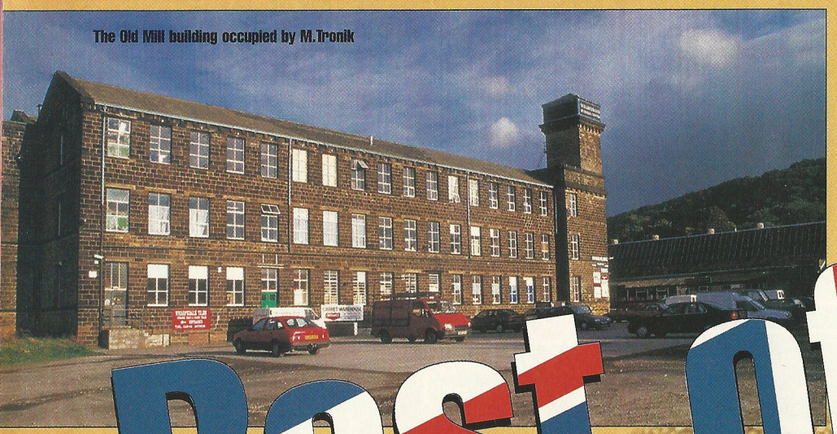
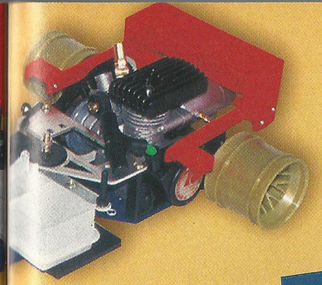
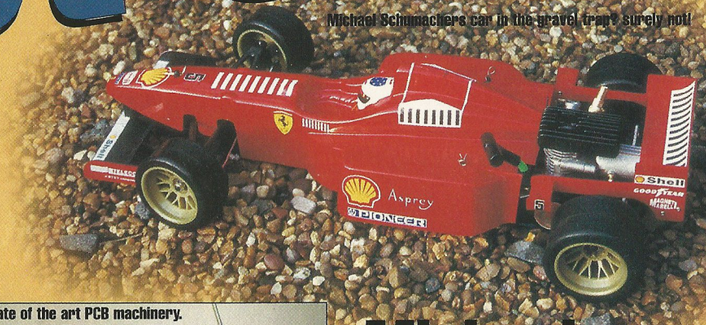
Peter Emery


The Old Mill building occupied by M.Tronik


The almost completed rolling chassis, add tyres, radio and fuel to go

Best of British


Michael Schumachers car in the gravel trap! surely not!

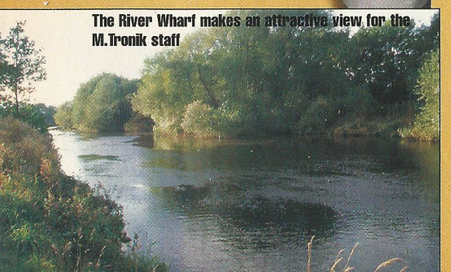
RRCI visits M.Tronik

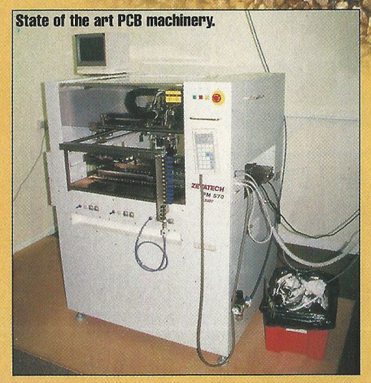
M.Tronik was started in 1988 by Mike Merrick in the garden shed in his parents house. The first products were Speed Controllers and these were sufficiently well received for the company to grow and in 1992 moved in to the current premises. M.Troniks are now sited in an attractive old mill close by the River Wharf in Otley in God's own country - Yorkshire (so, no guesses where your Ed' was born huh?)

M.Troniks have widened their appeal and a part of the company undertakes work for HM Government, but they were not prepared to talk about that and indeed some parts of the company were "off limits" during our visit.

The current range of products includes state of the art Speed controllers typified by the renowned "Prodigi". The Digimatik range of chargers and the PS6000 Power supplies show the solid electronics base of M.Troniks. Almost all of the production is carried out on the premises including the production of the bare Printed Circuit Boards. New products include Speed Controllers for the rapidly expanding Electric Flight market and the Carsons range of Nitro cars.


Nick shows off some of the PCB produced by M.Tronik at Otley


The River Wharf makes an attractive view for the M.Tronik staff


State of the art PCB machinery.

The current range of imported cars includes the "Fighter" 1/8th Scale rallycross car - to be reviewed in RRCI next month, the 1/10th Scale Calibra Touring car featured in our prize competition last month and the Ferrari F1 car reviewed here. The accent is firmly on providing good value for money with the 1/10th Touring car being a prime example. A .15 pull start engine, adjustable suspension, anti roll bars and a disk brake is an excellent spec' for a sub £200 racer. When we visited M.Tronik they were looking forward to receiving supplies of the Ferrari F1 car but we managed to get a sneak preview.

Michael Schumacher collection Ferrari F1 car

The box art is excellent and proudly proclaims this model to be part of the extensive Michael Schumacher Collection of models. If, like me, you are a Ferrari fan you are probably getting fairly excited already with this big, very RED box covered in Ferrari logos.

