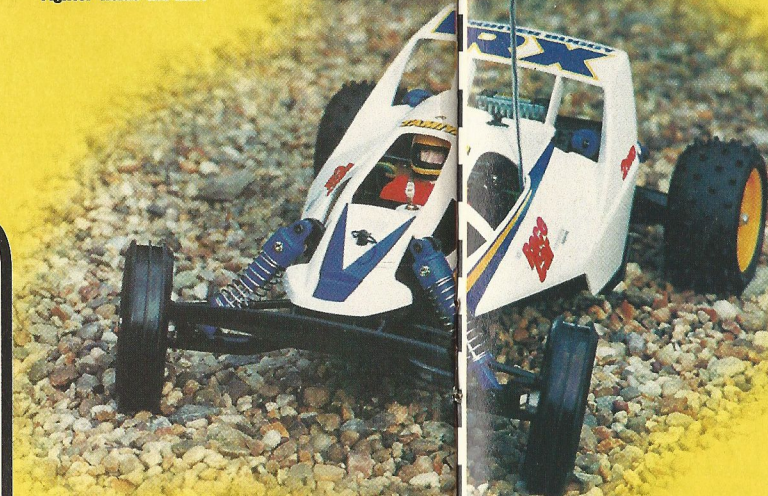


RRC

FORMULA for fun

Sweeping into the bend,
Fighter holds the line!



"those large spiked rear tyres provide plenty of traction"

OUR RESIDENT NOVICE BUILDS AND TESTS THE TAMIYA FIGHTER AND HAS A BALL IN THE PROCESS.



The Fighter Buggy's bright colourful box.

Tamiya Fighter Buggy

I am a model aircraft person, so when the Editor, Peter 'Scratch' Emery, asked if I would like to review a car kit, I was a little taken aback. However, my youngest, Joe, had been dropping some rather un-subtle hints that if 'Santa' brought him a radio controlled car he would not be unhappy! With this in mind I agreed to have a go. The Tamiya Fighter Buggy is designed and squarely aimed at the novice/newcomer to the sport of radio con-

trolled cars, which I certainly am, and as such is a straightforward, basic, car. I have no knowledge of this side of the hobby so this was virgin territory for me and I was looking forward to the experience.

Assembly

Now this presented me with my first problem, where could I build this kit so young Joe wouldn't know anything about it? Joe takes after his mother, and has an inquisitive nature, some might say noisy. I of course couldn't possibly comment!

Never having built a car before, I didn't have any idea how long it would take. Looking into the box, the number of bits and the fairly hefty instruction manual gave the impression that this project might take awhile. As luck would have it, Joe was selected to swim for his club at a gala, which meant, he would be out of the house for most of Sunday, grabbing the chance I set to work.

Arming myself with the tools suggested in the instruction manual, I cleared a space on the dining room table, emptied the contents of the brightly coloured box, located Bag A, and set to work.

As I mentioned, this was my first car, and I have to say I don't think I've come across an instruction manual quite like the Tamiya's before. Talk about comprehensive!

I don't think any one could fail to build this kit, providing they could read the book. Every step is very clearly illustrated, all the parts are identified, and the build sequence is so logical that I think failure would be impossible!



A rapid charger would give more play-time.



The Acoms Techniplus 2 channel radio used in the Fighter for this review.



The Fighter poised and ready for the Off!



opening the box, to having the car completed, other than finishing with the supplied transfers, took me 4 1/2 hours! A very pleasant way to spend a dull and damp Sunday.

At the back of the instruction manual there is a comprehensive list of 'options', which include such items as 540 Sport-tuned motor, Star-dished wheels for front and rear, Rib-Spike front tyres, Spire-Spike rear tyres and Oil filled dampers for both front and rear, all of which are available from your local Tamiya stockist. For those having a go at racing, these items would be needed to make your car a little more competitive!

A perfect kit, well not quite. There was one small point that I was a lit-

All the 'bits' from the box conveniently bagged making assembly a very simple task.



tle un-happy with, the slop in the steering linkage. The steering servo is connected to the steering horn with a pre-bent piece of wire incorporating 'Z' bends at each end. Because of the depth of the 'Z' bend, the wire rises and falls through the hole in the servo arm when it's moved, giving as much as 3/8th of an inch play at the wheels. I greatly reduced the 'play' by pinching up the bends a little with a pair of long nose pliers. To eliminate the problem it really requires a linkage to be made up with either ball joints or metal clevises, but bearing in mind the end user Joe, there seemed little point going to all that effort as he is most unlikely to race the car.

The fun bit

Problem number two, how am I going to test this car and still keep it in 'Santa' condition? I'm not, so test the car and worry about 'Santa' later!

Being a novice, I took the car into the office so that 'Scratch' could give it the once over, just in case I'd done something daft. Being ignorant about such matters I wanted confirmation that the linking pivot between the chassis and the motor/gear box was as it should be. I had followed the instructions to the letter and was fairly confident it was OK. 'Scratch' gave the Fighter a clean bill of health, so the battery pack was fully charged, new batteries installed in the transmitter, and off I went to the local BMX track to give the Fighter a blast.

Being used to operating in three dimensions, when flying, two dimensions was a very relaxing and enjoyable experience. Having said that the Fighter has an excellent turn of speed, those large spiked rear tyres provide plenty of traction and on a number of occasions she was in the third dimension! After a few tentative blasts in a fairly straight line I started to throw her about a bit as my confidence grew. In a very short space of time I was getting a feel for the car and controls and even managed to hang the back end out on the loose gravel. This was great fun and I was having a ball, when BEC stepped in and terminated my game. I didn't time the motor run, I was having too much fun, but I would guess that I had about 9 or 10 minutes from the fully charged batteries.

The Acoms radio set I had installed in the Fighter, functioned very well indeed, the transmitter was comfortable to hold and those LED's left you in no doubt about the state of your batteries. The incorporation of a BEC (Battery Elimination Circuitry) in the receiver means there is no need to install a receiver battery, saving weight and expense. The servos are standard AS-12's and seemed to be more

than suitable for the Fighter, being positive and powerful enough to cope with the rough terrain.

Conclusion

The Tamiya Fighter Buggy was a very straightforward and enjoyable build, its performance, as a first car, was exciting and it provides an excellent model to hone ones driving skills before progressing to Hotter machines. The Fighter is a lot of Fun and great value at around £59.00.

There has been a slight change of plans, as I had so much fun, I've decided to keep the Fighter and to get Joe another one for Christmas so we can go racing on Boxing day!

Postscript

A thought for the manufactures/distributors to ponder. The provision of a single battery pack and standard 14 hour charger limits the operational time of this excellent car to about ten minutes of fun per 14 hours. How about putting a starter package together with either two battery packs or replacing the standard charger with a fast charger, or both! That way the newcomer to the hobby would get at least a couple of fun filled blasts per day, far more likely to keep the interest level up, which can only benefit the hobby in the long run. **RRC**

Quick Spec:

1/10th Scale off road buggy for 2 channel electric radio control. Supplied with motor and rotary mechanical speed control.

Tester's Kit:

Radio - Acoms Techniplus Alpha 27 meg Radio
Cell Pack - Tamiya 1400
Tyres - Kit
Motor - Kit 540 type

Likes:

Excellent Mouldings
Super Instructions

Dislikes:

Steering slop
Limited play time on one cell pack

Profile view of the fighter, good ground clearance for the really rough stuff.

