

The HPI Viper
GTR Super RS4
Nitro

snake bite!

In Nitros, as with everything else, size matters.

First sight of the HPI RS4 Super Nitro box was quite a pleasant surprise. This box is finished with loads of Viper pictures and is big, almost 24" x 11".

On opening the box I was greeted by a large plastic bag containing several more smaller plastic bags. Each containing various parts of the model and a green bag label A, B, C, and so on. Two other bags were also in the box one housing the very nice super star wheels. The other bag had the tyres and foam inserts inside. Last but not least the lower chassis is a purple anodised 2.5 mm thick job. All the screws holes in the chassis are also counter sunk, so no more grounding of the under chassis screws. Does this mean I may scratch this gorgeous piece of kit? No I wouldn't, would I?

The box also comes in handy when building the car as it folds out to create a good clean working area. No more looking for that one screw you put down for a second and never see again.

Under Instruction

The instruction manual that comes with the kit is clear and user friendly even if there's not much written instruction. At the front of the manual it shows tools that are included in the kit and tools you need to supply yourself. Standard stuff really, large Phillips, small Phillips, long nose pliers, hobby knife and side cutter pliers. Also required to build the kit is super glue for the tyres and threadlock for all the machine screws. The threadlock is really a must for nitro cars as vibration will soon have bits coming loose and falling off. So if you want to bring all your car home 'use it'. A break down of parts used comes next followed by the build, you see that this is a real kit where you get to make the car bit by bit. If you have followed the manual carefully and

haven't rushed it, you will have a model to be proud of.

What about the body I here you say. Well I must admit there is a nice man who sprayed the shell for me, he is a very, very nice man! Thanks 'Terry the paint', as with all of the bodies that Terry Atkinson has done this one is top notch.

Building the Viper

The construction of the model followed the manual and everything went together very nicely, well almost. I will tell you more later. It starts off at the back end of the Super Nitro with the upper suspension arms. This is a straightforward job, as long as you remember that the turnbuckles (which are supplied in the kit), have one side of the thread reversed. To set the length of the arms I used an engineers Vernier Calliper, which makes the adjustments very easy. Plastic Vernier Callipers will do the same job, and only cost a few pounds. A good addition to any modellers tool box. But if neither of these devices are at hand, don't worry because there is a full size diagram of the assembled parts, so that you can overlay the arm on the diagram and check it that way. Don't forget to make two.

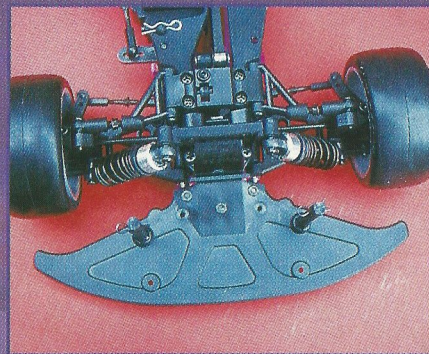
The diff and the rear suspension arm holders are next in line and incorporate a very nice belt tensioning idea. By rotating a loose ring that has an offset hole in the middle and a notch on the outside the diff is moved back and forth providing the belt tension. Care must be taken to make sure that both sides of the tensioning ring are set in the same notch on both sides of the diff holders. This will keep the belt square and true on the chassis.

When it comes to fixing the suspension arms to the holders you get a choice of making two

different wheelbases, 300 mm and 280 mm. 280 mm is the Viper wheel base, but if you fit a 300 mm body later the conversion will be quick and straightforward. The differentials back and front are both identical items and are made up together. Gears are used for the internal workings, so should give long maintenance free service. Lashings of grease were applied when assembling the diffs to keep them smooth and trouble free. A ball race set is supplied in the kit, so all the rotating parts have no bushes. Even the two remaining belt tensioners are made up of four ball races. All in all twenty two bearings. Slick.

