

ASSOCIATED RC12i

A Radio Race Car Kit Review



As it comes straight from the box the RC12i is impressive.

In my experience there is rarely anything that Associated have produced in r/c car kits and accessories, that isn't of the highest quality and ready to prove that, under racing conditions, in the right hands.

One may go no further back than the European Championships held in June at Watford, where the winners' laurels were carried off by one half of Birmingham's dynamic duo, Jim Davis, driving a basically box standard RC12i.

With a little help from his friends, headed by no other than American Mike Reedy, Jim has already posted notice to the European racing fraternity the potential of this new car, a point already made in the USA, in the hands of experienced team drivers such as Kent Clausen and Mike Lavacot.

What better time, therefore, for a kit to arrive in our hands for reviewing. Take note, one goal already achieved by Associated, next step the World Championships, perhaps? On home soil, I'm certain they will be very hard to beat with the car.

With this review we will not burden you with the tedious exercise of screw by screw assembly details as I am sure the excitement of such reading would be too much to bear. We will therefore concentrate, at not a too high technical level, with new concepts and improved ideas that make up the kit.

A quick glance at the accompanying photo's will show the experienced eye that this is not just an uprated version of it's predecessor. What we appear to have is a 'back to the drawing board' concept. A chassis with enough rigidity to perform on high traction tarmac surfaces, with enough built-in suspension to soak up the bumps of more uneven outdoor tracks. It's suspension design thus allows the chassis to be flexible to afford the kind of grip we have been accustomed to in the UK, with lexan chassis on billard table wooden surfaces.

The chassis retains Associated's conventional use of GRP and with the careful cutting of the chassis at the rear, it allows the motor and axle assembly to flex independently of the shaker plate assembly. Staying at the rear end, the axle blocks have been redesigned, with the near side (as per UK drivers) shortened to accomodate only the axle, with no provisions for mounting a motor, therefore use of the Mabuschi RS40 is out. Offside incorporates the axle and motor as previously used, but the block is held by two aluminium counter-sunk screws immediately beneath the axle, with the rest of the block tapered to clear the chassis to help with the rear suspension action.

The radio plate has been completely redesigned and now sits on two nylon pillars to the side and front of the rear blocks. When the

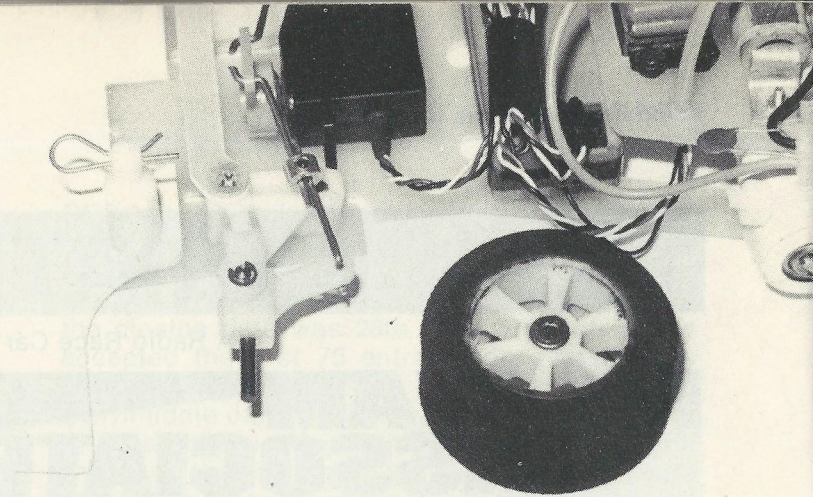
batteries are slung beneath in conventional manner that they lie about an eighth of an inch clear of the main chassis plate. Screwed through the radio plate on the centre line and to the rear of the batteries, is an aluminium pozidrive screw. Over this and clamped across the rear blocks, is a damper plate, which acts as a shock absorber, suspension travel stop and a box section brace for the rear end. To adjust this damper action special spring washers are tightened/loosened on the assembly with a nylon locknut.

The front steering blocks are unchanged but the steering arms have been altered to give only 0.05" caster offset. According to Associated, this will be at its best on high traction surfaces. If you run on low traction surfaces you could require blocks with a greater offset.

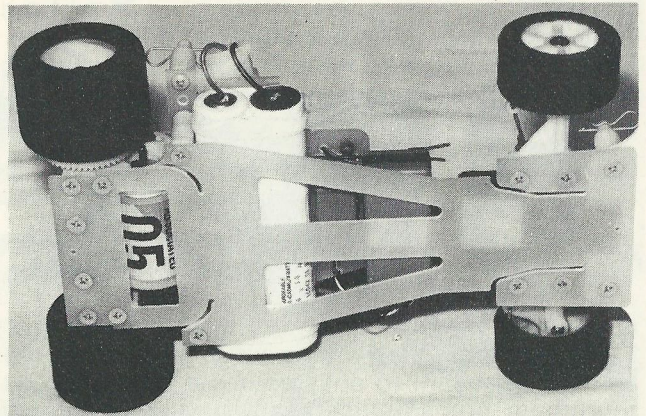
Written and pictorial information that comes with the kit leaves nothing to chance. Just join up the dots and everything will be revealed.

Once outside with the finished car, using kit supplied tyres, its handling was nothing short of superb in comparison to other cars tried. The car's ability to absorb surface irregularities and still stay on course was very pleasing. Adjustment of the damper plate certainly had its effect to dial the car in from oversteer to an understeer situation.

At the recent national meeting at Hull and in the hands of Wayne Davis, the car (using armaflex tyres all round) performed on the wooden floor as well as any of its lexan competition. On carpet it needs further discussion but it's name has already been assured.



Front end showing new steering block detail



General view showing nicely fretted lightweight chassis.

General view showing the neatness of layout

