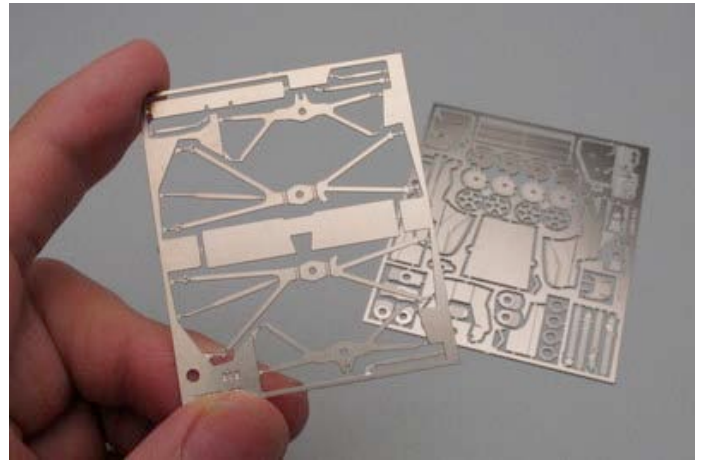
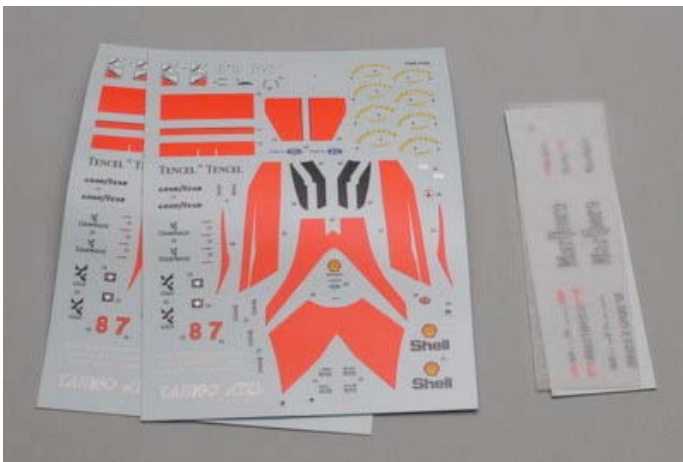




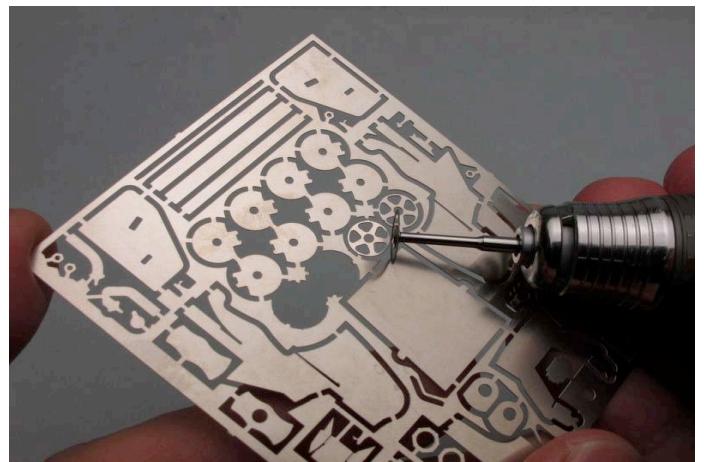
Tameo originally made a kit of the original MP4/8 many years ago, but their latest one is a more up to date version of Ayrton's last GP winner.



There are a wealth of photo-etched parts and no black coating on the suspension arms, making it an easier build for me.



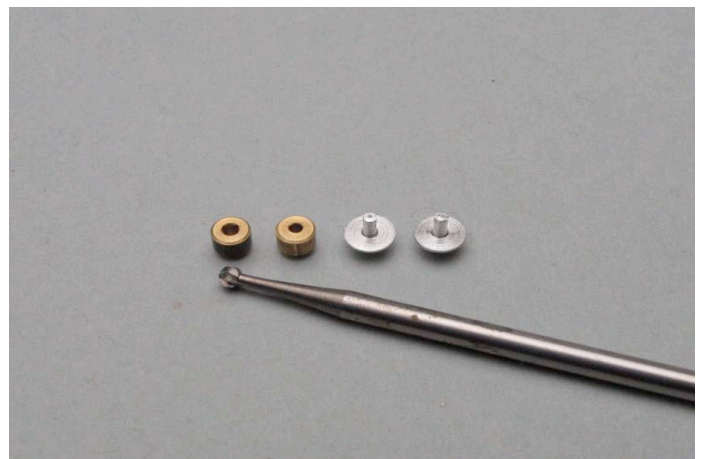
The clearly printed decals include all of sponsors and Marlboro logo. I'll try the orange stripe decals, without the annoying two-toned painting.



I started the kit with the wheel and tire parts as usual. This diamond cutter made quick work.



I glued the wheel spokes and rims tightly into a single unit. Actually the machining on the rear wheel rims was not perfect. There were a few absent parts around the center hole, however, no one will be able to see it in the final build.



In terms of the center pieces of the axle, there were some burrs which interfere with smooth assembly. I removed them by hand with this round cutter.



