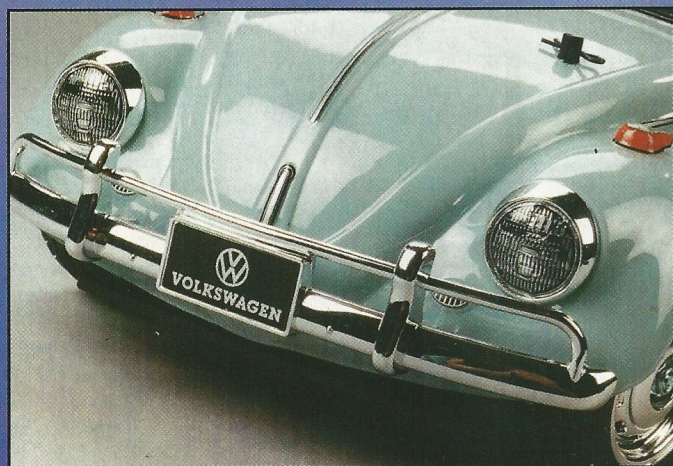
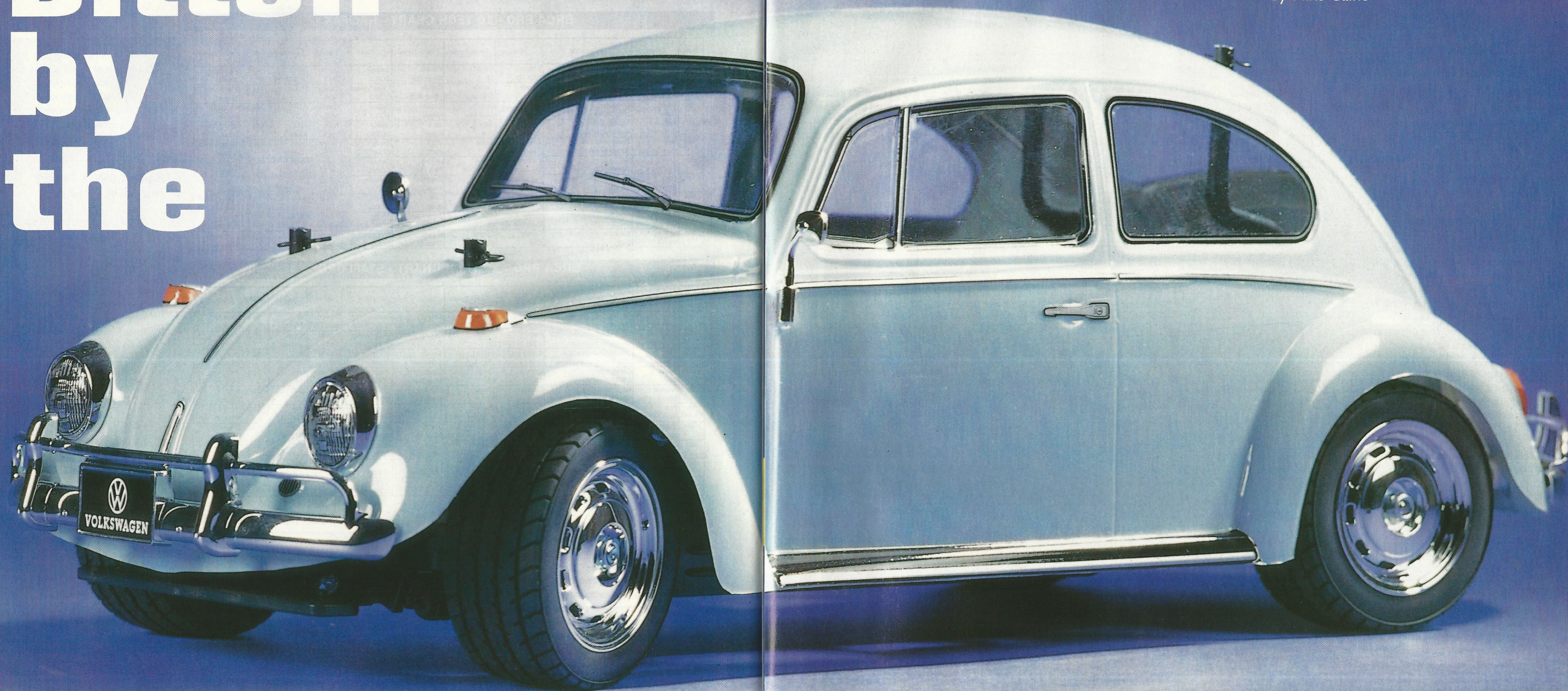


