

OVAL TIME

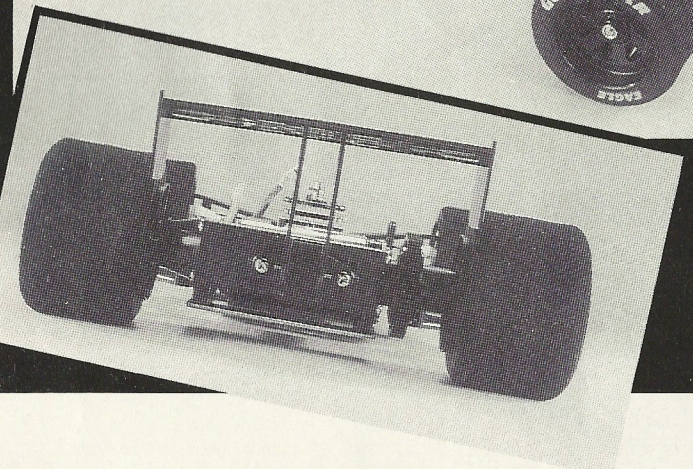
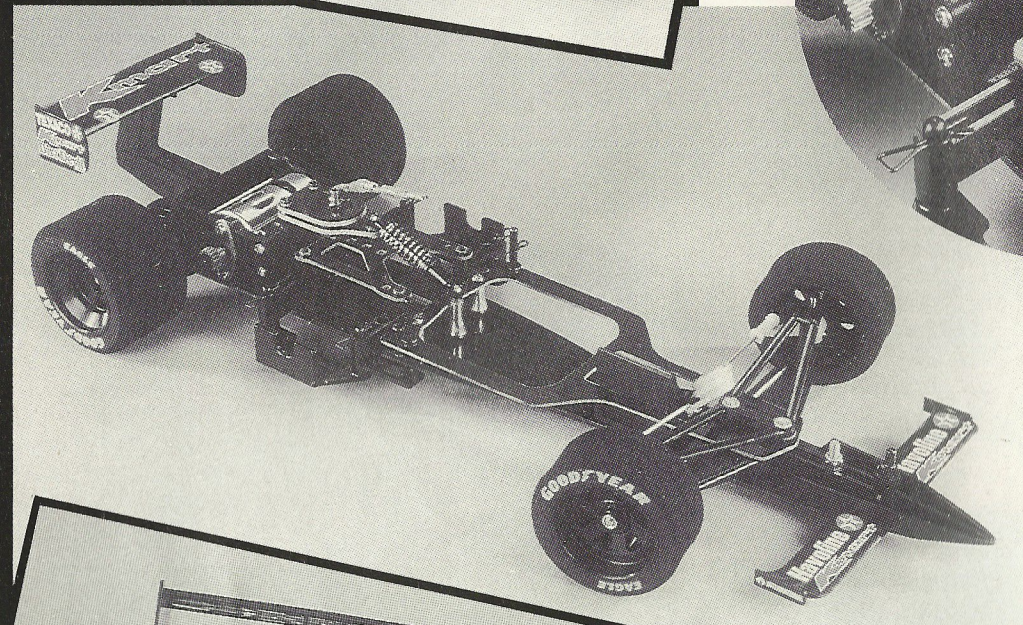
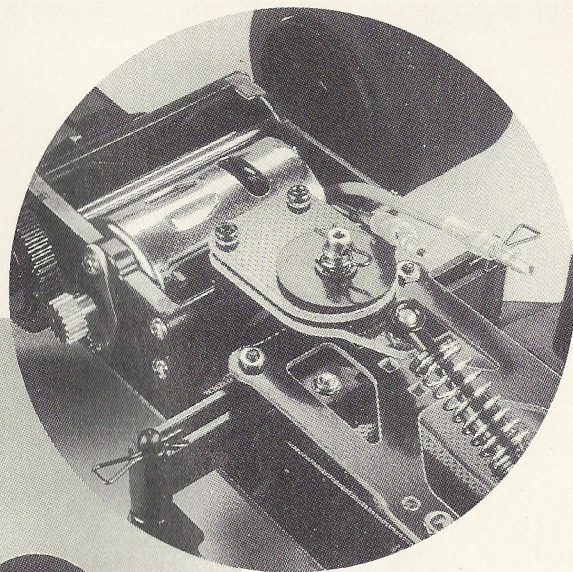
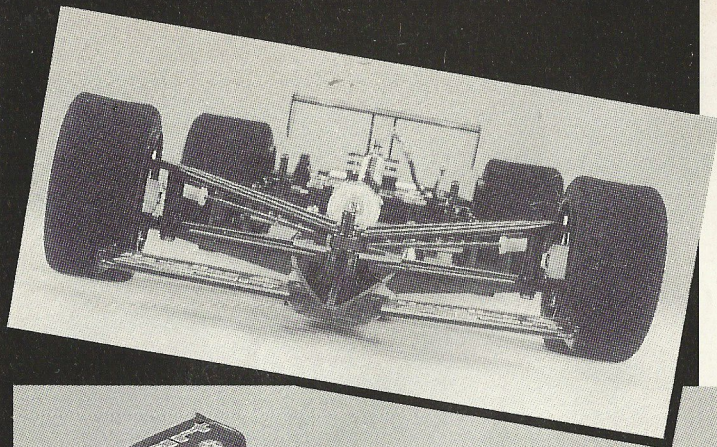
Tamiya made F1 RC kits and launched the F1 Eurocup - now they have the Mansell Lola in oval form with a new chassis and possibilities of an oval series....



