

Tamiya 1/24th Scale Aston Martin DBS Sports Car

by Jon Fincher

I'll admit – I'm addicted to Top Gear. Not the cheesy American knock-off, but the original British series about three lads cocking about in cars. It was on that show that that I learned how difficult it is to put the convertible roof on a Lamborghini Murcielago. It was on that show that I marveled as Captain Slow pushed a Bugatti Veyron Super Sport to over 260mph. And it was on that show that I fell in love with the Aston Martin DBS.

The name DBS isn't unique – Aston Martin used it once before on a late 60s grand tourer coupe. This latest car to carry the moniker is based on the DB9 platform, but with substantial tweaks. The DBS sports a 5.9L V12 engine producing 510bhp and 420lb-ft of torque. It takes 4.3 seconds to get from 0-60, and has a top speed of 191mph. For a while in 2006, it was the number #2 car around the Top Gear test track. In fact, the only thing the two DBS cars have in common is that James Bond has driven both of them (the original in On Her Majesty's Secret Service, and the newest one in Casino Royale).

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aston_Martin_DBS_V12



Opening the Box

The box provides the prospective modeler with a wealth of plastic and other materials. Five sprues in various shades of grey make up the bulk of the kit, with a sprue of chrome, one of clear, and body shell also present. The chrome is typical Tamiya – not too bright and very well done. A bag containing tires and some miscellaneous hardware is also provided. Everything is separately wrapped to prevent damage. A separate bag with decals and other goodies is held within the 12-page instruction sheet.

Inspection

First up was the body, because let's face it: if the body isn't right, the rest of the kit just doesn't matter. Tamiya got the body shape right – there are some minor mold parting lines in very easy to sand locations. The gentle curve of the

hood is matched by the sprue in which it's contained, which is a very nice touch.

The engine provided is extremely basic, comprising just two major parts so the engine bay isn't bare when the bonnet is opened. In fact, there are more suspension parts than there are engine parts – while you spend one step building the engine, you spend five pages building suspension and undercarriage details. Detail painting will help make the engine appear more substantial.

The interior is well apportioned, as is expected of a high end European sports car. You have the option of building either a manual or Touchtronic II style interior. All molding is well done, with ejector pin marks in discrete and easily hidden locations. Tires are rubber, and the wheels on the aforementioned chrome

sprue are well cast and appear to require very little, if any, attention in the clean-up or detail area.

The brake discs provided aren't round – they have cutouts for the calipers to fit onto them. I have an idea why this shortcut was taken, which I will explain later.

Instructions and Decals

The instruction provided are well written and complete, and very typical of Tamiya. Painting, decal, and other detailing instructions are provided throughout, as are all options. Language choices include English, German, French, and Japanese – paint colors provided are for Tamiya paints.

The decal sheet is typical Tamiya as well – exceedingly thin and well registered, providing interior detailing as well as European style license plates and other details. Also in the bag with decals are a sheet of window masks, which allow you to quickly and accurately paint the

window seals on the windows. And that's not all that's in that bag...

Two sheets of photo-etch, one adhesive backed, and the other on a sprue, are provided. The adhesive backed sheet contains engine badging and mirrors, while the photo-etch sprue contains grills and vent covers for the body, as well as an identification plate to put on a display base.

Price

This kit was not inexpensive by any means – MSRP is US\$71, and I paid well over US\$75 for mine in my local hobby shop. Prices on the Internet as of this writing ranged from US\$50 to US\$60. Given that the last Tamiya kit I purchased, the Ferrari FXX, was issued with photo-etch details for around US\$50, it seems a little excessive to issue this kit at the US\$70 price point, especially given the lack of engine detail and shortcuts on engineering in the brakes. I can only conjecture that

the costs of licensing this subject from Aston Martin, coupled with the decline in the world economy since the introduction of the FXX kit, are contributing to the cost.

Overall

A wise man once said that in order to get that which we love, we will pay the price but will not count the cost. In this kit, I agree whole-heartedly. The engineering overall is well-done and typical of Tamiya quality. The addition of photo-etch and window masks in the box mean I don't need to look everywhere for aftermarket details. Reference materials on this kit are everywhere on the Internet, and easy to find. I have gladly paid the price for this kit, and will not count the cost – I'll only count the days until my bench is clean enough to begin work on it.

[Thanks to Chris Banyai-Riepl and www.internetmodeler.com for permission to use Jon's article. - ED]