

THE TEXAS WILD BAJA

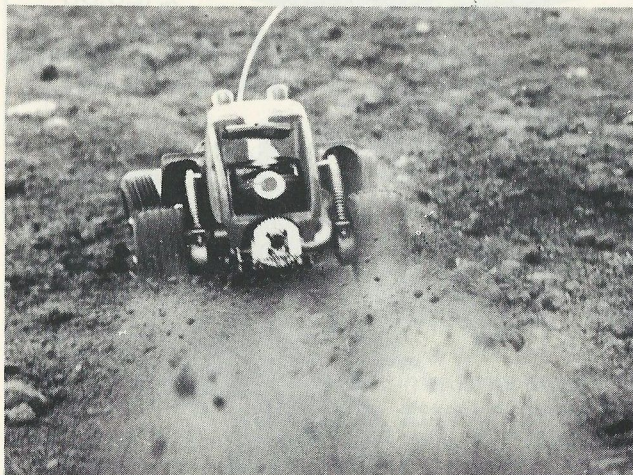
A
RADIO
RACE
CAR KIT
REVIEW



A super big box of bits that looks just as good when it's opened

The headlines could well have read 'Texas Wild Baja stops the show at Worcestershire Fete'. The reference would not have been about some strange and ferocious beast from one of our ex-colonies but a super chunky 1/8th off road racer from the land of the rising sun.

The story starts when I collected the kit from the Ripmax headquarters at Enfield and immediately liked what I saw. The almost all metal kit is beautifully presented in the accustomed fashion with items packed into



The Baja with its' throttle opened—and as seen by much of the opposition

separately labelled bags, i.e: one bag for the rear suspension parts, one containing all the front end parts, etc. This makes assembly simple and straightforward.

The kit assembles in three stages: first the rear end with motor and gearbox; second the front suspension and finally the mid section, which joints it all together.

I have already described the kit as being chunky and I meant it. The rear suspension trailing arms together with the gearbox are among the superb and very strong alloy castings.

The gearbox halves fit together well and house the final drive shaft bearings and bevel drive gears. The method used to secure all gears and pulleys to their relevant front shafts is a simple 'pin' secured by a spring circlip. This is both very simple to build and, of course, equally simple to remove for servicing, etc.

After securing all the necessary gears and shafts, the gearbox should be filled with grease (supplied) and the two halves bolted together, presumably with a smear of silicone on the two faces to ensure an oil tight seal.

The brake disc is then epoxied to the underside of the gearbox pulley, which is then secured to the main shaft, again using the pin and circlip method.

The rear end now assembles with the ease of a Meccano set with all holes accurately pre-drilled,

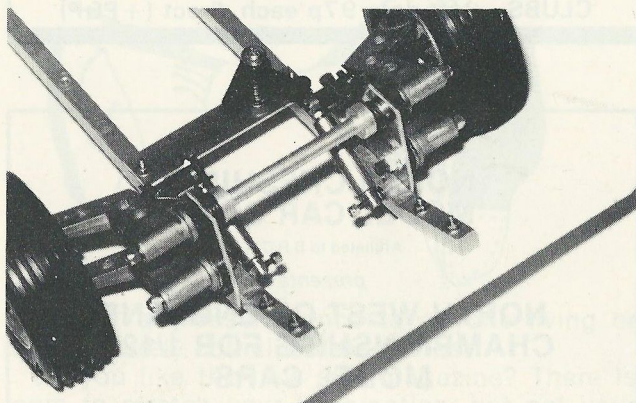
bolts the correct length and is so straightforward that it requires no further explanation. I would, however, like to point that it is worth remembering to use Loctite (or similar) when assembling any kit of this type to ensure that all nuts and bolts, etc. stay tight!

I opted to fit an HGK 21 car motor which presented no problems with all the necessary components, i.e: clutch, tuned pipe, etc. fitting without any alterations or difficulty.

