

RoR Step-by-Step Review 20130506*
Boot Hill Express 1:24 Scale Monogram Kit #85-4999 Review

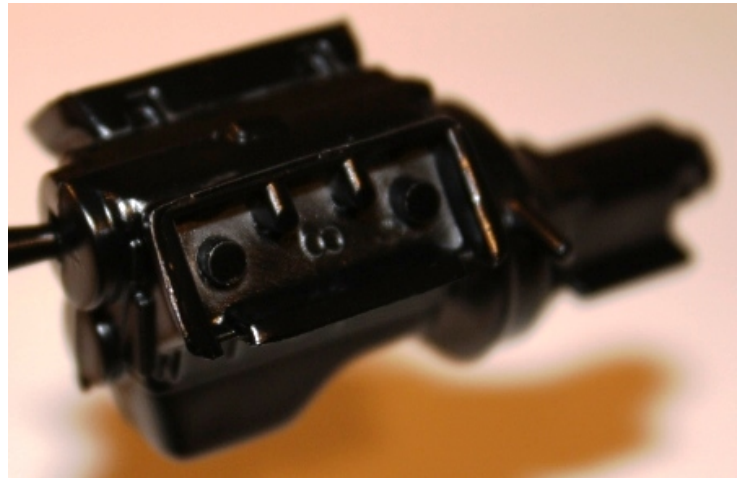
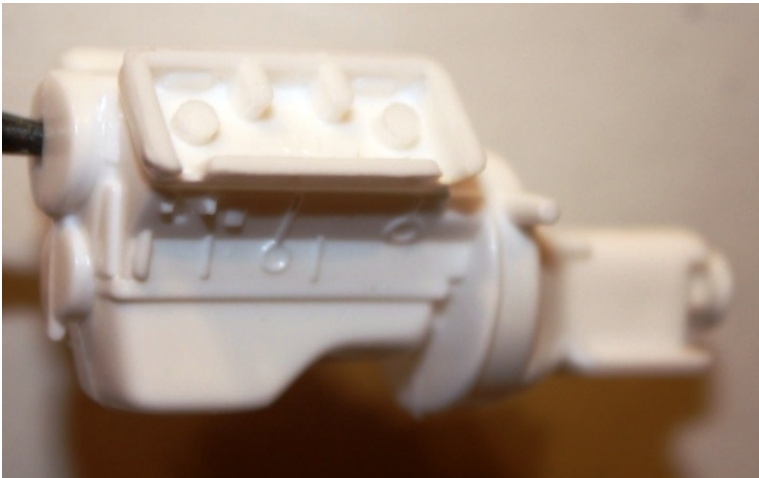


This is what happens when you combine a dragster with an exceptionally ornate hearse. The beautiful wood lines and ornamentation of a carriage merge with the sheer power of a fuel-injected engine to create the fastest hearse out there. This kit was one of the more famous Tom Daniel releases back in the 70's and now its back. Building this re-released kit was a must for me.

For the Modeler: This is a Monogram 1/24th scale Boot Hill Express skill level 2 model kit. The kit consist of 93 parts molded in white, clear and chrome; 4 vinyl tires; 2 front narrow drag tires; and 2 rear drag slicks with white wall inserts. Also comes with a bonus skeleton figure and BHE tombstone and features a single piece frame with spring suspension and full engine with injection system. I had a blast building the Boot Hill Express and I was very happy with the end result. The total build took about 50 hours, a good deal of that time was taken up by the paint effects. There are no decals with this kit. Finished dimensions are; Length: 6-1/4", Width: 3-1/4", Height: 3-1/2". Have fun and "keep the glue off the windshield!" - Tony Gibson



0a At first glance the kit looked fairly clean without a lot of flashing. There is a lot of chrome and it's very clean and bright. The window glass is clear and polished. The direction sheet gives a clear layout of parts and locations along with a color guide.



1, 2 The two pieces of the engine block were glued together, then the right and left cylinder heads attached. They were then spray painted with semi gloss black. Painting after some assembly helps hide seams and gives the engine a much cleaner look.



5 The rest of the engine parts are chrome. Before assembling them make sure to scrape the chrome from the gluing points for a better bond. As always, test fit everything. Before assembly all the chrome parts were given a wash of very thin bottle paint. The flat black paint was thinned with water then brushed sparingly over the parts. The paint flows into the low spots and gives depth. If too much paint is applied, a bit of paper towel or soft cloth can be used to dab a little off. Care should be taken not to rub the paint off, being too aggressive can take the chrome off too. If the paint is thinned well and very little is applied there should be no problem.



6, 7 The engine parts glue onto the block easily and there are good attachment points. This is not an overly complicated engine (pretty typical for a Tom Daniel kit). It looks great but there aren't a lot of parts to it. Everything lined up very well.

