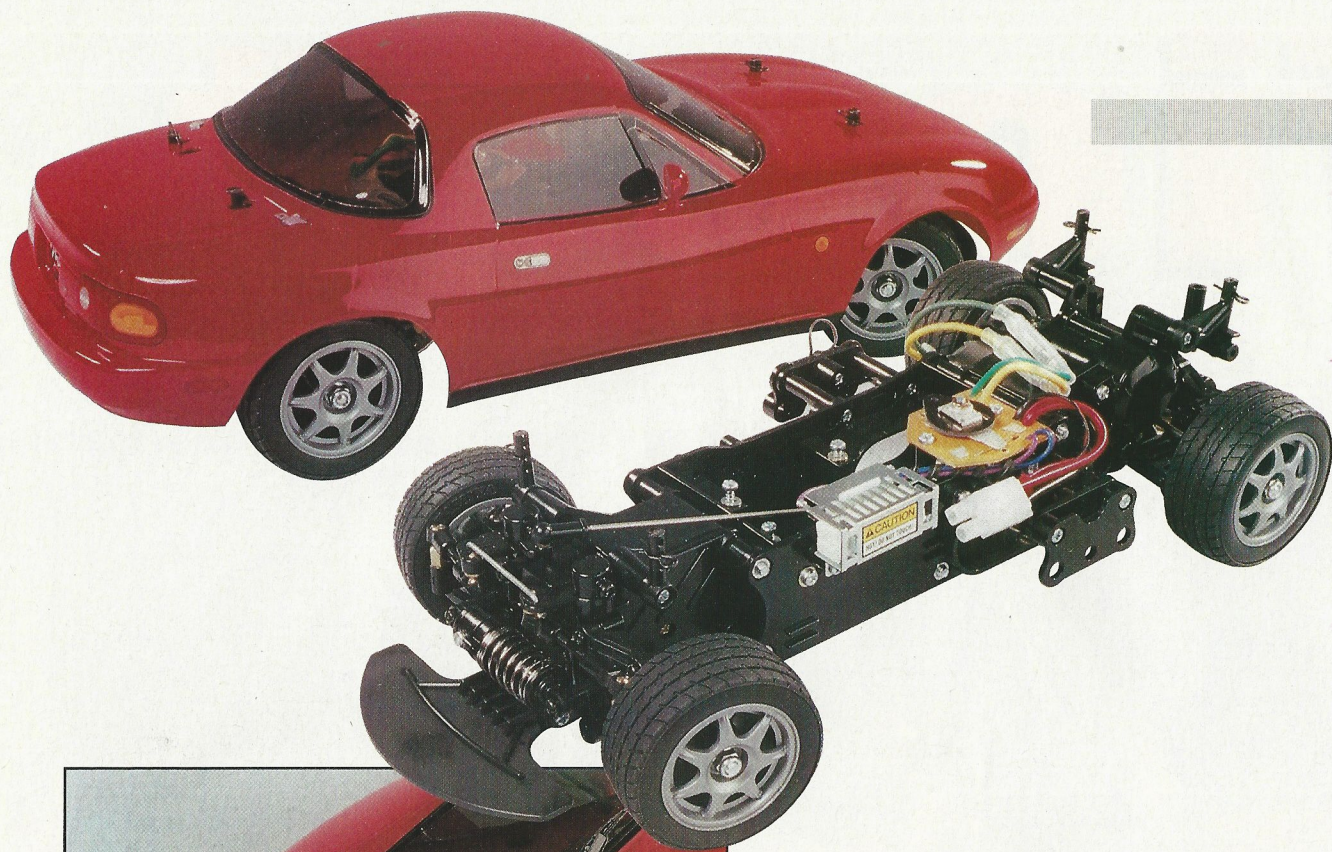


Magnificent



Mazda

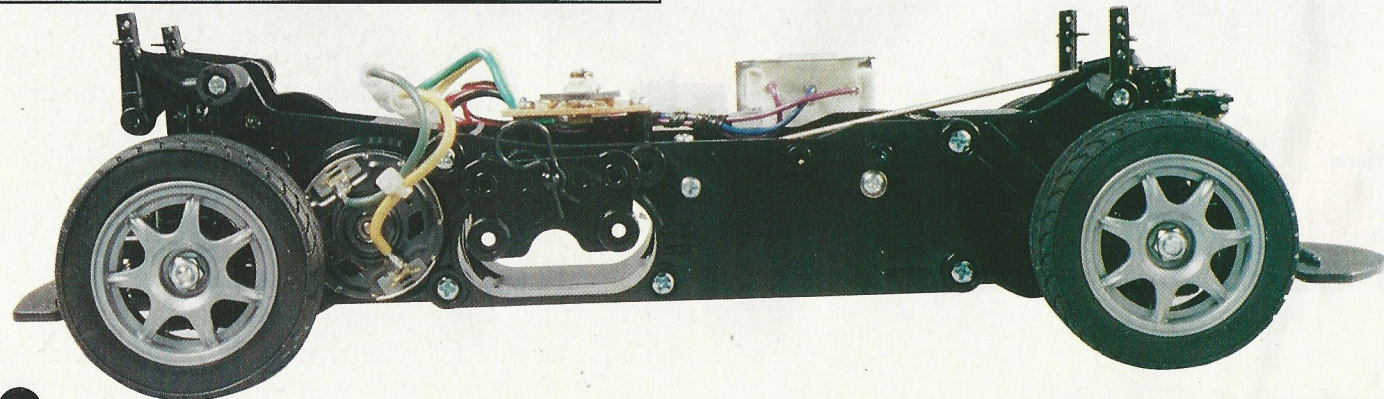


Regular readers of this magazine may recall that when I reviewed Tamiya's cute little Honda S800 a couple of issues ago that I suggested that an ideal follow up would be a Lotus Elan

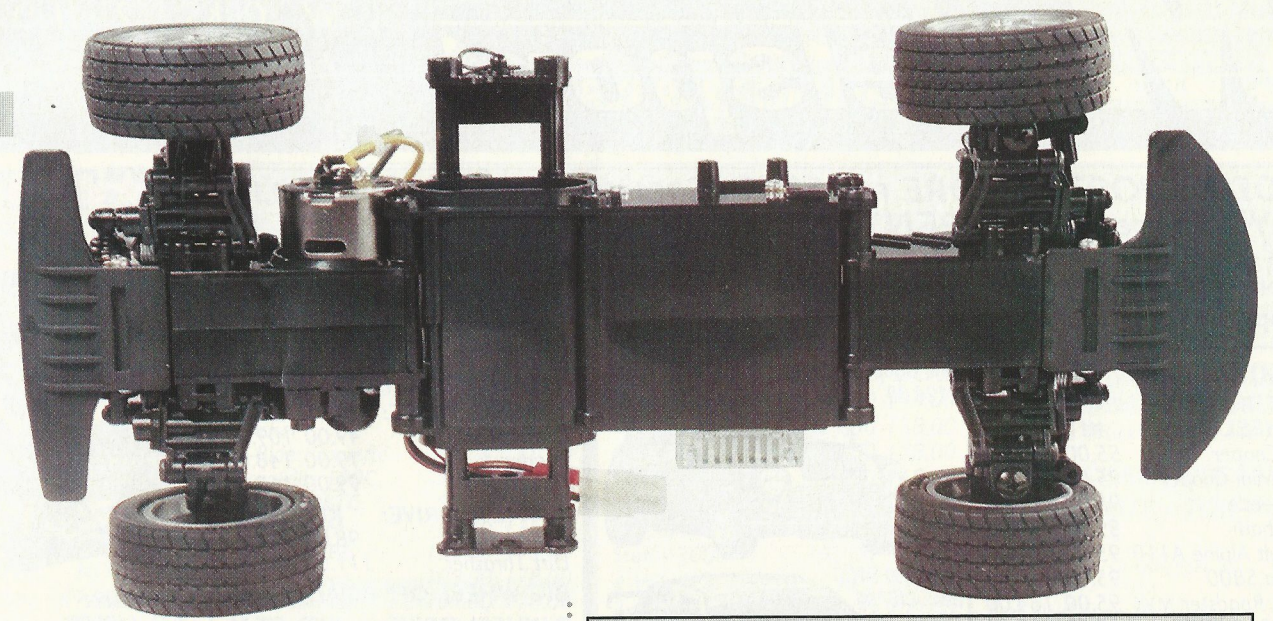
Knowing Tamiya's lead times and production schedules I'm sure that they were no way influenced in releasing their latest model in the M chassis series and I guess the nearest we're going to get to the fabulous Elan - the Mazda MX5. Don't be fooled by the box which declares 'Mazda Eunos' this is the oddly sounding Japanese market name. In the USA it's a Mazda Miata whereas in good old Europe it's an MX5 or Lotus Elan lookalike. The sixties version from East Anglia bears a distinct

resemblance!

Tamiya's M chassis range started with the Mini Cooper - hence the code and has seen subsequent releases of Fiat Abarth, Renault Alpine and the Volkswagen Beetle. The two piece chassis is common to the whole range but there are subtle differences with the other models involving relocating the drive motor to rear wheel drive (Abarth and Alpine) to a longer wheel base with the VW using the rear wheel drive set-up but incorporating a new front housing to achieve the longer length.



RADIO CONTROL MODEL CARS



Other wheels and tyres have been introduced with each model and the Mazda is no different. Tamiya like to be as accurate with dimensions as possible which in the case of the MX5 has necessitated another front housing of medium length to achieve the correct wheel base! New wheels again - of course coupled with the 60D tyres found on the Alpine and Honda. It all sounds a bit incestuous but Tamiya make the maximum use of existing components wherever possible. Perhaps that's why I've left the nicest new component to last. Yes Tamiya's body shells really do capture the look of their full size counterpart and it's a simple matter to choose between a one colour hardtop version - ours in Mazda Red (Tamiya's PS7 actually) or with a simple bit of masking a soft top version.