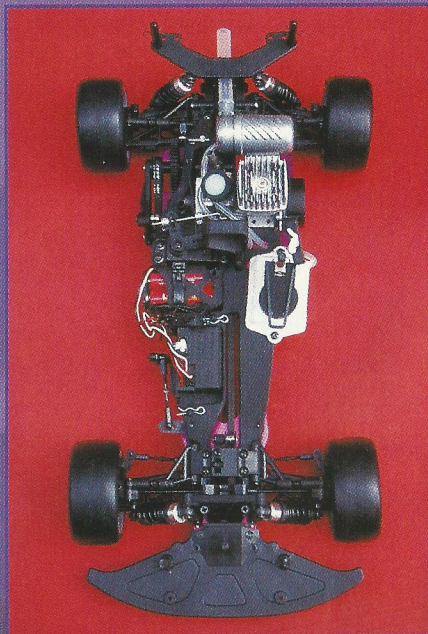
When you start fitting the rear end to the chassis you start to get a feel for how big the Super is going to be - Big!

The next item for attention is the disc brake assembly. The shaft that the disc slots onto has four holes passing through it where smaller pins are inserted to stop the brake and gears rotating. Be careful with the pins, as I tried to insert a split pin and I cracked the shaft. This should have no reflection on the quality of material or manual. The reviewer messed up, Do as I say not as I do.

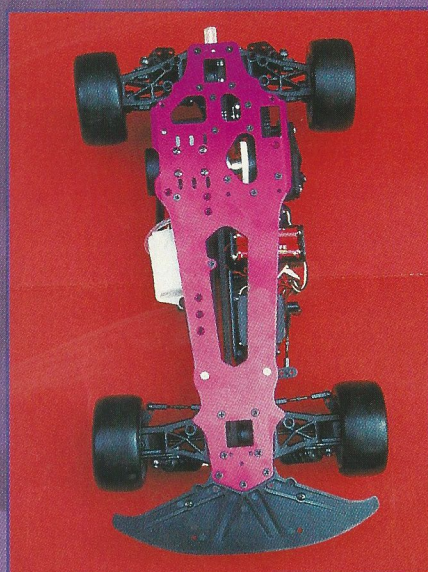


Nice big bumper but it is worth investing in a foam bumper as well

Megamix Review JUNE 99



It has stopped raining, let's go



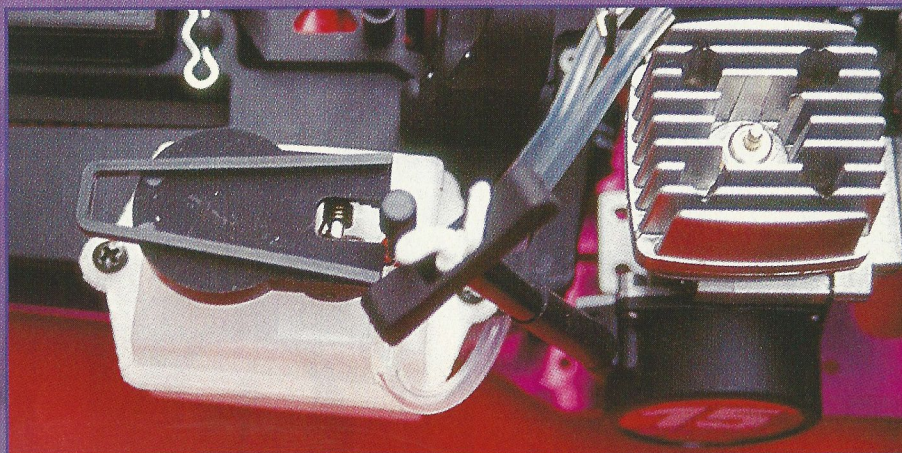
Bottom chassis plate is recessed and anodised purple, lovely

The front of the model was built up in much of the same way as the rear. All parts fitted well and moved smoothly. To the front of the model is fixed an upper deck which is also secured to the chassis, it holds the fuel tank and an easily removable radio gear plate. Good news for cleaning a dirty nitro. Another excellent touch is a little loop handle just in front of the engine, great for carrying the car with the body off. Best of all it gives you somewhere to hold when pull starting the engine.

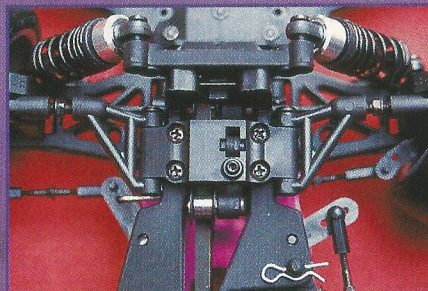
That's a shock

The shock absorbers were next, coil sprung over oil filled dampers. If the pistons are trimmed properly the shocks work smoothly

'I found the model stuck to a pane of glass, it must have thought it was a window Viper'