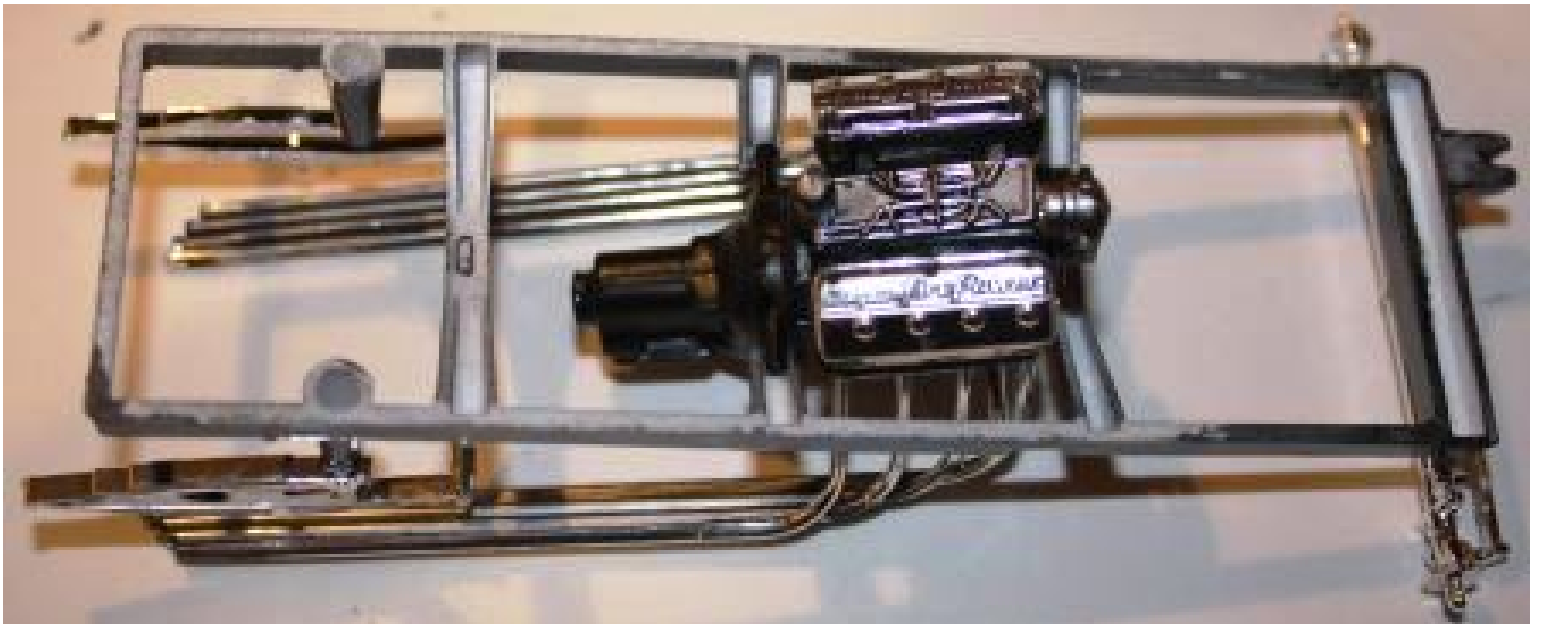
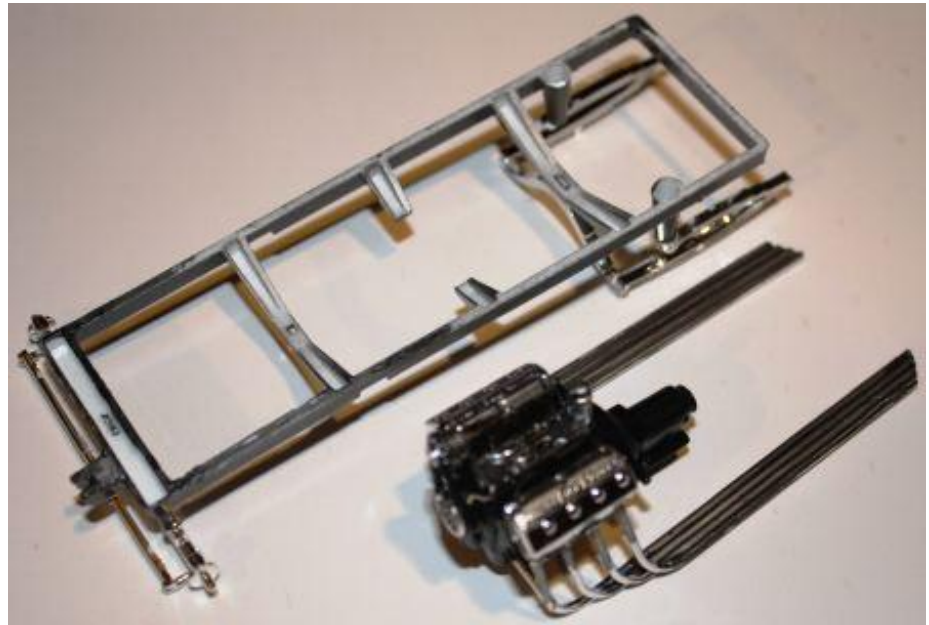


3 The chassis was painted with dark gray spray paint and allowed to dry completely. The suspension parts were all left chrome.



4 There are good locating points here also and everything assembled with no issues. Again, test fit everything and scrape the chrome from the gluing points.

8 There are 3 gluing points to attach the engine to the chassis, 2 at the rear of the engine and one at the front.



9 The header were lowered through the chassis then the engine set right in place. This does not take a lot of effort but be careful not to knock the headers loose. The engine sets just like it's supposed to without any adjustments. Fast drying glue was used to attach it.



9a The tires were scuffed with a coarse emery board (sand paper would work too). This is not required but adds a little realism.

