

Smart looking GT bodyshell finished to Terry's usual standard

speed freak

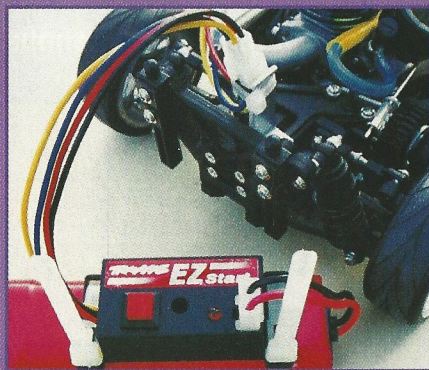
The Traxxas 4TEC Nitro

When I was informed that a box containing the new Traxxas Nitro scale saloon was winging its way to me I could not wait to see what was in store. Your Ed' had informed me that this car is supposed to do 50mph out of the box, and he wants me to prove it!

After picking up the package from the parcel force depot I just managed to hold myself back and resisted opening the box until I got home.

So what is in the box?

The colourful box greets you with the 50mph+ claim in big bold letters and a closer look reveals this car has an excellent specifica-



The EZ start system simply plugs into the socket on the rear of the chassis

tion which includes, TRX .15 pro Nitro engine with EZ start, 2 speed gearbox, tuned exhaust pipe, oil filled pro shocks, adjustable double wishbone suspension front and rear and Pro-line V Range tyres.

This is a very nice looking, fully assembled ready to run car, even down to the installation of the receiver and servos, although the kit is available without the radio gear but still ready to run. So with this kit, all you need to start racing is fuel (they recommend 10-20% nitro), batteries for the radio gear and a 7.2v stick pack for the EZ start. That's it! The only jobs that still need to be done are fitting the 4 body posts, gluing the tyres to the wheels and painting the body shell.

Nice blue bits

Since I can't go through the building process and how clear the diagrams are as the car is pre-built I did not have to do any building stuff - I think I should tell you something about the car itself. At the heart of the 4TEC is a TRX Pro .15 engine complete with tuned pipe and nice blue anodised heat sink which adds a quality feel to the car. The power is transmitted through an adjustable 2 speed gearbox via 3 belts to the four wheels which are shod with Pro-line V-range rubber tyres.

The differentials at each end of the car are bevel geared and are very smooth with power being transferred to the wheels down telescopic drive shafts. With the whole drive train being ball raced as standard, the transmission is free running and smooth.

As with most cars now the suspension is double wishbone front and rear. On the front, both castor and camber are adjustable. The castor adjustments are made by moving the top wishbone forwards or backwards using spacers which clip on and off, this makes things quick and easy when it comes to making changes trackside. The construction of the front end with large ball joints on the top and bottom wishbones looks strong and should be able to take the odd

knock or two. The rear suspension is not quite as beefy as the front but still has adjustable camber and there is toe-in built into the hub carriers.

My only gripe so far (albeit just a small one) is the oil filled ultra shocks. They are all short of oil and squeak, but once re-filled with 35wt oil the shocks were nice and smooth. All of the running gear sits on a nicely finished aluminium blue anodised chassis, which is counter-sunk and has folds on each side to give extra strength and rigidity.

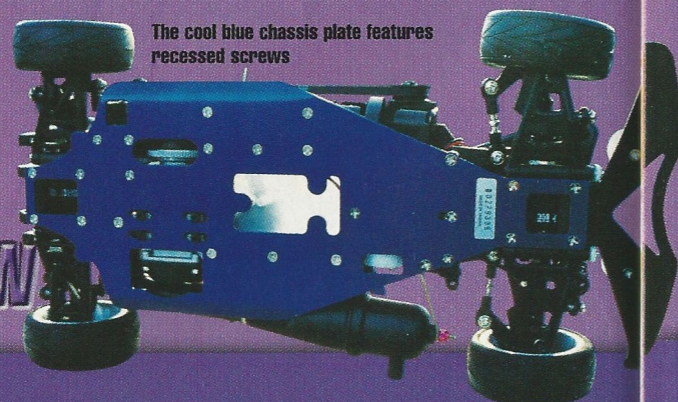
Traxxas EZ Start

This good idea consists of a small starter motor which is fitted to the engine via an arrangement of gears and a one way bearing on the crankshaft. The power source that makes this work is the EZ start controller which is strapped to a 7.2v nicad pack and plugs onto the back of the car. When the start button is pressed the controller energises the glow plug and turns the engine over, hey presto - the engine starts!

As I have been used to the pull start system on my Nitro this will be a bit of luxury and an experience.

Two speed or not two speed

To get the most speed out of the car and

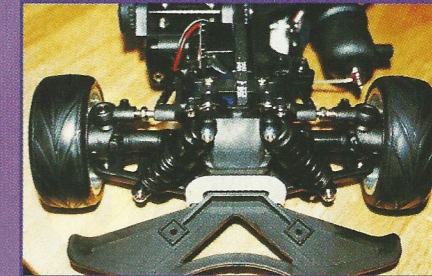


The cool blue chassis plate features recessed screws

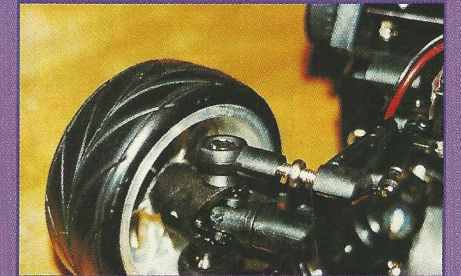
'this car is supposed to do 50mph out of the box, and he wants me to prove it!'



