AYK—Sidewinder 1/10 Off Road—Racing Car

Kit Review by J.B. Varley

Following hard on the heels of the Super Trail, though overtaking it in performance terms, comes the new AYK Sidewinder.

This car comes virtually fully built and ready to run, which seems to be the style of many new kits appearing on the market.

The pressed out highly lightened chassis is cut from high strength aluminium alloy, strengthened at the front by 6mm square alloy rails and side plates, forming supports for front bumper and suspension pivots.

Front suspension parts are die-cast alloy trailing arms. The bottom front pivot passes through the side plates and the alloy rails, then the suspension arms are held in place by circlips. Top pivots are split into two halves, supported centrally by a separate alloy moulding screwed to the main chassis plate.

Also attached to these top pivots are the shock absorber mounts, easily adjusted for final pivot position and ride height.

Steering arms are nylon moulded and incorporate hardened steel stub axles and tubular king pins. Steering is finalised by AYK's traditional adjustable servo saver and the track rods are adjustable each end with neat nylon ball joints.

Working rearwards, we move to the fibreglass radio plate which is fixed to the main chassis plate via four aluminium spacer posts. The radio plate is extensively lightened, leaving provisions for fitting the steering servo and receiver to the underside by servo tape. The centre cutaway allows room for radio batteries (if used) and a mounting bracket is provided for the radio switch. This leaves space at the rear of the plate for a servo to the mechanical speed controller (again — if used). Cutouts for tiewraps are provided, allowing 7.2 volt nicad packs to be slung beneath the radio plate, in the manner we are accustomed to with 1/12th scale circuit racers.

Rear suspension is by a single trailing arm, neatly moulded in nylon for the optimum in strength and lightness. To the top of each arm is screwed a nicely thought out bracket for the shock absorber.

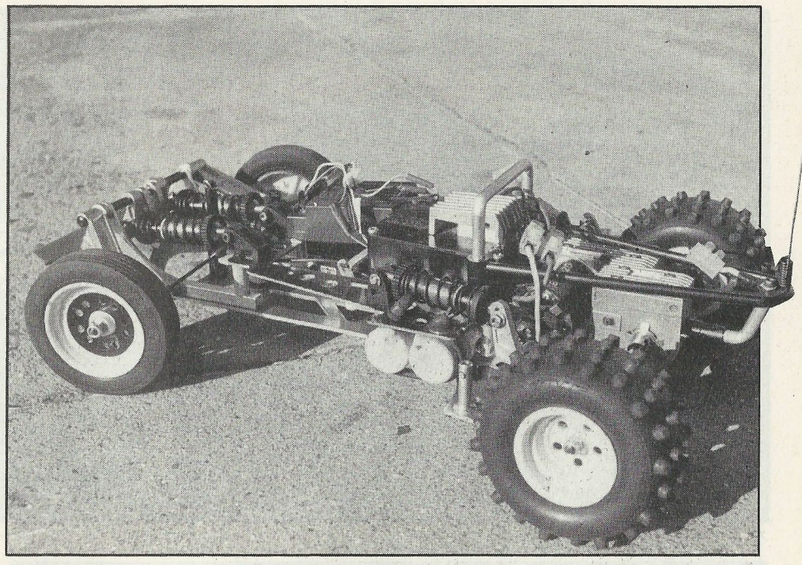
At this stage, I would like to make the point that considerable thought has been given to all parts on this AYK kit. Although much attention has been given to lightness, this does not appear to have jeopardised the strength of each part. At the same time, all of this work has added to the aesthetic value of the car in general, giving it a purposeful, rakish, racy look.

Let's not wax lyrical for too long, because we haven't finished outlining its many mechanical characteristics, such as differential and gear train. Here we have all components housed in a die-cast body bolted direct to the main aluminium chassis. Here one could

ask, why a diecasting and not a nylon moulding? My own feelings would suggest a diecasting as the obvious choice because it will act as an excellent heat sink to the motor. In many ways this theory is born out by the finned top cover to the gearbox. The level-gear differential is an all nylon affair, with a combination of nylon and metal gears making up the rest of the gear train from the motor pinion.