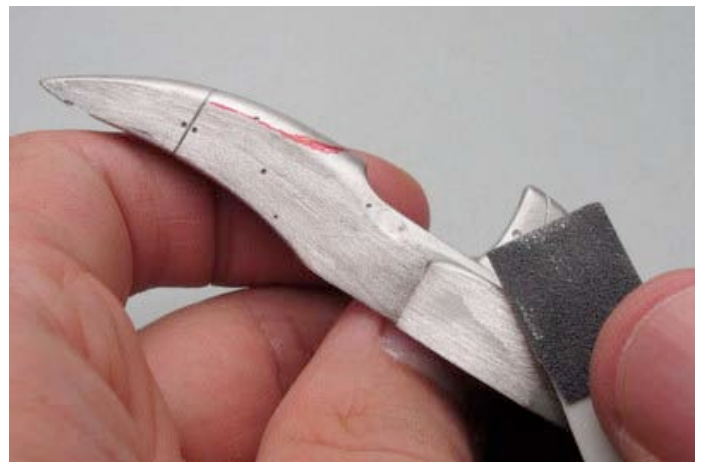
The brake ducts were assembled with solder. I use low temperature solder which fuses around 165 degrees centigrade and low-power iron -15 wattage.



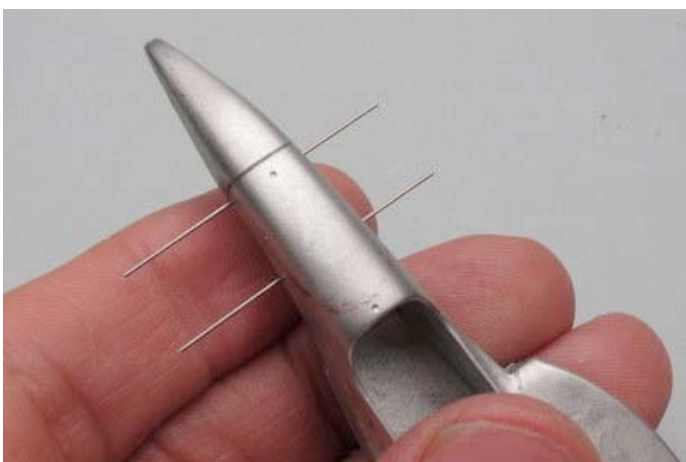
I temporarily built the inner unit of the front wheel and checked its depth. It seems better to reduce the thickness of the brake disk half as I had given a moderate curve to the wheel spoke.



I sanded the tires smooth with #320-400 sandpaper, and then made a flat spot on the bottom.



The clean main body castings were welcome but I had to sand a few parting lines on the side. The styrene plate backing is necessary to make a sharply chiseled face in such an instance.



To check the symmetric property of attachment position of front suspension, I ran a couple of stainless rods through the attachment holes and adjusted them so they were parallel.



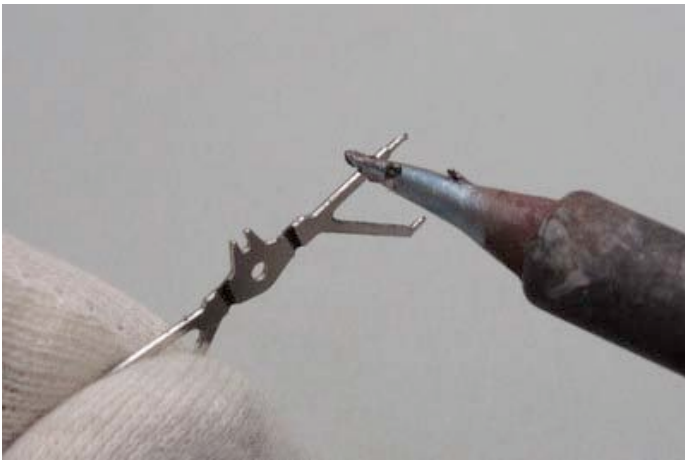
I attached the underbody to the body with a screw which was included in the kit. It looks better to add several engravings which I highlighted with red lines.



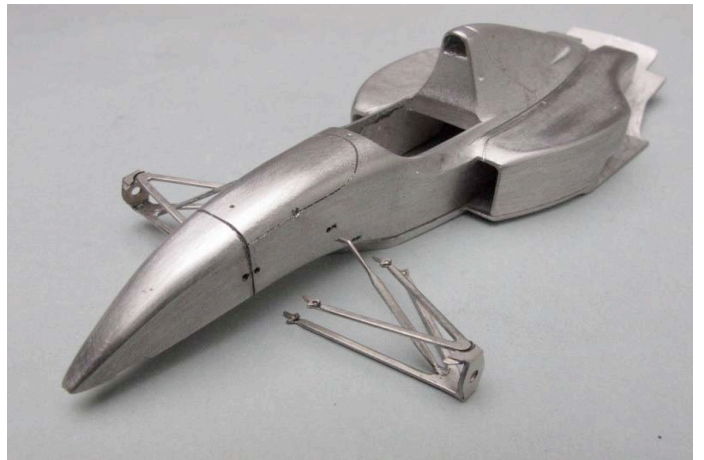
First I made a jig with a thin styrene sheet and then engraved a line along it with a micro chisel, little by little



Around the rear suspension panel, I used this Xacto knife. It makes engraving straight lines easy.



Before bending the PE suspension arms, I filled small gaps on the edges with solder and then sanded them smooth.



