

# New Beginnings...

**It's been a long time since we've seen a whole new car designed just for the beginner, with the Bearhawk Tamiya have started with a clean sheet of paper...**

**W**hen it comes down to it Tamiya started what we now all know as Off Road racing. The first real raceable off

road cars were the Rough Rider and Sand Scorcher, not everyone will remember those names but to those of us that do, images of real suspension, oil filled dampers and rubber racing tyres come flooding back. They were the first to have all these features and due to the plastic radio crate the cars could be run almost anywhere – and that included over the local park and through puddles! That all seems along time ago now, but what is important is that those same feelings of excitement when running a car for the first time are being had by newcomers all the time and the new Tamiya Bear Hawk could well be where many racing careers will start.

## A Good Start

For model car racing to continue to be a success we need new racers to come into the sport and stay here. The

worst thing that can happen is for people to buy a kit, have problems with it and get disillusioned. That is why it is so important that newcomer's cars have just as much development and research put into the design as the top of the range full racing 4WD kits, the Tamiya Bear Hawk is the light at the end of the tunnel. Tamiya have designed a virtually all new car for the task of taking over from their present starter cars. Assembly starts with the differential, this consists of two bevel gears and three smaller diff gears (all metal),

these sit inside a large plastic gear and requires a good amount of grease to be applied which is supplied. This very large plastic gear that houses the diff and another one-piece plastic moulding that consists of two gears completes the gearbox internals. The gearbox runs on plastic bearings, these need plenty of grease put on them and when installed need to be firmly pushed into their relevant recesses. The bearing fits on the gearbox are excellent – the bearings snap into place, a real improvement on the

gearboxes in the past. The gearbox casings (which are new) bolt together and are finished off with the fitting of the motor, this first has the pinion attached in the correct place by means of a plastic moulding to give the correct spacing – this lines the pinion up with the main gear when the motor is bolted in. The motor is a 540 standard with solid bushings, these bushings should be given a little drop of oil to help lubrication. The pinion in the kit has 15 teeth, this gives a reasonably long running time and a fairly good top speed, a 17 tooth pinion is available and the gearbox has two holes to allow for the fitting of one of these, a 17 tooth pinion will give increased top speed but at the price of a little running time.

## Real Improvements

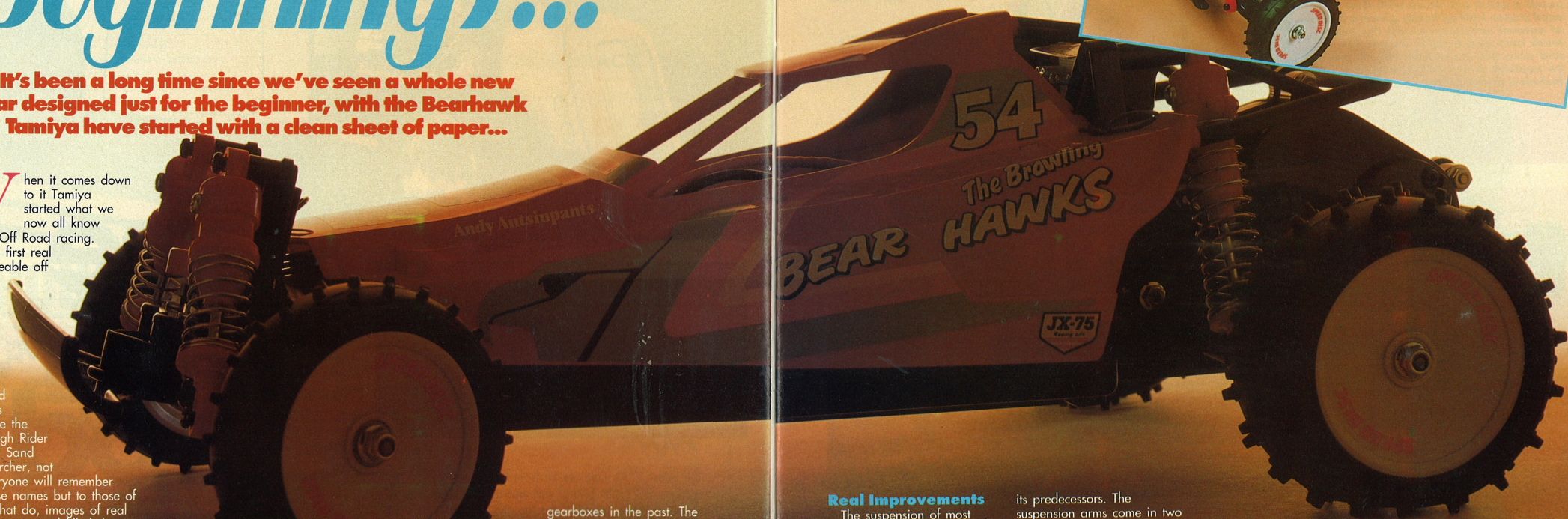
The suspension of most 2WD starter kits is often poor. The Bear Hawk has some real improvements over

