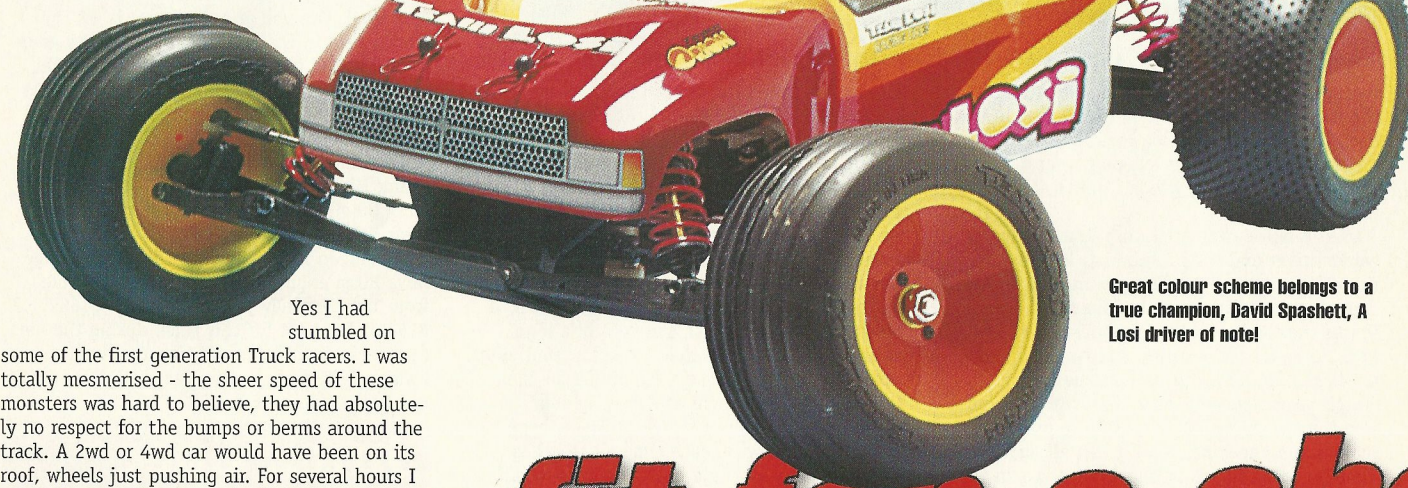


The Losi XXCR Graphite Plus

It must be nearly eleven years ago whilst on holiday in the USA that I wandered into the SoCal indoor off-road track in California, I was totally astonished by the spectacle that was in front of my eyes. There bouncing, leaping and generally flying around the clay track was some truly awesome projectiles, Fords, Chevys, GM's. Bright, bubbly in your face Race Cars, all with 'Big Wheels'.



Yes I had stumbled on

some of the first generation Truck racers. I was totally mesmerised - the sheer speed of these monsters was hard to believe, they had absolutely no respect for the bumps or berms around the track. A 2wd or 4wd car would have been on its roof, wheels just pushing air. For several hours I sat and was totally entertained. And judging by the grins, all the drivers were having some serious fun. I was hooked on Trucks. In the USA due to their televised full sized stadium truck racing the RC versions thrived, being as popular as 2wd buggies. This side of the pond it has taken a great deal longer, but now with a little help from the BRCA and of course RRCi trucks are now mega.

Moving on

November 1996 as the then editor of RRCi in '96 I finally managed to exercise a little editorial fat and got the chance to try my hand at electric truck racing first hand, down and dirty. With thanks to George Land of Helger Racing I was granted the chance to review the latest Losi XXT at that time. If you read my review, and I hope you did, you will remember I had a ball of a time, building and racing the truck. At the end of the review I promised we, or rather I, would build the ultimate Losi XXT. Well with the arrival of the XXCR Graphite plus, and thanks once again to said George Land, I finally got my wish.

