

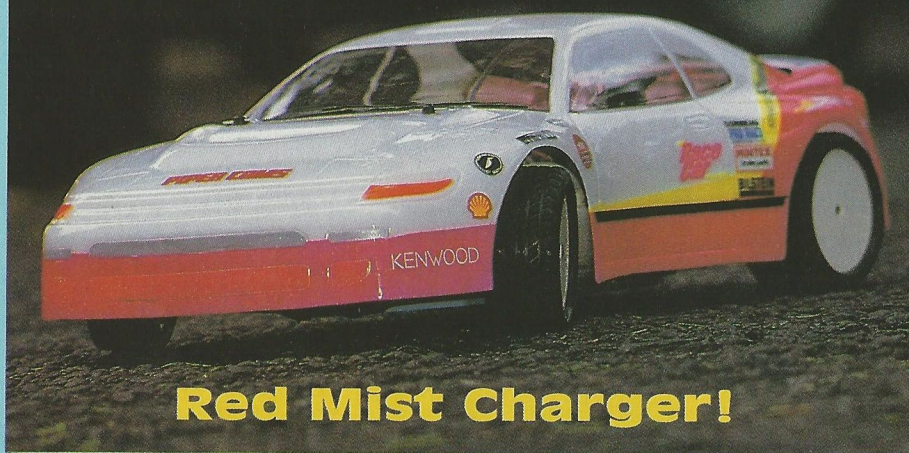


As it comes straight out of the box.

The range of cars now produced by this prolific company now encompasses virtually all classes currently in vogue. The advent of the Nitro Ten heralded a type of car that was almost universal in its capabilities. It could be built as a Truck, in which form it was totally new in concept and as such became very popular, as an off road buggy, which was a good alternative to the electric version, and as a circuit racer, which was very fast indeed, but lacked that certain something when it came to out and out competition use. The new Nitro 4x4 in the form received for review, is essentially meant for tarmac use and with the Toyota Celica bodyshell decorated as a rally/rallycross car, looks very realistic indeed.

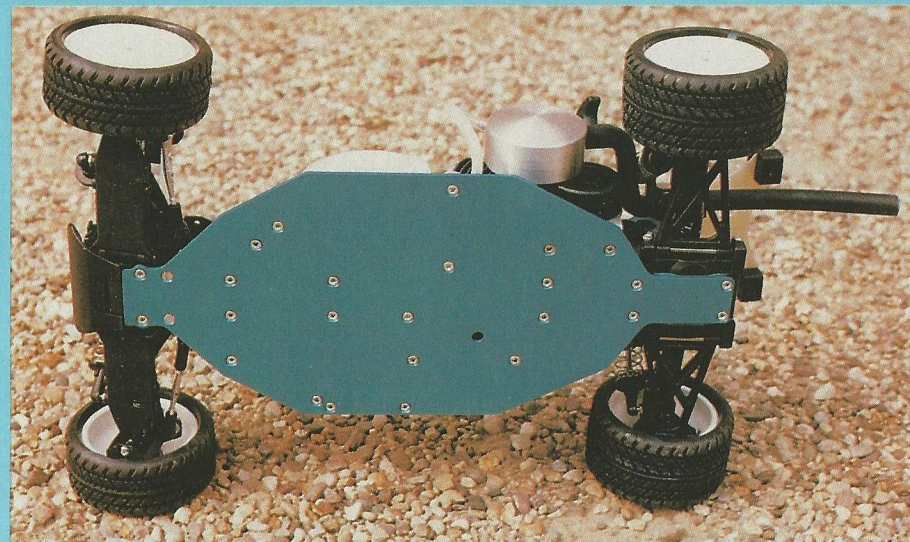
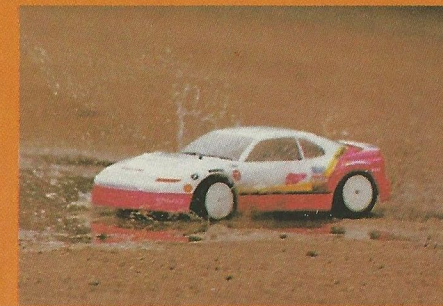
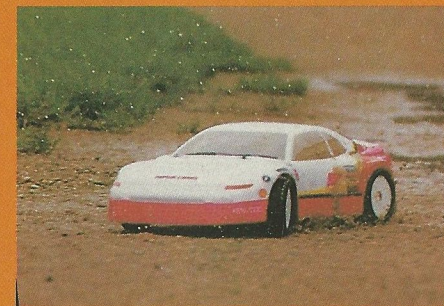
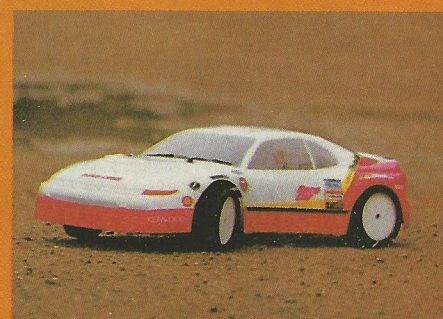
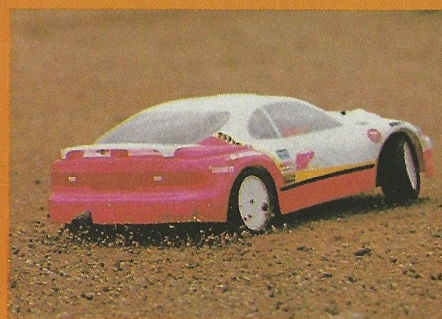
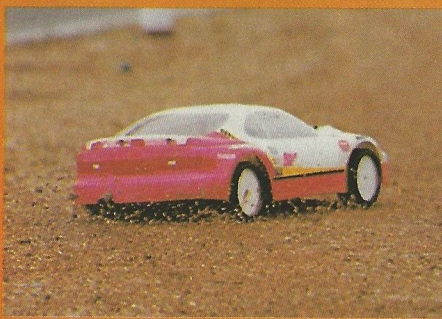
The Mechanics (or, what's this? nothing to build?!)

