

the boys are back

Want to get started in electric R/C? Well review these! Two lucky members of staff took up the challenge with Tamiya's 1/10 Scale Lo-riding F-150 and the Pennzoil Nismo GT-R.

Half a golf bag certainly looks good



Smart looking car the GT-R



Introduction

It was at the end of a lunch time in the Traplet office, and as we were coming back from a walk (or was that the pub?), we were collared by the Ed and dragged in to the editorial office and asked - "Can you write about a thousand or so words each?" It could only mean one thing, after waiting in the queue for what seemed an eternity, it was our turn! Review time! With Tamiya's TL-01 4wd shaft-driven chassis, in F-150 SVT electric Truck and a Pennzoil Nismo Skyline GT-R styles. Bliss! The Ed directed us towards the two kits, which contained the aforementioned TL-01 model chassis and separate bodysells, and we snapped them up quick sharp!

Before moving on it's probably best just to clarify a couple of things concerning the reviews. When they were returned to the Ed we discovered that we had both written virtually identical sections on the build of the models. So, to eradicate the repetitiveness (!) we have decided to write one section on the build which covers both models, as after all it's the same car! And then move onto our own experiences with the body shells. Hope this helps.

The Kits

After deciding on which body shells to do, we dived into the kits!

The TL-01 chassis is up to Tamiya's usual high standards and it certainly looks good from the outside as you clamp eyes on the box top. On opening it you are greeted with neatly packed and wrapped bags containing all the parts (including the 540 type motor and speed controller in both kits), a beautifully moulded Tamiya shell with all the lines in the right place and some cool little alloys.

Body shell wise, first up, the Ford pick up.

What colour would it look good in? Looks great in the box colours, but I had something different in mind! When I showed the guys in the office, loads of cool little ideas were furiously scribbled down. The Pennzoil box illustration looked too good to change, although looking at the sticker sheet (which is enormous) was scary to say the least, there were more than a few ideas on how to paint the shell, but why change it when it's already perfect!

Electrics are clean, fairly easy and extremely fun. No more coming home stinking of nitro fuel, no more painstaking pull starting, just the flick of a switch and it's away! Right then, let's take a proper look at this baby then.

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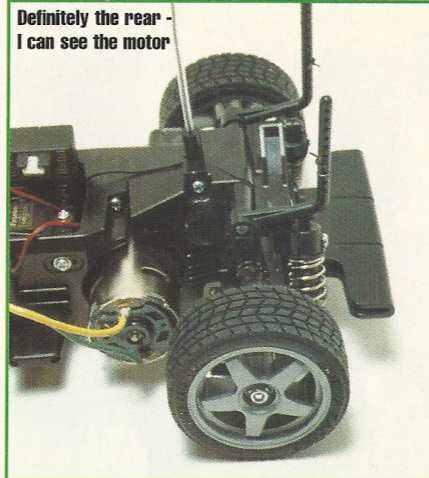
'Wow, they really move'

New Year New Gear

Lo-Rider, now with added neon



Definitely the rear - I can see the motor



You can see this is the front, it has a steering servo



Come on boys, trim those body posts



Get Ready

Simple! All you need is a Phillips screwdriver and a sharp craft knife to remove the pieces from the plastic sprues and you're away.

First impressions really last with this model because of the sheer quality of the kit, the moulded plastic pieces and the precise metal parts are superb, and should ensure a reliable and sturdy car. The chassis is a strong but light plastic, so it cuts the weight down and of course aids acceleration. It is set for four wheel drive but it looks like you could remove either gearbox for just front wheel or rear wheel drive (why on earth you'd want to do this when it's four wheel drive, I don't know, it's like tinkering with a real car!).

The body shells are tough polycarbonate, covered by a see-through film, which is there to help you keep it scratch free and to also to prevent overspray during painting and finishing.

The Build

The instruction booklet, upon first inspection, looks really complicated, with it all in Japanese and what looks like hieroglyphics! Don't let this put you off! Upon closer inspection, it is very detailed but exceptionally easy to use.

The booklet describes a simple step by step build in only 29 stages, cool! On the left hand side of every page is an informative key showing what tools and parts you need for each stage. Another good thing is that the parts are shown to scale in the instructions, so if there is any doubt you can refer to the size of the object to see if you have the correct piece.

