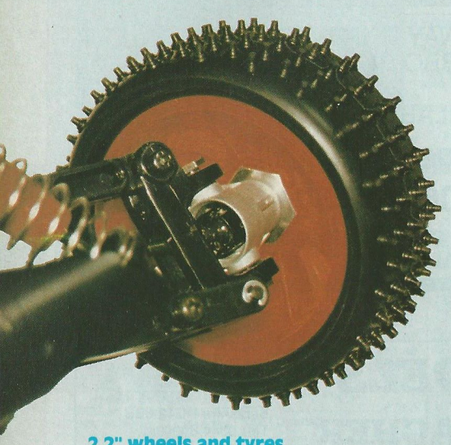
beauty or a BEAST?

REVIEW BY KEVIN GRIFFIN

Virtually 12 months ago to the day, I reported seeing a new racing buggy competing in the Radio Race Car Series at London. The car in question was the Tomy Intruder. I seem to remember saying that it was very competitive, and that put in the hands of an experienced driver, it could do well. Thanks to Matthew Hodgson to name but one, I have been proved correct.

The car is still 'number one' in the Tomy range of cars, so why have they (Tomy) developed the Adonis, a cheaper version of the competition spec Intruder. Well, it is aimed at younger drivers who wish to start racing at club level, while allowing them to gradually upgrade their car to be able to compete at national level. The cost of the Adonis is approximately £110, so let's see what you get for your money.



2.2" wheels and tyres.

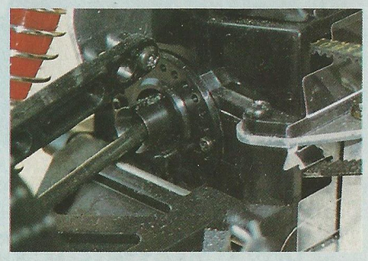
TOMY INTRUDER ADONIS

Specification

First of all, the chassis design is of the double deck variety common to all top racing four wheel drive machines. It has oil filled dampers on all four corners, is twin belt drive and it can accommodate both stick pack or saddle pack battery configurations. It has 2.2" wheels and tyres, the belt tension is easily adjustable, but the most outstanding feature is the use of a centre differential! Quite an impressive array of features for not a lot of money! Now let us look in more detail at these features and at the build up of the car.

First of all, if your patience allows it, please study the instruction manual thoroughly before ripping open every plastic bag in sight. The manual is, I'm afraid, rather basic and not very easy to follow, but with care and a few choice words, progress can be made.

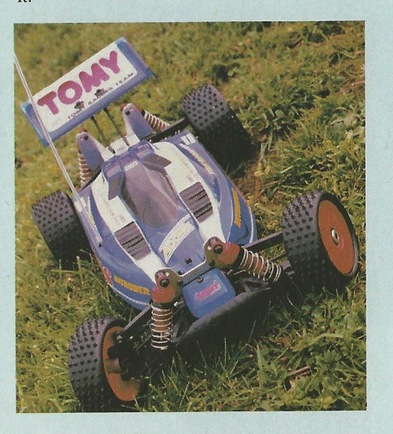
The first page of the manual refers to the building of the front and rear differentials, which are of the sun and planet type which, although not common in model cars, work very well. However, they are not that easy to put together. I certainly found it difficult to line up the four pins that locate the diff gears into the two halves of the casing. If care is taken and one pin does not locate properly, it is still possible to screw both halves together, but the diff will appear very notchy. If this happens, disassemble and try again!



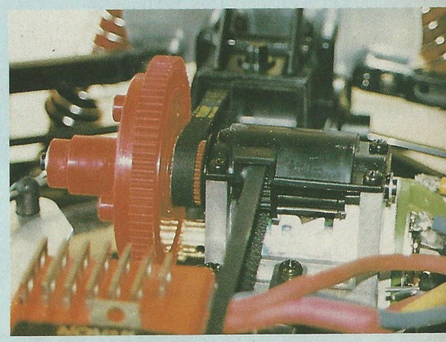
Rear cam adjusters can be seen here.

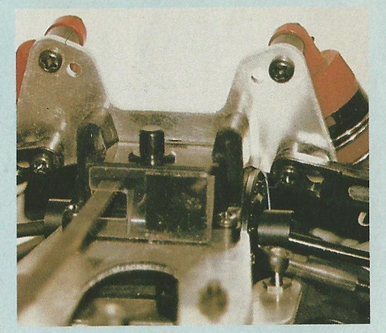
The next step is to assemble the centre differential and the only problem encountered here was locating the parts needed. After a few minutes of matching parts to pictures everything seemed to work well. All three of these units require a light application of grease during their assembly. This is supplied in the kit. Once these units are completed, I suggest that you take a break and have a coffee, you will have deserved one.

