

Racing Lines

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KYOSHO CALSONIC 350Z

HPI R40 NITRO TOURER
ASSOCIATED TC4 RTR

XRAY XB8-TQ

- TESTED: > TRINITY COBALT 7x1
> AXE ROSSI LSX
> SIRIO S12-T3 I STI



FIRST LOOK: NOVAK'S THREE NEW BRUSHLESS



XRAY XB8 TQ

NOW YOU'RE TALKING!

XRAY caused a stir when they released the XB8 a couple of years ago, everyone expecting a GP touring car rather than an off road vehicle but the move was successful, the Slovakian company able to boast of many wins around the world. Now they have this new model, the XB8 TQ and already it has won in major competition, the 2006 European Championship. As PETER JOYCE reports, the TQ is one of the best buggies you can buy...

The XB8 was always a good chassis, the changes made to the chassis with the new TQ edition improve it.

The biggest visual changes have been changing the carbon fibre to black alloy with silver highlights and it does look trick no doubt about it.

Adding alloy will make the chassis stiffer and while the steering and central diff braces and radio tray look good, they also impart stiffness to the chassis.

A new front brace has been included.

Formally an option part, the brace is a lot stiffer than the original torque rod brace.

But the big changes to the TQ come with the suspension geometry.

There are new upper and lower hinge pin carriers, giving even more potential setups than the original XB8.





More kick up, more caster... just more!

The rear shock tower has been revised to make full use of all the shock positions.

Other changes have been included but they are more

subtle (or perhaps hidden).

New lighter clutch shoes have been included, the front diff outdrives are a new 'long' type that again minimise binding and allow full suspension movement.

The suspension arms are the long 'soft' type for a slightly wider track and again more droop.

The new suspension setup emulates the setup used to TQ the XB8 at last year's 'Euros'.

It has been designed to be better on rougher "US" style tracks, which does mean it should be better on Aussie tracks also.

Like all 1:8 buggies, the TQ features triple gear diffs which can be tuned with silicone greases.

Hudy spring steel is used for all the turnbuckles and universal drive shafts.

Machined ventilated steel disc brakes are used to pull the buggy to a halt.

The front rear bias can be adjusted.

The entire buggy runs in rubber shielded bearings and, when built, is free running, given the natural inertia of a big buggy.

There are so many suspension tuning opportunities it's almost impossible to list them—you want it, the XB8 TQ probably has it!

XRAY even include alternate composite chassis braces for those times where a little more chassis flex is desirable.

WHAT YOU GET

This is a Pro level race kit, meaning the chassis is top shelf and few options are available for the TQ—because they are all included in this kit.

The TQ is a race kit and as such, you'll need to provide all the radio gear, engine, pipe and tires to get it going.

Our ever faithful KO EX10 Helios transmitter and F301 receiver were combined with Thunder Tiger's Ace 1211 digital servos for both steering

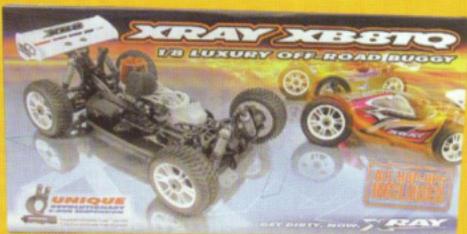
and throttle/brake.

Powering the radio was handed over to the VRX LiPo receiver pack, connected to a Novak voltage regulator.

Motive power was delivered by the latest Sirio .21 race engine, connected to the newer Thunder Tiger three chamber EFRA approved inline pipe.

This combo is reviewed next issue.

You're obviously going to need fuel to suit your engine as well, in our case it was Hot



Stuff's 20%.

There is an ever increasing number of tires available for 1:8 buggies but one tire most

people will carry a set of are the Pro-Line Dirty Harry's and that's what we have loaded on to the TQ.

THE BUILD

XRAY's instructions, 3D CAD drawings, set up tips are excellent and just as well—you have to build the TQ from a series of 13 or so bags.

There is also supplement to explain the changes made to the TQ buggy.

While this is a reasonably complex kit, there is no real reason why a novice (who can follow instructions) couldn't comfortably build the XB8.

Diffs are the first thing built, then the bulkheads and complete suspension (without

the shocks) is added to the bulkhead's chassis.

The last thing built are the shocks and these alloy bodied finish beautifully.

Like all XRAY's, the TQ is a quality production and whilst we had the Hudy Hinge Pin Reamers on hand, they were never needed.

The only hand finishing we had to attend to was touching the front lower arms with the Dremel to give a little bit of extra droop and allow the droop screws to be more effective.

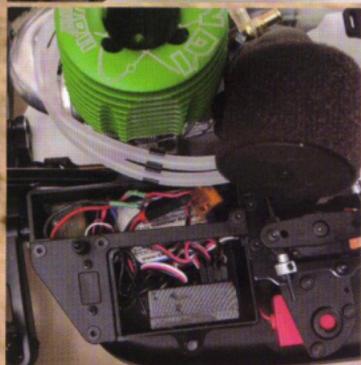
It should take about six hours to build the XB8 TQ, perhaps a little more if it's

you're first 1:8 buggy.

