

DARKSIDE MOTORSPORTS The Enemy

In the past year, we've seen an influx of new cars in oval. Few can deny that oval is once again growing, in large part because of an explosion in the number of manufacturers making cars, each trying to top the last. Darkside Motorsports is no stranger to racing in circles, and The Enemy chassis kit stands to prove that it is a far cry from your average pan car. If anything could be done differently, it was. Twice. Whether it's the stunning silver graphite that catches your attention, or the offset steering servo, or maybe the standup rear shock option, there's no denying it: "You don't know the power of the Darkside."

ASSEMBLY

The kit we got from Darkside included the offset servo and standup shock options, so I went all out making our Enemy like no other pan car out there. The instructions do a good job explaining assembly in fine detail, and the normal kit went together in no time. Keep a 4-40 tap handy when you get to the pod plates. When they go through anodizing, the threads get a little coated and can make the screw bind up. Pre-tapping them will make everything go together smoothly so you won't have to worry about snapping a head off.

While assembling the offset steering kit, I broke the steering post. **DISASTER.** Suddenly, I realized I'd seen that part before; I rummaged through an old box of TC3 parts, and there it was! The steering post is from the TC3 steering setup. Nothing like having a spare...phew!

One other minor glitch occurred when I assembled the standup shock kit. I had originally assembled the battery tray, and I attached it so that the receiver/esc slot was toward the rear of the chassis (it can be attached either way to suit your needs). With the lower ball-studs in place for the shocks, the slot blocks the pod from rotating. You can fix this issue easily by flipping the tray so that the slot is toward the front. The other way, if you're totally bent on having the slot toward the rear, is to Dremel off the part that hits, leaving just enough to hold the electronics clear of the pod.

Vital Stats

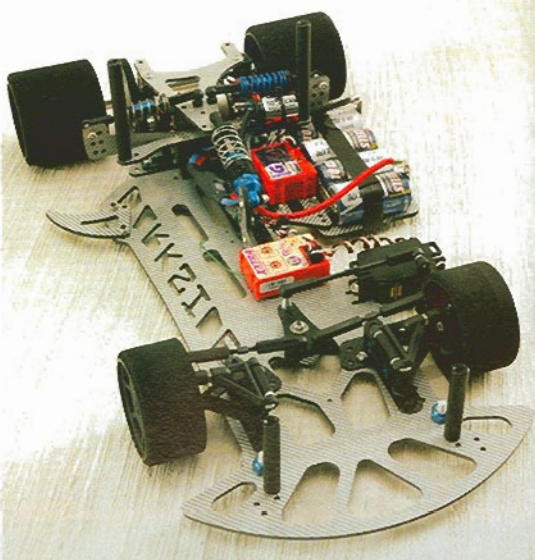
NAME: The Enemy
DISTRIBUTED BY: Darkside Motorsports
STREET PRICE: \$235 (less options)
WHAT YOU NEED: Pan car basic parts (front end, shocks, T-plate, axle, hubs, and hardware), body, electronics

WHAT THEY GOT RIGHT

- The single most unique pan car out there
- Plenty of adjustments
- Offset servo option is too cool

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Clearances can be tight
- A thinner chassis option would be nice.
- I wish the standup shock and offset steering options came standard

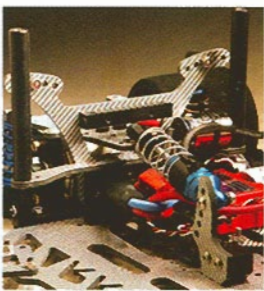


PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

FEATURES

The Enemy's big sell is its features, in particular its absolutely different approach to common features. Right off the bat the kit is made of 3mm silver graphite that makes the Enemy easy to spot from a mile away. Care to go stealth? The kit is also available in black graphite for those not so bold.

While we're on the topic of the chassis, there's a second set of T-plate mounting holes, so you can offset the plate for greater left rear leverage. As I mentioned before, the battery tray can be flipped to mount the electronics to the front or rear of the chassis; the tray mount also offers six pairs of holes to slide the tray fore and aft as well as in or out on the chassis. In front of the tray, the chassis sticks out to accommodate the offset steering servo. If you prefer a normal servo setup, you'll need to drill holes to mount it. The steering servo manipulates a single crank with a second set of holes to adjust Ackerman via a long linkage. Also up front, a pair of locator plates allow for nine different front track adjustments and three wheelbase settings. Out back, not only can the T-plate be offset, but the pod can be as well. A second set of holes in both top and bottom plates lets you mount the pod offset for further increased left side weight distribu-



tion. The standard kit's laydown shock tower has six holes to change shock angle, while the one-sided center shock mount also has six angle adjustments. The standup shock tower kit takes things vertical and allows for six adjustments. One thing to remember when using the kit is that the shocks no longer put weight on the opposite side's wheel. If you want more left rear, you need to tighten the left rear shock, NOT the right as you usually would.

TESTING

For my test, I took the Enemy to RC Madness in Enfield, CT. The tight competition would be the Enemy's debut on most uncompromising testing grounds. The first thing I noticed was that the Darkside car requires a substantially modified setup because of its thicker chassis. On a track with high grip, I can see the Enemy taking charge, but medium- and low-bite tracks can be unforgiving. Despite the chassis' rigidity, having practically everything as far left as possible made the car more sure-footed, and at no time did I feel as though the Enemy was getting away from me. Acceleration out of the corner is strong because of the extreme offset of the chassis components.

CONCLUSION

A car this outside the box may require a different setup than what you would normally run, but with this many adjustments and a little extra time committed, the Enemy can be a very formidable car on any track. With its setup requirements mastered, it could stand to be unstoppable. Only time will tell the path pan car design will follow, and the Darkside Enemy is a look at the future. ●

Links

Darkside Motorsports, www.darksidems.com, (970) 484-9503
 For more information, please see our source guide on pg. 193.