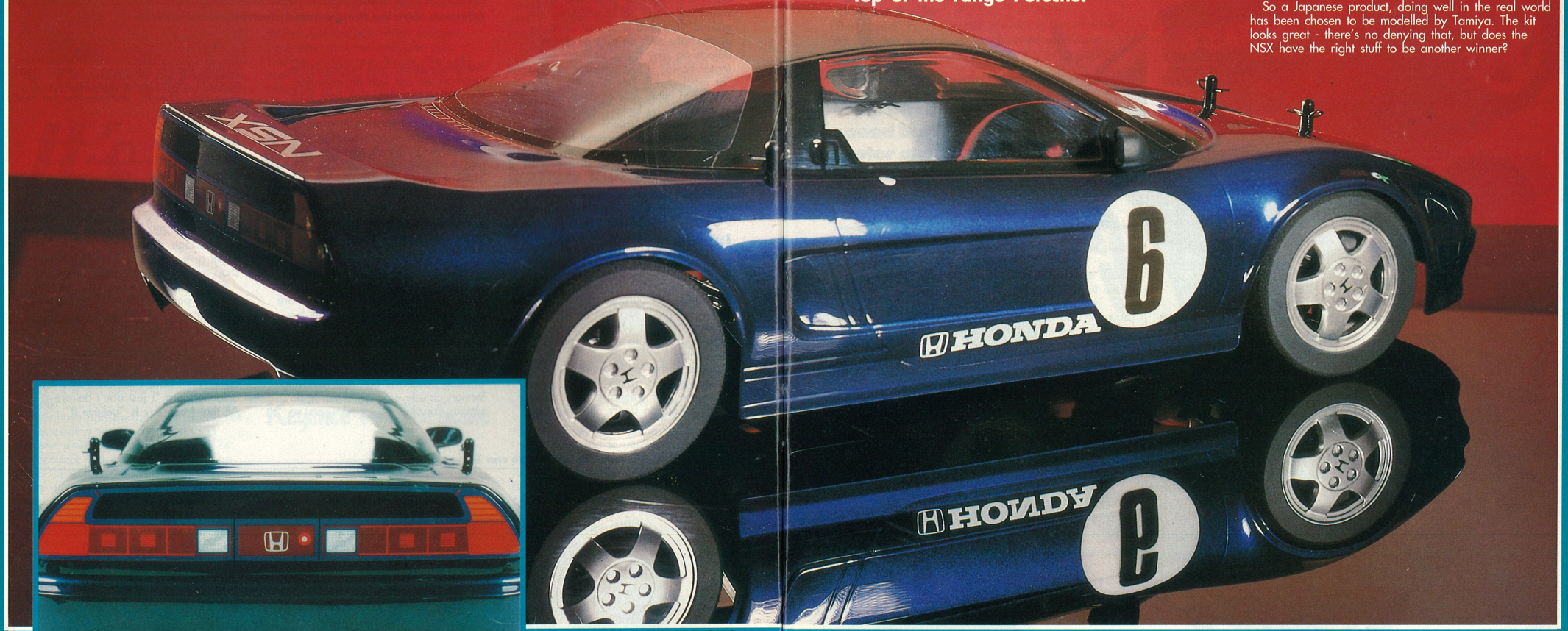
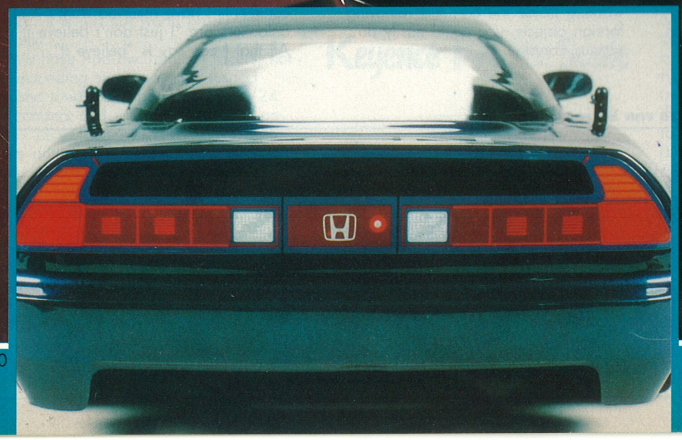
NSX From Tamiya