If it is your first time, our suggestion is to very much take your time—you aren't in a race against time and the reward for a proper build will be a trouble free run time when you get the noise happening.

Incidentally, our time frame doesn't count gluing tires or painting the body, which in itself can take as much or as little time as you choose.

We used XXX Main masks and Tamiya spray cans to complete the job in about an hour.



The Specs

Manufacturer

XRAY

Model

XB8 TQ

Type

1:8 4WD GP Off Road Buggy

Importer

Custom Model Cars

Dimensions

LOA 482mm
Wheelbase 321-327mm
Width 308mm
Weight (RTR, dry) 3300g

Technical

Chassis

7075 anodised alloy, machined alloy stays front and rear (composite stays also supplied), alloy radio tray and steering brace.

Suspension

Fully independent C-hub style, composite hub carriers and arms, Hudy steel turnbuckle upper camber links. Adjustable toe, camber, caster, kick-up and anti-squat angles. Uses offset hole bushings throughout as I.S.S. (Integrated Suspension Settings). Long travel coil over oil filled shocks, adjustable upper and lower shock mounting points on alloy shock towers.

Transmission

Front, centre and rear gear diffs. Steel spur gear, 3 alloy shoe clutch. Centre Hudy steel uni-joint drive shafts, machined steel ventilated disc brakes. Hudy steel uni-joint drive shafts, fully ball raced.

Engine (not supplied)

Sinio S21 EVO 2 STI competition engine and Thunder Tiger EFRA 3 chamber inline alloy tuned pipe.

Other gear used

KO Helios EX10 transmitter and KO 302 receiver, Ace 1211 digital servos for steering and throttle/brake. VXR 700mAh LiPo receiver battery, Novak voltage regulator, Pro-Line Crime Fighters/Dirty Harry tires.

Fuel

Hot Stuff "Yellow" 20%.

DIRT BURNING

There is little doubt the performance in a competition buggy like the XB8 TQ is some what dictated by the power plant.

The chassis dynamics are easily up to what any 'non competition' engine can dish out.

At about the same time the XB8-TQ arrived, Ace Hobby Distributors, the new Australian agents for the Sirio range of engines, sent us a .21 for review.

We had no doubt the Sirio is more than up to delivering power for exciting (read crazy) performance in the XB8 TQ so it didn't take us long to bolt this Italian stallion into the XRAY and commence our usual run-in procedure with, it must be said, a little impatience and anticipation.

Acceleration on our testing surfaces was staggering!

We tuned the Sirio so it motored like the one in the web site www.star-motor.com and the XRAY happily obliged, squatting a little on its haunches and shooting off at a rapid rate of knots.

The front tires showed a little ballooning, indicating that a slightly heavier centre diff oil might be beneficial to get a little more drive to the rear.

Nonetheless, acceleration is awesome and so is the top speed.

With a high revving .21, the TQ flies!

It spoils up and motors across whatever you point it at.

With impressive speed, a solid set of stoppers is critical and XRAY have set the TQ up with a great set of brakes.

The machined ventilated discs will stop as fast as you want time and time again.

The suspension of the XRAY is great, soaking up all hits really well.

Across rough ground, watching the suspension move and adjust to compensate for the bumps, is sensational.

The amount of suspension adjustment is perhaps daunting for all but the most expert of tuners, however the good thing is the kit setup is very good for most instances.

Turn in is a little slow and power on understeer is prevalent, thus making the buggy easy to drive.

It is certainly a characteristic that can be tuned out if desired.

Jumping is something 1:8 buggies are designed to do and the XB8 TQ does this task very well.

It is well balanced and easily managed in the air with the throttle and brake.

Our plan was to race the XB8-TQ at the recent AACRMCC New South Wales GP Off Road Championships at Moorebank, however the heavy rain produced firstly a very boggy (quadmire) track and, despite the endeavours of the Club, a very very heavy track by day two.

These conditions were never really going to allow the TQ to show its best but we do know, from watching the original TB8's optioned up to TQ spec at previous meetings, the TQ is right on the money.

All up this is an excellent package, all power and grace.

It's definitely an A Main contender, if you can't put this combo in the A Main then better start looking for excuses beyond the equipment—our favourite is to blame tracks, they never suit our set up or driving!



OUR THOUGHTS

The XRAY XB8 TQ is an evolution of the XB8 series in the right direction, the changes made, while not obvious at first, make a difference to the buggy on the track.

This is certainly one of the very best 1:8 off road buggies you could lay your money down on.

While the TQ is a rolling chassis (without tyres), it works so well that even a novice would be rewarded by the drive.

A race driver, however, will

be even more rewarded by the performance and adjustability of the TQ.

Our thanks

Our thanks to XRAY for the review XB8 TQ.

XRAY's Australian gents

are Custom Model Cars and you can purchase the XB8 TQ and other XRAY cars, parts and accessories through your local hobby shop.

If they aren't stocking XRAY (or Hudy), ask them to contact Custom Model Cars.