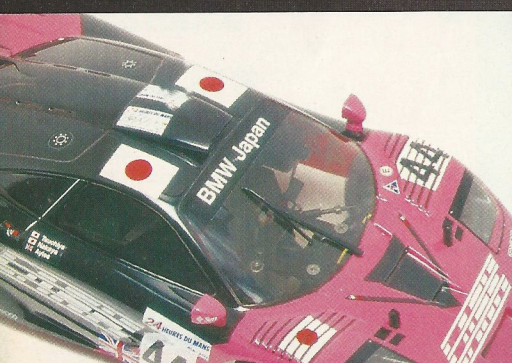


Kyosho GP Spider MKII Mercedes CLK and McLaren GTR 'Lark'

totally stunning



The Le Mans Pink and Metallic Black paintwork is an arresting sight

A real racing car

It must be a little over two years ago since the management at Mercedes sat down and decided to blow the barn doors off the World Series for GT racing cars. Their boardroom musing resulting in the construction of the most advanced racing chassis at that time, and undoubtedly one of the, if not the most stunning sports racing cars I have ever seen (much better looking than that darn Toyota). Somehow Mercedes managed to make sure that the styling of the 'C' class road cars, which the racer was supposedly based on still managed to come through, no mistaking that grill or emblem. With the legendary 'Silver Arrow' paint scheme flattering this long sleek goddess, the driving talents of Bernd Schneider, Sandro Nanni, Alexander Wurz and the race preparation of the renowned AMG organisation, this guaranteed that success would follow very quickly. As the history books will show this was indeed the case, a totally dominant performance in 1997 resulting in the World title, and it would appear to be the case in '98 as well. So it seems only more than fitting that Kyosho should choose this model to replicate, and introduce us to its Mk11 mechanics of its own World Champion, the GP Spider



With no opportunity to fit a driver I tinted the windows using Tamiya 'smoke' spray paint

Mk2. The second body shell that has been made available is the 'Long Tail' McLaren F1GTR as raced by the Japanese Lark Racing Team. The McLaren body featured here now graces (if that is the right term!) The Ed's MK1 chassis racing in this year's Kyosho Cup.

Modification or makeover?

When our esteemed Ed' asked me to have a play with Kyosho's latest Race Car, I can honestly say that I was not really that excited about the prospect. From seeing the pre-production press releases the Mk2 appeared to be just the Mk1 with a revised engine package. Not to say that the Mk1 was a bad car, it was a very user

friendly first time IC car for a lot of new converts to our hobby, just ask Team Emery. To be fair though it did lack a little in the performance stakes unless you raided Kyosho's very extensive hop-up list. So I really was not expecting what I got.

It was plain from the minute I opened the box that Kyosho had totally revamped the Mk2, not just the new engine, but new running gear, proper dampers, ballraces, reworked suspension geometry, and loads of a really stiff composite for all the mouldings. A new car in fact, but still keeping the basic layout of the Mk1 i.e.: Three Drive Belts, Alloy Chassis & Radio Plate etc.

From the top

Taking it from the top, we have Kyosho's latest GS11R engine easily identifiable by its much taller gold heatsink cylinder head, got to be good in the cool(ing) stakes. Still pull start and with its very clever and simple single point mixture adjustment carburettor, now it is fully ball-raced. This is a major plus point for both reliability and improved performance. After a quick internal examination it would appear to have a larger bore in the carburettor and some crankcase porting modifications, although this information has not been confirmed by Mr Kyosho. All in all this alone should give the Mk2 some very serious out of the box grunt, for what would appear to be no extra cost. But it does not stop there - just about every other part of the running gear has been replaced. If fact it would appear that Kyosho have taken the suspension layout, wishbones etc. straight from the electric powered TF3 racing chassis which I reviewed last year. Along the way they also appeared to have changed the formula for the

plastic mouldings, all the Mk2 mouldings are now very stiff and yet quite a lot lighter. And after a great deal of whinging by the Race Car team not only is the Mk2 fully ballraced, but at all four corners you will find some of Kyosho's excellent oil filled dampers, the plastic bodies capped with some very smart blue alloy tops. These dampers hang from some totally revised mounting brackets. The fronts being heavily angled for good roll control. Moreover Kyosho have also made some major revisions to the weight distribution of the car by moving the position of the steering servo and the radio receiver, which will give a much improved steering response. The stiffness of the rear has been increased by the addition of a bracing link and redesigning the mounting bridge for the middle layshaft/brake linkage, again with the intention of increasing the level of power-on steering. This car did not just suggest it was going to be good, it shouted it!

