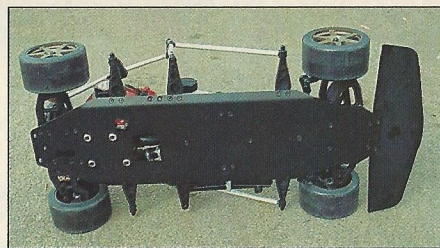
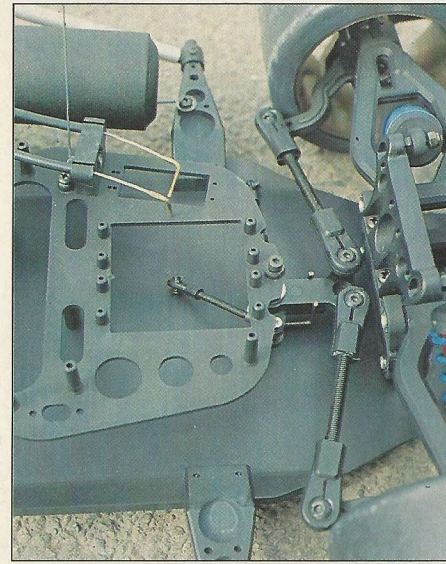
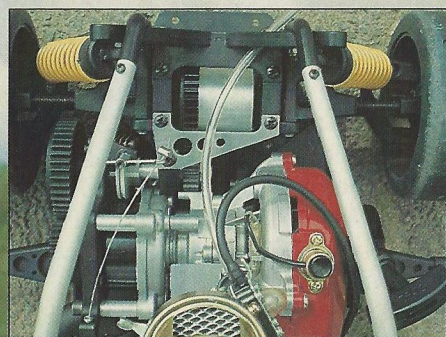


In recent months there has been a move away from the high tech world of 1/8 scale racing with its associated high costs, to 1/10 scale saloon racing that offers great realism and indeed, a lot of fun for the participants. The trend for smaller cars mirrors what happened in the early seventies when miniature radio gear became widely available so small model aeroplanes were all the rage. What happened next? Large scale models suddenly appeared on the scene, becoming very popular indeed to the present day, and it would seem that the same thing could well happen to i.c. circuit racing, with the release of cars such as the F.G. Modellsport Mercedes onto the British market.

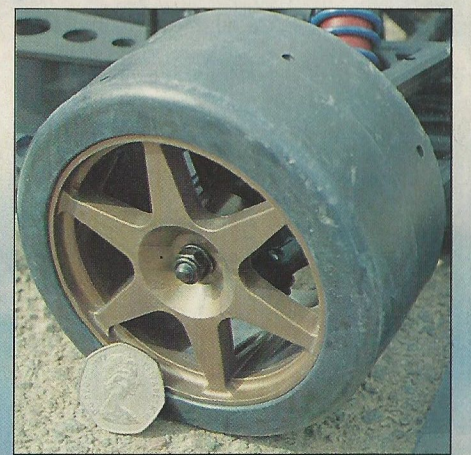
Following the review of the Marder 1/6 scale off road buggy in the May issue of RRC, I was told by Bob Stiles of King Cobra Racing Models, the F.G. Modellsport importers, that the Mercedes 1/5 scale saloon would soon be available and that its performance on tarmac was very good indeed. I must admit that I was rather sceptical, as I visualised it having the

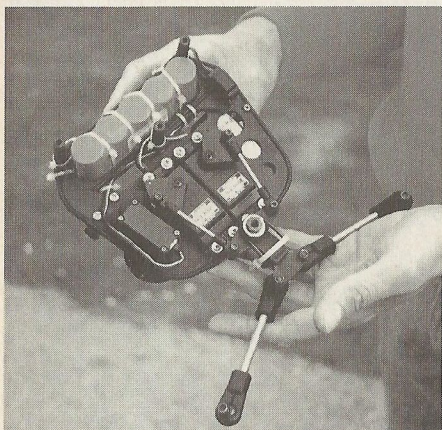


performance of a dustbin lorry, with handling to match. I was to be proved wrong when the review car was tested at the now beautiful Halifax circuit, but we'll talk about that later. As per the Marder buggy, the Mercedes arrived in a huge box, well packed to avoid damaging the contents. This is reassuring considering the outlay on such a model, the bodysell itself costing as much as a cheap beginner's electric buggy, but as the car comes ready built, only requiring the fitment of the radio gear and the spraying of the beautiful bodysell to make it ready for the track, the



