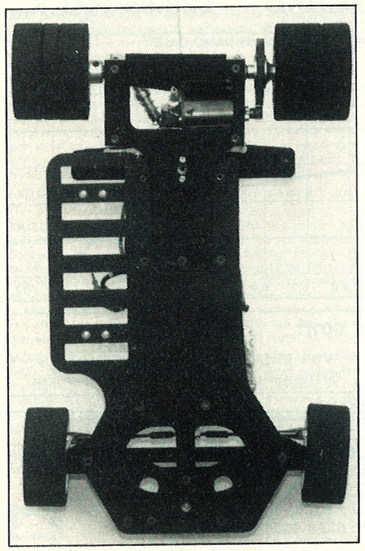
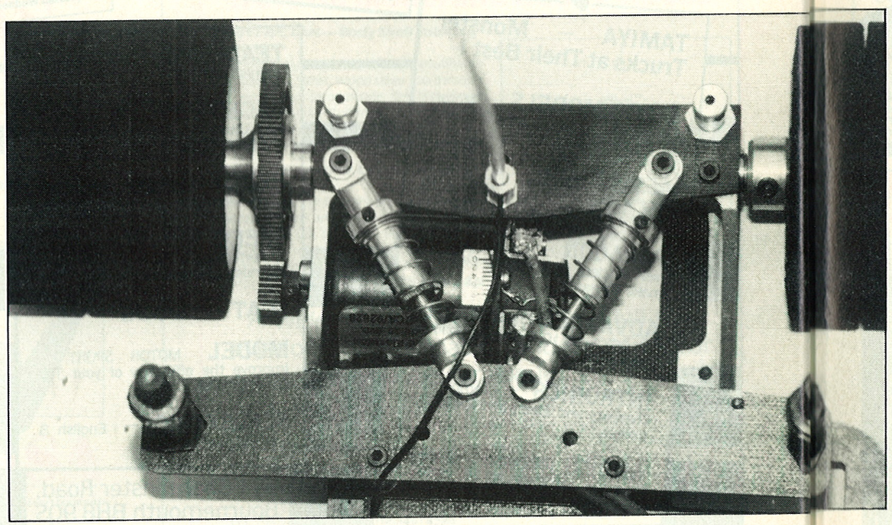
BOLINK ELIMINATOR LTO

The latest Pro 10 car from the U.S.A., the Bolink Eliminator LTO, is reviewed by James Ashton.

Many of you, as probable full size car fans, would have heard of a race held in the good 'ole U.S. of A. called the Indianapolis 500. This race is held on a huge oval track with banked corners and is raced upon by the American equivalent of the stock car. These cars are, in a word, fast! The weight is biased totally to the left hand side of the car as they travel in an anticlockwise direction and often the axles are even offset to help inner wheel traction. Capable of speeds over 200 mph and with impressive bodies such as the Chevy Lumina it's not surprising that full size oval racing has really taken off in the States.

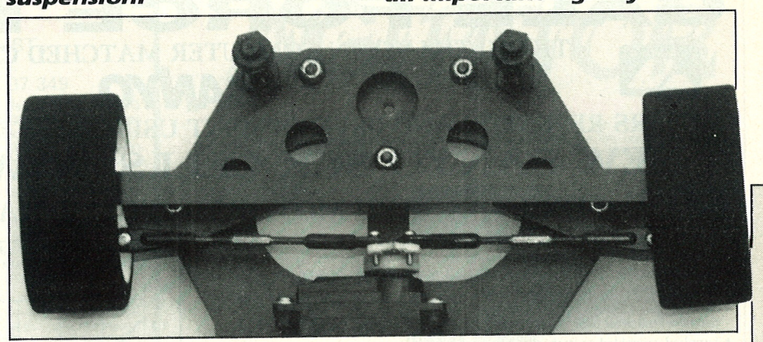
It is also not surprising then that, having seen the huge success of this form of motor sport, Bolink decided that making a model of one of these beasties may provide more than just fun. After the usual period of research and development they came up with the Bolink Eliminator LTO.





The usual Pro 10 diff unit is seen here. Note the double shock absorber rear suspension.

Front end. The upper fibreglass plate provides that all important rigidity.



The LTO comes packaged in a box just big enough to fit the Lumina body in and is nicely presented, showing pictures of all Bolink's other circuit cars and various other products they produce.

Upon opening the box, one is presented with several, neatly packed, businesslike plastic bags.

The parts are bagged in order of construction, ie all parts needed for front axle construction are in one bag. This method of packaging makes building considerably easier than the usual method where one finds oneself scrabbling about inside a huge box.

