TOMY DUO

RCMC takes a look at two new model cars from Tomy, both modelled on full sized participants from the 1991 rally season.

Toyota Celica

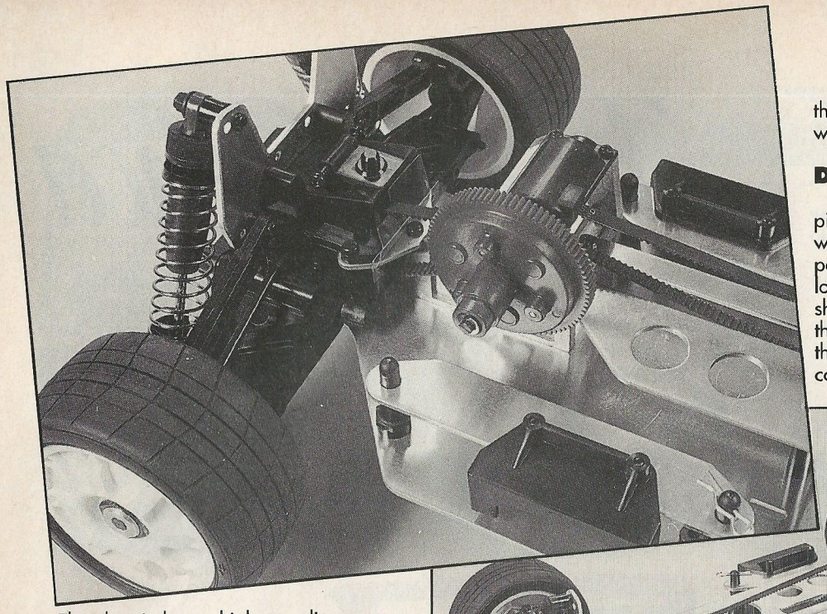
Nissan Pulsar

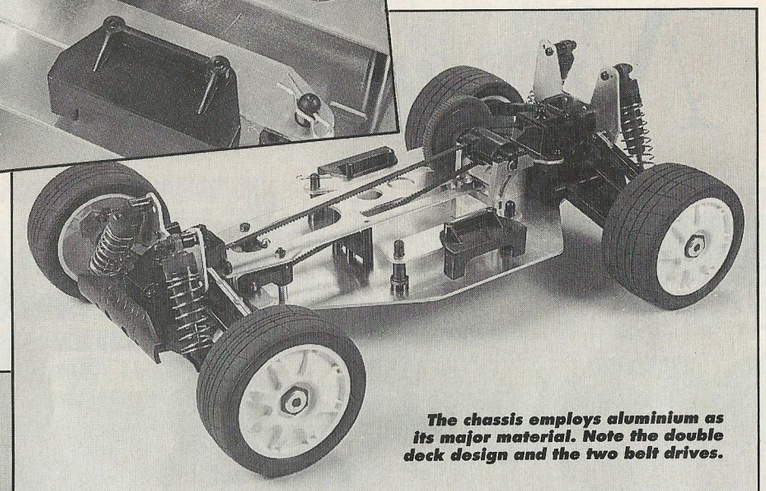
Some time ago we found out in the RCMC office that there was to be a new manufacturer entering the RC car arena. Tomy is a big company, and when we saw the early photos of their new 4WD racer we knew that they could make a real difference to racing if they really got involved. Our first reaction to the news was to find out when the car would hit the UK, a call was made to Tomy UK and the reaction was a surprise. "Sorry, we're not going to bring the car into the UK, not a market we want to get involved in".

That was some time ago and what they stated was true, Tomy UK didn't get involved with the cars, but others did. Samifran Racing and Top Gear Models both set-up a deal to allow the Tomy cars to arrive in the UK. Both are stocking the spares and are out in the field literally! racing the cars and setting up teams for the 1992 season.

Rally Racers

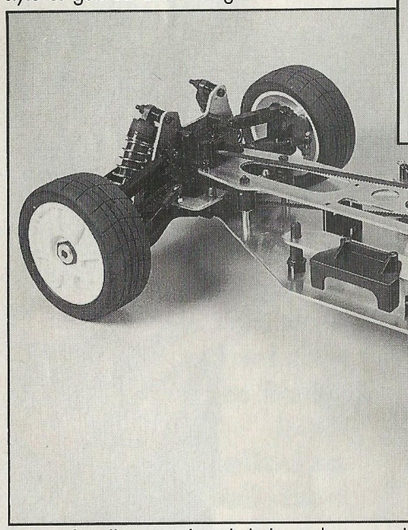
The subjects of our review are the kits based on the 4WD chassis fitted with lexan bodyshells representing Rally cars from the 1991 racing season. The two kits are the Nissan Pulsar GT-R, known in the UK as the Nissan Sunny and the Toyota Celica GT-Four.





