weight: 3.585 lbs. / 1.63kg

Additional Parts (Not included)

Hitec AD380 Battery Analyzer & Discharger
(P/N 44406)

FINAL WORD

The Hitec RDX2 1600 Duo proved to be a true workhorse during testing, combining power, versatility, and effortless multitasking into one impressive charging station. With dual independent charging channels, support for multiple battery chemistries, 8S capability, and the ability to handle everything from everyday basher packs to high-performance race batteries, it delivers the flexibility serious hobbyists and racers demand. Throughout testing, the RDX2 1600 Duo performed flawlessly and provided reliable charging sessions while making battery management simple and efficient. Its built-in power supply, parallel charging capability, and smart power distribution make it a valuable addition to any pit setup. With so many chargers on the market today, the RDX2 1600 Duo is top-of-the-line at a reasonable price point.

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National averages based on actual project costs as reported by unaffiliated third-party home project websites.



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Air Conditioning Systems
Electrical System
Plumbing System and Stoppages
Toilets
Refrigerators
Water Heaters
Interior Gas Lines
Ceiling Fans
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Garage Door Openers
Dishwashers (Built-in)
Wall Ovens
Cooktops/Ranges
Range Exhaust Hoods
Trash Compactors (Built-in)
Microwaves (Built-in)
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Clothes Dryers
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MPH



Velineon 3S
BRUSHLESS **60+**
MPH



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