

# BEETLE MANIA

Ron Cunnington puts Tamiya's 'Monster Beetle' to the test, and votes it a hit!

The last time a Beetle had as much impact as this newcomer from Tamiya was in 1962, when John, Paul, George and Ringo hit the charts with 'Love me Do' — they never looked back, and with the 'Monster Beetle' neither will Tamiya.

The 'Monster Beetle' comes packaged in the usual excellent Tamiya style with major components individually packed in see-through bags or blister packs. All parts are clearly numbered, making identification foolproof and all nuts, bolts, washers, etc. are individually packed in groups for ease of assembly. Tamiya have the layout of their kits and instruction manuals down to a fine art, so much so that even the complete novice should have no trouble with the assembly.

## 'Caddy' crusher!

The 'Beetle' is a monstrous 1/10th scale electric powered Off-Road car crusher, riding on massive 130mm semi-pneumatic rubber tyres which makes travel over the roughest terrain — and even over the odd 'Cadillac' or two — as easy as falling off the proverbial log, and although a 'high-rider' with 50mm of ground clearance! the positioning of the mechanics and Ni-Cad pack give it a low centre of gravity with handling to match.

The space frame chassis is derived from its stablemate the 'Blackfoot' sired by the 'Frog' out of the original 'Ford Ranger' — all from Tamiya — and is made of lightweight ABS resin which provides protection for the mechanics under the toughest of conditions. The chassis proves to be a good home for the radio gear and speed control with an all-weather cover keeping out the elements.

The four-wheel independent suspension — double wishbone at the front, trailing arm at the rear — has four large capacity coil-over dampers, all adjustable for differing track conditions.

Power to those huge rear boots is delivered by a Mabuchi 'RS-540' motor through a sealed gearbox/differential unit and although upgrading with 'Black' or 'Technigold' motors is possible, take it from me it's not necessary — this monster will go up the side of a house.

The bodyshell is injection-moulded in high impact plastic with a good degree of detail — the only bolt-on-goodies being the front and rear light clusters.

The choice of ABS plastic for the bodyshell gives you more options when it comes to finish. Virtually any type of paint can be used, so you can add a touch of realism to your model, but make sure to use a primer if using cellulose car sprays. Tamiya's choice of colour for the bodyshell was red, and although I agreed that red gave immediate impact, I felt the body had a style and sensuality that deserved that something extra. So without further ado a couple of coats of 'Red Metalflake' were laid down with a topcoat of clear gloss, add Tamiya's self-adhesive vinyl decals and Voila — beauty and the beast, all rolled into one.

## Performance ...

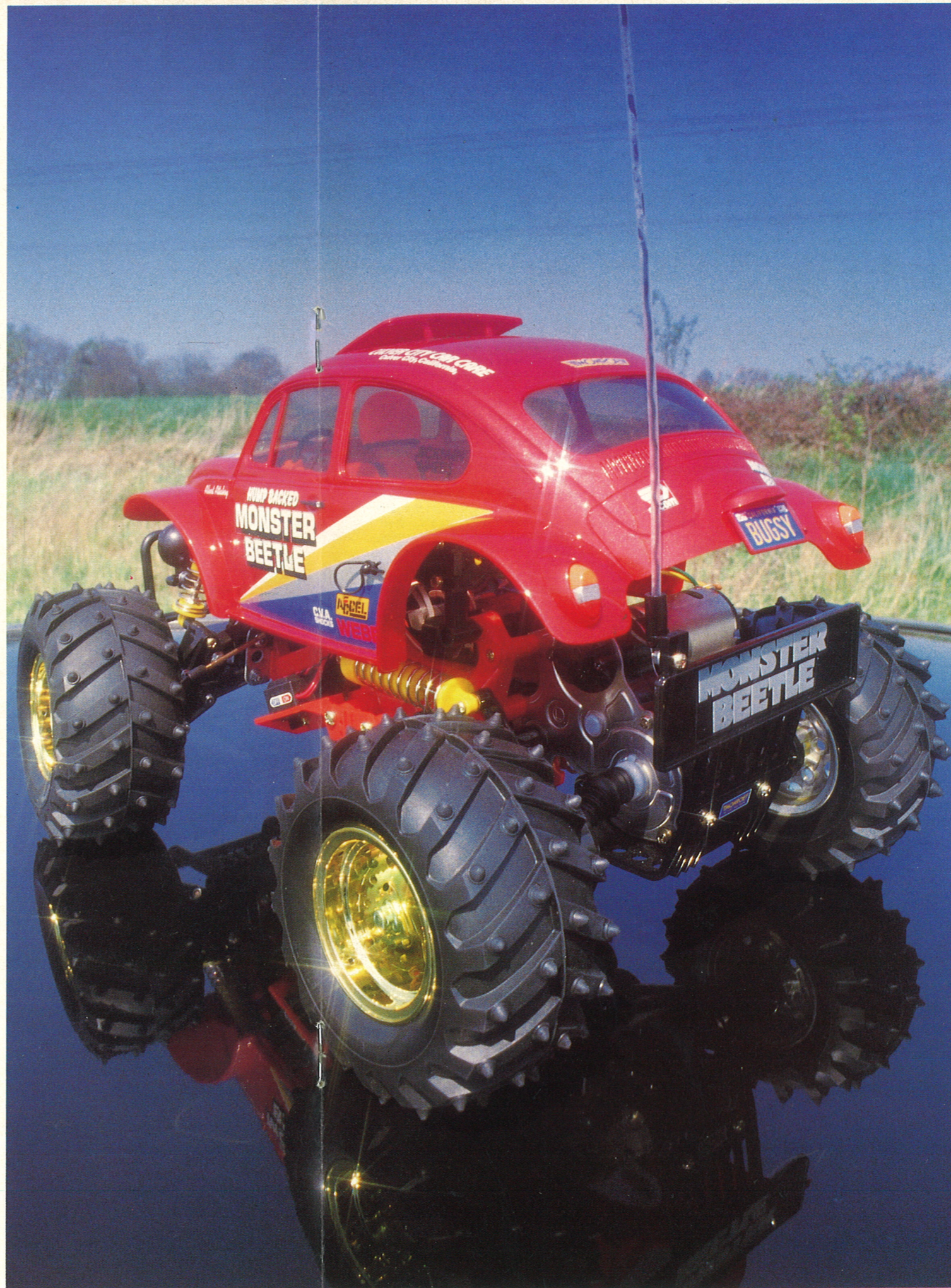
But, I hear you ask, how does it go? Well, all I can say is that if you have half the fun and enjoyment from your super-charged 4WD six-gear hot-shot racer than I've had with the 'Monster Beetle' then good luck to you.

