



## The Tamiya Mercedes CLKs

### TA03R Electric - Alan Leighton

When I opened the box, I looked at what seemed like an RS chassis. After a closer look, I realised that it was longer than that and curiosity got the better of me, and out came the tools.

### Assembly

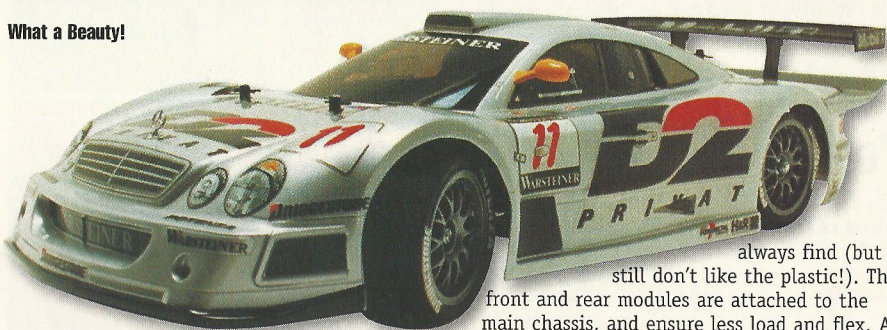
The manual, as always with a Tamiya - was superb. Easy to understand and to follow. All parts were clearly marked and the drawings were pretty good. After inspection, I decided that the chassis provided was a pretty good base for a four wheel drive. However, I have never been a fan of the material used and believe that the material needs to be more durable.

The differentials were straightforward and easy to assemble. When assembling the diff, make sure it is well lubricated as this will improve performance. Attaching the diffs to the gearboxes situated either side, looked different and interesting. I began to wonder what the performance would be like. The bevel geared diffs look solid and promising. It felt quiet tough, and hopefully keeps it's promising strength. No doubt, I will let you know after the test run. It also seems, that you probably don't need to nurse it like some others. Low maintenance springs to mind, and I am sure I can feel a smile appearing.

The assembly of the two gearboxes, which are the basis for the front and rear modules, will bolt securely to the top and bottom of the main chassis.

Now the CKL is coming to life.

What a Beauty!



always find (but I still don't like the plastic!). The front and rear modules are attached to the main chassis, and ensure less load and flex. A fiberglass strip, which is bolted down, creates a second level and takes care of any other flex which might be left.

### Shocks

My honest opinion, during assembly, is that the shocks could be higher spec to do the car justice. The key to the performance of any racing car is to carry speed through the corners. For this you need consistent and reliable suspension. Whilst the shocks are easy to assemble by following the manual, and are ideal for the first timer, it may take some track time to settle the car.

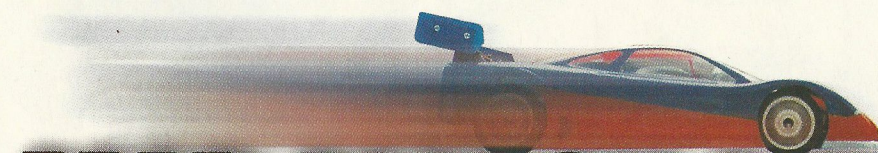
### Chassis Layout

Once the oil filled dampers have been attached, the layshafts at front and rear are connected by a long belt that will transmit drive to either end and all four wheels. The way Tamiya have designed this mean machine, in modular structure, makes the assembly over-all fairly easy and also reveals that a lot of thought and detail have gone into this pretty good looking machine. The refinement I noticed was the smooth chassis without any moulding marks as you would expect, but not

