

David Cundell

reviews

Tamiya's bid for

F1 stardom

**T**he 1987 Drivers' and Constructors' Formula 1 World Championship winning car, the 'Canon-Williams-Honda FW-11B' is, along with the 'Camel-Lotus-Honda 99T', Tamiya's selection from the Grand Prix line up to be represented in 1/10th scale Radio-Controlled model form. Not all that surprising considering that they are both Honda powered!

### The package

On opening the box, the packaging shows itself as standard Tamiya with blister moulding containers and stapled bags all clearly labelled. A quick look through the instructions shows that a minimum of tools are required in addition to the box wrench and Allen key that are supplied; a large and medium Pozidrive screwdriver, long nose pliers, side cutters, scissors and knife. Grease, rubber cement and damper oil are also supplied in the kit.

### Concept

The basic design of the chassis revolves around two GRP (glass reinforced plastic) plates; the lower and major one split at the rear to provide a suspended motor and rear axle mounting. The centre part of the chassis, which is particularly narrow because of



the correspondingly narrow width of the prototype, is reinforced by the second piece of GRP, which is attached by the rubber cement. The rear end is damped by an integral coiled spring/hydraulic damper, and the front suspension is the normal 'A' frames with coil sprung axle blocks.

Two function radio is required, but there is not enough space for the conventional resistor type speed controller, so an electronic controller in place of a servo is necessary; as is a BEC type radio.

### Construction

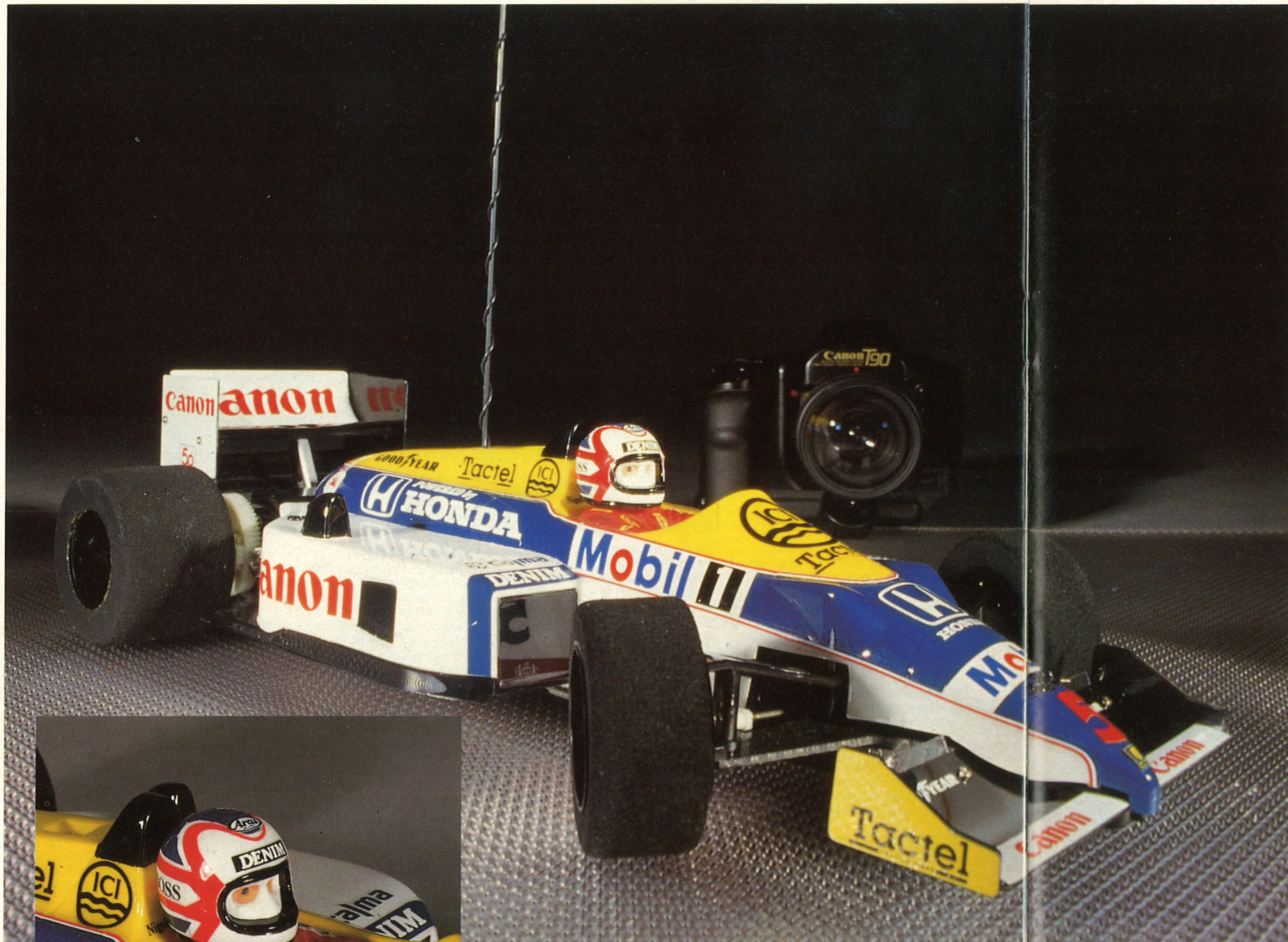
The first couple of steps entail the fabrication of the wheels and chassis. Both of these require the application of rubber cement and here come the first couple of hints!