With so many pieces, first timers may easily get lost, the best suggestion is to separate bits out from each bag, into something like margarine tubs to keep the relevant bits together.

First up the servos and linkages, front steering servo first, with big chunky plastic arms. The whole chassis is designed to build up around the two servos, creating a tough model with a solid feel, although this can prove difficult later as the servos are encased and not easily accessible for adjustment.

Next was the main drive shaft and once this was built it could be put into place on the chassis. Again this part of the model is nicely set but can also be difficult to access, meaning dismantling for adjustment. The stock drive shaft is a solid metal bar linking the front and rear gearboxes and runs the entire length of the chassis. This can be 'hopped up' later to a carbon fibre rod. Front and rear diffs, are easy to put together and fit perfectly in place.

The gears are nylon and perfectly moulded, and are very simple to install. Follow the instructions, remember that the little icon on the side of the page, which looks like a tube of grease, actually is a tube of grease, and believe it or not when the gear casings are together you should use plenty of grease for lubrication. Once the gear diffs, drive shaft and servos are in place the chassis is looking good, a quick little shake just to see if everything is firmly in place!

The motor is next and it's only two screws away from being fitted, thanks to the good

design finding the right alignment is as simple as counting the teeth on the pinion. After a bit of jiggling around on both models (remember - same model, the TL-01, but two body shells. Just checking to see if you're still awake!) the motor fitted into position.

The two models we were supplied with, came with mechanical speed controllers. Don't panic! If you cannot find the build instructions in the booklet, they are stored in the bag with the speed controller. It is worth marking out in the main build manual which steps you have come back to after installing the speed controller, this could prove to be helpful if you get lost. Make sure that you turn your radio gear on when sorting out the linkages, as it helps to have the servos centred! When speed control and servos, etc. are finally in place, there are some tie wraps supplied to tidy up the model.

We keep saying that this model really is simple, and after the suspension arms were in place that was pretty much the build. Top stuff!

F150 Pick Up - Body Beautiful (Neil Kerridge)

I was really impressed with the shape of the body, personally I like pick ups, so I wanted to



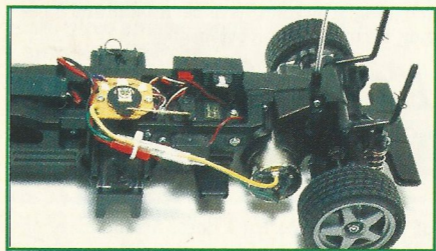
do something different. The body came with pre drilled holes (phew!), the last time I cut a body shell out (well I didn't really, I gave it to somebody with a steady hand!) I had painted it before I cut it out, a bit of a no-no really because you can crack the paint.

This time round I decided I would have a go and I have to say that is was fairly easy. Just keep a steady hand and score around the body several times until the excess just falls off. I had an idea for various colours, but all were swept away when I went to the local model shop only to find out they didn't have much stock in when I visited them. The colour that I settled on in the end was a true blue pearl with an indy silver undercoat. The pearl paint is a see through coat that I slowly built up. When satisfied with the pearl coat the indy silver was applied, and even in the drying stages you could see the effect, deep blues grading off into silver, NICE!

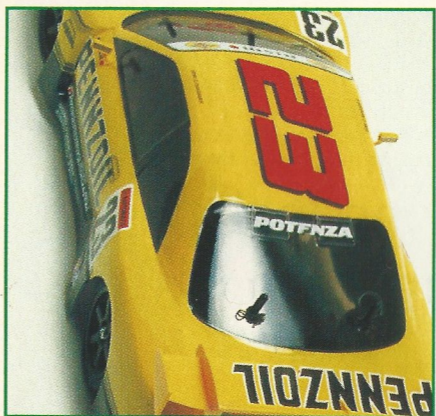
With the body colour applied and dried, I decided that as this was a pick up it would be nice to put a piece of leather on the back, to make it a bit more realistic. I found the perfect piece, it was actually part of my dad's golfing tee bag. It just so happened that he had never used this, so blagging it was easy.

Armed with super glue I set about sticking it down. It was very easy and the finished item looked simply stunning.

