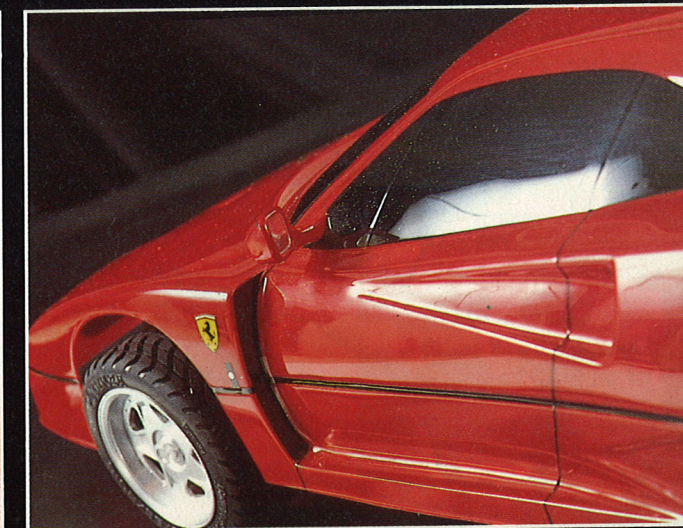
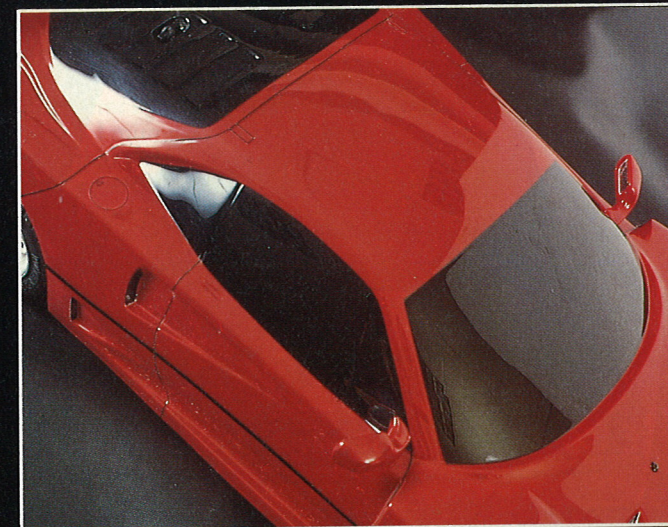


F40

Review

Model Cars lets Lewis Eckett loose with an F40!



I saw my Dad the other day (yes, really!) and pretty soon we got onto the usual subject of our all-time favourite cars. I reminded him (yet again) how he had told me when I was a mere nipper that one day he would buy himself a Ferrari – when he had become a millionaire.

"There's still time, son," he said before adding "but I had a go in one the other day."

"What! actually driving," I said.

