

Right On Replicas, LLC Step-by-Step Review 20151216\*  
Don Garlits Wynnscharger Dragster 1:25 Scale MPC Model Kit #810 Review

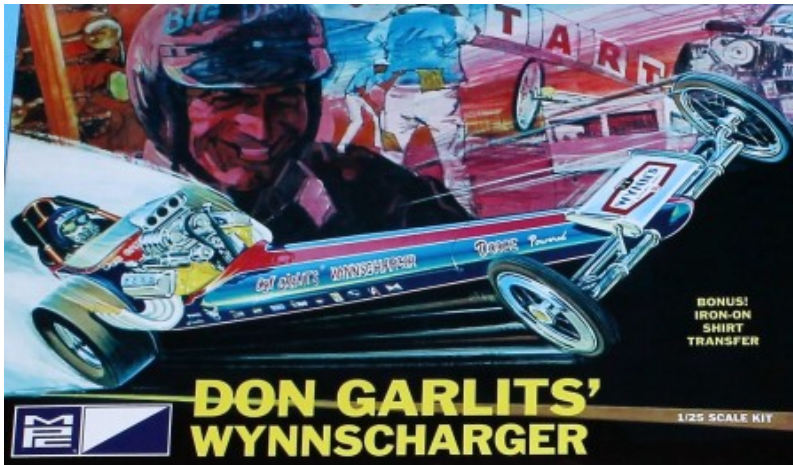


In the early days of drag racing, post-World War II Central and Western United States military aircraft pilot training fields had become available for alternate uses, including auto racing. Don Garlits' first drag race car was built under an oak tree at his home in North Tampa in 1954. He used an electric welder and a gas torch to modify an old 1927 Ford Model "T" Roadster to accept a 1948 Mercury block, a 1939 Ford floor shift transmission, and a 1948 Ford differential and axle. That early T-Bucket's quarter mile performance was a 13.5 second elapsed time, at a top speed of 93 mph. It was this successful, formative roadster that would give Don the beginnings of his first rail-job dragster. He took off the body, moved the engine back and located the seat behind the drive axle, a design invented that same year by Mickey Thompson. This would be the 12.1 second, 108 mph slingshot dragster with which Big Daddy would win the first NHRA race he entered, when the NHRA Safety Safari came to Lake City, Florida.

**For the Modeler:** This review covers the Don Garlits' Wynnscharger Dragster 1:25 Scale MPC Model Kit #810. MPC rates this as a Skill Level 2 kit for intermediate builders and this is a great model for the 1/4 Mile, Drag, or Race Car collection. The kit comes in 70 parts molded in White, Chrome, Clear, Black, and a vinyl seat, motor drive belt, and tires. Assembly is straight forward with sub-assemblies and final assembly sequences. The motor is nicely detailed and with some basic wiring; looks really good. The body is a multiple part unit. Also included in this kit are a nice set of decals, miniature display box, vintage retro deluxe packaging and a Bonus Wynnscharger T-shirt iron on. Overall dimensions are approximately: Length: 11", Width: 2", Height: 2".

**Build Caveats:** I build a lot of models and find that (although I have an airbrush) it's easier for me to use spray cans on various sub-assemblies. Krylon brand paint (the main one I use) dries fairly quickly and gives a good smooth glossy or flat finish. I do use my airbrush a lot of the time on car bodies however.

**\*\*\*\*\*NOTE\*\*\*\*\*** You will notice in a lot of the photos that some parts are still on a cut off part of the sprue tree. There are a few reasons for this, one being a hand hold for painting, another is to keep the part number with the part, and the final reason is that when I remove small parts, such as door handles, I stick a piece of masking tape to the parts before removing them from the sprue and this helps prevent them from flying into the jaws of the carpet/floor monsters. Also understand that Skill Level 2 kits are the largest and most popular group of model kits. Most Skill Level 2 kits are generally molded in a neutral color such as white to make painting easier, a traditional modeler preference. The molded color will often appear in the information section on the side of the box as well as the approximate number of parts contained in the kit. The greater the part count, the greater the number of smaller parts and the greater the detail. Glue or cement will be required to assemble the parts of Skill Level 2 model kits and Testors tube glue was used almost exclusively throughout the build. Model Masters liquid glue was used to reinforce locations after tube glue had set and also in some of the hard to reach spots. All the clear parts were glued on using Testors Clear Parts Cement and Window Maker adhesive. These model kits feature traditional water-release decals, offering greater detail, more colors and are much thinner than stickers for a more realistic build.

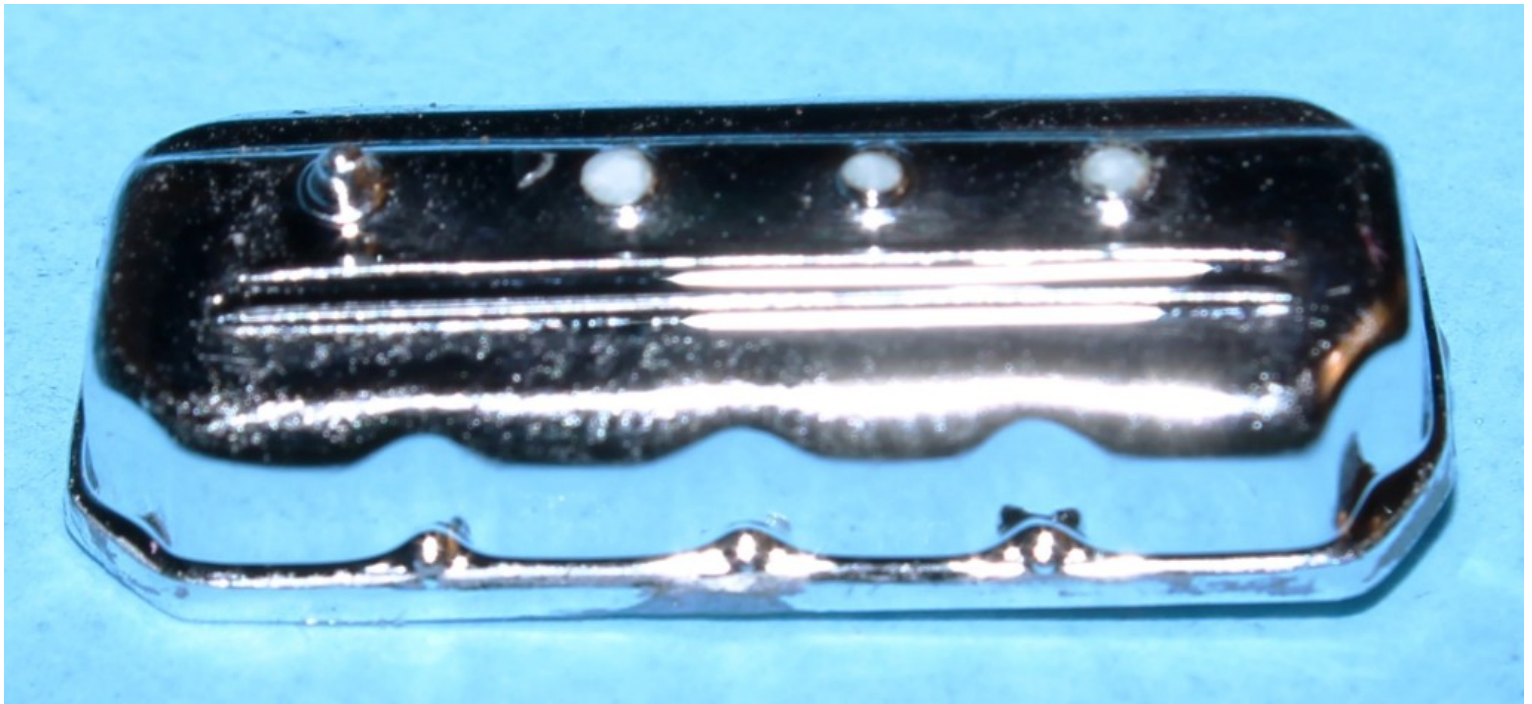
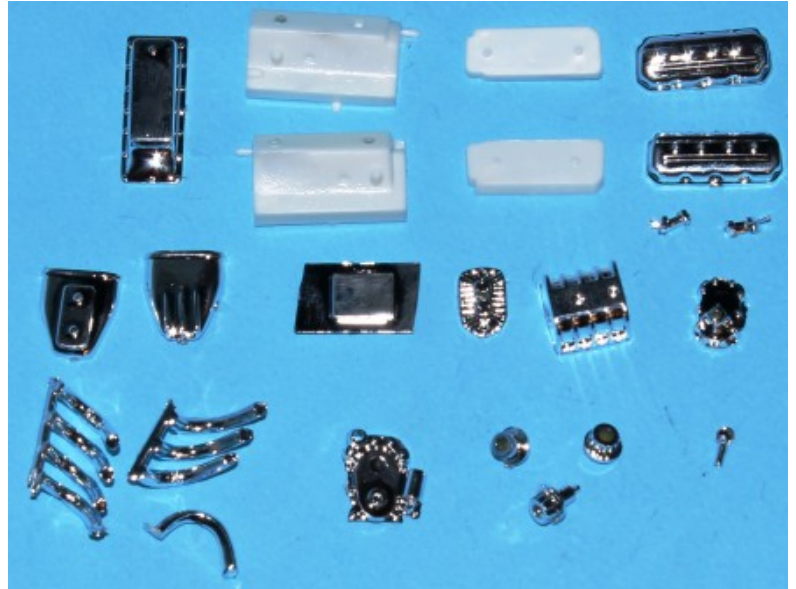