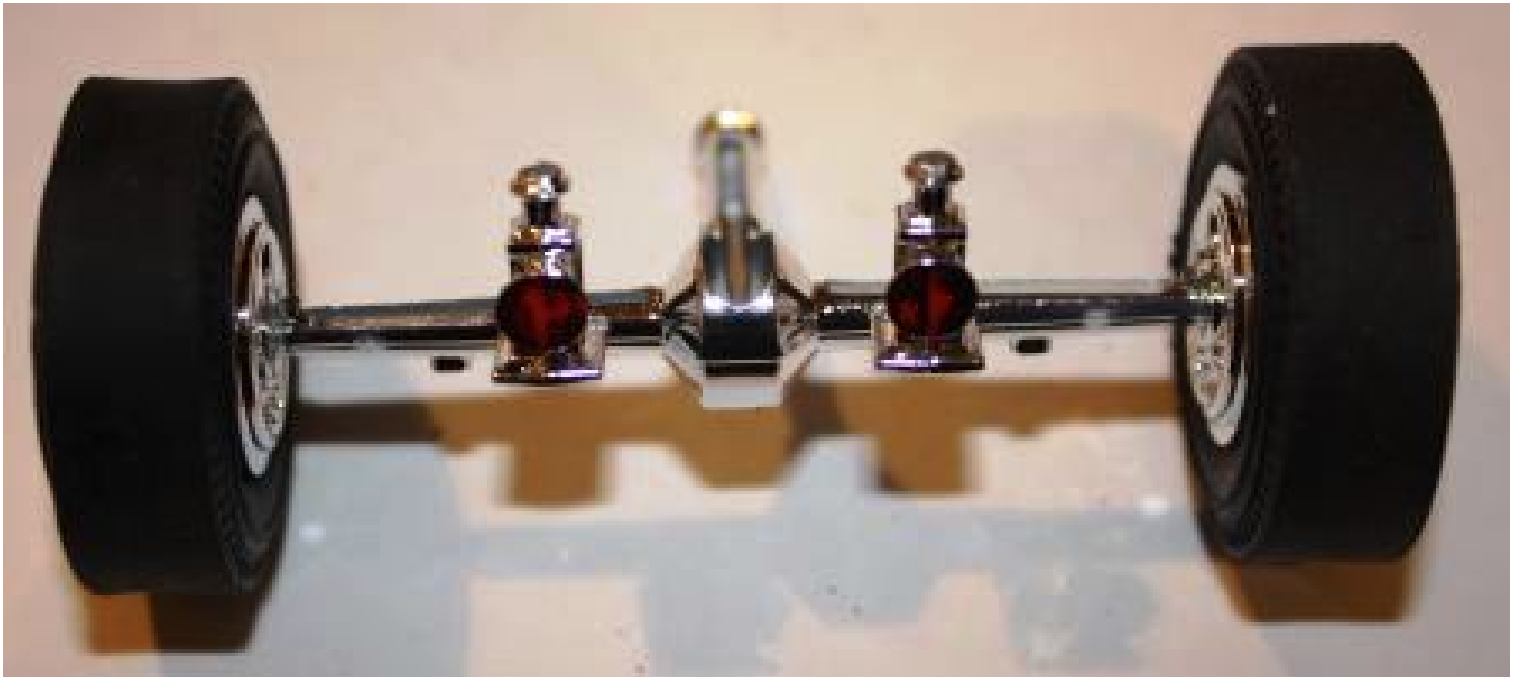


9b The front wheels come in 2 parts and have placement pins so the spokes line up. They fit together well. The rear wheels fit inside the tires. The white wall was then glued to the wheel on the outside of the tire. Testors glue was used to prevent frosting on the chrome wheel.



10 The rear end assembly has 3 parts: The main rear end and two tail lights.

11 The lights were touched up with red Sharpie over the chrome to resemble braking lights. The chrome was scraped from the gluing points. Fast setting glue was used for a strong bond.



