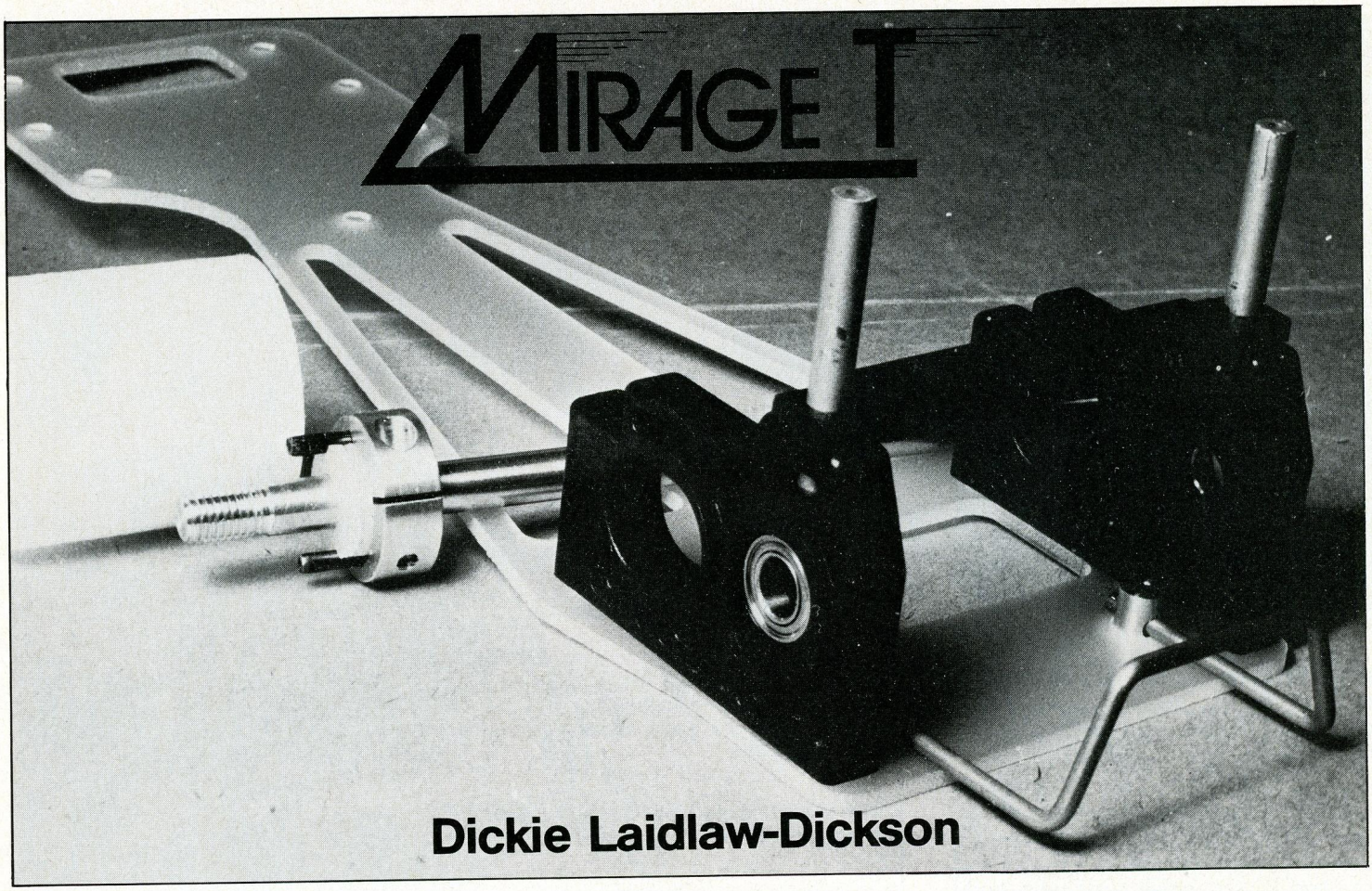


Dickie Laidlaw-Dickson

This is a different approach to 1/12th scale electric car racing from Sweden. *Mirage* has been enjoying a Scandinavian reputation for some time and with the expanding European organisation has already had one or two successful forays in other lands. Indeed, it has been successful enough to earn its own title as 'Swedish type' model!

Manufacturer is AB Slotcar of Stockholm, and its very name implies quite rightly that it has been established long enough in the model car field to go back to the heyday of slotcar racing. So when Crister Magnusson agreed to let me have a kit to review I was highly delighted. By now I expect he will have completed arrangements for a UK distributor.