Pic1 Pic 2 Picture 1 is the awesome box art of this kit, while the second shows what the kit consists of. These are separate bags containing the White chassis (I love the chassis being a complete frame and not one you have to assemble and keep squared up), Chromed plastic, White plastic and the dual bag keeping the Clear and Black vinyl parts separate and yet together. And also the decals and the one page instruction sheet (front and back). **\*\*\*NOTE\*\*\*:** You'll really need to study this instruction sheet. It has 3 sections 1. Engine, 2. Chassis, and 3. Body and Wheels. Each section shows the parts, painting, whether the part is Chromed or not, and where the part belongs. The unfortunate thing is that the black and white line drawings are not the best in my opinion, so take your time and test fit and definitely follow the numbered sequence order of assembly.



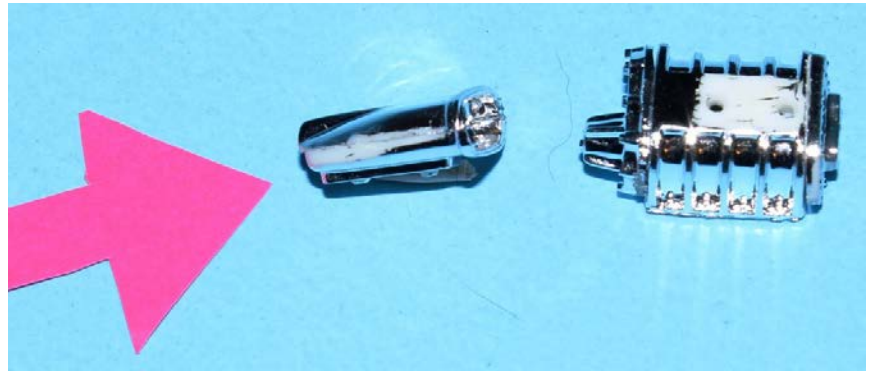
Pic 3 Pic 4 Picture 3 shows the decal sheet. Overall the decals are excellent. The problem here is that the placement is shown in Section 3 of the instructions and there are more decals on the sheet than are shown in the drawing (why I do not know) so you have extras for you decal box. Picture 4 shows the Microscale two-part decal setting system that I use on all my builds. First and foremost: start with a good glossy surface (if the model is to be a flat finish, first apply a clear gloss over the flat paint, then apply the decals and when dry spray entire area with clear flat) with a glossy surface one should apply Part 1 (Blue bottle) Micro Set and then the decal and ensure you have it positioned correctly, lightly blot excess water/set from the decal, then apply the Micro Sol Part 2 (Red bottle) to the decal and leave it alone. The Micro Sol softens the decal so it will conform to the models surface. Allow the decals to dry thoroughly and apply a top clear coat of the finish needed be it glossy, flat or satin.

Pic 5 shows the engine parts for the 426 Hemi Drag Motor, which consist of 24 parts (not shown is the Black vinyl drive belt and the homemade wired distributor that will be used. Most of the motor parts are Chrome except the 4 White ones (engine block halves and cylinder heads) in the picture which were painted Dupli-Color (DC) #DE1652 Chrysler Hemi Orange. I use Dupli-color automotive engine spray can engine paints for all my motors.

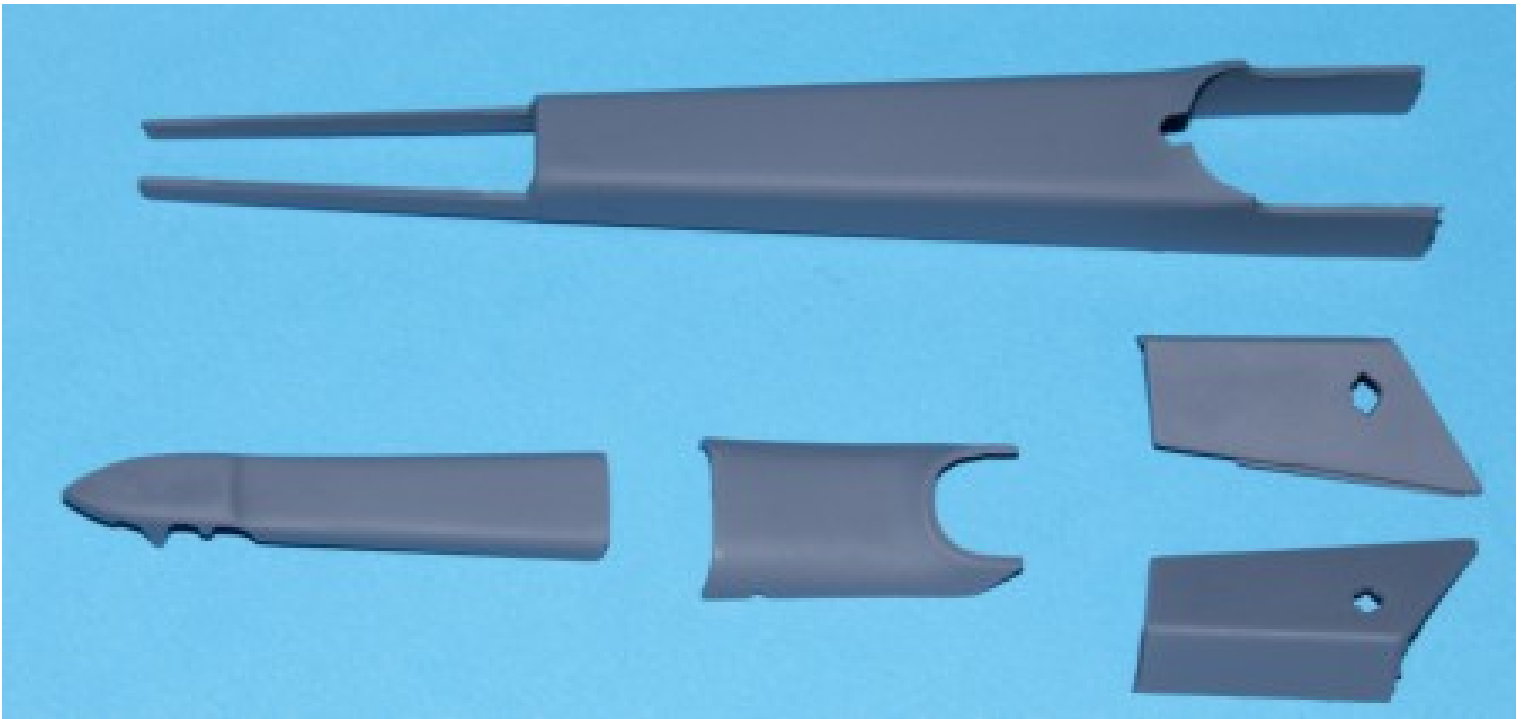


Pic 6 Since I will be using a homemade distributor with plug wires I need to open the plug access holes in the valve covers, in order to accomplish this I took my X-acto knife and removed the molded on spark plug boots on the valve cover. I drill a small hole in the middle of each boot to insert the plug wire into. This shows three of the four removed.

