

...The quest for more Rpm's from your associated RC10...

# R P M ULTRA

Just for a moment, imagine that you're listening to a conversation which will not only alter history, but will create it, leaving many of the industry's major corporate think tanks scratching and shaking their heads in collective amazement and disbelief;

"So, We've finally done it"  
"Yep, we've taken only the finest grades of raw materials, plastics and aluminiums and we've transformed them into a new weapon!"  
"Not just any weapon, but THE weapon, The ULTIMATE weapon by which all who stand

against us shall fall!"  
(laughs sadistically) "And its taken us two years of research and development, even with all of our technical knowledge and expertise..."  
"But wait...we've forgotten something..."  
"WHAT?"  
"Its NAME... it's got to have a NAME"



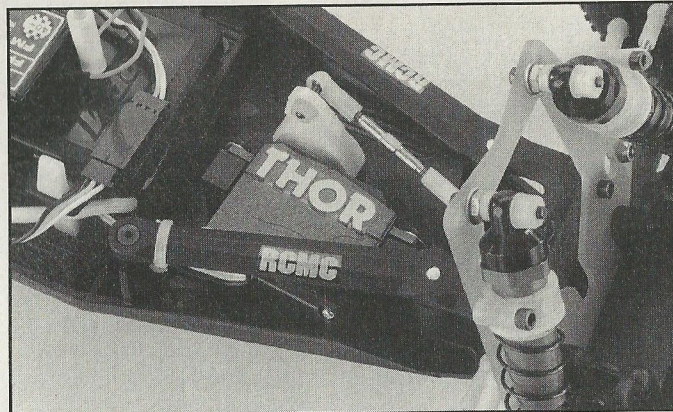


"Something short"  
 "Something catchy"  
 "Something that will be imprinted  
 in the minds of all who it will affect!"  
 "Something that denotes what it  
 is"

"Err... Something like R-C..."  
 "TEN... That's it... R-C-TEN"  
 "Yeah, it's short..."  
 "It's catchy..."  
 "And it's sure as hell going leave  
 its mark!!"

Well, okay maybe it is a little far  
 fetched, maybe I have been  
 watching too many James Bond  
 Movies but nobody can deny that  
 the Associated RC10 is the most  
 successful two wheel drive Off  
 Road buggy ever designed.

At a time in its own lifespan  
 when most other model cars would  
 be either drawing their pensions or



long since forgotten, the RC10 still  
 looks and performs as if it were  
 designed yesterday... at the  
 forefront of competition. Much of its  
 longevity can be attributed to the  
 R+D team at Associated who have  
 ensured, by careful design and  
 planning, that the car has always

been competitive even  
 when other  
 manufacturers have  
 tried to emulate it.  
 True, the  
 competition has  
 become very  
 close, several  
 model  
 manufacturers  
 have eaten a little  
 into Associated  
 vast market place  
 but still, the RC10  
 refuses to lay down and  
 die.

Other Model manufacturers have  
 looked at the RC10's success and,  
 instead of trying to compete against  
 it, they have become 'allies' to the  
 cause because, as the old saying  
 goes;  
 "If you can't beat them...Join  
 them!"

One of these such manufacturers  
 is another American company called  
 RPM whose products are effectively  
 distributed in this country by Thor  
 Racing Products.

For several years now, RPM have  
 existed by producing replacement  
 components for the RC10 which are  
 of excellent quality. Most of their  
 components seem to be moulded  
 from a very similar Nylon based  
 plastic to the standard RC10 parts.  
 The main differences seem to be  
 that invariably, they are fractionally  
 lighter than the standard parts and  
 they also come with a lifetime

guarantee – as long as the  
 mouldings haven't been altered or  
 chopped about with by a scalpel or  
 other sharp instruments.

One of the latest and certainly  
 the most interesting releases from  
 RPM is their 'Ultra Chassis Kit'  
 which is the subject under review  
 here.

Alby Smith, a Thor Racing  
 sponsored driver kindly sent his own  
 RC10 to the RCMC offices for this  
 review so it is with thanks to Alby,  
 and also to Arris Teller of Thor  
 Racing, that this review is possible  
 right now.

A quick telephone call to Arris  
 confirmed the retail price of the  
 conversion to be approximately  
 seventy pounds which, if that  
 seems a little high, please hold  
 tight until you've seen what comes  
 with the kit.

The chassis kit is a lot more than  
 just a chassis. It includes new front  
 and rear suspension arms, a pair of  
 very smooth ballraced steering  
 levers and many more ancillary  
 parts. The chassis itself is a  
 moulded tub which has the  
 provision of the cell arrangement  
 already moulded into it.

