



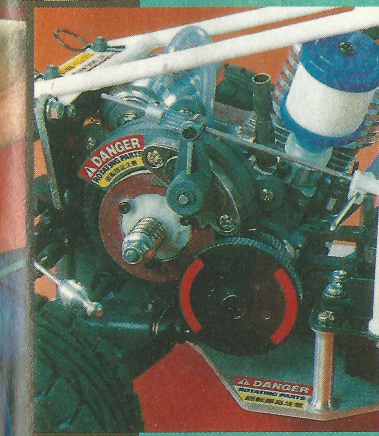
Give it  
gas!



Exclusive

It has been a long time coming, but the Tamiya TR-15T Gas powered truck has been well worth the wait

TAMIYA TR-15T



For so long Tamiya have been the outright kings of electric radio control car kits. They started the off road boom and have perfected their range so that there is an easy to build high quality kit for everyone. An area they have never been involved in though is gas power, but of course as you will already know from our loud cover Tamiya have gone Gas!

The TR-15T is the number given to the truck which is rare for Tamiya as they normally give names to their releases.

The basic specification is a 2WD truck with oil filled dampers, alloy chassis, FS15 engine, disc brake and semi slick tyres for on road use. The car features a lexan bodysell, plastic roll cage and an exposed engine bay at the rear. With all this in mind how does it go together, and is it any good?

Into the box...

For a start this is the first 1:10 IC car kit that is presented in the box like this, Tamiya's style and experience means that the box artwork is superb and this is continued when the lid is removed, everything laid out in place in an attractive and logical way - beware if you go and look at one of these

kits in a model shop you will be tempted.

Construction of the truck starts in the depths of the gearbox. The TR-15T has an adjustable ball differential made from a plastic spurgear, ten balls, steel plates and alloy pressure discs. This needs to be adjusted to the correct setting so that it is free but does not slip, the instruction manual is very clear about this and it is important for the performance of the truck. The diff and a range of other gears are assembled into the gearbox casing along with a set of ballraces. For Tamiya enthusiasts the truck is the first kit from Tamiya to use a new style of plastic. Although the gearbox is loaned from the Dyna Storm the new

plastic makes the unit stiffer and stronger.

### Keep cool

The chassis on the truck is made from aluminium alloy. It is finished neatly with no sharp edges and is fully countersunk, the chassis is made from aluminium to aid cooling for the engine and is also very strong – good as high speed accidents may occur. Various plastic mouldings bolt to the chassis and all seem to have a double job, most being supports for the top layer chassis.

The suspension arms on the car are taken from the Dyna Blaster, these are long in design and fix to the chassis via plastic mounts and

clever self gripping press nuts. Tamiya have used strong plastics throughout on the suspension for toughness and a system of small flanged bushings are used on the moving parts of the suspension for smooth action and easy maintenance. The gearbox of the truck slips in between the rear suspension arms and the rear of the truck starts to take shape. The

rest of the rear suspension is added along with a rear anti-roll bar, this is to allow the suspension to be soft for bumps yet stiff in roll for fast cornering.

An unusual feature of the TR-15T that other IC trucks don't have is a slipper clutch. This bolts to the gearbox and acts in two ways. 1. as an aid to easy driving by slipping slightly under hard acceleration, the engine is very powerful and getting out of corners is made much easier by reducing wheelspin. 2. the diff



and drive system are protected from shocks that could damage the gears. The slipping clutch is full adjustable and is an excellent feature.