12 The rear tires/wheels slid on the axel ends over a half round location point.

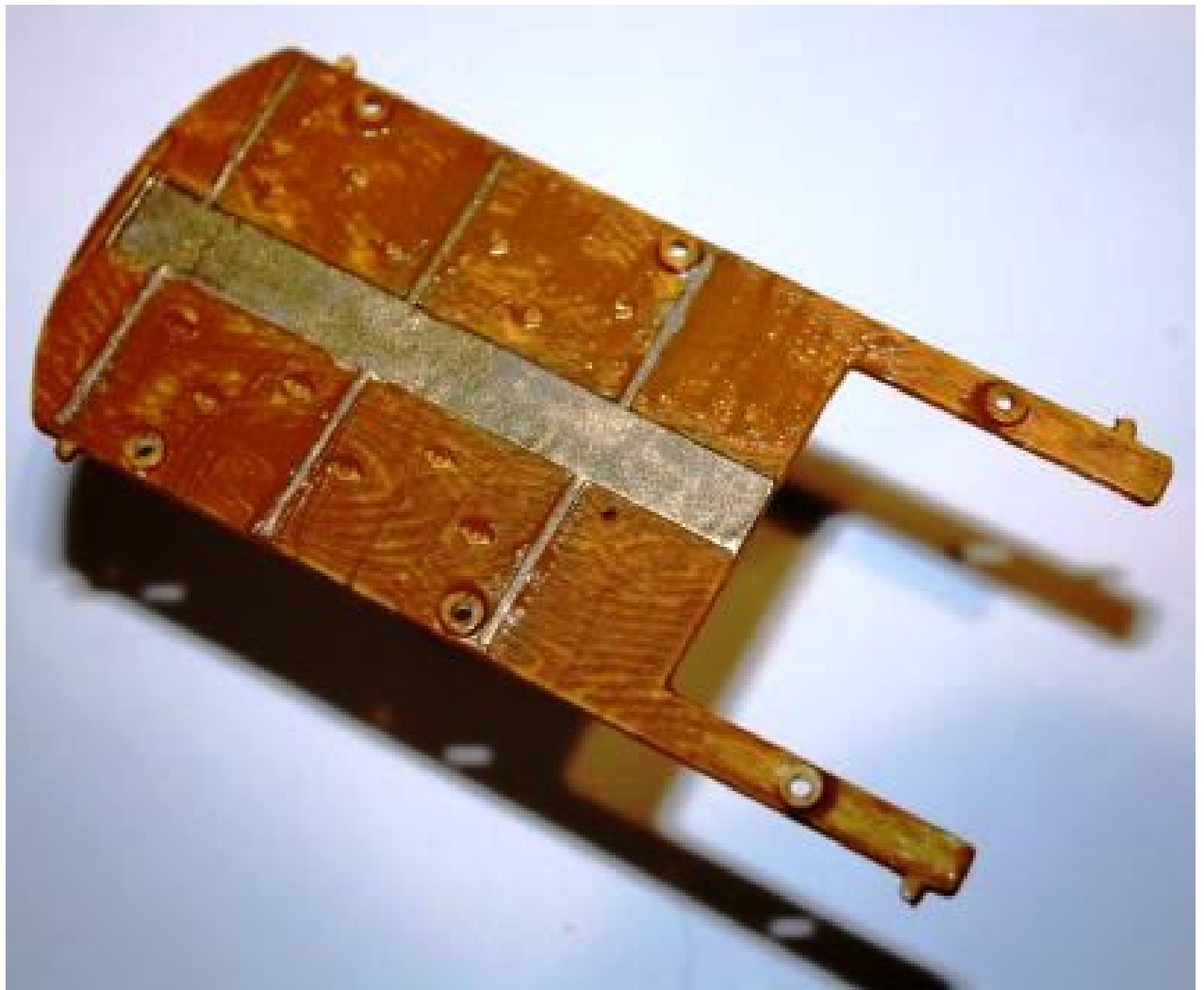


14 The completed rear end assembly fit to the transmission and rear leaf springs perfectly, no adjustments were needed.



15 The floor pan was given a special paint job using craft paint and a wood stain pen.

18 The paint started with Testors bottle paint, Gold. This was painted on the “ribs” with a soft brush then left to dry completely. The craft paint (flat medium brown sable) was applied to the wood grain patterned part of the pan and again allowed to dry completely. A second coat was also applied.



19, 20 To make the wood grain pop, a wood stain pen was used. The color was “Early American”. When new, the pen has to be primed. The directions are on the package. Once primed, the pen was brushed lightly over the wood areas of the pan. Not much stain is applied and it should be just on the high spots of the wood grain areas. Again, use a very light touch if you’re trying this. If too much is applied, a paper towel can be used to dab it off. The stain was allowed to dry overnight then given a coat of Duplicolor Crystal Clear. One even coat was plenty.



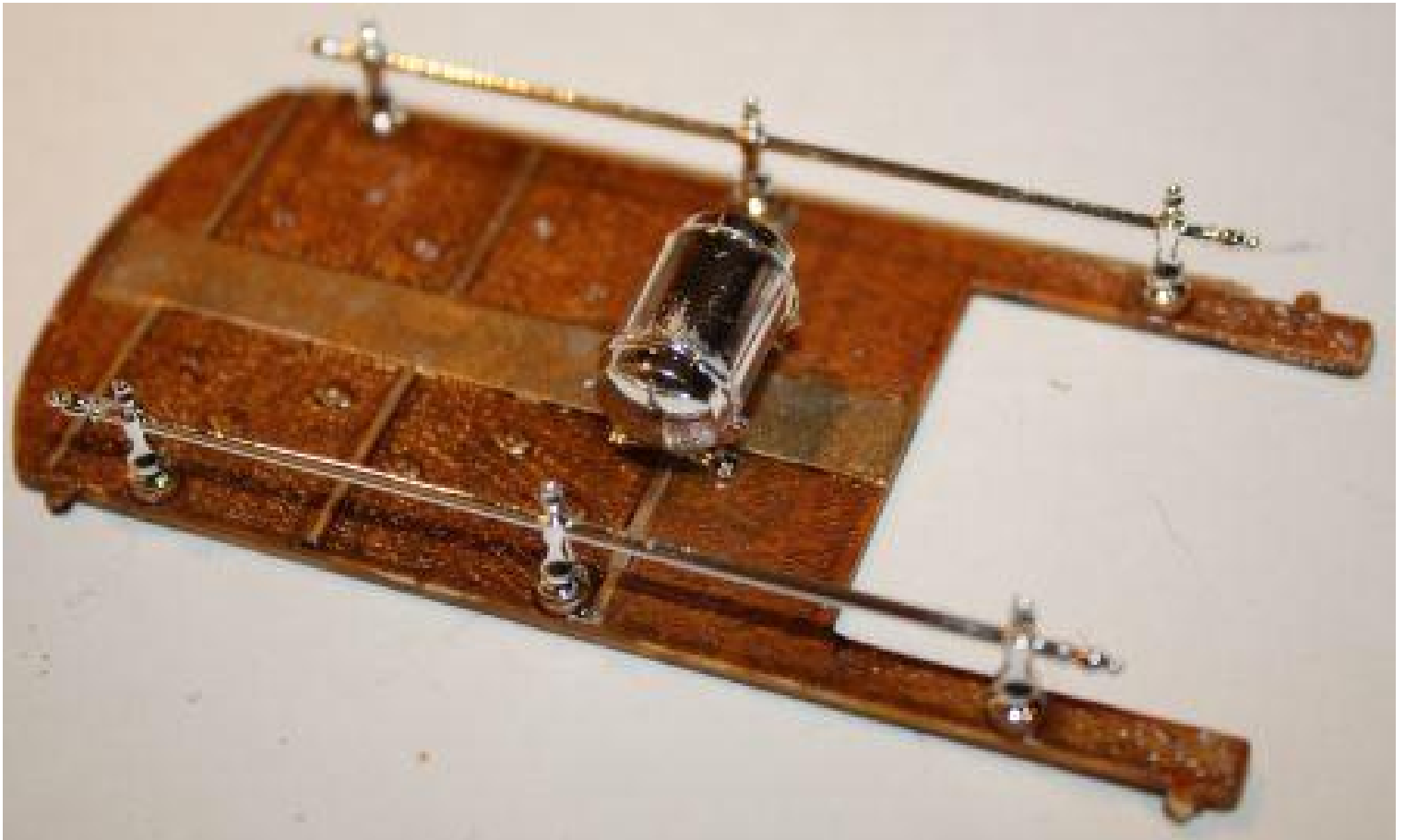
16, 17 The stage coach body was painted before it was assembled. 2 coats of Krylon Saddle Brown gloss was applied with 20 minutes between coats. The first coat was lighter than the second. No clear was applied; the paint alone was glossy enough. After the base coat was allowed to dry overnight, the craft paint and stain pen were applied just as they were for the floor pan.



