

BoLink's LTO Extreme

By Jack Wright

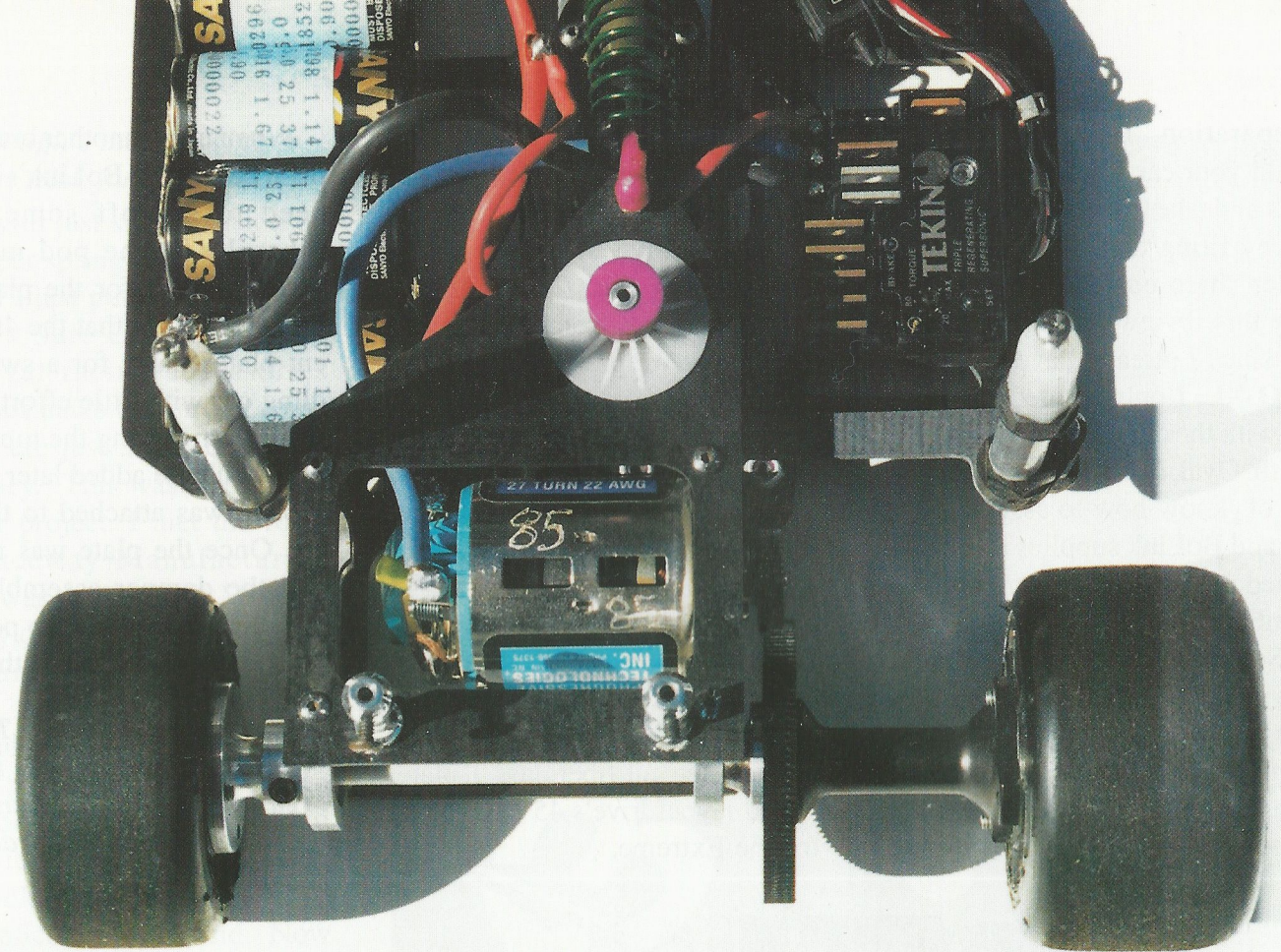


If there's one thing that can be said for the gang at BoLink they're always thinking and that's what it takes to keep on top of the growing R/C Oval racing market. Just like with other advances, like the first narrow car kit and the first left turn only chassis, now BoLink has developed a extreme left bias chassis. The LTO Extreme features a graphite chassis plate with the battery slots projected so far left they almost touch the body. With this chassis design you can position the batteries almost 1.5