The F.G. Modellsport 1/5 Scale Mercedes 190 Evolution 11

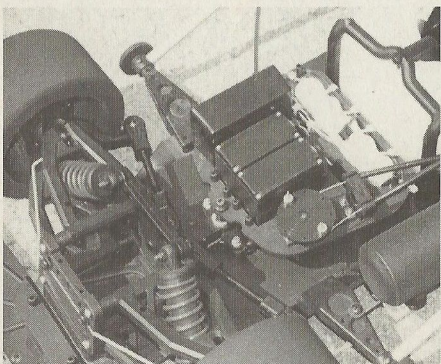




asking price doesn't really seem excessive in comparison to some scales of racing.

The photographs that show the car minus radio illustrate what is presented to the lucky purchaser upon opening the box (mind you don't give yourself a hernia getting it out!), and the build quality is second to none. All the plastic moulded parts such as the wishbones, bulkheads and roll cage joiners have a nice finish, and I proved their strength during the track test by clouting the dreaded wall at Halifax at quite high speed whilst giving the car its first run minus the bodyshell (I had to drive it with a steering wheel radio which I find rather a handicap!). The Robin 22cc motor is laid down horizontally in the Mercedes to lower the centre of gravity, rather than the upright installation found with the Marder buggy, and is fitted with a tuned pipe as standard to give an increase in the performance for circuit use. The pipe actually gives the car quite a flat exhaust note which belies quite an impressive performance that should improve as it becomes run in. The single speed transmission gives a reasonable top end, but I think that for serious circuit use the optional two speed set up is infinitely preferable and is now available from King Cobra Racing.

The two piece bodyshell was sprayed by RRC's resident airbrush artist, John Rogers of the Central club, and really looks the part. The rolling chassis was taken to the Sandown Model Show and took pride of place at the front of the Traplet stand. It was quite amazing to watch visitors to the show ambling along, their eyes roving the exhibitors stands for items of interest.



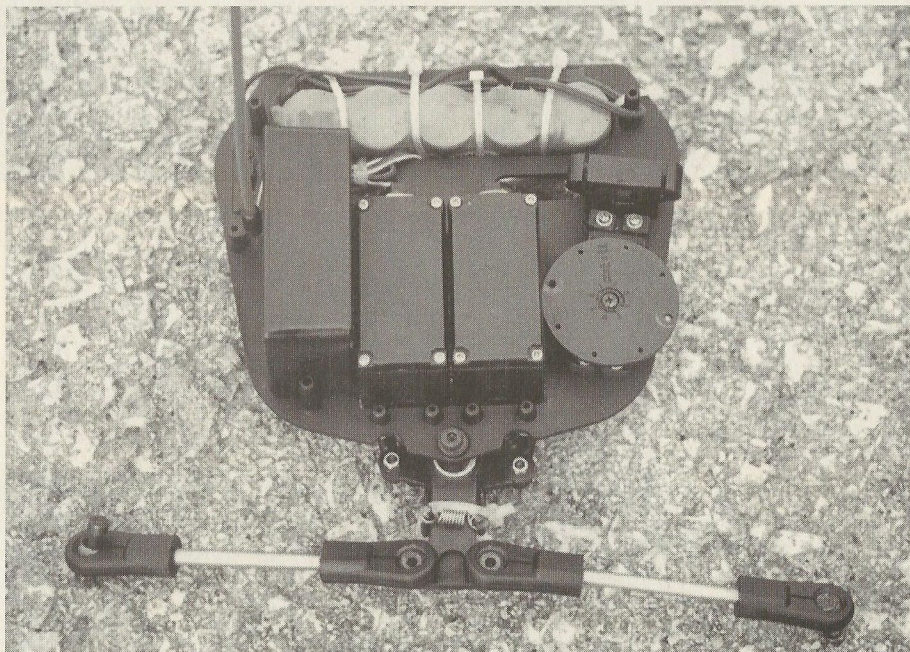
Suddenly their eyes would lock onto the Mercedes (that is, if it wasn't surrounded by interested onlookers!), then they would make a bee line for the car to have a better look. I was told that having a sign on the car saying 'Please do not touch' wouldn't have any effect, and that proved to be the case. If we had been selling the car, we would have done quite well!