As this is a road car model the decal sheet is very sparse, so I asked the Ed to ferret in his bits box and he came up with some Parma F-150 Nascar stickers. Decals in hand I set about putting them on. Big '98 stickers on the doors and roof, grills and lights in the obvious



The mechanical speedo', change it to an electronic one as soon as funds allow



mellow yellow

places! The most difficult stickers to put on were the rear step stickers, which needed twisting and turning to fit in place.

Standing back from the finished body shell I was very impressed with what I had created. Next was determining the ride height. I have a passion for low ride cars so that's what it was going to be, a 'Lo-Rider Gansta Mobile'. The body actually sits about 1.5 mm from the floor and surprisingly doesn't catch too much during running.

Pennzoil Nismo GT-R Body (Ed Blackman)

Too sexy to tamper with, it's as simple as that! I'm not an arty type at the best of times, and after many suggestions from the crew in the office (like a themed Robocop paint job!) I kept looking back at the box. That had to be the one. Look, it's my first model and not being all that confident in case I messed up the spraying or got lost amongst the mass of decals, Pete Emery sent the shell to Terry Atkinson (bodysheer painter supremo) to be finished. Two days later and it came back looking gorgeous! Well worth it. I can see a big temptation here for any would-be first time modeller. You've made a good job of the chassis your nearly on the road and the end is in sight. You just want to slap the paint on and get driving. STOP! Take a deep breath and count to ten, avoid any temptation to rush the body shell. Think about what your going to do first. I promise you'll thank me when you sit back and admire the model when finished. Curved scissors, for the wheel arches, and a steady hand are useful when cutting out the body shell, again the best advice here is to take your time. It'll be worth it for the results.

Test Run

Time for a test run, charge up the battery (loaned by the Ed), turn her on and let her rip. This is what's great about electric's; no nonsense, no mess and straight to it, with no trouble starting. For a basic model, the 540 engine supplied does a very good job, with impressive speed and handling, or put into our own words, "Rather miffed that I couldn't get the back end out as far as I wanted" (Neil K), and, "I'm chuffed it moved at all!" (Ed B)!

The Race!

So! A showdown, both models built, novice against novice (well nearly!). The clever money had to be on Neil who already had some experience and had shown some recent form

(allegedly!). OK - Gentlemen, start your engines! Well that was and is the plan but bad weather has so far spoiled the fun. We did get a chance to thrash the Editors TL01 Escort Rally Car but the head to head is still to come.

Since they have been 'on the road' the models have had constant use. Not one crash yet, which is strange, but it's nothing to worry about, when hop up's are sorted they are bound to get thrashed!

Body Even More Beautiful

After the Pick-up had been finished, PeterE had just completed his Hemi Coupe, with neon strip and number plate lights. Interesting!? It just so happened that there was a spare set of number plates lying around, which were kindly donated to the F150! Work couldn't finish quick enough to fit these little gadgets. Installing the neon is very easy, a few holes in the front and rear for number plates, and the strips stick to the side of the body with the supplied sticky pads. They work off two 9v batteries (one for each, plates and strips) and it was surprising how much they lit up the lo-rider. Stunning! These neon strips aren't available at the moment in the UK (but check out the November issue of RRCi for more details of how to purchase them direct), but when they are more readily available they are well worth checking out.

The models are great fun, you can't fault the kit, everything is neatly packaged and the finished cars look tidy, you really couldn't want for anything more. This model should be recommended to any beginner, and for the price you can't go wrong.

Thank you Ed! Let us know when you want another chat! **RRCi**

Quick Spec

Simple 1:10th scale 4WD Touring cars. 540 Type motor and mechanical speed controller included. Requires 2 channel radio, servos, battery pack, charger and polycarbonate paint to complete.

Testers Kit

Acoms Alpha 27 MHz Radios and servos. Tamiya 1400 7.2v Battery Packs, Riko charger. Pactra Paint and Terry 'the paint' Atkinson

Likes:

Neil: ease of build, bodysheer styling, an all round quality product
Ed: build - easy even for me! Beginner friendly

Dislikes:

Neil: fiddly shockers
Ed: would like to have had a go at the bodysheer!