inches further left of center than any other standard left side chassis. The advantage to the extreme battery placement is improved cornering in both low and high banked ovals, to add to this advantage BoLink has also placed the rear pod further left than before.

Once again, with all of the weight bias to the left of the car will turn easier and at the same time without scrubbing off as much speed as a conventional chassis. A first for BoLink is using the traditional damper disc sus-

pension found on Associated's 10L. But, BoLink does offer a top plate so you can use their race proven damper tube that was found on the LTO XL. BoLink offers the LTO Extreme in two versions, one is a kit with chassis, body, Associated's front end, hubs, bearings and body mounts. The second version is for those racers who already have a race car and are looking to upgrade. The basic kit features the Extreme chassis and pod and you will need to supply the rest, neither kit includes an axle

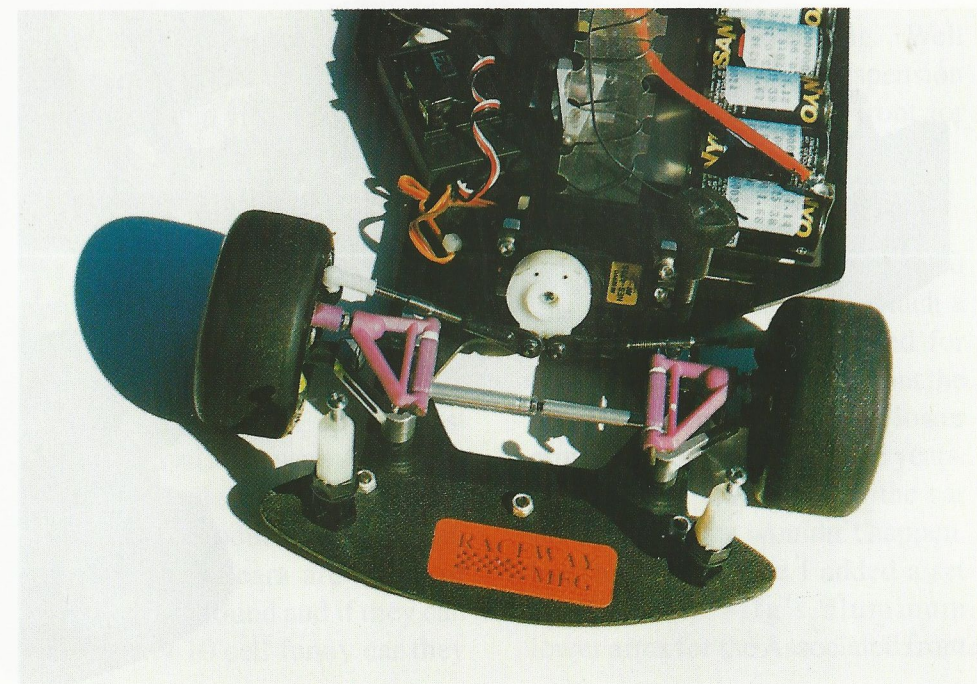


Left: The beautiful LTO in Pontiac colors. Top: At this angle you can really see how left side heavy this car is. This allows the use of such a narrow left hub. Right: Raceway Mfg.'s A-arms and other front end parts are a real winner on the race track.

the reason for this is that most racers will use an aftermarket fiberglass axle.