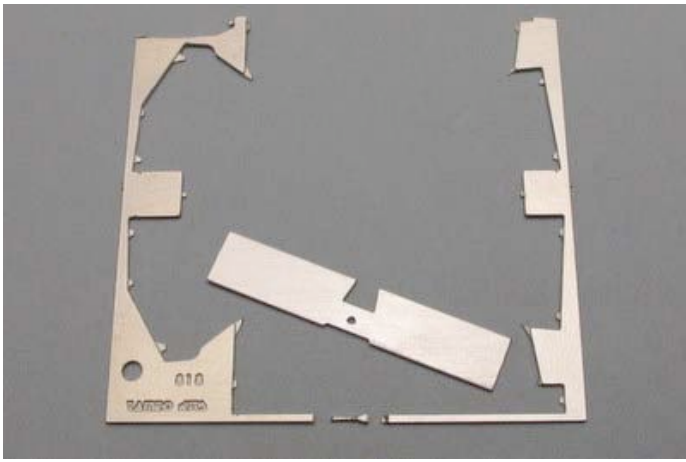
I tried to fit the arms to the body, however, it needed relocation of the attachment holes to get the correct position.



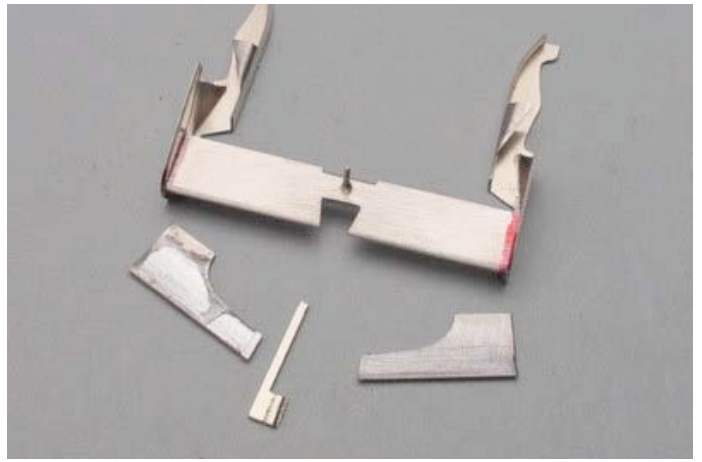
Unfortunately I had to remove the original Tameo Kits engraving on the base plate to set the ride-height accurately.



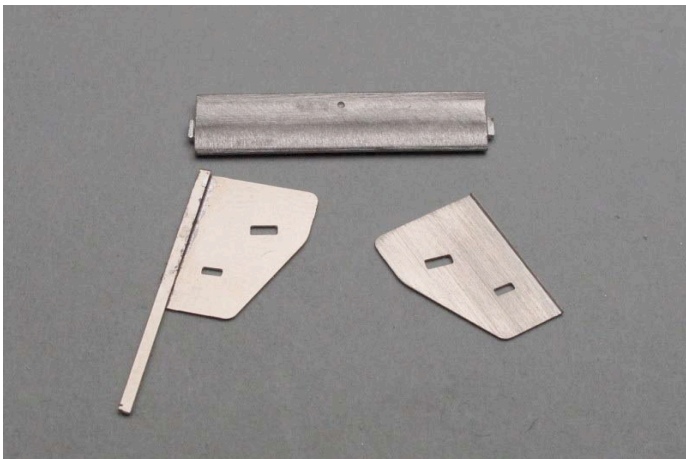
The underbody was screwed to 1.2mm styrene sheet on the base. I pre-assembled the suspensions and tires and then checked their alignments.



The PE front wing is a good material for teaching soldering beginners, a lot of chances to try again if they have made mistakes. I made a micro hole on the center of the main wing and soldered the axis which was made with PE sprue to fix the wing securely.



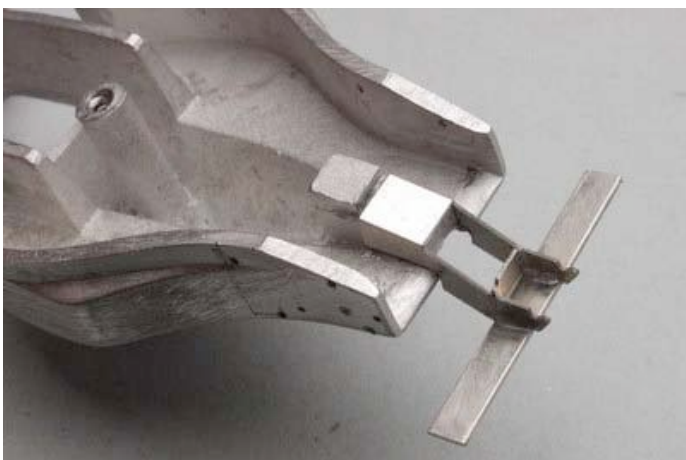
Something strange occurred when I pre-assembled the wing unit. I modified valley fold-lines on the both flaps with solder and sanded them smooth with a gentle curve. I also attached a chip of PE sprue at the inner-end of the flap to extend it.



