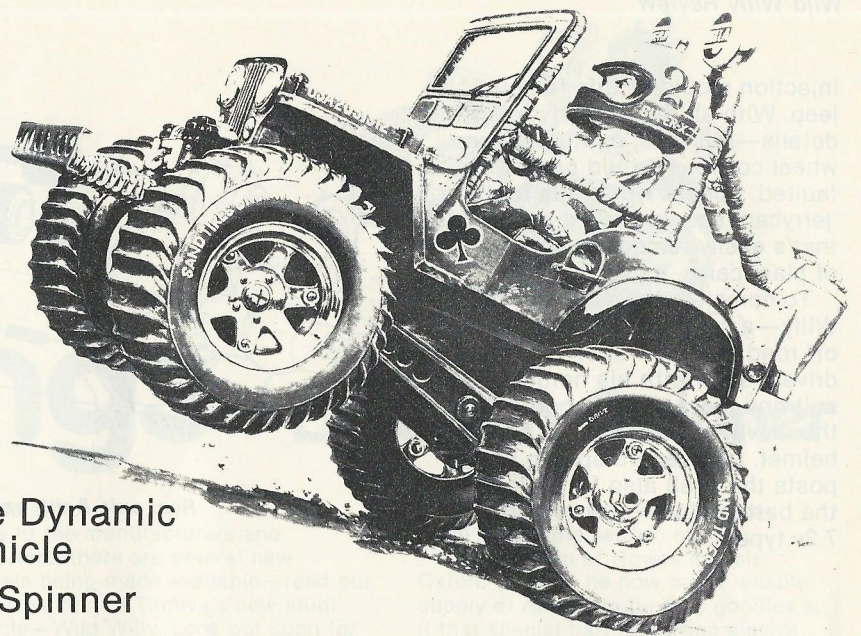


wild willy



Tamiya's NEW 1/10th scale Dynamic and Versatile R/C stunt vehicle

Exclusive Review by Colin Spinner

DURING OUR final meeting of 82 at the Worlds End Off Road Club, we were all ears when it was discovered that two new Tamiya models for off road use were due early in 1983.

Sneak previews were gained by a quick glance through the respective Japanese model magazines.

First to arrive from the land of the rising sun was Wild Willy – a not unreasonable name seeing that the model is based on the Willys® M38 Jeep. These vehicles abound in the USA and are a popular basis for off road conversions. The difference between this and other off road models is that it is designed for fun rather than for competitive use.

In the very short time I've had it to evaluate I can see all sorts of driving tests being devised to make competitive use of the kit – but more on that later.

Whilst stated as being 1/10th scale, make no mistake, this kit is big in comparison to the Rough Riders, etc.

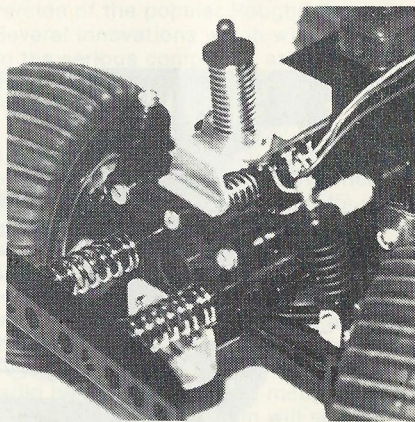
So what's it all about? Read on!

CHASSIS AND FRONT SUSPENSION

The basis is an injection moulded box which houses the radio gear and batteries. At the front end is a sophisticated moulding plus aluminium tubes to support the independently sprung wishbones. Coil springs with rubber overboots form a simple but effective suspension system.

A simple sprung servo system completes the steering with those rose joint type ball ends from the VW Golf model.

Two steel pressings with ball



Springs with everything (as can be seen by this front detail shot)

pivots attach to the box moulding for supporting the rear drive assembly.

