

Tamiya's FAST ATTACK Vehicle



1/10 Scale Electric Off Road Buggy Reviewed by Colin Spinner

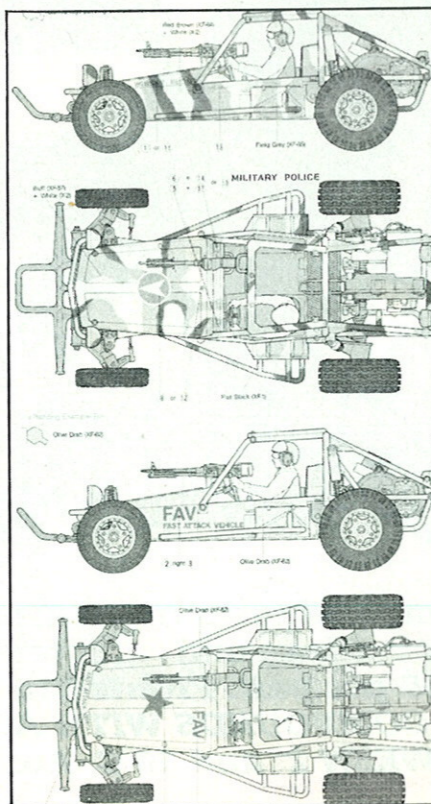
As hinted in last issue's Off Road Rumbings, here's the first review of our four star feature. Those who read between the lines should have detected the inference to the Tamiya marque.

The latest model to reach our shores is the oddly titled F.A.V. (Fast Attack Vehicle) — my initial reaction to the box top artwork being that this device had escaped from the grasps of the 'A Team' T.V. series.

However, upon opening the box and inspecting the contents, it became obvious that here was a newly designed kit that didn't have to be sprayed in camouflage colours unless you really wanted to.

Chassis

A new tough plastic moulding resembles the earlier styled 'Holiday Buggy' bath tub type, furthered through the range by the Grasshopper, Pajero and Hornet. A neat battery cover is held in place by a hinged clip located out of harms way adjacent to the gearbox.



The aperture will accept 5 or 6 cell flat-packs and the 'humped' variety.

The side 'nerf' bars are functional if somewhat difficult to paint — their flexible nature doesn't allow much success!

All of the components which attach to the chassis are secured with self tapping screws. The rear gives support to the new gearbox.

Gearbox and final drive

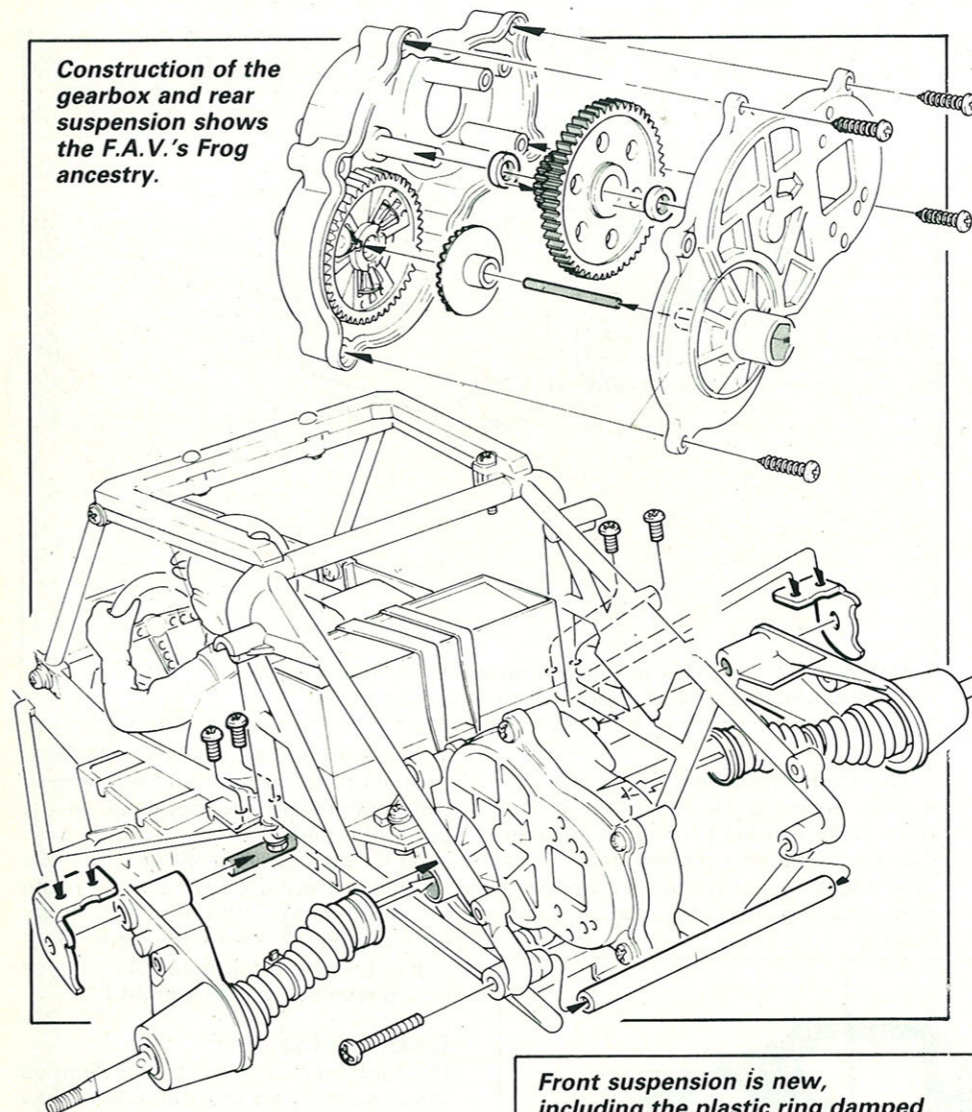
Again a high quality plastic two part moulding is used. Plain nylon bearings are supplied in the standard kit, but these were replaced with the optional SP5073 ballraces.

