

Tamiya Castrol Mugen NSX

Superb looking body - a Tamiya trade mark



# long lines' latest offering

**A**rrrrgh! I hear you say. Not another TL-01 kit so soon, surely? Well, yes it is and it is clear that Tamiya are going to make the most out of the design effort that went into the TL-01 chassis. The basic design is now used for rally cars, trucks and (in a mildly modified form) for their new range of 4WD off-road buggies. Now it is the turn of a GT/Sports car and it is quite likely that this is the first of a number of such kits that will hit these shores in the next year.

OK then, so what's new? Well, there is the lovely NSX body of course. This is fitted on to new body mounts and because it is wider at the rear in real life, there are larger spacers for the rear wheels and new longer axles to match. The wheels are green and that is it really. I reviewed a TL-01 Celica last year and I still think the chassis design and production engineering is very clever. The use of so few parts and identical sized bearings throughout clearly contribute to making this one of the cheapest entry-level R/C cars going. It is certainly a good first car and, judging by the popularity of



Superb box art is a great help when sorting out the decals

'I thought I would get the lad Tim to build it just to see if he could do it'



The new wheels are a rather fetching green

the Stock class at this year's Eurocup, sales are going well. As this is an entry-level car I thought I would get the lad Tim to build it just to see if he could do it. Tim is 11 and has been around R/C cars for a few years but he has never built his own car as I have been wary of letting him near modelling knives and the like for safety reasons. Just to prove how careful I

am with tools, I showed him how to cut the top of your finger with a hedge trimmer the other week! So it was something of a pleasant surprise - no, not cutting my finger! - when he finished the chassis in a total of about 5 hours with very limited help from me. I showed him how to cut parts off the sprues safely and stressed the importance of matching up screw sizes with the instructions. After 20 minutes, I left him to get on with it and with one minor problem, he did the rest himself including mounting the radio gear. No two ways about it, these are good instruction manuals and well put together kits. For the body we agreed that I would do it as: a) it looked difficult and b) this was a review kit so we could not afford to muck it up for fear of incurring the wrath of PeterE the Ed and RIKO! I have to say that I found this tricky myself and I doubt whether many modellers Tim's age would be able to get it all finished as indicated in the instructions. The painting was no problem but the stickers were very fiddly. The front bumper section in particular was tricky with lots of compound curves and folds to be incorporated whilst still keeping everything in line. I mounted the decals in numerical order but only after realising that there was no number '1' sticker! By the way, stickers '2' and '3' are best left until later, sometime after number '60' in my opinion.