Next on the agenda is the steering linkage. This is the normal unit that is found on all the top racing vehicles, and it certainly works extremely well. The drag link between the two is made from aluminium, so there is no fear of breaking it.



Belt drive transmission.





Lexan dust cover for front gearbox.

It is worth noting that all the main chassis components are stamped out of aluminium. This leaves quite a sharp edge, so a few minutes with a fine file just to round off the edges of the aluminium is advised. At long last we come to the main chassis plate. I always think that once you arrive at this point that the car starts to take shape. Please take care to study which way up the chassis should be, as it is all too easy to assemble the front the rear diff housing the wrong way up. I suggest that the first unit that is screwed down to the chassis is the magnesium motor mount. By doing this you cannot make a mistake.

So with the diff casings bolted down, in go the front and rear differential units, not forgetting the belts! Once these units are in, it is very simple to adjust the belt tension using the eccentric bearing housing, but do make sure that you adjust both right and left hand sides the same. Once this is done, your whole drive train from front to rear is complete. All that is left to do is to hang on the suspension arms.

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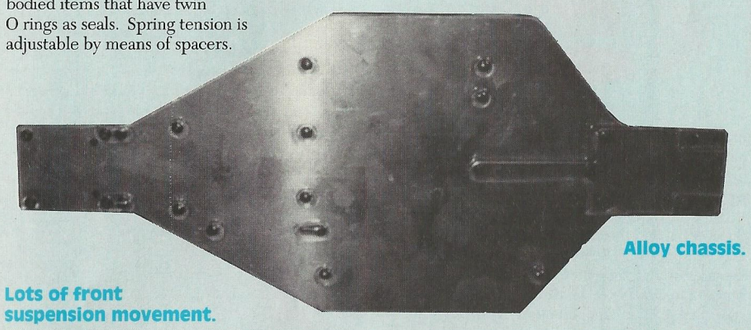
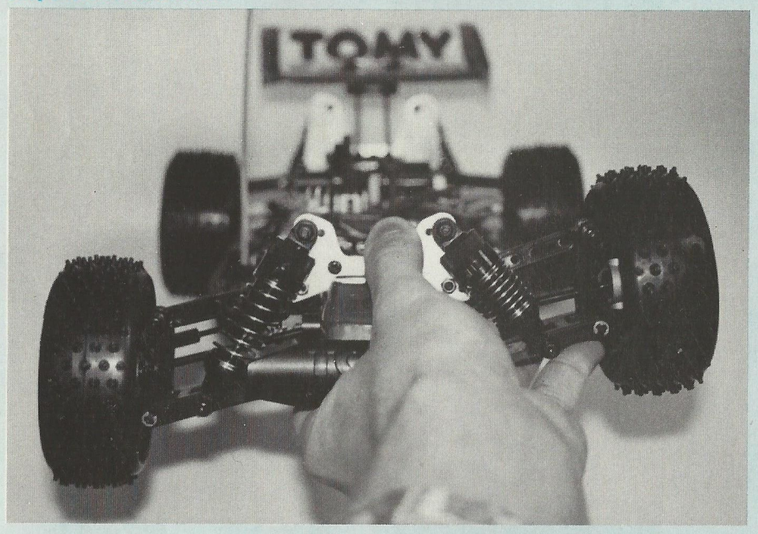
The bottom suspension arms pivot from the gearbox housing both front and rear, and the top link locates to the shock mounts. Drive shafts are of the dog bone variety all round and are all the same length front and rear. The front knuckle arms are magnesium and are very similar to those used on many other cars. The kit comes complete with metal bushes for the wheels and differential output shafts, so a little dab of grease on these during assembly will help.

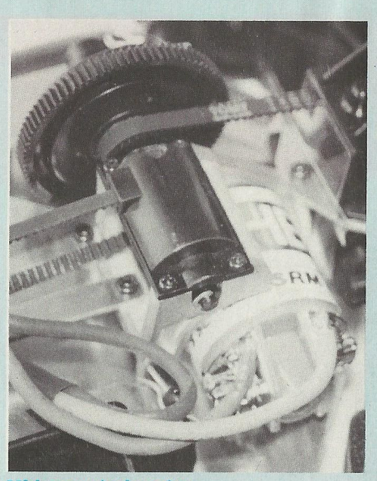
The final step in the construction of the base car is the shock absorbers. These are plastic bodied items that have twin O rings as seals. Spring tension is adjustable by means of spacers.



