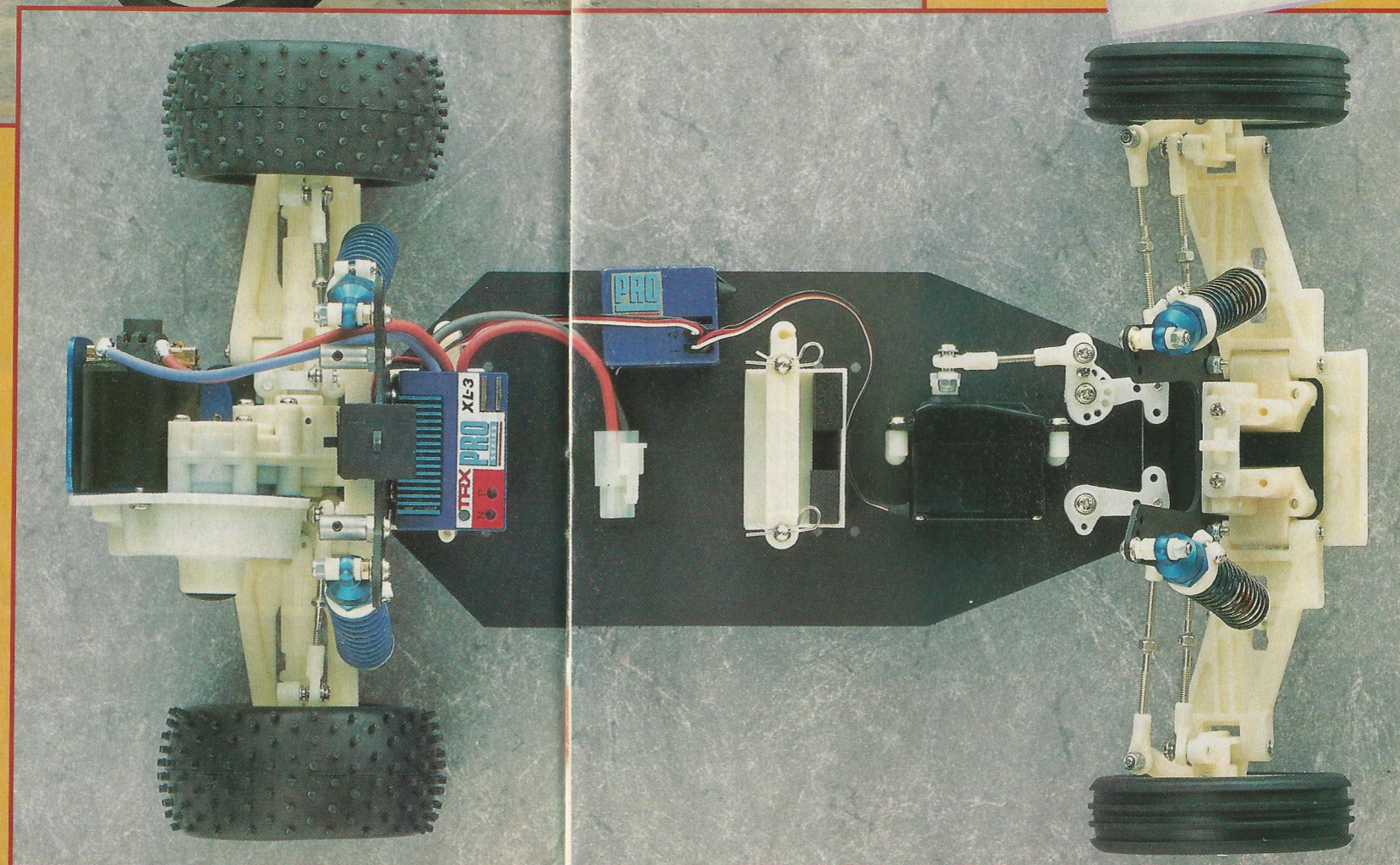


# Traxxas Time?

**Could the Traxxas TRX1 be a contender for the British title?... We think so.**

There are various ways to start the review an RC model car. I'll start by explaining the relationship between RCMC and Traxxas. Around ten months ago an American chap was put through on the telephone at the RCMC offices, he asked questions about racing in the UK, the BRCA and the major distributors of cars. Luckily I was helpful and we chatted for some time on the phone. I answered his questions and he was enthusiastic and knowledgeable. I say that luckily I was helpful, because after a while he explained that he owned Traxxas, its always nice to get off on the right foot with these people! He was interested in the UK market, I told him all about racing in the rain in the cold and on grass, and he listened carefully to everything I had to say. At the end of the call I thought no more about it.

