

Building a Honda S2000

by Alex Kustov

It all started in 1962, when Honda announced its first passenger production car - S500. It was a front engine/rear-wheel drive sports car. After several years, Honda moved away from this layout, but in 1998 it was re-introduced with new S2000. The car was designed in best traditions of classic sports cars – long nose, big radiator openings, and of course, front engine/rear-wheel drive layout. Press the big red start button on the dashboard to fire up the engine and you'll soon know why this is one of the most eagerly awaited sports cars of the last few years. 2.0 liter naturally aspirated inline-4 engine boosting 250 hp, sturdy double wishbone suspension, 6-speed manual transmission, and almost perfect 50/50 weight distribution make S2000 one of the most potent cars in its class. Developed to celebrate Honda's 50th anniversary, S2000 is already regarded as a collector's item.

Soon after Honda announced S2000, Tamiya made an excellent plastic kit of the little rocket. Today, we will build one in Spa Yellow Pearl. Kit # 24211 has very crisp details, excellent parts fit, perfect rims and rubber-like tires, great interior detail, very thin decals and great metal transfers. Sophisticated headlights and taillights assemblies yield amazing and very realistic results. Great instruction sheet and correct color guide. Near perfect kit.

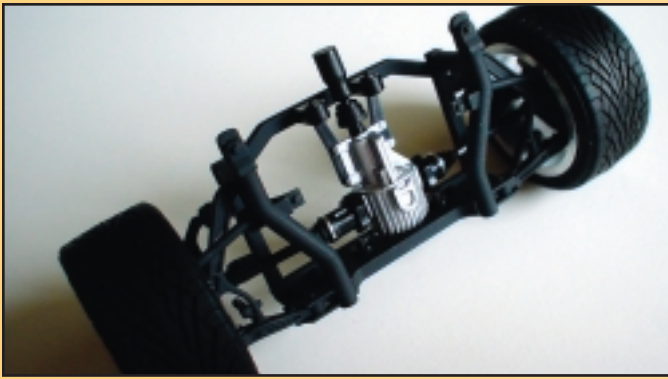


1 The chassis plate was sprayed Tamiya Lemon Yellow and then masked and sprayed Tamiya Semi-Gloss Black. The engine was painted Testors aluminum metalizer.

2 Here is another shot of the front suspension. Later, I picked out all the bolts and nuts with different metallic paints, and applied some black wash to the engine.

3 It was such a pain to mask the gas tank! But thanks to Tamiya masking tape, it turned out quite good. I touched up the rear shock saddles with yellow to cover them evenly before spraying.

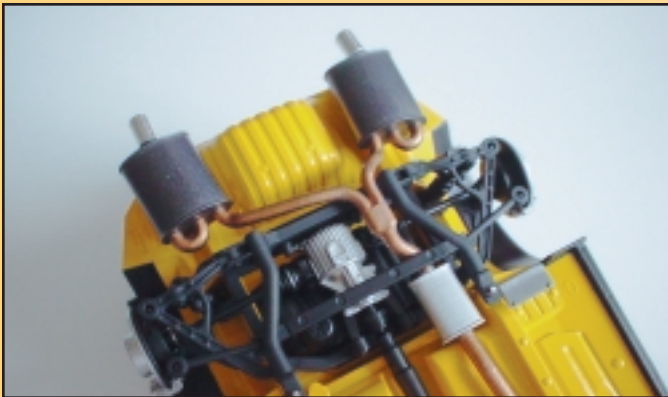




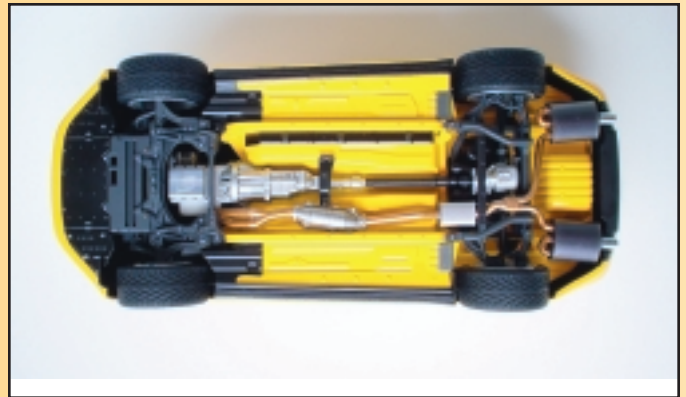
4 Here is the rear suspension. Brilliant Tamiya engineering recreates the real thing perfectly! I wish the drive shaft was a whole piece, though! I applied some Bare-Metal Foil to simulate boot clamps.



5 The exhaust was painted using four different colors: Tamiya Gun Metal, Testors flat bronze, aluminum, and burnt metal metalizers. The exhaust tips were drilled out.



6 This is how rear suspension looks when assembled. Interesting thing is that a bar secures the whole thing after the exhaust was installed. In this picture you can see that drive shaft is a two-piece part.



7 This is view of completed underside. Here you can see that all the nuts and bolts are ked out in metallic paints, and body shell painted flat black inside.



8 Painted, polished, and waxed body with installed headlights, painted window frames and applied front emblem. Couldn't wait to see how it looks with this emblem on!



9 Rear end with everything ready for taillights installation! The third stop light was painted red over silver before installing the cover. I painted cover Tamiya smoke outside and clear red inside.



10 Glass ready for installation. I threw away kit wipers and used some Detail Master wipers. These are 3-piece, very detailed PE wipers. You can't really see the difference on this tures, but they look amazing! Glass was also polished with 3M Compound and waxed.



11 This is a better picture of the (unassembled) wipers used for the model. These are bit pricey, but the package contain enough to make five pairs of wipers, so it's not really that expensive—just over a buck per model.



12 This is interior before final seat installation. I used 1/32" Hobby Lobby ribbon and Detail Master buckles to make seatbelts and super glued them both to the retainers and the seats. Seats were painted semi-gloss black and black-washed to look like they were made from real leather.



13 The pedals were painted silver and they look very realistic. I also mixed black and gray Detail Master flocking to simulate Honda gray carpet and flocked the interior. In my opinion, it looks great!



14 I scratchbuilt seatbelts latches from sheet styrene and flexible vinyl, painted them black, and glued them to the seats. I also painted the release buttons red. They add to the realism of the interior, and this is very important for the model that will be displayed with its top off!



15 The dashboard was painted black and detailed with decals and some painting.



16 This is a picture of a completed interior tub with everything installed. You can also see the rear window installed.



17 Another picture of completed interior. This is the way it will be seen when displayed. I didn't glue the dashboard in case I want to switch it for the RHD one.



18 Final assembly. Soft top, antenna, mirrors, metal transfers, rim decals, turn signals—presto! The assembled model looks amazingly accurate and true to the original. The kit like that is why Tamiya is one of the top manufacturers of plastic models.



True to the original shapes, no flash, great detail—the kit that builds without a hint of a problem, and looks so realistic, you can almost hear the engine running. This kit is highly recommended to any builder.