

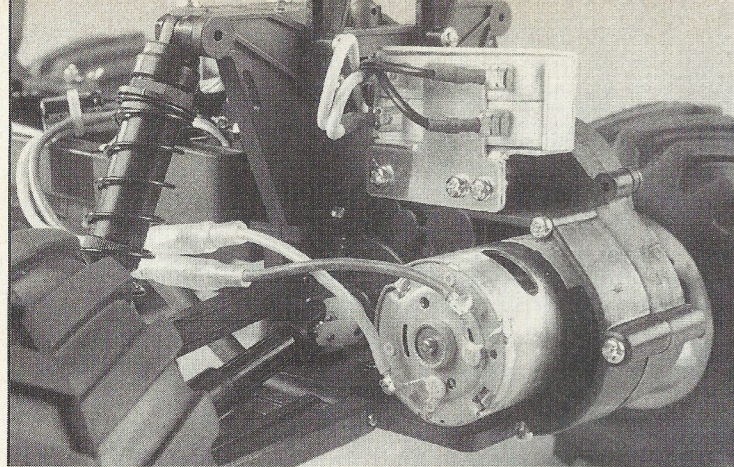


KIT
REVIEW
Reviewed by Andy Carter

With massive ground clearance, big wheels and a very competitive price the Traxxas Stampede is set to rule the Monster Truck class

Traxxas Stampede

Stampede



been competent but none of which have leapt out at me like the man in the Tango advert does screaming 'Buy me!'.

Where the Stampede is different is that it isn't purely a re-bodied something else. It isn't a turbo version of an existing kit. What it is, is an all new 2WD Monster

great deal to you but, ask any design engineer and they will tell you that to design something from the drawing board and take it into production in under a year is fast. Especially when there are plastic mouldings to be made.

The assembly of the kit is very modular - i.e. you build one area

Once the gearbox is assembled, you assemble the driveshafts and the rear wishbones and suspension. Once again, the driveshafts are the telescopic universal type which are very reliable.

Suspension both front and rear is taken care of by a single

wishbone and a fixed length top link - no camber adjustments here! Four long throw oil filled dampers with massive coil springs provide the suspension control which does feel exceptionally smooth. Once the rear-end is finished (without dampers), you assemble the front in exactly the

same manner until you have 2 ends of a Monster Truck without a chassis.

The chassis is an extremely simple, narrow bathtub style moulding which, in my opinion, really steals the show. Firstly, it is mounted extremely high which, whilst it wouldn't be very good in a out-and-out racing buggy, does provide exceptional ground clearance and a good deal of inherent weather proofing. The steering servo pokes through the bottom of the chassis just in front of the receiver, whilst the speed control servo sits at the back of the chassis with the mechanical speed controller on top of it. The nicad battery pack sits along the length of the chassis (a la virtually all 2WD buggies) and enhances the slim looks of this set up.

The front and rear modules are fixed to the chassis with the help of enormous plastic mouldings which look like up turned roll cages. The front one also serves as a guard for the steering servo and the track rods.

Once the shock absorbers are attached along with the wheels

and tyres, you really begin to see just how big this kit is. It totally dwarfs my Losi XX to the extent where the roof of my Losi is actually lower than the bottom of the chassis on the Stampede.

All that is required now, is to cut out the polycarbonate shell, paint it (from the inside) and apply the decals.

Conclusions

You may have already got the impression that I like this kit but it's true, I do like it - a lot! I have, in the past, been criticised for some comments I made regarding other Traxxas kits but I stand by those comments like I do with the comments about this kit.