Can't race, won't race

This is an unusual model in that, for the UK at least, it is purely a fun run car. No class exists, that I am aware of, to race this car. Not that I think that will put off many buyers. This is an attractive model, of an attractive prototype produced at a sensible price. I think that this will be a popular "Dad's little pressie' to himself" this Christmas.

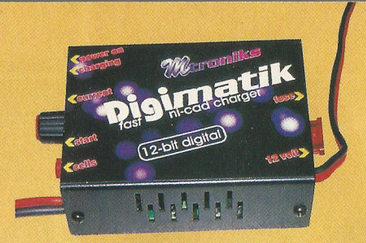
So what is Dad going to find in this lovely Red box?

This is a 1/10th scale Nitro powered F1 Ferrari powered by a .12 size pull start glow plug engine. Not included in the kit are the Servos, Radio Transmitter and Receiver, fuel - 5-15% Nitro content is recommended, and a glow starter. It appears to have a very comprehensive build manual, I say appears to have as we had a pre-production sample which only had the German Manual. In fact we managed to separate M.Tronik from their ONLY sample! Sorry guys but we were desperate...

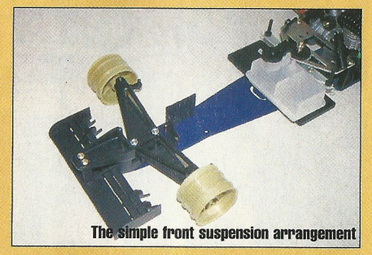
The attractive box art of the "Michael Schumacher collection" Ferrari F1 car

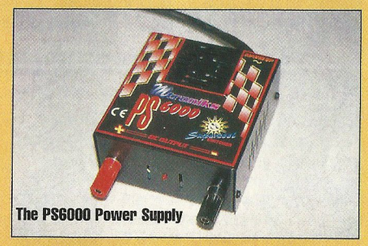
Building sights

The build is extremely straightforward. First the rear pod is built up to include the ball diff' and transmission. A "live" rear axle is fitted, the only suspension being a friction damper joining the "pod" to the main chassis. The front suspension assembly is simple, the front springs allow limited travel directly on the kingpins. A similar system is used on those advanced sports cars built close to Traplet Towers, the Morgan. The front servo mount is a simple bracket for the servo to be fixed using servo tape, not a favourite method with me but it certainly worked well enough in this case. The rear servo fits onto the top plate of the pod and carries both the throttle linkage and that for the brake. The brake is a simple friction affair employing a small brake block which is pressed against the clutch housing or "Kupplungsglocke" as our instruction manual would have it. Much to my surprise this was fairly effective and well able to contain the F1. I was surprised to find a metal antenna, given time I will probably substitute a plastic tube aerial. After fitting the fuel pipes a successful system check suggested that it was time to give this little bomb a run.

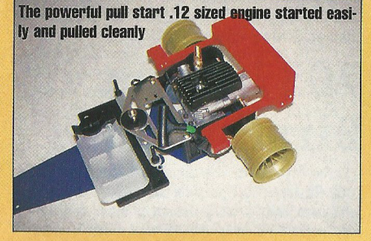


The Digimatik Nicad Fast Charger


The simple front suspension arrangement



The PS6000 Power Supply


The powerful pull start .12 sized engine started easily and pulled cleanly

Driving Impressions

The conditions were not very good for a first run, and as this model arrived mighty close to print day simply waiting for a better day was not an option, we decided to have a go. To begin with I thought the F1 pretty disastrous but a quick check revealed that the friction damper was not connected properly. As we had stolen M.Troniks Photographic "mule" it was already part built and silly me forgot to check if the assembled bits were assembled correctly, whoops!

After connecting this up properly we tried again. The engine could not have been more willing. After filling the generous tank with 16% Nitro mix and priming the fuel system a mere three pulls found the engine fired and ready to go. This is a great fun car, it is desperately short of grip on a typically uneven tarmac car park on an Autumn day but that simply adds to the hooligan element. You can "doughnut" this car all day but it can also be motored pretty quickly if you show some restraint and delicacy with the throttle. Great fun and I look forward to a more extended session as well as giving it some stick around my favourite circuits after which it will probably become a static model to join my numerous other Ferrari models! Oh, did I not make it clear, I am a fan of the scarlet ones, Big Time! Forsa Ferrari - The Tifosi Rules..... RRCI

Quick Spec:

1/10th Ferrari F1 car powered by a .12 size pull start glow plug engine. Sliding pillar type front suspension and podded, friction damper solid rear end. Transmission brake.

Tester's Kit:

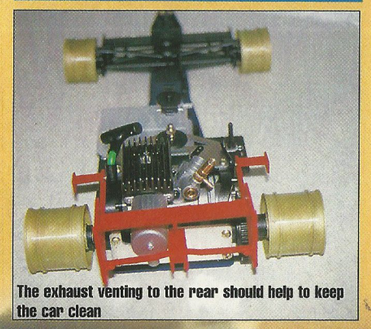
Radio - Futaba Megatech
Servos - Futaba 3001
Fuel - Model Technics Duraglow 16%
Glow Plug - Model Technics Firepower

Likes:

Looks - it's a Ferrari
Plenty of power, ease of starting from the pull start engine

Dislikes:

Grip - it could use a bit more Brakes


The exhaust venting to the rear should help to keep the car clean

Grid eye view of the Ferrari