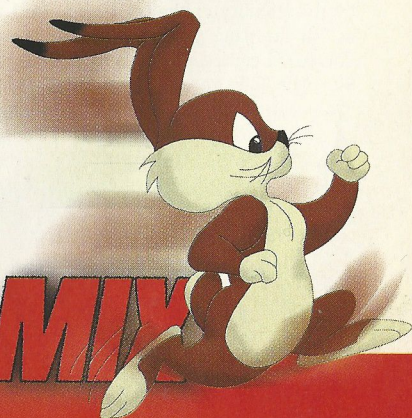
### Electrics

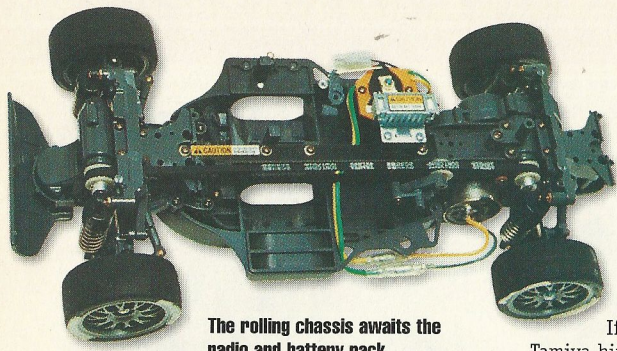
The manual speed controller sits proudly on top of the carbon fibre plate, the receiver is housed underneath. There is plenty of room in this compartment and no excuse for untidy

'The end result is outstanding, all you want to do is sit and look at it.'

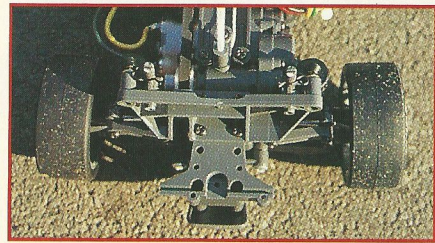


# MAD MARCH MEGA MIX





The rolling chassis awaits the radio and battery pack



Rear end of the TA03R shows the mounting point for the optional stabiliser/anti-roll bar

wiring. The steering servo is placed near, or almost over the top of the cells. So far, so good. Everything has fitted easily together without a lot of elbow grease.

## Finishing Touch

The mask set supplied fitted superbly. The shell, now sprayed in silver grey, looks pretty aggressive. The shell required two coats of paint, but one can will cover it easily twice. Remember to remove all protective film once the paint has dried. There is a theory, that if it looks good, it will work well! Never ever rush this job, as you will spoil a brilliant shell.

Now comes the fiddly work! All parts, like wing mirrors, upper and lower rear wings and the Merc badge, have to be sprayed separately.

Now it's time to dress it up. Apply all the stickers, labour time around 2 gearboxes to five stickers but it was worth it!

## Show Time

Final look, what a cracker! To give it the perfect, aggressive racing look, I placed the shell as low as possible over the chassis. Having seen the real CLK and looking at the Tamiya CLK, where is the difference? Well mine is a 1:10 scale, and certainly cheaper!

## Road Test

The CLK certainly looks good. Now it's time for home truth. It is very predictable car and responses well. Easy to drive, which is helped by the stability of the rear wing. Am I driving at full throttle?; yes I am! Where is the speed? The speed controller needs to come into the 90's. The CLK's capability on a flat surface is

very good, it holds the track well. This car would be competitive in its own class. It will run for around 8 minutes at a push, providing you don't 'hammer' it too hard. An ideal car for a beginner but still remember the L-plates.

## Conclusion

If it is designed for fun driving, Tamiya hit the nail on the head. Should it be designed for competitive racing, to race it against other manufacturers, it would require several modifications, i.e. suspension and definitely speed. It is fun to drive and even a novice can get it to move straight-away (the girlfriend managed the figure of eight without damaging the shell). Overall, a good looking car lacking only a little more speed to match its aggressive appearance.

## Quick Spec

4 Wheel drive - belt drive transmission  
Double wishbone suspension with oil filled shocks  
Mid mounted Standard Tamiya Kit Motor  
Geared differentials  
3 Step mechanical Speed controller  
Plastic tub chassis