EXTREME ASSEMBLY

Well I can't say that building a race car is a snap, but at the same time there's not much here to take an awful lot of time. The thing about building a great race car is



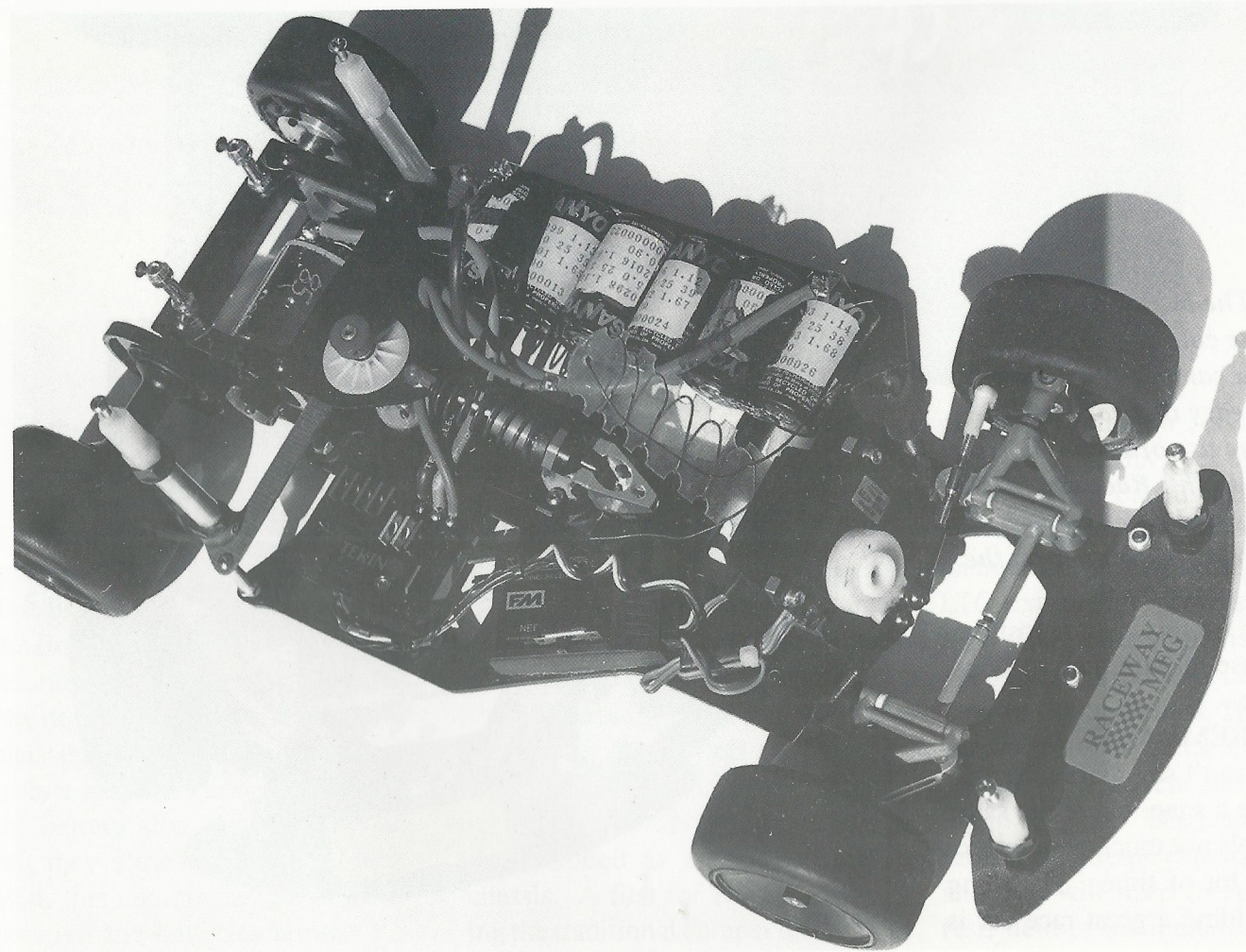
preparation. Take your time to build your car with the best products and take time to prep the chassis by filing the battery slots and other sharp edges of the chassis. For this review I chose the basic kit since I already have a BoLink LTO XL, I only needed the basic kit with the chassis and motor pod. With Oval cars it doesn't take a lot of know how to assemble the kit and BoLink supplies a very detailed instruction sheet making assembly easy.

