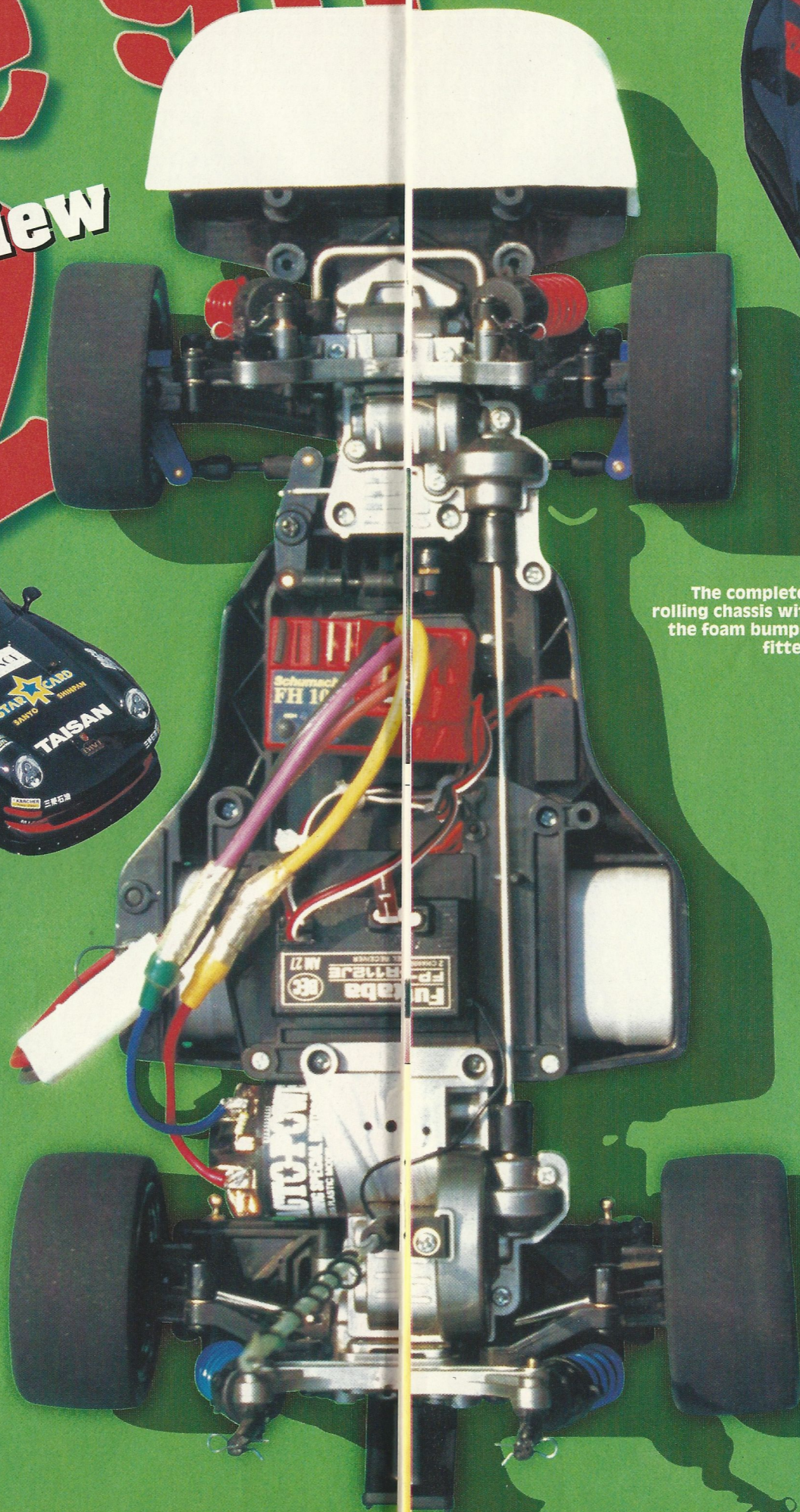


Tamiya Porsche GT2

Kit Review

by John Cheyne

Don't
look back
in anger



The completed rolling chassis with the foam bumper fitted.



It's 1986 somewhere in darkest Edinburgh and your writer is sitting in a trendy bar with his best mate drinking bottles of Budweiser. These two fresh faced eighteen year olds are talking of their hopes and ambitions for the future, and since it's still during the big-money boom times of the eighties most of their aspirations are based around material possessions. There were three things that the two young men agreed were more desirable than anything else. (1) A luxury penthouse apartment in London (or New York) with a rooftop swimming pool. (2) Kim Basinger and (3) a Porsche 911.