## Tester Kit

KO Vantage Radio gear  
2 KO PS 712 servo  
Yokomo 1700 Stickpack batteries

## Likes

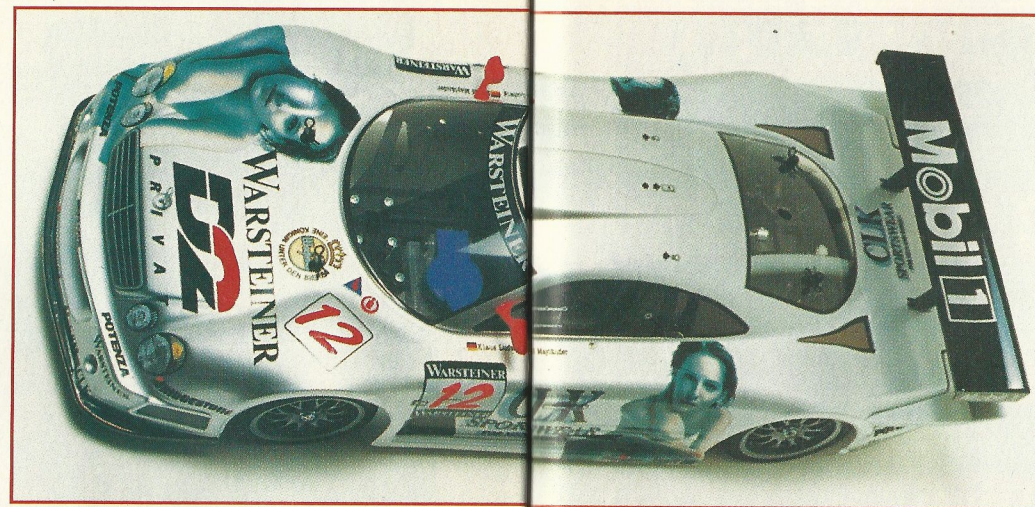
Stunning looks  
Easy to assemble  
Smooth transmission  
Superb manual, ideal for beginners

## Dislikes

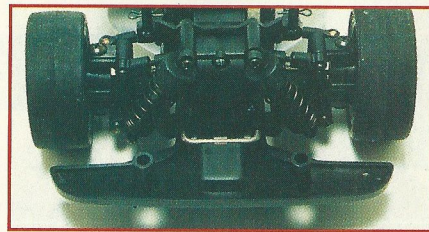
Loose steering and suspension joints  
Shocks could be a better quality  
Too many hop-up parts needed

## TGX Nitro - Terry Atkinson

Back in the August issue of RRCi Chris Fife-Schaw reviewed the Tamiya 1/8 scale Mercedes CLK-GTR with Nitro I.C. Power. Also in that issue was a review of the 'world champs' at South Shields, it was at the world champs that I met your Ed', Peter 'E', shortly after that he got in touch with me about spraying some bodysells for the mag' thanks to a conversation with Kon Zazee, thanks Kon! Anyway I



The decal set is very attractive, if a little challenging here and there!

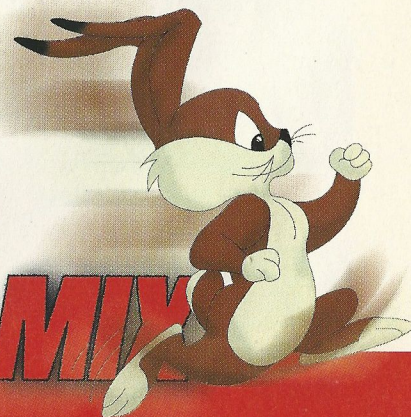


The normal theme of modular construction means simplicity of construction

started doing shells for the mag'. Then Peter E asked me if he I wanted to do a review so I said yes, and here it is. Its an identical car as the one Chris reviewed back in August. That is, it may look identical from the outside but it isn't, because this is the new Tamiya 1:10th scale Nitro TGX Mercedes CLK-GTR.

## The Build Up

I'm not going to bore you all with a blow by blow account on every part of the construction, because the instructions do all that, all I'm going to do is go through the bits you need to know. As with all Tamiya kits everything goes together absolutely perfect. The build starts with two geared diffs which fit into two gearboxes. The gearboxes are exactly the same right down to the very last detail, which is a good idea for beginners as there will be no confusion as to which is the front and rear. On to the 'boxes fit all the suspension and drive shaft parts etc. The drive shafts are the dog-bone type and not the u/j type, and you are advised to grease the ends of the driveshafts but I never do as this tends to attract dust, dirt and small stones which cause more damage



than not greasing them.

Underneath the car there is a 2.5mm thick aluminium chassis which is very strong and looks as though it would take the heaviest of crashes. Onto this bolts the gearboxes, radio plate, engine and so on. Now for my first moan, the engine and other parts all bolt on to the chassis with non-countersunk screws which can easily get damaged if it bounces over curbs etc. and during the test one came off and got lost! But it will also make it difficult to remove the screws if they get worn down especially if you use thread lock.