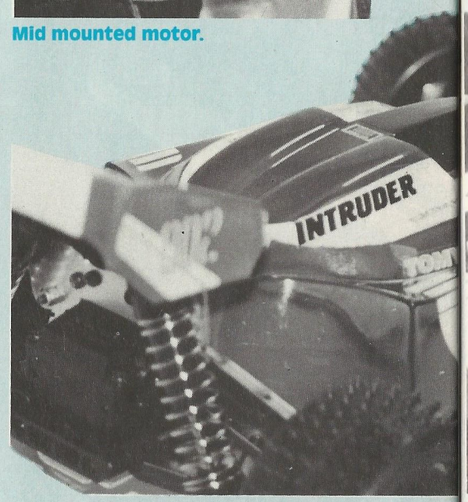
Alloy chassis.

Lots of front suspension movement.



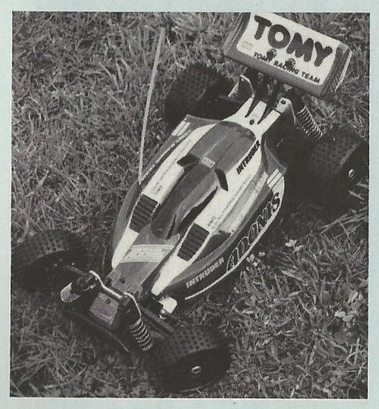


Mid mounted motor.

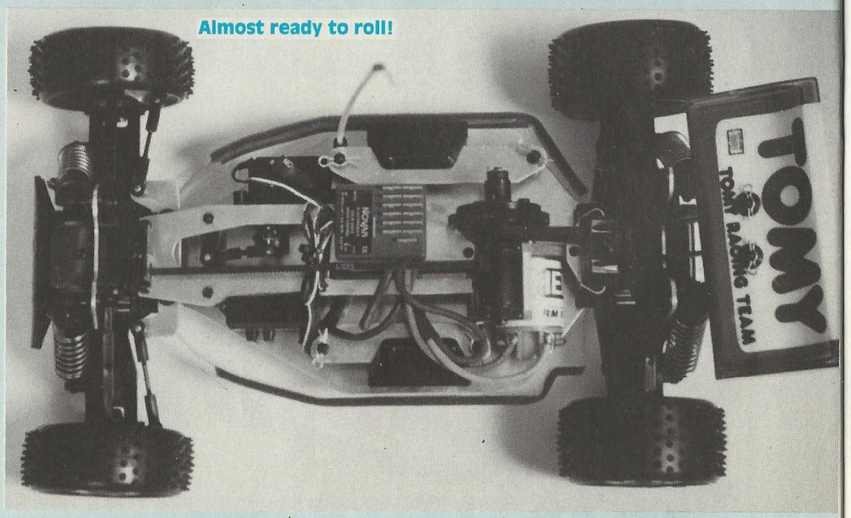


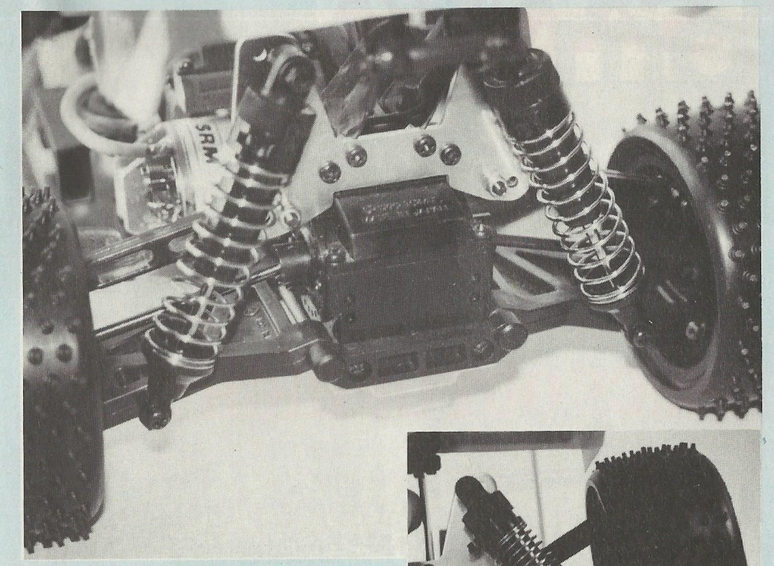
The oil supplied in the kit I feel is a little too thin, but as I haven't yet run the car, I could be proved wrong.

All that is left to do is the fitting of the radio equipment. There is plenty of room to fit any

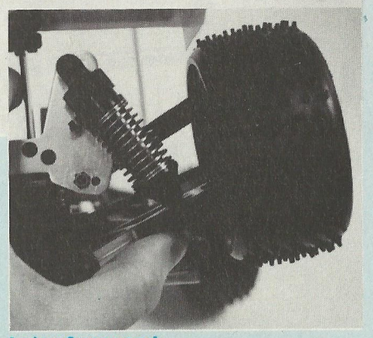


Almost ready to roll!