Special

To celebrate Team Losi's success in the ROAR Nationals in 1997, Team Losi have released the XXT CR Graphite Plus. Not as a special edition but as an off the shelf kit. This truck really has got the lot, in fact just about every option that

was on the XXT parts list has been included, plus several new parts that have been developed by World Champion Brian Kinwald and Team Losi. These include:
Full set of graphite parts
Long wheelbase chassis
Graphite wishbones - very light & stiff
New front king pin/balljoint for better handling
Lunsford Racing Titanium Turnbuckles - very strong - ease of adjustment
M.i.p. CVD Driveshafts - zero backlash
XXT CR Rear Suspension set - with inboard toe-in
Super smooth Titanium Shock Shafts
XX4 Twin Pad Slipper Clutch - very adjustable
Fully Ballraced including steering - no drag
Alloy Top Gear/ slipper shaft - lightweight- low friction
Carbide DiffBall - perfect roundness & hardness
Front/Rear Wheel Bearing Spacers - no-drag

Great colour scheme belongs to a true champion, David Spashett, A Losi driver of note!

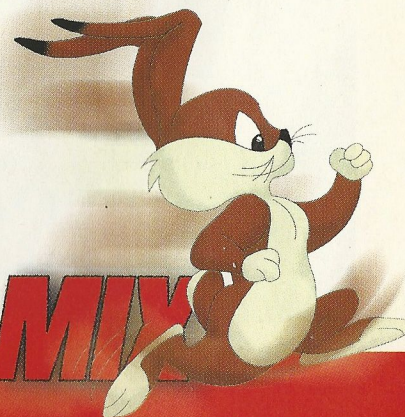
fit for a champion

'the construction began, with the aid of Burger King, Pepsi and Brian Adams'

As you can see it really has got the lot, and considering the price it really is amazing value. So other than some of those nice blue Losi/Trinity alloy parts you really don't need a single extra part. Real out of the box racing, I approve - big time.

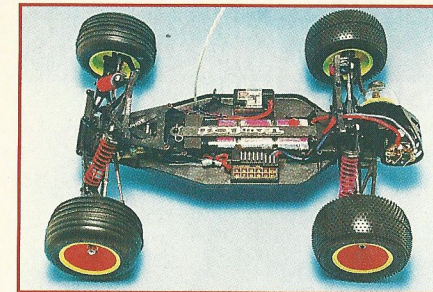
Build sheet

After a good read of Losi's excellent instruction manual, the construction began, with the aid of Burger King, Pepsi and Brian Adams. There really

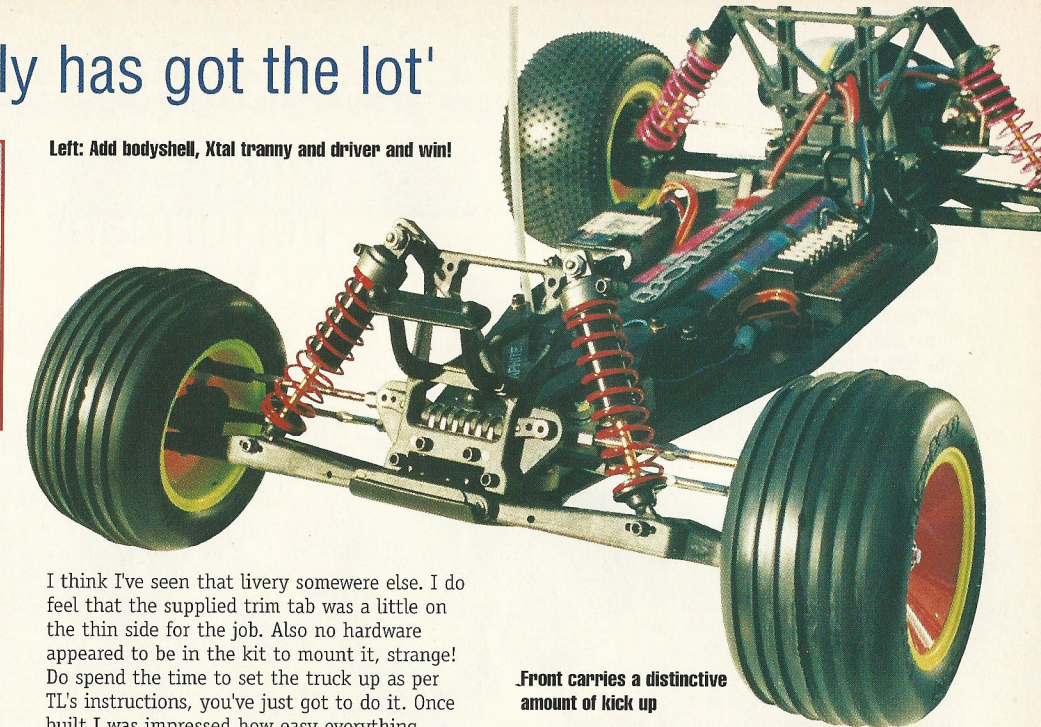


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'This truck really has got the lot'



