

**Tamiya's 8.4v 7 cell Muscle Car, the Bigwig, reviewed by Radio Race Car's Dave Pearson**

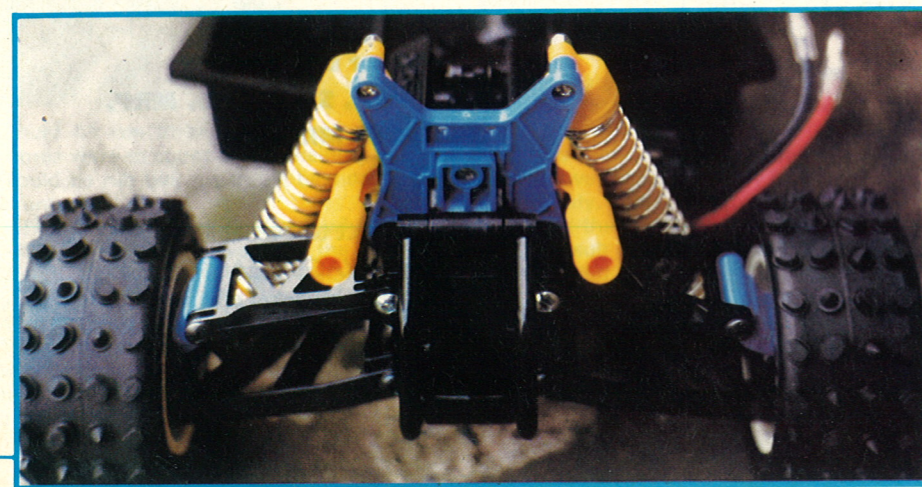
here are some amongst us that are in considerable doubt as to what a Bigwig is, could it be something that once belonged to Bruce Forsyth? A cosmetic stray part of the famed American missing link? Bigwig is neither, it is in fact Tamiya's new seven cell, 8.4 volt muscle car, equipped with 4WD via a propellor shaft and Technigold RX540VZ motor, Bigwig promised to be a real treat, but first things first; let's start at the beginning. As now expected from Tamiya, presentation and packaging are both excellent, all components are either clearly bagged or blister packed, the instruction booklet is clearly laid out with all nuts, bolts, screws etc., shown full size opposite each constructional stage, making sure you're about to fit the right bolt is easy, just offer it up to the drawing shown, and Bobs yer uncle.

Construction begins with the installation of radio gear and speed controller, servo savers are included in the kit to fit most modern equipment. Steering set up on Bigwig, is the closest thing to full size rack

**Tamiya 8.4v Gold Power battery equipped with automatic circuit breaker.**



**Heavy duty shocks, combined with double wishbone suspension works very well indeed.**



**The rubber boots, will keep most of the dirt out.**



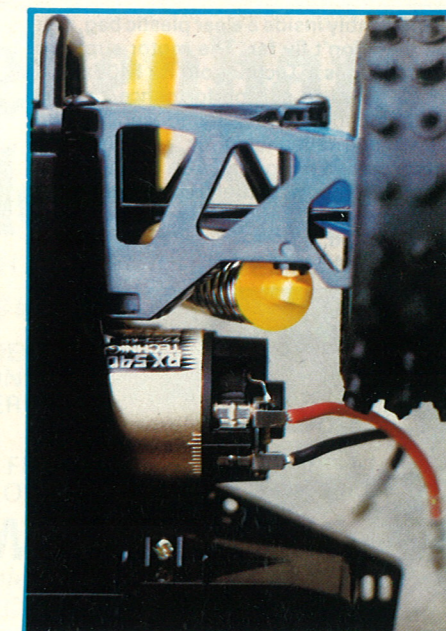
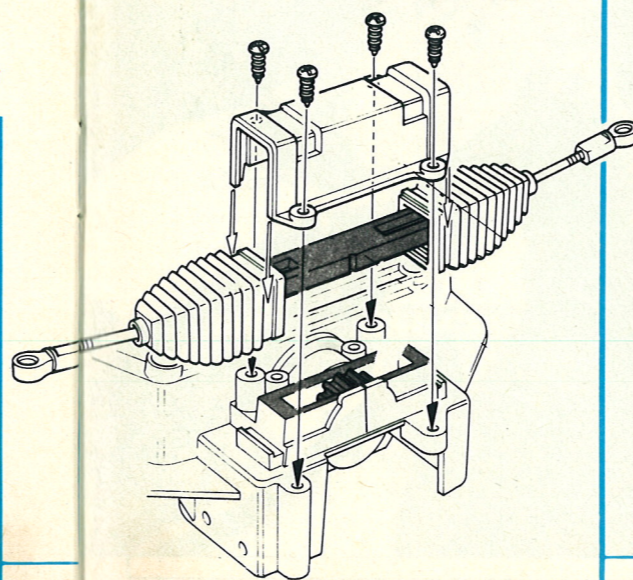
and pinion you'll ever see, consequently, the pinion wheel is secured directly to the steering servo before installation into the huge bathtub frame, remember to centre the servo before you do this, because once assembled half the car has to be taken apart to gain entry to the servo. The three position speed controller is assembled with the servo taped to a base plate which in turn