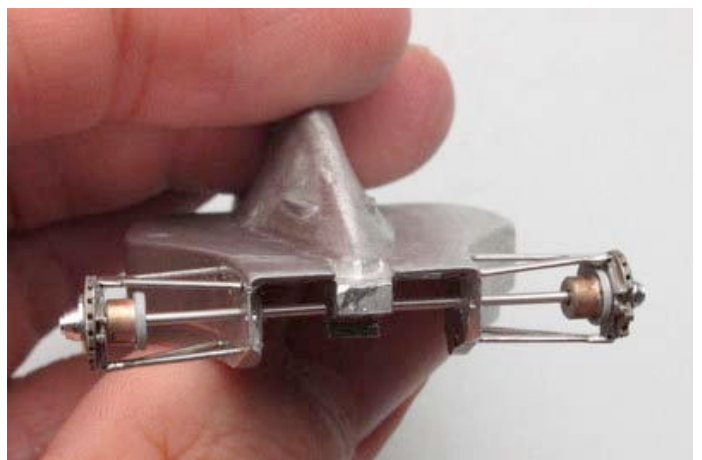
PE sprue was a nice choice for the rear wing, too. I soldered it on the back edge of the end plate and then sanded it thinner.



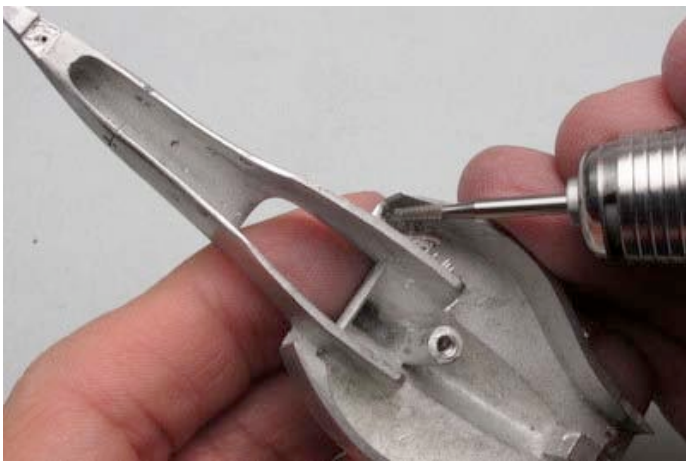
I joined the main wing and the end plates with solder. The mount and the lower part of the wing will be attached after painting.



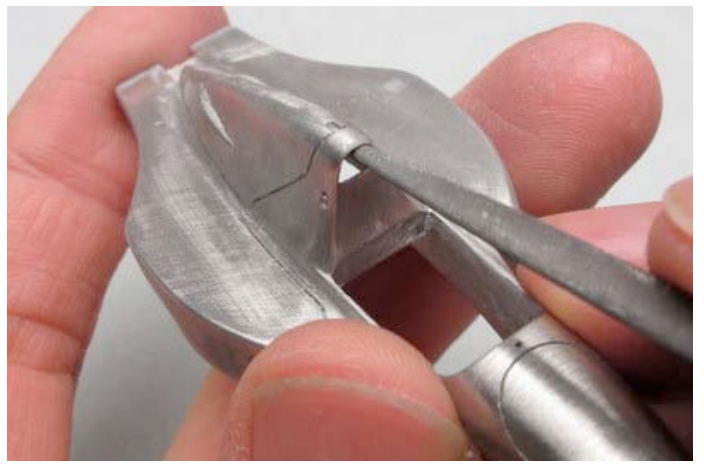
A test-fitting of the rear wing unit to the body showed me that I have to raise the mount up about 2mm. I removed the thickness of the mount block and raised its height... it took a bit of finesse.



I removed the thickness of the cowl edges and adjusted the alignment of both drive shafts.



I removed the front edges of each side pod. If you want to open the air intake, the moto tool is a big help to when removing a lot of metal.



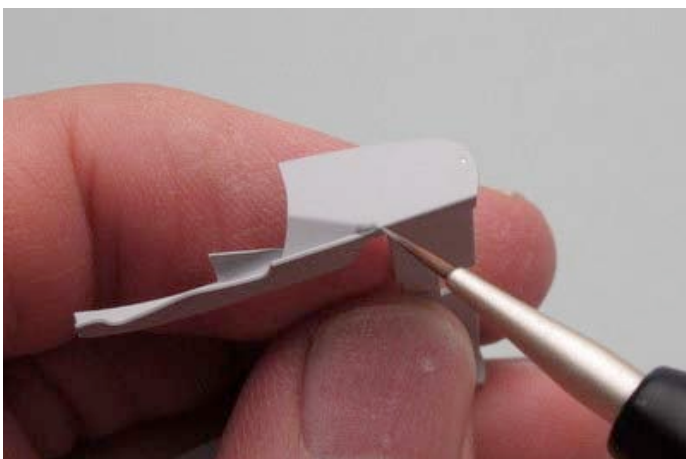
Trimming around the edges of the air intake required a sensitive touch.



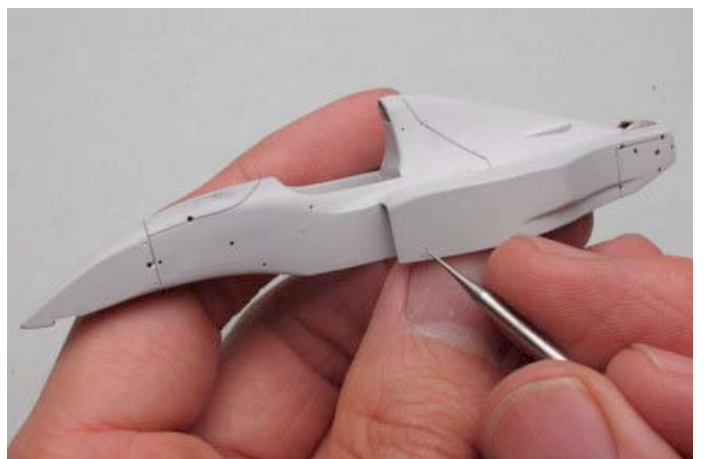
I trimmed the edge of the underbody thin like a paper knife. This might be stepping away from the simple approach which I had planned at the beginning, however, I couldn't resist the temptation anyway!