Left: Add bodyshell, Xtal tranny and driver and win!



Front carries a distinctive amount of kick up

is very little to say about the build. You do need to spend a little time cleaning up the flash on the graphite mouldings, a job for a sharp craft knife. So be careful. As with any Losi kit you do need to pre-thread the fixing points in the graphite mouldings, with this kit they include a 'tapping' bolt and some white assembly grease. This does make the build flow. I know that a lot of racers replace some of the steel screws with alloy ones, this I feel is a bad move. I'd rather have the extra strength, with a minor weight penalty. From the front to the back the assembly was real knife and fork stuff. Everything just fell together, fits and finishes were perfect. When I came to the transmission I did spend a little extra time, but really it didn't need any special work. I did add a little thin Hydrodrive fluid to

I think I've seen that livery somewhere else. I do feel that the supplied trim tab was a little on the thin side for the job. Also no hardware appeared to be in the kit to mount it, strange! Do spend the time to set the truck up as per TL's instructions, you've just got to do it. Once built I was impressed how easy everything moved, suspension gearbox etc. At both ends the spring/ damper oils seemed to be just perfect when dropped the truck wouldn't bottom, just dipped and return to ride height. The transmission being almost friction free, loads of power to those big wheels. Even at the extremes of the rear wheels movements the CVD's didn't bind or drag, this was going to be one very quick race car.

Down & Dirty

At this point having built this mechanical beauty, and as Peter E was planning to race it, I really wasn't that keen to run the review kit. Fortunately I was given the chance to borrow an ex Losi 'Team' car for a weekend, along with some very tasty gear, Trinity 2000 cells, D2 12 double motor and an LRP V6 speedo. Mouth watering stuff. Prior to the test I set the borrowed truck up to the settings in the manual, springs, oil, camber etc. After a quick burn down the M5 I arrived at Kidderminster's multi layout track. This track really must be one of the best in the UK, you've got grass, dirt, concrete, Astro turf, jumps, bumps, lumps, the lot. First job was to try the adjustment of the slipper clutch, I did leave it a little on the loose side at first, just to give me a little extra throttle control (4 1/2 turns from full tight). Also at this point I would have checked the diff adjustment on the new car. You will find after the first run the diff will back-off as the diff balls bed in, never run the diff too loose for any length of time, it will damage it. I started with the nicads positioned to the rear of the truck, hoping to get as much traction as I had to learn both truck and track. Using the kit spec. silver tyres the fun began. Punching the sticks the truck just surged forward, my these things don't half go. In the first right hander the truck just soaked up the many ripples, with



Quick Spec

2wd Offroad. Fully Ballraced. Triple Shaft Gearbox. Adjustable Ball Diff. Twin Plate Slipper Clutch. Graphite Mouldings. Independent Suspension. Coil Over Oil Filled Shock Absorbers. Silver Directional Rib Front Tyres. Silver Mini Pin Rear Tyres. Dish Wheel.

Tester Kit

Radio: KO Vantage
Receiver: KO Mini
Servo: KO 2001
Speedo: LRP V6
Nicads: Trinity 2000
Motor: Trinity D2 12D (Geared 18/87)
Charger: Tekin

Likes

Total spec.
Strong
Price
Performance.
Raceable Tyres.