DRIVE TRANSMISSION/ASSEMBLY

First impressions here are of something out of Santa Pod Raceway. Chrome 'wheelie' bars and sprung clutch assembly. Another Tamiya departure is the way in which the RS540 motor is sealed—merely heat shrink tubing. A brass drive gear is shrunk fitted to the motor shaft. The motor is mounted on two brackets and bolted to the underside of the radio box. The rear axle features two half shafts (well more 1/3:2/3 if you see what I mean). In the middle is a nylon geared differential of a completely new design.

Aluminium idler gears and bushed shafts fit neatly into a moulded housing which is rigidly supported by two ball races which fit into the trailing arm members. Two rose jointed tie rods prevent the assembly from flopping around in all directions.

Final drive is via the usual brass universal joint to the clutch unit attached to the drive motor. Rear suspension completes this section in the form of adjustable chromed coil springs.

SPEED CONTROLLER/RADIO EQUIPMENT

A forward and reverse three speed wiper type control is fitted to a metal bracket within the radio box. It is recommended in the instructions that the solder connections on the rear of the board are filed flat to give a little more space for the receiver, which slots in vertically. Steering and speed control servos are taped to each other and 'stacked' behind the front bulkhead of the box. The usual receiver nicad pack slots into the rear compartment. The switch fits into a booted top in the normal Tamiya practice and then the box lid can be screwed down. Motor/resistor connections are via a grommet in the top of the box. (My own preference here would have been for longer cables on the speed controller resistors as it is necessary to release the bracket/body mount when access is required to the radio crate).

WHEELS AND TYRES

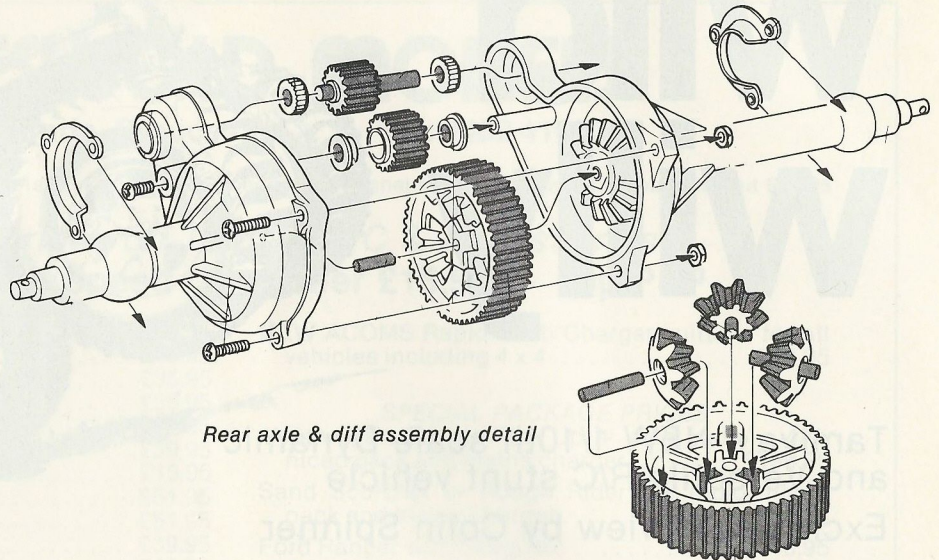
The oversize wheels and semi pneumatic ribbed tyres (the latter from the Blazing Blazer 4 x 4) give the Willy's Jeep its unusual appearance. Coupled with an extremely short wheelbase, the vehicle appears out of balance even before the body is fitted. All four wheels are ballraced.

BODYSHELL

In true Tamiya style the kit features a superbly turned out

injection mould of this famous jeep. With all the add on details—roll bars, extinguishers, wheel cover—it could not really be faulted. Purists will argue that the 'jerrycan' should have a back, but that's easily remedied with a piece of plasticard.