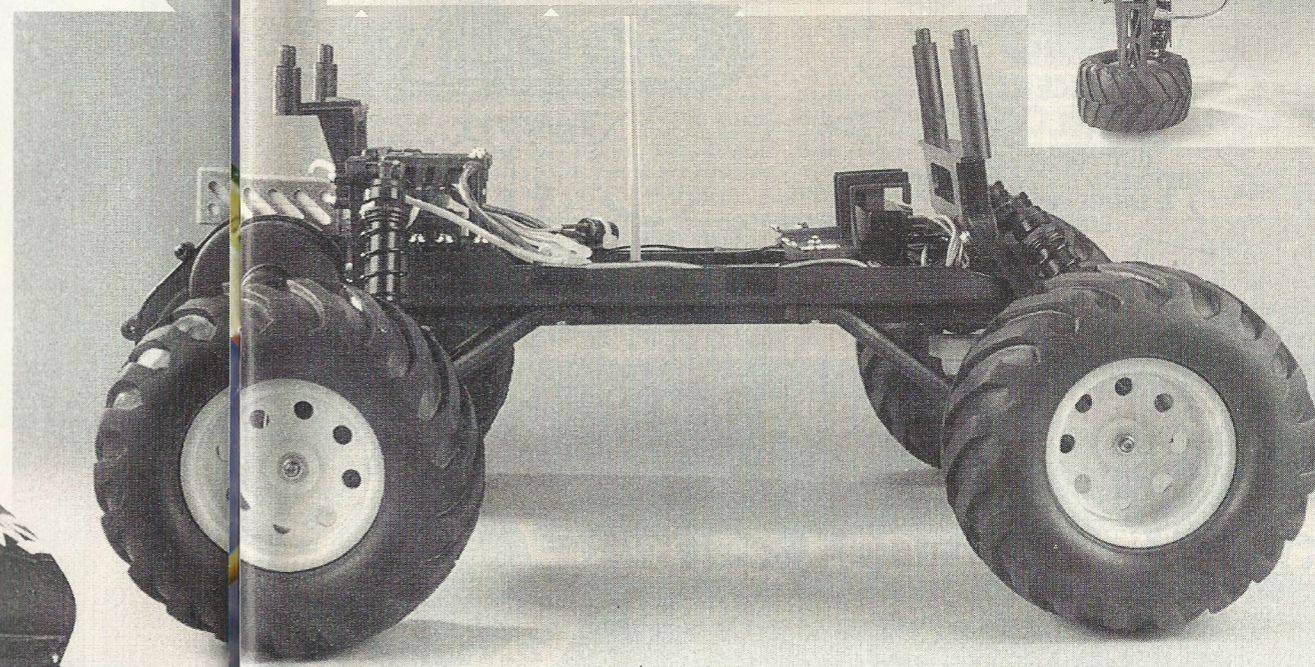
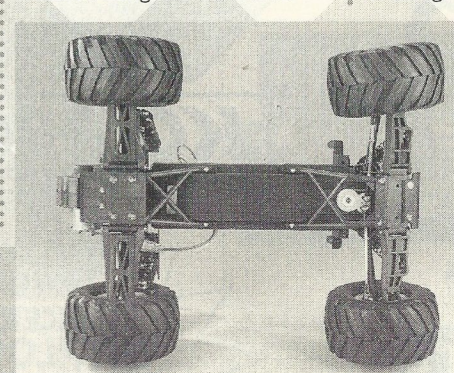
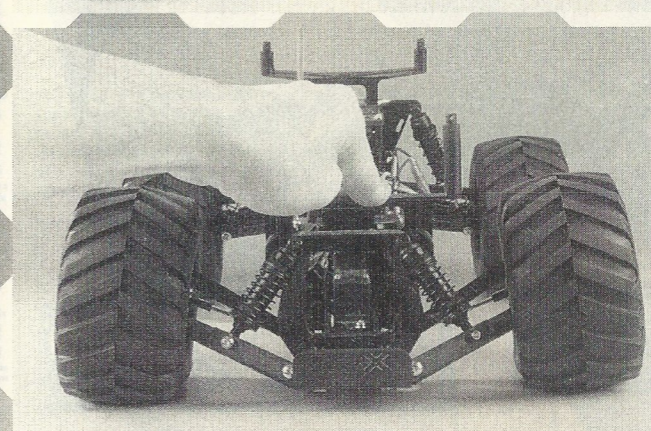
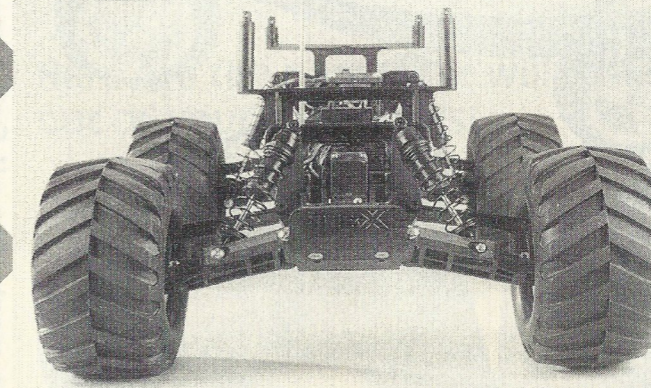
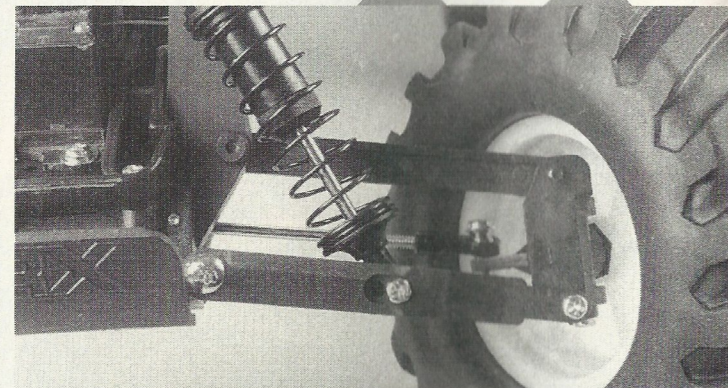
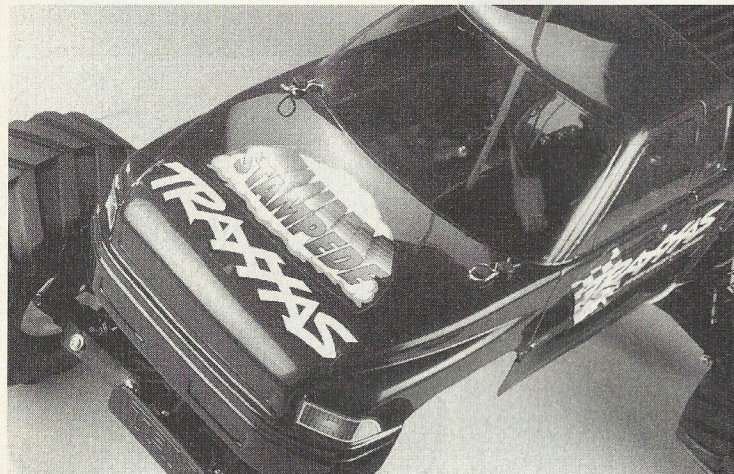
The packaging is still somewhat idiosyncratic - all the components are separated into their relevant instruction bags so only one bag need be opened at any time - a method with which I wholly applaud. The screws, however, are still in many different little plastic bags which I do find a little irritating. There is, however, a