So what I'll do is let you in on the package I put together for this project, I had just gotten the Extreme days before the US Oval Masters in Sugar Hill, Georgia so time was of the essence to have

this car ready to roll. I started off with prepping the chassis by filing the battery slots and other cut outs to remove the sharp edges from the graphite. This will prevent the chassis from cutting into the battery wrap and shorting the cells or worse cutting you while working on the car. Once the chassis is prepped I moved on to the assembly of the rear motor pod and T-plate assembly. Now BoLink does supply the kit with two T-plates one .065 and one .075 inch fiberglass. But I chose to replace the stock T-plate as my home track and the Sugar Bowl set ups call for a 45 degree cut fiberglass T-plate. I used Hyperdrive's 45 cut T-plate for the Extreme.

When using another brand of T-plate other than BoLink's you will need to cut off some excess Fiberglas at the pod mounting point in order for the plate to fit properly. I find that the 45 degree cut plates make for a sweet handling car with little effort. Now I skipped mounting the top plate as that would be added later after the T-plate was attached to the chassis. Once the plate was mounted and the damper assembly is assembled, mount the top pod plate. For a basic set up I set the spring

A look at the finished LTO. This extreme left side bias is one reason why this car handles so well on the oval track.



Kimbrough's molded wing is just the trick for oval action.

collars with just slight tension on the damper springs and for damping fluid I just put a few drops of BoLink's Sure Lube 3 on each disk. Oval racing accessories sometimes make the car but some hop-ups are just a waste of time and money. This wasn't the case with our project. I met the folks with Raceway Manufacturing while I was at the Oval Masters, Raceway offers a complete line of aluminum products like wing mounts, suspension arms, and shock mounts.

And speaking of shocks I used an Associated short anodized shock with green springs, I filled the shock with Associated 40 weight silicone shock fluid. Now when using an Associated style shock on an oval, I've found that putting a rubber diaphragm in the shock cap improved shock action greatly. You still can find these diaphragms that were used in the old style Associated gold shocks in most hobby shops. To mount the shock I picked up Raceway Manufacturing's polished aluminum shock mount with .20" drop. Raceway's parts come polished and they look great but you would think that with the parts being so highly polished they wouldn't stay that way long. Well to my surprise that's not the case as these keep there shine after months of racing, and the finish and fit of the parts is the best I've ever seen of any on the market.

With the shock assembly together I installed my tweak screws in the T-plate. At this point in the assembly you want the tweak to



be neutral at the start. To finish up the rear end of the car I added a BME axle and BME's wide style diff hub. I used the centered axle ride height adjusters and the supplied narrow left side hub. With the extreme left bias the car, it requires the narrow hub and a narrow left side tire as well. Of course a narrow left rear tire is pretty much the go fast set up on most concrete ovals anyway. To outfit the rear axle I chose to use Kimbrough Products 64 spur gear. Kimbrough's gears are some of the toughest around and if they can survive my 10 cell funny car they

can live through anything. Well with the rear end and suspension complete we'll move up front for a new spin on a old favorite.

DON'T TWIST MY ARM

For the most part the Associated front suspension is pretty much a trick piece without the need for hop-ups, until now I can't count the times that I have broken a lower arm on my oval cars over the years. Of course if I would keep the car off the walls that wouldn't happen, but for the Extreme I added a set of Raceway Mfg's aluminum lower arms for the Associated front

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end. These arms are a perfect fit and the finish is trick. Besides the pretty part the arms also have an shim adjustment to extend the king pin mount outward to enhance camber, and since they're made from high grade aluminum there is less flex in the front suspension under racing conditions.

With the addition of the arms I finished up the assembly with a set of TRC .020 springs and a dose of BoLink's Sure Lube 3 on the king pins, and using a set of Associated's centered steering blocks to top it off. I've found that putting two shims at the front of the upper arm on the left side, and one on each side for the right, will take care of the caster. As for the camber you want 2 degrees of negative camber on the right, and 1 degree of positive on the left.