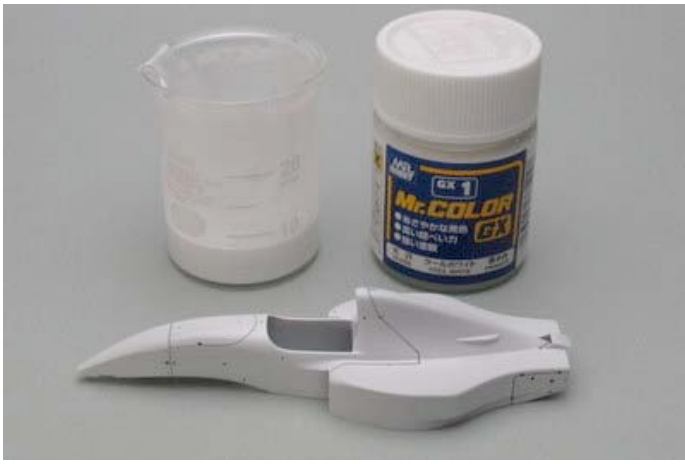
I sprayed grey primer on the body, wings, wheels, and other small pieces. After a half day of drying I checked the surface and then found a few micro holes or scuff marks which I filled with lacquer putty.



I almost missed a small gap in the seam of the PE front wing.



I sanded the surface smooth with #800-1000 sandpaper, and then added picky details like these cowl fasteners.



It was time to paint the body white. I put 7ml thinner into a glass beaker and made a 10ml mixture of white lacquer paint which can be passed through Tamiya's 0.2mm diameter air brush. Then I sprayed it carefully about 5 or 6 times.



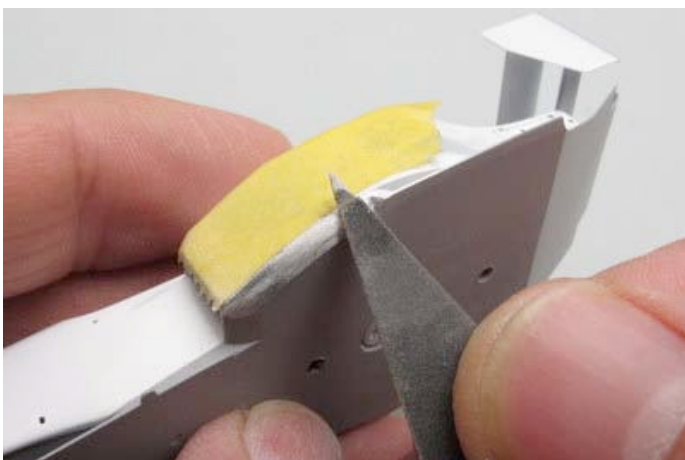
These flaps look difficult to hold for painting. I usually leave PE sprues intact for easier clamping, however, this time I had to cut them off for the test-fitting with the end plates. So this combination of double-faced tape and styrene rod was the alternative.



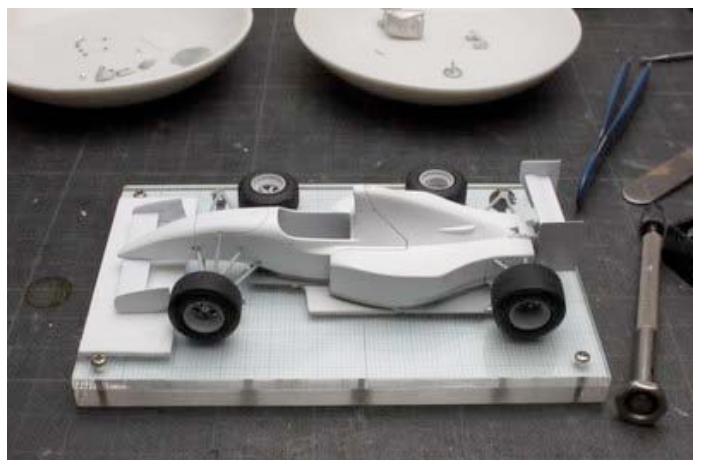
The original PE mirror stem looks too thick... I reduced its diameter with a moto tool after I joined it to the bottom of mirror.



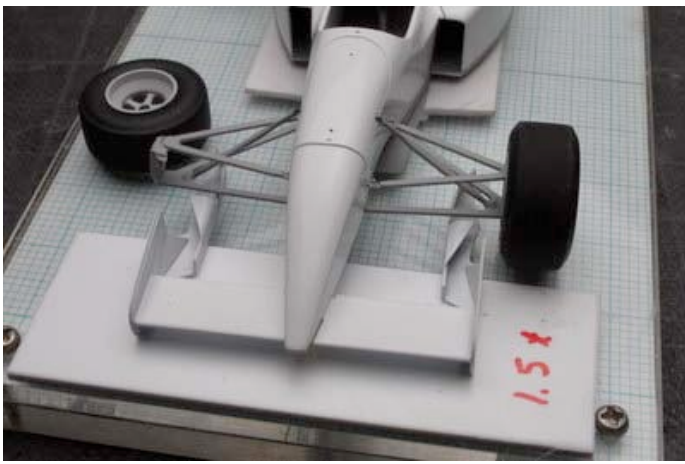
Then I modified the shape of the outer cases and polished the face of each mirror with a lapping film.