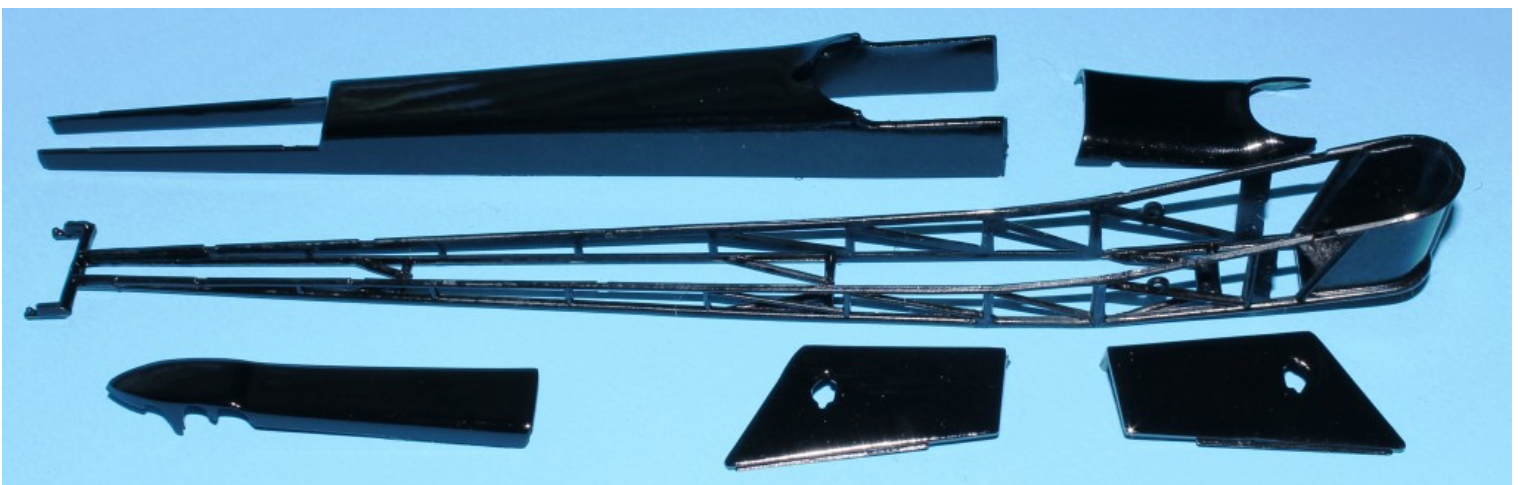
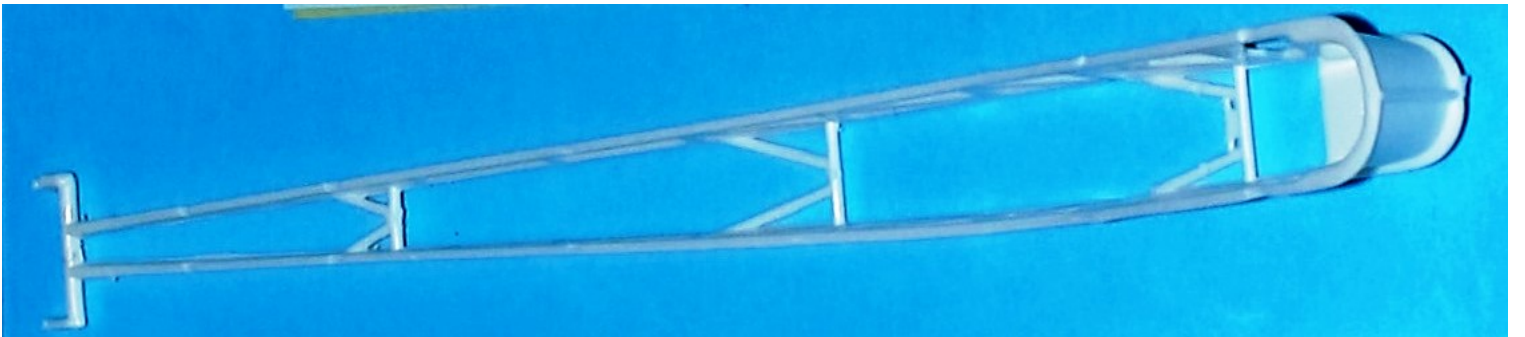
Pic 7 When assembling the blower drive air intake (pic7) you'll have to remove some of the Chrome plating on the joint line. This Chrome mirror-like finish is hard to redo, so you'll have a choice of repainting the intake (this happens on all your Chrome parts since one must remove them from the parts tree leaving an area of bare white plastic as well as having to remove the Chrome from the gluing locations. Alternatively, you can cover the bare plastic with Bare-Metal Foil. **\*\*\*NOTE\*\*\*:** Bare-Metal Foil is a thin adhesive backed foil that you use simply by cutting a piece slightly larger than the area needed to be covered, remove the paper backing, put the adhesive side down on the part covering the area and burnish (rub) with a toothpick or Q-tip, to stick the foil in place.



