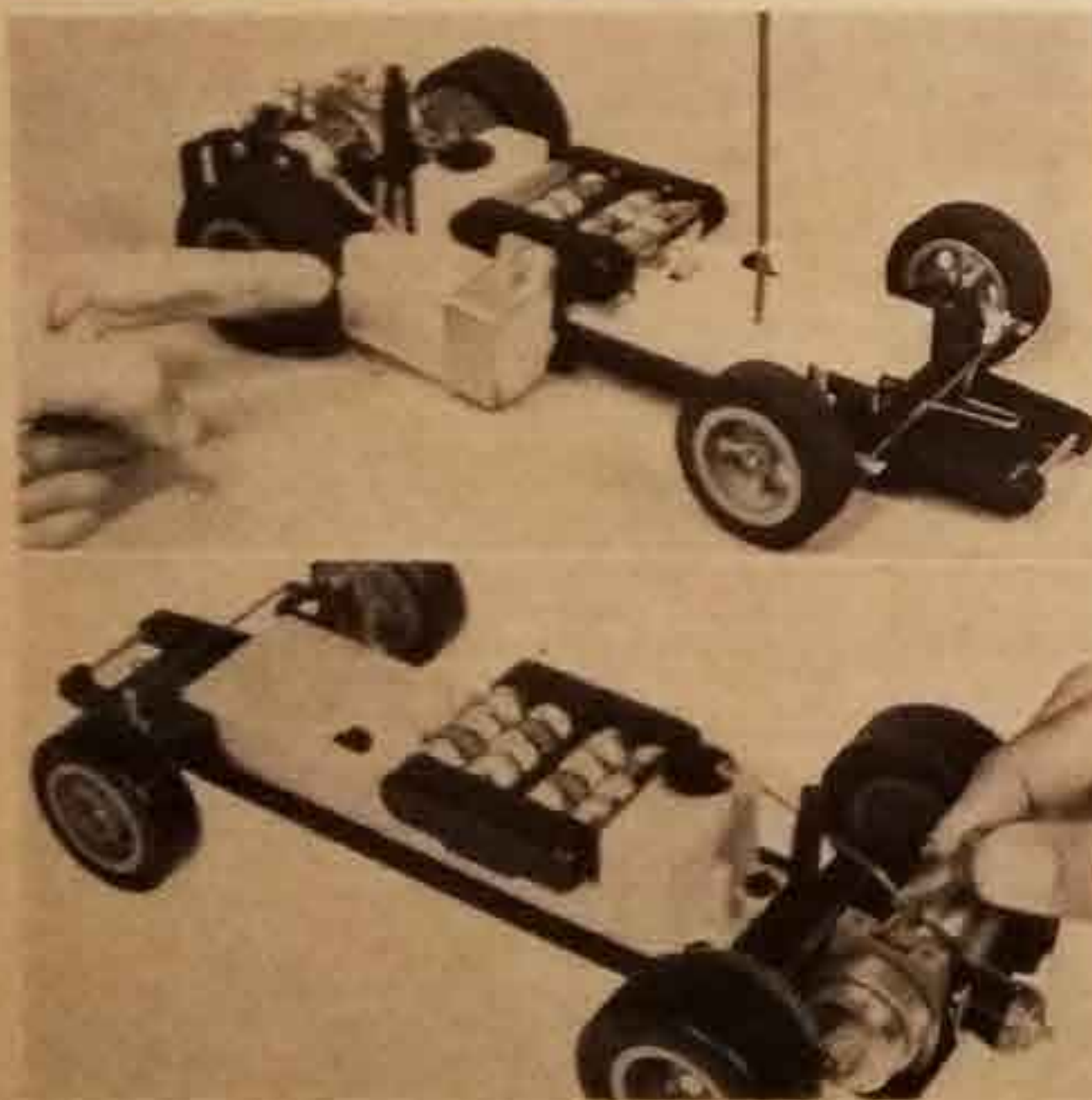




R/C RACERS in 1/12th

George Siposs describes this new 'small scale' system from the States

Jerobee



SELDOM has a new product created so much excitement in hobby circles as the arrival of the Jerobee cars. Originally conceived by Ed Sweeney, editor of *American Aircraft Modeler*, and mass produced by JEROBEE Industries (a company in Washington State). This car seems to open up many interesting approaches to car racing.