Instructions

Instructions are well laid out in good English with adequate sketches as necessary plus a large exploded drawing and parts list to make all clear: so that differences present no special problem. Do please read them through before making a start.

Kits are offered in various stages of completeness from a rolling chassis upwards. Mine came with speed controller, differential and Sorbello body but less nicads which is a usual set-up for the more advanced kits.

Wheels and Tyres

This is a job I usually do first of all to get the stick bit out of the way, but with Mirage it comes last of all and it is suggested that tyres are fitted when the wheels have been mounted on the car. This it is claimed makes the aligning of the tyres a simpler task. Anyway here is the instruction: 'After sanding wheels, put on a coat of contact cement; ditto to inside of tyres. Allow to dry for 5 minutes, then wet with thinners and slide onto the hub. This allows 5-10 seconds for adjustment, spin wheels to check'. If you have not tried this way yet, have a go. (It is sometimes included in American instructions as a regular method, though they, being lavish, usually dip the whole tyre in thinners!)

Chassis and Rear End

Two csk studs go through the GRP chassis, which is cut out the lightening holes, to take the rear bumper wire, which is secured with allen screws. The axle blocks comprise also the supports for the wing wires and again are secured with csk aluminium screws, Phillips type, and are joined by a cross bar. Inserts for the ballbearings in which the axle runs are oval in shape. They can be put in either way up to produce a ground hugging chassis 2.5mm lower than when reversed. Front end can of course be treated in a similar manner.

Rear Axle & Differential

Yes, you get a diff included in the kit. This is in its component parts but very easily assembled. Locating wheel hubs are held in place with allen screws. These hubs required pins to be pressed in to lock rear wheels (do not bash in with hammer, press in with a small vice). On the diff side the nylon washers go on untouched since there are no locating pins, but on left side they must be cut away slightly to let the pins through. Nyloc nuts secure the wheels on each side. On diff side a thrust bearing and spring srve to adjust the diff. tension against tightening of the nut. Final adjustment on the track of course.

Front End

Kingpin and stub axle fit into nylon suspension arm. Nylon clip can be fitted either at the top or bottom of the steering block, reversing the kingpin at the same time to offer the 2.5mm adjustment to match the rear axle ball bearing insert. Steering linkage is adjusted with nylon collars, one also taking up the servo connection.

Servo is mounted forward of this linkage. I intended to use a MacGregor MR12 servo which is a trifle large for the available space—particularly as the Sorbello body provided comes very low at the front. This meant that I had to cut

away a piece of one suspension arm to allow the servo fixing lugs to go down flat on the GRP chassis and also to cut out a recess on the front bumper plate to secure a snug flat fit. If you are using any of the very mini servos it will not be necessary, and you will have a slightly lighter car as well. Servo attachment with doublesided servo tape.

Bumper

Neat attachments for securing the small front bumper follow the streamlined flush pattern of the rear bumper. These also extend upwards and form the body fixing posts. They are drilled for a whole variety of body sizes. It would be a shame to cut them down for the flatter Sorbello body but you could if you wished.

Motor

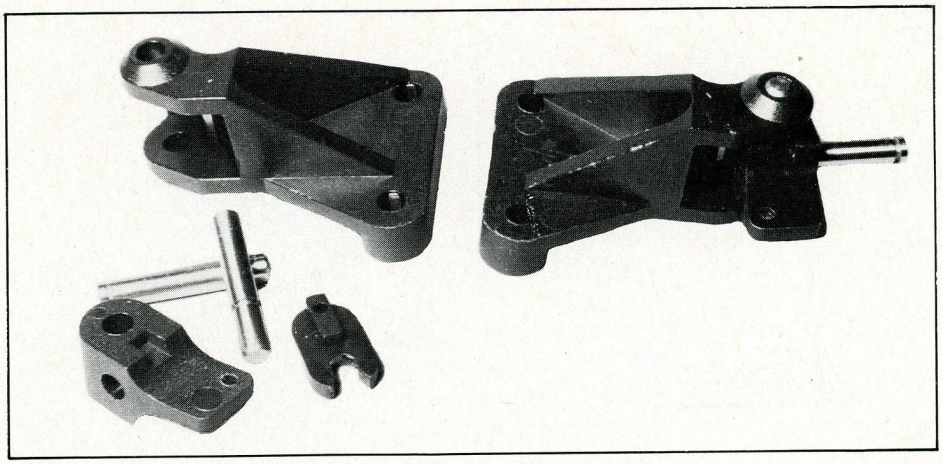
Motor was not supplied with my kit. I am not sure whether this was something which had gone astray at some Customs level (One or two minor bits were also absent) or whether it was intended that way. Anyway to keep the Swedish motive present I fitted a motor from a Swedish source (they are very nearly all of Japanese ancestry I believe—no one this side can compare on price!) and this has connections that suit my charger. If you have a regular charging method it pays to standardise it. My favourite method (not alas always practical on a variety of kit reviews) is to have sockets on rear cross piece to take plugs on the charging leads, a system which I first saw on one of Richard Gammon's cars and have followed ever since.