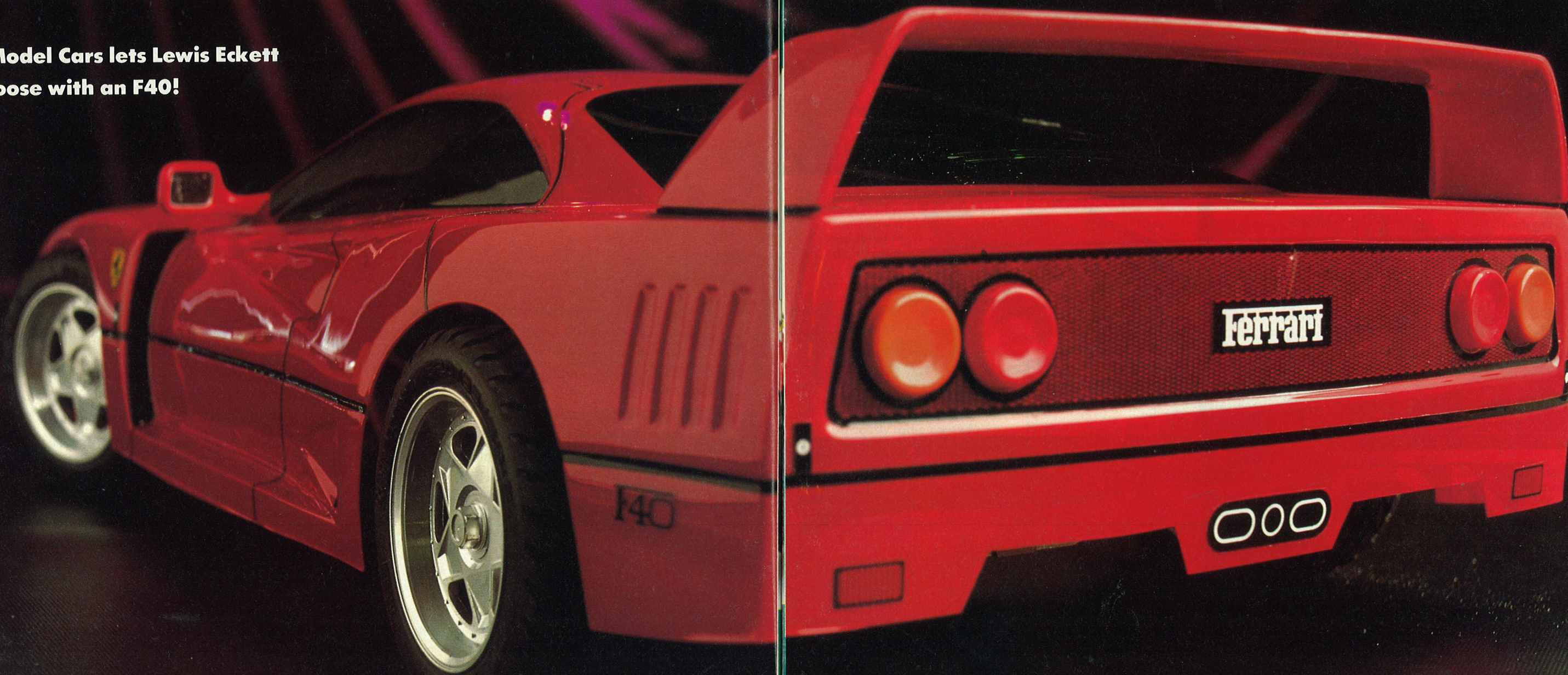
"Well, erm, um no – only as a passenger," he answered.