Bitten by the

KIT REVIEW

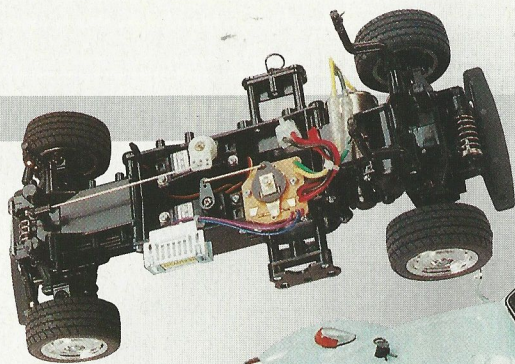
By Mike Caine



RADIO CONTROL MODEL CARS

Occasionally you feel compelled to buy something because it seems the right thing to do at the time. My compunction and in hind sight, was a serious mistake, was to swap my trusty Cavalier rep mobile for what outwardly appeared to be a stunning example of a VW 1303 S circa 1972

BUG...



It was an instant love hate relationship, I loved it, but my other half hated it! The kids who were much younger than they are now and more easily pleased, found it quite amusing to be driven round in this bright orange version of 'Herbie Rides Again'. However, underneath its immaculate exterior lay more holes than you would find in a colander and it's reliability factor, despite its simplistic Germanic design, was not too good. It didn't say in the family very long and despite that hype in but ownership at the time, I lost a lot of my hard earned cash. I still retain fond memories of it and when I saw that Tamiya's new items included a 1960's style VW, I just had to investigate further.

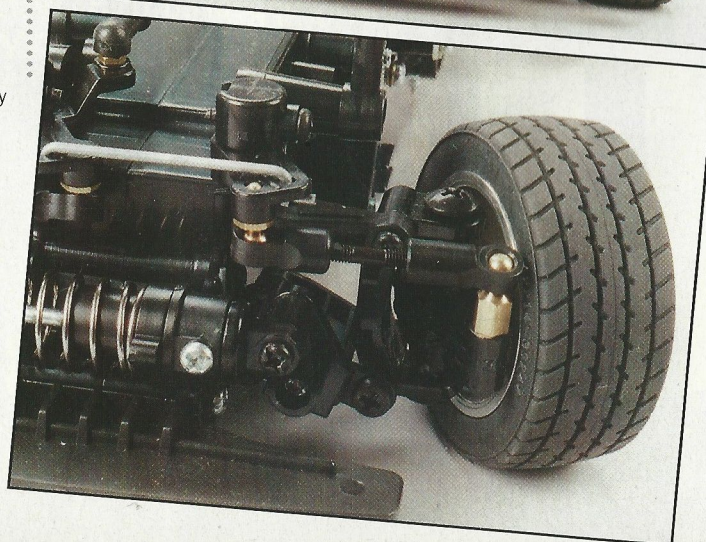
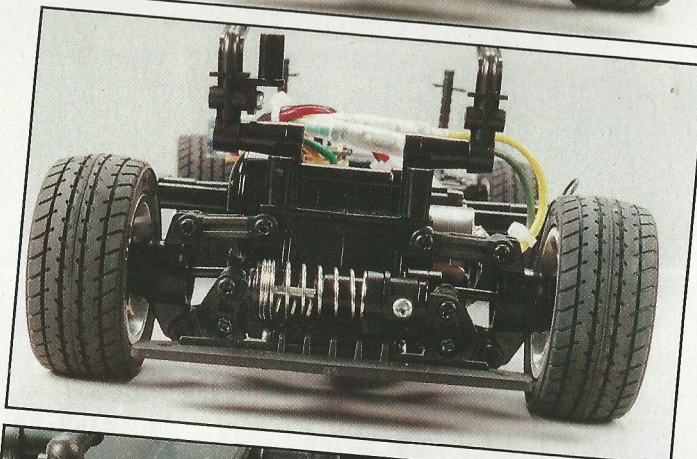
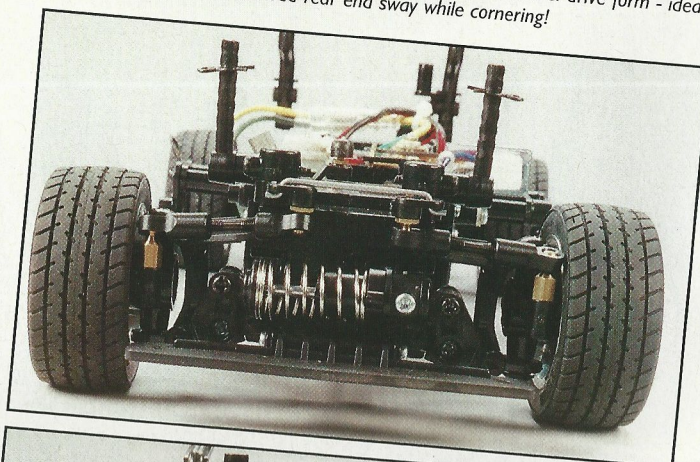
The box top didn't portray an orange 1303 S, but the classic lines of the world's most produced car was enough for me to feel that compunction again. Based on Tamiya's M Chassis components this the third version utilising this new modular construction. The idea is very simple and Tamiya's designers look to be exploiting it to the full. The centre chassis frame can feature front or rear battery mounting, to which a gearbox (front or rear mounted depending on the real model), is added together with identical front and rear independent wishbones which are dampened by a single mono shock. Told you it was simple, but when you tip the box upside down there seems to be oh so many parts!