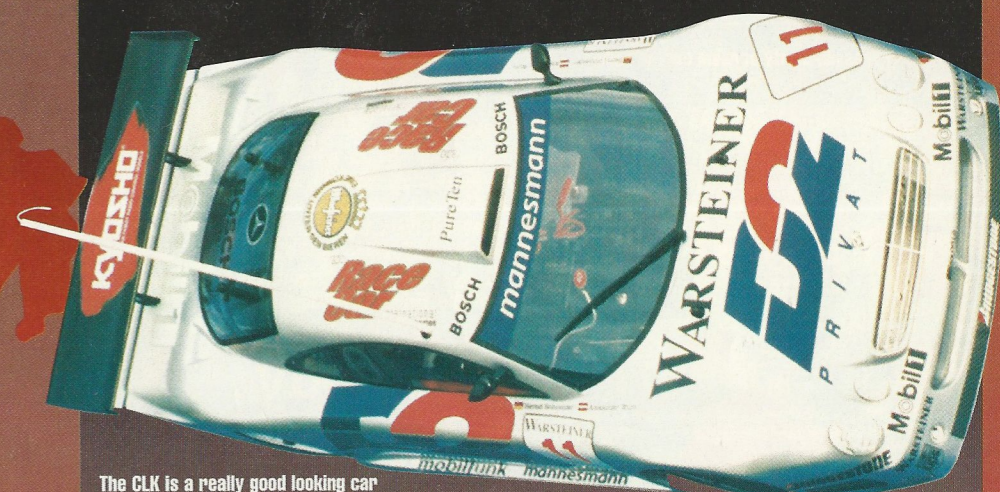
Build Sheet

As ever Kyosho supply some of the clearest and most concise assembly instructions. In fact anyone from 5 to 105 should be able to build the Mk2, even if they have never built any form of model racing car. All that you really need to complete the car is any two or three channel radio system, some polycarbonate paint, glow fuel and glow plug power supply. These will be available from the shop where you buy your car. Do remember though to get a fuel with at least a 10% Nitro content, this will make the setting up of the engine much simpler, also get a spare glow plug.

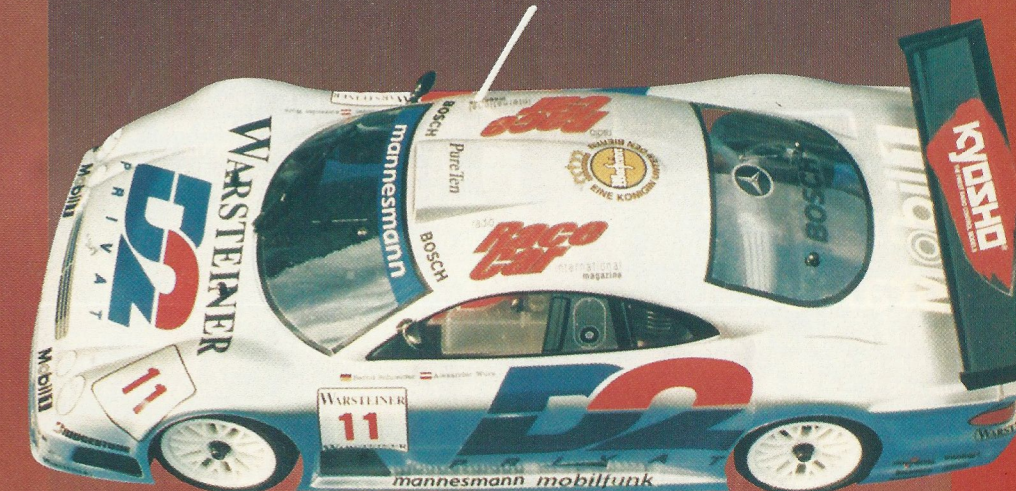
Deakin's Drill

I don't intend to go through the build screw by screw, it really is not necessary, however, there are one or two points I feel should be made:-