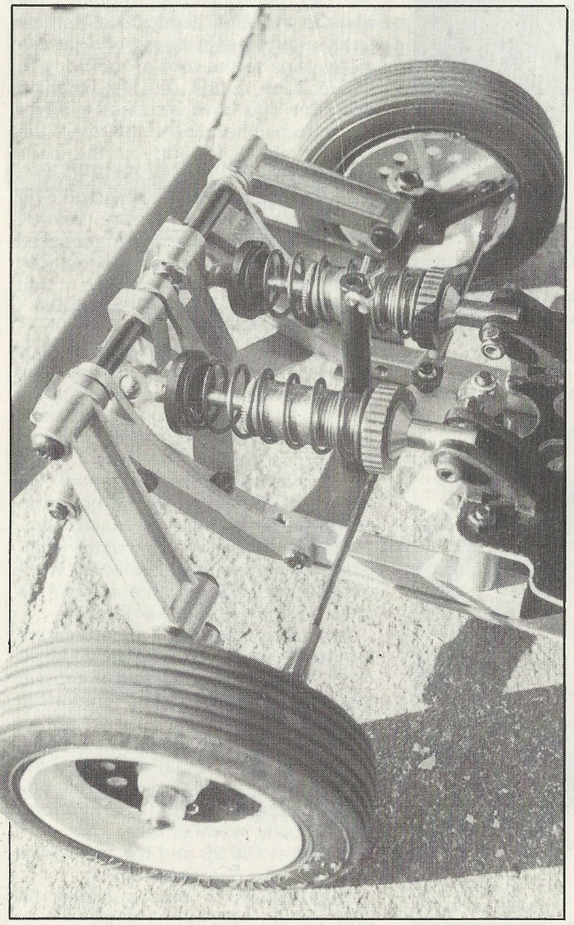
To finalise, we have coli-over stock oil fitted suspension units at each corner. These shocks are fully adjustable via nylon collars which screw along the threaded outer diameter of the shock absorber body.

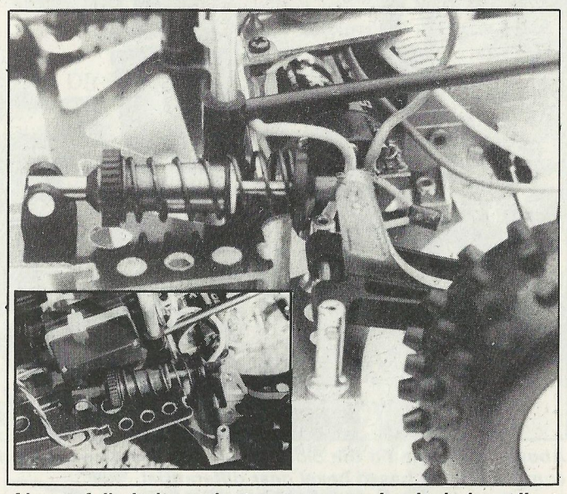
Three speed forward, full speed reverse, printed circuit speed controller, mounted with its own resistors on an aluminium bracket, immediately behind the roll-bar.



Right, at a later stage in its testing, the Sidewinder was fitted with an electronic speed controller. This fitted in the receiver's usual position.

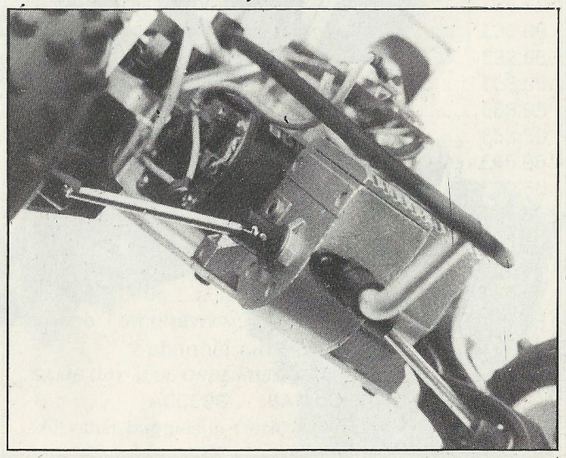
Below, most unusual feature of the Sidewinder is the system used on the front suspension. Loads are transmitted via the top trailing arms to torque rods and then to the adjustable oil-filled suspension units.