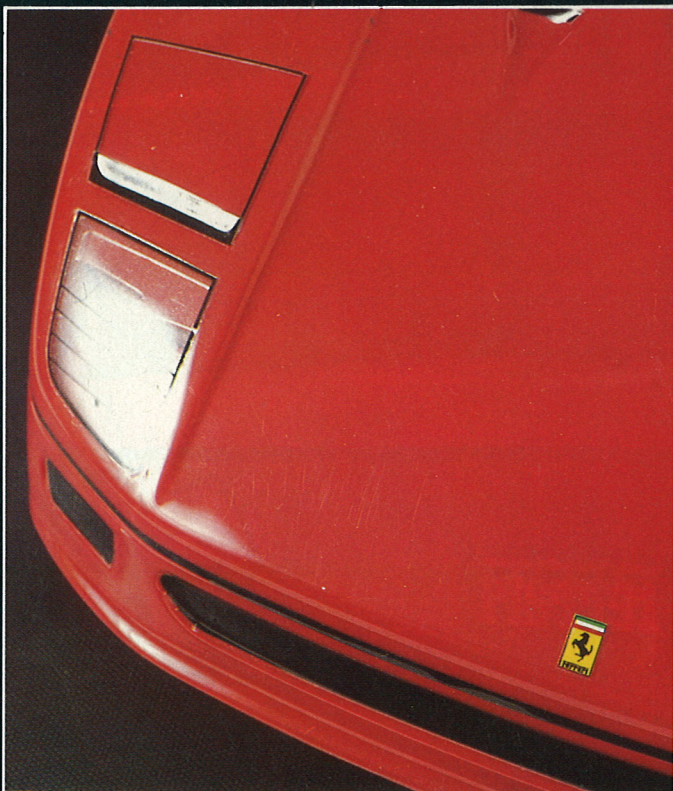
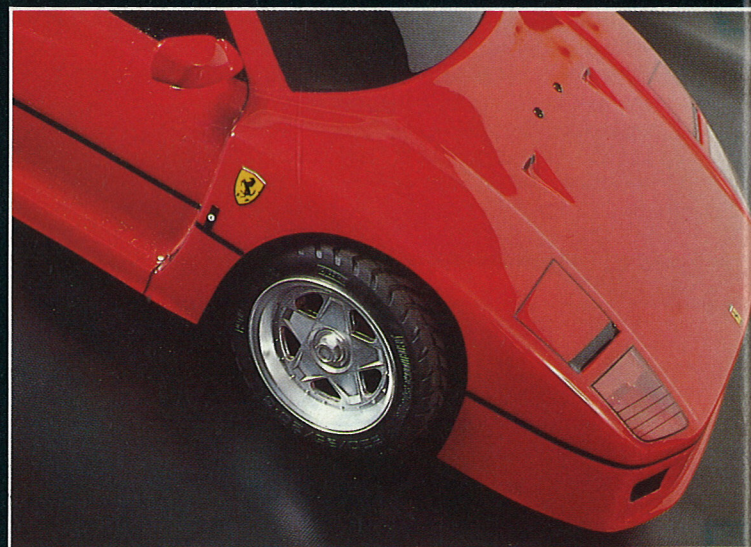
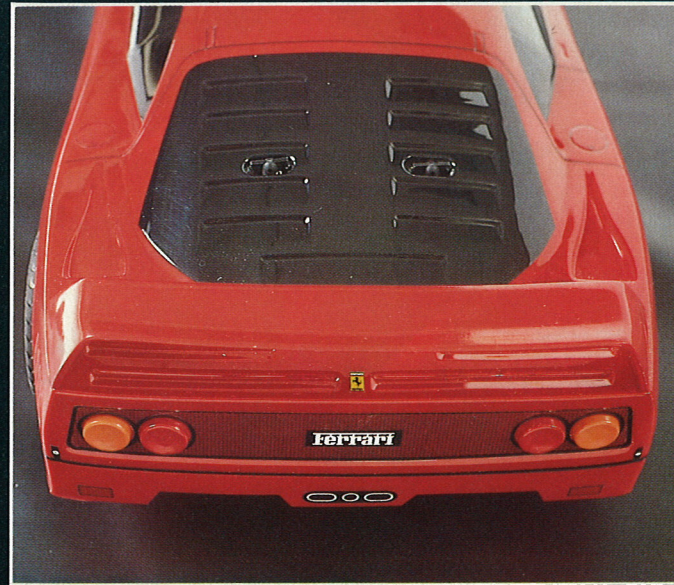
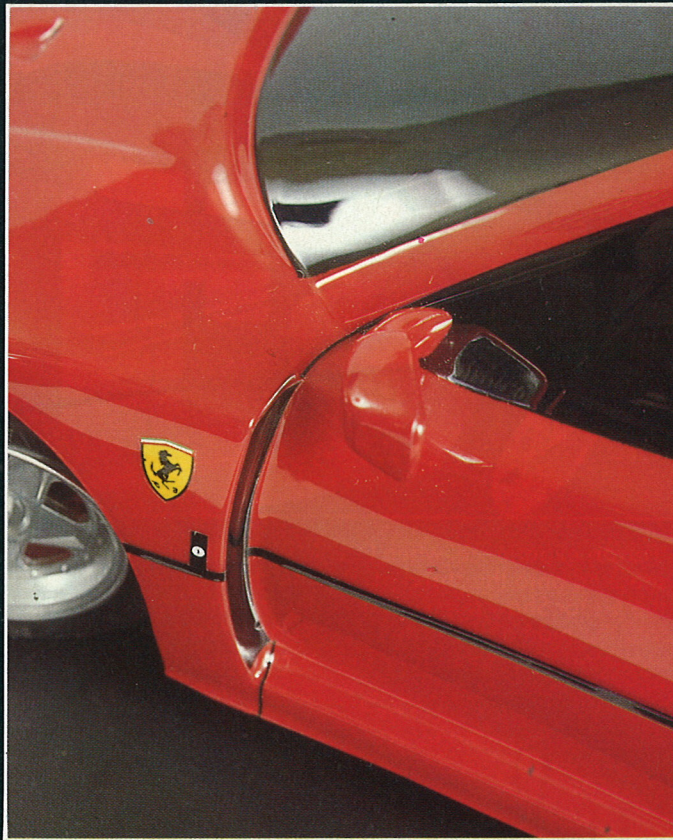
Still I had to admit this was better than my own