21 To finish the body, the curtains were finished with Satin Black craft paint and Testors gold bottle paint.



22 The seats cushions were painted with the same black craft paint using a soft brush. Craft paint was used here for a couple reasons. First, it has a leather-like look and texture when it dries. Second, if a mistake is made it can be cleaned off the part easily. Lastly, it cleans up with warm water and it dries quickly, and best of all it's pretty cheap and easy to find. ***Builder's note*** The process for wood-graining was taught to me by a fellow builder who has a lot more know-how. There are probably other ways to do this but I stick with what works for me. The materials aren't expensive and you'll get enough to practice before trying it on your project. This is a fun way to add great detail to this model and lots of others.



23 The floor pan assembly was fairly simple. The fuel tank was in 2 pieces and the location points on the floor pan are very clear. The side rails were very delicate so a lot of care was needed when working with them.

24 Getting the glass in was a little tricky, everything fits in tightly. The bevel goes to the inside. A very small dab of glue (Testors was used here to prevent frosting) was applied to the corners and allowed to set up for a minute or two before the glass was put in place. If too much glue is applied it will squeeze out once the glass is pressed in. Allowing the glue to tack up a little will help prevent smearing and keep the glass in place.



25 The directions say to build the coach on the chassis. It's possible but would make assembly much harder. For this build the sides were attached to the floor pan before putting it on the chassis. Fast drying glue was used to attach one side to the pan. Then the front was attached to the side. Then the second side was glued into place. At this point the roof was set on (no glue) to square up the main part of the coach and it was allowed to dry. Once dry the rear section of the coach was put in place and allowed to dry completely.



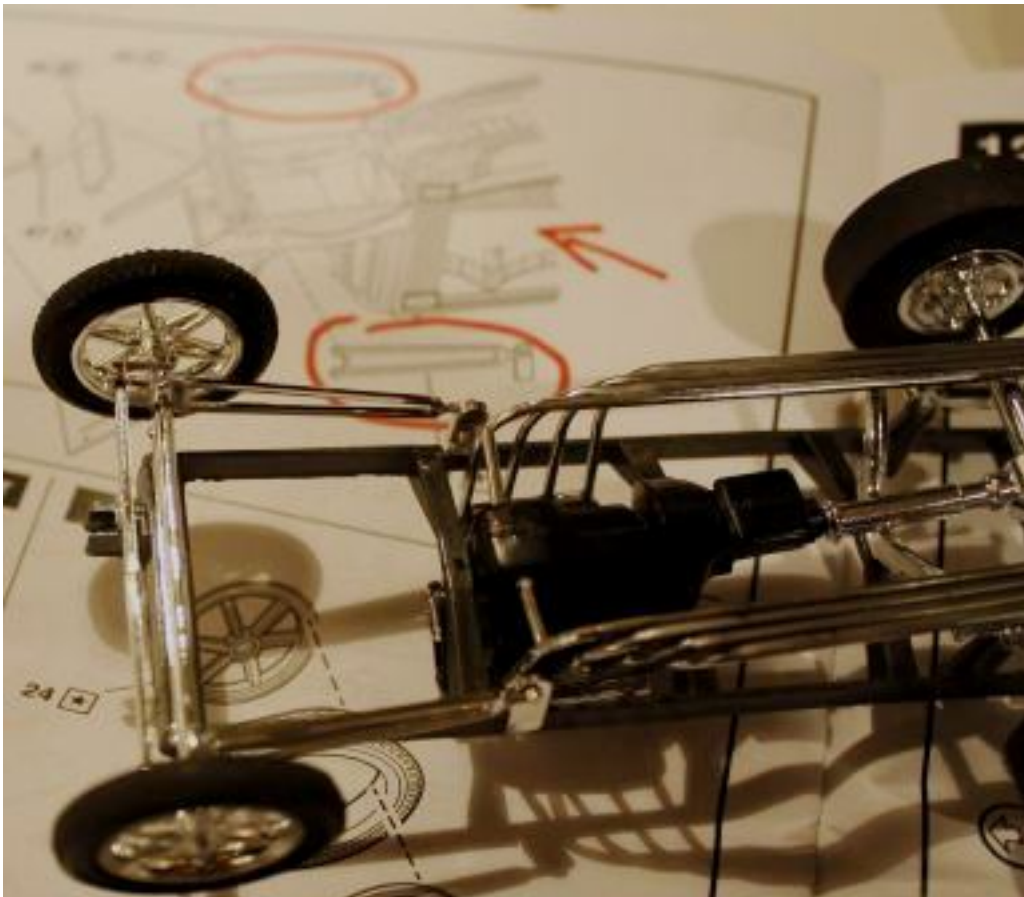
26 At this point the interior walls of the coach were painted with the same black craft paint as the seats. This was purely cosmetic. The interior will be visible and painting this hides over spray, gluing marks and any imperfections in the seams. It's a nice detail that doesn't take much time or effort.