its predecessors. The suspension arms come in two pieces, these need to be bolted together with specially

formed screws. The rear uprights are really chunky, they fit to the suspension

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arms with clever pins which have a threaded portion at one end next to a screw head, the pins slide through the upright and the arm and then neatly thread into the plastic. The fits are now greatly improved and there is very little play in the





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The Bearhawk comes with a hard white ABS plastic bodyshell that needs a quick rub down with fine sand paper before being given a coat of enamel or Tamiya paint. The rear crash bars also need to be painted and once this is done the decals can be applied. A driver figure is also included in the kit for realism.

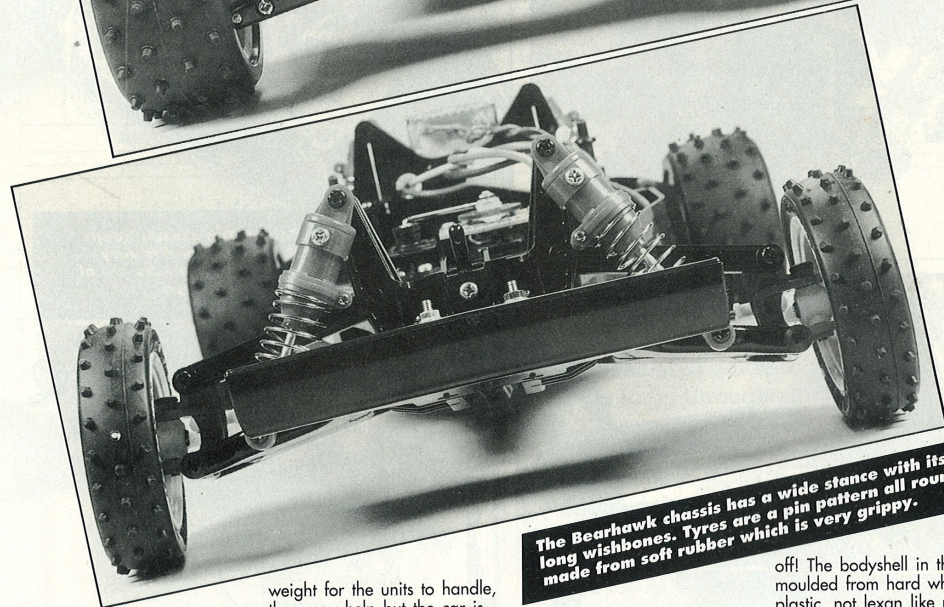
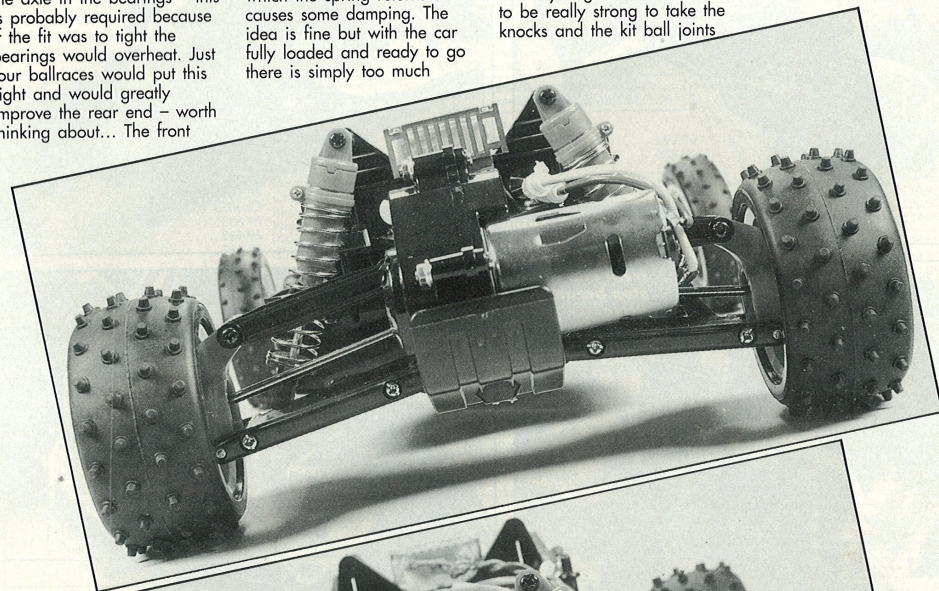