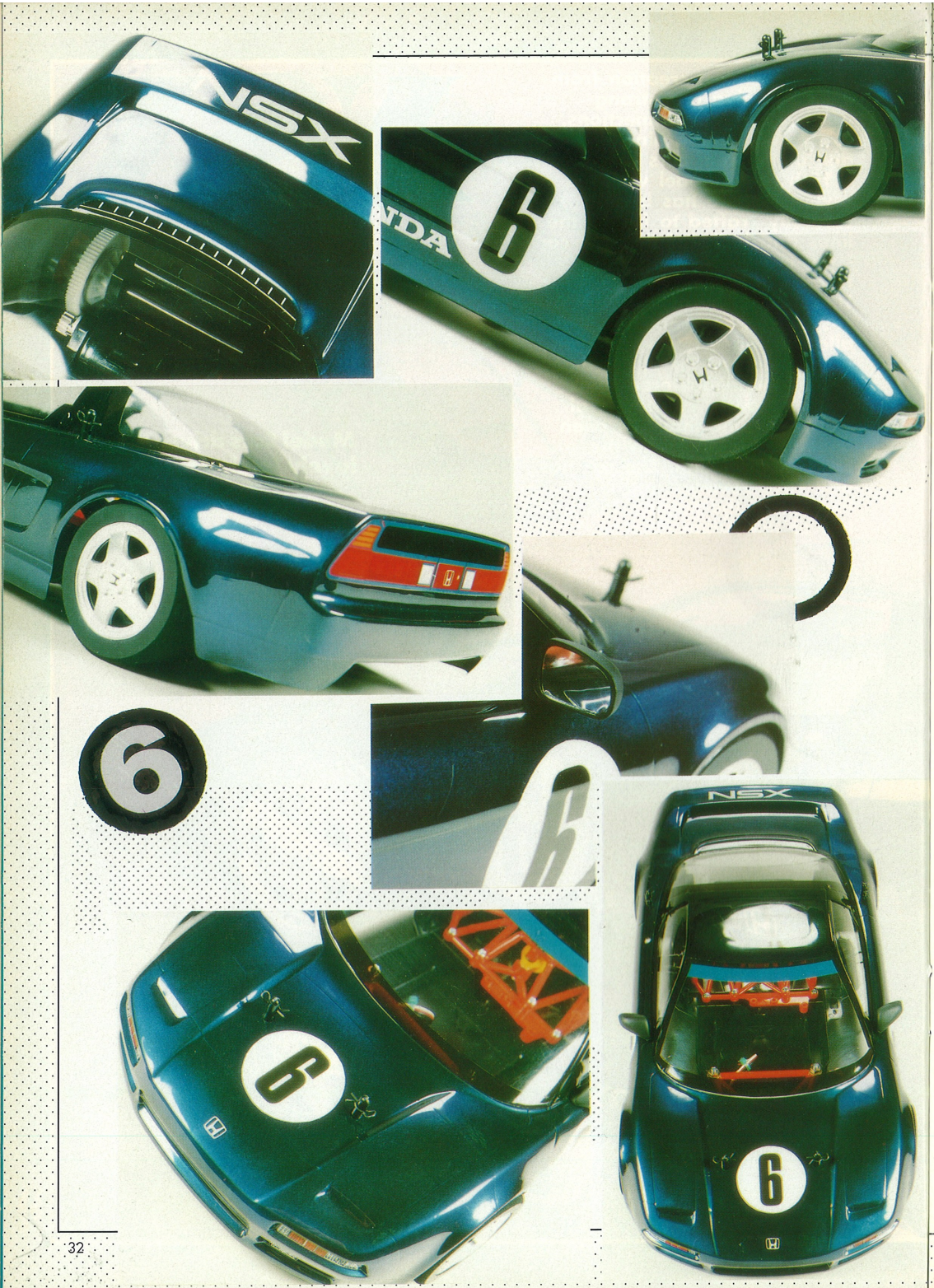
Model Cars drives the lovely Tamiya NSX for 1:10th on road

The latest creation from Tamiya has strong Japanese connections. Mr Tamiya himself owns one of the real cars and the 1:10th scale model which is reviewed here has been carefully crafted to follow the lines and looks of the real car - the Honda NSX. The real Honda NSX is a true supercar. The chassis, including suspension components are alloy giving it low weight and high strength. The car is mid-engined and powered by a super smooth, yet powerful Honda engine that has been developed along with the Formula One unit. The car has had rave reviews and is likened to the Ferrari 348 and top of the range Porsche.

