

XXT Revisited

BY CHRIS DEAKIN



Get trucking.

In the June edition of RRC, Matthew Hunt, one of our junior reviewers took a look at the Losi "Starter" XXT. The original idea was for Matt to update his truck and continue writing the series of articles. But having seen the completed truck I must admit to a large amount of envy. So I flexed the Editorial muscle (all right fat) and decided to do the next part of the series myself, sorry Matt.

With thanks to George Land of Helger Racing, a Double XT kit with bearings, slipper clutch and Hydra-Drive climbed the RRC desk. After re-reading Matt's ode the build began.

long suspension arms, front bulkhead and gearbox case are all made from Losi's "stiff-as-hell" material. This is a modern engineering composite which has a high carbon content, thus making the components very stiff and durable. As Matt had found on his review kit that forming the threads in this material a problem, I decided therefore to make my own life a little easier. In the Helger "Trick Bits" list I found a 4-40 U.N.C. tap and tap wrench set, just the job. Before any building took place I went through the instruction manual and identified all the points that would require a thread tapping in. Then proceeded to use my trick bits kit to cut all the threads. This will make the build much easier, but be warned you need to take care when doing this, to lose a thread is far worse than a tight one.

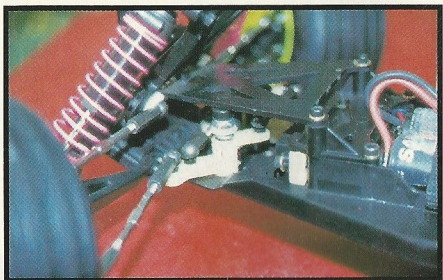
Swing away

Building begins at the front of the car, assembling the "swing away" system, which is the same as the "starter" and the XXCR, which was reviewed by "Andys Big Wheels Benson" in the last edition of

Race Car. The lower hinge pin is best tapped in with a series of light blows, rather than one big belt. Having pre-tapped all the chassis mounting point holes, the front chassis stiffener fell on. Front shock tower followed in short order, followed by the king-pins and axle blocks.

Having spoken with "Big Wheels" prior to the build, and on his advice, several of the "Trick Bits" from the Helger range were also to be fitted. The first of these was set of titanium

The white steering bellcranks gave quite an increase in steering lock.



Tap those threads

Based around Losi's legendary "G" tunnel moulded chassis, the full competition version is very similar to the "starter" kit. The chassis,

The famed "G" tunnel chassis.



turnbuckles. Although made of steel the standard turnbuckles can bend, maybe not break, but enough to disturb the handling of the truck.

Bellcranks

The steering came next, and also the "Trick Bits" parts. Andy felt in standard form the XXT needed a little more lock, a look though the trick bits list yielded a set of replacement bellcranks, which increased the amount of lock available. Also they were adjustable for ackerman. Although ballraces are available for the post supporting the bellcranks I left the bushings in, well lubricated of course. The rest of the front of the truck was as per the "starter".

Hydra-drive

The major difference between the two trucks is found at the rear, and they are all based around the transmission. Firstly the bushings are all replaced with ballraces. A this point another of Andy's top ten was also fitted, the gearbox top shaft/gear was replaced with the lighter hard coated alloy one. The 2.6:1 ratio remaining the same. I must admit a smoother, freer gearbox I have yet to build. All the motor power should go straight to the wheels. Finally we come to the major difference the famed Losi Hydra Drive. As with Matt's truck the slipper clutch is still used. The Hydra-Drive being the icing on the cake. The slipper clutch has only one point at which it is effective, spring pressure and friction dictating this. With the addition of the "turbine based" Hydra Drive a smoother drive curve allows maximum traction at all times, reducing wheel spin and giving better power-on handling (less oversteer), great if your a throttle jammer like me.

During this phase of the construction I fitted my final option, in America the tracks tend to be hard clay, low grip. Consequently Losi fit 3° toe-in rear hubs (6 deg total). On English grass this gives too much grip and also reduces straight line speed. 2.5° hubs came from Helger's parts bin and were bolted on. With the addition of ballraces in the rear hub carriers, the rest of the build was the same as the "starter".

Again on Andy's advice I made my final change to the kit spec, the standard shock oil was swapped on the front for 40w, shock pistons were left as kit.

My choice now

At this point I fitted my choice of electric's. For a speedo M.Troniks latest 750 Gold was fitted. This speedo has many of the 900 Turbo's features, but has much sharper brakes, has only three wires, and is very easy to set up, all for £89.00, a bargain. Sifting through "Big

Damn Yankee.



Wheels" articles it was fairly obvious that a hot motor was needed, my final choice being a Trinity Kinwald Dirtinator 13 Triple. Servo choice being the industry standard KO 1002.