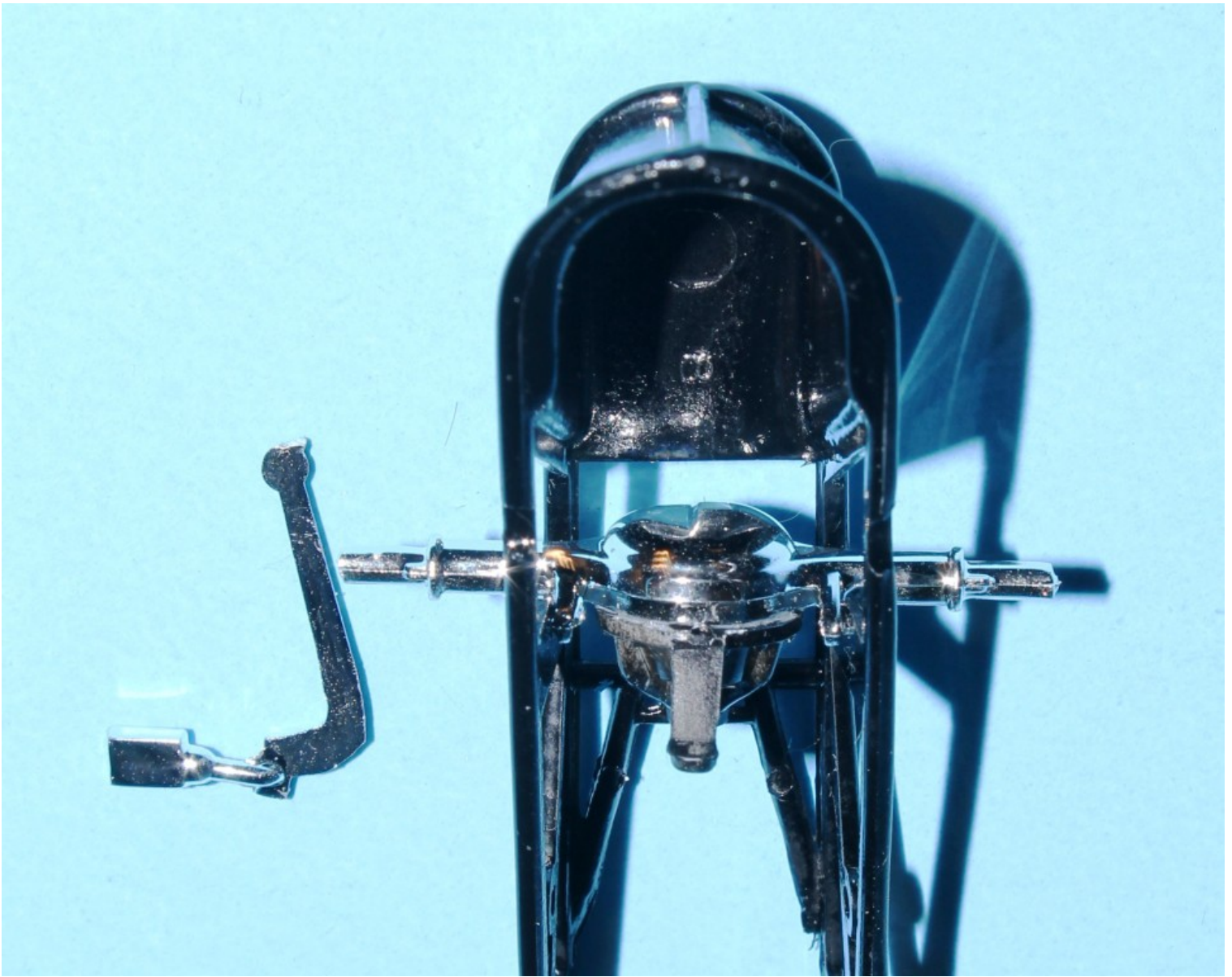
Pic 9 Here is the completed engine with the plug wires and main belt in place. Also in the picture, as well as the air intake Butterflies that were simply made out of a thinly sliced wafer off a plastic parts tree runner, glued in place and painted red for contrast. With the engine finished except exhaust headers is was set aside.



Pic 10 The body panels were removed from the part trees and cleaned up for priming. I sanded the parts with 800 grit wet and dry paper then wiped them off with an alcohol prep pad. After allowing the parts to dry for a few minutes I sprayed them with DC #DAP1699 Primer Sealer and set them aside for about an hour to dry.



Pic 11 Pic 12 With the body parts set aside, I cleaned up the chassis, primed it, and set it aside with the body parts. When all the parts were dry I sprayed them with Gloss Black using DC #DAL1677 Acrylic Lacquer. I like using Lacquers when I can because of their quick drying time.

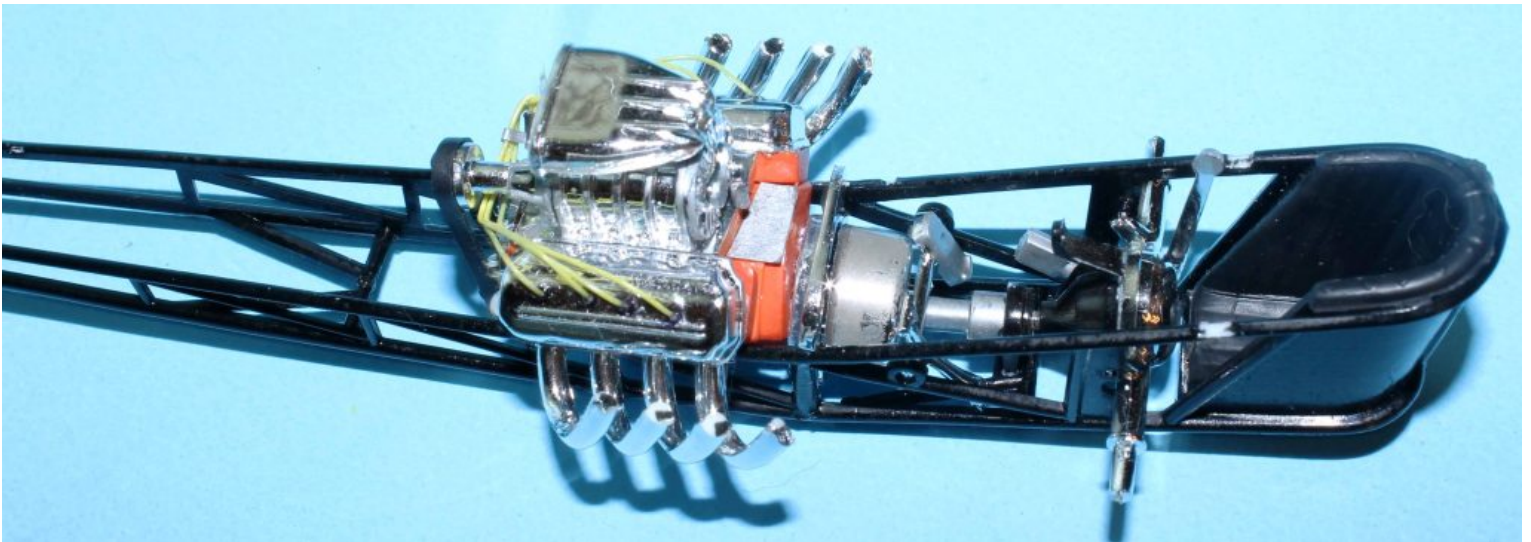


Pic 13 Pic 13a The first steps in the chassis assembly are to install the rear end and the long control. **\*\*\*NOTE\*\*\*:** Make sure you install the rear end with gear (pumpkin) as shown in the instructions otherwise you can't get the rear end through the frame to install it. Once I had the rear end and lever in place I glued the pumpkin to the front and then the drive shaft to the mount and the pumpkin. Both the parts had been pre-painted using Model Master (MM) enamels, the pumpkin Gloss Black and the drive shaft Steel.



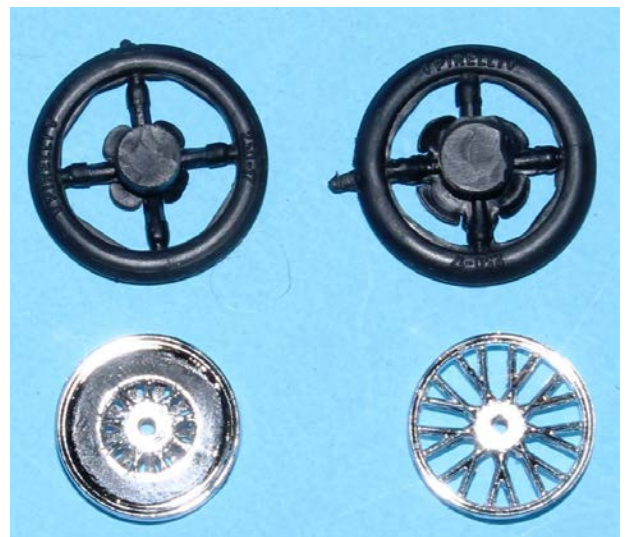
Pic 14 Pic 14a The vinyl seat insert was also glued into the seat bucket.