Building commences with the assembly of the front end of the car and starts by attaching the chassis to the front axle plate. This is achieved by bolting the two front holes in the axle onto a pair of front axle supports that are raised about 5mm above the level of the chassis. The back mounting holes are assembled over pieces of silicone tubing which allow the caster angle to be changed to suit your own driving style.

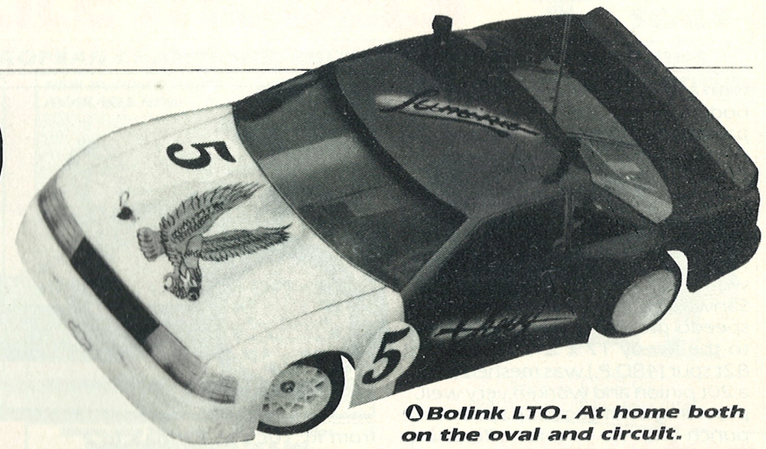
Onto the front axle plate are attached the kingpins and stub axles. These are supported by a fibreglass cross-member, which although thin, has excellent longitudinal strength. Front suspension is provided by the now common method where the stub axle housing slides up and down the king pin, and works very well. The whole front end is, in part, identical to the Bolink Eliminator gold which has been proven both here and in the States.

Underview of the LTO. The weight balance is obviously to the left hand side.

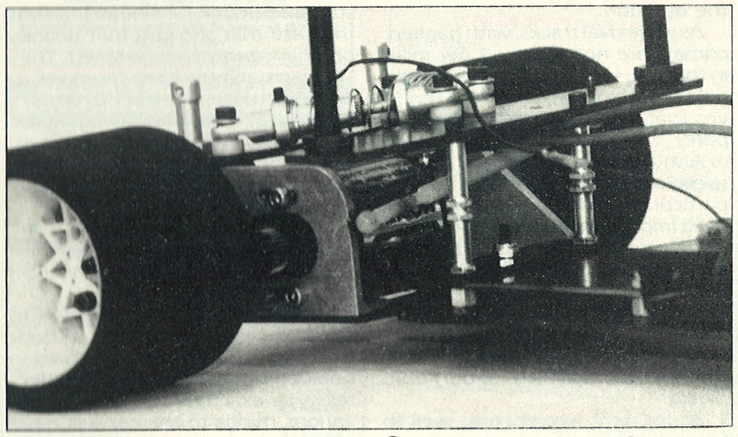
The Chassis

The chassis is made from exceptionally high grade carbon fibre and to those of you who have driven circuit cars before it will provide a shock. All the cells are slung along the left hand side of the chassis and on the right hand side is a void. Although initially this comes as a shock it makes absolutely perfect sense as the car is designed only to turn left. With all the weight on the inside the grip is much more evenly distributed and results in a much better handling car.

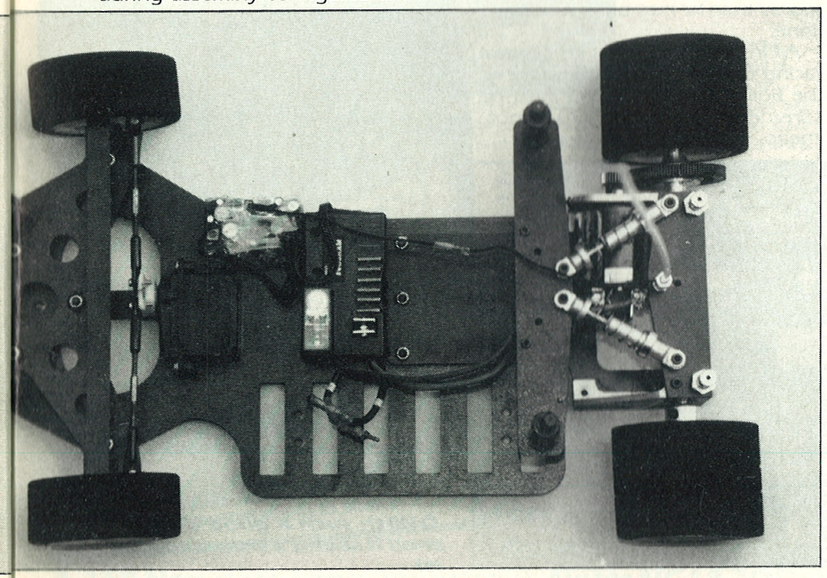
Rear suspension is provided by the usual T-piece and is hinged on a rocker ball. Two excellent shock absorbers are provided and seem to work very well. However some difficulties were encountered during assembly as regards to getting exactly the right amount of oil in the shocks to enable them to move freely throughout their travel. Oil to fill the shocks with comes in the kit and is very thick! Extra roll resistance comes in the form of a well greased, pre-assembled strut and piston which stretches from the motor mount to the shock mount and irons out any undulations in the track.