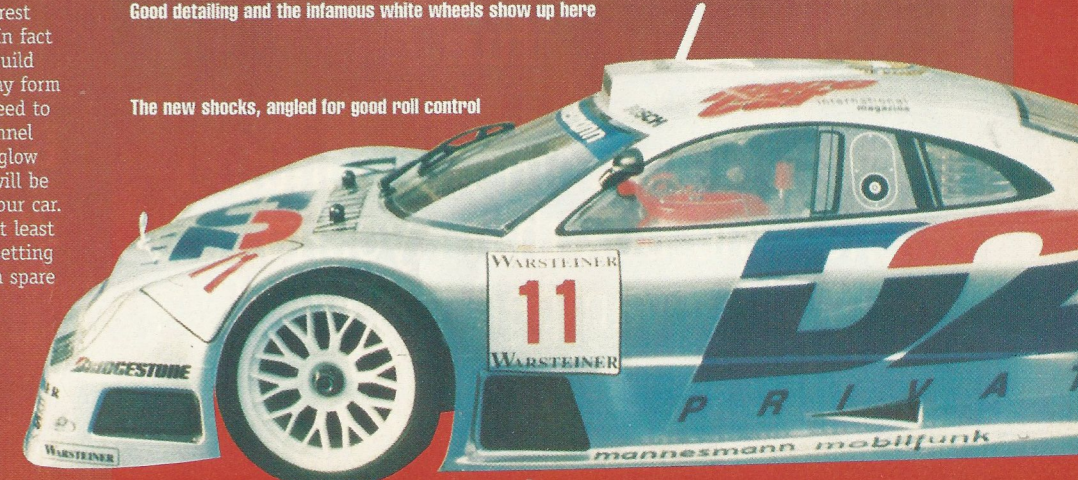
- 1) A lot of the screws are of a very similar length, do make sure you have the correct one for the relevant assembly. In a lot of cases you could spoil an assembly by using too long or short a screw. I used a neat plastic vernier I have from SMB bearings, a good ruler will also do the job though.
- 2) Leave plenty of float between the disc brake and the pads. When the plastic disc gets hot it expands quite a lot.
- 3) Make sure you fit the correct wishbones front and rear, although they look the same they are not.
- 4) Threadlock all the bolts that hold the engine locating plate, exhaust, and engine in. If you don't I guarantee that they will fall out, with devastating results.
- 5) As the moulded rubber tyres have to be super glued on, wear some form of eye protection
- 6) Take a great deal of care with the radio installation. Although there is a plenty of room it is important to keep all the wiring away from the moving parts.
- 7) When you come to operation 41, don't trim the body mounts to the length in the instructions, it is totally wrong. I trial fitted the body until it looked right, then trimmed them.



The CLK is a really good looking car



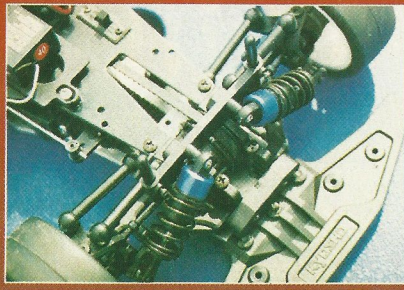
Good detailing and the infamous white wheels show up here



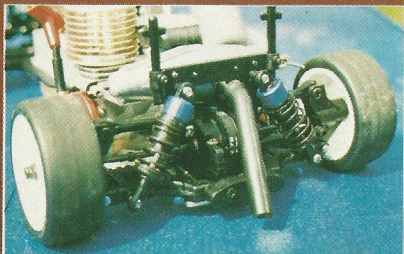
The new shocks, angled for good roll control