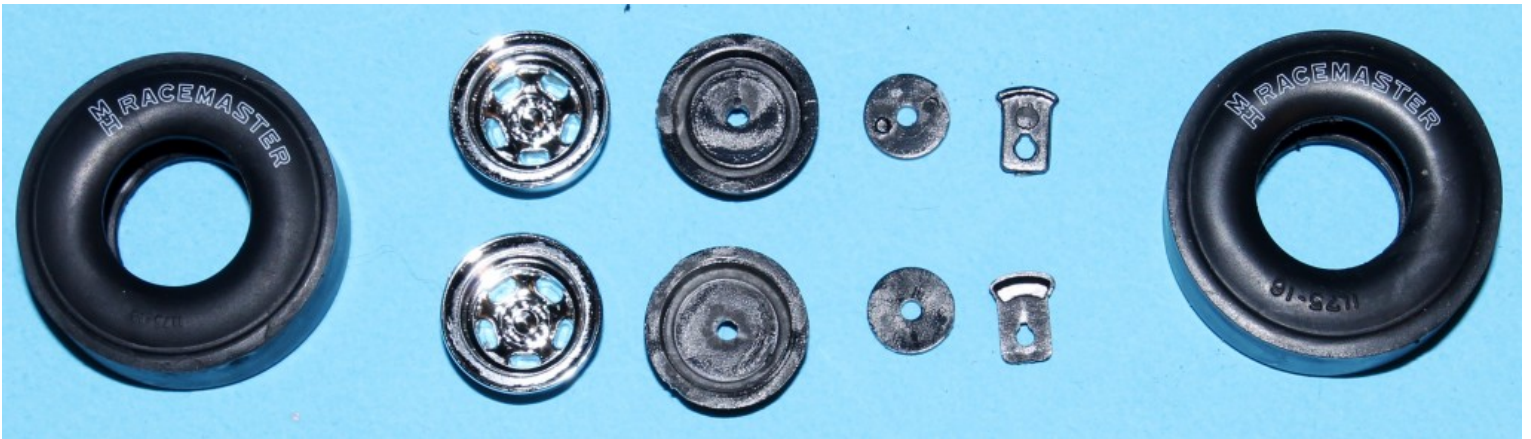
Pic 15 Pic 16 Next was the addition of the engine to the chassis. First I glued the exhaust headers in place and allowed the glue to set up but not dry thoroughly, then I applied glue to the draft and also to the pins on the side of the engine that will attached the engine to the frame. Having previously scraped the paint from the engine mount pin area on the frame I now slid the bell housing onto the drive shaft and lowered the front of the engine to where the mount pins met the frame and the held it in place for a few minutes to allow the glue to set up enough that the engine stayed in place. Fortunately, the exhaust headers lined up right and didn't need adjusting but could have been if need be with the glue not dried thoroughly.

Pic 17 Installing the motor and allowing time for it to dry gave me time to get the tire and rims painted and assembled. The front rims are two part fronts and backs with rubber tires. I had to remove the injection cross from the middle of the tires and scrape the Chrome from the back of the rims with the X-acto knife.



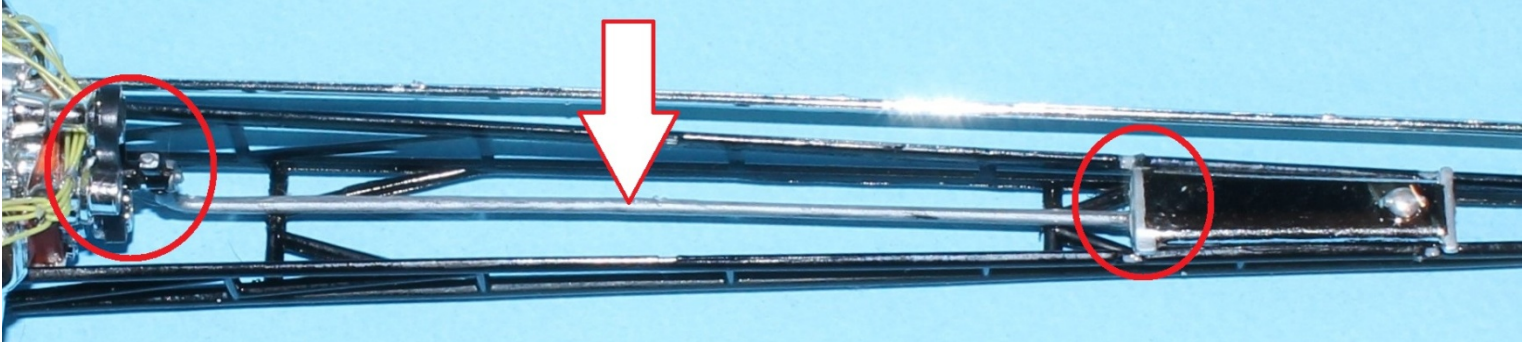
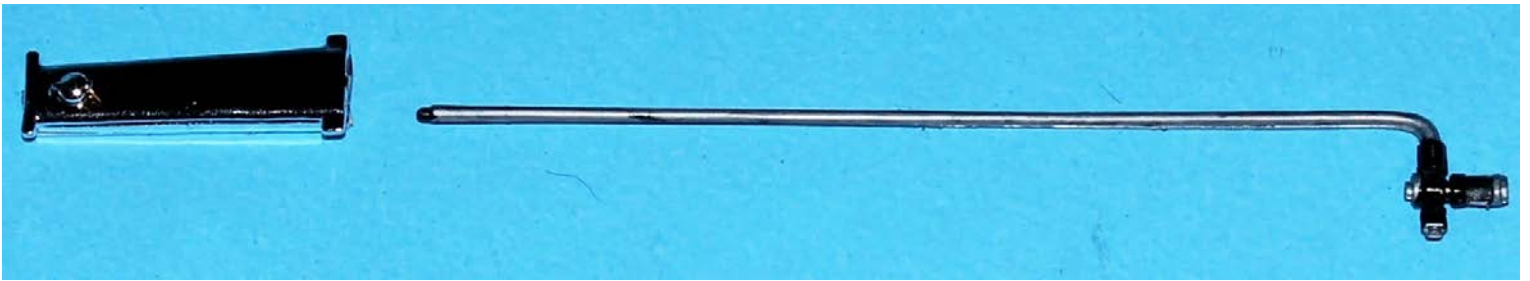


Pic 18 The rims halves were then glued together and the tire put on. The fronts were then set aside to dry thoroughly.



Pic 19 Pic 20 Next it was time to prep the rear tires and rims. The rims consisted of 4 parts; the Chrome exterior rim half and the inner half, axle ring and the brake caliper/shoe. The last 3 parts were spayed DC Lacquer Gloss Black and allowed to dry. Once dry, the ring was put into the inner rim half and then the rim halves were glued together. The tires/slicks were then put on the rims and all parts set aside.