I test-fitted the underbody again and found these side edges need to blend against the surface of the side pontoons.



I finally adjusted the ride height to around 1.0mm and checked the alignment of the front and rear wings, again and again.



The front wing was settled on 1.5mm thickness styrene plate. Look at the funny position of the right hand tire. The distance against the end plates should be closer.



Then I removed the axle pieces from the brake disc and reduced their depth with motor tool to narrow the front tread



The wheels' outer rim exceeded the tire edge a little. It can also reduce the tread if I shave it even if only slightly.... I did it at last.



I tried to apply the orange decals but I couldn't manage it. So I changed plans and began to mask the body for two tone painting instead. The blue material is a pressure-sensitive adhesive masking sheet for airbrush artwork which I bought at an art supply store.



I sprayed GSI Creos' fluorescent color which was blended with a few drops of normal orange. I referred to the original decal to check the tone of the paint, however, the result seems a bit brighter?



I softly polished every edge between the orange and white areas with polishing paste and then applied the decals. To avoid any trouble after the clear coating, I laid them down snugly with decal softener and hot air from the hair dryer



It required a delicate adjustment to apply the separated Marlboro logos on the upper and lower flaps. I dropped a bit of softener liquid under the decal and then aligned the logo with a micro brush



I started the clear coating process. Never spray thick coat on the decals at the first layer. Unfortunately, some dust and lint were caught on the surface of the third layer. I just stopped my airbrush and waited until the layer had dried enough until I could sand to remove them



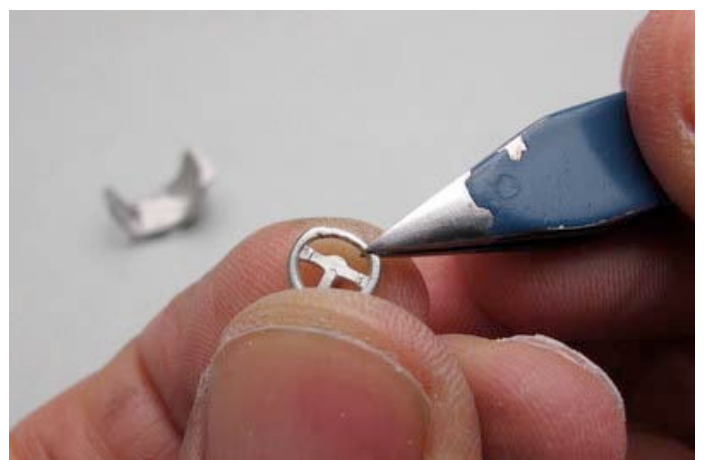
I should do something while waiting to resume the clear coat. The car cameras were sanded and finished with polishing paste.



I painted brake ducts black and decorated them with carbon fiber pattern. It was very easy work with a micro mesh close to the black surface, and then I over-sprayed silver paint lightly.



The suspension arms were painted black, too. Better to peel off the paint around the base of the parts to attach them to the body more easily.



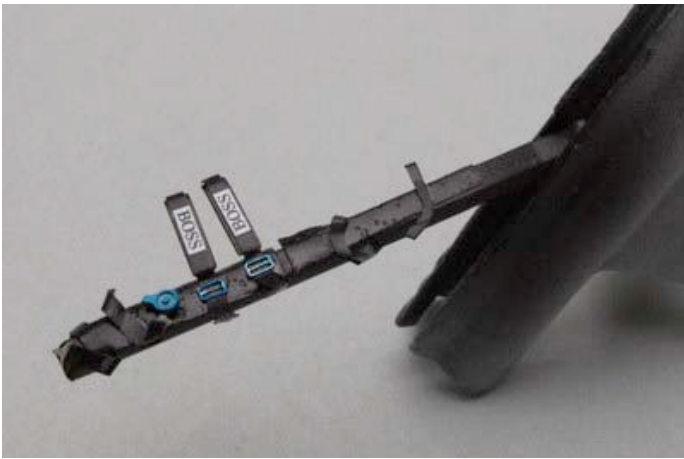
Shifting my eyes to the cockpit area, I changed the shape of the steering wheel after drawing upon some reference books... I recommend this one.



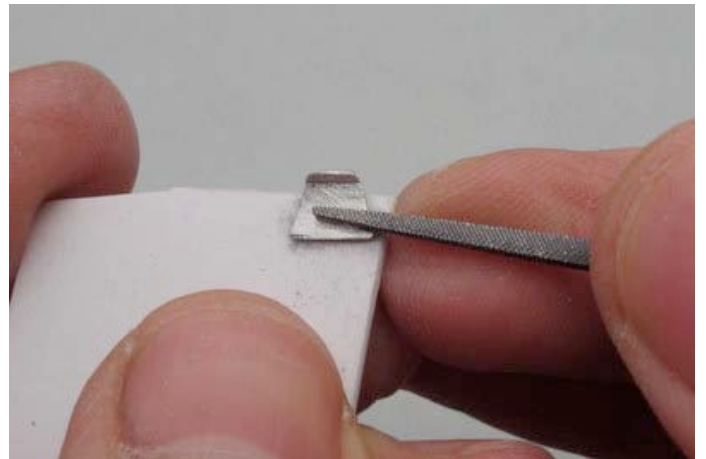
It is kind of a pain to trim such a small curved-surface on the driver seat, however, a chip of sandpaper with Tamiya paint-mix stick was a big help.