screws into the frame of the car, nylon locking bands are supplied to keep all wires well out of the way of moving parts, a good idea as there are a lot of heavy gauge wires lying about and a short caused by chaffed wires could cause quite a few problems. That is probably why Tamiya produce their own 8.4v power pack, the Gold Power battery, this has the added safety feature of a built-in

circuit breaker that automatically shuts off any current flow. The breaker will reset itself within 30 seconds.

The steering rack is assembled next, and here Tamiya supply two rubber boots to fit over the tie rods, these should stop a lot of

**Rack and pinion steering virtually eliminates bump steer.**



**Technigold RX540VZ motor, note timing marks on the can.**

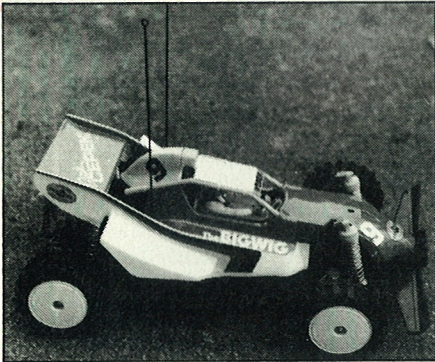
the mud and dust wearing the rack and pinion, before final assembly of the steering rack to the pinion wheel, check to make sure everything is centrally aligned, otherwise you'll be going round in ever decreasing circles, finally disappearing you know where.

Front and rear gear boxes are next to be assembled, Bigwig is nearly all ballraced, I say nearly as the only part that isn't is the propeller joint, which runs in a nylon bearing, everything else is ballraced right down to thrust washers, I would suggest that an ample amount of grease is applied to spur gears and all recessed mountings in which they run. All gear box joints are held in place with 'C' rings, care must be taken when fitting these for two reasons, firstly the 'C' rings themselves are eased into place, across the face of a ballrace, one slip with a pair of pliers or a screwdriver and the ballrace cage can be ruined. Secondly, and as everyone knows, there has never been a 'C' ring manufactured without a built in escape mechanism, they all react like lead footed fleas given the slightest opportunity, to combat this, I always assemble any 'C'

# BIGWIG



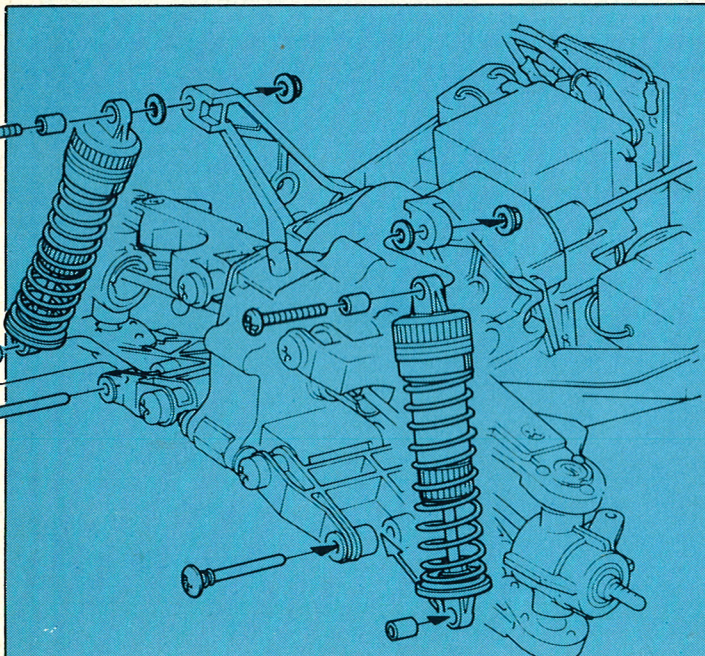
ring assembly inside a clear plastic bag, that way they don't fly far. The motor supplied with Bigwig is a Technogold Rx 540Vz, this can be timed to suit performance needed in the standard way, by loosening two screws and advancing or retarding the motor off the timing marks on the can. Also included are tools, namely a brush spreader and a spring removing tool for maintenance when needed.