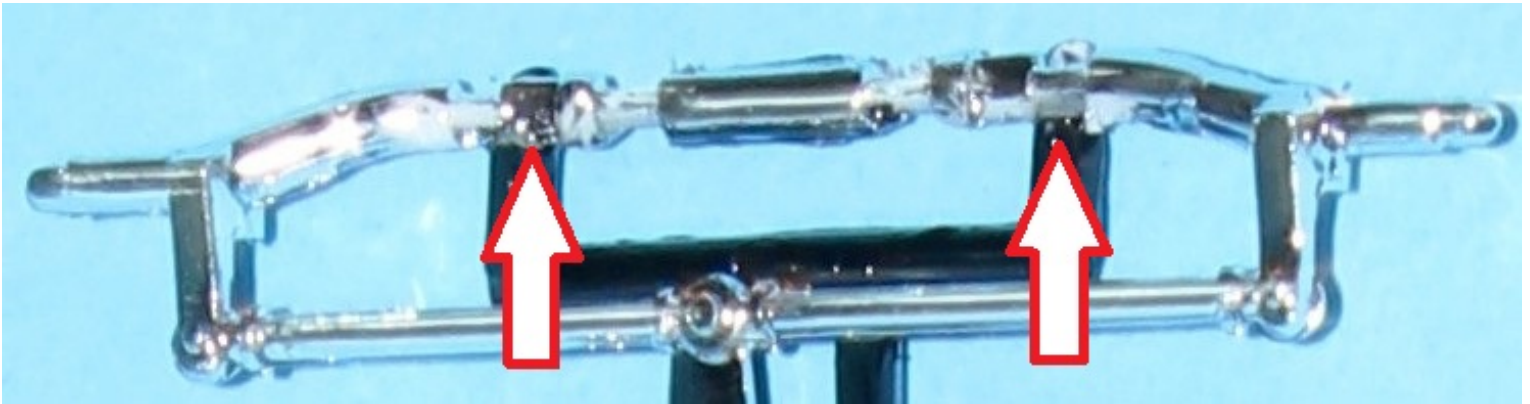
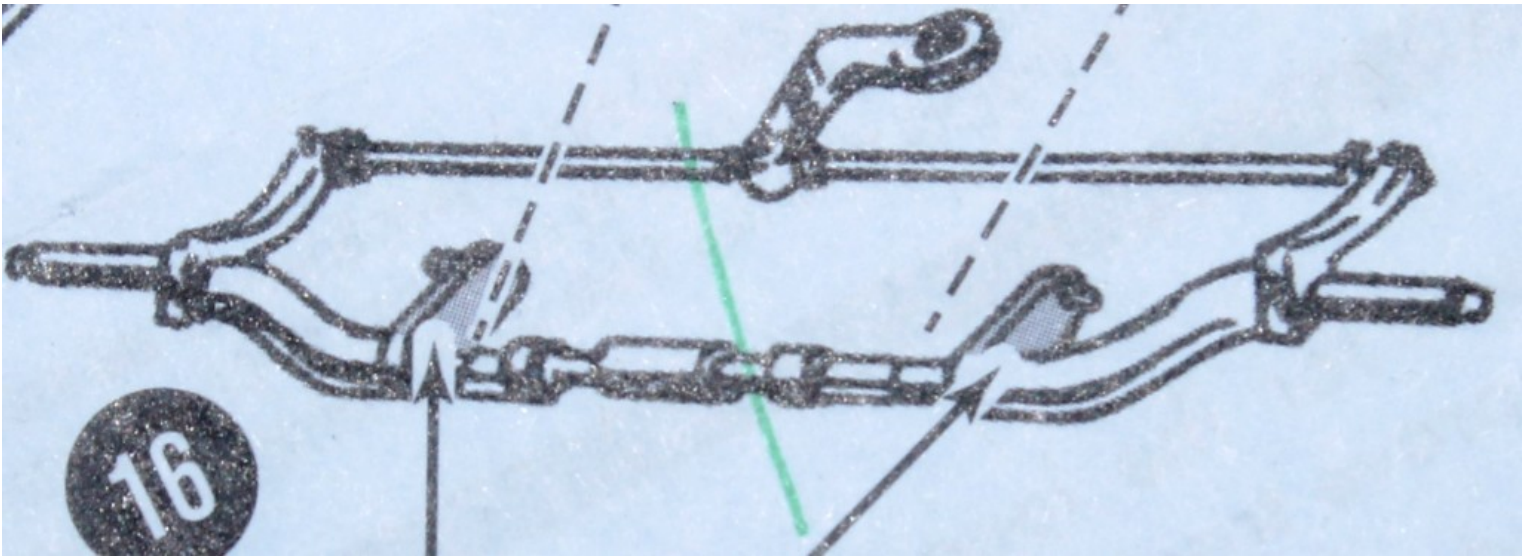


Pic 21 Pic 21a The fuel system which consists of the fuel tank and fuel pump/fuel line came next. The tank is a simple 2 part (top and bottom half) assembly while the fuel pump and fuel line is all one piece. After gluing the tank halves together it was glued into slots on the top frame rail after using the X-acto to remove the paint in the slot and the Chrome from the bottom of the locating tabs on the tank. The fuel pump and line was painted MM Steel for the line and the pump ends while the main pump body was painted MM Gloss Black. The end of the fuel line slips into a hole in the tank and the pump end is glued to the front engine plate through the center of the drive belt.

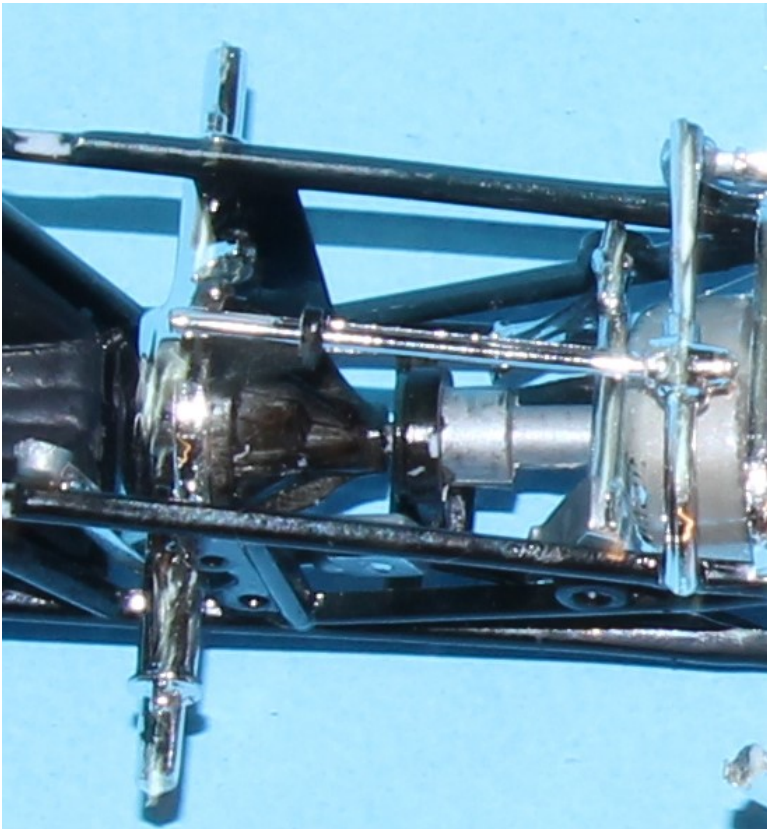


Pic 22 Pic 22a I glued the accelerator pedal/brake pedal arm (left) into the location holes in the chassis frame above the drive shaft.

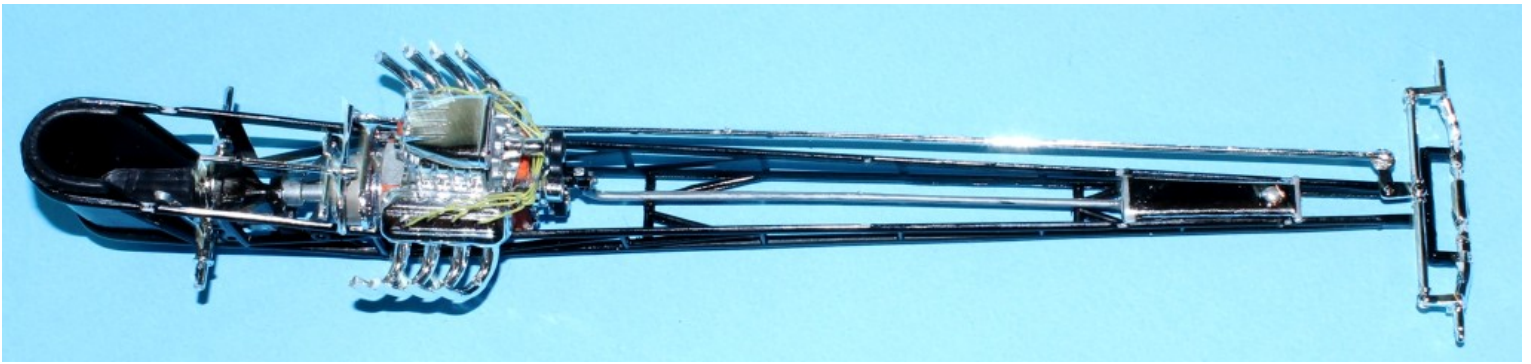




Pic 23 Pic 24 After allowing the engine and chassis assembly to dry over night it was now time to glue the front axle to the frame. The front axle simply glues to the front arms (pic23) on the chassis after you remove the two locating arms from the main axle as shown on the instruction diagram (pic24).