I formed PE seat belt parts after annealing with burner. The both sholder pads came from PE sprue and I soldered them on the belt back.



I attached each piece of the belt on the sprue with double face tape, and sprayed them black. Then I painted the buckle parts with clear blue and applied BOSS decals on the shoulders.



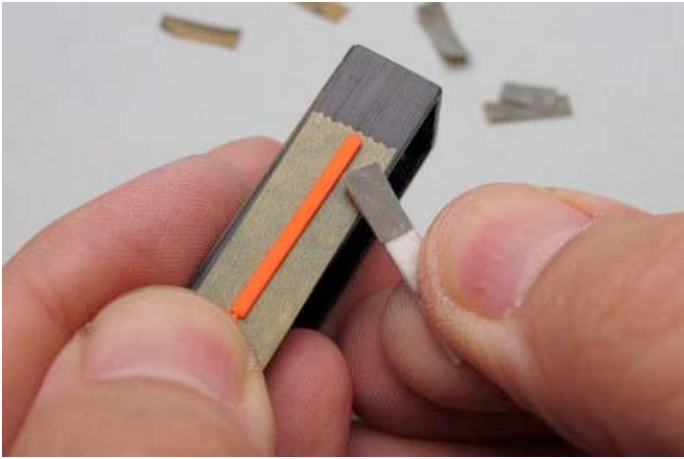
The head rest seemed too thick. So I temporarily fixed it to the styrene plate and shaved its surface



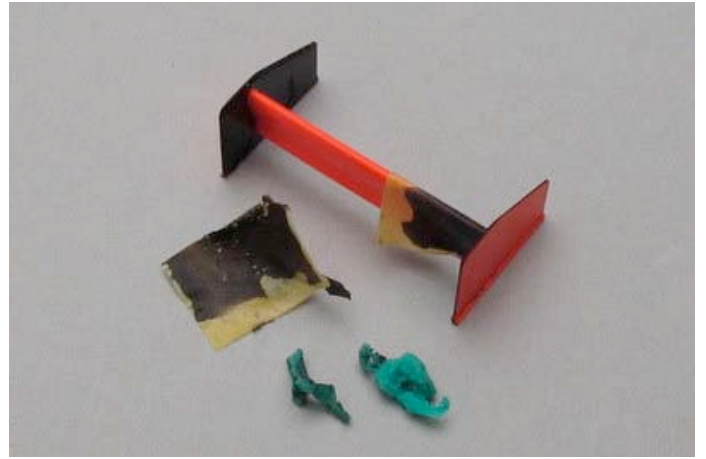
After painting the wheels with brownly black, I combined them with the tires. The Goodyear decals were securely applied to the side walls with decal softener.



A week later, the clear coat had dried enough. I started to sand the surface smooth with #1500 sandpaper, and then polished it with polishing paste and a cotton swab.



It took about three days, and over 50 wasted pieces of swab to complete the polishing. Be careful when you handle such a narrow flap, it can be easily over-sanded even if using a styren plate backing.



Regarding the rear wing, I painted the inside part of the end plates with matt black before polishing. Actually my masking was not perfect as usual, so the polishing served a dual purpose, smoothing the surface of the paint and trimming the edge of the two-toned paint.



I also sprayed matt black on the backside of the front wing. The excess paint around the center connecting pin area should be removed to assist the smooth assembling when I glue the wing to the nose



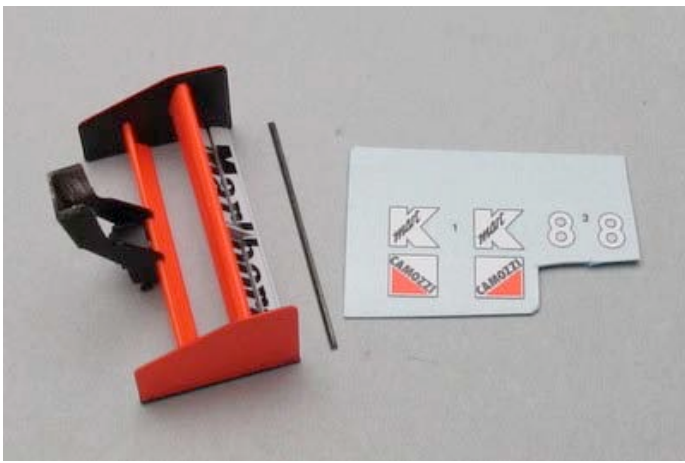
Well, the inside area of the main body has been blacked out and now I'm going to attach the driver's seat and head rest