GTR, like the CLK has a huge wing

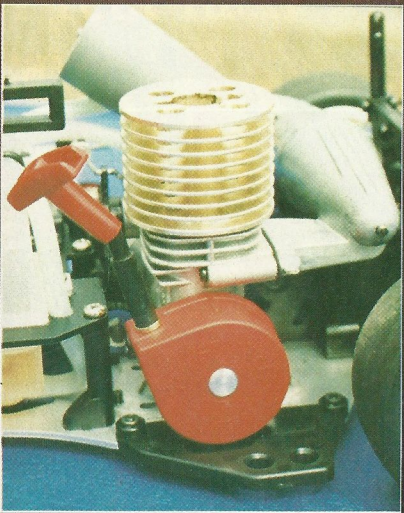




This exhaust routing should help to keep the car clean



The rolling chassis, plenty of room for the radio gear



The new engine features ball races and a smart gold heat sink

Points of praise

In the last Kyosho kit I built I found the gear diffs to be more than a little notchy, I was pleased to find the latest versions to be very smooth, requiring no further work on them. As per normal I filled the diffs with as much grease as I could get in them. A much thicker grease going into the rear than the front, I have got to have as much steering as possible.

The shocks are of a fairly classic design, and with their factory fitted seals are totally bullet proof, I doubt even the Ed' could build these other than totally smooth. (Ouch! Ed') With

their very soft volume compensators they really are the business.

With all types of car a stiff chassis will always give a great base for suspension control. With the new rear brace and well located radio plate, the Mk2 is 200% more rigid than the Mk1, so the car will stay far more consistent through long hot finals. Also any changes made to the suspension will be immediately apparent at the sticks.

Last two pp's are the very neat large volume air cleaner, great for noise reduction and protection for your motor. However I did soak the filter in some KN filter oil before I ran the engine. Finally we have the neat carrying handle, on the side of it is a little 'growth', this is for storing spare packers for the damper springs, you know the ones you can never find in a hurry, 10 out of 10 Kyosho.

On the other hand

Very few in fact, the biggest single moan being the wheels, a good replication of the real wheels, but why are they white!

Even the car used for the box art has silver wheels, so why are mine white?

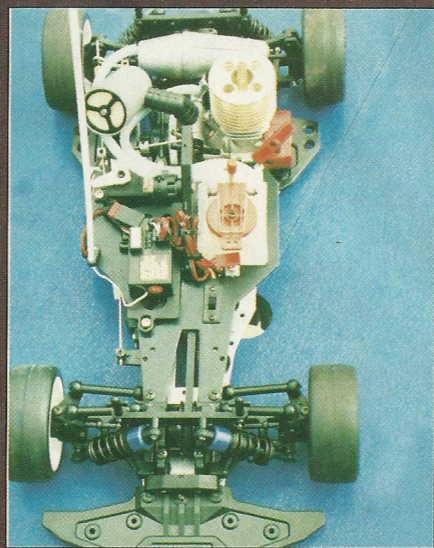
We all know that it is important to have slop free steering and in previous Pure Tens the servo saver has been a little soft, but the Mk2 one is taking the sublime to the ridiculous. The amount of force required to assemble it nearly turned me into the 'Hulk', but it is slop free.

The body beautiful

As ever with Kyosho the CLK is a really exceptional moulding. Very clear and carrying all the detail of the real car. With the supplied window masks, which fitted very well, all that is needed is a coat of silver paint, I used Custom Colour from Helger racing. This really is a one coat paint, and it seems to cope well with the rigours of racing. Both the liveries for the two works cars are supplied on the extensive sticker sheet. But for some unknown reason only the details of the World Championship winning car are shown, so if you fancy the Warsteiner car you will need some photos. A good collection of detail mouldings finish the shell off. I did find the grill moulding a little out of scale, also the decal for it would not stick to it, so I didn't use it. Once complete it just looks amazing, this has got to be one of my favourite Race Cars without a shadow of a doubt.

Time for some fun

Prior to getting some running time in I did a



The rolling chassis, plenty of room for the radio gear

basic set-up, why basic you may say, well with all the fixed link track rods etc. their really is little to adjust. However I did spend some time on the ride height and shock absorbers. It was fairly obvious that the kit supplied damper oil was just a little too soft (the chassis bounced on the springs quite badly). A change to some Trinity 60w oil made all the difference. Also I set the ride height as low as possible (for the best possible out of the box handling), this meant have less packers in the shockers than recommended in the instructions. Do be aware though that this could wear the bottom of the alloy chassis very quickly.