All the steering arms and suspension arms are adjustable. The kit measurements for these are a little bit out. The steering arms are set with toe-out, this means that, when looking from above the wheels point outwards and this can cause inconsistent straight line running. They were adjusted so that they were parallel. The upper suspension arms on the front were fine but the rear arms were set with quite a lot of camber (the top of the wheel leans inwards), so I adjusted it half a turn out. The shocks are Tamiya's plastic type and are very high quality and move very smoothly. I started using the oil and springs provided in the kit, just to get as close to the standard set-up as I could. After putting the shocks on the car, I thought, "mmmmm the fronts a little bit high" and yes, I had forgotten to put the packers inside the

front shocks -packers are the little bits of plastic that act as a sort of a spacer that fits underneath the piston to limit the travel of the shocks-therefore the front of the car was a little bit high. This was quickly resolved by fitting a spring of a similar rate that was a bit shorter, which levelled the car out nicely.

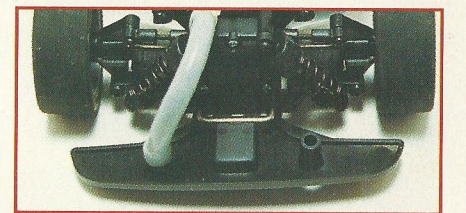
All of the radio equipment fits neatly under a large black plate which seems like a good idea, until that is, you want to change something. The whole thing has to be taken off and when the car has been fully built this can be an absolute pain. The good point about it is that, if fuel gets spilled whilst refuelling the plate will protect the radio gear.

The wheels are superb mouldings and really finish the car off, I would recommend gluing the tyres onto the wheels as they may tend to come off under cornering. Do be careful when gluing them on as the tyre may flick back and splash the glue upwards towards your eye (just ask Wayne Lander) so if you are a junior modeller I would recommend asking an adult to help. The tyres are not the belted kind but I don't think that the car really goes fast enough for ballooning to be a problem. This does not take from the fact that they really do have a good amount of grip for a kit spec tyre.

That is basically it for building the car, all you have to do is follow the instructions, as with all Tamiya kits the instructions are of the highest quality and show exactly how to build the kit (even the shocks).

## One Elle Of A Body

This body has got to be the most beautifully precise piece of moulding I have ever seen in 1:10th scale. The lines are absolutely perfect' and all the edges which should be are nice and square/sharp. The body was sprayed using the Tamiya silver aerosol spray which gives an absolutely great silky smooth looking finish, about 3 or 4 coats was enough without having to back it up with another (the Tamiya window masks were used where required). The door mirrors were sprayed using Pactra racing red. The rear lower body spoiler was brush painted with flat aluminium, mainly because the local model shop didn't have any gloss. The rear wing



The plumbing for the exhaust helps to keep the car clean

was spayed using gloss black, this is my only moan about the shell, being sprayed in gloss black, it takes a long time to dry and impatient youngsters could mess it up at this point. Why they didn't make this out of black plastic? Now it was time for the difficult part of the kit. There really did seem to be hundreds of stickers in this kit, most of them were quite easy to put on but others weren't. The character stickers of the man and the woman were quite difficult to get right, especially on the front over the headlights because the front of this car has more curves than Kate Winslett. To get it right I used the 'hot air' gun technique, what I did was to get the position some where right and stick a little bit on the wheel arch area and then warm the sticker up with a hot air gun until it waivers. It should now be warm enough to be stretched and smoothed over the headlights and curves. The end result is outstanding, all you want to do is sit and look at it. I spent about 8 hours on a Sunday with a few breaks in between but it was worth it.

