



BEHIND THE WHEEL

Confession: I went ahead and used my Duratrax Onyx 245 charger to juice up the included battery instead of the supplied 700mAh charger. The included charger works just fine, but I wanted to get to the action quicker (charging takes 90 minutes to two hours with the included charger). With the pack still warm from charging, I strapped my GPS to the roof to get in a speed run. After three full-throttle passes, I confirmed a solid 27mph. That's especially fast when it's a 1/18-scale car strafing the neighborhood. Acceleration is just about instantaneous, and the shaft-driven 4WD system digs in hard. The finely treaded Road and Rally tires seemed to offer equal grip and driving feel, with both cars reacting instantly to steering inputs. Dromida doesn't list specs for the little DS100 servo, but it's speedy and certainly seems to have all the torque required to steer the cars with authority. The cars sit on fairly long shocks and offer deep suspension travel by on-road standards, which gives plenty of cushion for cracks and heaves in the pavement. It also allows for some body roll that makes the cars look as if they're really hunkering through turns. Like shaft-driven tourers in 1/10 scale, the Dromida cars tend to push when turning in hard on-power but will transition to oversteer if you clip the throttle. But watch out: There's more than enough grip to traction-roll the cars (at least on my neighborhood's rain-cleaned Texas concrete). A little road dust makes for easier pitch-it-sideways driving, and if you've got a smooth concrete floor in your garage or basement, you'll be in drift heaven.

DROMIDA SPEED SERIES RALLY AND TOURING CARS

Budget brushless fun with high-performance handling

BY PETER VIEIRA PHOTOS BY PETER VIEIRA & CARL HYNDMAN

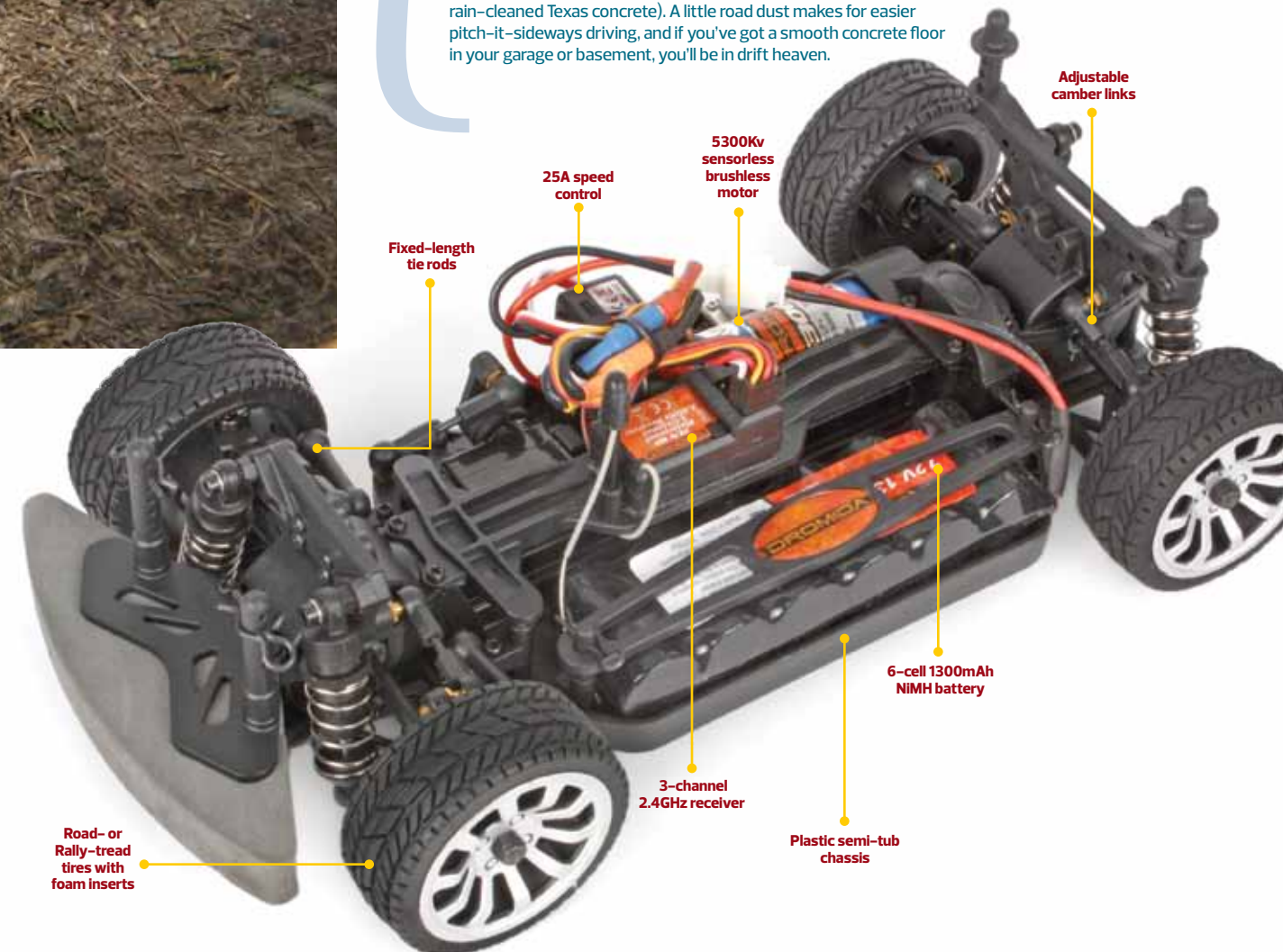
Dromida first hit the RC car scene back in late 2013 with short-course, monster-truck, and buggy models that shared the same versatile 1/18-scale 4WD chassis. Affordable and fun with brushed power, the lineup has since spawned new looks (including the missile-firing Wasteland models we reviewed back in the April 2016 issue) and gone brushless with Speed Series models. And now, Dromida is hitting the pavement with the new Rally and Touring models, also available in "Brushed" and "Speed Series" versions. I took both for a spin, and the little shaft-driven machines turned out to be bigger fun than I expected for their small scale.



