



Tamiya Wild Dagger 4WD Truck

Scintillating symmetry

from Tamiya Construction

Introduction

With the reputation that Tamiya rightly hold for innovation, it will have come as no surprise to anyone that they were to release a new chassis for their off-road vehicles. Even less surprising - at least to this reviewer! - is the realisation that the new system improves on what's already available, thus making their 1/10 range even more fun! So what about specifics?

Well, Tamiya pen their new chassis as a 'Symmetrical Chassis Concept'. Flash though that description may be, it is in fact quite accurate. Essentially, the designers at Shizuoka have incorporated two identical gear box/motor/suspension assemblies onto a generic centre-section. If it wasn't for the fact that one of the assemblies included the steering 'front axle' you'd never know the difference between each one. The down side to this of course is that you have to assemble everything twice, but that is more than amply repaid by the responsiveness and balance that this new chassis exhibits during running.

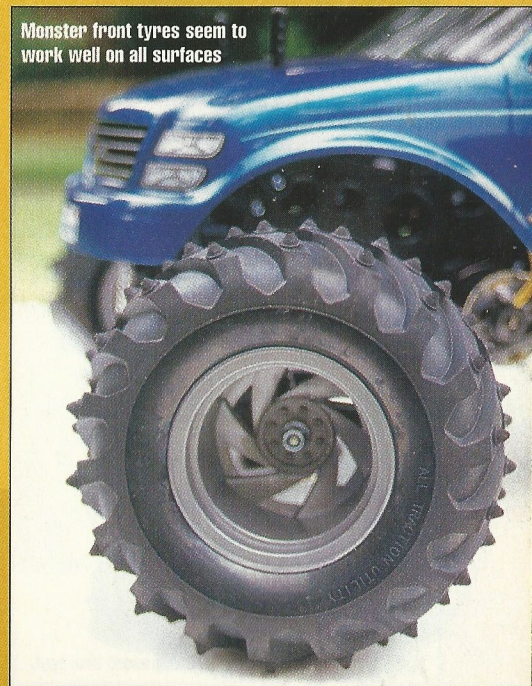
'well balanced and easily able to deal with most things placed in its path'

As mentioned in my review of Tamiya's Peugeot 306 last year, I'm a relative novice in the field of R/C and so tend to follow the instructions to the letter. With this in mind assembly began with the diff' gear. All fairly familiar here with standard parts that are found in most Tamiya R/C kits. Care needs to be taken with grease in order to reduce possible wear and seizure. Moving on, counter gears are added to one half of the gear box casing - more grease - before closing everything up using the self-tapping screws supplied. With that done, the whole thing is repeated until there are two identical gear boxes.

With the addition of the motor, care needs to be exercised that the unit is fixed in the correct position. Alternative pinion gear sizes are an optional 'Hop-Up'. This is reflected in the inclusion of two sets of screw holes on the side of the gear casing which allows the fitment of the larger 16.5:1 gear. Again, this stage is repeated, before moving on to the suspension.

The suspension is fully independent and incorporates friction sprung dampers. Given the size of the vehicle, its weight and off-road qualities, the suspension is reassuringly solid. The only

Monster front tyres seem to work well on all surfaces



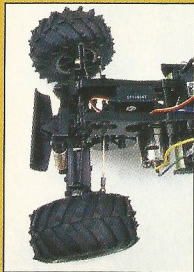
August 99

MEGAMIX REVIEW

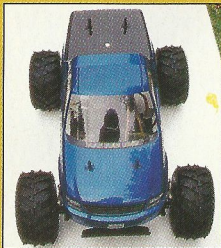


Stout front bumper will get a real work out

This end steers so it must be the front



I just could not bear to put any more decals on my beautiful paint work



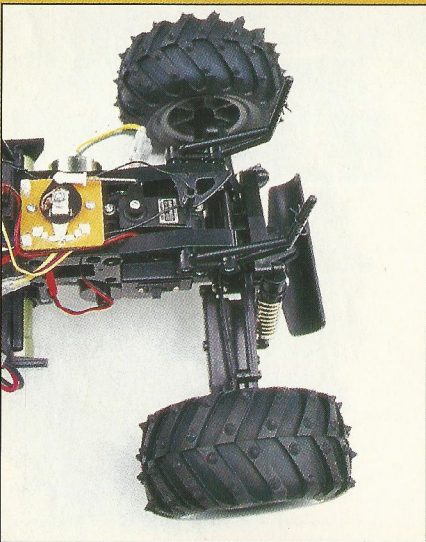
proviso to this, is that the dampers are a little too stiff for my liking. Squeezing them before they were attached to the suspension arms revealed an alarming lack of travel and made me wonder whether they would be up to the job. As it turned out, they worked well in concert with the huge wheels and tyres that are a feature of the model. Alternatively, the dampers could be replaced with a set of Low Friction Aluminium Dampers - no. 53155 - which would no doubt improve matters.