When Nigel Mansell decided to leave the F1 circus and go East to race in the 1993 Indy car championship it was a blow to the British racing fans and to the world of F1 - losing their reigning World Champion was bad news. The Mansell success story though continues, and he must be credited with educating the world on the excitement and closeness of the racing stateside.

Another bonus from a driver such as Mansell taking up the sport in a different area is that model companies like Tamiya decide to make models of the cars in the limelight. The Lola T93/00 as driven by Mansell is now known almost as a household name and Tamiya have done the business with a scale like oval RC car kit of the championship winning car following in the lines of their F1 series of kits.





Long, long Lola is sleeker and lower looking than its F1 brothers. Top; Sliding plate system is borrowed from latest F1 chassis.

The kit like all the Tamiya F1 cars is incredibly simple in chassis design. Basically the rear of the car is formed by a four piece plastic box that bolts together via self tapping screws to give a tough unit that holds the electric motor. This is then attached to a glass fibre 'T' piece that is the chassis at the rear of the car. This in turn is fixed to the main chassis via a flexible set of mounts - this is basically the cars rear suspension and this slight 'flexing' and movement give the grip. The amount of movement allowed is controlled by a sliding plate system and a spring unit - this system is proven RC car technology and on smooth surfaces is an ideal lightweight and simple design.

The rest of the chassis is longer than its F1 brothers just like the real thing.

A steel axle and gear drive unit is also at the rear featuring a ball type diff unit. The battery compartment on the car is again a well thought out unit that uses quick release pins to allow the battery to be changed, this is a great improvement on the old tie-wrap idea that was used previously on the earlier Tamiya F1 kits.

Front suspension is simplicity

itself, a moulded plastic set of wishbones are fixed in position while a small spring and sliding king pin allow the suspension to move around 4-5mm. This is a slick and uncomplicated system that gives the car more than enough grip.

New wheels and tyres have been made for the Lola and of course in true Tamiya style these mimic the real cars lines perfectly, complete with yellow tyre decals.

On the outside the Lola has been modelled using the latest moulding techniques, the front and rear wings are moulded in plastic and are tough and flexible. The lexan body is of course beautifully moulded, the real Lola is a sleek, long, wide car and the model is faithful to these aspects.

After a quick coat of both black and white paint the long task of applying the many stickers takes place - these Indy cars have so many sponsors!

Racing out there?

The question that next comes to mind is where to race this car. It is not clear as yet if the model will be able to compete in the Tamiya Eurocup or whether there will be a separate class, these is hardly any ovals in the UK although the Tamiya Racing Circuit in Basildon does have just such a track.

On the track the car behaves just like the F1 cars, a touch of understeer and don't accelerate too hard! The car appears to be much longer and lower than the F1 cars although in reality it isn't much at all.

Another class kit from Tamiya that will probably start the trend as they always do.

Available during 1994 in all good model shops.

Oval not track

The Tamiya kit is of a car raced at an oval circuit, therefore the car has small wings front and rear. When the real car was raced on road tracks such as Long Beach the

cars were fitted with big chunky wings for maximum downforce and this would in some ways have seemed a better bet for RC as the cars do tend to use the wings as bumpers during racing...