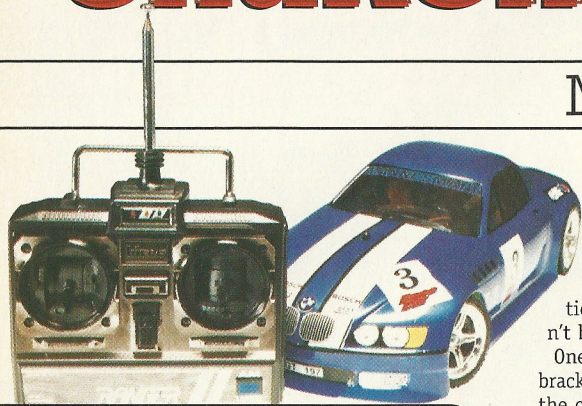


Stewart Walford

# shaken and stirred!

## MRC BMW Z3 Review



The complete starter package, BMW Z3 and HiTec Ranger

**W**alford, Stewart Walford. OK, so it hasn't got the same ring as a certain James Bond, but when the opportunity came to review MRC's BMW Z3, you have to get in character and to be honest this is the closest thing I'm going to get to the black tuxedo and scotch on the rocks. Even though it's not the real thing (I wish!) I waited with anticipation for the arrival of the kit.

I'm fairly new to the world of R/C modelling, even though I've done a fair bit of static modelling, the chance to build my first R/C model car, and a 'gasser' too, was a challenge not to be missed.

### Special Agent Harper arrives

Soon enough, Steve Harper (codename: Editorial Assistant), dropped off the inviting box and the mission began. The large, colourful box shows a pic of the BMW, along with the chassis and all the various bits listed, this is all mainly in French but has English translation. Next step, a look inside.

I'm greeted by virtually a pre-built, yellow and blue, rigid anodised, chassis and a lexan body shell. The body shell immediately brings visions of the BMW Z3 that appeared in the film 'Goldeneye', where Bond is burning up the Cuban countryside, with (shock!) a beautiful woman sat next to him in the passenger seat. Snapped out of my day dream I suddenly came to the conclusion that when it came to painting the bodyshell I would have a difficult choice on what colour scheme to go for, follow Bond or go for a racing style? Choices, choices!

The striking chassis has a number of strong points, including the dust proof receiver box (great touch and it blends in so well with the rest of the chassis), 2.5 cc pull start engine with adjustable carburettor. In all a great little package, that left me having to fit the manifold and tuned pipe, the radio gear and the multi-setting shock towers, a few hours work, tops.

There wasn't anything difficult here that time and patience didn't overcome, with the instructions in French I did get confused sometimes and slowed a little when I had to find the English translation! But follow carefully and there shouldn't be any problems.

One item I did find missing was a small bracket, that helped keep the exhaust 'fixed' to the chassis and stopped it from wandering when the Z3 was motoring. A search in the Ed's spares box soon sorted this minor problem out. First step achieved.

### Wheels within wheels

Moving onto the tyres. The kit comes complete with 5-Star chrome wheels, but without any foam inserts (a call to CML soon put this right). I was told that gluing the wheels is a tricky operation and more so for a beginner, if you slip up here you can take the gloss off the finished model.

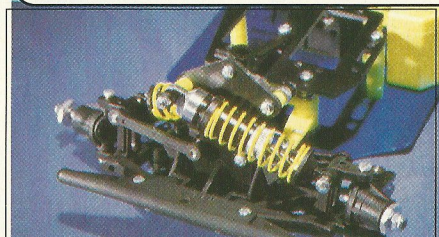
Help was at hand in the shape of the KO Propo 'Professor' Tyre Mounting Set. Available for M-chassis and Touring cars, it certainly aided in the fiddly process of gluing the tyre to the wheel, it is certainly recommended for those who feel the need for a bit of assistance in the tyre gluing process. Remember when gluing the tyres to the wheel rims use some sort of eye protection, as the glue has a nasty habit of 'splashing up' and could catch someone in the eye.

All in all the chassis doesn't hide any great horrors for the novice, with most of the components fitted it's a simple process of building and looking forward to racing!

With the chassis virtually pre-built (striking it is to), I moved onto getting the radio gear fitted and having a look at the transmitter.



