

The Kyosho 1/10 EP Calibra

A Beginner's Tale . . .

Pete and Sarah Wood begin their model car career by building and reviewing Kyosho's 1/10 electric Calibra

Most people's obsession with cars starts early in life. For as long as I can remember, I have been the proud owner of a four wheeled 'something or other'. My first memories are of a pale green model Ford Anglia with real rubber tyres, plastic windows and a moulded plastic interior. State of the art back in the '60s! However, it wasn't long before the diecast treasures were overtaken by Scalextric cars, for most the first form of 'competition' car any of us experience.

As a car buff, I went through the usual phase of plastic kit building, until eventually I got the real thing. What then? Those masochist enough to be without money for years go on to full size motorsport, and my first foray into the full size stuff was co-driving for Jonty the Ed some 10 years ago when we rallied an RS2000. Since then I've driven my own Peugeot 205 on stage rallies, a real drain on the housekeeping funds!

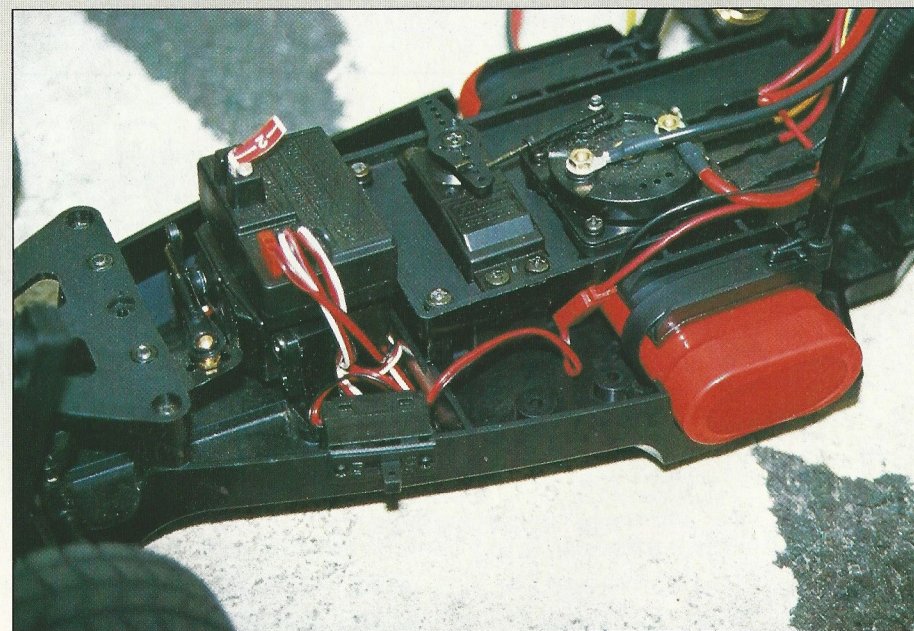
The Ed recently convinced me that driving model cars is just as much fun as the real thing after dragging me up to Ashby's track. "Why not?" I thought, r/c cars were something that my 14 year old, car crazy daughter Sarah could get involved in too.

Where To Start??

I began by reading RRC. The first thing I noticed were the different types of cars available. For me, it was like opening the wardrobe door and everything falling on top of you: Indoor or outdoor, electric or IC, Buggies or Saloons, on a tarmac track or Off Road! So many options suggested, just as with full size motorsport, that a visit to the local Club would be wise. Ask at the local model shop for the whereabouts of the nearest Club. The local Worcester Model Car Club meets on a Wednesday night indoors, and outdoors on Sundays during the summer. A

number of visits to the Club narrowed our options to either a Buggy or a Saloon car, but turning up at the hall to see these missiles flying around was great. The drivers had been seeded into Beginners, Improvers and Experts, with three or four races during the evening. Everyone was having lots of fun and the friendliness was noticeable, with people borrowing spares off one another, imagine that in Grand Prix racing! By the end of the evening, both Sarah and myself were itching to have a go!