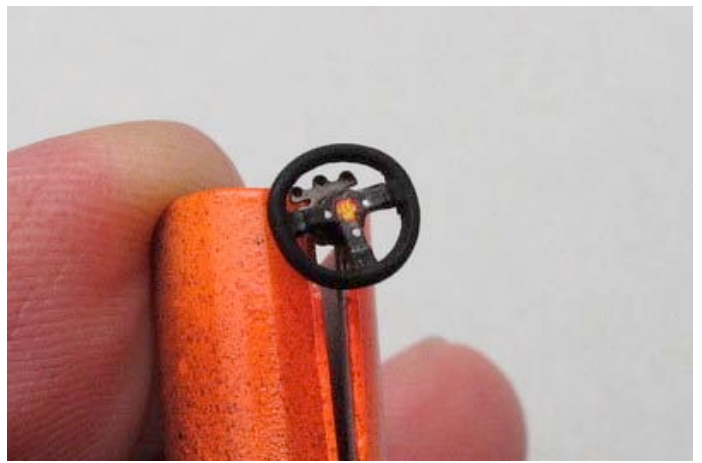
I fixed the underbody and the front wing to the body. The flap was too long to be settled between the endplate and the nose.



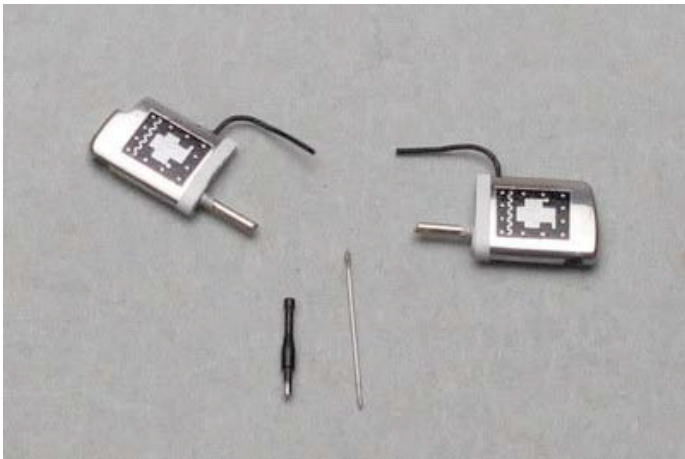
I began the suspension assembly after I finished the sensitive adjustment of the front wing flap. The tooth pick was keeping the position of the push rod until the adhesive dries.



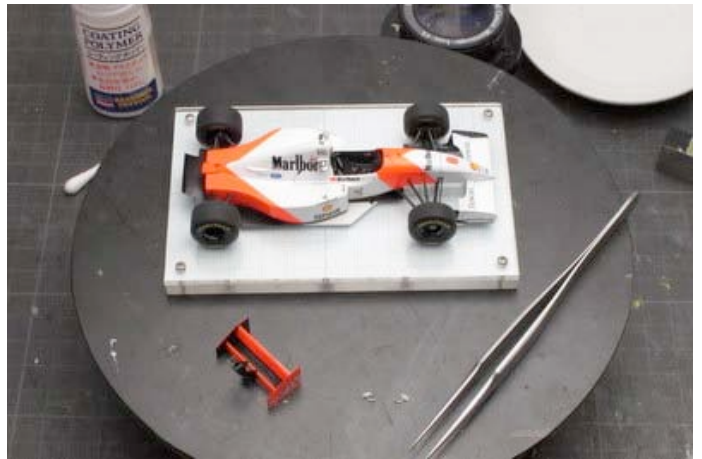
The rear wing unit has been assembled and then I'm going to apply these decals. For my past three works in 1/43 scale, I've been refraining from spraying any clear coat on the end plates to keep them from getting too thick.



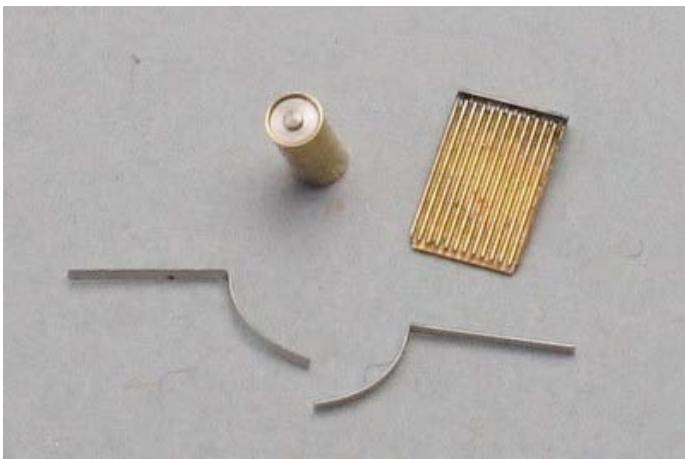
I draw three rivets and a "Shell" logo on the steering wheel center. The base white and the yellow layer were painted with lacquer, and I trimmed the outlines with enamel red paint.



The purpose of this project is "out of the box", however, I'm not as good as my word! The camera cords came from 0.18mm colored wires by Detail Master and the black antenna from Zmodel products. I also picked up a 0.15mm acupuncture needle for this thin antenna.



Actually 26 days has passed since I opened the kit. And I'm just reaching the finish line. It took about 256 hours to complete it



Appendix : I couldn't stop to add these details before the photo session for the F1MODELING magazine.

The cylindrical tank and the oil cooler into the rear wing mount were made with brass. The tiny lips on the front wing flap were made with 0.3mm width nickel silver strips.