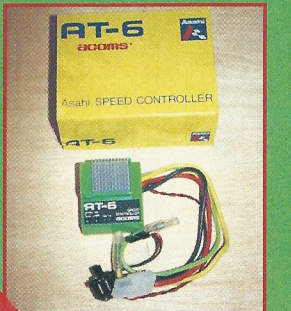
Well it's now 1996 and your writer is somewhere in darkest West Midlands sitting in a grotty pub with his best mate drinking Bank's! Their's nothing wrong with Bank's - a Black Country born ED. It's ten years on, and time to reflect, have I achieved any of my goals? Well in place of the Penthouse apartment is a two bedroom terrace, and the only person called Kim that I know is a bloke who works down the local Chinese Take away. So I'm not rich and I'm not famous, but am I bitter? No, because anyway there's one dream left... the Porsche...and guess what, I've actually got one, a 911 too, and not just any old 911, this is a 911 GT2. A big black speed machine! Yes, Ok it's not a full size one, but hell, I couldn't afford the insurance anyway. The question is, does the reality live up the dream?

In a dream

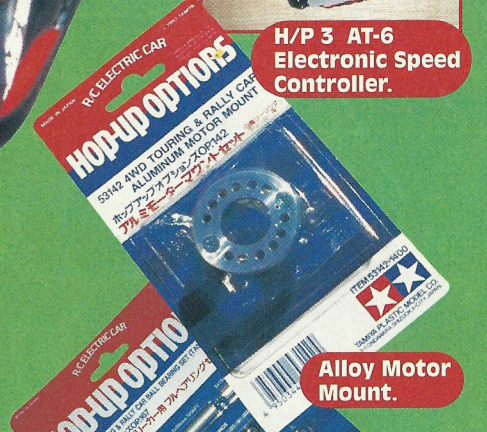
When it comes to building detailed scale R/C models of on-road cars at an affordable price, Tamiya really are world leaders. Recently they've been churning out lovely 1/10th scale cars based around their excellent TA02 Chassis with monotonous regularity, and at first when I got my hands on their new Taisan Starcard Porsche I thought this was simply another gorgeous body shell on the same chassis. Guess what, I was wrong. The Porsche has got two extremely significant differences. 1) it's got a shorter wheel base and 2) it's wider. What that means (in theory at least) is that the Porsche should handle significantly better than any of it's TA02 cousins, making it the hottest property of the season as far as Tamiya Euro-cup success is concerned.

For all stone dwellers

For those of you who have been living under a stone for the past few years, here's a



H/P 3 AT-6 Electronic Speed Controller.



Alloy Motor Mount.



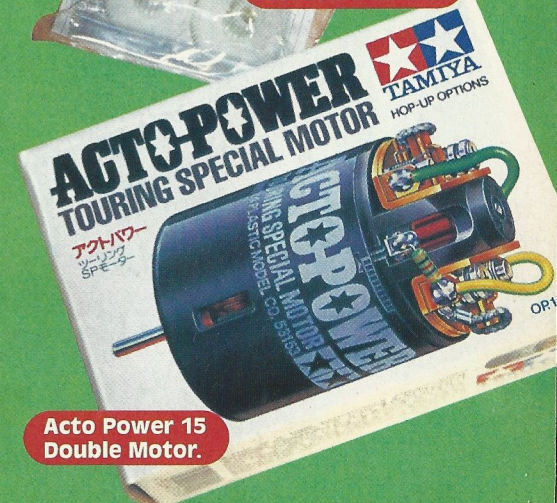
Ball Race Set.



On Road Spring Tuning Set.



Speed Tuned Gearbox Gear Set.



Acto Power 15 Double Motor.



The new grey and black mouldings really improve the look of the rolling chassis.

decided to play with the suspension set up a little. I'd brought along a packet of Tamiya's tuned springs, so we popped the red's (med.) on the front and the blues (hard) on the back and added the largest kit spacers to stiffen things up a little. Chris the Ed. liked this set up even more and was lapping faster than ever, while I seemed too have a mental block about Ashby's banked corner as I tried to push the car faster than my limited ability could handle.