This Beetle is built for fun, and that is not to say it isn't fast and responsive, because it is, but when this bug is popping around the back garden, flying down the drive, and turning on a sixpence you realise that Tamiya have come out of the closet — or rather off the track and gone into the entertainment business.

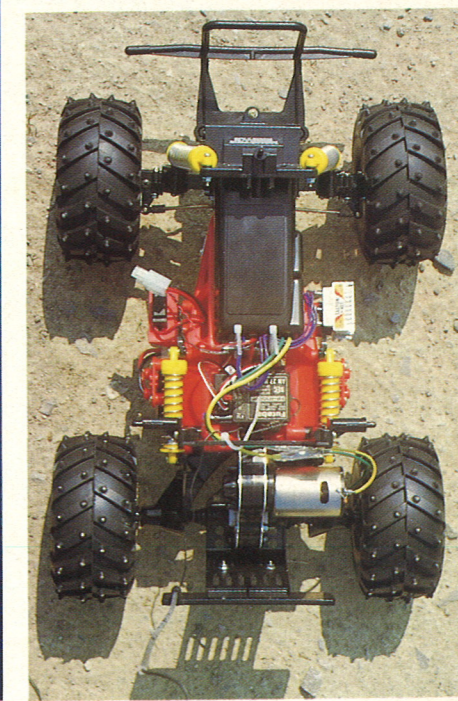
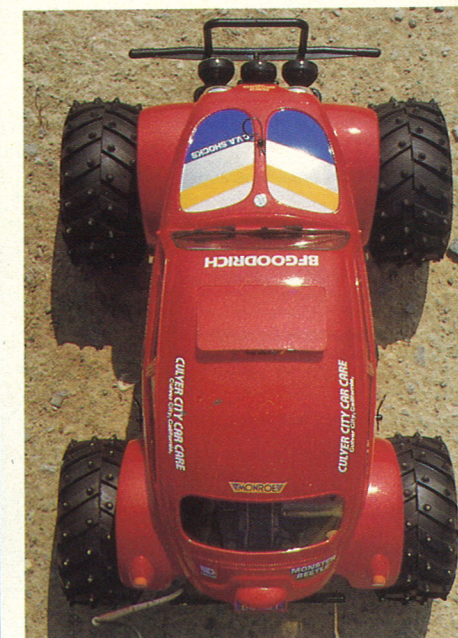
It's a winner!

Available through all Tamiya stockists.

Price: £90.00 approx.



Left: the Beetle standing proud (don't get in its way!). Above: side view showing those tyres. Below: from above, note open sunroof. Bottom: the works, very neat and tidy.



TRACK TEST