suspension arms. The plastic bearings that the wheel axle run on are also a very good fit in the uprights, the only play coming from the fit of the axle in the bearings - this is probably required because if the fit was too tight the bearings would overheat. Just four ballraces would put this right and would greatly improve the rear end - worth thinking about... The front

are called in the instructions carry no oil, they simply have a shaft that is lubricated inside a piece of rubber tube, this slows down the rate at which the spring returns and causes some damping. The idea is fine but with the car fully loaded and ready to go there is simply too much

disappointments with the contents of the kit, one is that the ball joints on the steering are still the small white plastic type - with the car to be used by beginners these need to be really strong to take the knocks and the kit ball joints

rear under pan which protects the gearbox. The wheels are light and strong and the tyres are pins all round - these really take some pulling onto the rim and shouldn't ever fall



The Bearhawk chassis has a wide stance with its long wishbones. Tyres are a pin pattern all round made from soft rubber which is very grippy.

suspension is much the same story, fits have been improved and the finished item feels tough and purposeful.

### Good Spec

There was a time when the suspension on such cars was just sprung, on the Bear Hawk there is a method of damping - be it a little crude. The dampers as they

weight for the units to handle, they may help but the car is still rather under damped. The chassis of the car is one of Tamiya's finest, although it appears simple when assembled it is remarkably tough and stiff. The radio control equipment is easy to fit and will accept most types giving servo adaptors for all the major makes, there is also room for a battery eliminator if your radio is not BEC. There are two

