



A slightly different path has been taken with the third kit in the Tractor Truck Series, as it takes the form of the thoroughly European Mercedes 1838LS. This truck differs from the first two vehicles in that it features a single rear axle as opposed to the double drive axles of the 'Hauler and 'Liner, and therefore has a shorter wheelbase.

The assembly sequence begins with the steering and gearshift servo bracket construction. The reason for this early involvement of the radio system is that the gear shift servo is sandwiched between the chassis rails, and to install this servo at a later stage would mean a degree dis-assembly.

As with the King Hauler and Globe Liner, steel leaf springs are used as the main components in the suspension. Tamiya supply these pre-built, leaving the modeller to attach them to the chassis via a realistic swing links and U bolts.

The single rear axle is the same unit used in the previous trucks, consisting of a scale differential housing with the working parts sealed inside. The injection moulded axle halves house a cast metal geared diff

and solid steel half-shafts which run in Tamiya's familiar sintered bronze bearings. As you might expect, these can be upgraded to ballraces which reduce friction and wear.

Up a gear...

The heart of the all three truck kits is the impressively engineered three speed "shift on the fly" gearbox. The drive train starts with a Mabuchi RS540SH electric motor, bolted directly to the front face of the gearbox. A brass pinion is attached to the motor's drive shaft, which turns a series of nylon and aluminium gears, with power eventually being delivered to the axle via a solid propeller shaft.

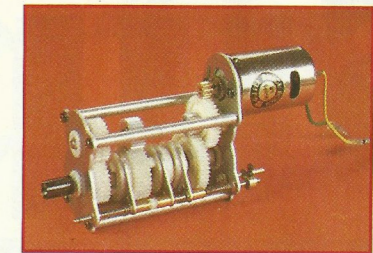
Assembly of the gearbox itself is quite complex, but Tamiya's

instructions are clear as ever and so long as the sequence is followed carefully, it all comes together with no hitches. A tube of ceramic grease will be found in the kit box, and a good proportion of it will be used in the gearbox alone. To change gear whilst on the move, a third channel on your radio control system will be required. The truck can still be driven with a two speed radio, but the gears must be shifted by hand when the model is stationary.

The chassis starts to look very substantial with all of the "equipment" in place, and it's not finished yet! Next to go on are the rear mud flap/indicator units, and here some careful airbrushing will be needed. The indicator lenses are supplied as clear styrene parts, and therefore need painting with Tamiya X26 Clear orange and X27 Clear Red.

KIT REVIEW

Reviewed by Mike Caine



Tilting cab

Another major difference between the Mercedes and the previous trucks is the incorporation of a forward tilting cab to allow access to the radio receiver. An internally mounted brace ensures that it doesn't fall forward, and the cab is secured by a large snap pin when lowered.

With all detail parts added such as windscreen wipers, wing mirrors and cab visor, Tamiya's Mercedes 1838LS truck is all but complete. A Tamiya nicad pack was slotted into the holder under the

chassis, the radio gear switched on and the vehicle was ready drive. With a model of this size and specification, the handling is surprisingly agile. Corners can be taken fast, and so long as you remembered to glue the front tyres to their rims, steering response remains precise throughout.

To sum up, the third tractor truck from Tamiya is a good looker, and whilst it uses components from the previous two kits, manages to look substantially different to those models. It goes without saying that this kit was a joy to build, with absolutely no problems encountered during assembly.

TEURO TRUCK

After the King Hauler and Globe Liner Tamiya are headed to Europe with the Mercedes 1838LS