Bolink LTO. At home both on the oval and circuit.



Notice the nylon damper rod that aids the smooth ride of the car.



The motor pod is constructed from fibreglass and aluminium, the latter providing an excellent "soak away" for any excess heat produced. A graphite rear axle comes as standard on which the normal Pro 10 type differential is used. The only point worth noting here is that the centre of the spur gear is ballraced, this feature is often lacking on Pro 10 cars and its inclusion creates a far more free and smooth unit.

Wheels and tyres are supplied with the kit and appear to be of the blue (firm) compound all round.

Now all that remains to be done before you can race the car is to fit radio gear, motor and paint the bodyshell. Our model was supplied

Overall view of the car, it is a simple well thought out design.

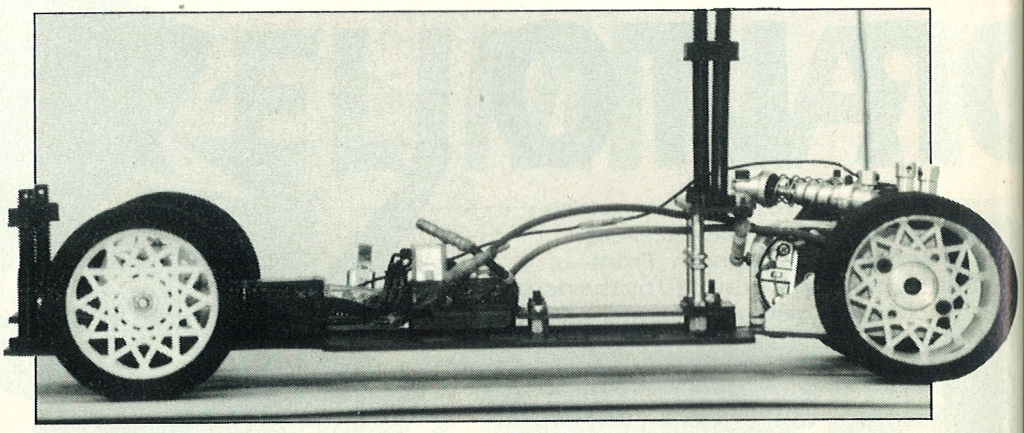
with a lovely looking Chevy Lumina body, which (luckily) was not painted by myself, but the Mr. Airbrush of the West Midlands, Dave Rogers. Also supplied is a wing although we did not use it as we found that the Chevy on its own provided plenty of rear end down force. On the radio and motor front, we fitted a Futaba receiver and a Sanwa servo with Nosram cells and speedo providing plenty of power to the Reedy 17 x 2. The standard 82t spur (48D.P.) was meshed with a 20t pinion and worked very well, providing both good top speed and punch with no adverse effects on the duration.

As large oval tracks, with banked corners are not exactly 2 per mile in the U.K., we opted for nearly the next best thing to test the LTO on, yes that's right, a supermarket car park.

Although the technical specification of the car has been particularly stunning, by far the most impressive feature of the LTO is its incredible handling straight out of the box. The weight bias to the left of the car certainly helps and enables the LTO to be taken into left handers at frighteningly fast speeds and still come out of them on the right line and in one piece!

As for right hand bends, well to be quite honest I thought that the LTO would be terrible due to all the weight being on the left. However, not unusually I was wrong — sure, it does understeer more but it is by no means unacceptable.

For the final showdown it was decided to race the LTO on an oval track against other more conventional Pro 10 cars ranging from RC10L's to Parma's to standard Bolink Eliminators. It was this race that showed that Bolinks original concept has worked. The LTO was able to keep far more power on around the bends whilst remaining stable and staying smack bang on the racing line. As they say, the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and the LTO really does go down well.



