



To quote an Andrew Lloyd-Webber lyric 'Today is the first day of my life', or to be more accurate 'Today is the first day of my life as a convert to Nitro mania!'

I thought that Christmas had arrived early, when the Editor asked me to review the Traxxas Nitro Hawk. It has long been an ambition of mine to try my hand at driving an I.C. vehicle and with the Nitro Hawk Truck I felt certain I would not be disappointed.

The Traxxas Nitro Hawk represents the 1/10 scale racing version of the full size American Stadium racing tracks very well, and will definitely give you 'track credibility', wherever you choose to use it.

Traxxas have produced the Nitro Hawk in 1:10 scale, two wheel drive, powered by an Image.12 ABC glow plug operated engine, which matches the chassis very well.

You have three options having decided to purchase the Nitro Hawk. It is available in kit form, or pre-built with or without radio gear. The engine in the built up versions is factory run and set up ready for use.

### It's a good introduction to IC!

Traxxas designed the Nitro Hawk for the person who has limited or no experience of I.C. models, as in my case. The instruction manual proved to be invaluable as a reference point, and is well up to Traxxas' usual high standard. All the pictures are very clear and informative as are the written details and instructions, which as many modellers will know, can sometimes be a challenge in themselves.

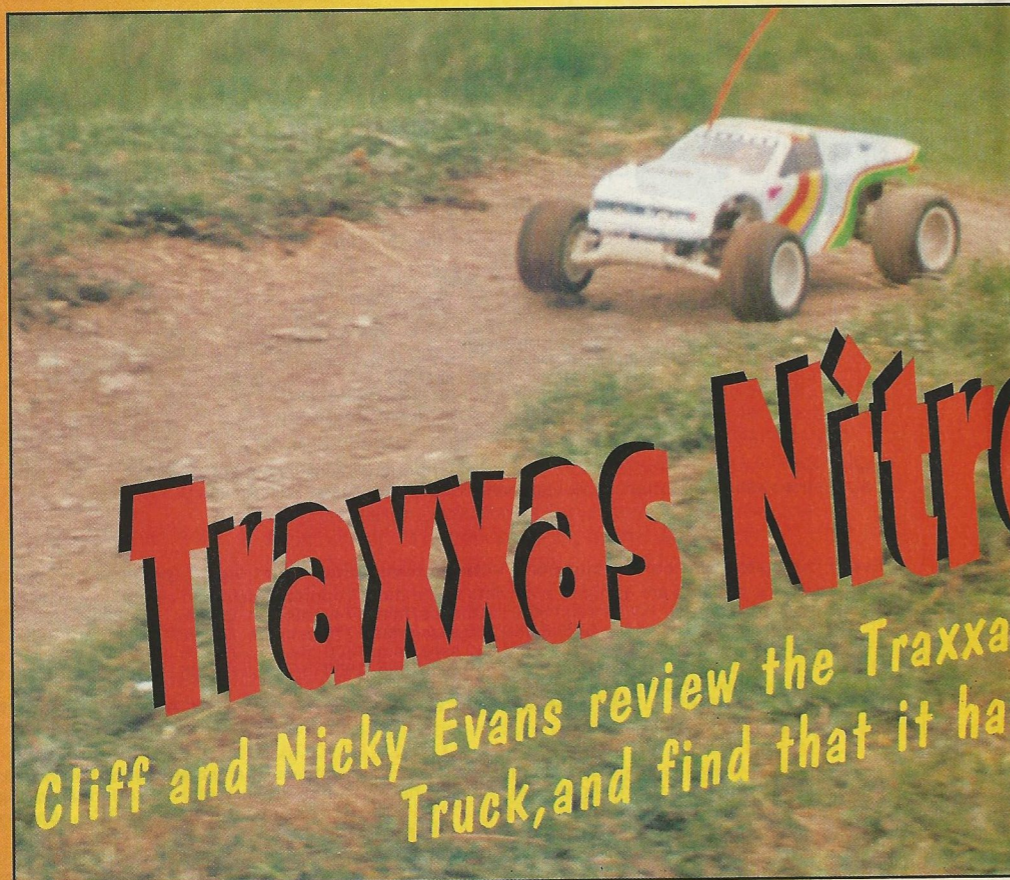
### What's in the box?