Having taken the photos for the review, I returned the car to King Cobra Racing for the brick servos and radio to be installed, and for Bob to make the car ready for the track test. The idea

was to actually race the car at the TopScale meeting to be held at Halifax on May 23rd. On leaving Worcester that morning at 7am, the weather looked foul, but once past Stafford on the M6 the sun came out, and for once the forecasters were wrong, because it stayed out all day, giving perfect racing conditions! There were five Mercedes cars present, with not one of them having turned a wheel until the morning of the race meeting, so some quiet testing laps were the order of the day initially. The warm temperature wasn't going to help matters when it came to racing, because the Robin motor isn't at its best until a few miles have been put on the clock, so all the drivers were warned by Bob not to give

that foam tyres might let the car slide a little, which for my style of driving (what style I hear some of you say?) proved faster around the tighter corners. The weight of the car did tend to allow the lifting of both inside wheels, so after the first heat I fitted the roll bars front and rear. The handling did become rather skittish so equipped, so I disconnected the rear bar after the second heat, which made the rear end more predictable.

I can hear you saying "Well, just how did it drive?," the answer to that is that it was great! The size of the car would tend to make you think that it would be cumbersome, but this is not the case at all. It was easy to set it up for the Halifax hairpins using the extremely effective disc brake,



their cars too much in the way of 'stick' because they would probably suffer initial overheating due to the motors being 'tight'.

Starting the beast was simplicity itself, and following two quick presses of the priming button it always started with one or two short pulls on the cord. The inbuilt electronic ignition system obviously works very well indeed, as all the Mercedes and Marder buggy drivers present had no trouble at all in getting their cars ready for their heats. There aren't many other scales that can boast that in i.c. racing! The car was run to start with exactly as it came out of the box ie; rubber tyres with foam inserts and the supplied anti roll bars unfitted. For the tight hairpin corners at Halifax the moulded kit tyres actually endowed the car with too much grip, and I felt

then a swift application of opposite lock and lots of throttle would see the Mercedes slide round under perfect control (the majority of the time!). The weight of the beast allows real door handle rubbing dices to take place without either car shooting off the track, and it is quite easy to place to take good lines into corners. The car is best treated with respect in faster corners, but is always fairly easy to keep in line. It was very spectacular exiting the top bend at Halifax, as progressive application of power from the late apex allowed an opposite lock drift half way to the next right hand hairpin! Quite honestly, driving the Mercedes at Halifax gave me the best fun I've had since the Hinkley 1/12 scale National, so that should give prospective purchasers an inkling of what the machine is all about. If King Cobra Racing had more cars in stock, there would have been more entrants at the meeting, and with there now being a race series specifically for the Mercedes (see Racing Round Up for details) the scale will, I am sure, become as popular in the U.K., as it is in Europe. Watch out for details in next month's Race Car of what could well be the best thing to happen for model car racing since man learnt to wind the electric motor! My conclusion is that the F.C. Modellsport Mercedes 190 Evo 11 is a superb little racing car (!), and that despite the initial shock at the price, once the economics of running one of these cars has been investigated they actually appear to be quite cheap to run, as the motors for instance last a long time, being under very little stress. Nice!

Imported and distributed by:-

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