'Ferrari experience' when I sneaked onto the stand at the Motor Show one year. I told the man at the gate I was a photographer for Performance Car, amazingly he let me in and I wondered around for a while until making a bee-line for the Testarossa.

I crawled inside and got

comfortable, put my foot on the clutch, pushed the gear lever into Top and then floored the accelerator. For a moment, just one perfect moment of sheer fantasy, I was doing 170mph down the Tring bypass. There I was, waving at boy-racers in their Escorts and burning





F40 Fever

up Golf GTI's until . . . I felt the heavy hand of authority.

"Got a press card," said the rather largish security guard. I mumbled something about leaving it back at the office, so he told me to go away and get it – or words to that effect. But at least I had managed to get a Ferrari into top gear.

Truly something to remember.

Anyway, I asked my Dad what being driven in the real thing was like.

"You know what," he began, "it was cramped, noisy, uncomfortable, you couldn't see anything, it handled like a dust cart and the gearbox sounded as if it started life in a JCB."

"Your kidding!" I screamed.

"Yeah," he replied, "but I loved every minute of it."

Fanatics

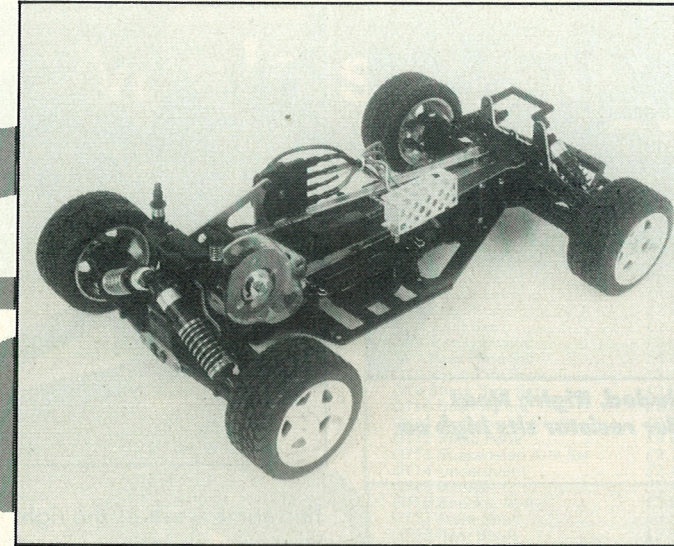
My Dad and I are not unique in having a 'thing' about Ferraris, not by any means. We're just like a lot of people – we can't afford one. It doesn't stop any of us from dreaming of owning one, which must be why there are so many models around of Ferraris of all types and sizes.

The plastic and die cast model market has been doing very nicely out of the Ferrari name for quite a few years. I used to collect them (I even sent one to my Dad for Christmas one year) but somehow a plastic or metal model of my favourite car didn't seem quite right. Basically, none of them moved.