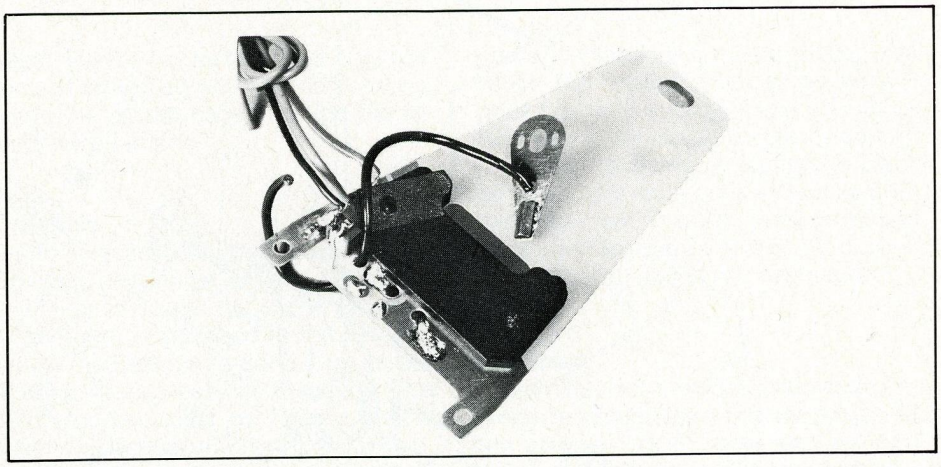
Radio Tray

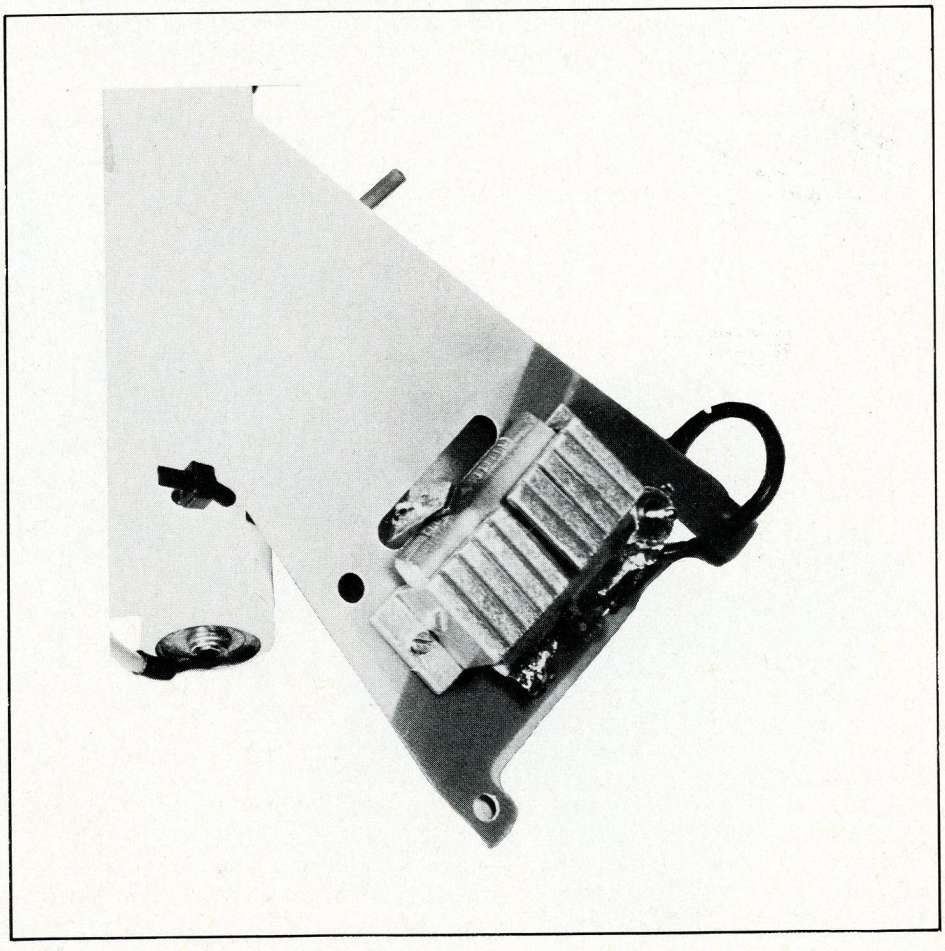
This really does break new ground. First of all the radio tray a cooper mini printed circuit on it to which components are soldered. Small voltage dropping diodes are provided to enable a separate r.c. battery to be dispensed with, and there is a neat on/off switch. A shaped nylon mount is included for the speed control servo which goes under the tray on its side and the wiper arm is arranged to wipe through a slot in the tray across the edge of the flat resistor. All of which takes a bit of thinking out. The resistor itself is attached via two impressive looking heat sink brackets. No possible excuse here for any overheating of the speed controller. There is quite a bit of soldering here, so that the less skilled solderer should try a few practice connections first. A light iron is all that is needed plus the usual resin cored solder—Multicore or similar. Hot iron is the secret of good soldering!