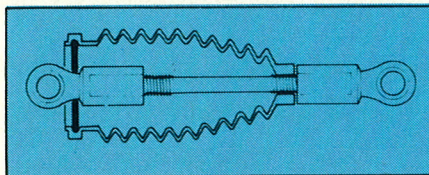
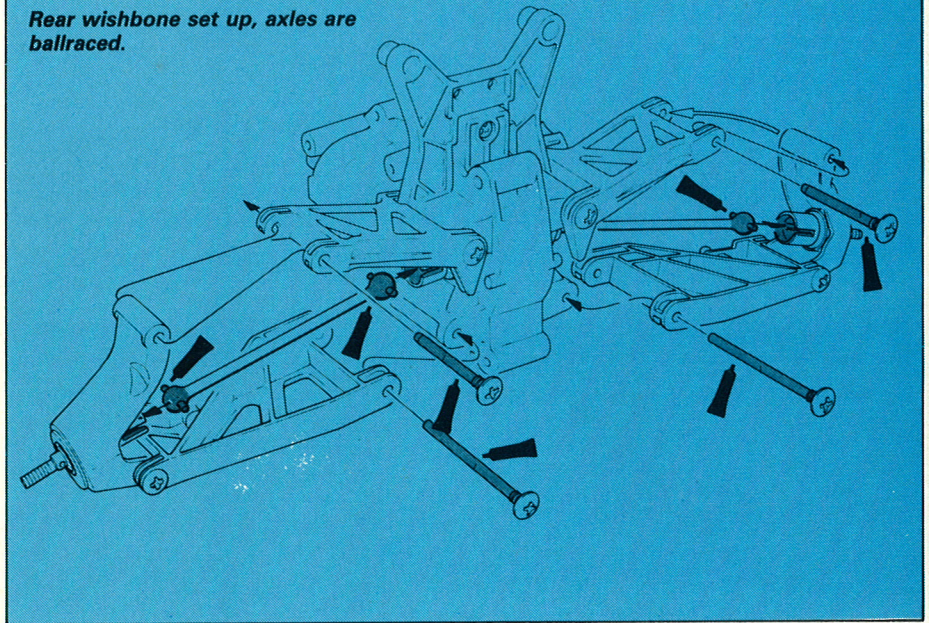
**Bigwig is aerodynamically very clean**

Suspension layout on Bigwig is double wishbone front and rear, employing four coil over oil shock absorbers, this set up gives amazing road holding characteristics and inspires the confidence to hammer into corners as if the car is on rails, although roadholding is also improved by the rack and pinion steering set up, which virtually eliminates bump steer. All wishbones are held firmly apart by up rights, the rear being fixed units, the front obviously have to rotate in some way, this is done by using ball connectors, running in ball plates firmly screwed to the top and bottom wishbone using four screws in each, any burring that may occur whilst fitting the ball connector to the upright, *must* be removed using a file before assembly takes place, failure to do this will cause untold wear and damage to the wishbones. The front bumper and skid plate are one unit and simply held in place by three screws. The tyres are of the non-glue variety, being held in place by annular rings moulded into the wheel, there is a direction of rotation on the side wall of each tyre so take care. Wheels and tyres are

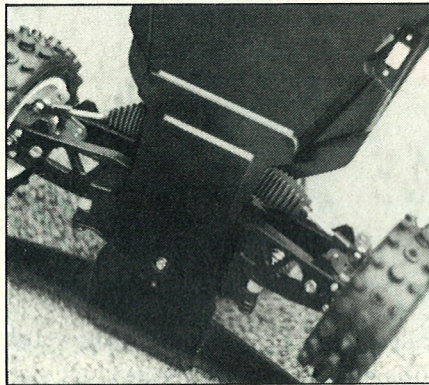
**Front gearbox, showing installation of shocker units situated mid point on lower wishbone.**



**Rear wishbone set up, axles are ballraced.**



**Rubber boots will keep dirt out of rack and pinion gear.**



held securely onto the axles by lock nuts.

The Bigwig bodyshell I rather like, along with the added detail such as the instrument panel and air intake, the driver can also be quite detailed and this finishes the car off nicely, the decals provided are also to Tamiya's high standard.

All in all, Tamiya's new Bigwig is a very nice car to build, all parts of the constructional stage were very straightforward and logically presented.

As far as driving is concerned the Bigwig is a monster with manners, doing what she's told and when she's told but faster, much faster than anything else I've ever seen, even up steep gradients! The sad conclusion I must draw though is, as yet there are no provisions made to allow the Bigwig to race in Britain although 8.4v 7 cell racing is legal in the USA and has been for some time, so what do you think, should Britain also run 7 cell cars? Should you wish to express yourself on this matter remember the BRCA holds its AGM on Sunday, 26th October at The Shoulder of Mutton, Hardstoft, Tibshelf, Derbyshire 9.30am sharp.

