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34

THE ICONIC FORD FALCON XB GT

SCALE 1:8

Rear Left Wheel

Issigonis' Mini Marvel

Published weekly
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POST-APOCALYPTIC EDITION

THE ICONIC FORD FALCON XB GT

ISSUE 34

YOUR MODEL

You will be building a 1:8 scale replica of a customised 1973 Ford Falcon XB GT. Features include a lift-up bonnet that reveals a detailed engine, opening doors, wind-down windows and an 'active' steering wheel. A remote-control fob illuminates the main lights, brake lights and indicators.

Scale: 1:8
Length: 62cm
Width: 25cm
Height: 19cm
Weight: 7+kg

Official Licensed Product

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NOT SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 14. This product is not a toy and is not intended for use in play.

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t=top, c=centre, b=bottom, l=left, r=right, u=upper

Stage 34: Rear Left Wheel (1)

Work begins on the assembly of the rear left wheel, putting the wheel rim parts together.

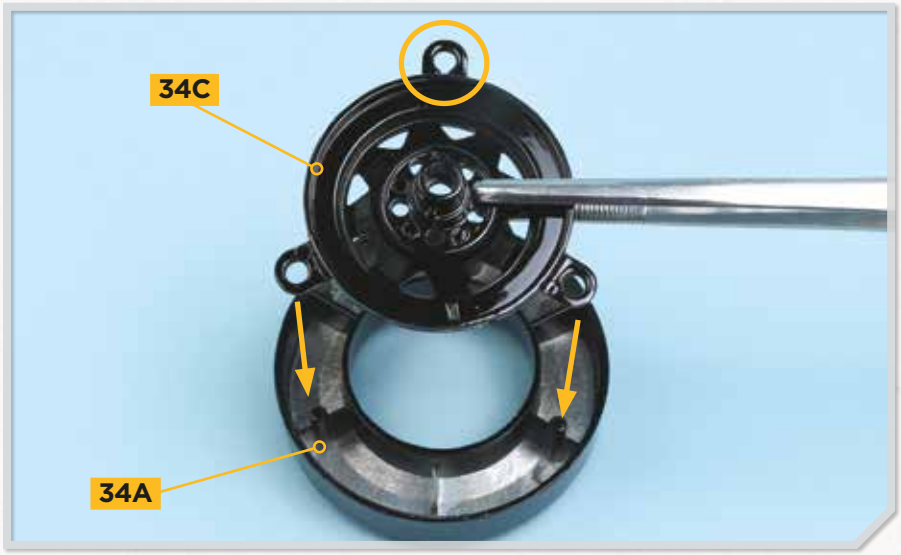
List of parts:

34A	External part of wheel rim
34B	Internal part of wheel rim
34C	Central part of wheel rim
34D	Wheel nuts
DS02	Four* 2.3 x 4mm PM screws

* Including spare
PM = Pan head for metal

Area of assembly

Stage 34: Rear Left Wheel (1)

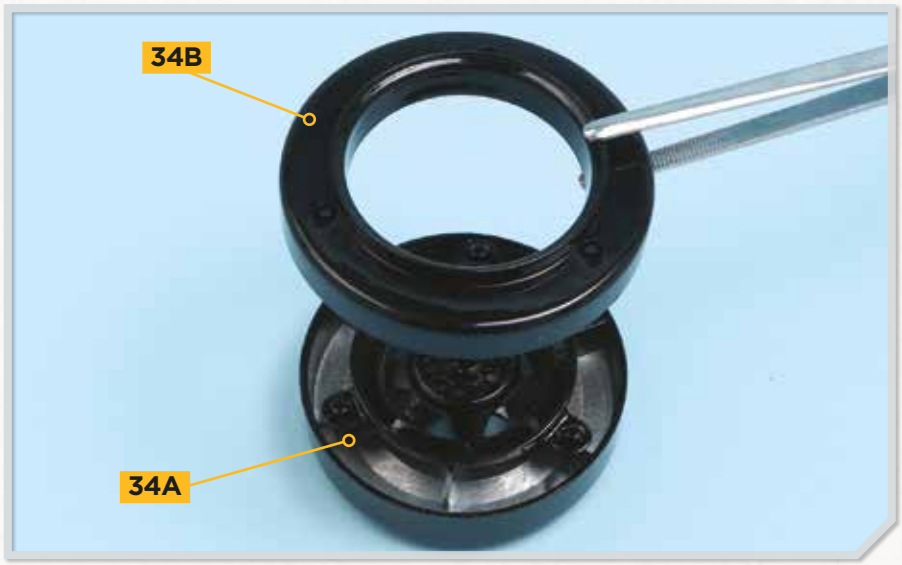


STEP 1

Align the tabs of the central part of the wheel rim **34C** with the screw posts of the external part of the rim **34A**. Note the keyhole shape on one of the tabs (circled), which corresponds with a similarly shaped screw post on the external rim part **34A**.