One small snag that needed to be sorted, the screw on the front of the exhaust fouls the front wheel on full lock



Solid looking front bumper, I hope it doesn't get much work!



Hefty pivot balls should be capable of taking a knock

flexibility out of the engine the two-speed gearbox is needed. The kit comes with a gear set which gives the car good acceleration with a very high top speed, but the ratios are changeable to tune the car to different tracks. The adjustably part of the gearbox means that the change point can be adjusted, i.e. at what revs/speed the gearbox changes up and an increase in speed is achieved. This should be adjusted to suit the track and conditions.

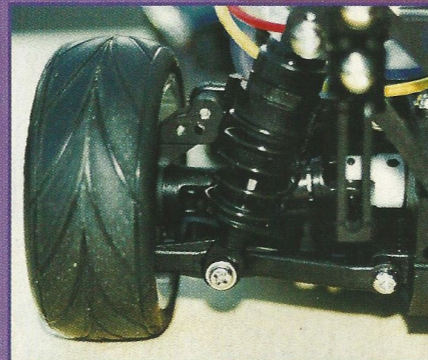
In the groove

With a 'V' groove pattern these tyres look the part. The tread pattern may help with grip in the wet and with the compound and the foam inserts being soft there should hopefully be plenty of grip in the dry. But the softness of the tyre makes it a bit bouncy and it may be prone to ballooning at high speed, we will have to see.

Running in

The TRX booklet that is enclosed with the car explains the running in process in detail and should be followed if you want to get the best performance out of your engine. So with a fully changed 7.2v Nicad pack strapped to the EZ Start controller and a bottle of 16% QuickFire fuel I was ready to start. After setting the high and low speed needle settings as described in the instructions the engine was primed using the pump on the fuel tank lid. Here I found a little problem. When the pump is pressed, fuel from the tank travels up the pressurisation pipe and into the exhaust and then out onto the floor. As an extreme example the fuel actually siphoned out of the tank until it was nearly empty (what a waste, fuel is not cheap). The only way I could find around this was to pinch the pipe while I pumped which is a bit awkward.

Once primed the EZ start was connected to the plug on the back of the car and once the little red button was pressed the engine turned over. I did not expect the engine to start first time as the carburettor usually needs a bit of a



Rear end features neat sliding drive shafts

tweak to get the mixture's right, but after setting the high speed needle a little richer it started but then stopped.

This was promising so again I went through the motions and again the engine started and carried on running with help of a little more throttle. What a nice noise! Even on low revs the exhaust note sounded meaty, so I think I'm going to like this. The procedure for running in requires you to run through four tanks of fuel. After each tank the high-speed mixture needle is turned to lean the mixture. Needless to say, when running the car with a rich mixture it tends to run a little lumpy and it does tend to stall a lot. The first tank was run through and each tank after this the mixture is leaned off and by the 5th tank it is run in and you should be ready to give it some throttle (Hoorah!!). It took a while to get the carburettor settings right and stop the engine from 'bogging down' and I still haven't got them quite right, even after following their guidelines. I think this engine is going to be a bit of a handful to get right. I have had a bit of experience with nitro engines but not one with two mixture screws. I think the trick will be to concentrate on one at a time, as even a small turn of the mixture screw seems to make a lot of difference to the way the engine runs or does not.

The body

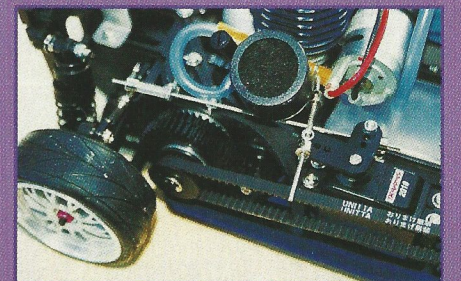
One thing remains to be done. The bodyshell. The shell that is supplied is a McLaren F1 type with a different rear end to normal which makes it look quite square at the back. As I don't have the knack for painting I passed the shell on to Terry Atkinson who paints shells for myself and RRC. One thing Terry had to say was that the shell did not have a plastic covering on it to stop over spray, but Terry gets around this by covering the body with cling film first, easy eh! None of the body mount holes are marked on the body so included in the instruction book is a template which is placed on the body and the holes drilled through it. This is a little tricky so it may help to stick the templates in place with some tape to hold it while you drill.

Talk about the weather

With the body painted and fitted, the engine nicely run in and 'kind of tuned', I headed over to Ashby. When I left home the weather was OK, well at least it was not raining. But not for long anyway. During the 20-minute drive it

started spitting, then it started to throw it down, and so it continued day after day, Oh well. Wait and see. So far I have been impressed with this car as a kit but we will have to wait and see what it's like on the track. As I want to give this car a fair review, I have been waiting for the Gods to give me some nice weather to get plenty of track time. This I'm afraid has not happened and I'm going to wait until another time. Sorry. All being well I should bring you up to date in 'Drive In' in the next issue. And I still don't know if it will break 50 mph, but I think it might.

My thanks to Traxxas UK for supplying the review sample. **RRC**



The very high specification includes a 2 speed transmission, tuned pipe and these Proline tyres

Quick Spec

.15 sized Nitro powered 4WD Scale Touring Car. 2 Speed Gearbox, Tuned Pipe, ProLine 'V' Tyres. 2 Channel radio (optional). Requires Fuel, Paint for Polycarbonate body and a 7.2v Nicad Pack to complete.

Tester Kit

Quickfire 16% Nitro fuel
Kit Radio, tyres
7.2 Volt Orion Nicad for EZ start

Likes

Build quality
Specification
EZ Start

Dislikes

Engine tricky to set up
Engine priming