The suspension is rounded off with the completion of the steerable front axles. Once again there is a reassuringly solid air, which combines well with ease of assembly and generally high level of engineering excellence. It never ceases to amaze me how well designed these kits are - they really do get better and better!

Electronics

The design of this model goes back to basics in terms of its radio gear with a 3-step controller at its heart. Never mind, it's still fun even without

Foolproof and reliable - the mechanical speed controller



August 99

'how well designed these kits are - they really do get better and better!'

the sophistication of a digital brain, as well as being easy to build. Following the instructions all of the electrical goodies are attached to one of the chassis members - they aren't numbered and thus not handed - before everything is fully enclosed with the addition of the other half. From the point of view of a novice such as I, it may be worth pointing out the need to get everything right at this stage. With everything being so enclosed, a mistake will result in having to strip everything down, which is frustrating. How do I know? Well...

Further points worthy of note here are the addition of switch lubricant and the need to set up the switch rod perfectly. The latter only revealed itself when I added the battery later and then could not understand why the wheels were racing, even though the radio controls were set at neutral. The problem was, that I had incorrectly set up the switch and it was connecting with a power terminal. Be warned!

With the main chassis complete, the receiver is added followed by the front and rear gearbox assemblies. The union between the chassis and the gearboxes is very solid indeed and that adds up to one impressive chassis! The addition of wheels gives some idea of how the chassis will react under operation and indeed help alleviate any worries concerning the suspension. Further time and some highly professional testing(!) of the completed model, would only serve to reassure me that Tamiya have indeed come up with a very fine chassis indeed. It is well balanced and easily able to deal to most things placed in its path. No problems with kerbs with this model!

Body Shell

All that remains to do before the fun starts is to complete the body shell and add the transfers. Tamiya include a pick-up type body with this kit complete with suitably wild markings. Having painted the body shell metallic blue and black, I must admit to being put off by the addition of the markings. Quite simply the shell looked so smart with just basic markings on, that it would have been shame to have spoilt it with anything else. And that, coupled with the fact that I didn't really like the somewhat over the top 'Wild Dagger' logos made me complete the model as you see here. It's a personal choice - you may choose to be different!

Running

Boy this model's fun! Initially, I was concerned that it would be rather slow and pedestrian but that proved not to be that case. Though not as fast as the Peugeot, it was just as responsive and with those big tyres going fifty to the dozen looked excellent, whether on, or off road. The car takes most obstacles in its stride, with grass, dirt and kerbs all well within reach.

The symmetrical chassis isn't just some fancy sales gimmick either; the addition of twin motors gives the car a balance and poise that is sometimes missing from single engined models. Even under extremes of steering and braking there is very little lateral travel - the car simply

dips to one side and carries on effortlessly. It stuck to the road like stink - if only my real car did as well!

That said where the two motors do cause some 'fun' is when power is firmly applied forwards or backwards. Speeding the car forwards and then whacking it into reverse, results in a wheelie at best and a total flip at worst! The same problem - or rather facet of its design! - can occur the other way 'round. It's an alarming sight when your pride and joy ends up on its roof I can tell ya! Still, with practice, I feel that this model could be made to do all sorts of tricks and that makes it all the more appealing.

Finally, the twin motor set-up affects the performance of the car's battery. Even during on-road operation, the battery didn't last much more than 10 minutes and that seemed poor to me. Still, I guess that most modellers choosing this model will have more than one cell pack to use and so this won't be too much of a problem. Maybe I should have more than one...

The Ed' says

I always reckon that the first 'hop up' you should buy is a set of ball races to improve the run time and the second is more cell packs! Seriously 10 minutes is not bad for a far from lightweight, 2 motor design. And this was a standard Tamiya 1400 pack, pretty good I reckon!

Conclusion

As with everything that comes from Tamiya, this kit simply oozes quality. It is very easy to build, runs like a dream and is brilliant fun to drive. What more needs to be said?

Now Pete, can I have my car back? Pete. PETE!!!

NO - Ed'

Our thanks to Richard Kohnstam Ltd for supplying the review model **RRC1**

Quick Spec

Kit Wild Dagger twin motor 4WD racing truck
Manufacturer Tamiya
Scale 1/10
Code 58231

Tester Kit

Acoms Techniplus 2-channel radio
RiKo battery charger and 12 volt battery pack
Tamiya PS-16, PS-31 and PC-5 paint

Likes

Ease of assembly
Balance of chassis
Instructions

Dislikes

Crude dampers
Decals style - it must be my age

MEGAMIX REVIEW