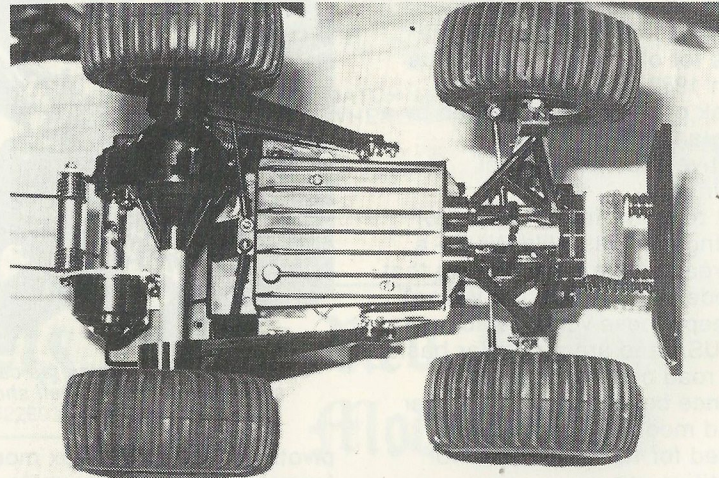
To complete the package Wild Willy—a superb characature of an off road maniac—adorns the drivers seat, with his nomex racing suit and gloves, flying boots and the inevitable customised Bellstar helmet. Located on sprung body posts the shell also firmly locates the battery drive pack either 6v or 7.2v type.



Rear axle & diff assembly detail



As usual with Tamiya kits, good driver detail.



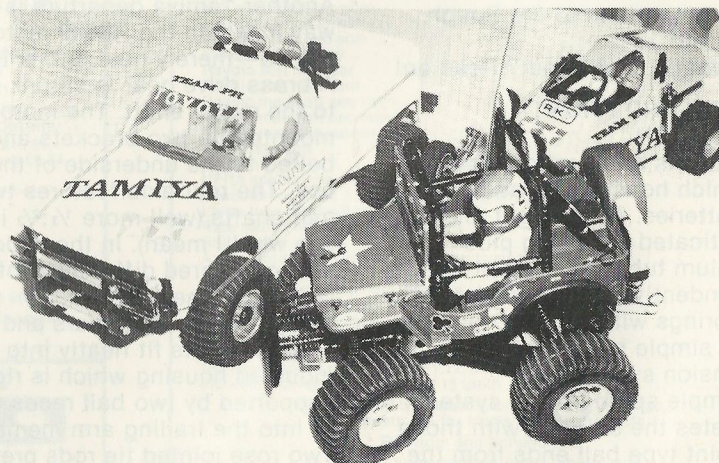
Underside detail with its weird and wonderful rear axle and suspension.

CONCLUSION

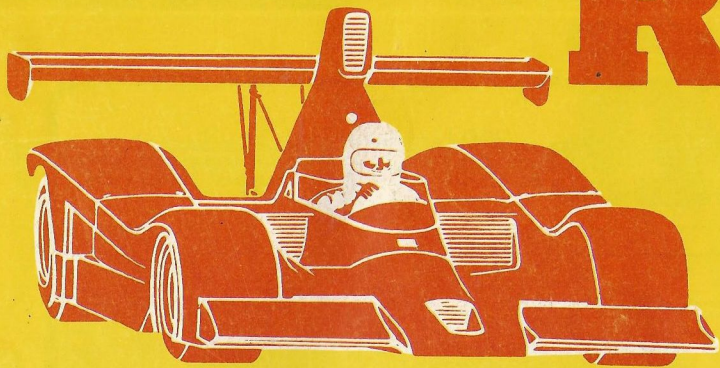
With a fully charged battery it was out into the street (no full size cars around as they had all been put in the garage for Christmas!).

A flick of the throttle produced an instant wheelie. So that's why those bars are fitted! Every time it was possible to pull a wheelie and also spins and turns at a flick of the steering control. Over zealous use of throttle and steering induced immediate rollovers—self righting on grass—but a little harsh on tarmac.

The length of the two wheel antics is governed mainly by the space available and battery power. These will surely be superb for the summer fetes, etc. A couple of jump ramps, perhaps a garage building, some 1/10th scale cones and you've got yourself a driving test course. I'm sure that many established enthusiasts will want to experiment, so as soon as numbers permit I will cater for them at the Worlds End Meetings.