Dislikes

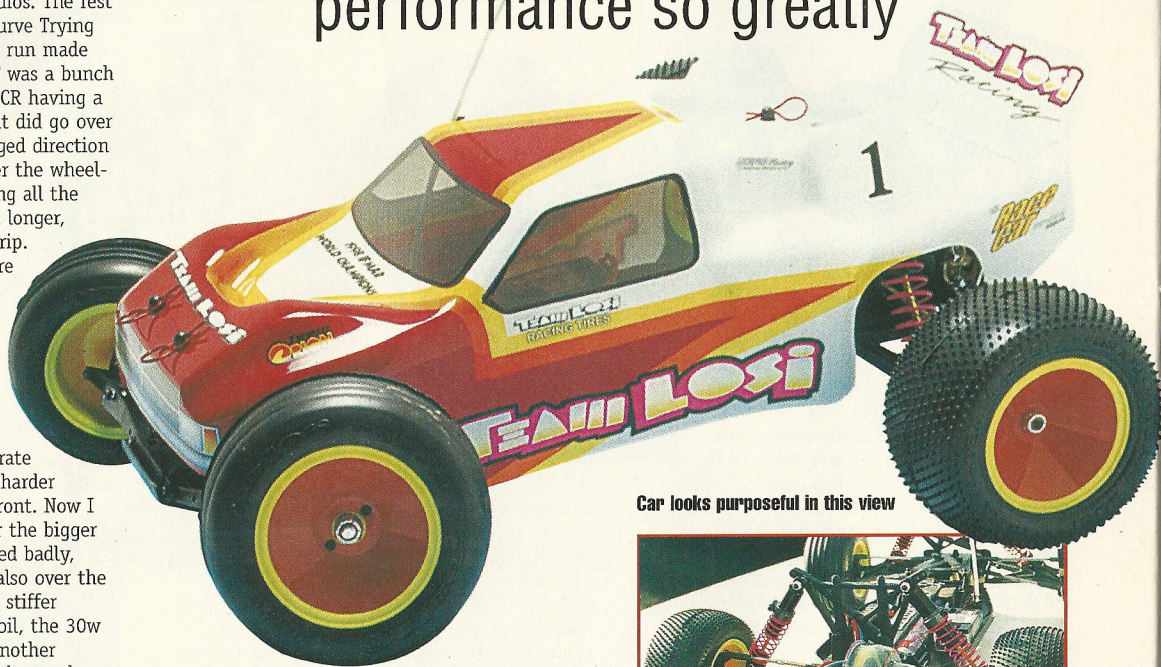
I'm not Brian Kinwald !!

Smart 'Graphite' logo tells all

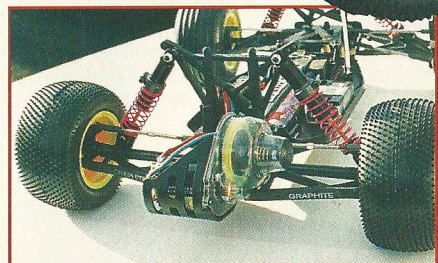
out moving off line. Up on to a 90 deg turn it just dipped its nose and turned in hard. To quick for me and I spun, mental note turn rates down. Thanks to the gods for computer radios. The rest of the run was one giant learning curve Trying to scan the memory banks after the run made me feel that this version of the XXT was a bunch different to my previous steed. The CR having a great deal more steering, although it did go over the bumps better, and I think changed direction quite a lot quicker. I decided to alter the wheel-base - a simple job. By simply moving all the spacers forward the truck was 3 mm longer, hopefully this would add rear end grip. This was quite an improvement, more than I had expected. But still the truck steered better than me. It was fairly evident that on the kit tyres I really need more rear grip, I felt it important to stick with the one's Pete would be using, so out came the springs. Softer Yellow 2.0 rate springs were added to the rear, and harder Orange 2.9 rate were added to the front. Now I had a truck I could handle, but over the bigger bumps the front of the truck bounced badly, making very it hard to hold a line, also over the multi bumps in the first corner. The stiffer springs at the front needing stiffer oil, the 30w coming out and 35w going in. Yet another improvement, I really was enjoying the truck now. Practice was now the main requirement. Four more packs were run through the truck, I just concentrated on my driving. It didn't take long to see that there was a lot more in the truck than me. At the end of the afternoon I knew I could race the CR quite happily. I did feel that maybe for new drivers and on low grip days, such as my test day, the previous XXT rear hubs/pivot block would be advisable, this is apparently what several top drivers do, all have said this will give more rear end grip, it's not an expensive change, and simple to do. However, on a good grippy day the CR back end will be better. This will of course depend what you as a driver want from your truck. At this point the weather finally closed in, ending my fun.