The radio equipment was easy to install, with the rotary speed controller proving very effective and quite smooth in operation.



Enter the Kyosho Calibra!

Having caught the bug, as luck would have it, the Ed turned up on my doorstep one evening with a large box containing the Kyosho Calibra! "Would we like to build it?" The answer was that it was put together that very evening, bar the radio gear and painting the bodyshell, but I'm jumping ahead of myself here. Upon opening the box, the prospects of Sarah building the kit OK dimmed slightly, there seemed so many parts to assemble. Close inspection of the contents and instruction booklet inspired a little more confidence, although the whole thing was far larger than we first imagined. The parts were all packed in numbered bags, and each stage of the instruction booklet told us which bag number we should be using, so at least we knew we were putting together the correct bits.

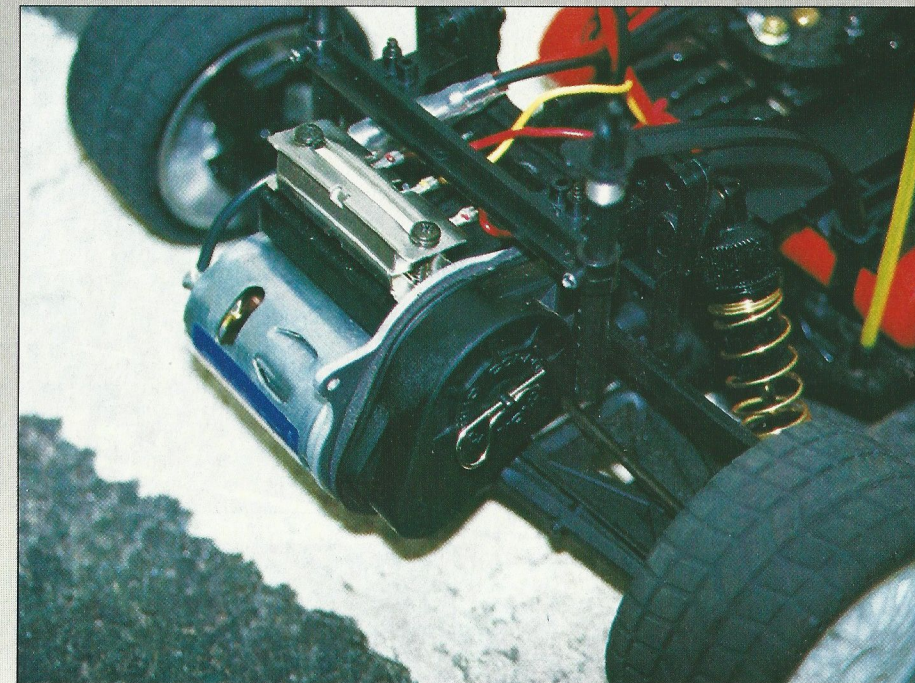
The geared differential was the first part to assemble, and went together well, although some parts seemed a bit of a tight fit, although you must remember Sara was new to gears, cogs etc! The instructions took a bit of getting used to, but bearing in mind that Sarah had never built any type of model kit before, slow but sure was the



motto. Stage two was the gearbox, and here again, it appeared that the metal bushes were very tight. In fact they were so tight we at first thought we'd assembled it wrongly. The rear suspension components all went together far easier than the first two stages, being just a simple "Assemble part A to B" exercise, so things were looking up. The front suspension and steering mechanism was next, and other than my filling the shock absorbers with the supplied oil, Sarah put the rest of it together herself, finding it relatively simple although the final outcome was that the front wheels didn't point in a straight line, calling for final adjustments by somebody who knew what he was doing (Who me? Ed!). With the front and rear suspension complete and attached to the moulded tub chassis along with the gearbox and steering, this left only the radio plate and speed controller to fit.