Firstly, when glueing the tyres to the wheels, be careful not to use too much cement or it will ooze out of the side and, if you do, don't do what I did and try to wipe it off immediately. This only causes an even stickier mess with more of the stick on you than on the wheel! The second point is also connected with the cement. As mentioned earlier,

*Above: 'Red Five' has been made famous by Nigel Mansell over the past two Formula 1 seasons. Below: Tamiya's model is reproduced very accurately to the real Williams FW11B right down to the smallest sponsorship decal.*



# Williams FW11B HONDA F1



to make the chassis strong yet flexible, it is made from two pieces of GRP glued together. The point here is not to be sparing with the cement, as I was. Although I think that I used enough to make it secure, there was plenty left over, so I could quite easily have been more generous.

The next stage requires an undercowl which has to be painted black in advance of being attached to the model. If, as I do, you like to get on with your model and can't stand waiting around for things to dry, I suggest that you hunt the undercowl out as soon as you open the kit and get it painted up ready for when you reach that stage of the model. There now follows a warning. When you are fitting the dried undercowl, take great care

when holding the screwdriver because the slightest slip and a nasty-looking scratch will appear on your paintwork. Believe me, I know! Here ends this warning.

#### All geared up

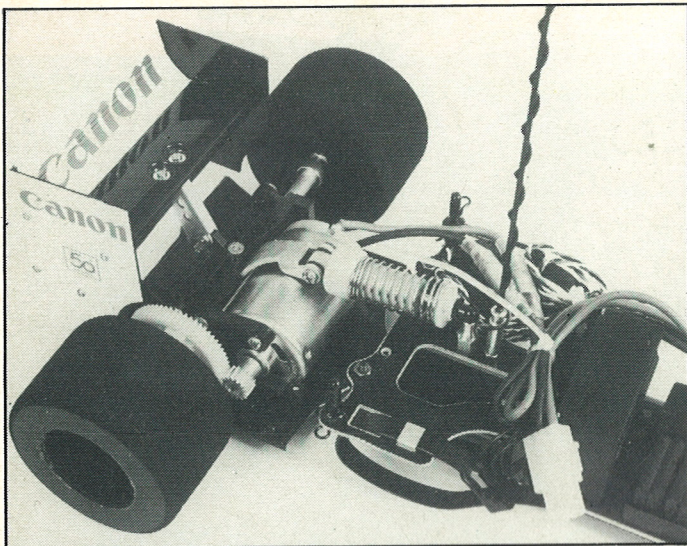
The differential comes next and the same applied to the grease at this point as did to the cement previously. Although the grease is needed later on, plenty is supplied and if you don't put a lot on the gears, you may find yourself dismantling the differential later because it is too tight. The differential is constructed from nylon gears and is relatively straightforward to assemble. One is instructed to push the differential together gently