After my day I decided to have a chat with Darren Boyle at DMS, Darren is a regular on the UK's Truck scene and a Team Losi driver. From our conversation it appeared that a change in the basic set-up of the truck had not been included in my instructions. The inboard position of the rear camber link in the rear bulkhead had been changed one hole out, giving a shorter link length and thus more camber change, result, more grip. Darren suggested this would be a major change, and would dial the truck in. I was a little sceptical, back to Kiddy.

'I was astonished that such a small change would alter the performance so greatly'



Car looks purposeful in this view



Rear view shows the slipper clutch under a Lexan cover

Don't you just hate a smart a*#@?*

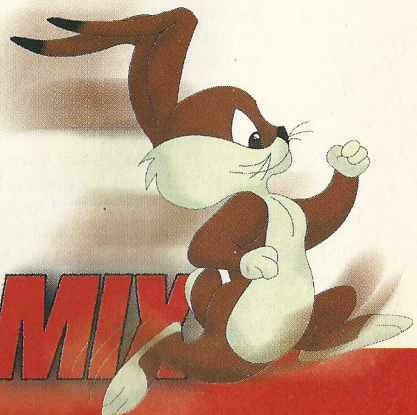
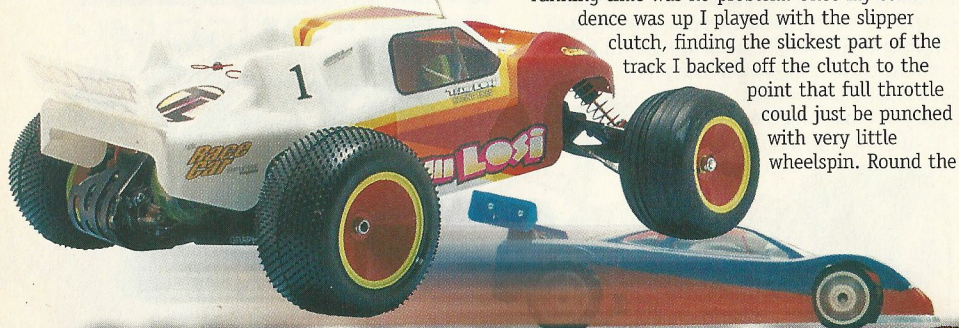
Well Darren was spot on, mid corner a lot more power could now be applied without spinning out. I had some understeer, great. Time to put the springs/oils back to the kit spec., but still with the long wheel base, chicken I know. Not so good. This time I only added the softer rear springs (yellow). I was more than happy. The CR was dialled. It would appear some how that a Losi supplement sheet should have been included in my kit box, but wasn't. This included the set-up change. I must admit I was astonished that such a small change would alter the performance so greatly, a moral for all here I think. Well now the CR really was motoring, and very driveable. At this point I also tried another of Darren's 'tweaks', I changed both oil and shock pistons, 25 w and orange (larger holes) pistons. This much softer set up really worked, the level of grip was most impressive. The truck was now at its best. Power wise the CR was staggering, the latest gearbox was so free than even on a gear ratio of 1 8/87, pretty long, six minutes running time was no problem. Once my confidence was up I played with the slipper

clutch, finding the slickest part of the track I backed off the clutch to the point that full throttle could just be punched with very little wheelspin. Round the

rest of the track I had a great deal more control, power could now be applied much earlier in the corners, without any real loss of performance. Indeed after the run only just the smallest amount of heat could be felt in the alloy slipper hub, astounding.

Last Lap

The XXT CR Graphite plus is a complete package and will match straight from the box any other truck on the racing scene today. A very high specification at the right price, combined with the knowledge and assistance of Team Losi will make this kit a winner, from rookie to expert racer. After completion of the kit you realise that this will certainly be a very competitive package. With its low weight and all graphite construction it does pack a mean punch. With all the developments that have gone into this car it will build on the success of its older brother. **RRCI**



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