



1/43rd scale Auto Models

By Chazz Klanian

Sometimes a small niche for a specific type of model is born when major styrene kit manufacturers choose to market to larger audiences. Once such niche is 1:43 scale race cars. Several low-volume manufacturers make these models, and for the most part use resin or metal to cast duplicates from masters. These kits have unique challenges due to their composition. Chazz has sampled a few over the years and the two that rise to the top are Formula Models and SMTS. SMTS is the most prolific, with Formula Models being a shade better in overall quality.

These kits usually have bare bones instructions, leaving order of assembly entirely up to the builder. For this reason it is important to study the parts and the



instructions and devise a plan of attack. In-

stalling a part that prevents a subsequent part from being installed should be avoided! Often, parts have to be painted before assembly since reaching them is problematic as more parts are attached.

Inspect the parts for over pours and burrs. These obviously need to be removed carefully and sanded out to match surrounding contours. If a surface has to be built up, Chazz prefers to use a standard auto body putty called Nitro-Stan thinned a bit with MEK.

Metal and resin require either CA-type adhesives or epoxies. Chazz recommends building from the inside and working your way out. Make sure that each part is as perfect as it can be and all will be perfect in the end. It also prevents something getting off in the early stages and the error being amplified. Dry fitting is crucial to test the parts fit and allow you to correct the part if needed. The suspension is probably the most important to get right, so spend time making sure all the wheels are level and correctly oriented. Chazz sometimes uses a jig to keep the wheels aligned dur-



ing a glue cure.

Another area that needs careful attention is the open air scoop, if the kit has one. Often there are casting flaws inside that must be repaired. Sometimes Chazz will make custom-shaped sanding sticks using toothpicks or coffee stirrers to reach inside.

When all the cleanup is done, the surface must be primed. This is need for two reasons. First, to reveal flaws, and second to prepare the surface for the paint. Chazz likes to use either Gunze Sangyo Mr. Surfacer or Tamiya Surface Primer.

The final painting is done in multiple stages. the color coat is applied in several layers, and is sanded and buffed be-

tween coats. Wait several days between applications to be sure the surface is fully cured. Chazz sometimes uses a 60w light bulb as a gentle heat source to help speed things along. Keep the model 8"-12" inches away from the bulb!

Chazz creates large stripes using tape as masks. A photocopy of the decal sheet can be used as a template to cut out the tape shapes. After all the decals are dry, several clear coats are applied. Chazz prefers Model Master lacquer but he has tried Future floor finish to some success.

One last thing, put your model on a base so it no longer will be handled and stressed. It also presents the model well and in the light it deserves!