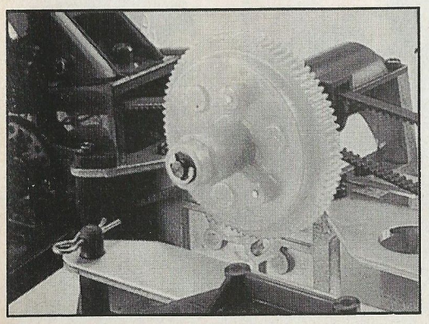
The chassis employs aluminium as its major material. Note the double deck design and the two belt drives.

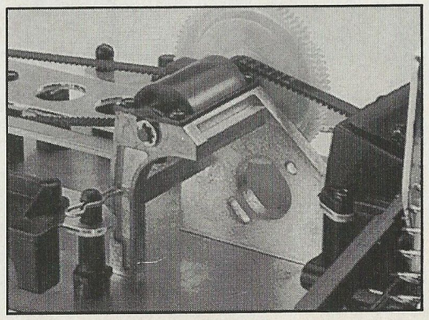
The chassis has a high sounding specification, four wheel drive, two belts, optional third differential, front and rear geared diffs, alloy chassis and lexan bodyshell. Construction of the kit starts with the diffs, these are the standard style of geared diffs that give a smooth

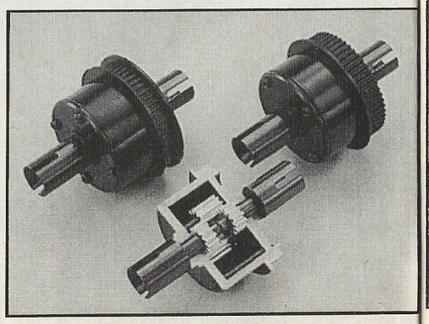


action if well greased and de-burred. The diffs go ahead quite well but lull you into a false sense of easy construction, for next to do is fit the metal bearings to the diffs and the diff housings. This should have been easy but was frankly very confusing and frustrating. The instructions are unclear and basically wrong in this area and are a real let-down. Plastic spacers and the fitting of third diff. The diff is assembled using three small metal gears which sit cleverly in the main drive gear, these drive onto another large gear which is incapsulated inside the main gear fairly safe from dirt and dust, the diff was a little notchy at first but after a five minute run soon frees up. Putting the diffs and belts into the car is quite easy, the lexan dirt covers are tricky but do fit OK as do the gearbox tops and the shock brackets etc. The next feature we found not too pleasing was the finish of the alloy parts including the top and bottom chassis plates. These are punched from alloy and seem to receive no other attention at the factory leaving the edges sharp and in need of attention, we'll say no more but do clean these sharp edges up with a file. The rest of the chassis goes together easily and quickly, metal bearings are found throughout and the suspension is simple but well laid out. Fixed upper links are found all round making the camber of the car non-adjustable. Alloy wheel drivers are fitted to the drive outputs which line up with the all round dogbone driveshafts. The front of the car also has bogbones -no UJ's, these seem OK and don't fall out but UJ's would give more lock and a smoother drive system. Wheels and tyres on the car are excellent, bright white racy wheels bolt on via alloy nuts and are shod with wide semi-slick racing look tyres.

Below, from left; Main drive can be built with or without differential. Centre mounted main drive showing the twin belts driving front and rear gearboxes. Differential units are the same front and rear - note the cut away showing internals. Eccentric housing which allows for belt tension adjustment. Light alloy employed in the Knuckle arms. Semi-slick, low profile tyres handle well and improve appearence.







Drive System

The drive system involves two fine pitch belts, these are a bit deformed when they first are released from their packet but do straighten up in time. The long belt travels to the front diff and the short one to the rear. These two meet in the middle at the centre shaft where there are a number of options. The kit comes with either a solid drive or a

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Best Bit

The best part of the Tomy kits are the bodyshells available, the Nissan and Toyota shells really are good to look at and for a specific reason. Unlike most 1:10 shells which are moulded in one piece the Tomy shells are in three sections. The bulk of the shell is moulded as per usual but both the front and rear bumper sections are separate mouldings, these are simply bolted to the main shell to give a tuck under effect that makes the bodies to our eyes really excellent! Painting the main colours onto the shell is left to the builder, some stickers are given in the kit but on the Nissan the red and blue needs to be masked as does the red on the Toyota.

Body mounts are good and strong holding the shell in position and giving a little flex to soak-up the crashes and bangs!

Overall we must say that the building of the Tomy was a little disappointing, we will go further in depth next month with the review of the buggy based Adonis which shares the same components. Once finished and running the car is quite a nice surprise, speed is OK and handling just what it should be, dampers are a little under damped with the kit oil and so the ride is a little bumpy. The car has a good amount of steering on grass but we are yet to try the car on anything too slippery.

Our verdict is that if you don't mind a little work to get to a good looking final product then the Tomy may be for you. Over the next two issues of RCMC we will be looking at the Adonis and the Intruder in more detail so if you haven't made your mind up yet wait till next month! The Tomy range of cars and spares is available from Top Gear Models and Samifran Racing.

Is it real or is it a model? The attractive full sized Nissan GTI-R was driven by David LLewellyn and Stig Blomqvist in the 1991 rally season.