

Project TLR GT8

WORDS & PHOTOS - TONY PHALEN

BIG CAR
BIG POWER
BIG FUN!



the build

CHASSIS & SUSPENSION

My goal was to create a killer rig that I didn't have to heavily modify to get to race-ready status. The biggest deal is the body mounts...since this is a relatively new class, there are not a lot of 1/8-scale vehicles with on road body mounts. That is, however, until I found the Losi L8ight Model! While it is a nitro-based vehicle, the L8ight Model is already set up with front and rear body mounts (for the L8ight Model body), optimized, shorter dirt oval shock towers, molded front bumper and Losi racing rubber mounted on Losi dish wheels. To convert the L8ight Model to electric, I gave Tekno RC a call and they immediately sent over one of their new V4 Brushless Conversion kits. This kit includes a milled, aluminum chassis, battery tray, servo mounts, an aluminum motor mount and hardware. The quality is excellent and the final product looks completely factory! To add some further beauty to this beast (as well as tuning), Losi's carbon front and rear shock towers, aluminum king pin spindles and tuning springs were bolted on.

ELECTRONICS

There are plenty of electronics to choose from when it comes to 1/8-scale, but I knew I needed some high-end equipment keep up with some of the other uber-fast cars on the track. To make sure that I had complete control over the Losi, I installed a Spektrum 2.4GHz radio system. The DX-3R system fit the bill perfectly with its intuitive menu system and ease of adjustment...oh, and it's crystal clear DSM2 technology. To tackle the steering duties, a Savox SC-0252MG servo was used. To handle the heavy duty braking system, I installed a Savox SC-0352 servo. Both of these servos have plenty of torque and speed to handle this huge onroad car...and they're incredibly affordable! For the mojo, I dropped in Tekin's RX8 ESC and 2650Kv brushless motor. I opted to set the ESC braking to 0% so I could fully utilize the Losi's front/rear biased center differential braking system (handled by the Savox SC-0352 servo). And finally, go-juice is provided by a Thunder Power 50C 5200mAh 4S LiPo pack. This monstrous, 14.8V power source can provide short bursts of up to 100C! I've used this awesome power combo in other vehicles and can say that it's definitely at the top of the 'uber-fast' category!

DRIVETRAIN

Thankfully, Losi's line of 1/8-scale cars are brutally strong. Anything added at this point was for tuning rather than strength.

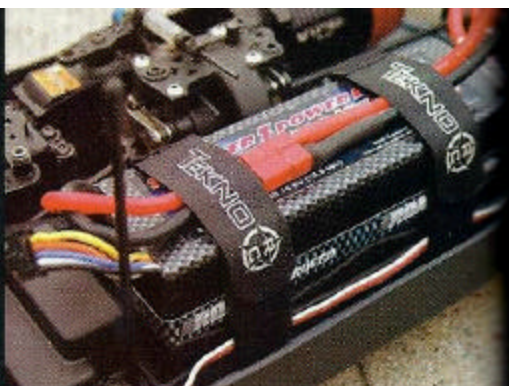
That being said, I couldn't just leave it be. I installed one of Losi's SmartDiffs in the center and front gearbox. These differentials allow you to tune both on- and off-throttle action by changing the springs (and oil) within the unit. I was a little skeptical in the beginning about how well this would work but can say that, using the included tuning chart, I was able to build them with almost the perfect balance! I had so much off-power steering now that I actually had to dial a bit out using my Spektrum radio! I'm happy to know that I have some additional steering in reserve should I need it!

BODY, WHEELS & TIRES

There isn't a huge selection of bodies available yet for the GT8 cars, so I went with Protoform's PE8-GT body. For a quick spritz of the glitz, I sent it over to Pat at Custom Painted RC Bodies. He laid down my personal paint scheme and had it back to me in no time at all. On the track, the body's curvy lines worked well at keeping the Losi planted around the track. For the rollers, I went with Sweep 1/8 GT tires in the 45 shore. These tires worked really well at the local parking lot track. Wear is pretty good too, but they seem to be a little temperature sensitive so I would suggest picking up a set of the 50's as well.

THE DRIVE

You know you're on a time schedule when the only chance you get to test a car is during a race! I showed up at my buddy's parking lot race and found that I'd be running in a class of around 20 other cars. Practice went well, but some tuning was definitely in order. Limiters in the shocks, ride height adjustment and chassis tweak were all things I needed to address. By main time, however, I found myself qualified second behind Steve, one of my very fast friends. I made a few changes to the car before the main and knew that if I was going to win I'd have to strike fast and use traffic to my advantage. At the horn, I had a great launch and dipped inside of him going into the first sweeper. I made the pass and for the next two minutes we were nose to tail, slowly pulling away from the rest of the pack. By minute three we had already started catching back markers and, picking my pass, slowly made my way through the carnage that was ensuing in the back of the pack. Steve, however, wasn't so lucky. I kept up my pace and by the end of the 10-minute main had taken the win by just over a lap on second place. I would say that's a pretty successful debut, wouldn't you?



The Tekno chassis will accept a pair of 2S or a single 4S LiPo pack. Whichever you choose, the heavy duty Velcro straps will definitely keep them in place.



For supreme durability, I added a set of TLR's aluminum form uprights and steering knuckles. These help eliminate flex and improve the responsiveness of the vehicle.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Anything 1/8-scale in SoCal is pretty huge, and the GT8 class is proof that people want to go fast with big cars. The Losi, equipped with the Tekin/Thunder Power electronics, is a pretty lethal combo on the track. Having to fight a car while driving is never a fun thing, but I must say the starting setup is pretty darn close to where I want it. I'll be keeping a little log of its progress on my blog on the RC Driver web site. Let me know what you think or if you have any additional questions regarding the build. ©

Links

Team Losi Racing, distributed by Horizon Hobby Inc., losi.com, (800) 338-4639

Tekno RC, teknorc.com, (877) 857-2872

Tekin, Inc., teamtekin.com

Thunder Power RC, thunderpowerrc.com, (702) 228-8883

Savox, distributed by HRP Distributing, Inc., hrpdealer.com, (800) 622-7223

Spektrum, distributed by Horizon Hobby, www.spektrumrc.com, (800) 338-4639

Protoform Inc., Distributed by Pro-Line Racing, prolineracing.com, 800-899-7223

Sweep, Sweepacingusa.com

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