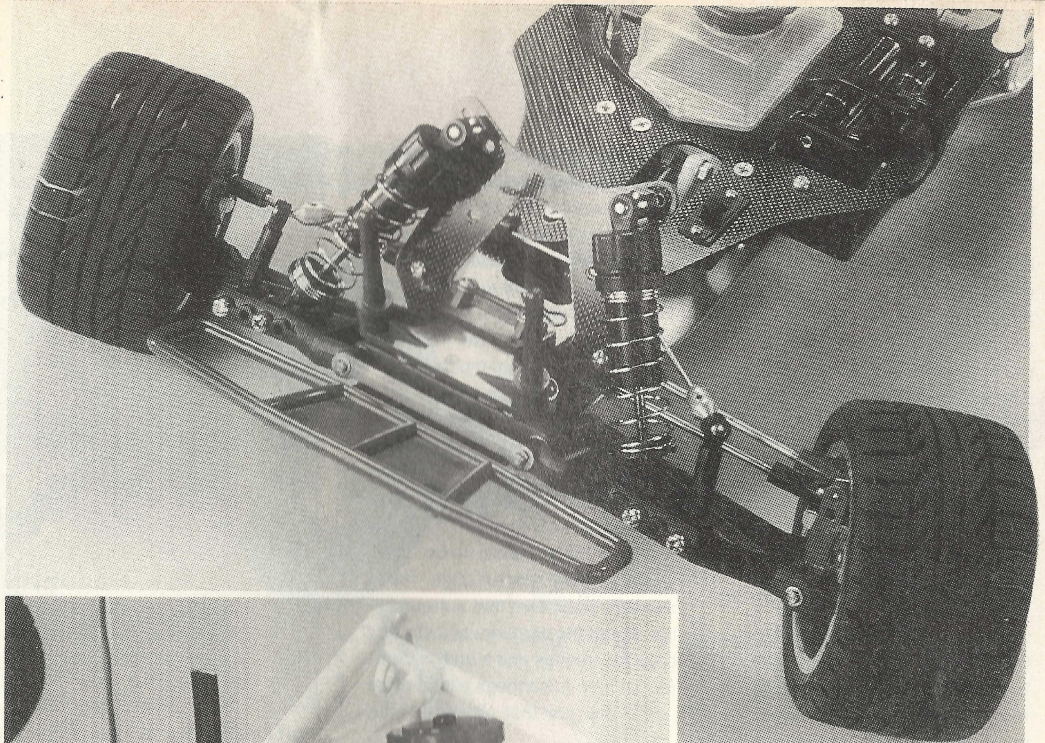
### Up front

The front suspension and steering parts are next to be assembled to the chassis. The suspension is again of Dyna Blaster design but has a different shock bracket and parts moulded from new plastic. At various points on the suspension small steel reinforcing plates are used to beef up the suspension mounts, these are obviously used due to the extra rigours of IC use. All the steering arms are the new ball joint type seen on various Tamiya vehicles, they are bigger in design than the original black ball joints and give more movement allowing longer suspension and steering without any binding. A front bumper is attached at this stage and is approximately two thirds of the width of the car protecting all but the wheels.

Dampers on the TR-15T are oil filled with rubber seals that take up the vacuum during their use, these work smoothly and are leak free. Being plastic they are also light and keep the oil clean. The springs and shock spring holders are fitted to the dampers and the spring stiffness is adjusted by a series of collars in various widths that are popped into place. The dampers fit to the suspension arms on ball joints and are easily removed for oil changes etc. The front of the car also features an anti-roll bar for handling purposes.