Six months later while sitting trackside in Detroit watching the 2WD practice and waiting for my own slot I got chatting to a tall tanned man wearing a pure white 'Team USA' hat. We were watching Masami Hirosaka blasting round the track and admiring his 'flat out' approach to driving around the circuit, he would sometimes deliberately cut the track to go over and over the same section to



**Neat gearbox is moulded in the creamy white Traxxas plastic and looks neat with its blue alloy motor plate.**

tune-in his driving, he was going very quickly.

Also on the track was Scott Montgomery, his Traxxas looked really good - I mean Really good. He was lapping as fast as Masami and the car rode the bumps as though they weren't there.

As we watched I commented on how good I felt the Traxxas looked, the guy I was sitting with said 'Yep, we may not win this year but we'll win in '93', as you've guessed I had been chatting to the same guy who had rang me in the UK - Jim Jenkins, owner of Traxxas.

We had a good chat and discussed the plans he had for Traxxas, Jim is a really nice guy and when he says he's gonna win - you tend to believe him. The Traxxas TRX1 making the World championship final at its first attempt is now history, the car was great and looked if not the best on the track equal to anything else, our review is of one of the first kits of the TRX1 to come out of the factory. This though is not just a review of a car you can't buy, Traxxas Europe is now with us, and as you read this the cars should be in the shops.

## Here We Go

As soon as you look in the box the standard and completeness of the kit make it apparent that this car is not the first Traxxas have made. They in fact have been making cars for years and

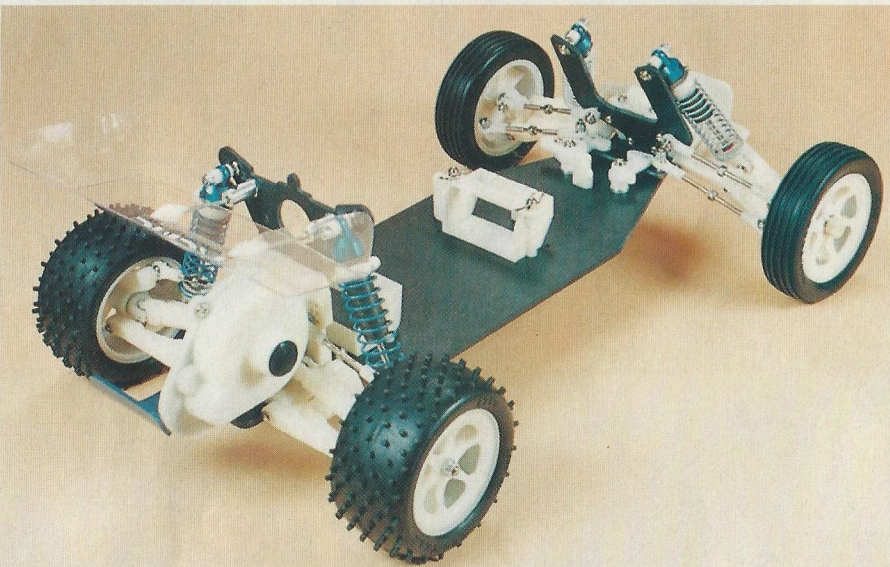
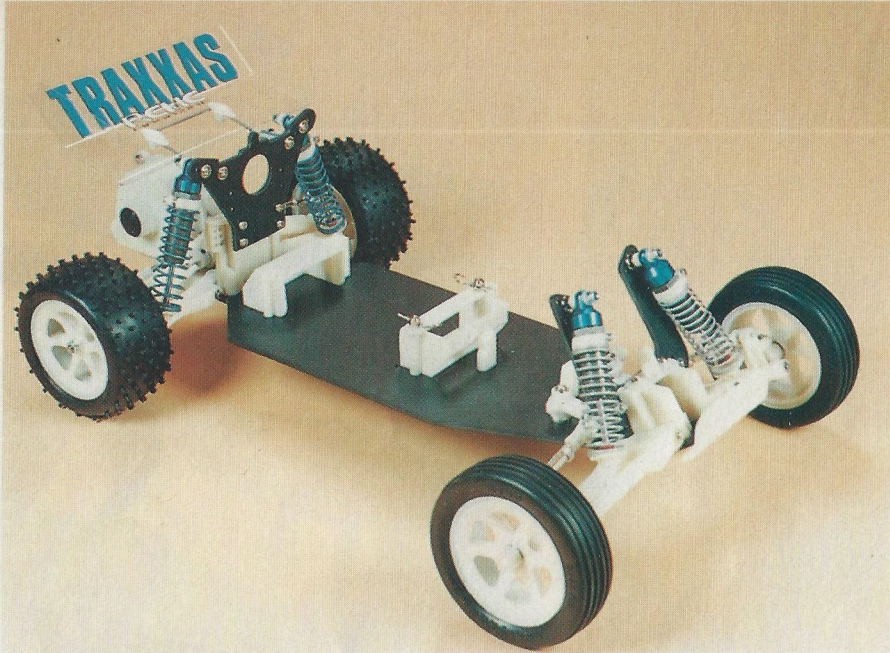


the TRX1 uses all the technology and skills they have developed in making the range of cars they now produce.

