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SLOT CAR

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metal precision of
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Modelant invited Stu Goddard to
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PLUS... THUNDER SLOT!

AND THE RETURN OF GIOVANNI MONTIGLIO

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WATCH OUT NOW I'M BACK

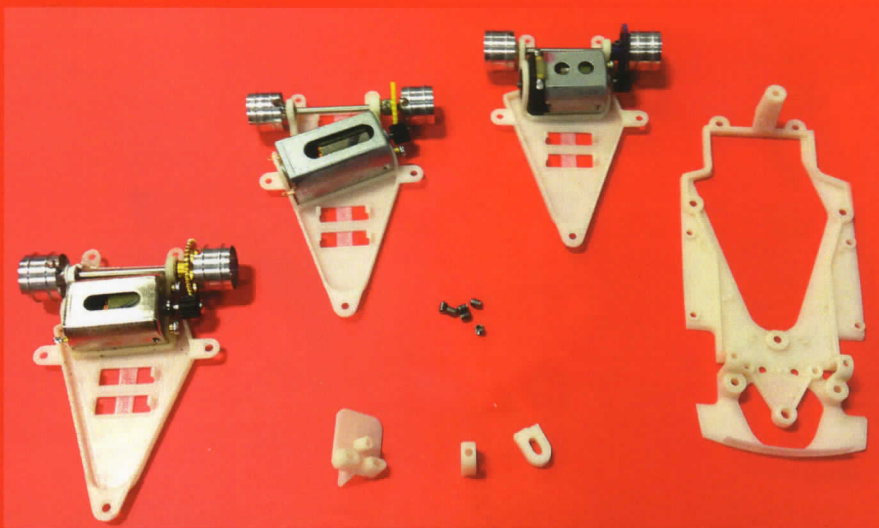


You can't keep a good man down. World champion racer and designer Giovanni Montiglio might have been forgiven for opting for the quiet life when his time at NSR ended on a sour note. But no, there is unfinished business in the shapely form of a Lola T70 for a start...

A few years ago we had a long chat with Giovanni Montiglio about the state of play at NSR. They were all trying to recover from the sudden and devastating loss of Salvatore Noviello in a road accident but Giovanni was trying to remain positive, showing us the forthcoming Aston Martin which looked tremendous. When we asked about future cars, the response was "the Lola T70." Not the Mk3B as done by

Fly, but the car before that, the Mk3, as done by...well, hardly anybody in a RTR form. This was exciting news, but not long afterwards came the word that things hadn't worked out at NSR and Giovanni had left the company. "There goes the T70" we thought...

There followed a deafening silence until just before Gaydon, when we heard that Giovanni might be coming to show his new company, Thunder Slot, to the UK audience. And indeed he was there. He was going to launch a new RTR car. What car is that? "The Lola T70." He's a man of his word, is Giovanni. He said he'd do the T70 and so he will. All he had to show at this point were some prototype chassis designs, motor mounts and a T70 body, but take note, this car is going to be a corker. As luck would have it, we at Slot Car Magazine had been positioned right next to Giovanni, so we were able to examine the parts at some length as well as discuss the venture with the man himself. The arrangement worked well for him too, as was able to gain a (cough) valuable insight into the UK market



NSR... CK!

by Ric Woods



and eat most of Marc's chocolate biscuits.

As we mentioned before, the '67/'68 T70 coupé has until now been largely overlooked in slot racing circles, especially in RTR form. There was certainly a Cox version that used a Lancer vac body back in the late 'sixties, but apart from some resin bodies of varying quality, nothing else springs immediately to mind. This might be because the T70 was never a huge success on the international scene. It had speed, but the reliability just wasn't there and it

should be remembered that the cars were all sold to and run by private teams who at the time were competing against the works cars from Ferrari, Ford and Porsche. In national events it was a different matter, however, with the spectacular Chevrolet-engined brutes being popular additions to the sharp end of the grid. There were twenty-one T70

Mk3 coupés built and for the trivia-minded readers out there, it was said to be the first racing car to use carbon fibre-reinforced bodywork. Lola were quick to embrace the new technology that was coming into racing, so the body was designed using a wind tunnel and provided a degree of downforce front and rear. On a less hi-tech note, the steering



rack came from the BMC 1800 and the window latches from a Vauxhall Viva!

With so many of the originals having been raced, there are myriad liveries to choose from. We understand that the yellow and white Bonnier 'Bongrip' car will be an initial release, along with the red and white Taki Racing Team version (pictured below) that raced in Japan in 1969 and is now a popular addition to the historic racing scene. Moving on from those two, the Team Surtees and white and green Sid Taylor cars will be eagerly anticipated. Historically, the car will sit very nicely on slot car grids with the Ford P68 and Ford GT40, as well as any souped-up Ferrari P4 you might own.

It makes sound economic sense that the T70 spyder will follow the coupé into production, as it can use the

same chassis. Again, there will be a multitude of liveries to choose from as these cars raced extensively in Europe and in the Can-Am series in the US.

And the chassis? This is Sig. Montiglio's area of expertise and quite naturally will be a development of his previous designs. There will be a triangulated motor mount with a single front pivot and four other adjustment screws, but it is anticipated that just using three (i.e. one front and two rear) will work best, with adequate adjustment and two fewer potential friction points. Interestingly, the motor angle is to be increased very slightly in the standard 'not-quite-sidewinder' configuration, to give a little extra clearance between the motor can and the axle. This helps to avoid dirt getting trapped in the gap and creating drag,

which can easily happen in endurance events. In fact, no little consideration seems to have been given to the car running in longer races. Another nice design touch is the idea that the spur gear will be level with the bottom of the chassis, instead of being the first thing that strikes the track as the tyres wear. There will be the now-usual adjustable front axle height, which should incorporate the option for independent stub front axles (à la Fly) but without the drag-inducing slop (er...also à la Fly). These would be held in place by three screws, but the idea is that they could have some movement if needed, e.g. for bumpy tracks. Talking of which, a suspension system is also under consideration, perhaps with a foam damping device, but that may be some way off in the future.



Photos this page by Ric Woods
Photos previous page by Marc Abbott and Hub Habets



Giovanni also had a few other components with him, including some single-flange bearings which will be of interest to scratchbuilders and users of PP-type chassis.

Clearly these are very early days for Thunder Slot, but make no mistake, the will is very much there to make it all happen— you don't get this far without a lot of determination— the plans are very realistic and, judging by the reaction at Gaydon, the choice of the Lola as the first car is absolutely on the money. It was a great pleasure to chat to Giovanni over the course of the weekend and we wish him well with this exciting new venture. *Forza Thunder Slot!*

www.thunderslot.com