## Time To Start Running

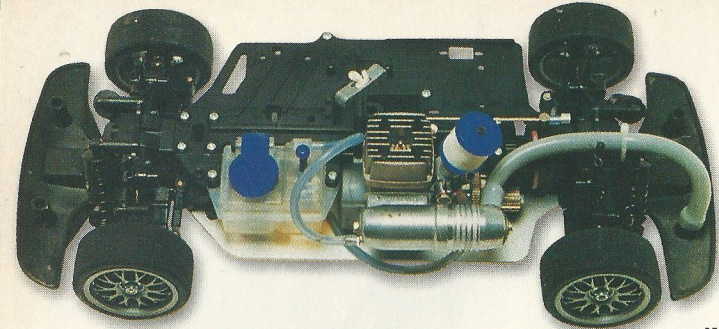
Tibshel was the venue for the test with its long straights, tight corners and long fast banked corner. After running the CLK through about 3 tanks of fuel I put it on the track, minus the body. I never have been confident about running Nitro Cars with the body on because they always seem to cut out on me. I did another tanks worth of running without the body. Acceleration is very good, perhaps a little bit to good for the damp and greasy conditions because all it wanted to do was spin like bambi on ice but I managed to get it sorted after a while. Straight away I realised that it wasn't very fast down the long straights, it seems to be a little under geared, but I would think that Tamiya would be bringing a gearing set out for it to get around the problem. The car handled very well through the fast corners but always wanted to swap ends through the slower corners. After looking closely at the car the camber on the back was still very high, so I adjusted it so that the wheels were almost upright and took it out for another spin. This time it was the front that was digging in which was causing it to spin out through the slow corners. In I came again and this time changed the front springs for 'Schumacher blue' spring which are a little bit stiffer than the standard ones. This time it was just about right, it did step out a little bit but not as much as before and I was able to catch the back end with a little bit of opposite lock. Being a regular Tibshel winter series runner it was good to compare it with my F1. The difference being that my F1 is electric and runs on foam tyres whereas the Merc' runs on rubber and is obviously Nitro Powered. Because of the lack of speed the Merc' was about 3-4 seconds a lap slower than my F1. I then decided to put



Now choose just one, go on, try!

'The wheels are superb mouldings'

MAD MARCH MEGA MIX



The rolling chassis is dominated by the large plastic radio plate

the bodyshell on to see if it made any difference to handling - as with electric scale saloons - it was then that I realised I hadn't cut the holes out of the shell to aid cooling, and I hadn't brought my cutting gear with me. It must have been all the excitement of getting it running on track that made me forget! Anyway, I put the shell on and just did about 2 laps just to see if it made any difference but it didn't. With the car being quite heavy anyway, the light body shell and shallow wing angles didn't have much effect on the car, not enough to notice anyway. So off came the shell and I just carried on having fun. It does make a difference being able to run for about 10-15 minutes instead of 5 minutes without

having to worry about charging batteries and so on.

## Final Thoughts

Not being that familiar with Nitro Cars (I had a nitro 10 about 5 years ago) it took me about 10 minutes to get it started, but after that it started within about 4-5 pulls every time. This would be an ideal kit for the starter to the world of I.C. Powered cars, but it would be easier for the beginner if there was a larger pinion gear supplied so that there wasn't as much acceleration. The quality of the kit is really good as with all Tamiya kits and it is enormous fun to drive. I don't think it would be good as a competition kit unless you wanted to spend more money on upgrades, but as a run around for a beginner it is ideal. All in all its a good kit of high quality and would be an ideal gift to the beginner. You never know Tamiya might introduce Nitros into their Eurocup like Kyosho do! **RRCI**

## Quick Spec

1/10 scale shaft driven 4wd. Powered by Tamiya FS-12 LT engine. Plastic coil over oil filled shocks.

## Tester Kit

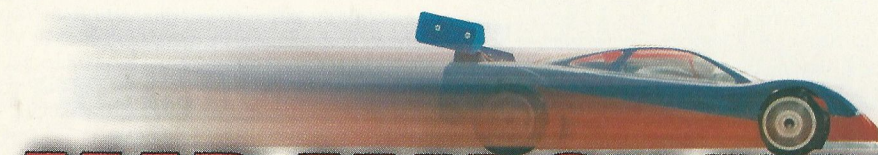
Acorns techniplus 2 channel radio. Model technics 10% glow fuel Glow battery

## Likes

Easy construction  
Excellent bodyshell

## Dislikes

Not much top end speed and too much acceleration.



# MAD MARCH MEGA MIX