EXTREMELY ELECTRIFYING

With the basic ride out of the way it's time to install the radio gear and body on the Extreme. For this review I outfitted the Extreme with my trusty JR 756 radio system. This has to my favorite radio of all in my arsenal, with its six car memory and adjustment settings that are quick and precise. The stop watch feature is a must

for oval racing where timed practice runs are important. To add to the power of the 756 I installed JR's 4735 Hi Speed servo. For quick steering response and durability, these are a must on the high banked superspeedways.

The only thing that can be more state-of-the-art than the 756 radio in this car is Tekin's new G-9 Supersonic speed control, the new G-9 features what Tekin calls Triple Regenerating. This is a process that operates at 16,000 HZ. Switching the speed at which the G-9 operates, allows for "stepless" throttle response. Other features that set the G-9 apart from other Hi frequency ESC's, the G-9 Triple Regenerating operation regenerates heat that normally adds up to lost power and turns it into longer run time. This circuitry also extends the life of the motor and prevents resistance build up in your cells. And, the best feature on the G-9 is the quick tune set up for matching the G-9 to any radio system with just a push of the set button.

Overall the G-9's bottom line is better throttle response, low on resistance, longer motor and battery life, all of which are important in racing as the motor and bat-

teries are the life blood of anyone's racing program. One feature I failed to mention about the G-9 is its independent torque and brake response adjustment. This allows for a more defined balance between throttle and braking. Along with the Varitorque you have the utmost in ESC technology at your trigger finger. Once the G-9 was on board I moved on to trimming out the radio system, and preparing the Bod for the Extreme.

RUNNING LIKE A KING

It was fitting to top off the LTO Extreme with BoLink's hot '97 Pontiac Grand Prix and it didn't take long for me to choose a paint scheme. The STP colors of Petty Enterprises is the first thing I think of when dealing with a GM body, since most of the time I prefer the bodies from the "Blue Oval" camp. After painting and detailing the body I mounted it to the chassis with a set of BoLink's Aero mounts, these mounts are very similar to the those offered by Kimbrough Products. The big difference is the BoLink kit comes with everything you need to mount up any body to nearly any oval type chassis. BoLink offers the Aero mounts in two versions, long and short for different styles of chassis. To top off the BoLink body I added a Kimbrough molded rear wing, these wings are not only tough but also provide great downforce with minimal drag.

With the car finished we loaded up and made our way to Bob Hosch's US Oval Masters at the Sugar Bowl in Sugar Hill, Georgia. I put a set of BSR green compound cap tires with standard stagger. Right off the bat the car was

working great. Of course after BoLink's Ricky Jordon put some final tweaks to the car it was now flying. The Extreme likes quite a bit more left tweak in the T-plate for most high banked ovals. Outside of that I found the Extreme to be an easy car to drive and tune and by the end of the weekend I found myself qualifying 52nd out of over 100 other cars and went on to place in the main. That's pretty good considering this was a car that was built in less than a day before the event and I haven't even seen this track before.

Overall the LTO Extreme is a great idea. By moving the car's weight as far left as possible, it makes for one of the fastest turning rides I have ever had the chance to drive. Maybe if I had Ricky drive the car it would have easily made the A Main. And what more can I say about the Raceway hop-ups the fit and finish is one-of-a-kind. The Tekin G-9 was outstanding, after my initial set-up I found no need for further adjustments and even after a full four minute run the G-9 was still as cool as a cucumber.

As you can tell I was really pleased with the performance of the LTO Extreme and as hard as I tried to, I couldn't find much wrong with the fit and finish of the LTO kit. Although a 45 cut T-plate would be a nice standard feature along with a set of the Aero mounts, but hey don't get greedy the LTO Extreme alone is a bargain. So the next time you feel like going fast and turning left, pick up an LTO Extreme and go even faster and turn EXTREMELY left.

CP

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