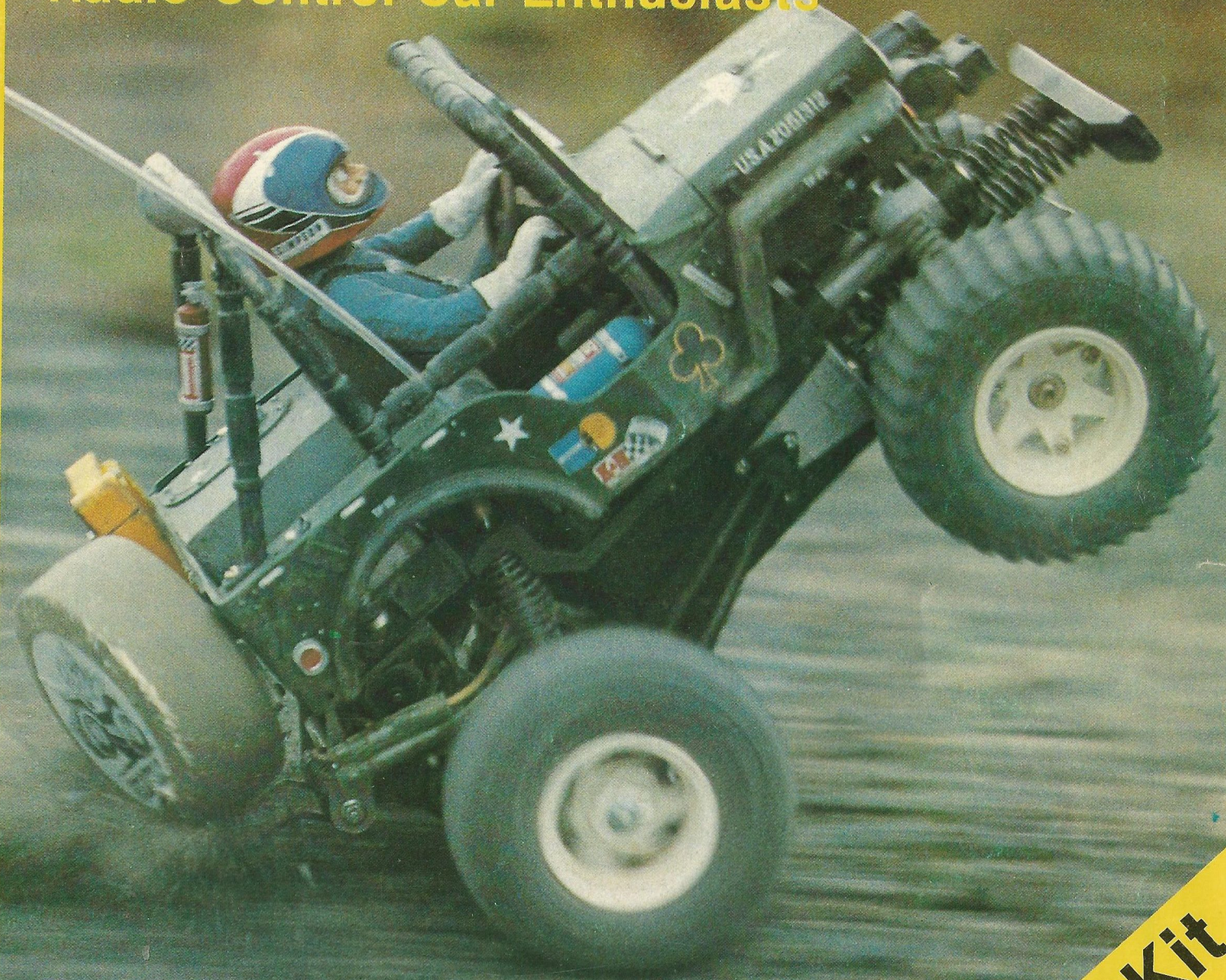
Quite a large outfit, alongside two of its Tamiya stablemates



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