before tightening the grub screw in the bevel bushing which holds the whole assembly together. We are advised that it pays to set the differential up quite tightly to obtain long life, so a slightly harder push is perhaps called for, but don't overdo it.

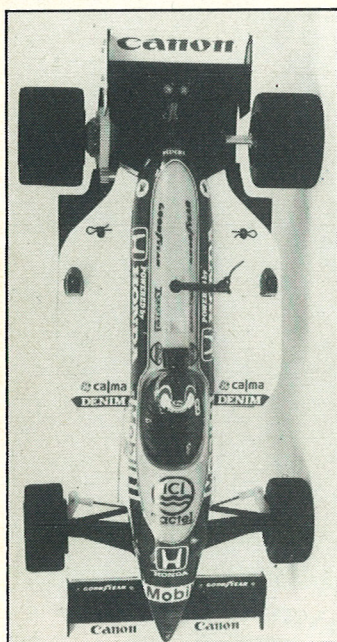
The motor comes next, rapidly followed by the battery housing. No real problems there, but make sure the mesh between the pinion and the main differential gear is free, but not loose.

Next item on the agenda is the damper and, although this looks a bit messy on paper, it turned out to be quite easy with no problems arising. Just make sure that when you push the seal into the damper that you have enough tissue paper at hand to mop up the excess oil.

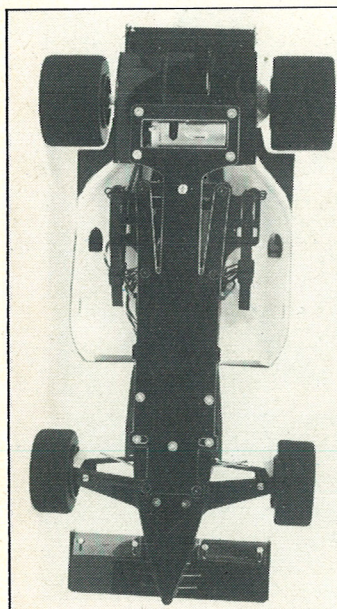




Above: The single 'CVA' yellow damper softens the rear suspension movement. Below: Overall view of the chassis shows location of decals and body fixings.



The underneath of the car features a regular 'T' piece to allow for suspension movement.



Finally, before the radio gear comes along, we move to the front end of the car and the suspension which is a simple spring system and again, use plenty of grease.

### Radio installation

As long as the type of equipment mentioned earlier is utilised, there are no problems during installation. There is not a lot of room around so endeavour to keep the wiring neat and well tied down. At this stage the chassis is almost ready to run, and all that needs doing for the moment is to fit the wheels and remember to use that grease.

### The body

Now comes the body and this is where the fun starts. The Williams car is certainly one of the most attractive Grand Prix cars but this means a lot of masking and careful painting, but more of that later. The instructions point towards the driver's body as being the first paint job and it is suggested that you should paint from the inside. However, for the driver's body, I used Tamiya enamel matt paint and, ignoring the instructions, painted from the outside. If you follow the instructions, this would cause the body to look shiny from the outside and who has ever seen a shiny clean set of overalls. The matt finish looks very realistic and lends itself towards a few badges being painted on his overalls.