Low price tag—get two!
Fast and rugged
Razor-sharp handling



Watch out for traction rolling





The Speed Series cars come in blue; the brushed models get red and green shells.



Above: The BE18 speed control has adjustable drag brake, maximum brake, and "punch" settings to fine-tune the feel. If you upgrade to a LiPo pack, you can also activate low-voltage detection to prevent overdischarging.



Left: Dromida puts AAs for the radio right in the box, so there's nothing else you need to buy (or steal out of your Xbox controller).



The included charger squeezes out 700mAh, so expect charge times of about two hours. Faster would be better, but at least you don't have to buy a charger.

The included 6-cell NiMH battery delivers about 20 minutes of run time. Dromida also offers a 7.4V LiPo pack for the cars as an accessory.



The Touring and Rally models get the same wheels, but each wears unique tires. Road on the left, Rally on the right. If you didn't already figure it out, there are foam inserts in there.



The full-size transmitter hides channel-reversing switches and rate knobs under a flip-up cover. The throttle-rate knob is handy for dialing down speed, so inexperienced drivers can take a spin.

FINAL WORD

I was ready to chalk up the Dromida Rally Car and Touring Car as perfectly OK beginner fun-mobiles, but with their brushless power systems and surprisingly aggressive handling, they're actually entertaining hot-rods for enthusiasts of any skill level. 1/18 scale is great for small spaces, but there's speed and performance here for any place you want to drive (as long as it's smooth, of course). Speed running my neighborhood didn't make the cars feel small or slow, and if you've got two (or more) of these little bullets and buddies to run with, get ready for some good fender-rubbing fun. 🚗

SOURCES

Dromida dromida.com
Hobbico hobbico.com
Tower Hobbies towerhobbies.com

VEHICLE SPECS

Item no.: DIDC0074 (Touring); DIDC0076 (Rally)
Scale: 1/18
Price: \$170
Wheelbase: 6.7 in. (170mm)
Length: 11.1 in. (282mm)
Width: 5.1 in. (130mm)
Weight, as tested: 1 lb. 5.1 oz. (598g)



CHASSIS

Material: Plastic
Type: Semi-tub with upper deck

SUSPENSION

Type: Lower H-arm with adjustable camber link

SHOCKS

Type: Oil-filled
Bodies: Threaded plastic

DRIVETRAIN

Type: Shaft-driven 4WD
Differentials: Bevel gear
Driveshafts: Plastic dogbone
Bearings: Shielded ball

WHEELS & TIRES

Wheels: One-piece plastic, 7mm hex
Tires: Road or Rally tread
Inserts: Closed-cell foam

INCLUDED ELECTRONICS

Transmitter/receiver: Dromida D100 2-channel/
 Dromida RX18 3-channel 2.4GHz
Servo: Dromida DS100 waterproof
Speed control: Dromida BE18 25A
Motor: Dromida 5300Kv sensorless



This little blue bullet is good for 27mph on the included NiMH battery. The electronics are waterproof; note the silicone-covered switch.



As seen here on a brushed model, a metal motor plate draws heat away from the motor and keeps the mesh from drifting.



The steering links are fixed-length, but camber is adjustable. Ball bearings are standard, and the wheels slide onto 7mm hexes.



Oil-filled shocks smooth the ride. The plastic bodies are threaded for easy preload changes.

HOW ABOUT BRUSHED?

I also took the brushed Rally and Touring cars for a spin (they're the models shown in the action shots), and they're no slouches in the performance department either. They're not as fast as the brushless models, but 20mph is still well into "fast" territory for 1/18-scale RTRs. Speed notwithstanding, the brushed cars handle just as well as the brushless models. The big difference is price: The Speed series cars will lighten your wallet to the tune of \$170, while the brushed cars sell for \$110 and leave an extra sixty bones in your pocket.