A useful oil cover is fitted to allow lubrication of the gearbox.

The well proven 'Frog' differential is fitted together with a new counter gear, driving two possible gear ratios of 7.5 to 1 and 9 to 1. It's worth taking the effort to 'bed' the gears in by light running prior to fitting into the car.

Splined and hexagonal drive shafts complete the final drive assembly — again all the nylon bearings supplied were replaced with ballraces. A Mabuchi 540 motor, rear mounted behind the drive shafts, is fitted in a low position to reduce the C of G.

Construction of the gearbox and rear suspension shows the F.A.V.'s Frog ancestry.



Radio equipment/speed controller

Any modern two function set will fit and operate this car. A transverse steering servo fitted with the kit supplied servo saver is used. Four bases are supplied and cover most popular servos. This steering servo attaches to mounting posts dispensing with earlier problems associated with 'tape' attached parts.

The car is designed to accept the receiver nicad/battery pack to the rear of the chassis. A location is also provided for a slider type on/off switch.

The mechanical speed controller features three speed forward and reverse control with the resistor bolted to the rollcage up in the airflow for cooling purposes.

We dispensed with the receiver nicad, one servo and the kit speed controller to fit our trusty Star Electronics Quasar electronic controller. (Some reshaping of the driver's mounting plate is required if you adopt this layout.) This arrangement also reduces the weight and coupled with the high reliability of the controller proves a worthwhile modification.

Rear Suspension

Independent trailing arms are fitted to this F.A.V., similar in design to the

Frog counterparts though somewhat squatter. Plastic friction/coil assisted dampers are supplied although by experience we chose to fit the SP5193 adjustable racing shock absorbers.