As I can't paint my way out of a paper bag, the very strong bodyshell was sent to Paul Dudley of Puma Models for a suitable paint job, cheers Paul

Get Truckin

The first test run was round by own back garden, much to the amusement of my 18 month old son Michael. Setting up a small jump confirmed the trucks poise and flight. The pink springs and damping doing their work well. But this was no real test.

Into the deep end

I booked in for a truck B.R.C.A. Regional at Northampton, just a stones throw from Schumacher's premises. Having not raced Off-Road for five years I was a little uneasy about coming up against the superstars the like of Helmke, Hodge and Benson. I needn't have worried though, they really are nice guys.

The track was laid on virgin grass, one medium jump and a nice raised platform 90° ramp, plus a nice mixture of slow and quick corners, quite a challenge.

First Run

With all the wheels pointing in the right direction, and the kit H.T. compound ribs and Gold step-pin rears fitted, understeer was the name of the game.

The truck would turn-in, if slid on the brakes into a corner, not the best way to learn a track or car. Over the bumps and jumps the truck performed very well. The Trinity motor having loads of power, more than the pilot could cope with.

Second Run

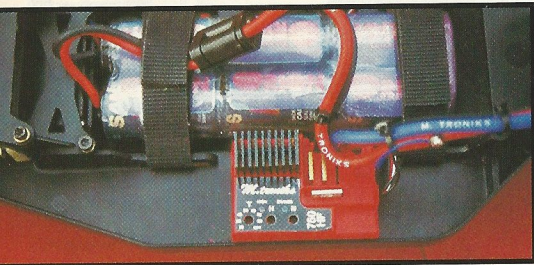
"Big Wheels" lent me some Staggered Rib Losi fronts again in H.T. compound, which were duly fitted. Also the rear tyres were swapped for some Silver Step-pins. The truck now turned-in and steered under power. Handling was crisp and gave great confidence.

Both the jump and ramp were taken with ease. The XXT was good, the driver . . . average.

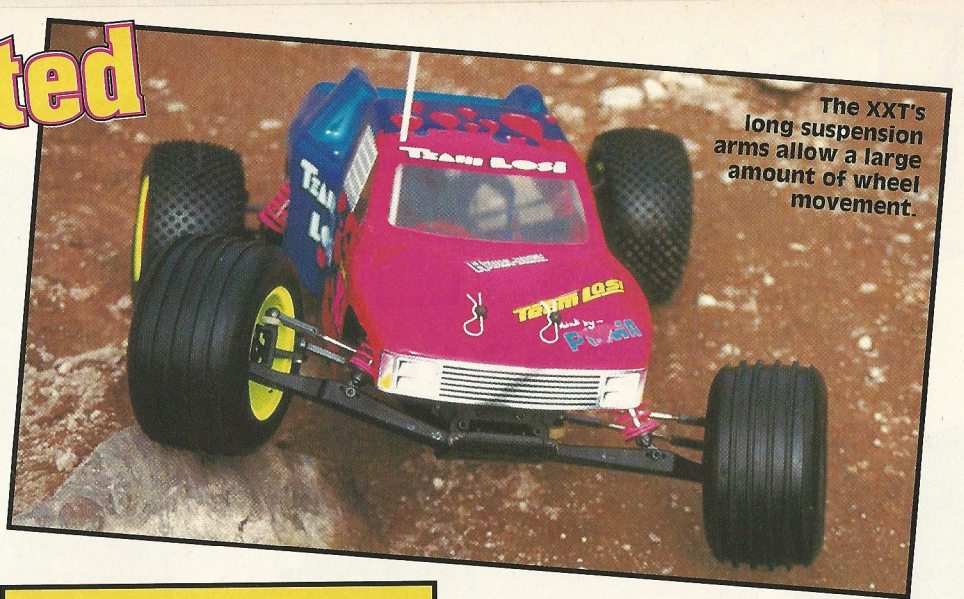


I need action.

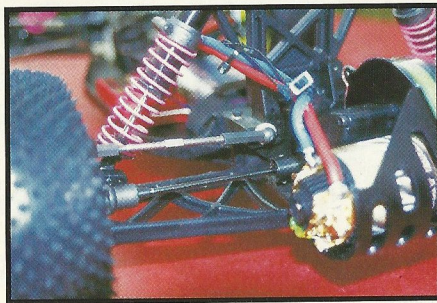
XXT Revisited



The M'Troniks 750 Gold speedo.



The XXT's long suspension arms allow a large amount of wheel movement.



You can clearly see the Trick Bits turnbuckles.

Round One

A messy start left me dead last, but the truck was keen to make up the gap. Progress was being made, but a major league dump on the last lap spoiled the recovery.