The radio plate simply screwed down to posts on the front suspension and further posts on the chassis plate. The speed controller fitted on to the radio plate alright, and the wiring diagrams were reasonably clear, so we had no problems with this stage. The kit was now complete with the exception of the wheels and tyres. These look very realistic, and really set the whole model off very nicely, however fitting the wheels was fiddly due to not having the correct tools to hand such as a little box spanner.

With the chassis complete, it was time to concentrate on the bodyshell. This part of the build was a bit awkward, using normal scissors left a ragged edge which looked a bit untidy. Only later did we find out that simply scoring a line with a sharp blade then simply flexing and pulling the moulding is the tidest and neatest way to do it. The Ed tells me that curved scissors are available which make a very good alternative for those not too happy to use a sharp knife blade, especially youngsters. As for painting the shell, we opted for the scale colour scheme, so as most of it was white, masking off the windows and the single line for the yellow stripe was pretty straightforward. Should we ever wish to go for a big paint job, I think we could get in to a mess.



How do people do those fabulous paint jobs? One criticism I would make of the instruction leaflet regards the instructions supplied for the paint scheme and application of the decals. It would have been easier to follow had the decal section used a full page for the diagrams. As it was, our finished model had a yellow panel missing and a couple of decals in the wrong place. A colour picture of the rear of the car, somewhere on the box, would have been useful.

Nearly There!

The basic 2 function Futaba Attack 11 radio set was quite adequate for the Calibra, and there

The resistor does get quite hot in use, so don't touch it!

seemed little point in purchasing a mega expensive radio set when starting out, as the Attack 11 was enough to ensure Sarah needed only to concentrate on her driving!

With the radio gear fitted as per the booklet, it only left the kit short of a set of batteries. To this end we obtained two sets; Sanyo cadnicca 1400 and 1700 packs were our choice. With the car now built, it was checked over by an experienced driver who found that the bushes in the gearbox were definitely too tight, and demanded some attention before we ran it. Just as well we had it given a check over!



controller etc) are readily available in all model shops.

The Calibra can be driven on the local car park without any hassles, the kit's motor and gearing allowing Sarah to practice seemingly for ages, so 'the learning to drive' bit doesn't have to take place in front of all those serious racing beings that have been doing it for months or even years.

In fact, the Ed has asked Sarah and I to chronicle our experiences over the next few months, so in my next offering I'll tell you how we're getting on...

The Kyosho Calibra and Futaba radio equipment are imported and distributed to the trade by Ripmax Ltd, Ripmax Corner, Green St, Enfield, Middlesex. Available from HobbyStores and all good model shops.

Everything required for some car park fun!

Take It To A Car Park!

Once any beginner has completed his/her first model car, it's natural to want to get outside and charge it around like mad, but learning to actually drive properly is obviously the art to master before even trying to race it! Although it might sound boring, Sarah and I went to the local council offices car park on a Sunday afternoon so she could drive it around at her own speed before visiting the local Club's tight indoor carpet track.

Although the Calibra's speed controller isn't an electronic type, it was still possible for Sarah to just trickle the car around at low speed without it screaming off into the distance, and despite my initial misgivings, the scale like tyres gave quite a respectable amount of grip on the cold tarmac. Sarah ran the car around for a while, then the Editor took over and gave the Calibra a good blast around, after which he said he was well impressed with the way it went. Between Sarah and I we must have done something right!

So, we now have a very nice looking model car which we can use either indoors or outdoors, staying local to home or travelling to the nearest track if we wish to. The Calibra was an interesting

kit to build for a complete first timer, with few pitfalls other than the oilite bushes. As built with the equipment seen here it represents a low initial outlay to start off with, but the options to improve on the basic kit when we wish to (ballraces, hotter motor, electronic speed

Pete and Sarah having their first experience of driving around an obstacle course. They soon found it to be quite difficult!



Ooops! Sarah gets it completely wrong here (Pete did laugh here, but Sarah got her own back when he had a go!



The proud builder of the Calibra, 14 yr old Sarah Wood, with dad Pete.