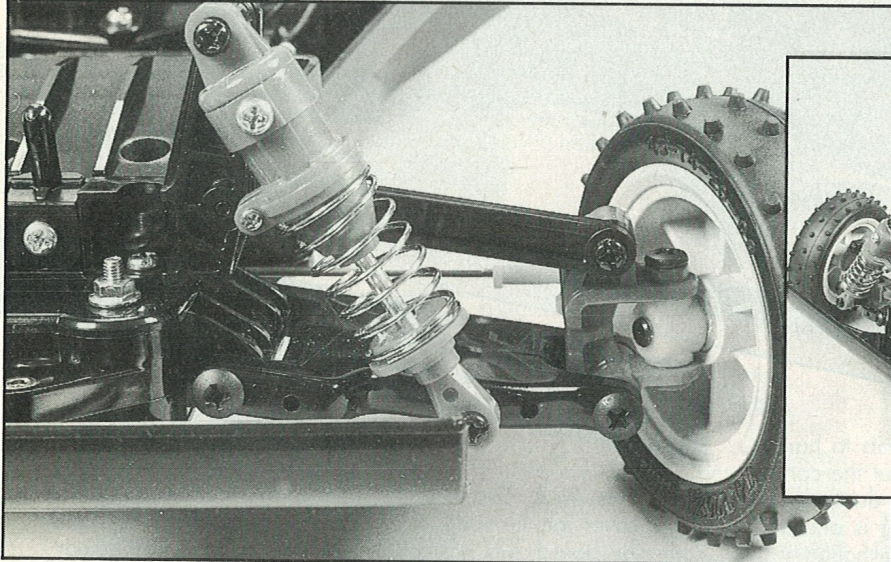
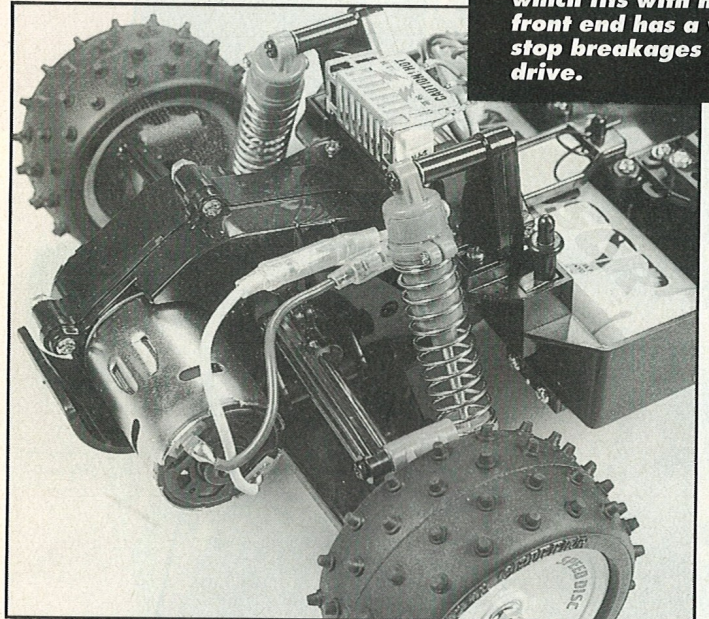
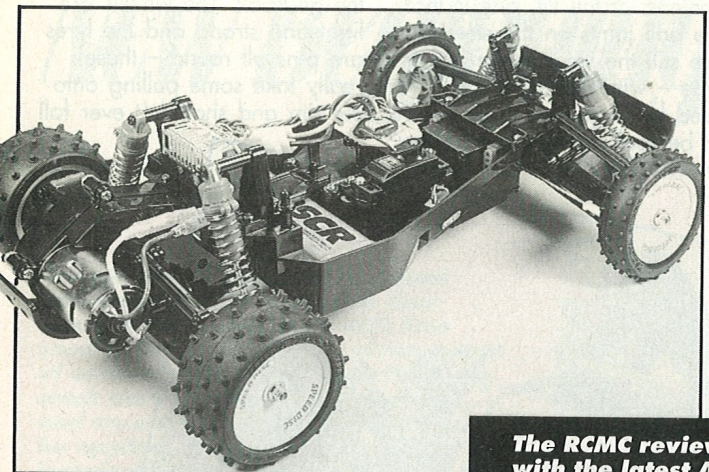
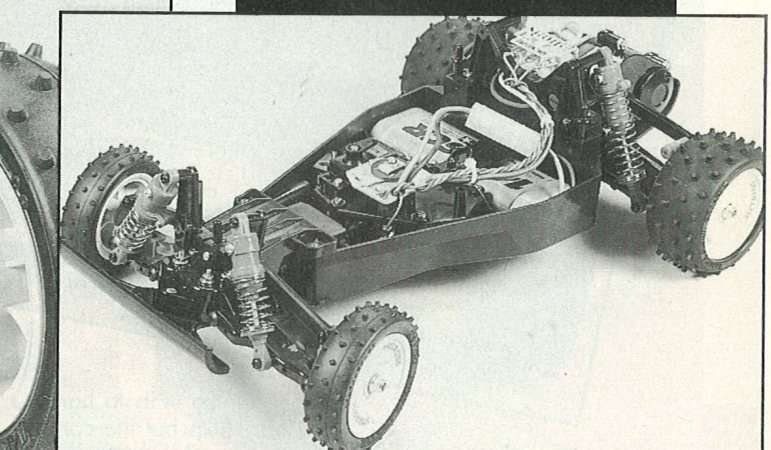
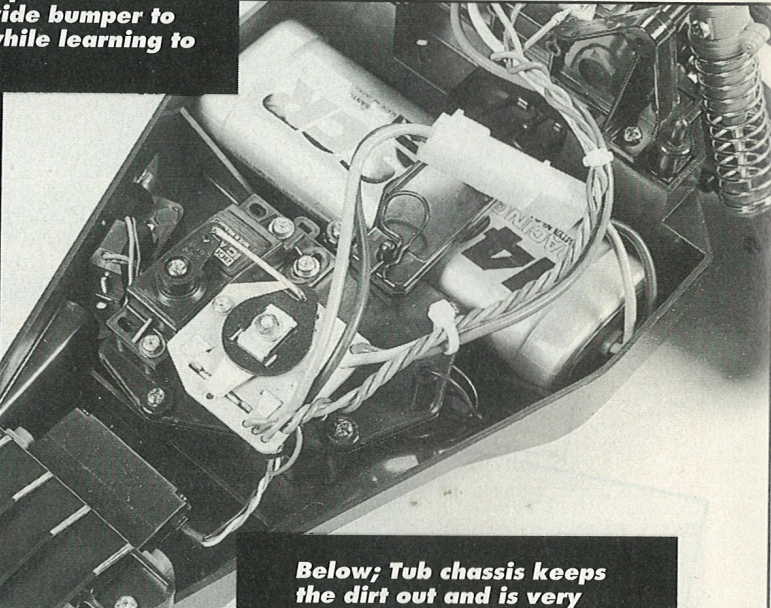
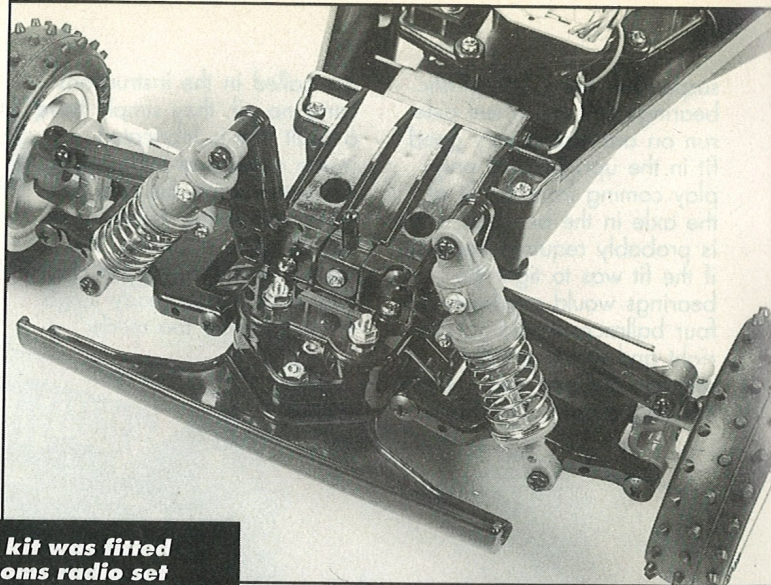
are a little weak. The second is the cover for the speed controller board, this protects the electrics from dirt and water, the cover is plastic but is fiddly to cut out, not very strong and distorts when fitted - small points but worth noting.