On opening the box, all the cars neatly moulded creamy white plastic parts are neatly packaged in labelled bags. Taking a closer look, attention to detail has really been taken care of, there's even pre-cut masking for the body and a neat rubber cap for the end of the aerial! Construction starts in the instruction manual with the differential, ours came ready built which made life easy! The diff is fully ballraced, smooth and easy to construct. Final adjustment needs to be done but this is quick and easy.

The diff is popped in to the gear casing along with an idler gear and the top shaft, we put a small amount of light oil in before we closed the two halves and put the long screws through the two sides and into the motor plate. The instructions don't say to add oil so it's your choice. The gearbox is similar in design to another successful American design, we won't mention it again but comparisons are bound to be made.

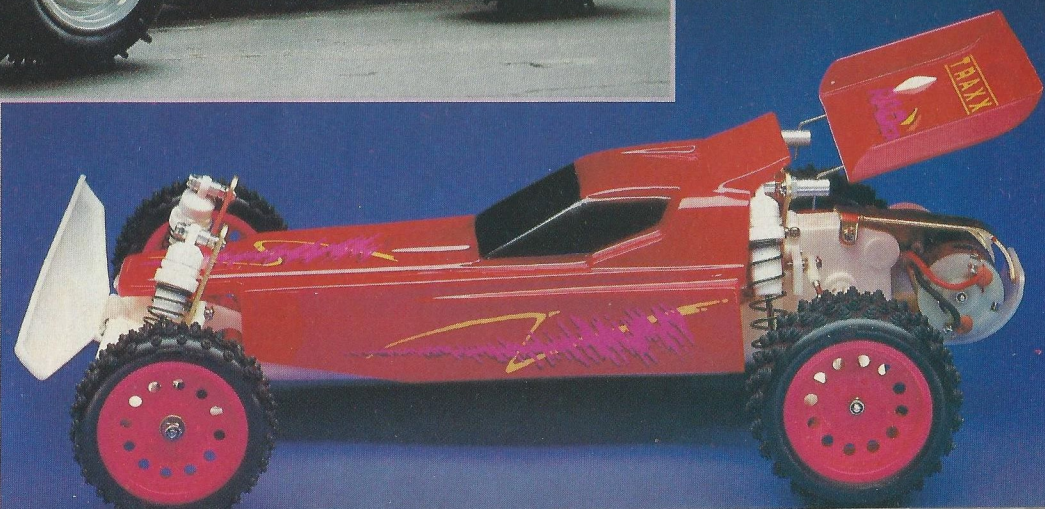
Next to be fitted is the item all good 2WD cars aren't seen without, the slipper clutch! The instructions advise that the slipper washer be glued to the plates, as there's a neat notch in both these items I felt it unnecessary ...until I tried to fit them, the instructions are right. Lining all the plates and washers up is rather tricky and the tip of gluing the plates is the correct method. To complete the gearbox the sliding plastic driveshafts need to be fitted, the instructions say the assembly of the driveshafts is 'somewhat difficult' I didn't find this the case, they seemed to slip



**Neat layout of the chassis allows for the radio to be placed in the car neatly. Car has a small bumper at the front - more to protect the chassis.**



**Two other cars in the Traxxas line-up include the Radicator 2WD and the Blue Eagle racing truck.**



# Traxxas Alternatives

together easily (must be all the Schumacher ones I've assembled).

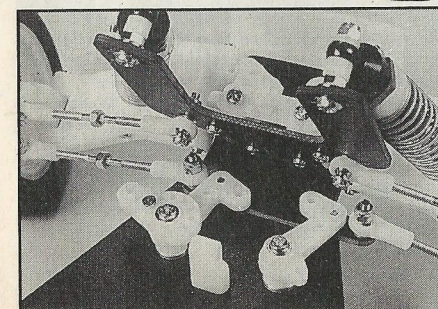
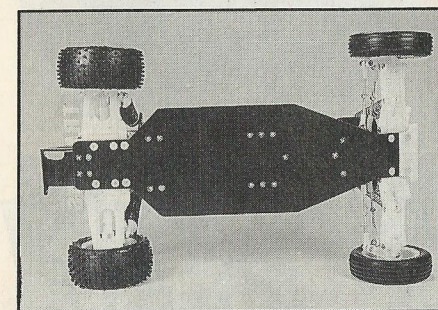
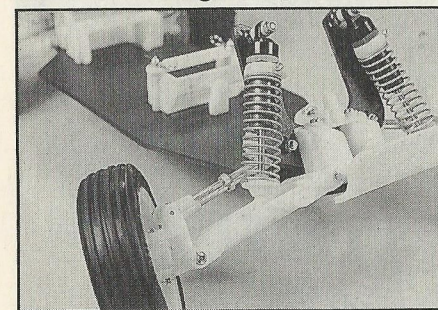
## Rear Ender