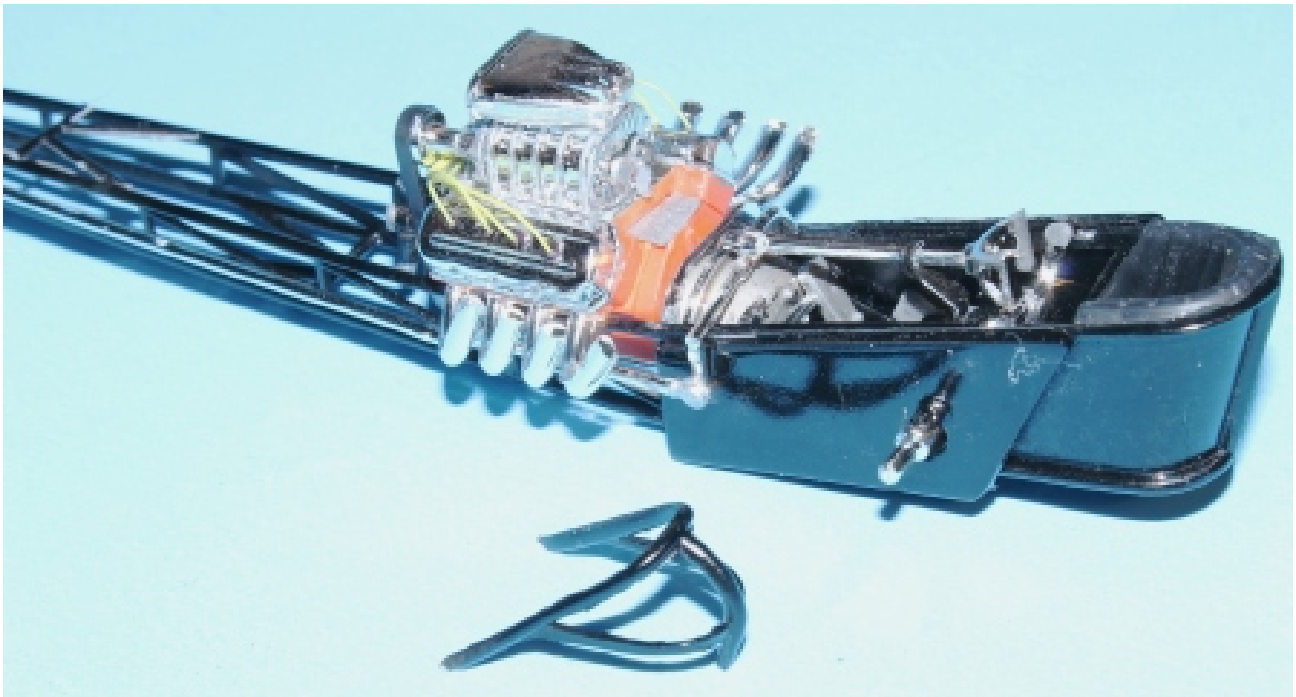
Pic 25 All the internal chassis parts were now in place so it was time to start finishing up the build. The last few items before the body parts are installed are the steering column and the mount. The mount was first glued to the right top frame rail where there is a locating slot and the chrome steering column was the put through the hole on the mount on the rear end pumpkin and glued into the cross mount location. **\*\*\*NOTE\*\*\***: I had to enlarge the hole in the rear end mount in order for the steering column to pass through it and I recommend you check this at the beginning of the build as it is a little hard to get to after it is installed.



Pic 26 Here's the completed chassis assembly with the steering control linkage in place. This linkage is a long Chromed part with numerous attachment points to the Chrome sprue tree. Careful removal is a must due to the length and fragileness of this part. Once removed, I cleaned up the places where it had been cut from the sprue tree and used a Silver Sharpie maker to touch up the areas where the attachment points were. I then glued it in place to the steering mount and the front axle control arm hole.



Pic 27 With everything coming together nicely and the chassis done, it was now time to start adding the body panels. The first two added are the driver's compartment side/bottom panels. These two panels, as well as the rest, had been painted DC Gloss Black Lacquer earlier, and had been clear coated using DC #DAL 1695 Acrylic Lacquer Clear, numerous times giving a high-gloss finish. These panels have the rear end axle holes in them and fit over the axles and I glued them together along the bottom joint and where they touch the frame (using just a small drop of tube glue) on the frame locations.



Pic 28 Once the panels had set I glued the steering wheel to the steering column and the roll cage to the slotted locations on the top frame rail.



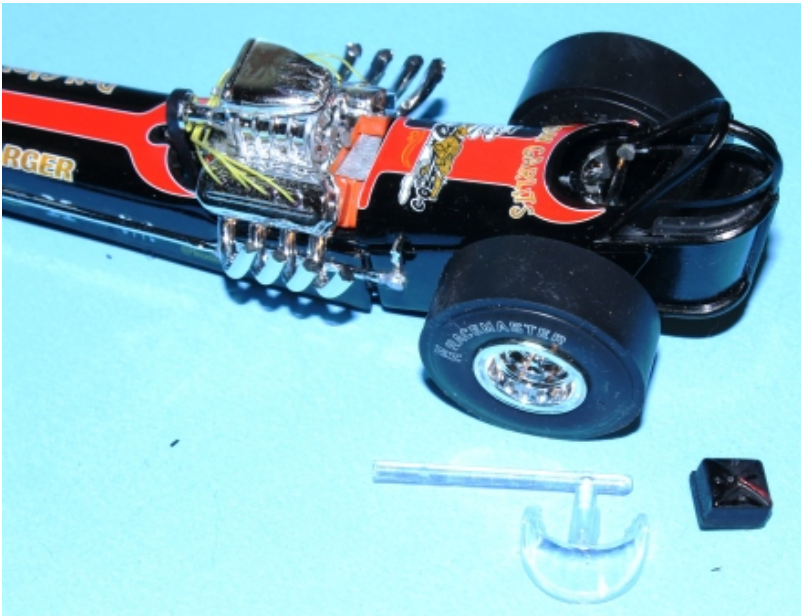
Pic 29 Pic 30 With the driver compartment totally finished I turned my attention front end of the dragster were I had to add the axle weights (pic 29). The weights were Chrome plated so I used the Silver Sharpie and "painted" the weights themselves with it, leaving the mounts Chrome. Before gluing them on, I slid the front tires (assembled earlier) into place on the axle ends along with the retainer cap. With the tires now on I was able to glue the weights on and ensure that they were both the same distance from the tires.



Pic 30 With the front end done I moved to the rear slicks. First the brake part was slid onto the axle followed by the slicks (assembled earlier) after applying some glue to the axle tip. **\*\*\*NOTE\*\*\***: On my builds I almost always glue the rims to the axles because I do not mind since they are just for display and not action. So with all the rubber mounted I now added the drivers compartment body cover, the main body, the nose cover and the nose belly tip. I glued all of these in place, although the instructions show not gluing the drivers compartment in place so you can display its interior, I opted not to. At this point the Wynnscharger is done except for the decals, windshield and parachute.