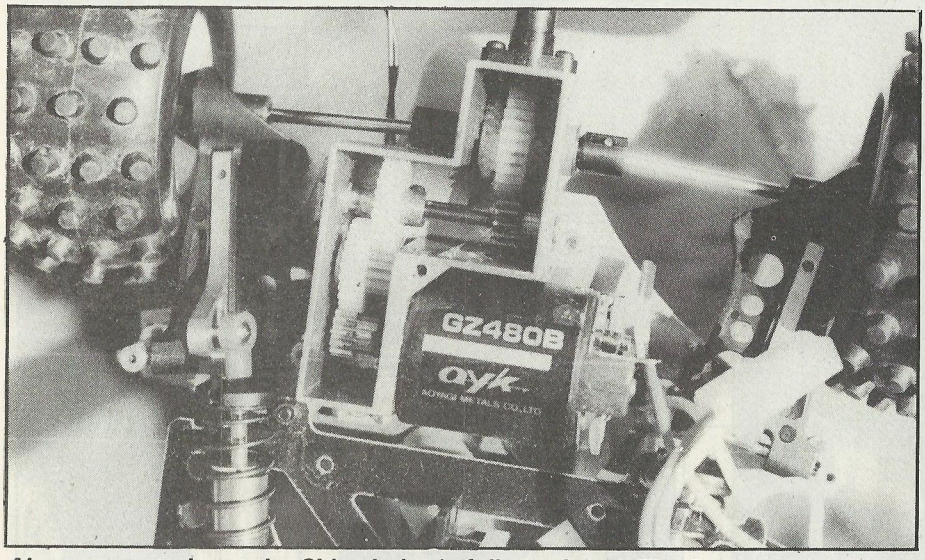




Above, fully independent rear suspension includes adjustable oil-filled coil over shocks, connected to the injection moulded nylon trailing arms via alloy extensions.

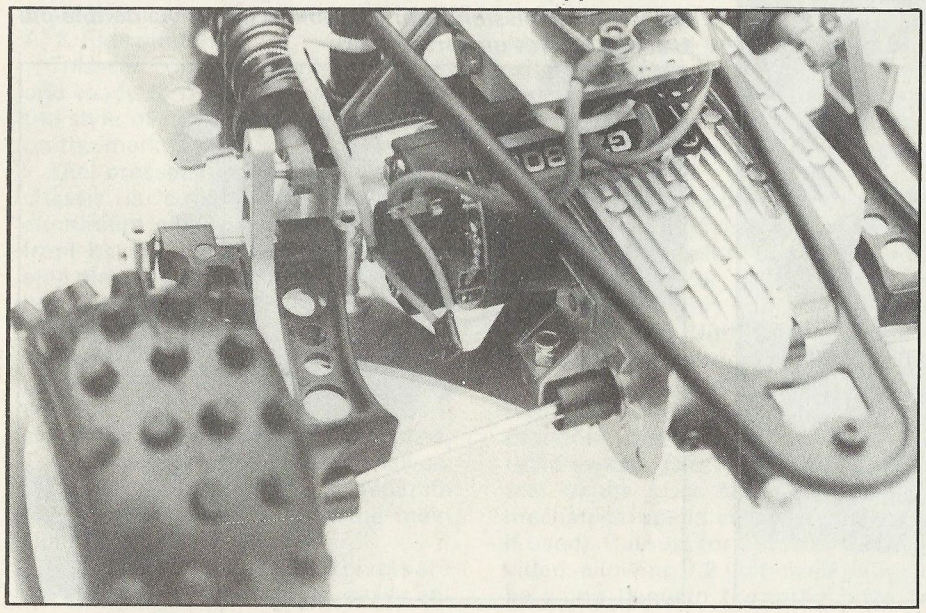
Below, transmission from gearbox to hub is via double-pin ball and socket universal joints.





Above, gear train on the Sidewinder is fully enclosed. The final gear includes a compact, nylon based bevel gear differential.

Below, a GY480B Yokomo type motor is employed in the review model. A simple mechanical switch type of speed controller is supplied.



Semi-pneumatic tyres re-used all round, knobblies to the rear, mounted on two-part nylon hubs, and narrow ribbed are used on the front tyres glued on one-piece hubs.

What do we have left then, before we can get ourselves mobile? We have to trim and paint the extremely lightweight lexan body and attach nylon clips to the roof of the body to locate it on to the roll bar when in position. You have also got a driver figure to paint and fit to the top of the throttle servo to add to the car's realism.

Last, but by no means least, go over every nut and bolt to ensure they are locked in place. Screws to stressed parts should be removed and replaced with the use of Loctite, to prevent that vital part readjusting itself just when it is most inconvenient.

At the time of writing, the car has not been driven in anger, but has been tested on open ground adjacent to the writer's home, incorporating many and varied types of surface. Until it is run against other similar kits it is difficult to assess its true potential. On the scales, it shows a good power to weight ratio against its major competitors and close scrutiny of the kit indicates that extensive lightening without altering the strength and handling characteristics would be difficult.

The adjustable shock absorbers are a must however, with the easy adjustment front to rear allowing the driver to easily dial the car in to alterations in circuit surface.

All in all then, an excellently produced kit, to AYK's usual standards. An hour's work straight out of the box and you can be ready to run, pardon me, virtually ready to *race*.

Priced at £96.95 and it is well worth some serious consideration

The Review kit was supplied by SRM Racing, Fareham, Hants.