The chrome wheels are just too nice to scratch



Unusual 'lay down' front end

### Now 'Q' where is that radio?

The Ed selected a HITEC 'Ranger' radio system (27 MHz), supplied, like the MRC BMW Z3 kit, by Amerang.

The 2 channel receiver is an ideal radio for the beginner and suits a 'fun' model like this



Q: OK James pop the body back on and take off

perfectly. With clear and precise instructions provided, the setting up of the radio gear was a doddle. Careful installation of the batteries, both in the transmitter and receiver, and then making sure the HS-300 Standard servos are fitted properly, doesn't take too long.

Remember (something that I nearly forgot, until my trustee sidekick, codename 'Editorial Assistant' stopped me in my tracks!) to switch on the transmitter before switching on the receiver, this is to minimise the threat of other interfering signals affecting the performance.

By controlling the throttle sticks I checked to see if the servos worked, and all seemed well. Reaching the 'rolling' chassis stage, it was time to take some photos. Those included with this review hopefully show that MRC have produced a well made, striking chassis, that befits a car of this quality.

After a final check over to see if I had missed anything, it was time to start thinking about putting the completed chassis to one side and get on with painting the bodyshell.

### Bodyshell

A difficult decision but after changing my mind a few times (just a few!), I settled on racing colours, rather than the Bond style (well this is a Le Mans Special, after all!). Seriously, with this being my first R/C model I wanted it to stand out from the crowd, and hopefully it does.

I used a rather cool metal flake blue from the Pactra spray paint range with contrasting white stripes. The RRCi number panels set it off nicely, part of the free sticker sheet you receive when you join the RRCi Drivers Club (thanks for the 'plug' Ed!).

There is no masking tape provided in the kit, so it was a case of toddling off to my local model shop and purchasing some. If putting on the tyres is a tricky business, then cutting out the wheel arches and spray painting the bodyshell goes above and beyond this for a newcomer! Cutting out the wheel arches was probably the hardest part of completing the model. The instructions do assist here and provide a good method of getting through this tricky operation. Again time and patience (and little help from the 'old man') will provide a satisfying result (hopefully!). A gentle rub down with sandpaper smoothed any rough edges.

As with getting the tyres glued on right, the final effect the bodyshell has on the kit is pretty important. Get it wrong and you can waste the whole building process. With a little help from our 'esteemed' editor, the shell

was masked in the appropriate places and spraying was completed. For any beginner the masking and spraying process is always a daunting process, so if help is around - take it. I finished off the shell with Dahms Window Tint from Lesro, it just looks so cool.

After leaving to dry overnight, the final effect was pretty good, maybe I did choose the right colour scheme after all? It fitted nicely onto the chassis, and building wise that was that. In normal static mode that would be it, but now onto the best bit, lets see how it goes.

### Running the BMW Z3

The local college car park was the venue for its first outing, and once again PeterE was dragged in to help out. After running through a few tankfuls of two-stroke fuel and getting the pull-start loosened up, it was time to let her rip! Boy does it go! For a first timer I was amazed at the speed of the Z3, and it took me a while to get used to the handling and became comfortable with it. The throttle/brake had to be aligned a tad, but this was quickly rectified. Soon enough I had it diving in out of the corners and burning up the long straights on the car park. I was enjoying myself so much I had to fight off the intentions of PeterE and Steve, who were waiting patiently to have a go!



The detail on this car is superb, look at those shocks

### Quick Spec

MRC BMW Z3 1/10 scale IC powered car, lexan bodyshell with decals  
2.5 cc pull start engine. Adjustable carburettor  
Dust proof receiver box  
5-Star chrome wheels

### Tester Kits

HITEC 'Ranger' 2-channel radio, including HS-300 Standard Servos and HP-2RNB Receiver  
Ripmax Glowstart  
Borrowed Fuel

### Likes

Ease of build  
Bodyshell (mean and lean!)  
Being a 'gasser'!

### Dislikes

Instructions can be confusing at times  
No foam inserts

### Conclusion

For the beginner to R/C cars they wouldn't go far wrong in checking out MRC's BMW Z3. Ease of build gently introduces the novice into building techniques, especially in IC cars, and then running it cements (hopefully) their enthusiasm into R/C model cars. For me I enjoyed the whole experience and forgive me for finishing abruptly, I'm off to have another go! **RRCi**

Curvy Z3 shell looks terrific