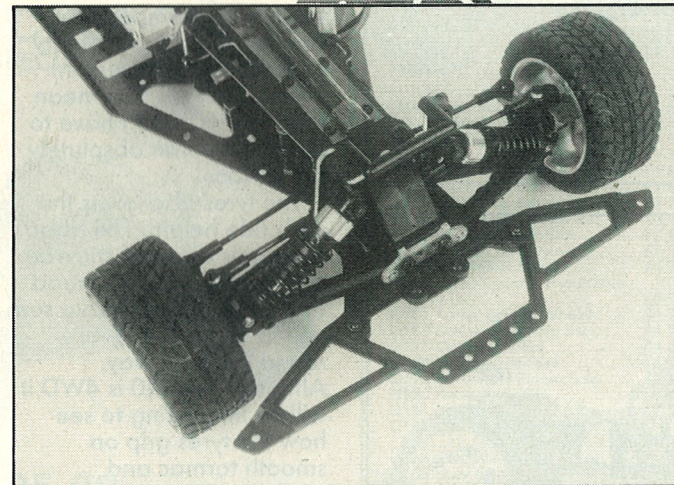
Sure you could push it around the living room making vroom, vroom noises, but this is a bit embarrassing when you look round to find the wife and kids giving you that 'funny' look.

So the answer was obviously radio control – still not as good as the real thing of course, but I haven't made my first million yet. Radio control Ferrari models unfortunately have been few and far between, mostly it has been a case of fitting a lexan bodyshell to a standard chassis.

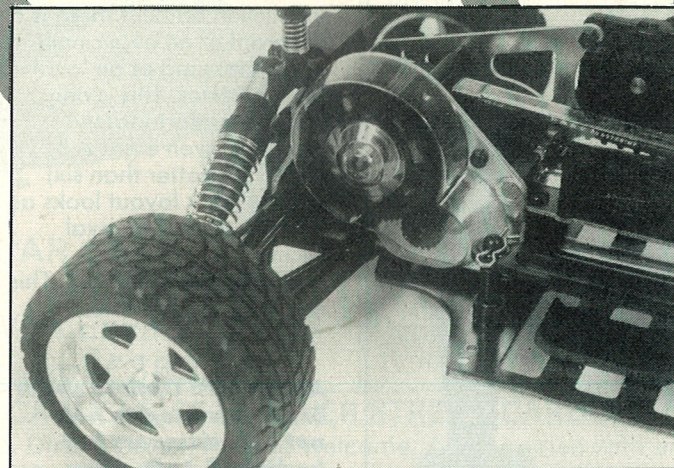
German manufacturers, Robbe bought out a R/C



The F40 chassis has the dampers laid over – this gives reduced suspension movement and stops body roll.



The bumper on the car is made from tough plastic – it doesn't protrude the bodyshell – so looks aren't spoilt.



The standard Kyosho 48dp gears are used – note neat centres to cover nuts on wheels!

scale model but this didn't really have enough go about it to justify the badge.

Sooner or later, I thought someone like Kyosho or Tamiya is going to produce a car that will be worth investigating.

And here it is. Well sort of.

Belter

What Kyosho have done is take their Optima kit and stick a Ferrari F40 bodyshell on top of it. This sounds a bit simplistic – but there it is. The obvious reason for doing this is to use up all the old Optima parts Kyosho have got left over now that the Lazer has taken over as the company's Competition 4WD buggy.

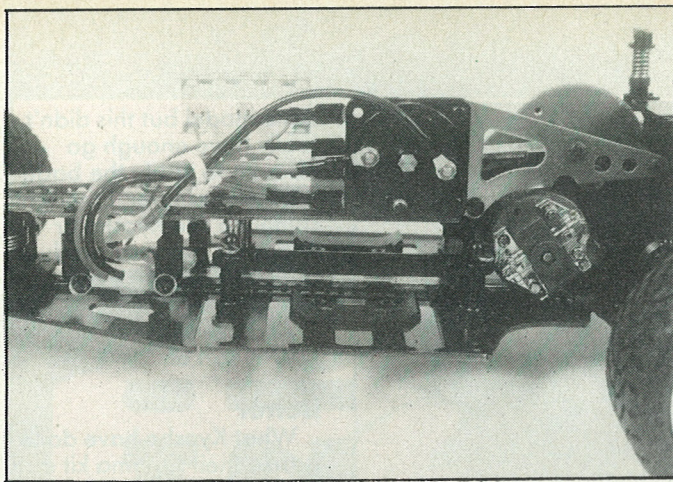
So immediately we go one better than the boys at Maranello because the Kyosho car is four-wheel drive – ha!