The HPI .15 pull start engine has a reputation for easy starting



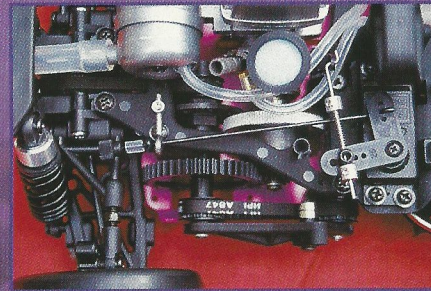
and are leak free. Spacers are also provided for changing the ride height. The engine is a 0.15 size and it comes with the flywheel and clutch shoes already assembled. Attach the clutch bell housing and the exhaust before finally fixing to the chassis. The screws that hold the exhaust in place are awkward to get at once assembled. The pipe itself has a silicone tube attached which exits through a hole in the rear bracket of the car. This should make the car a lot cleaner as all the oily, smoky stuff should be left behind. I hope! The linkages and pipes were all fitted without any fuss and adjusted to suit.

Tyres, and those gorgeous wheels came together next. Nice to see that foam inserts are provided and a I added a good helping of super glue is needed to keep everything together.

Conclusion

Building the Viper has been fun, and I think if you are not having fun why do it? There are some very nice touches in the kit as mentioned earlier. The Super Nitro is my first HPI model. I don't think it will be my last. Good quality and ease of build gets my vote. I just have to run the Viper now and I cannot wait. Hopefully you can read about it in 'Drive In' next month.

Oh, one last thing before I go. During construction, I

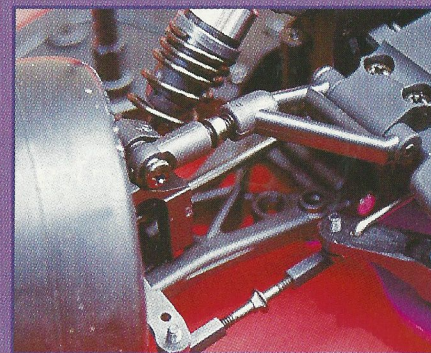


Above: The ball raced belt tensioner and the rear suspension turnbuckles
Above Left: Another ball raced belt tensioner at the front, the simple body clip fixing for the radio plate can also be seen here

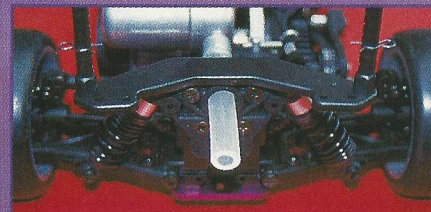
found the model stuck to a pane of glass, it must have thought it was a window Viper.

PS. Thanks PeterE (Ed) for giving me this opportunity to review this kit, and I take my hat off to other reviewers past and present as this is not as easy as you may think.

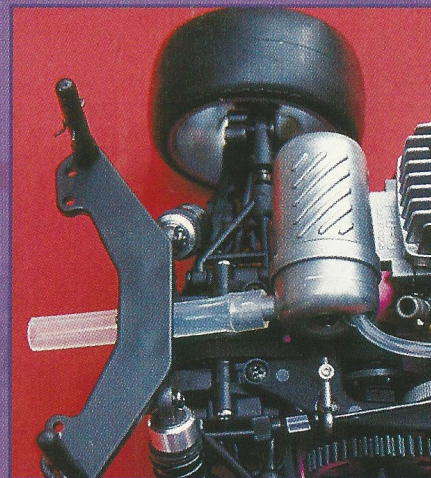
Our thanks to HPI Europe for supplying the model for testing. **RRC**



Turnbuckles for both toe and camber adjustment



That silicone exhaust pipe should push all of the muck away from the chassis



Above: Simple can type exhaust, a tuned pipe might be a good investment for increased performance

Below: In Nitros, as with everything else, size matters



'you start to get a feel for how big the Super is going to be - Big!'

Quick Spec

Super scale Dodge Viper GTS-R (approx. 1:9th) Belt drive, 4WD chassis powered by a .15 sized Nitro engine. Independent suspension all round by wishbones and oil filled, coil over shocks. Requires fuel, glow start, 2 channel radio and paint for the Polycarbonate body to complete.

Likes

Size
Looks
Quality
Terry Atkinson paint job

Dislikes

British weather
Not being able to play yet