So a Japanese product, doing well in the real world has been chosen to be modelled by Tamiya. The kit looks great - there's no denying that, but does the NSX have the right stuff to be another winner?







Bottoms Up!

Assembly of the NSX is really simple. The kit (less Radio) can be put together in 30 minutes - this may sound a little rushed but everything fits perfectly (typical Tamiya) and everything you need is in the box (less radio and battery). The first thing to be done is gluing the tyres on to the rims. The tyres are pre-trued and very nicely too! The wheels are those seen in the Mercedes and are moulded in a gorgeous matt and shiny black. The tyres are actually not glued on, they are taped on. Double sided is first placed onto the rim towards the edges. The tyre is then

NSX has a simple chassis - but don't be fooled, the handling is top class. Right; Motor in the kit is standard 540 - this keeps the cost down.

placed over the tape and the coating is peeled off from the tape with tweezers. The tyres are left neatly in place and there's no mess! Radio equipment slips in to the car with ease. The Japanese kits have no speed controllers, as the trend seems to be for electronic controllers. The UK kits have a three speed controller slipped in the box and an extra instruction leaflet added. The radio allowance suits any type and all connections and a servo saver are included.

Chassis Build

The suspension and chassis are simple but effective. All moulded in tough plastic the front suspension mounts around two glass fibre plates, These in turn

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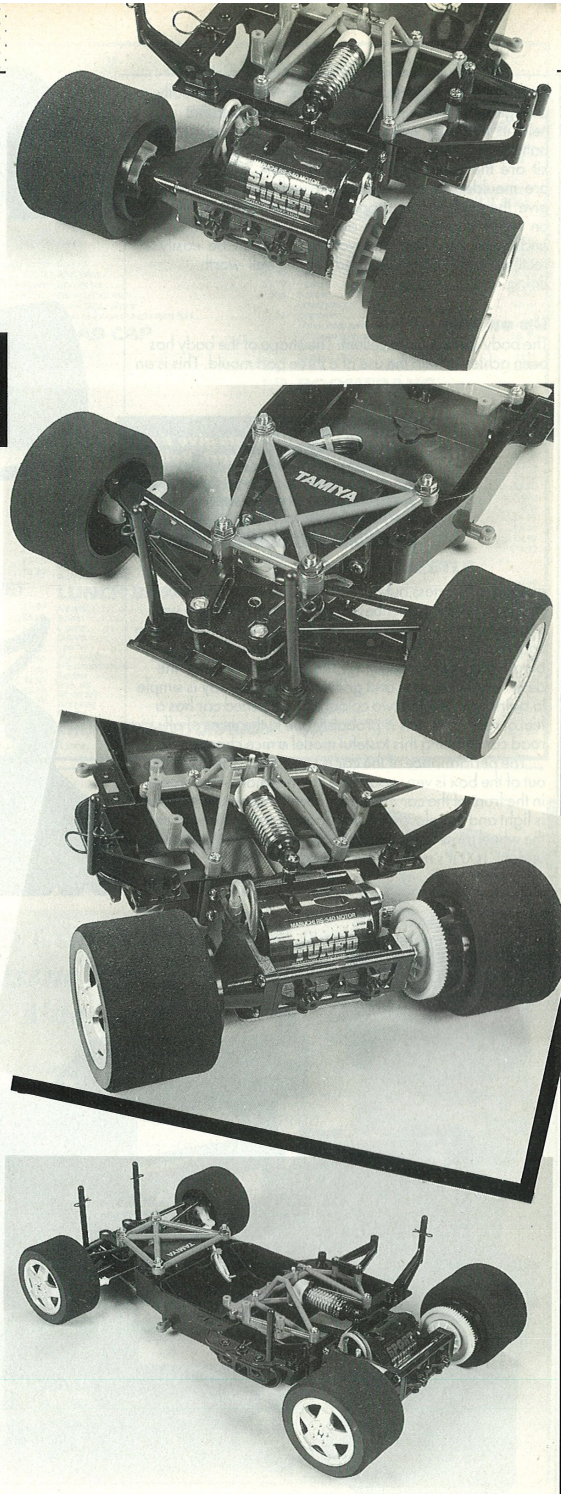
are fitted with the servo for the steering and the neat front bumper (which is very small). This whole assembly is then bolted through a plastic space frame section to the tub to form a rigid complete front end. As the front is bolted to the chassis, spacers are placed either above or below the tub to alter the ride height - this is quick, simple and allows the tyres to be run till they're almost bald! The rear of the car uses a standard T piece flexing idea as used in many forms of model car chassis design. The rear flex of the car is controlled by a damper and this gives a very smooth movement. The oil is supplied to fill the damper and the instructions give guide-lines to alter the handling by adjusting the oil. Handling can also be changed by adjusting the rear sideways movement of the rear pod by tightening or loosening the screw that locates the rear T piece. The rear axle is ball-raced in the kit, but there are two plastic bearings in the diff that can be replaced with ball-races. The diff unit uses 6 balls and a neat 8 ball thrustrace, this gives a smooth and free diff action. The motor in the kit is a standard 540 with metal bearings not ball-races. This has a fair deal of speed but an alternative motor and pinion would increase the excitment considerably. The chassis is finished off by the rear space frame moulding that toughens up the rear end. This also holds the rear damper and stops the