Anyone who has built an Optima will be completely familiar with the F40's mechanics. The only differences are the bodyshell of course, the wheels and tyres and the damper mounts.

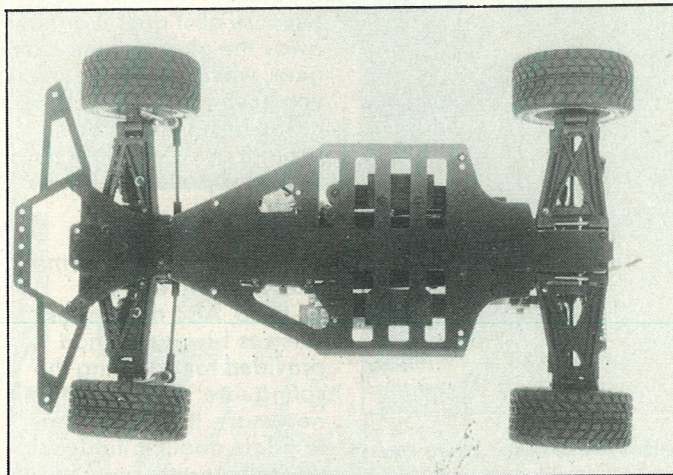
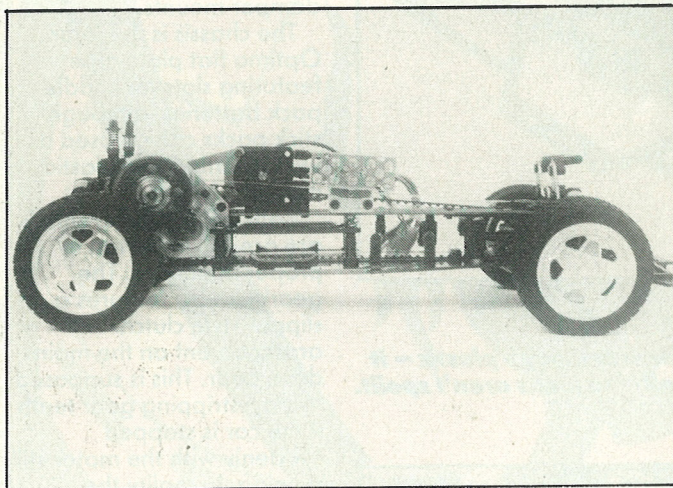
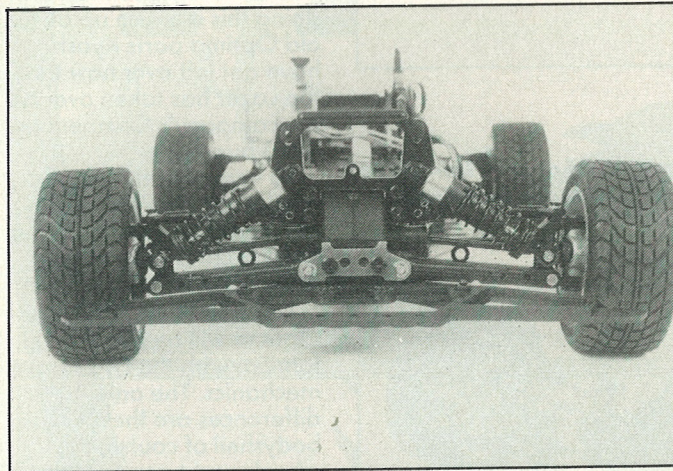
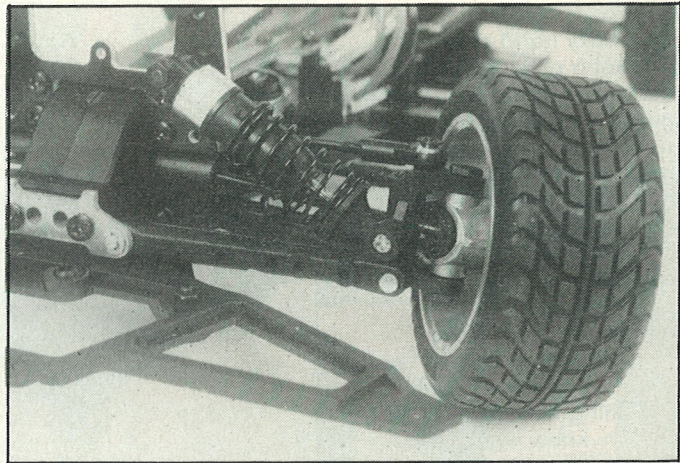
The chassis is the later Optima flat plate type featuring slots for saddle pack batteries, although stick packs can be used as well by fitting two plastic mounts.

