

The Magnificent Seven Ride Again by Gary Maslin

To ease myself into the project of recreating the pioneering the first seven Drysdale tether cars I selected the "Galeota Beginners Model" . From the outset I decided to use the only materials available to the builders of the period when the plans were originally published if at all possible.

Before any construction was commenced I spent the day studying the plans and any publication detailing the car that I was aware of in: Motor Racing In Miniature, G. A Deason 1947, Model Racing Cars, D. A Russell & D.M.B Wright 1945, and Aero Modeller, September 1942. After careful consideration I decided to make the following modifications to the visual appearance, as may well have been made at the time for the following reasons.

1. To upgrade the axles from 5/32" Meccano items, to 3/16" silver steel as I felt the Meccano axles to be too flexible.
2. The track was slightly reduced from the original for aesthetic reasons, as I did not think it would have any detrimental effect on performance or stability.
3. Exhaust moved from offside to nearside as I was installing a Thor slag engine, the Spitfire engine as specified being a rare and expensive engine in today's market.
4. An extra vent added to the bonnet and positioned slightly differently to aid cooling and ventilation of the engine.

Work then commenced with construction of the chassis as in the plan. Seasoned 1940 's oak (old table top) was used, and plywood. At this point I added 4 brass pins vertically on the chassis rails to locate in brass tubes on the bonnet bottom edge to give positive location.

Also two 3/16" dia brass pins rear facing on the rear chassis crossmember, this was to locate the rear bodywork which is removable for installation / maintenance of the rear running gear and electrical system.

Next the running gear, axles, engine, flywheel, axle fairings, dumb iron fairing and tether points were tackled as in the plan but with some improvements.

Front and rear axle fairings are of mahogany, glued and screwed to the chassis rails with thin brass cappings on the axle exit holes. Double arm cranks are used for axle mounts at the front, reamed out to take the 3/16" silver steel axle, located with reamed out Meccano washers between them and the double arm crank bearings. The rear axle is as in the plan but with collars soldered to the Meccano part no 46 axle mount. Again collars and washers are used to position the axle. The gear box frame is of one strip of 1/16" thick brass bent and soldered, a further 1/16" strip is soldered to the front face to increase the bearing surfaces for the gears to 1/8" the rear bearing is also increased by the fact that it runs through a chassis cross member.

Once all the gears were running free and true the gear casing was bolted to the chassis rails. The Thor engine was then fitted as in the plan details but with brass flywheel instead of bronze with silver steel pins driving the mild steel tee drive. The bonnet / scuttle chassis cross member being carved out to accommodate the Thor integral rear mounted fuel tank . 1/32" aluminium sheet was bolted on to form the dumb iron apron on the front of the chassis. The radiator and grill is as on the plan details. The bonnet and rear body was then constructed again as in the plan except for the location points as previously mentioned. The rear body locked in place by two screws through chassis bonnet / scuttle cross member into the corresponding body former. The rear body fairing allowing access to the electrical connections is also located by the same technique. The exhaust is made and fitted to the body as on the plan details.

The brake drums are represented by the Meccano part number 20 all round instead of just the smaller part number 20b to just the front wheels. Wheels and tyres are of the aero type with hubs sprayed red. Tether brackets are bolted through the chassis with 3/16" dia bolts. 3/16" removable "U" bolts carry the tethering wire.

The seat and backrest are formed from ply and balsa, covered in red "Rexine" type material reclaimed from 1940's car seat covering. All electrical wiring is also of the 1940's auto woven cloth covered type. The steering wheel is Meccano specified in the plan details.

The instrument panel is ply but faced with 1/32" aluminium with engine turned finish upon which are mounted oil gauge, rev counter and speedometer, the surrounds of which are formed from plated key rings. The chassis received many primer and filler coats rubbed down between each before applying the silver top coat.

The body received the same preparation and is finished in cream with red and black number

three decals.

The aero windscreen is Perspex mounted in aluminium and bolted in position.

In summary this has been a nice model to build, but I think if the extra bearing surfaces had not been added then problems would have been encountered especially with the gear meshing after only a few runs

1 down 6 to go watch this space!!!

HOPE I HAVEN'T BORED YOU. ALL THE BEST FROM THE UK GARY