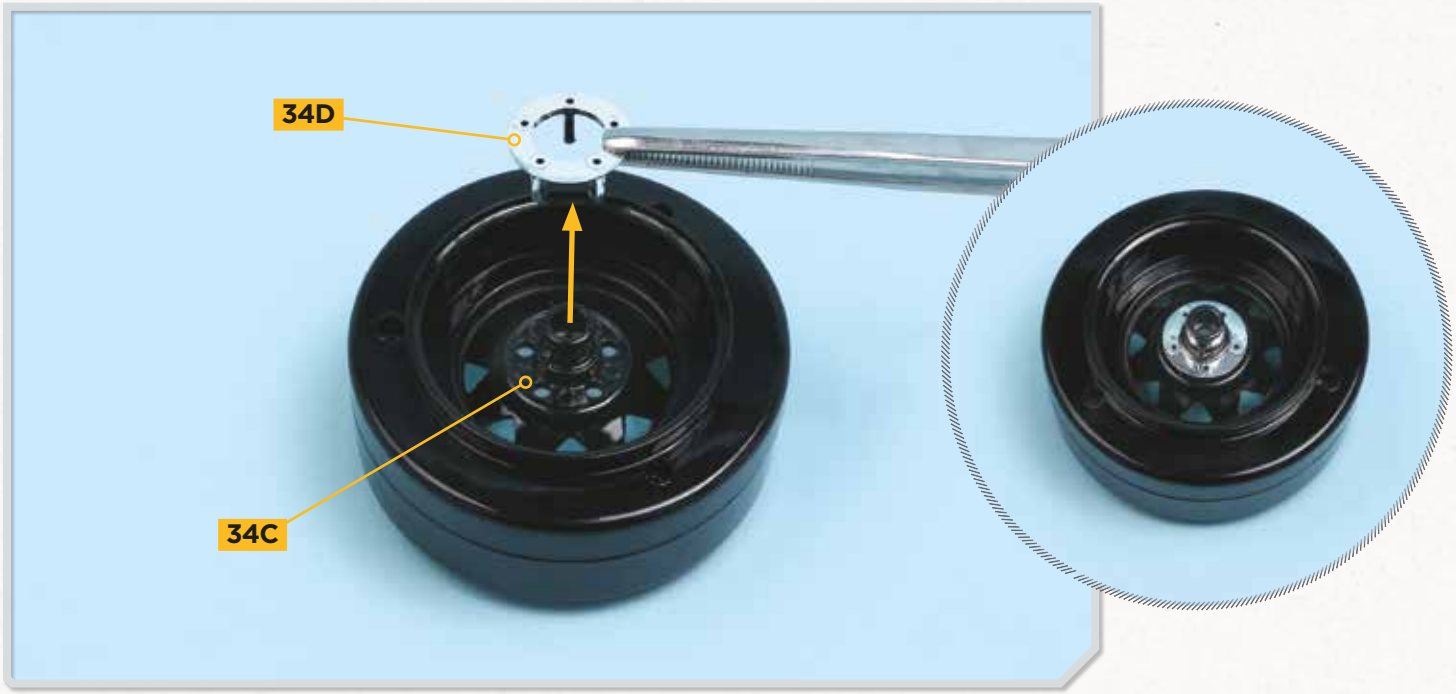
STEP 2

Fit the internal part of the rim **34B** over the assembly from the previous step. Make sure the screw holes on the rim of part **34B** align with the screw posts on the rim of external part **34A**.



STEP 3

Identify the three screw holes in part **34B**. Fix the parts together using three **DS02** screws.



STEP 4

Fit the wheel nuts **34D** into the centre of the assembly so that the central hub of part **34C** fits through the centre of part **34D** and the nuts pass through the holes in part **34C**.

COMPLETED ASSEMBLY

The left rear wheel rim has been assembled.

Issigonis' Mini Marvel

The original Mini was an engineering marvel that caught the zeitgeist perfectly. It wasn't fast (in standard form) or comfortable, but it didn't matter because it was brilliant fun to drive, looked extremely cute and quickly became the object of much affection.

The famous advertisement proclaiming "Mini's have feelings too" is completely believable, but would have seemed absurd had it been used for almost any other car.