Both geared differentials are pre-built and run in proper ball races. The gearbox also features a slipper style clutch arrangement on the main drive gear. This is supposed to stop stripping gear teeth if the car is stopped suddenly with the motor still running. In reality the slipper is a waste of time because all it does it grind away the plastic of the main gear, which in turn means you have to keep adjusting it. The best thing to do straight away is to lock it up solid and pretend it doesn't exist.

The dampers are the same, smaller than normal, size all round and are oil-filled. Also there doesn't seem to be any method provided for adjusting the spring rate – perhaps it isn't necessary. If you did want to fiddle about it though, it would be pretty simple to



Above: Speed controller is included. Right: Neat treaded tyres. Below: Controller resistor sits high on the chassis.



find some washers the right size.

To get the ride height of the F40 right the dampers are fitted to different mounts. The lower suspension wishbones also feature extra mounting holes for you to make further adjustments. Even though the dampers are smaller, there is still plenty of suspension movement which should in turn mean that the F40 won't have to be driven on an absolutely flat surface.

The tyres also lower the car's ride height. The tread pattern is a sort of chevron and it is important to read the instructions to make sure you fit them so they are round the right way. Although the F40 is 4WD it will be interesting to see how the tyres grip on smooth tarmac and concrete. On smoothish, dusty surfaces the results could be very exciting - I can just imagine long four wheel drifts round the corners.

In fact at the back of the instruction booklet there is a diagram of an oval circuit and a drawing of an 'oval battery' pack. This is only 7.2 volts unfortunately (seven or even eight cells would be better than six) but the pack layout looks as if it is designed for oval racing.

Finally, the bodyshell. This is a fairly reasonable

representation of a Ferrari F40, particularly as Kyosho have had to make it fit onto a 1/10th scale buggy chassis. Because Ferrari's are so wide at the back (you have to be careful through the odd width restriction apparently) they almost appear arrow shaped. For some reason this is even further exaggerated on a model and looks slightly strange.

To retain the smooth flow of the bonnet, the bodyshell clips on at the front from inside. At the rear the body mounts are spring loaded to allow the body to float up and down and not catch on the ground as the suspension is depressed.

So there you have it, the next best thing to a real Ferrari, unless you can afford to go down to Harrods and buy one of those really expensive pedal car versions (but really, you won't half look a wholly going down the shops in that!).

With Optima mechanics and 4WD the F40 will go as well as it looks, or should do at least. A couple of issues ago *RCMC* bought you details of the new electric Rallycross racing formula, now what about a Ferrari for that. Of if you like a Nissan Skyline GT-R because Kyosho have also bought this out to.

Of course you should have realised by now that if you go down the model shop, buy the dampers, mounts, wheels, tyres and bodyshell you can then drag the old Optima out of the cupboard and have yourself a Ferrari for *even less* money!

Above left: Optima shock bracket is used to hold not only dampers but bodyshell. Left: Alloy chassis allows for both stick or saddle pack cells.