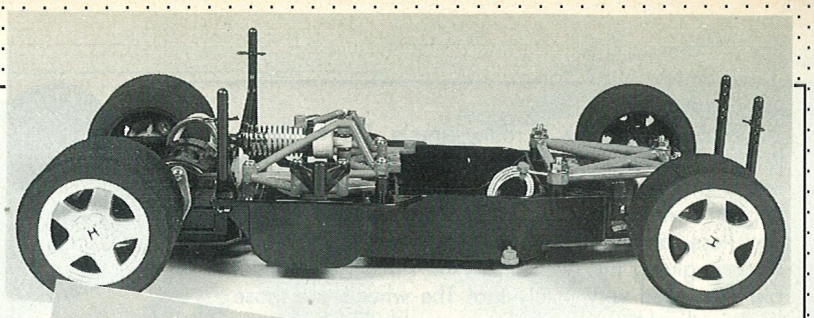


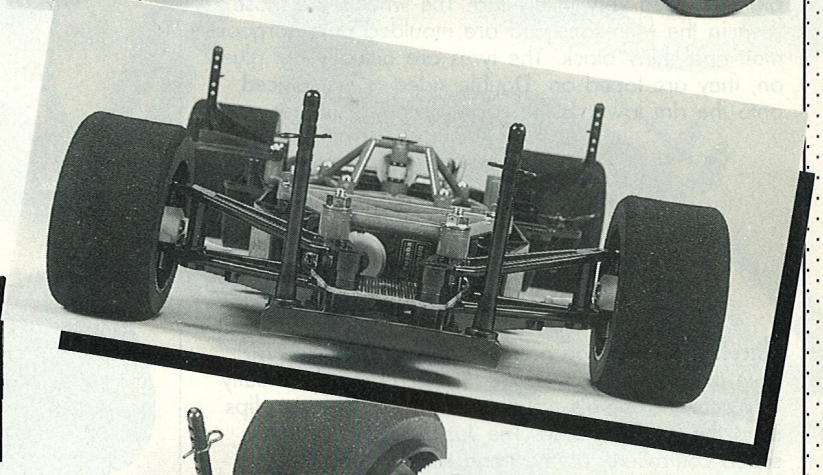
batteries from coming out. The batteries are actually changed by removing a neat little moulding that is held in place by a body clip, this is removed and the battery can slide in and out. The body mounts on the kit are the same as that in the Nissan 300ZX, they are moulded in plastic and are well positioned to give the body good support. The front wheels run on metal bearings, these are not too good a fit and allow the wheels to wobble. This can be easily rectified by 4 ball-races and this is well worth doing.

Up on Top

The body in the kit is excellent. The shape of the body has been achieved with the use of a three part mould. This is an expensive business but the end result is well worth the hassle as the shape echoes that of the real NSX very well giving the same beautiful shape. We gave the RCMC car a coat of a deep purple and finished the roof off in shiny black - just like the real thing. The stickers include all the detail work like lights and grille etc. and the body is simple to paint only needed two colours. The finished car has a feel of rear class, this is probably due to the mass of off-road cars making this tasteful model a nice change.

The performance of the car is surprising. The handling out of the box is very good and the inclusion of ball-races in the front of the car makes the speed impressive - the car is light and therefore fast! So it looks good, goes well and the wheel trims finish it off a treat!, and lets face it, for under £100 it's not bad for a Honda NSX!!





Right; The body posts give the NSX shell good support. Below; Space frame layout to hold rear damper. Bottom; Underside of the car reveals T piece and front glass fibre section.