

## K&R Replicas Jaguar C Type Le Mans winner. by Roy Fitzsimmonds

Christmas comes but once a year, I'm writing this little piece on January 8th and I'm still thinking I don't care if I never see another turkey, or lump of Christmas pud! Don't get me wrong though. I'm not a 'Bah Humbug' in the true Dickensian style by any means and I've yet to see my door knocker transform into anything sinister looking. I actually love Christmas but I have to admit to a certain over-indulgence at this time of year. I've put on half a stone and up until recently one hangover seemed to blend in with the next. Like most people, I also tend to feel a bit deflated after the event. All the excitement, the build-up, then 'poof', it's all over. So imagine my excitement on the 28th December, when a familiar little brown box arrived on my door step. It was like Christmas all over again! Like a small boy, I unwrapped the contents to find the excellent K&R Replicas white metal kit of the 'C' Type Jaguar ([KAR030](#)).

Now, I don't know about you, but I have a fondness for white metal kits. True, in many ways they are a little 'inferior' (I choose the word carefully) to most resin/etch kits of today but they are currently years ahead of the older John Day style of castings we had in the past, (all due respect to JD,) and they have a certain enjoyable 'heft' to them that you just don't get with a resin model. They still also tend to be a little cheaper, and usually somewhat easier to build than the resin counterparts, which is the whole purpose of this review. If you're new to building 1/43 scale models in metal or even resin for that matter, then this model should be right up your street.

So, on to the car itself. Whether you collect Le Mans racers from the classic era of the 50's - 60's, or you favour Jaguars, or you just love the sweeping style of cars of that period, or whatever, there's little doubt that every self respecting collection should have a 'C' Type Jaguar in it somewhere.

This kit is an ideal candidate for a beginner as well as the more experienced modeller. The castings are sharp, clean and fit together very well. Upon emptying the contents of the K&R box, you will find a total of around 40 parts. 2 large white metal castings for the body and base, 2 seats, a dashboard and steering wheel and assorted smaller detail parts such as bonnet straps, various interior and exterior fittings as well as 4 cast wire wheels. There are also some very nice chromed hinges and handles and a small fret of etched parts including a very fine radiator grille. 4 tyres, 2 axles and some clear vac forms for the lights and screen, and that's about it. Not bad for a small kit, particularly for the uninitiated. There's also a checklist of parts and what can only be very loosely called an exploded drawing that wouldn't look out of place in a Picasso sketchbook, which serves as the instructions. Not only is the drawing pretty appalling, but several of the parts illustrated are incorrectly numbered meaning a bit of head-scratching to work out precisely what the parts actually are, far less where they are supposed to go.

This model could be a prospective 'newbies' first venture into the realm of finding the all-essential reference pictures, as without them, there's very little chance of building this type of kit cor-

rectly. How kit builders in years gone by would have managed I can't imagine, unless they had access to a vast library of car books. Nowadays we have the invaluable 'Google Images'.

*Beginners tip: Make sure you have plenty of colour pictures of the real car before you begin work on your model.*

Try to get pictures of the real car from several different angles, as if you just try to follow the exploded drawing in this kit you will be putting the door hinges beside the rear number plate, the tonneau cover somewhere under the tail and the bonnet straps just a tad beneath the headlights! There is absolutely NO guide as to where to fit the components. Don't be put off though, as with a few decent pictures to follow as already explained, everything is plain sailing.

I did find that several of the pictures of the actual car showed the interior in a different colour scheme, as it seems the car was restored around 15 years ago, but given a more up-to-date re-trim in brown leather. The original interior was pretty much bare metal and black so take your pick. I chose to model the car in the original racing scheme.

The main body casting had a fairly large lump of flash under the tail that cleaned up easily with a small file, and there was the tiniest bit of jaggedness around the lower edges. All sorted in a few minutes. The actual upper body was as clean as the proverbial whistle though. After fitting the carburettor cover and rear boot strengthener, the whole shell was given a quick going over with 600 grade, then a rub with 6000 Micromesh, leaving me a finish ready to paint. This was done after washing, and priming using Tamiya grey spray primer - amazing stuff that never seems to hide the details. Not only that, but one small can has lasted me into my 5th or 6th model. Even Ebenezer himself wouldn't complain at that. The primer coat did show up a patch of porous metal on one front wing top, but this was easily remedied with a light coat of cyano adhesive rubbed in, which was rubbed down and primed when dry.

*Beginners tip: If you come across porous patches, or tiny pin holes in your kit, cyanoacrylate adhesive (Superglue) can simply be spread over the patch and allowed to dry. Then carefully rub it down and paint as normal.*

The body was then painted using Humbrol Brunswick green (a good match for my colour pictures) and allowed to dry for 3 days before polishing with 6000, then 12000 Micromesh, which left a deep and glossy (if somewhat un-50's) lustre. Care must be taken here not to rub through to the primer on the numerous body vents. The tonneau was painted satin black, and then rubbed over with fingers several times to impart a slightly glossy finish in places, replicating a real fabric cover quite well. This was attached from the inside using cyano.