If staying in and building cars is your thing, with this car disappointment is yours! It comes fully built! The running gear is as used in the current flagship of the Schumacher range of electric off road cars, the Bosscat. The chassis however, is made of 3mm aluminium, anodised light blue,

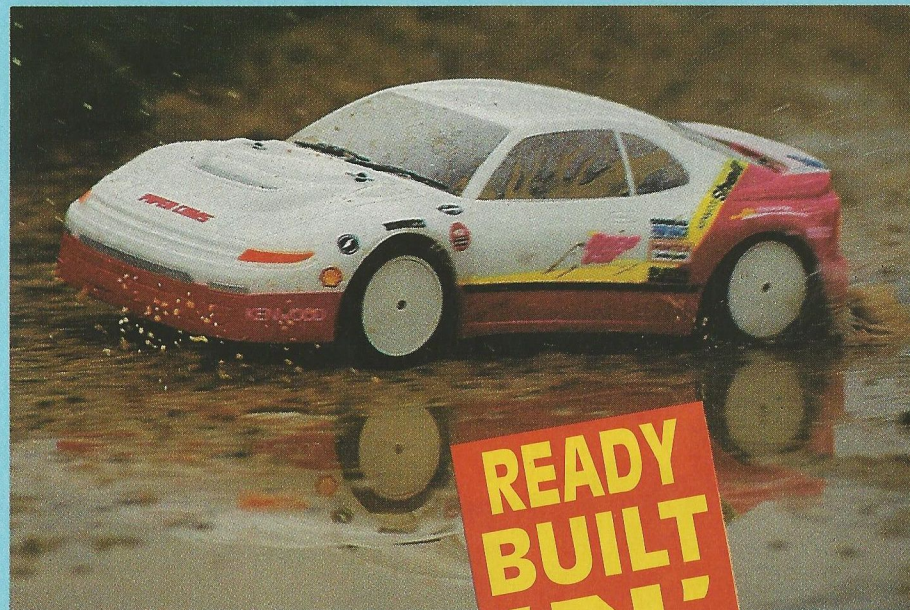


Red Mist Charger!

SCHUMACHER NITRO 4x4



The sturdy aluminium chassis.



READY BUILT 'N' RARING TO GO!

and is of a different design to the Bosscat, in that it now doesn't have to accept nicads but rather has to provide the mounting for a very pokey motor! The crash-back system is retained at the front to alleviate any damage to the suspension. This is a tried and tested feature which has also been copied (this makes a change??!) by some of the Japanese

manufacturers, so it must be good! To try and write about how part A fitted in part B will prove rather difficult in this instance, as the Nitro comes ready built, with the radio gear installed and set up! The only chores left to do were to paint the bodyshell, install the dry cells in their respective holders, and to charge the on-board glow plug supply, a 1700 mah Sanyo SCE cell. The latter is achieved by using a 12v car battery charger and a resistor already mounted to the car to lower the current. The presentation of the car is superb, down to the inclusion of a spare glow plug and plug spanner.

Having had the shell painted (many thanks to George Land of Helger Racing for the decals, and to Martin Parsons for painting the shell) I presented the car, complete with 1/2 a gallon of 10% nitro, synthetic oil fuel (Helimix) and a priming bottle (would have been nice if one had been included) to a friend of mine, local autotest and rally driver, Brian Watkins, who has expressed an interest in models for some time. He had seen the 1/10 I.C. Touring car races at Ashby this summer, and couldn't wait to try it.

Brian was a total novice prior to receiving the Nitro 4x4, and was therefore ideally suited to giving an opinion on a model that will ultimately, I think, end up in similar hands. Over to Brian....

Shock Announcement: Novice gets Toyota Works drive

In the wake of Nigel Mansell's departure from Formula 1 to the American Indy/Car series, I had been awaiting a 'call' from Frank (Williams) to partner Alain. However the 'call' I did get, but from Jonty, not Frank. Life's like that!



Although not on a Schumacher chassis, Richard Deives' fine paintwork on this example of the shell, shows how it looks in works rally colours.