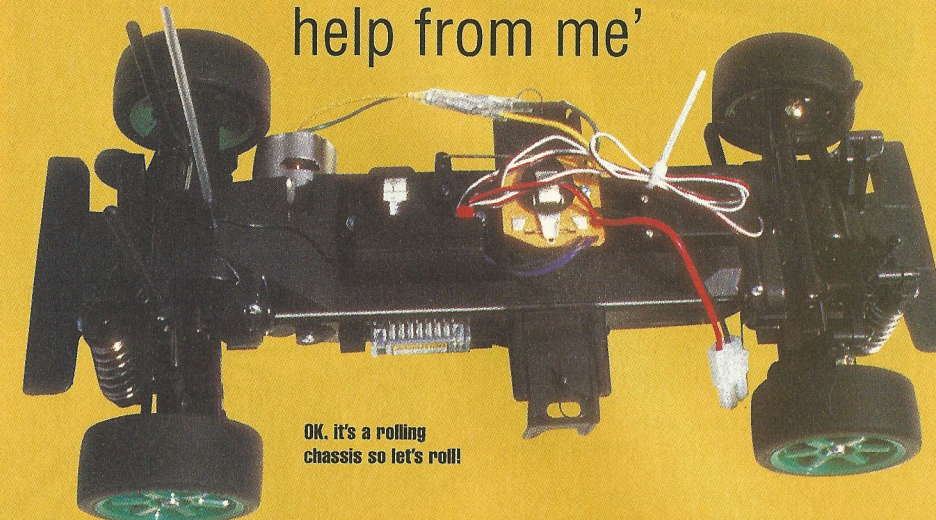
## Pick On Somebody Else

Looking to be picky - moi? surely not! - I could not help but feel that the glue used on the stickers was less sticky than in previous Tamiya kits I have built. Usually, if you put one in the wrong place you can peel it off and put it on again several times and it will still stick. On this kit the glue seemed to be a 'one-touch' variety and I had to resort to using extra glue for some of the stickers. I hope this was just an isolated problem and not the start of a trend. It was also next to impossible to find the recommended fluorescent red spray for the rear wing. None of 6 shops I tried stocked the stuff so I resorted to brushed-on enamel which is not quite right but never mind. Although I like the body a lot it does not really look right when mounted on the chassis. Compared to the same NSX shell when mounted on the TA-03 chassis it sits too high off the ground on the TL-01. You could regard this as a good thing for a beginner's car as it means the car can be driven over rougher ground without damaging the body. From a scale point of view though it is not right, though it is possible to lower the chassis by putting spacers in the shocks. This can be done easily but is not mentioned in the instructions.

## Moving The Parts

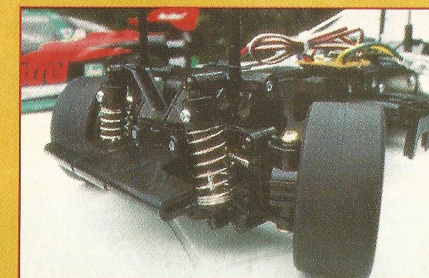
In terms of speed and handling there is not much new here. The basic kit comes with rubber-tube

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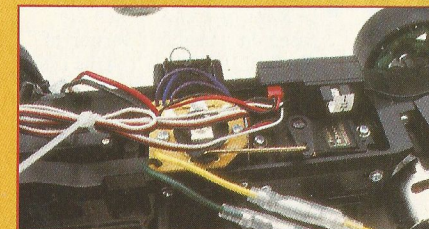


OK, it's a rolling chassis so let's roll!

damped shockers that work well enough at absorbing basic bumps and keeping the chassis off the ground but they tend to give the car a bouncy quality to the handling. On smooth surfaces the car is fine but bumps tend to throw it off course a bit. It will certainly sharpen up your reactions! Regular readers will know that last year I ran a TL-01 (two in fact, a Celica and a Skyline) in the Eurocup with mixed success. Although the chassis did take a couple of class wins against FWD opposition - not my chassis unfortunately, the rules restricting modifications to the shocks made it a tricky car to drive. If you are intending to race the car then some ballraces and the plastic oil-filled shocks make it go a lot better. This year's Eurocup rules allow the oil shocks and thus far the TL-01 has proved very competitive indeed. Lots of other hop-ups are now available for this chassis including anti-roll bars, alternative internal gear sets, lightweight propshafts, universal joints, ball differentials and even a complete replacement lightweight chassis!



The only difference between this end, the front - and the other end is... this one steers!

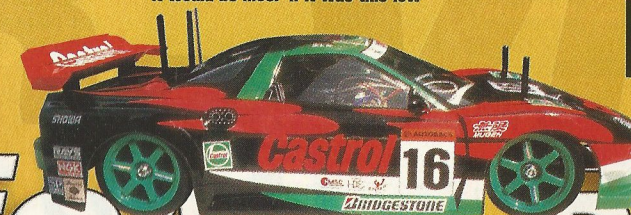


The mechanical speed controller works just fine

## In Sum

To sum up, this is still a good first car and it is still good value. In these respects I haven't changed my opinion since last year. It is easy for a first timer to build the car but doing a good job on the body is probably best left to someone with more experience. You could, of course, paint the car in your own colours if you like. Having said this is good kit, Tamiya will have to think hard about including oil-filled shocks without hiking the price too much. The competition for entry-level cars is hotting up and it needs the extra handling confidence that the oil shocks impart if it is to remain top of the entry-level pile.

It would be nicer if it was this low



## Quick Spec

1:10th scale Electric touring car. Shaft drive system, 4WD with two geared diffs. Requires 2 channel radio, 2 servos battery, charger, paint to complete.

## Likes

Body shell  
Ease of build  
Clever design

## Dislikes

Lack of ride height adjustment  
Lack of decent shock absorbers

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