It is important with any form of IC kit to run the engine in. This should take the form of several runs with the engine set slightly on the rich side, on light throttle levels and not on full throttle. But the engine should not run over cool, but not too hot as well. Gradually the mixture level should be leaned-out (turn mixture screw in) until the engine reaches maximum revs but still has a good level of exhaust smoke, at no time should it smell hot. A good tip is to keep some small bits of soap handy, if you put it on the engine and the soap bubbles the engine is too hot. This can be one of two things, too weak a fuel mixture, or a lack of air flow. I did find that the left side window and a slot in the windscreen had to be cut out of the body shell to keep the engine at reasonable temperature. Shame really, it did spoil the look of the shell, strange that Kyosho don't make any form of recommendation regarding cooling.

When the time came to start the engine I did find it quite hard to get it to fire up. Even the Kyosho instruction sheet settings failed to get it to run. In the end I changed the glow plug, now I doubt this will be the same for all MK2's. But if it won't start just take your time be calm, go through the instructions. If you still have problems I have no doubt the model shop you purchased the car from will have a tame expert at hand.

But how did it go?

After I got the engine to run the Mk11 was loaded up with tranny and fuel and it was off to the races. A good day was found, the track at Bedworth the place. The first hour or so

was spent running the engine in very gently, gradually leaning the mixture down. Straight away it was clear that the performance of the new car was light years better than the old car, and not just the engine. The handling was really good, the car steered, stopped and braked very positively. All the understeer of the old car has gone, turn in was progressive, mid corner the throttle could be picked up and the Merc' just powered out of the corner. Stability was awesome, no doubt the large rear wing on the CLK giving a lot of down-force, and thus grip. Once the engine felt a little looser I tried a timed run, based on the times from the Kyosho World Cup meeting in '97 the Mk11 was some three seconds of a lap quicker. Quite an improvement, and the good news is that the car costs only a little more than the Mk1. It would appear that the people at Ripmax (Kyosho's UK importer) have come to the same conclusion about the performance as the car has been excluded from their own series for '98, shame really.

Long term

With this type of car it is very important to the buyer that it should perform well, have low maintenance, be easy on the pocket and of course last. To that end the CLK has now been run quite a lot, not just in my hands but in my friends and work mates less forgiving fingers.

'The handling was really good, the car steered, stopped and braked very positively'

With a slave body shell I might add, the Merc' is best kept on the shelf. All the reports have been along the lines of 'wow, I gotta have one', 'these new cars are really quick', 'give it back its my go', do you get the drift? So far the engine has stayed trouble free, if still a little hard to a start, just the one new pull start. The tyres have worn out, and all the screws on the bottom of the chassis have worn down, screws are cheaper than a new chassis anyway. The performance is pretty good still, although a two speed gearbox would make all the difference. The car has been cleaned using a Ripmax foam cleaner and except for replacing the front bumper.

Finish line

The Mk2 GP Spider is a totally new car, with a great pedigree. Nothing about the car is half hearted. It is quick, strong, reliable and very tasty to look at, and a major plus is its value for money. Shame that if you buy one now you will have to wait till the Kyosho series for '99 or maybe the likes of the Ashby Winter series if you want to race. But it will still create a stir even at the local park or car park, and this gives you plenty of time to practice.

Results:- Kyosho 10 out of 10, take a Silver Star. **RACI**

Quick Spec

4WD.IC. Triple Belt Drive. Fullstart Engine. Alloy Chassis. Fully Ballraced. Oil Filled Coil Over Shocks. Independent Suspension. Disc Brakes. Moulded Slick Tyres.

Testers Kit

Radio: MO Vantage Esprit 2
Receiver: KO Mini
Servos: 2 x Futaba 3001
Receiver Nicad: Sanyo 4.8 600mAh (rechargeable)
Glow plug: OPS silver
Fuel: DD Models 16% Nitro

Likes

Too many to mention. Engine, Chassis, body, value.

Dislikes

White wheels.