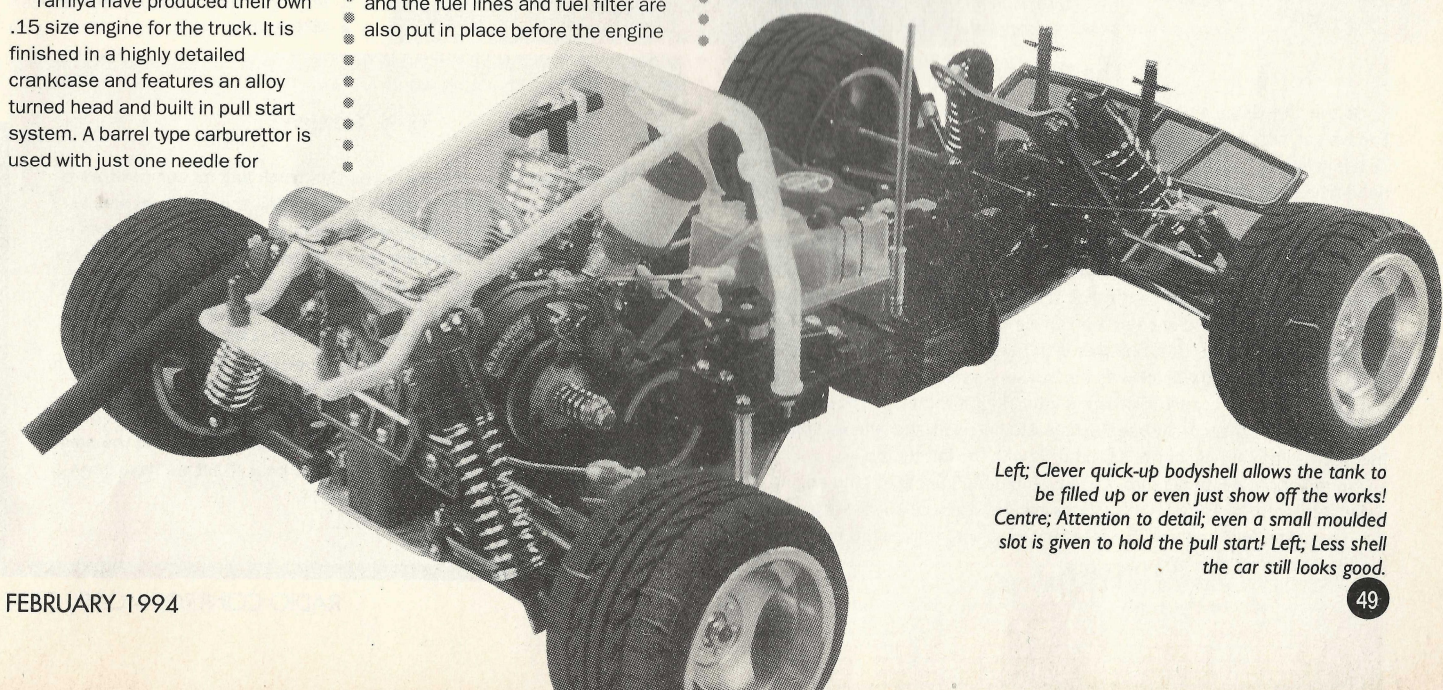
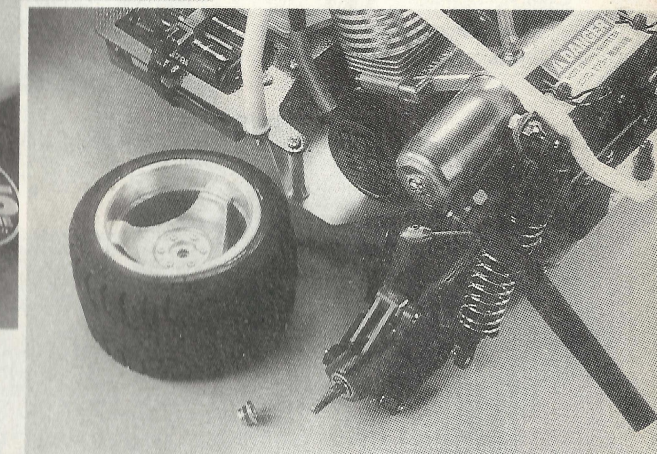
### Now add power..

Tamiya have produced their own .15 size engine for the truck. It is finished in a highly detailed crankcase and features an alloy turned head and built in pull start system. A barrel type carburettor is used with just one needle for



is put onto the chassis. Four screws hold the engine in place via the alloy engine mount, the engine sits at an angle tipped forward, this allows the engine to not sit too high in the truck and will give better handling. At this stage the air filter is assembled but not fitted as the throttle linkage needs to be done first, the filter is typical of Tamiya

adjustment. The clutch needs to be assembled onto the engine as does the flywheel and clutch drum. The silencer and engine mounts are next to be placed onto the engine and the fuel lines and fuel filter are also put in place before the engine



Left; Clever quick-up bodysell allows the tank to be filled up or even just show off the works! Centre; Attention to detail; even a small moulded slot is given to hold the pull start! Left; Less shell the car still looks good.

and this kit, beautifully designed and moulded and keeping the dirt out with ease.