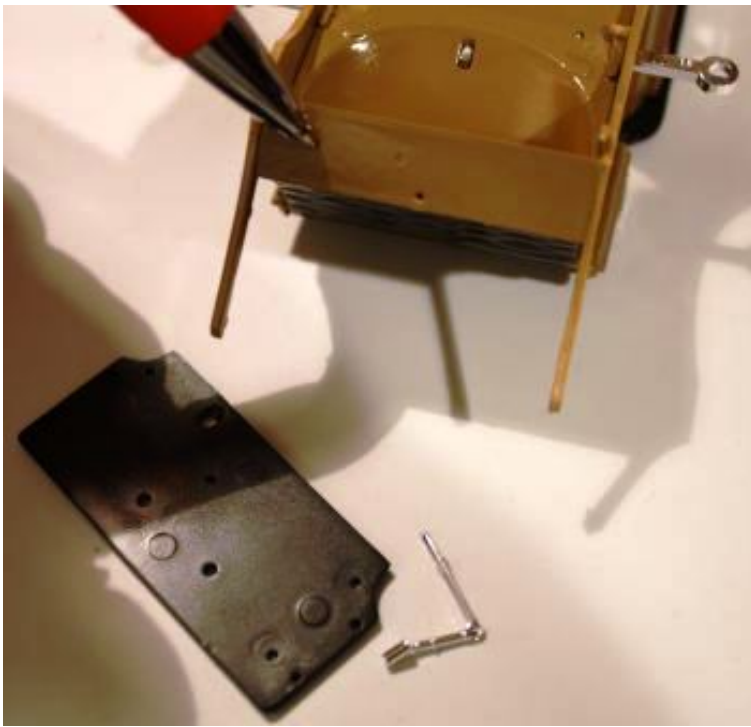
27 The coach roof and seat were assembled. The location points were very clear. A lot of test fitting was done first just to make sure it all lined up as it should. If everything on the coach is true and square the roof should sit right into place.



28 Once the seat is in place put the lantern bar in. This will be needed for later assembly and it's easier to glue in before the chassis and coach are assembled.

