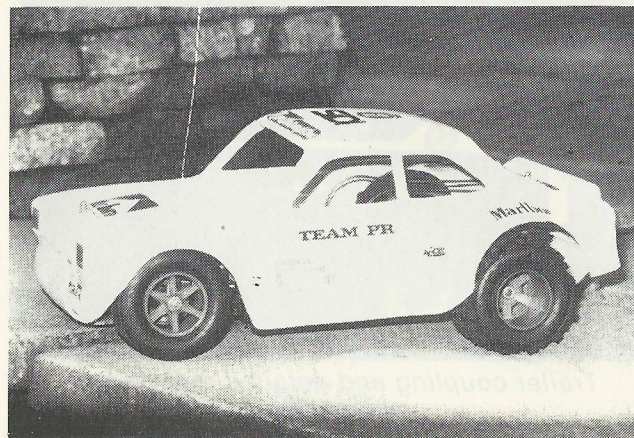


the taming of the Mustang

John Varley on 1/8th



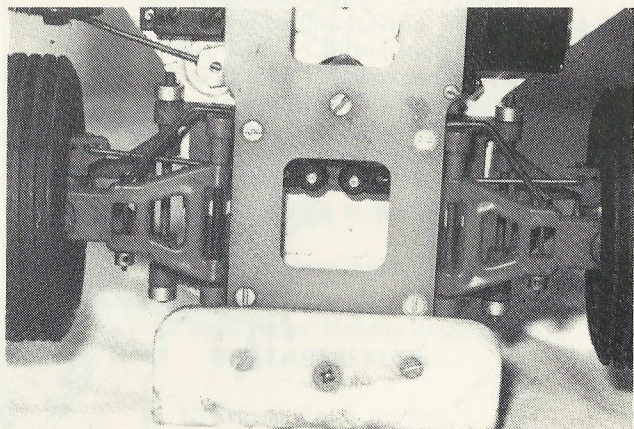
use of the already tried and tested parts from the PB alpha. The front and rear suspension wishbones, main epoxy chassis, alloy power pod, servo saver, fuel tank and mounting blocks.

As I did not construct the kit I will not elaborate on the screw by screw details, but will try to offer constructive thoughts on each section of the car.

The chassis is produced in epoxy glass and comes complete with all cut outs and holes ready machined. The motor power pod comes in black anodised aircraft alloy and is also ready machined. The two are epoxied together before any further assembly work is undertaken on the chassis.

The front suspension is tackled next, with it built around two transverse positional mounting blocks. The lower wishbone pivot, when assembled through the wishbone, is held in place between these two mountings.

Before assembling these blocks on to the chassis, the torsion bars are pressed into slots pre-moulded in the blocks. The torsion bars are bent as per building instructions, one end being held in place with a simple bent wire clamp on the top of the lower wishbone, whilst the other incorporates the adjustment details. The top wishbones are held and pivoted through two separate mouldings, each finally held in place when the radio plate is fixed in position.



Front underside showing suspension and torsion bar detail.

IF YOU are one of the many people wondering just what the hell you are doing each week playing around with your 'big boys toys.' Perhaps like myself, after four years, competing against (and being beaten) by the same old faces in 1/12th electric, then do not despair.

OK, so the fun has gone out of it (do I hear massive murmurings of agreement from all quarters of the country). Trying to find the motor with the best torque out of the bunch; endeavouring to make your silicone last longer than your batteries in eight minute finals; trying everything from rat poison to underarm deodorant on your tyres for carpet racing in order to make your model perform like slot car; etc, etc.

Again, do not despair. Before you sign on for the Foreign Legion, join a monastery (or even a convent!), read on, because I have found the answer *viz* off road competition.

So where have I been for the last twelve months? Head in the sand, that's where. Just think all those acres of space, just waiting to be churned up by 1/8th scale knobby tyres.

Allow me to digress here and go back a month to when I visited 'young' Cecil Schumacher purportedly on a strictly business visit – hopefully he didn't see the hidden camera in my Parker pen!

It was interesting to note that his premises were taking on a different appearance because dotted about the place were bits and pieces of BoLink 1/10th off road kits.

Cecil was quick to suggest we retire to the garden for a chance to assess the finished car. After an hour of lawn cutting and border trimming, I had well and truly got the bug because off road has retained what the other aspects of the sport has lost and that is FUN!

Let me now continue with the real reason for this article (reminiscing about lost causes can come in a later issue) because, bliss upon bliss, what did I find in the cellars of the RRC offices but a generously offered kit, from Keith Plested, the PB Mustang.

Now unfortunately, Colin Spinner had his hands on it first and did a neat assembly job, but he couldn't come to terms with the boilers and burners and so he passed it over to myself to do the necessary review.

Let me conclude the preamble here with the pre-flight build up and now take a none too technical, but albeit serious, look at the main attributes the kit has to offer.

The first thing that is apparent is the large scale

The bushed servo saver can now be fitted, allowing assembly of the track rods, and finally the stub axles are attached between the wishbones and held in place with circlips.