All gas powered cars need brakes, – they go faster than electrics and with no reverse to jam it into when heading towards a wall you need something to slow them down. The TR-15T has a floating disc and twin steel pads for this. The unit fits onto the slipper clutch output and slows down the gearbox rather than each wheel like on a real car. A small cleverly placed spring keeps the pads away from the disc when not in use and the unit seems to have plenty of stopping power.

Next to be slipped into place is the fuel tank. This features a flip top for fast refills and a pump to feed the fuel round to the carb before starting. The tank is moulded in a clear plastic so that you can keep an eye on when your next top up is required.

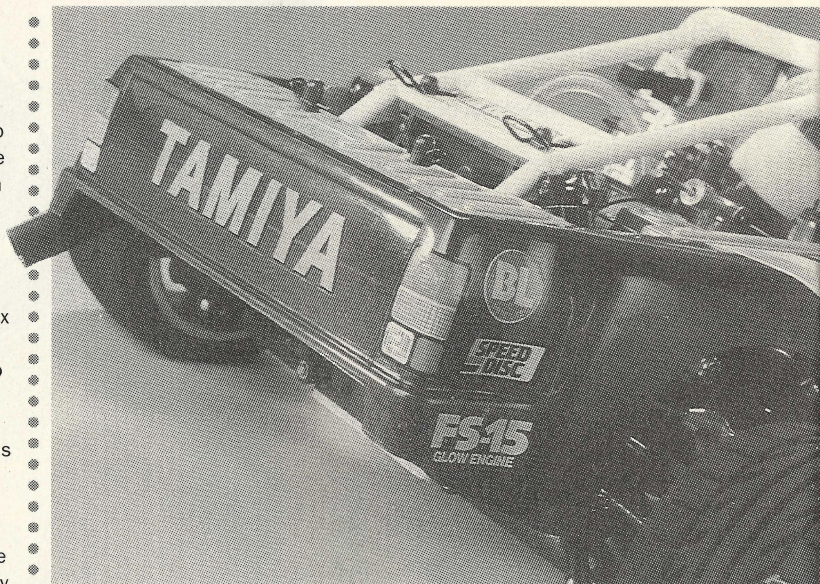
### Setting up the radio

For the TR-15T you will need a two channel radio system that has a separate battery box and switch. Some radios these days don't have all these components so beware..

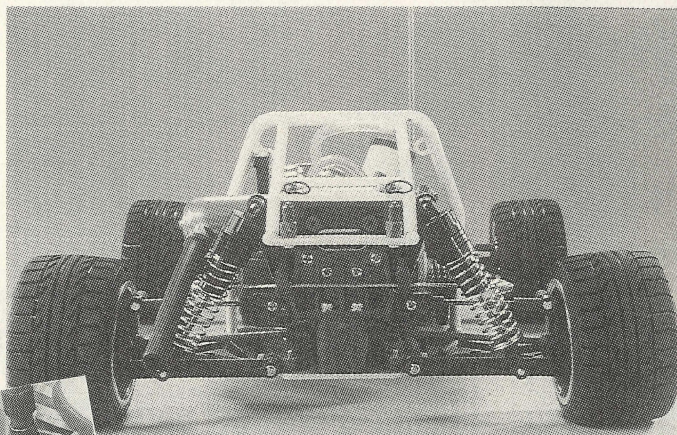
The radio is placed onto a fibre

plate using small plastic mounting posts and rubber grommets. The receiver is put into a Tamiya rubber balloon for protection and a small tray looks after the battery box. Two servo saver units are employed, the usual for the steering is used and a clever item is used for the throttle that makes setting up the throttle/brake linkage a breeze. The radio tray is bolted to the chassis and forms the top layer of a very stiff box section. A simple set of servo rods are popped into place and the radio installation is complete.

One of the last areas to be prepared is the rear roll cage. This is a white plastic item that surrounds the rear of the car forming a strong cage for crashes and a body mount for the rear, it is though a little more useful than just that. When the body



Disc brake set-up is very powerful, nice touch is warning stickers.