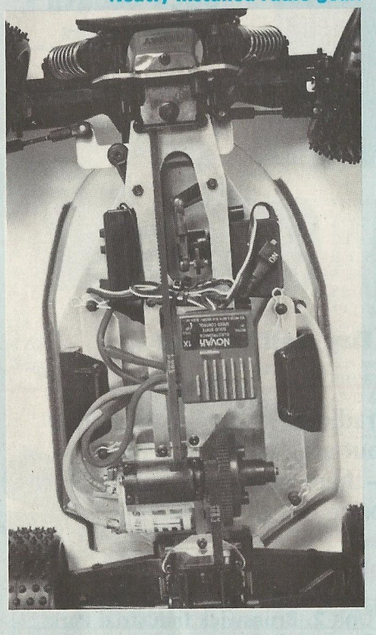


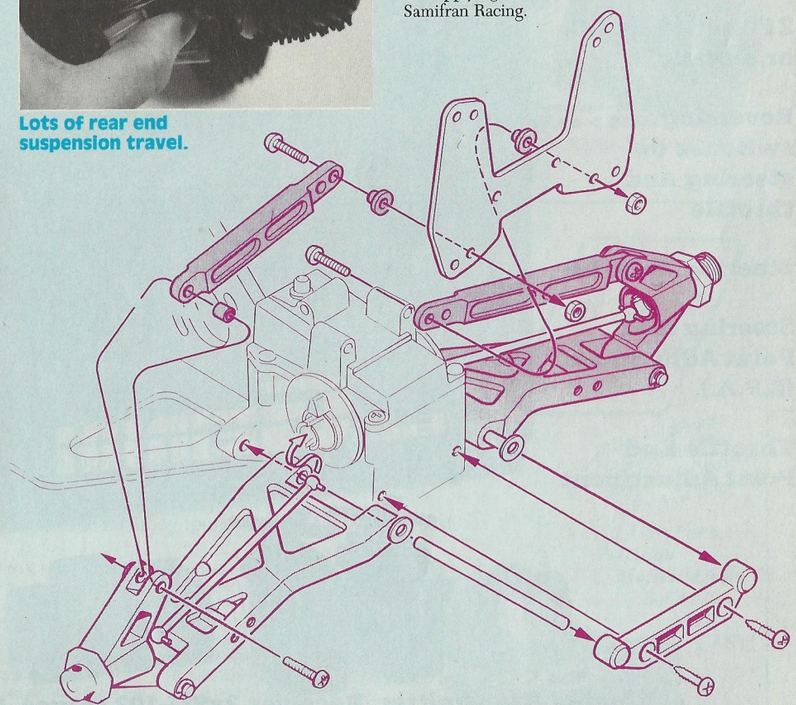
Rear suspension.



Lots of rear end suspension travel.

Neatly installed radio gear.





Conclusion

The name Adonis immediately conjures up in my mind, Greek mythology. Well, the only thing that's Greek about this car is the instruction manual. I am sorry, Mr Tomy, but you are not the first! I seem to remember building a certain car that is made in Northampton, a number of years ago, when it was first on the market, and being even more confused than I was this time. Now however, their instructions are very good, so I am confident that Tomy's will improve also. I must add that this slight criticism only refers to the gearbox section, as the rest of the instructions are quite good.

More importantly, the car — well, what can one say? It's absolutely excellent value for money. The manual goes on to explain in picture form how the car can be upgraded with ball differential, one way centre unit, and how to ballrace the whole car. For £110 I am confident that the car is well capable of showing a clean pair of heels to more expensive cars at my local club, and I will enjoy proving it!

If the new owner of one of these cars wishes to upgrade the car, I would suggest that he/she spends his money on the ballrace option rather than the others, as this will reduce wear, and also reduce friction.

The parts back up for this car is excellent, either from your local model shop or direct from Top Gear Model Trading (who we have to thank for supplying the kit for review) or from Samifran Racing.

make of receiver and steering servo. The car does not come with a resistor type speed control, so obviously one will require an electronic type. Again there is plenty of room to fit whatever one chooses.

The only thing that you have to be careful of is where you run your main wires. Make sure that you keep them clear of the belts so they don't rub. So with the car finished, all that is needed is to fit the bodyshell. Tomy provide you not only with this, but with an excellent fitting undertray, and a very flash set of stickers, allowing you to finish off you car ready to take it racing.