Front Suspension

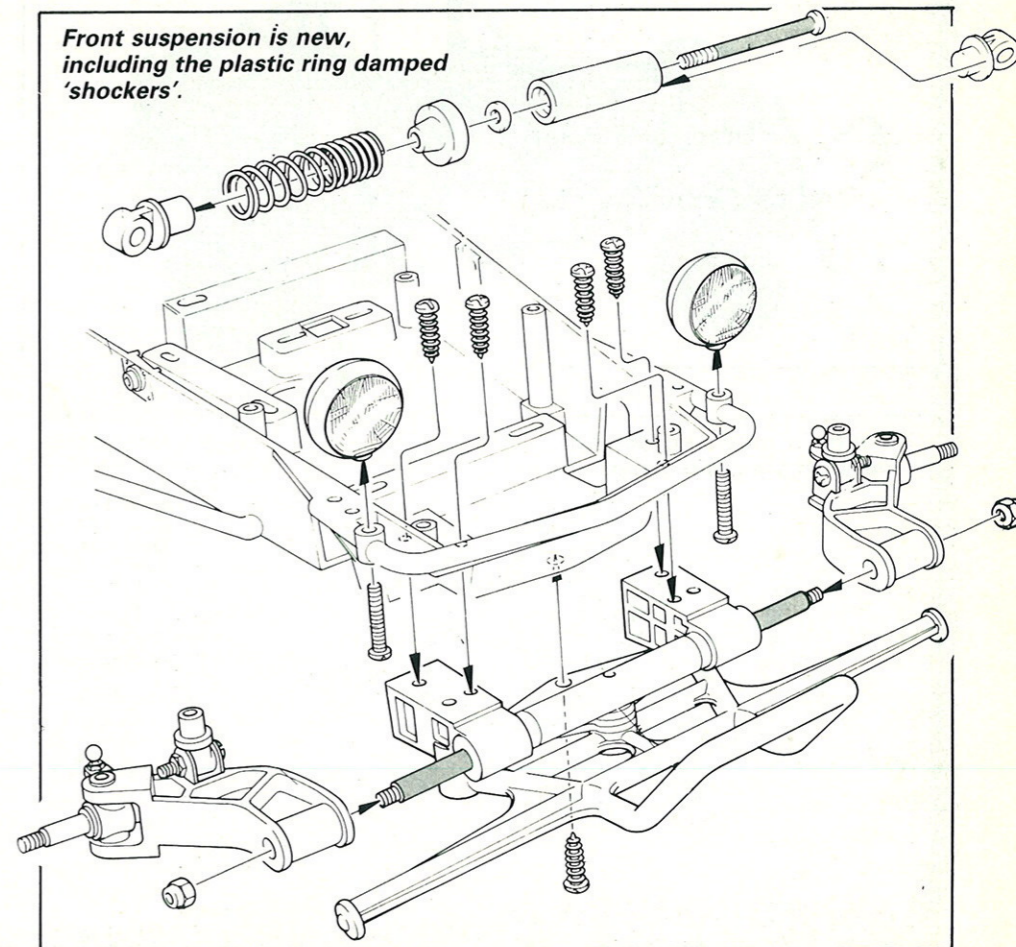
Trailing independent arms feature here too, supported by spring dampers. A good feature here is the top damper mount — a tough steel plate overcomes all those problems encountered with the 'Holiday Buggy' mounts. Easy too to fabricate a flat version should you wish to fit short oil filled shocks.

A solid shaft supports and retains the trailing arms giving a rigid front end assembly.

Wheels and tyres

Out with the spray gun here — I didn't like the sand coloured mouldings but each to their own. The front tyres are 'Roughrider' narrow pattern (SP5119) if you want any more. The rears too are from the same model (SP5120). Personal choice and track conditions permit any of the Tamiya off road tyres to be used together with Mardave, MRC and Marui covers. (The last three named fit easily onto Ford Ranger hubs.)

Front suspension is new, including the plastic ring damped 'shockers'.



Body Shell

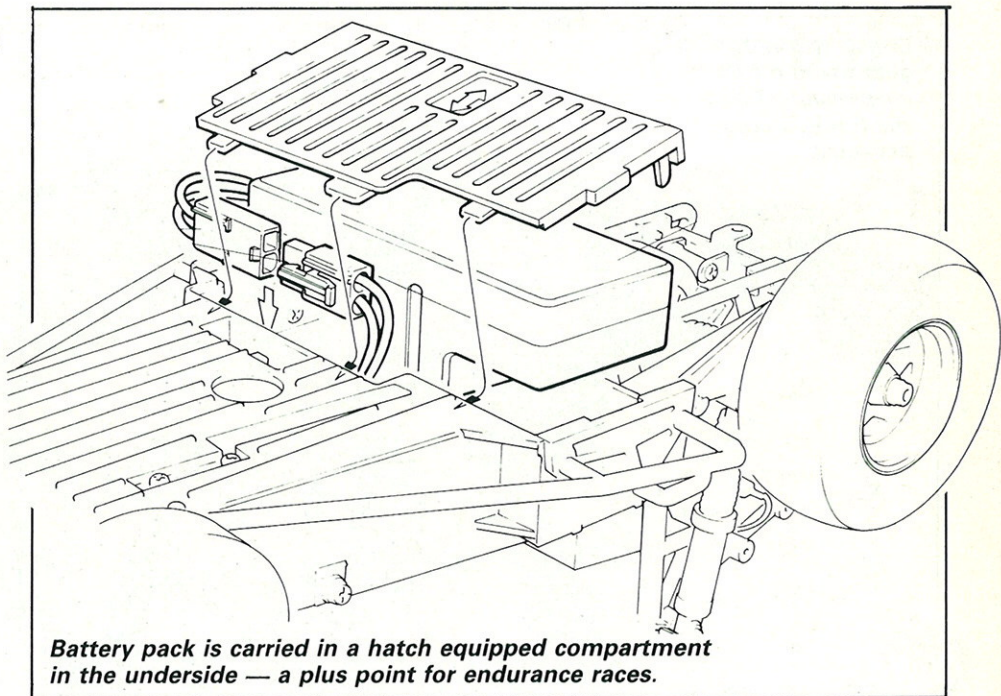
The unusual design of this vehicle means part bodyshell — mainly roll-cage! A strong 2 section moulding — steel reinforced in places — completes the rugged look. An infill platform carries the driver figure which can be painted as required. We replaced the military styled helmet with a full faced racing type left over from a previous kit. A moulded cover for the nicad receiver pack is retained by elastic band giving easy access.