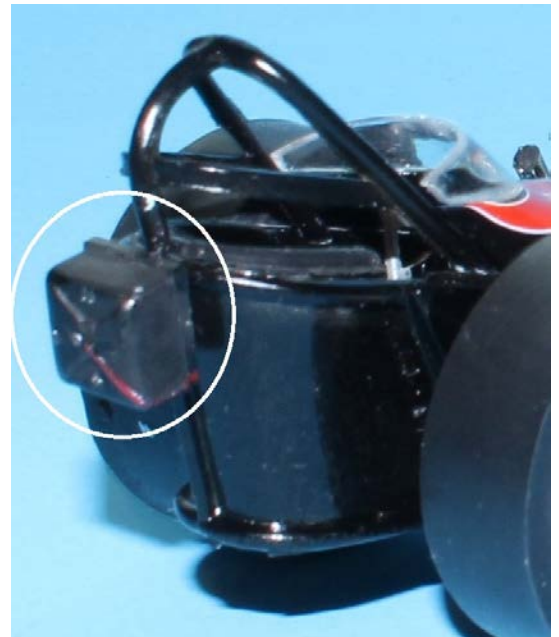


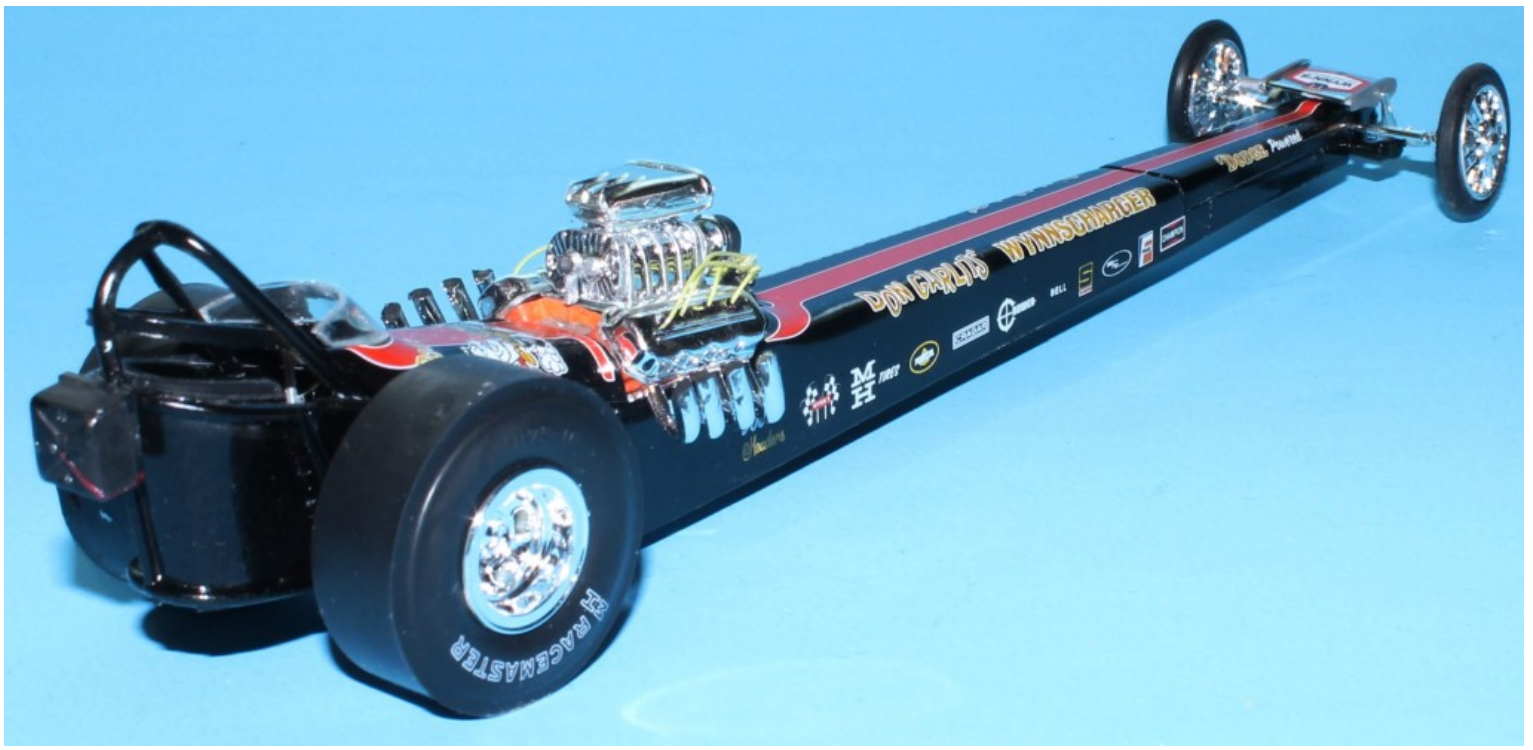
Pic 31 Before gluing the windshield and parachute in place I applied the decals using the Microscale two-part system. The instructions are very vague in the placement of the decals on the sheet and explain nothing about the others not shown in the line drawing of the final section on Body and Wheels. I applied the ones shown, which were the upper body red stripe the "Dodge Powered" "Don Garlits Wynnscharger" "Wynns" airfoil wing, and the sponsors.



Pic 33 Pic 34 With the decals dry, the windshield was removed from the sprue section and cleaned up then was glued in place using the Testors Clear Parts Cement and Window Maker adhesive.

Pic 35 The parachute was the final part glued into position on the rear frame bar and the Wynnscharger was complete.





**Pic 999 Overall:** I really enjoyed this build, although it is an older mold and not as detailed as the currently produced kits, it has its merits. The one piece chassis frame is great, compared to other kits with multi-piece frames; the vinyl rubber tires, engine belt, and seat were excellent. The decals were great too. Some issues were in Section 3 build instructions; they were a bit unclear in places. Flash on parts and the parting line seams show how old the mold is. Not that they can't be easily cleaned up, it was just time consuming. The final issue would have to be the Chrome parts. With heavy attachments points to the parts to the sprue tree you'll notice some missing chrome. Just use some Bare-Metal to replace the chrome plating there. Overall, I would still give this a Skill level 2 rating for the intermediate builder. If you have previously built some models, it shouldn't be a difficult build at all and this is a great subject kit for your shelf.

## Premium Model Reviews

# RORR

## Right On Replicas, LLC

### **More About Don Garlits:**

In the early fifties, Don became a professional drag racer. The first national drag racing meet, sponsored by the National Hot Rod Association was held on an airfield near Great Bend, KS in 1955. Don Garlits, being from Florida, was something of an outsider. He was sometimes referred to as the Floridian, before permanently adopting the nickname, "Swamp Rat," which also became the name for each generation of his innovative dragster designs. In 1959, Garlits traveled to Bakersfield, California for the US Fuel and Gas Championships, later to be named the "March Meet", to show that the times he was setting were as legitimate as those set by the west coast racers. Over 30,000 people attended the event, the largest attendance at a drag race at that point. His presence helped to grow the sport of drag racing beyond its California base. In 1964 he won the U.S. Nationals at Indianapolis, where he became the first top fuel driver to attain 200 mph, the wheel base of his AA/Fuel dragster was 145 inches. His latest Dodge-powered rail (the one this kit replicates) had a 200-inch wheelbase in which he set the world record 240 mph. In 1970, Garlits was driving Swamp Rat XIII, also called the Wynnscharger, a front-engine slingshot rail, when the vehicle suffered a catastrophic failure. The two-speed transmission Garlits was developing exploded and took a piece out of his right foot; he was out for the remainder of the season. He returned to Pomona in 1971 with Swamp Rat XIV, a brand new mid-engine, front-cockpit rail, also dubbed the "Swamp Rat I-R" by Hot Rod Magazine in the article introducing it to their readers. At first, the hotrod magazines considered the disadvantages of the new dragster design "obvious". However, Swamp Rat XIV was so successful that in 1971, Garlits won two of his next three Top Fuel Eliminator titles (the Winternats and Bakersfield), and was a runner-up at Lions, all in the new rod. A change so momentous had not happened since Mickey Thompson moved the seat behind the rear axle to create the slingshot in 1954. Rear engine dragsters have since become mainstream in drag racing.