The rear suspension adopts the same principles as the front end and offers no problems to the builder who has already overcome any problems he (or she) may have incurred.

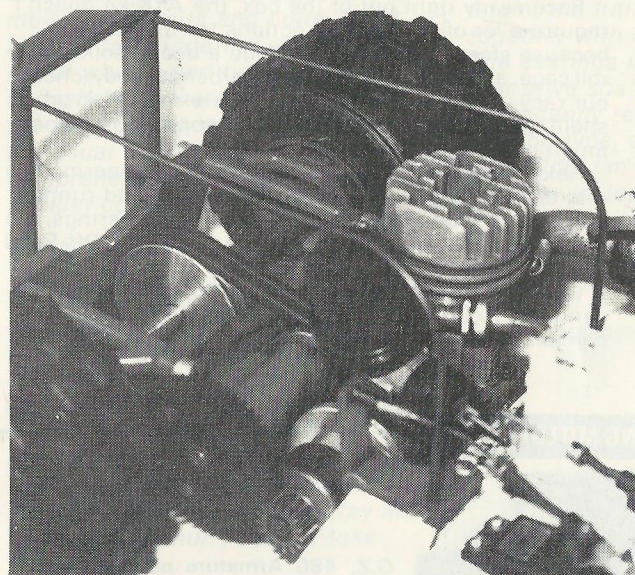
During the assembly of the rear suspension the rubber drive belts are placed in position, ready for fitting to the twin alloy pulleys attached to the rear axle.

Once the final drive pulley has been correctly positioned on the axle the rear pivoting blocks are placed over each end and then attached to the top and bottom wishbones. These blocks have a sealed ballrace pressed into them. Onto the axle and inside the bearing there is an aluminium adaptor for locating and driving the rear wheels. This adaptor incorporates in its machining, a ball joint principle, thus allowing movement of each end of the solid axle to give the independent effect at the rear.

Final drive to the rear is effected through a layshaft with one end of the shaft taking the twin drive pulleys for the rubber belts taking the drive to the rear axle. The other end takes a 48 tooth drive gear from the clutch.

Little is now left to do other than install the engine and fit the radio tray with its various sundries.

In this instance it was decided to install a Picco rear exhaust motor with slide carburettor and no problems were encountered during the fitting.



Rear detail with Picco motor installed.

The radio tray comes in a one piece ABS moulding and is screwed at its rear to a moulded bulkhead, just in front of the motor, and at its forward position to the front suspension mounting blocks. Provisions are made in the tray to fit the fuel tank, throttle servo, radio receiver and receiver battery – simple.

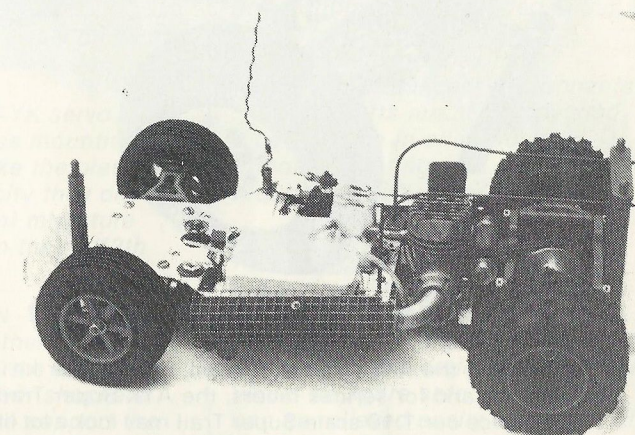
A suitable exhaust manifold was found and married to the PB forward mounted muffler. This left with body posts, twin rear roll cage (which fully protects the engine and carb) and both bumpers.

Those bumpers have to be finally formed to the correct shape giving adequate protection to the front and rear of the car.

And so to the first run with an ABS Ford Escort body fitted, we started up the faithful Picco. A few minutes of minor adjustment to the carb and brake and it was ready to run.

A piece of land adjoining the local hospital was chosen, which incorporated some very good undulating areas of close cut and loose gravel paths.

The rear Enduro knobby tyres and Enduro ribbed front tyres giving adequate grip on the dry grass. Care had to be on the loose surface because on occasions too much power was put down to contend with.



Body off but ready to race.

After several tentative runs it was decided to let caution to the wind and give the car everything and that is when the real fun began! I had set the suspension at maximum ride height and believe me, it needed it all, as the car pitched and bucked over the roughest of the ground. Very much like the real rallycross and it was discovered that it was easier to drive with plenty of power to rear and controlled slides, rather than using precise judgement.

The car has a recommended retail price of £99.50 and appears good value for money. There are those who will argue that it needs a diff, improved suspension and better braking, but then all those have to be paid for. If you want this then buy an Alpha and put off road tyres on it. The Mustang gives value for money and value for its level of performance and ability to be raced competitively in company with more expensive machinery.

Finally, my advice is, therefore, if you have lost that feel for driving model cars, then off road can help to bring it back, helped with lashings of Mustang driving