The front section of the body is held in place by four self tapping screws. The usual 'knock off' lights are provided front and rear. Oh yes I nearly forgot the spring mounted machine gun — we didn't fit it — there's enough hassle out on the track now!!

A small decal sheet (by Tamiya standards) is provided to allow a Military Police or F.A.V. Army vehicle to be finished. An alternative is a can of bright paint to transform it into the 'boy racer' style.

Track test

This model was completed just before the winter's snow and saw ample service in the white stuff! It's wide rear track adds to its stability over the roughest surfaces. The racing shocks we fitted ironed out most of the



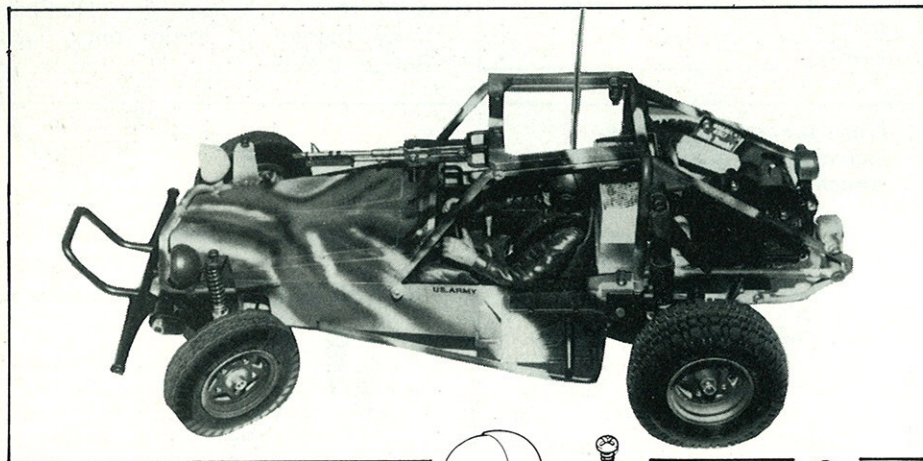
Battery pack is carried in a hatch equipped compartment in the underside — a plus point for endurance races.

bumps.

The lively front end works admirably — decrying all attempts of improved performance by adding proper dampers. The kit supplied gear ratios give adequate performance compared with existing models. The 7.2 volt

drive pack gave around six and a half minutes running on the lower ratio in competitive use — longer if you're just out in the park.

With our modifications the car weighs in around 3lbs 8oz — still room for lightening although its extra weight doesn't seem to matter that much. (In competition use 3lb-3lb 4oz is a reasonable R.T.R. weight.)



Conclusion

The high standard found with Tamiya kits is maintained with the F.A.V. New components make for an interesting model with scope for "tuning". Despite its aggressive appearance the kit is sure to be seen both at race meetings and in the street in large numbers in 1985. Competitively priced and with the addition of a few 'luxuries', give an optimistic look to race winning performances after considerable back to back testing with our present stable of Frogs! At least F.A.V. can't be conquered with — or can it?

The interior mouldings form a cover over the radio equipment.