One small deviation from the usual drilling and tapping required at this point for the engine mounts, is that the motor is 'clamped' to the engine mounting by two strong plates bolted at each end. Not only does this make it very simple and quick to fit the motor but should you wish to fit another motor, the process is simplified by not having to alter any of the mounting holes.

The front assembly was really completely uneventful with all the parts slotting in together with ease.

The front suspension arm mounts have been redesigned, since the earlier kits, to provide a much stronger and trouble-free unit. The king pins swivel on plastic rose joints (one of the few items in this kit that are not made of metal). These joints are in two halves and are secured with large E clips, again ease of removal for servicing/replacement is excellent.



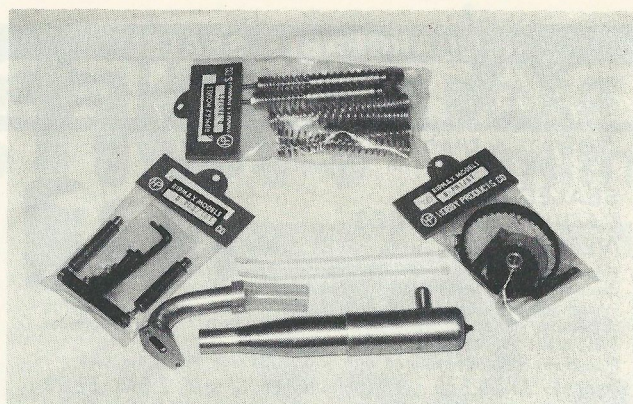
Front suspension with shockers fitted

The main chassis members onto which the front and rear assembly fit are constructed of square section alloy—providing a strong and simple chassis.

As with any model that is relatively complex is vitally important to read and understand the instructions before getting to grips with it—failure to do so can lead to quite serious problems.

The body supplied is in clear lexan and requires painting; again a little time spent on this can be very rewarding. The paint I used was the BoLink Concours which water soluble and foolproof. Provided in the kit is a super sheet of decals that really put the finish to the paint job.

A further lexan part supplied is a small cover for the two bladed fan that is fitted just below the clutch to assist in engine cooling. **DON'T** be



Custom designed accessories Front oil damper set £11.75 Rear oil damper set £13.75 Special tuned silencer £22.75 Speed gear set £6.25 All are superlative quality

tempted to leave the cover off because without it there is a strong risk of injury from the fan whilst the motor is running.

I decided to fit the extras available for the Wild Baja—tuned pipe, front and rear shocks (oil filled). The rear set come with a whole selection of springs to adjust the suspension.

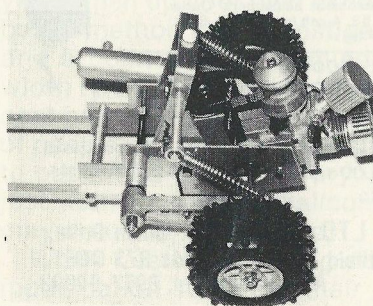
The kit, in standard form, without these parts would be a real flyer but the extras are custom designed for this car and can be fitted without any great alterations; they can be added at a later if required.

Now to my main criticism and this is directed at the steering assembly; I felt that the parts supplied for the track rods and connectors were not really man enough for the job, nor do they allow for any adjustment. However it is not the end of the world—with all the commercial track rods and knuckles connections available I was soon able to obtain a slop-free steering that was strong and adjustable.

So there now remained the moment of truth—the radio was fitted, all links connected, tyres firmly glued to the metal wheels, air filter on and, most important, fuelled up.

Now it just happened that we had been asked to put on an r/c car display at a local fete—so what better opportunity to test out the Wild Baja. The car stopped the show; it pulled wheelies, went like a rocket, leaped over the jumps with great style—it did the lot!

I am sure we will see a lot more 1/8th i/c off road racing in the UK especially with cars like this around. It is great fun and straightforward to build and very exciting to drive.



The 'business end' clearly showing the simple and rigid design that makes this such an excellent kit

Available from Ripmax Stockists—price £128.50