Next comes the painting of the car body, which is a polycarbonate moulding. But before painting, it is necessary to carefully remove the body and other parts such as the rear wing, from the moulding using a small sharp pair of scissors or scoring with a sharp knife and bending. The parts must they be washed with a lukewarm, weak solution of household washing up detergent in water to remove all traces of grease and mould release agent, followed by a thorough rinsing in cold water, and allowed to dry.

The paints used are Tamiya acrylic paints for polycarbonate and, as said

before, a lot of masking is required and here, another hint. Most people would use either Sellotape or car masking tape, but neither of these are really effective; the first being very difficult to remove and sometimes leaving a sticky mess behind, and the second not really being accurate enough and therefore not leaving a very smooth edge. So here at last is the alternative - self adhesive decorative vinyl (probably better known as 'sticky black plastic!'). This can be found in small rolls from do it yourself stores, the most common type known as Fablon. This costs around £1.50 a roll and will last for about 100 models, give or take a few! The advantage of using this is that it sticks firmly yet lifts easily, at the same time leaving a sharp edge. Try it.

Don't forget to paint in the reverse order to the method that would be used for outside painting. The details need to be done first, then the darkest colour, the black, followed by the blue, the yellow and finally the white. Fortunately, most of

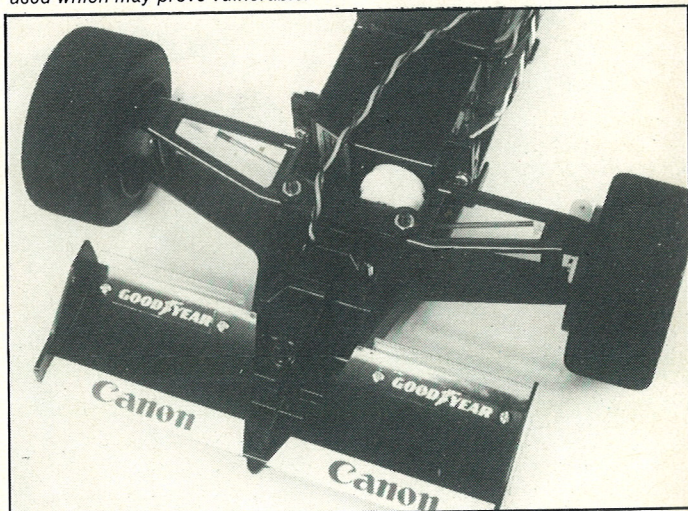
of the model where the decal is to go and then, when you place it, you have the opportunity to position it before the water dries and the decal sticks. Unfortunately, I didn't receive this hint until I had finished the model so I can't say whether it works or not.

The body fitted well, but as mentioned earlier, because of the limited space inside the model, especially at the front, when fitting the body for the first time, I found that I had to experiment a few times with the positioning of the wires before the body would sit smoothly on the car.

### In conclusion

On the whole, I found the model very easy to put together with no major problems. As ever, Tamiya's instructions were extremely easy to understand, with excellent diagrams and full size drawings of all parts required for each step. The result is a very attractive car which will not disgrace any race track, and which also looks great as a static display model.

The front suspension is simple but works well - a single piece moulding is used which may prove vulnerable.



the separations of colours on this car are lined by a thin white and red strip of self-adhesive decal, so any minor wobbles of paint will be covered up. The rest of the decals are quite easy to apply but be careful on some of the round ones, especially the ICI symbols as these are very difficult to get straight.

For the driver's helmet and the number of the car, you are supplied with number 5 for Nigel Mansell (Hooray!) and 6 for Nelson Piquet (Boo Hiss!) with appropriate transfers for each helmet. Not being one of Mr. Piquet's biggest fans, as you may have noticed, I have plumped for the colours of 'Our Nige'. These proved quite difficult on the helmet because of the shape of it and a lot of wrinkles appeared, but after some persuasion with the back of a knife, most of these disappear. One tip somebody gave me latterly was to put some soapy water on the area

Nigel Mansell kindly agreed to sweep the track at Brands Hatch before RCMC continued the Tamiya track test!