method to this madness which after speaking to Traxxas UK, I can agree with - It is in fact, more economical for Traxxas to adopt this method than to collate all the different screws and place them either in one bag, or with the relevant plastic components. This, in turn, makes the kit cheaper to

manufacture and therefore correspondingly cheaper in the market place.

The instructions are good, not quite up to Tamiya standards but easily followed and understood nonetheless but the overall quality of the kit, especially the fibre composite plastic mouldings is extremely high which leaves a good, lasting feeling about this kit.

Finally, to cap it all, the Stampede costs approximately £92.00 (kit only) and is available either in kit form or almost ready to run (Radio included and installed) for about £145.00 which makes the Stampede, in my opinion, extremely competitive.



Stylish truck bodyshell is included in the Stampede kit that has a mean, tough look. Top left; Standard 540 type motor fitted in the rear. Above; Chunky suspension should cope with all the thrills and spills of truck driving.

I've just finished reviewing the latest offering from Traxxas, an American company who, in the past four years or so, have made good in-roads into the vast American market but who, so far, have yet to hit the proverbial jackpot over here.

Sure, their existing kits offer everything from the entry level/novice market right through to the competition orientated 2WD racing scene. Their range could quite easily fit into a Burger King advert;

'You want Big wheels?'
'You got it!'
'You want 2WD racing buggy?'
'You got it!'
'You want electric?'
'You got it!'
'You want Nitro-power?'
'You got it!'

You see, Traxxas have a kit to suit virtually all tastes (unless you want a 4WD!) but none have had quite the same impact on me as the new Stampede. I've built a TRX-3, an LS-II, a Rad 2 and even a Nitro Hawk - all of which have

Truck aimed squarely at the novice/entry level market place and as such, it's going to have to be good to take on the might of companies such as Tamiya.

And Good it certainly is (in my opinion anyway). I'm not going to bore you with all the build details of the kit. Instead, I'm going to bore you with some of the features of the kit which have certainly impressed me.

Firstly, the kit has been designed in a matter of months - 8 to be exact. This may not mean a

and then put it to one side and build another. In this instance, you start off by assembling the gearbox which is a straight forward gear reduction type with a geared differential. Gone is the ubiquitous Traxxas slipper clutch which, in a kit like this, isn't a problem. The gearbox, like the whole kit, is bushed using plain bearings. I'm not a great lover of plain bearings because they are inherently quite inefficient but this gearbox, is one of the smoothest running that I have built without ballraces.