Remember that if you go for the soft top you're actually better to apply a matt or semi matt black finish to the outside of the body after you've removed the protective film that coats the majority of Tamiya polycarbonate bodies. This film protects the shell both in the moulding process and in transit although I've heard of one or two instances where components packed inside the body have scratched the unprotected side.

It's worth taking some time to spray the attractive spoked wheels in matt silver to replicate the alloy wheels available on the real thing. Alternatively you could take out a bank loan and invest in a set of the various style of alloy wheels from Tamiya's hop up range - be warned £70.00 a set of four. Equally there are many after market suppliers of M chassis parts following the

phenomenal success worldwide of Tamiya's M chassis design. Try HPI or Cross (both Japanese manufacturers of mini goodies having mentioned Hop Ups it's fair to say that for the M chassis range there's nearly as much choice of parts as there is for 4WD Touring cars. Indeed several top Eurocup competitors in M chassis class have been critical of the increased cost creeping into what was conceived as a budget controlled class. Maybe a case of segregating the models into mini cup (front wheel drive only) and the others which have a distinct advantage with their larger tyres and longer gear ratio.

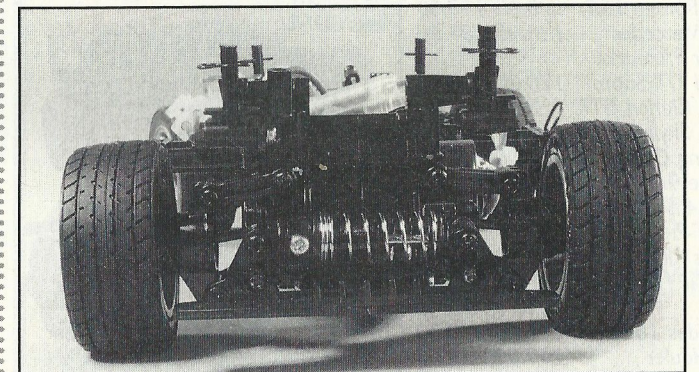
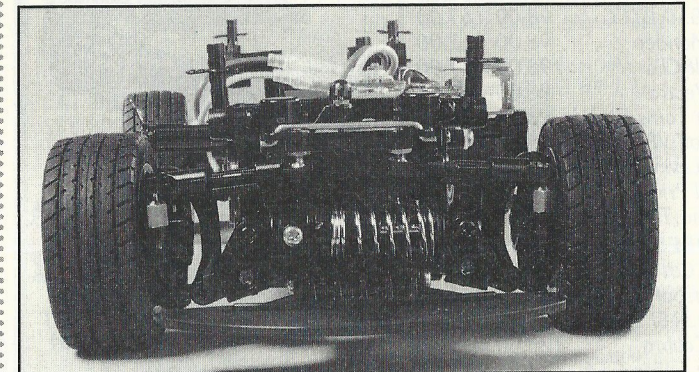
The Mazda MX5 falls into the latter category. However convert to front wheel drive (it's only the wheel centres that have to remain constant and you may find an edge not found on the Mini's).

Alternatively just buy it because it looks so nice and whatever your choice of model name the decals are supplied for Eunos, Miata or of course MX5.

The kit comes complete with motor, speed controller and virtually any two channel BEC radio system will fit. Add the usual 7.2 volt battery pack and a can of paint to finish and you will soon be enjoying adequate performance whether novice driver or expert and a car that looks just right!

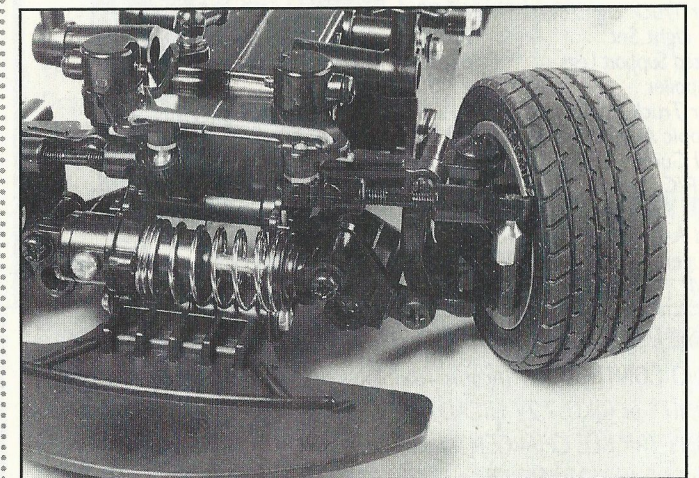
So what next? Well not wishing to say I told you so, maybe another Italian classic from the sixties alternatively how about a Morris 1000 - or maybe not!

Available from all good model shops although I hear they are becoming scarce due to the Mazda Owners Club snapping them up.



Simple chassis on the MX5 is used to create the overall look and feel of the real thing - basically a light chassis that handles well and is well up to racing standards.

Mono shock layout is used to the max by Tamiya with many Hop-Up options available.



From here the chassis may look a little complicated but the chassis is built up easily and ready to race in a number of hours.