Tamiya's new bagging of the necessary components in stage form makes selection very simple and the usual excellent four language instruction manual makes construction pleasurable, even for the first timer who may find so many parts a daunting challenge. A screwdriver and pliers are all that is required as the obligatory box spanner and Allen key are included in the kit. Grease and switch lubricant are included and as the shocks are air filled there is no need to cover yourself in damper oil, which always seems to happen despite your prowess at kit building. In real terms the VW is a

lot bigger than a Mini or Fiat Abarth, and to achieve this Tamiya have moulded a new long front gearbox, albeit without the motor attached (remember bugs have the engines in the back), to achieve its longer wheelbase and scale appearance.

New wheels have been supplied together with the 60D radial high grip tyres, a mechanical 3 speed controller is included together with a standard 540 size motor.

Super detail makes Tamiya's model look just like the real thing! Below; Tamiya well tested chassis is used in rear wheel drive form - ideal for the odd rear end sway while cornering!



Performance is more than adequate, but the ever increasing range of Tamiya hop up options means the owner can choose the spec under the body shell - stock showroom, street rod or full blown racer - the choice is endless. It is only your pocket which is the limiting factor. It's the bodysell that really makes this kit stand out above any other VW predecessor. It's worth taking the time to make a first class job of this exquisite polycarbonate moulding, created from expensive slide mould technology. It approaches the looks of one of Tamiya's high detail plastic kits and the brightness of the chromium finished bumpers, mirrors, and wheel caps finish the effect. No racing stickers to spoil its appearance, but difficult to apply stickers are supplied for lamps and indicators. The old tip of softening with a hairdryer and stretching around the curvature worked for me. There are many specialist VW mags bodyshops and accessory outlets, and some of these that have seen this Tamiya model have commented on its accurate appearance. It seems too good to endure the hurly burly of Eurocup racing, so I think this one will safely sit on the modelling shelf and just be used for cruising around on lazy summer days.

Available from all good model shops, the kit retails for around £99 and a package deal of radio battery and charger can be obtained for around £180 complete. Looks like I've been bitten by the bug again!