Firstly the chassis, this is constructed in T6 aircraft grade aluminium and smartly finished a smokey brown colour, as are the front brace and rear impact protector. The chassis is very rigid and will not allow any flex, which in turn permits the suspension to do its work correctly.

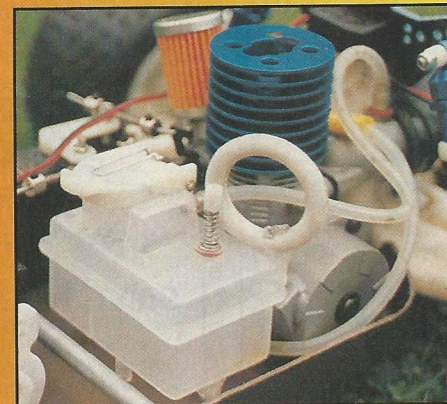
The suspension parts are again moulded to Traxxas' usual high quality and finished in white (as per the TRX1). Tuning in the correct camber, castor and toe in angles is made easy, the turn buckles have left and right hand threads, with adjustment nuts fitted.

The gearbox is well designed and constructed in the same white nylon as the suspension parts. Traxxas have fitted the Hawk with a planetary gear diff for strength and long life. A slipper clutch is fitted as standard, with ball races on the slipper clutch shaft.

Quality is the key word when you look at the shock absorbers, the blue anodised body and cap really look the part, black springs are fitted as



Cliff and Nicky Evans review the Traxxas Nitro Hawk 1/10 ic Truck, and find that it has changed their lives!



The starter ring can be seen clearly here. Note the priming pump on top of the tank.

perfect body, my son usually suggests page three of the Sun (Sorry Nick, wrong type of body!). However, back to the job at hand.

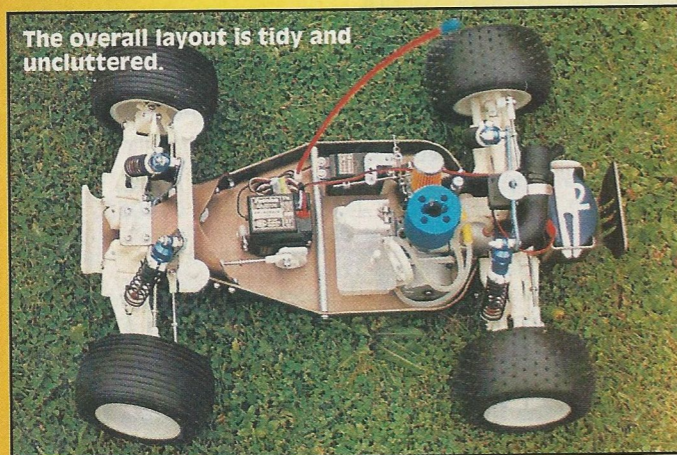
The Hawk shell is well designed and easy to prepare prior to painting, but please take your time at this point! Wash the shell in warm soapy water and dry it with a hair drier prior to masking the windows and roll cage. From here on in you can be as ambitious as you like, the body pictured took nearly six hours to complete. Supplied with the kit is a very good sticker sheet which will allow you to finish off the bodyshell very nicely.

### The Radio Installation

As mentioned previously, the Nitro Hawk kit under review came ready built but minus the radio gear.

### Custom Paint Job?

I always like to get the bodyshell painted and out of the way, before I progress to the actual preparation of a model. This gives me time to play mind games and kid myself that I can produce a radical custom paint job! After some considerable time thumbing through back issues of RRC magazine looking for inspiration in the form of the



The overall layout is tidy and uncluttered.



The stubby exhaust pipe and rear battery box.

For completion of the car you need a two channel radio, receiver, two servos and a battery box. Following the instructions, fitting the two servos, battery box and switch was easy. A little thought is needed to place the receiver in the correct position, it not being mentioned in the instructions (!), on top of the steering servo seemed the best place to me.