The rest of the rear end of the car comes together quickly, rear suspension arms mount to suspension holders, these can be set to various castor angles or what we in the UK refer to as 'anti-squat'. The blocks are mounted to the 100% graphite chassis. The chassis really is superb, very tough, stiff and good to look at. Rear shock bracket and bulkhead cleverly slot together and finish off the rear end, bolting all this to the chassis with the countersunk screws is quick and gives a good solid result.

The dampers are the next item the instructions refer to. These are super slippery alloy coated items that fall together very quickly, the instructions make you assemble them in a manner as to not allow the threaded portion of the damper rod to touch the oil seals, this is clever but if when taking the dampers apart again you don't follow the procedure exactly the seals as with any damper could be damaged. A lot of time and effort has obviously gone into the build up process of this kit.

Tie-rod on the car are of the left and right handed thread type, this is one area where I feel the car is a little let down, the quality of the tie-rods being a

**Long stroke front dampers; photo shows the castor angle. Underside of the chassis showing alloy screws. Steering set-up.**



little low. Rear dampers are fitted with the blue springs (just 4 springs in the kit) and when on the car feel as they should, smooth and silky. The front suspension on the car goes together much like the rear, the fits are excellent and the long suspension arms (which could well be why the cars is so good on bumps) give lots of smooth flowing movement. Both shock tower on the car are made from the same graphite that the chassis is formed from, they are very strong and incredibly light. Front dampers are long and are supplied with 'grey' soft springs.

The parts that decide which direction the car travels (steering bellcranks) are really neat. Two alloy posts are fitted to the chassis and the moulded bellcranks are a perfect fit. No ball-races are fitted but the steering is smooth and silky, again the track rods leave a little to be desired but they do do the job. Fitting radio into the car is as with most car a simple but time consuming job, wiring must be kept neat and out of harms way but Traxxas supply all that is needed to do the job (although no servo saver is supplied one could be fitted).

Last stages of the car include the clever battery holders, the two mouldings are exactly the same but the rear is mounted upside down, the location is secure and clever. Rear wheels are fitted with ny-loc nuts and drive through pins, fibre washers are shown but seem to distort when tightened up on. The fronts are of course ballraced (as is the whole car) and slip well onto the alloy stub axles. Wheels are of the 2 inch variety and come with soft pin spike rear tyres and 6 row rubber fronts.

The car is supplied with a strong purposeful wing and proper alloy mounting posts, (no extras needed for this kit) when fitted the wing is good and strong. One of the final parts to be fitted is the body, like it or hate it the unusual shape is designed to be sleek and aerodynamic and does a good job of keeping the dirt out. Fitting the body is simple, a neat front post and over the rear shock bracket, a small rubber pad is given to protect the body; as said earlier attention to detail is the hallmark of this racing machine.

## End Result

When complete the standard model car racers test is to give the car a good bounce up and down and get the feel for the car, and this car feels good.

To our eyes the car is neat, compact and probably best of all, different to what everyone else is running. The quality of the parts is high, build fits very good and the car has all the right bits in the box.

The instructions are clear and give really helpful tips on building and tuning the chassis, a full ratio chart is supplied and a really good guide on dampers and changes to the geometry including tow-in and castor and what they do is

included in the back of the manual.

As yet we are still to race our TRX1, but we have tested it. With the standard setting as per the instructions the car feels a little too easy to drive, ride is very good bumps not being a problem, but the last little bit of sharpness required wasn't there. This is probably just as Traxxas wanted the car to be for the first run, we set the rear damping harder (40wt) and fitted Schumacher tyres (front 2 row stud, rear 15X20 minis) and generally ran the setting of the car lower. This made the car much more 'chuckable' and responsive. When we ran the car a 14 double motor was fitted on 18/87 (two spurs are given in the kit, 87 and 81), around 10.34:1, speed was good and duration fine, the car obviously has a good gearbox.

Our final comments on the car are these, it is easy to build, very complete and strong. At the World champs in Detroit the car looked one of the best on the track and in our small test we felt the car had a lot of potential, availability should be good and the commitment of Traxxas in Europe is high so spares should be no problem. We like the car and feel its one of the best we ever built, get your local shop to build one for you to have a look at - it may change your mind of your next 2WD purchase.

**Slipper clutch fitted to the rear of the Traxxas. Note: Plastic sliding driveshafts.**