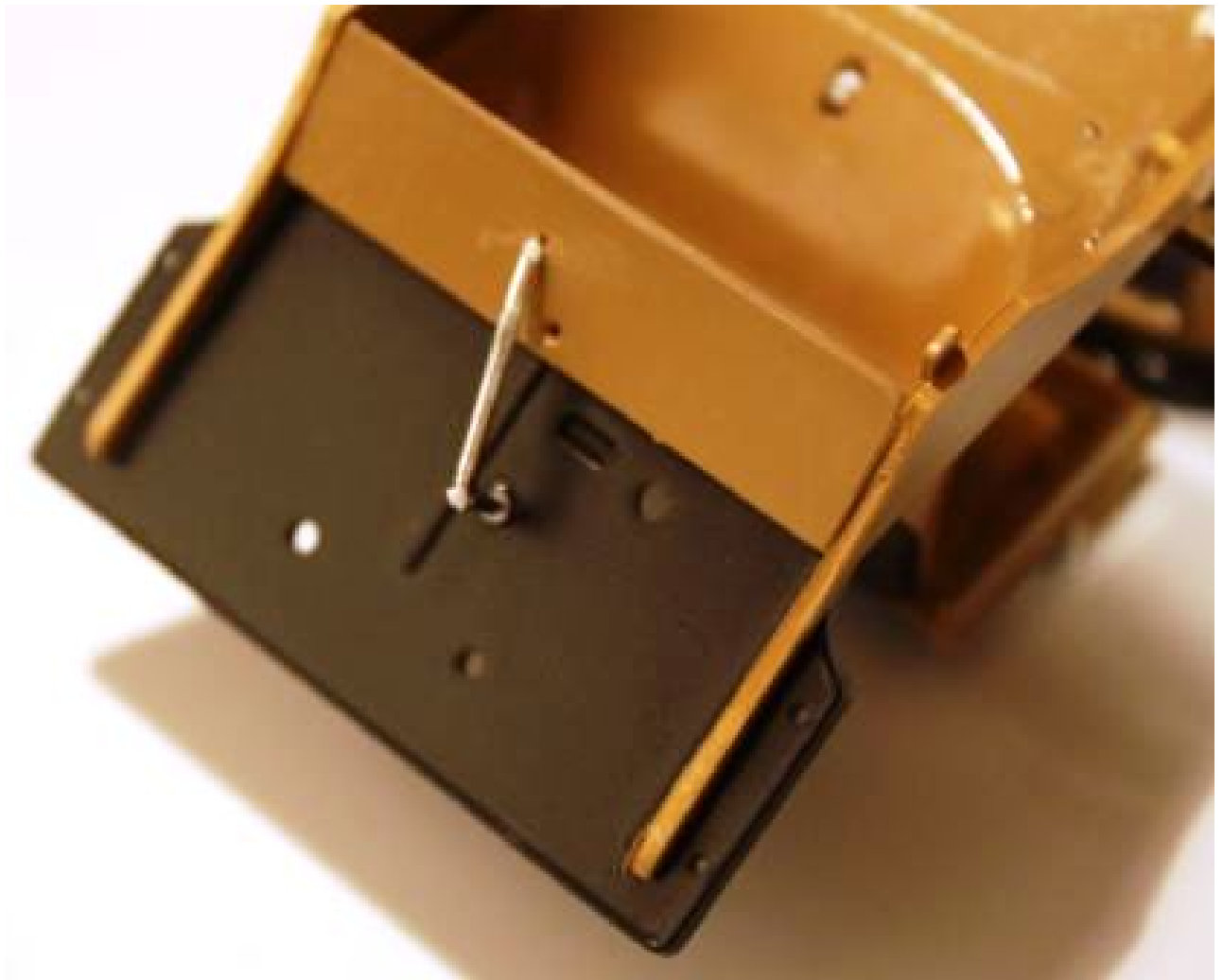


29 The directions state to attach the coach to the chassis, then assemble the front end. However, it is easier to assemble the chassis/front end completely before putting the coach on. The front end was assembled to the chassis, including the front wheels and tires. The last parts to be applied were the radius rods. Putting the rods on last allows a little more freedom while assembling the front end. The radius rods are a little fragile and can be difficult to get into place. If the body had been put on before the front end was assembled, it would have been very difficult, if not impossible, to get the radius rods in place properly.



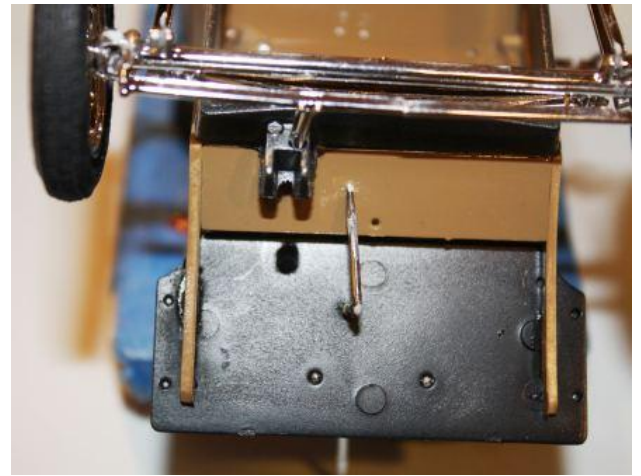
30 The foot board and front pan with the linkage was the next step. The linkage is small and fragile so it's important to be very careful when cutting it from the tree. A sharp blade is a necessity. The parts were test fit to check for proper fit and placement.

31 The foot board was painted with semi-gloss spray paint. The front pan was painted with the same paint as the body parts base coat. Assembly was straight forward and fit perfectly.

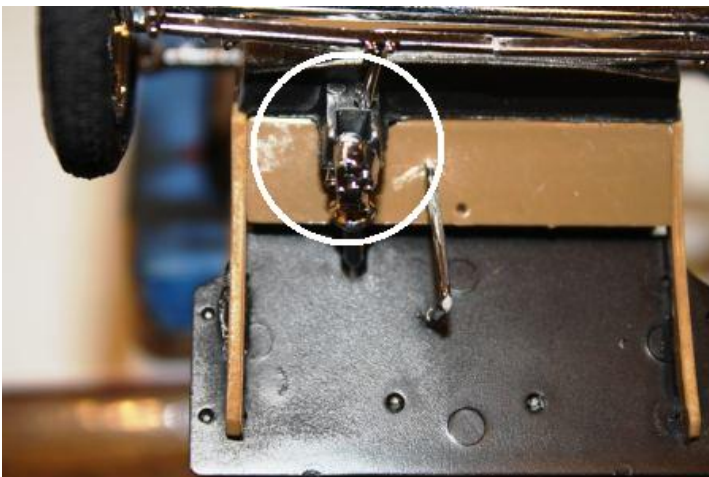




32 The foot rails, handle brake, instrument panel, and gas pedal are all parts for the foot board. Scrape the chrome off the gluing points and glue onto the holes in the foot board.



33 Before the steering column can be attached, the body and chassis must be put together. The location points are very clear. Fast setting glue was used to attach them.



34 Once the two assemblies are attached, the steering column can be slid through the foot board. This is done from the underside, through the hole in the foot board. It attaches on the underside to the linkage on the frame.



35, 36 As long as everything is assembled correctly and lined up, it should slide right through and set into place. Fast setting glue was used on these parts and all the parts attached to the foot board. The steering wheel fit on the top of the column.