Before you progress any further, power up the radio system and centralise your servos. Only when this is done can you fit the two servo horns in their correct position and make any small adjustments that may be necessary to throttle and steering operation.

### Starting The Engine

A tip for prospective purchasers - Before trying to start the engine, I recommend reading the sixteen page engine manual thoroughly. This will ensure that your truck gives you many hours of trouble free racing. Also read the five page tuning guide in the main instruction manual, Traxxas

have gone to great lengths to supply this information, so for your own benefit please read both sections.

Having read the instructions, it was time to fill the tank and adjust the high and low speed settings on the carburetor. The engine was primed, following the instructions, and the glow starter attached. A quick glance at the instructions to boost my confidence and all was ready. A few short pulls on the starter cord failed to provoke a response from the engine, then after a few more pulls on the starter cord, I began to feel the action tightening up. I referred to the trouble shooting section of the manual, these indicated the most likely cause was that I had flooded the engine having primed it excessively. Having followed the instructions, I was ready for another attempt at starting the engine.

The glow starter was attached once more and two pulls later the engine burst into life and idled perfectly. The glow starter was removed and the engine left to tick over on the stand for about thirty seconds. We removed the Nitro Hawk from the stand and placed it on the ground, then with a little forward movement of the throttle away we went, a healthy plume of blue smoke trailing behind the Nitro Hawk as it ran around the test track.

Performance at this stage is not very exciting, but improves with each tank of fuel. In the early stages the engine must be run with the settings on the rich side (hence the blue smoke), then as the engine begins to free up the power of the .12 Image engine really comes into play. At this point, I recommend referring back to the manual for fuel mixture settings.

The response of an I.C. engine is not as immediate as that of their electric brothers and they can take a second or so to reach full power. Once the centrifugal clutch engages it really shows its true turn of speed. Adjustment to the slipper clutch can be carried out at this stage, if you wish.

### The Track Test

I selected an old BMX track on which to test the Nitro Hawk Truck. The surface is a mixture of stone-dust, grass and concrete, and being a BMX track it has several banked high speed bends, hairpin turns and jumps, all of which make for an interesting track test!

After a few laps around the track the engine was ready for some serious testing. I chose to run the Nitro Hawk with the settings set, apart from one or two small adjustments to the steering trim, as it came out of the box. Acceleration was good with a very nice note coming from the exhaust.

On the high speed banking the Nitro Hawk kept very much on the chosen line and exited the bank with a

really good turn of speed. The next obstacle was a small jump, for which it was necessary to throttle back slightly, followed by a left hand bend. At this point the Nitro Hawk was prone to understeer, the same happened on the next right hand bend. Later on, a small adjustment to the suspension improved the situation but a change to grippier front tyres would probably cure the understeer problem. Having said that, the characteristics would be ideal for a complete novice.

Over the rough part of the track the Nitro Hawk handled very well and kept on the chosen line, even with the suspension working full out. On the jumps the truck was equally impressive, landing on all four wheels most of the time, the odd occasion when it rolled was down to driver error. The steering is very highly geared and the slightest movement on the trim can result in some dramatic changes of directional control. Each driver will need to set the trim to suit his or her style of driving.

### Our Evaluation?

The Traxxas Nitro Hawk truck is the ideal vehicle with which to enter I.C. off road racing, but is also an interesting prospect for those who are more familiar with I.C. engines. Available in



The flywheel, slipper clutch and brake band complete with spring loaded linkage.

three options ranging from ready to run to kit, the Nitro Hawk should give hours of pleasure to anyone who decides to run one.

I.C. engines can be said to be noisy if used in the confines of your back garden and will certainly cause annoyance to your neighbours. It is best to find an open space or large car park on which to run your Truck, and in turn you will have many happy hours driving your Nitro Hawk.

Well done Traxxas - a first class product and a great concept, it would be perfect to race in the RRC Truck Series in 1994!

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