The Mini changed everything. No car, before or since, has had such a profound impact on the motor industry, motorsport and, perhaps most importantly, British culture. The car was, at least for a time in the 1960s, utterly classless, driven by district nurses, pop stars, royalty and a bunch of famous fictional criminals escaping Turin! The 1961 Mini Cooper democratised speed and was the perfect car for use in swinging London.

However, it almost fell at the first hurdle: the motoring press greeted the new Morris Mini Minor and Austin Seven twins with almost universal acclaim. They had road-tested Minis provided by the BMC (British Motor Corporation) press office after the launch in August 1959 and adored them because they set new standards in road holding. The BMC dealers who attended the launch at Longbridge, masterminded by a young PR man, Tony Ball (who became father of singer Michael), were wowed by the sheer ingenuity of being able to pack so much into such a small space. The buying public, however, were wary of this 10ft (3m) long miniature car, which seemed like a Doctor Who Tardis; small on the outside, big on the inside. Fleet buyers and the motor trade were equally nervous of the weird new technology it contained.

Above: An Austin Mini Seven shows off its road-holding ability at the Stony Stratford Classic Car Festival in 2023.

The engine and, even more remarkably, the radiator were sideways; the gearbox was below the engine and shared its oil. Mechanics were worried about how they were going to service it. Surely, they said, it's going to need driveshafts every week and tyres too, because the small 10-inch (25.5-cm) wheels looked like they had come off a pram. The Ford Anglia remained the more popular choice as the motor trade knew how to maintain them. It then became clear that the first Minis did indeed have some issues. A design error allowed water to seep in through the floor.

Right: Rauno Aaltonen drove his Morris Mini Cooper S to victory at the 1967 Monte Carlo Rally.

ROOTS OF THE DESIGN

Project ADO 15, which became the Mini, had started because of the Suez Crisis (1956), which raised the price of fuel. As a result Sir Leonard Lord, BMC's boss, told Alec Issigonis: "Build me something to beat the bloody bubble cars. We must drive them off the streets by designing a proper miniature car." The Austin/Longbridge Works had history on its side, having motorised the UK with their 1922 Austin 7. Issigonis was a genius and conceptual thinker; his idea was to take BMC's proven A-series 850cc engine and mount it transversely, then design a new gearbox that would sit underneath the engine and drive the front wheels. The idea of front-wheel drive was not new. Alvis (where Issigonis had worked prior to Austin) had experimented with it in the 1920s and Citroen's 1934 Traction Avant had shown it could work very well, but those two cars used a longitudinal engine, so needed a long bonnet. Issigonis' inspired transverse layout created a car that was short but spacious; the bonnet was short, and no aspect of the drivetrain impinged on cockpit space. He worked with Dunlop to produce a small wheel to minimise wheel arch intrusion. The result was a car that became the industry's template for small and medium cars.

The small team that worked on Issigonis' inspirational concepts included Jack Daniels (chassis, suspension and bodyshell), Chris Kingham (power-train packaging), Charles Griffen (development manager) and Doug Adams (foreman of the prototype shop who translated the ideas into steel).

RACING TO SUCCESS

Issigonis liked to call the Mini his car for District Nurses, but F1 World Champion team owner John Cooper, then the world's largest racing car manufacturer, saw that the Mini's handling could win races if it had more power. He suggested using the knowledge he and engine tuner Downton Engineering had learned building A-Series engines for Formula Junior single seaters; the resulting 1961 Mini Cooper has become an icon. Pat Moss (Stirling's sister) took the Mini Cooper's first rally win in 1962 and in January 1964 Paddy Hopkirk and Henry Liddon achieved the impossible by winning the Monte Carlo Rally, which is widely regarded as being one of the toughest rallies in the world. Crew and car were rushed back to appear on TV in the UK that night, and sales really took off. The Mini was finally living up to the phrase Tony Ball had coined when he launched the car, "Wizardry on Wheels".

The Mini remained in production until 2000, and over 5.3 million cars were manufactured. Ironically it took BMW, one of the German companies that built those bubble cars so disliked by Leonard Lord, to realise what a worldwide legend the name had become. The company built it into the range of new MINIs they offer today. ■

Left: George Harrison drove this highly decorated 1966 Mini Cooper S.

COMING IN ISSUE 35

- **ASSEMBLY GUIDE**
  The tyre is fitted to the wheel assembly from the previous issue.

- **CUSTOM MADE**
  By the 1970s, popular culture in the United States was moving away from hippies and flower power pop. Hard rock, fuel shortages and a 55mph speed limit ushered in a new direction for car customisation!

NEW PARTS

Rear left tyre and hub cap.

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