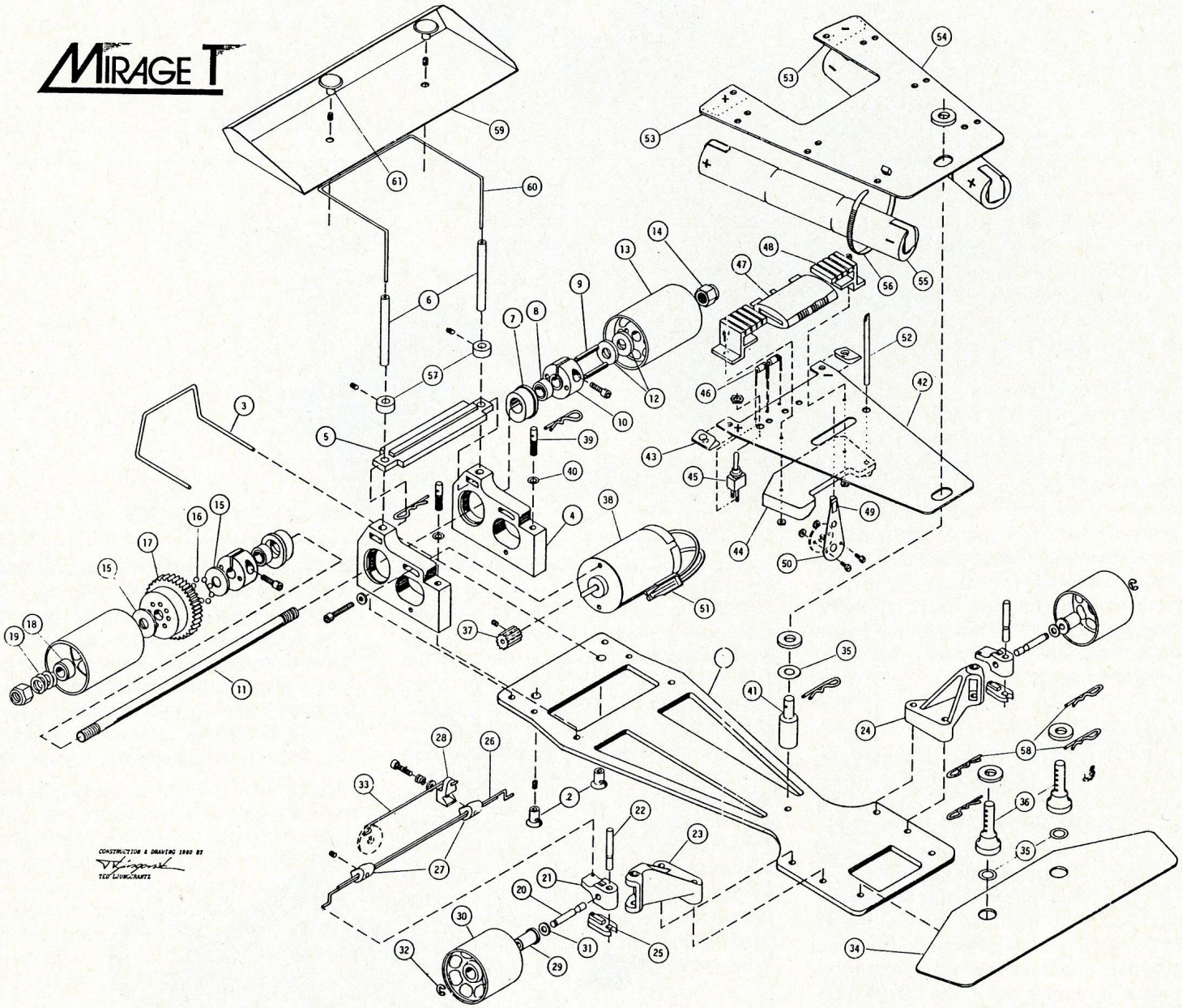
Battery Tray

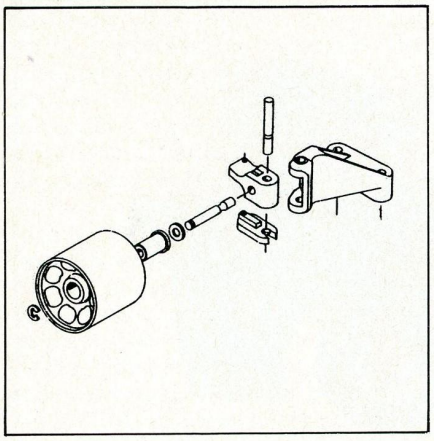
Then there is the battery tray! Three ni-

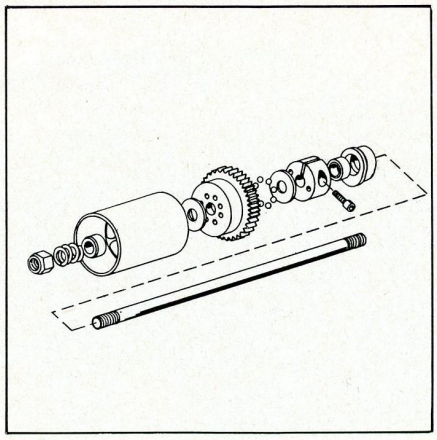


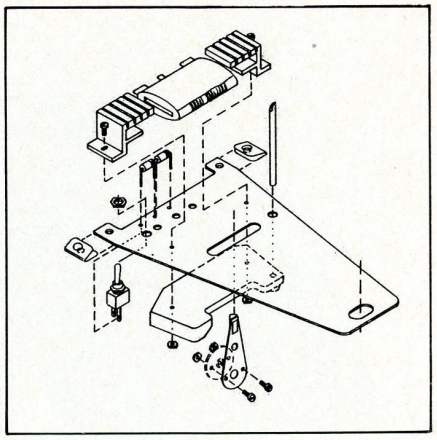





MIRAGE T
CONSTRUCTION & DRAWING 1980 BY
TED LJUNGKRANTZ







cads in line are fixed each side with a little servo tape and cable ties. The two lines are joined across the fron end with a short length of wire. Once again flat battery connections are supplied which must be glued to the underside of the battery tray to connect the nicads. Contact glue is suggested for this purpose but I found it not very satisfactory and used epoxy glue instead. real sticky fans will doubtless use instant glue to be really sure of a fix! Battery tray goes under the radio tray, both slipping over posts attched to rear axle blocks and at the front on a common post. Between the two blocks of nicads the power servo rests attached to the tray and in the space remaining rests the Rx. To save space and weight the Rx may be taken out of its box and just protected with a piece from one of the the plastic bags in which the kit parts were packed.

The Body

The polycarbonate body supplied is a Sorbello, apparently of local (Swedish) moulding and suits the car. A separate wing mount is provided in the flat with simple instructions to bend it up as per drawing. Not as easy as it sounds. The polycarbonate must be heated until it softens—it is most unwilling to bend cold. An electric bar fire is the best source of heat (not a blow lamp please!) Don't try to take short cuts here. Best way to do the job is to make up a mould (male) over which the heated poly can be bent. It goes soft very suddenly and should be bent round the mould before it cools.

The box pictures all features a black Mirage. this is really not the thing for photos (black cat in cellar syndrome) so I have given my body a coat or two of silver (frozen North) and some decoration.

Comment

Definitely not a kit for the absolute beginner to tackle! But very much the job for the up-and-coming racer who wants a somewhat different car at not too high a price which if carefully built will have a good chance against the best.