The floor/chassis casting needed virtually no cleanup other than the axle holes being drilled through, and a quick flash over with 600 grade before being painted. It fitted the body on the first trial run with no adjustments at all. The rear inner cab wall was carefully masked off and left in bare white metal, as it looked exactly like the aluminium finish on the



Roy's completed model of the 1953 Le Mans winner.  
Built from K&R Replicas' kit [KAR030](#) with BBR wire wheels [BBRR34](#).

real car. The floor and inner side panels were spray painted light grey and the tunnel was also finished in clean metal, again to match my web-pictures. I painted the seats satin black and lightly weathered them with a touch of dark grey to add some depth to the leather panels. The dash was painted gloss black over a coat of 'Kleer' floor polish - effectively crackling nicely. The dials and details were then carefully scraped down to metal again using the edge of a scalpel blade. The steering wheel was painted brown and the spokes given the knife bladed treatment to reveal shiny metal. Assembling the interior was straightforward, but I found that fitting the gear lever and handbrake BEFORE fitting the seats was probably a good idea.....

There are some nice additional interior detail parts supplied, such as a fire extinguisher and a panel containing spare spark plugs, and although the 'instructions' are pretty minimal, the location of these parts is fairly obvious and after painting with brass for the extinguisher, and a tiny dot of white for each plug, they were fixed in place on either side of the cockpit tub. Body details such as the light bowls, centre lamp and grille recess were then brush painted in.

Cutting the headlight lenses from the vacuum mouldings was fiddly, but made easier using good quality nail scissors, and an illuminated free standing magnifying lens. If you haven't got one yet, get one now. It makes building a 1/43 kit almost as easy as assembling one in 1/12 scale. The light covers were fixed in place using Humbrol Clearfix, as was the windscreen.

The small components such as the door hinges, filler cap, handles and driving mirror were fitted using cyano adhesive and the trusty mag-lens after re-drilling the locating holes.

*Beginners tip: When painting tiny castings, lightly stick them to 'poles' of Blu-tak and work under a magnifying lens. The parts will be easily accessible, and they will look surprisingly large for working on.*

The exhaust pipes were painted a mix of silver and gold, according to my reference pictures, with the silencers rubbed down to metal and 'dulled' down using a graphite pencil.

The wheels... Nowadays, most kits come with very nice etched wire wheels. Not so the Jaguar. True, the supplied wheels aren't at all bad, but a set of BBR wires ([BBRR34](#)) were added to improve the finished car immensely. I can't praise these wheels enough as they really are miniature works of art. They fitted perfectly, and the completed chassis sat completely flat and square on a glass mirror.



BBR (left) & K&R (right) wheels

*Beginners tip: A word of advice here when fitting wheels on a white metal kit. Fit the wheels BEFORE gluing the chassis in place. If any of the wheels don't quite sit true on a level surface, a gentle twist of the base will sort it out. THEN you can glue the base to the body.*

I fitted the base using my trusty cyano adhesive although I found that with the dashboard now in place on the inside of the body, the cockpit side frames had to be filed down a tad to allow the base to fit properly. Not a problem though.

I usually save an important feature of any car until last before fitting, just to get that last little 'buzz' of satisfaction when all is done. In the case of the Jaguar it was the nice etched grille. I formed a gentle curve in the flat etch by rolling it around a marker pen barrel. The resulting curve was just right and the grille was fitted with a few dots of Humbrol Clearfix. It impressed me how you can even see the small central driving lamp behind the bars of the grille.

The simple decals were added and due to the relatively smooth shape of the car; they went on nice and flat with no bother.

The finished model scales out very accurately with the dimensions of the Le Mans winner, even the ground clearance being spot on, a feature that many kit makers would do well to observe, and it looks a very impressive piece in my 'oldies' collection alongside my Aston Martin DBR1.

So, to sum up. Just because a particular kit isn't laden with fret after fret of etched parts, bags of metal or resin castings and a body with more parts to it than Pamela Anderson, it doesn't make it any less fun or less rewarding to build. As I've said on many an occasion, I would rather have a display of well built 'easy' kits, than a shelf full of badly built complex ones. The addition of the BBR wheels is well worth the extra £12 or so, especially as the Jaguar kit is less than £30 itself.

For around £40 and a bit of careful building you will have a model that could stand with pride alongside any of the £100+ hand built examples. Somewhat better instructions would definitely be a plus though. So, well done to K&R Replicas for producing an excellent model that will suit the raw beginner just as well as the experienced builders out there.