The original idea behind the car was to create a simple, low-cost model car which can be handled by almost anyone and which can be raced even on very small tracks. In these regards the makers have realised all of their goals.

The car and radio come in a very colourful shipping box. A 12-page instruction booklet, decals, radio, antennas, etc., are packed with the car itself. The main components of the car are injection moulded from tough plastic to withstand abuse. The body styles, at this writing, are a McLaren

Heading, the transmitter and receiver units showing use of dry batteries all round, particularly clever is the arrangement for the receiver which enables batteries to be replaced without dropping the radio. Left, top, this additional tank was added for longer running and bottom, the simple throttle arrangement for the Cox .049.

Right, the car which Jerobee offers as well the tail-wire Laguna

sports car and a hybrid (performing car reminiscent of the Ferraris about eight years ago). The body detail is excellent, with lines moulded in. The transparent windscreen is actually fastened to the body. A chrome plated driver's helmet adds further realism.

The chassis itself is a plastic moulding and has a narrow ladder shape. At the rear, the well-known Cox .049 engine is mounted with integral fuel tank. For the car, however, a pull-cord starter has been added which greatly simplifies the starting procedure. A centrifugal clutch permits smooth starts. Drive is by sidewinder gears. The front suspension is also of moulded plastic construction with coil springs. Wheels are plastic while tyres are black moulded rubber, soft in the rear and hard at the front end to promote understeer. The body hinges up at the front end of the chassis. The rear end of the body is held down with a split pin.

The radio is integrated into a small block which protects it against dust and grit. The steering servo sits transversely and controls the wheels via wire rods. The receiver has interchangeable crystals. Four pen-light batteries are held in a holder on top of the radio. These have to be renewed after every four or so hours of racing. The antenna extends through the body and is quite flexible although slightly unsightly.

The transmitter is of the latest 'human-engineered' design made specially for car racing. Throttle is on the side while the steering wheel is on the face of the transmitter. On the top there is an opening through which the interchangeable frequency crystals are inserted. A 9-volt battery is used for the transmitter which puts out less than 100 milliwatts and does not require the driver to have a licence to operate it.

Two models are being offered. The McLaren bodied car is equipped with steering and throttle servos. This model is called the 'Comando' and is advertised at \$109. The Bandero has a steering servo only but it is combined with the throttle so that when the car enters a turn it automatically slows down.

Altogether this is a simple fun car which requires little technical knowhow, easy to drive, easy to learn and simple to operate. Some large department stores advertise these cars at around \$75 (for the one servo Bandero model which is usually listed at \$98). Thus,



it is expected that many hobbyists or casual purchasers will be introduced to R/C car racing through the Jerobee cars.

On the negative side the true hobbyist will find it almost impossible to tune the car because most parts are moulded and snapped together thereby affording little room for adjustment. Also the car is quite small and cannot be seen as far as a regular 1/8 model. The general feeling is that many people will get their first exposure to R/C cars through JEROBEE and then eventually they will graduate to the more sophisticated 1/8 scale cars. When this happens and when a sufficiently large number of modellers will desire formal organised competition, ROAR will probably open up a new class for 1/12 scale model cars. Until then, quite likely the owners of Jerobee cars will hold impromptu races on garage driveways or school yards.

It should be mentioned that the radio in this car has a range of about 250 feet. When the car goes out of range or, if there is any kind of radio interference, the steering servo will turn the car in a tight turn and the throttle servo will go to idle. This is a very important 'fail-safe' feature which would be very desirable even for the 1/8 scale cars.

Jerobee also sells the chassis and engine without the radio and the price is approximately \$39. Any small radio, such as the Kraft 2-channel brick or the Logictrol Little-red-brick will fit the chassis. Plans are now being made to market a racing tyre kit, brakes, new bodies and other accessories.

Jerobee are at 12702 N.E. 124th Street, Kirkland, Washington, 98033, U.S.A.