Low centre of gravity and solid construction makes the LTO a sure winner.

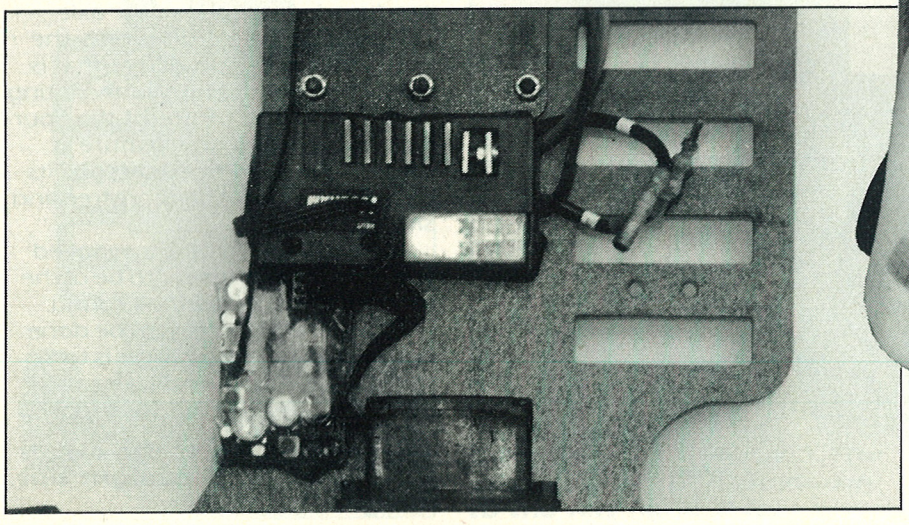
The Bolink Eliminator LTO is a very complete kit and comes supplied with bodyshell, wheels, tyres and steering rods.

Personally I was very pleased to see some excellent advice on how to set up the car in the instruction booklet. This section in the booklet tells you exactly what effect doing various things to the car will have. I believe that this sort of advice on setting the car up should be included by many more companies as it really does help the beginner and enables him to start really enjoying our excellent hobby sooner than he may otherwise have done.

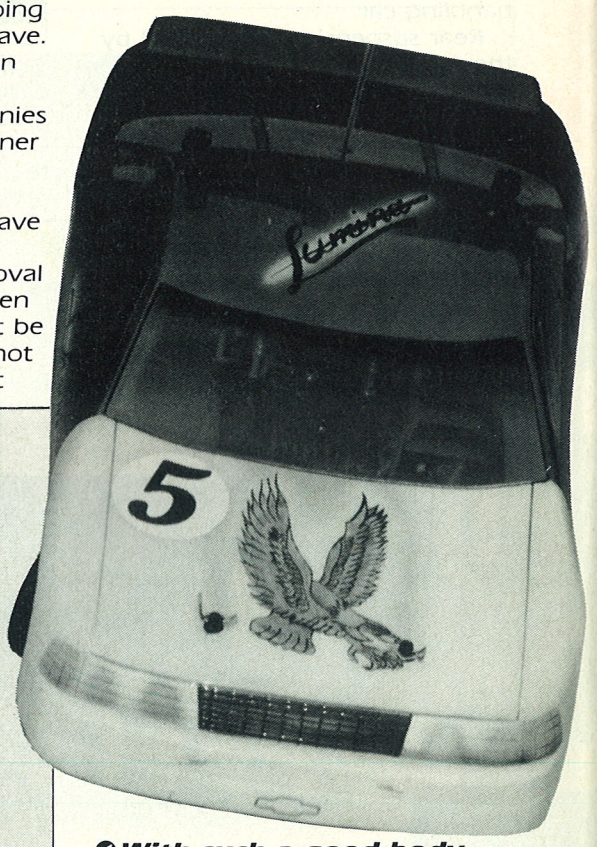
All in all, if you want to go oval racing or even circuit racing then the Bolink Eliminator LTO must be considered, at around £170 it's not cheap, but there again you get what you pay for, and in this case that includes high quality graphite parts, ballraces, body, left and right threaded turnbuckle, etc.

Many thanks to Dave Rogers who painted the superb Chevy body and to Jonathan Holloway who assisted me in that short but important part, the building.

For those who've been dying to know, I've just been told that L.T.O. actually stands for Long Track Oval, makes sense I suppose!



More than enough room for the radio gear.



With such a good body shell it seems a shame to race it!