### Good Package?

The car is finished off with a good tough bumper, and a

off! The bodyshell in the kit is moulded from hard white plastic, not lexan like many of Tamiya's other shells. The body is low and mean and features a cage at the rear not a wing, this makes the car look different and we think really good. The body requires to be painted on the outside with either an enamel paint or as we used one of the Tamiya paints available, don't use cellulose paints as these melt the plastic! Stickers in the kit are the usual





**The RCMC review kit was fitted with the latest Acoms radio set which fits with no problems. The front end has a wide bumper to stop breakages while learning to drive.**

**Below; Tub chassis keeps the dirt out and is very tough. Left; Shocks are of the friction type.**

excellent quality and are basically the best in the business, even a half good paint job is transformed by the application of these. The kit also comes with a driver figure which we didn't use, but it does add a fair amount of realism. The instructions in

the kit are second to none – clear, easy to follow and never incorrect! They also show some "Hop Up" options and give a guide of how to run the car and set it up. So is this the right product for beginners to come across first?, well the kit is good,

instructions clear and with the many improvements outlined above the car should be reliable and tough. So if you know someone who wants to start in RC car racing, point them in the direction of the Bear Hawk – they won't go far wrong!

**Basic Specification**  
 2WD Aimed at beginner  
 540 Standard motor (non ballraced)  
 Friction Dampers  
 Plastic Tub Chassis  
 3 Speed  
 Board Controller  
 Gearing  
 Differential  
 ABS Body with stickers  
 Takes any 7.2v stick pack battery