Round Two

After gearing down one tooth (16-87) and lowering the torque setting on my speedo to 60 amps I was confident of a five minute run. In a search for a little more steering, I moved the bottom pick-up point of the front shock in one hole, thus softening the roll stiffness. A better start left me third, but the truck was "hooking" into the corners. The grip had come up and now the front suspension was too soft. Also some of the punch from the motor had been lost, 60 amps was too low. But five minutes and a lap gave me a run.

QUICK SPEC

2wd, Fully Ballraced. Triple Shaft Gearbox. Adjustable Ball Diff. U/J Driveshafts. Hydra-Drive. Slipper Clutch. Moulded Composite Chassis. Independent Suspension. Bottom Wishbone & Top Link. Adjustable Camber Front & Rear. Coil-over Oil Filled Shock Absorbers. Dish Wheels. H.T. Rib Front Tyres. Gold Step-pin Rears.

Round Three

With the front shock set back in the standard position and the speedo re-set to 70 amps, this was it. Wrong!!! The track had now cut-up and the back was trying to catch the front over the bumps, all traction had gone. This seemed to be a problem for several of the XXT's running, which gave me some consolation.

Round Four

After a quick "team" talk the rear springs were replaced with Yellow springs (softer). As softer springs had been fitted, a better "Pack" (bump damping) was needed, so 40w oil was added to the rear shocks. The truck was now dialled, a best lap of 22 seconds put me on the pace, but too many driver errors kept me down in the "B" final.

Final

No problems with truck, just driver and traffic. The handling had stayed consistent, the traction was good, steering sharp, a pleasure to drive. Fifth place being my reward.

TESTERS KIT

Speedo Motor	M.Troniks 750 Gold Trinity Dirtinator 13 x 3 (geared 16-87)
Cells	Orion/ESP
Servo	KO 1002
Receiver	Futaba 40meg Mini
Radio	JR X756
Front Tyres	Losi Staggered Rib (H.T.)
Rear Tyres	Losi Silver Step Pin

On Reflection

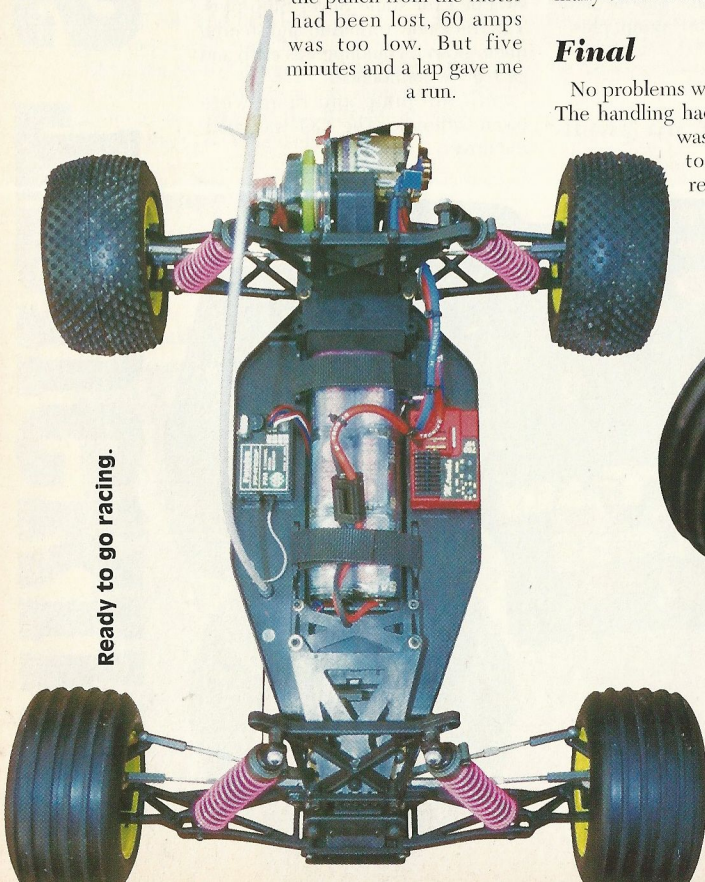
The XXT is a great truck, it builds well, sets up well, and responds to changes. I really enjoy the build and the driving. On the National scene the XXT is very much a dominant feature in numbers, giving drivers of all skill levels a chance to compete with the best. In the next part of the series, R.R.C will build the ultimate XXT using the latest CR bits and the odd bit of carbon..

This review was completed with thanks to George Land, Mike Merrick (M.Troniks), Paul Dudley (Paint by Puma), Keith Helmke and "Big Wheels" Benson.

Trick Bits/LOSI Options Fitted

1. Turnbuckles
2. Steering Bellcranks
3. Alloy Top Gearbox Shaft
4. 2.5 Degree Rear Hub Carriers

Ready to go racing.



Paint by Puma.