All the nylon parts come moulded  
 in white but the parts are dyeable

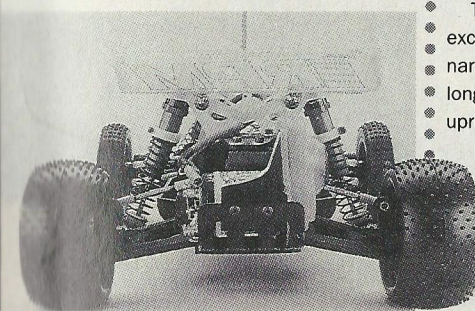
*Below; RPM Ultra has a completely  
 different appearance to the well known  
 Associated RC10. Insert; Associated  
 Stealth gearbox installed.*

using a suitable dye such as 'Hot  
 Dye'. Be careful if you do decide to  
 dye the parts as it is a messy  
 performance and one that can leave  
 you in some trouble if you ruin your  
 mum's/wife's saucepans.

Location for the R/C equipment  
 is provided by the 'shaker plate'  
 which also doubles as the nicad  
 retainer. This plate is also moulded  
 from nylon and can be easily  
 removed via the quick release  
 clamps provided – just do remember  
 to unplug the steering servo from  
 the receiver.

The plastic chassis is in fact very  
 rigid. This rigidity is enhanced by the  
 two front braces which also provide  
 the top location for the steering  
 bellcranks.

For many of you, the front and  
*Rear of the car is protected by alloy  
 bumper provided in the kit.*



rear suspension setup may look  
 very familiar. In fact, it is the same  
 setup that is used, to great effect,  
 in the RPM 'Worlds' front and rear  
 upgrade kits which have been  
 available from Thor racing for over a  
 year. These were primarily  
 developed for the Detroit World  
 Championships in 1991 for the  
 RC10 drivers who were not  
 fortunate enough to have the  
 extremely secret Stealth car.

Basically, the suspension arms  
 have been increased in length which  
 makes the car handle better on very  
 rough tracks (like Detroit). The front  
 shock mount is drilled to take  
 longer front shocks (1.02" bodies)  
 which also improve matters over  
 rough terrain. This does mean  
 however that you may need to  
 purchase some more shock  
 absorbers or the shock mount can  
 be re-drilled to take the standard  
 length front shocks.

One thing that is immediately  
 noticeable about this conversion is  
 the extreme amount of wishbone  
 travel which is available. This does  
 mean that, unless some spacers  
 are used underneath the pistons,  
 the car may sit unacceptably too  
 high off of the ground even when it  
 is fully laden. Up until now, if you've

wanted to  
 use the  
 longer  
 front  
 shocks  
 on your  
 existing  
 car,  
 you've  
 had to  
 cut the  
 rear springs down in length in  
 order to get the correct size. This  
 can now be eliminated because  
 RPM have released some front  
 springs which are the correct length  
 for the recommended front shocks.

Moving onto the rear of the car,  
 the motor is protected by an  
 aluminium motor guard which has  
 been manufactured to look like the  
 original, integral guard found on the  
 aluminium chassis.

The chassis is drilled to take the  
 excellent Stealth gearbox and has a  
 narrow rear section to allow for the  
 longer rear wishbones. The rear  
 uprights are also manufactured by  
 RPM and are included in the kit.

They do look quite different  
 from the original kit items but,  
 at first glances, the  
 suspension geometry doesn't  
 seem to have been affected.

The rear bulkhead is  
 however quite different. The  
 original associated bulkhead has a  
 series of holes in it which provide  
 different locations for the upper  
 adjustable track rod. This will affect  
 the amount of camber change and  
 therefore grip change which occurs  
 during cornering. On the new RPM  
 bulkhead, only two holes are  
 provided but they do appear to be in  
 the positions most favored by RC10  
 drivers everywhere.

### Results And Conclusions

Talking to drivers who have used  
 the RPM front and rear suspension  
 kits, all of them have indicated that  
 they like the way that the car  
 handles. The standard RC10 is an  
 excellent handling car straight from  
 the box but all of the drivers spoken  
 to said that the 'RPM car' had more  
 steering, was easier to control on  
 bumpier tracks, and was easier to  
 setup and that there is no reason to  
 suspect that the Ultra Chassis Kit  
 won't behave in the same manner.

The chassis kit represents, in my  
 opinion, extremely good value for  
 money especially for those who own  
 RC10's which are getting older and  
 maybe past their primes. In an age  
 where we are used to just buying  
 any add-on bit we require rather than  
 scratch building our cars, the cars



all tend to be very  
 similar and the RPM  
 Ultra Chassis kit offers  
 a 'throw back' to the  
 days when all the cars  
 were unique and not  
 just a 'standard' model  
 car.

Just a final note to all  
 you sceptics still out  
 there who are reading  
 this but saying 'Well,  
 Craig Drescher's car  
 hasn't got this and he's  
 National Champion!', just  
 remember that whilst Craig's car is  
 standard, he himself is far from  
 being Mr Average and, I for one,  
 would use this conversion if I felt  
 that it would make an Associated  
 easier for me to drive – not Craig  
 Drescher!!

*Overall RPM Ultra has increased  
 ground clearance over RC10. Above;  
 Speedo and receiver mounted on  
 battery tray.*

### Verdict

**If your RC10 looks tired or you're just simply bored with the standard car, give the RPM conversion more than just a passing glance because it does represent good value for money and it may well be right up your street!!**