Foam filled

By now the car was nicely run in but the steering and suspension had developed a little bit of "slop". Curing this is just a matter of tightening all the screws and nuts and perhaps adding a washer here and there.

Not being the tidiest driver in the world, I'm always likely to push too hard and prang a car into the tyres/wall/trees/ice cream vans etc. which eventually results in body shell damage. Once you've seen the Porsche shell face to face you will realise that this is virtually sacrilege, and anyway Tamiya shells may be beautiful, but their not cheap, so it makes sense to protect them as much as possible. The best way to do this is with a front foam bumper, which absorbs much of the abuse and stops the shell splitting above the wheel-arch on heavy impacts. I managed to scrounge a lightweight TRC bumper that was sent into the RRC office by the UK distributors Mirage R/C Enterprises, but I believe a Tamiya version is available and if you intend to race in the Eurocup it's the Tamiya version you will need to stay legal.

What's the Story, Euro-cup Glory?

All in all the Porsche is a very nice kit indeed. Structured around tried and tested components, you can be sure that the car will go together simply and efficiently, and yet because of it's shorter and wider dimensions it will also offer improved performance over previous Tamiya saloons. The shell is one of Tamiya's best yet, and will turn heads wherever it races. Will it immediately become a success in the Eurocup? only time will tell and it depends very much on who decides to race it, but my advice is, don't bet against it.

Quick Spec

4WD. Shaft Drive. Front Ball Diff. Rear Gear Diff. Dog-bone Driveshafts. Plastic Bushings. Moulded Plastic Chassis. Moulded Plastic Transmission Housings. Independent Suspension. Wishbone and Top Link. Coil-over Oil Filled Shock Absorbers. BBS Wheels. Slick Tyres.

quick run down on what you get for your money when you buy a Tamiya 4WD "Sedan" (as the yanks would say). Basically she's electric powered with all round independent oil-filled shocks and double wishbone suspension mounted on a plastic bathtub-type chassis. The power is delivered from a standard 540 motor by a basic steel prop shaft through a rear ball-differential and a front geared-differential. The kits come with a simple mechanical speed-controller and of course a detailed body set and decals.

The whole thing goes together simply and efficiently. The instructions are so well produced and the components are so well manufactured, that really just about any body over the age of 12 should be able to throw a kit together in an evening or two.

I won't bore you with a detailed description of how the kit goes together, really there's very little worth adding to the instructions in the box and anyway most of it's been said before.

TA02SW

Ok now that's over and done with, let's get on with deciding whether the Porsche with it's TA02SW Chassis really is going to offer a competitive advantage over the standard TA02 chassis cars.

To begin with I built the car in out of the box spec, apart from substituting the mechanical speedo for an electronic one. One big improvement on previous Tamiya saloons that the Porsche has, is the colour of the front and rear diff cases. Instead of that rather gaudy looking red as with previous models, the Porsche comes with metallic grey mouldings which improve the looks of the rolling chassis considerably. Once the shell is painted and the stickers are applied the Porsche looks superb.

The big wing comes as a 3 piece injection moulded kit which makes

it pleasingly solid and easy to fit, and because it's moulded in black you don't even have to paint it!

Parklife

I couldn't wait to see how she ran so as soon as I'd charged up some cells I headed down to our local park which has a large concreted area. It's always difficult to tell how well a car handles unless you test it on a circuit which you are used to, but my first impressions were very favourable. I set up a basic figure of eight circuit and the Porsche seemed nice and sure-footed on the tight turns. The back end slid around a bit, but only when I put the power on too early, or applied the anchors a little too late.

My blast in the park hadn't really answered any questions, but it had whetted my appetite. So that night was spent popping a few hop-up goodies under the sleek black bonnet and arranging to dash up the motorway with our Ed to see how the 911 matched up to the tight corners and long straight at Ashby.

Down in the dust

Ashby was hot and dusty as I fired the Porsche off the line. With the car now fully ballraced, powered by Tamiya's Acto-power Touring modified motor (15 double) and fitted with a speed tuned gear set the performance was bound to be improved on my run in the park. It took me a couple of circuits to get used to the handling, but once I got a feel for it I began to really enjoy myself. The car handled very nicely and straight line speed was excellent. At this point I let the Ed have a go to see what he thought. His efforts however were rather depressing...for me that is! As he immediately began lapping about twice as quick as me (never trust a man with a beard). When our second set of cells had dumped we