37 The front lanterns were clear and in four parts.



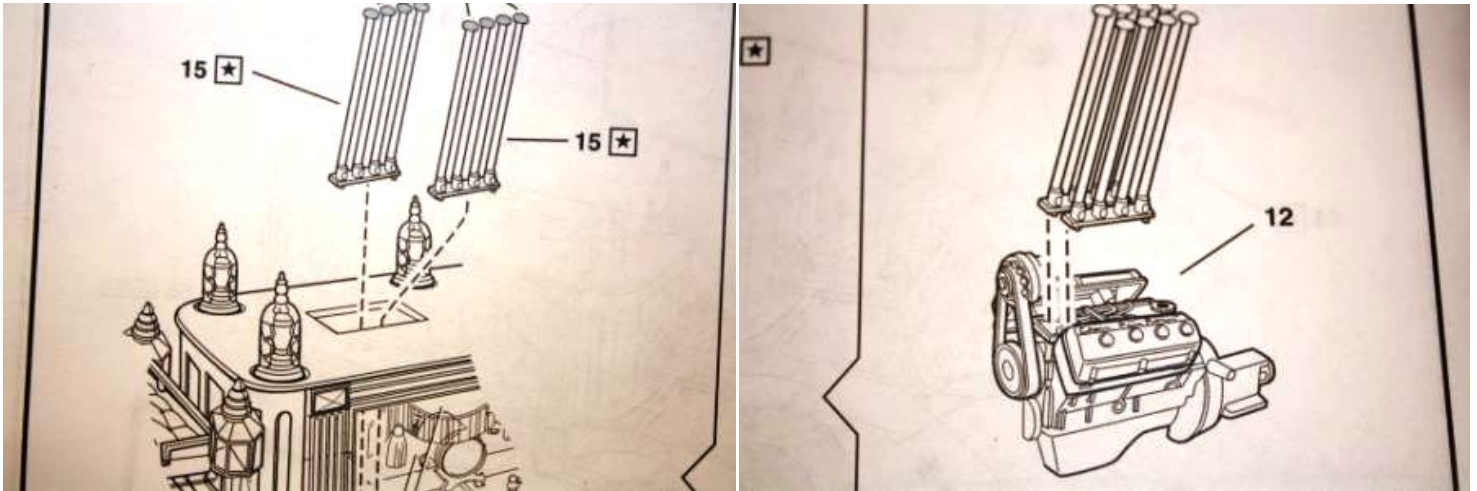
38 They were assembled with Testors glue then painted with gold Testors bottle paint at the top and bottom.



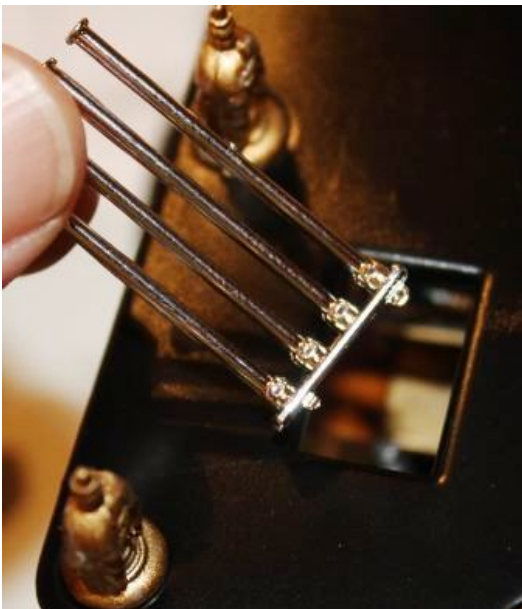
39 The front lanterns were glued into place in the lantern bar under the seat.



42 The roof lanterns were also painted Testors gold. There are 6 in total. There are very clear gluing points on the roof and they go into position easily.



44, 45 The header pipes go through a hole in the roof and line up to the engine. It's important to make sure they go on the correct side so study the directions



43, 46 Putting the header pipes in place might seem like a difficult step, but they slid right into place. The chrome was scraped off the gluing points and they were set into place. Testors glue was used here also. If fast setting glue was used, the fumes could cause the glass on the coach to frost on the inside.



48 There are 3 round handles and 1 tow bar. The directions state to put these into place in several different steps. However, these parts are tiny and very delicate. If they are assembled according to the directions there's a good chance of them being broken or knocked off (and will probably never be found again). Wait until the end to keep them from being lost or broken.



49, 50 The handles were glued into place with fast drying glue. This glue gave a fast, strong hold and required minimal handling.



51, 52 The skeleton comes in 4 pieces (not including the stand and stone). The parts had some flashing that needed to be cleaned, especially around the rib cage. A sharp blade was used to remove the flashing. These parts are very fine, so a lot of time and care was taken and very little pressure used. The pieces were glued together with Testors glue.



53 The skeleton was not given any base coat color. Flat black craft paint was thinned with water. The paint was brushed on the whole skeleton, then quickly wiped off with a soft, dry cloth. The paint stayed in the low areas and crevices.



55 The gun holster, hat, stand and headstone were painted with the brown craft paint used on the body. The neckerchief was painted with red Testors bottle paint. The lettering on the stone was hand painted with a fine brush and the semi-gloss craft paint. Once the stone was dried, the wood stain pen was brushed over to highlight the wood grain.



57, 58 Here are some alternate views for the finished model.



999 In the past, I only collected these kits, they were a novelty. This was the first one I actually built and I was very surprised. I thought it would be easy and fast to build but once I saw what the possibilities were it was hard not to go the extra mile and do it right. The wood grain, the skeleton, and all the custom parts made this kit fun and really enhances the finished look. The directions are a good guide for paint and part placement, but it's really kind of a puzzle when putting it together. Don't assume everything will go together easily. Some things should be done out of order. It's rated a skill level 2 (10 and older) and that's correct if the builder has done other kits. It might be a little tricky as a first kit. There's a lot of test fitting and a lot of paint suggestions.

PREMIUM MODEL REVIEWS