He was aware of my interest in model racing cars, and of totally novice status, also my previous experience in road and stage rallying and autotests. My main reservations of electric model racing was the lack of duration — recharge/new batteries every 5 minutes, and the dislike of the 'sticks', having shown an interest in trying a 'wheel'. Jonty's offer, like most, combined good news and bad news. The good — to drive a



Brian working hard at keeping the spectators happy!

works' 4WD Toyota Celica — he had my attention! I.C. not electric — Utopia! Bad news — sticks!!! Life's like that!

The car duly arrived with Jonty complete with radio, fuel, instructions. My first impressions were that it was larger than I had expected and with the bodyshell in place looked very realistic. The paint job was impressive and very colourful, ensuring it would stand out in a crowd. Also the build quality seemed such that the Toyota was not going to fall apart. This proved to be the case later during 'testing'.

I studied the instructions to get a 'feel' for the car. These were presented partly in diagrammatic format, which although fine in theory, to a novice left many questions unanswered in practice. Jonty was on hand to assist. He had already charged the 'glow' battery through a car battery charger. I attempted to fit the receiver batteries with encouraging remarks — 'don't be afraid of it — it won't break'. He was right! This exercise was a bit fiddly with large hands! I noticed the front wheels had slight 'toe-out', and after discussion adjusted them accordingly — much easier than the real thing!

All other adjustments seemed o.k. so it was onto the patio for start up. I was about to find out 'what your right arm's for,' and it wasn't drinking a pint. Repeated attempts to start proved fruitless — must be my technique, although the wife has never complained before! Eventually, using processes of elimination, not used since the old rallying days, and a circuit tester, the problem appeared to be that the wire to the glow-plug was connected to the wrong side of the resistor — fitted for charging purposes. Once repositioned it started — second pull. My interest, and feeling in my right arm returned. We moved to the front of the house for an expert demonstration — not from me! The Toyota was amazing — the sound, smell, grip seemed incredible, it even dipped under braking. It looked so real. Soon, over an hour had elapsed in what seemed no

time, with just a few minor adjustments. The neighbours were impressed too, not because of any noise, but the sheer speed of this small projectile up and down the road. It was now my turn. In view of the Toyota's incredible performance, I decided to begin my initiation on my works' car park on Sunday afternoon.

The weekend could not arrive fast enough — and it was dry — unusual for September!!! The car started virtually first time. I remembered Jonty telling me to turn my back and look over my shoulder to drive the car on its return journey. Easier said than done! Having gone round in ever increasing and decreasing circles, within minutes I felt confident enough to try an outwards and return route. Outward run o.k. Return run — 'dogs' hind leg — or what! Lucky it stops when you take your fingers off the 'sticks'. Nowhere in the instruction book does it say it's going to be easy first time! After a short while, and a 'cricked-neck', I felt more confident. Some conveniently placed bollards seemed an ideal next challenge.

It stopped! Panic was immediately replaced with commonsense. These things need fuel just

like the real ones. Sod's law decreed it was going to stop on the outermost extremes of the Galaxy!! Nice afternoon for a walk!

Couldn't retrieve the Toyota fast enough — had caught the 'bug'. Traffic bollards in abundance brought out the autotest memories in me, and soon was manoeuvring quite quickly around them — well it seemed quick to me! Over confidence was soon kerbed by the unceremonious 'mating' of the Toyota with a traffic bollard — reminded me of Jasper Carrotts' leg and amorous dog sketch! What, no reverse? Can't have everything. Confidence returned and some faster laps undertaken. Did I see 'understeer' on that last lap? I did! Could get to like this. Just like the real thing. It stopped — again! Getting a bit of a habit this. Me thinks fit a bigger tank — always used to fit Capri tanks in Escorts to give bigger capacity — don't think it will fit in the Toyota! Who turned the lights out? Darkness stopped play. I think Carlos (Saintz) might have been worried on that last run!

Why? My initial brief encounter with the Toyota confirmed to me that if I can drive it — then anyone can. After initial set-up, suspension/steering adjustments were not exploited — thought I would learn to drive first! The tool kit only came with a glo-plug spanner, and may have benefited from a few other simple tools to adjust mixture, suspension, and prevent going into the garage.

Although Jonty's initial help was invaluable, with minimal mechanical knowledge and basic commonsense initial set ups and starting would have been achieved, albeit taking a little longer. Compared with the 'real thing' the enjoyment is there and you don't have to get up at some unsociable hour, drive miles, and get soaking wet. Also, if you roll it, you don't need a trailer to drag it back home on!

Still like to have a go with a 'wheel' though!

Thanks to Jonty and Radio Race Car and Schumacher for much fun.

Summary

If getting a car running quickly is your aim, the Nitro 4x4 fits the bill admirably. The handling on tarmac is good, but would be improved for track use with the use of foam tyres. With the option of converting it to either buggy or truck specification (parts available from Schumacher), the Nitro is a great buy and can only be described as 'versatile as an egg'! Ed.