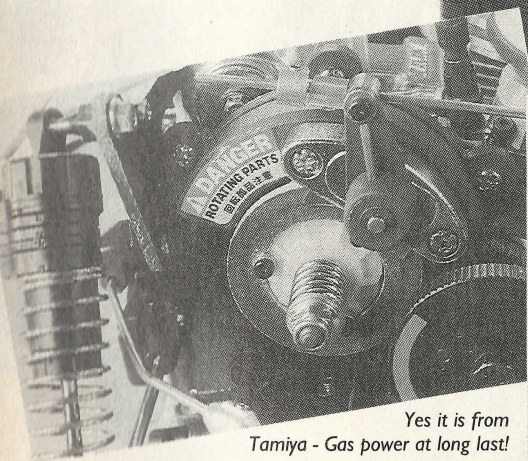
is full mounted the roll cage needs just two clips to be removed and the whole thing hinges up! This allows the tank to be filled etc. without removing the body – very clever..

### For on road

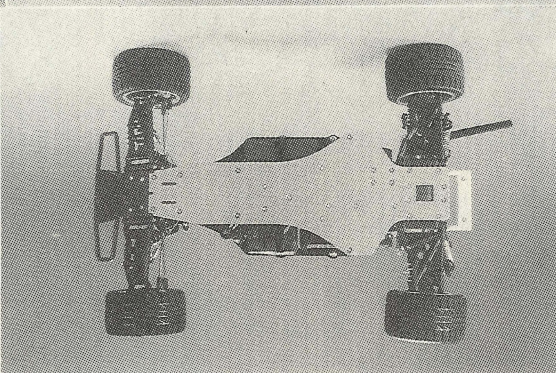
The wheels on the TR-15T are plastic but look alloy, they are really an excellent design that are stiff and strong. Foam inserts and semi slick tyres feature which need to be glued into place. Once bolted to the chassis the suspension can be played with for the first time!

The last thing to do is cut out and paint the body, all the tricky bits are already done like wheel arches and fitting holes so this is soon ready. Painting requires the ready to fit masking to be placed on the body and two colours applied. Next it's on with the rather tricky decal set and you're ready.

All along during building a number of decals are placed on the chassis to warn of heat and moving parts etc., so if you have these left over when you've finished go back and take a closer look...



Yes it is from Tamiya - Gas power at long last!



### The first run

So the radio is on and you've filled the tank. Well let's go back a stage. Tamiya can supply you with a starter kit of fuel bottle and 2v supply and lead. This is a neat little set-up but we used alternatives as we didn't have them the hand. The tank can be filled through the flip top or through a tube connected to the roll cage to save time. Once the fuel was in about six pumps on the tank plunger had the fuel up, setting the only needle on the carb to the manual setting we connected the clip pulled and..... we were ticking over. The first impression was that it was very quiet, a small rev and we were ready to roll.

With a fairly wide audience of top Tamiya UK brass watching the TR-15T needed to run without fuss, and this didn't seem to be a problem. The most surprising aspect of the truck was the speed, it really does motor on. Initially the first few feet of acceleration are a little sluggish, then the power comes in and...bang! The truck really does accelerate hard with the wheels spinning and the truck a little out of control if too heavy with the left thumb.

We ran about 4-5 tanks through the car before leaning out the engine to make it faster. The Tamiya instructions are very clear about the procedures that should be followed and they seem to work very well as the truck has run faultlessly and reliably to date.

### Why Tamiya?

The only real difference between this truck and its competitors is that it is easy to build as are all Tamiya kits, the quality is also very high with all components seemingly designed with 'no compromise' being the attitude. There are also a series of nice features from the warning decals around the engine to the quick lift body to the servo saver throttle that make building and running the car simple and that is where Tamiya will score highly. This kit is simply the best transition from electric power to gas power we have seen, giving no reason not to have a go at gas if that's what you fancy.

Overall the best feature about the truck is driving it, it is fast in the extreme but also handles well, the brakes are superb and the noise level acceptable, this could well be the best IC kit we have seen... in fact it is.