



Type: 1/10th 4WD Brushless MT

UK RRP: £229.00

Manufacturer: BSD Racing

UK Distributor: www.centuryuk.com



"REGRESS ABOUT JU

QUICK SPEC

Wheelbase 325 mm

Width 355 mm

Length 505 mm

Those were the words given to me by the Editor when giving me this review.

"Take yourself as far away from 'race mode' as you can, go back to the point in your life when you got your first proper off road R/C as a kid."

Once you get your hands on the, quite frankly, enormous box that it comes in, it's

hard to think in any other way! But what is it? Who are BSD Racing? Why is it yellow? Well, sit yourself down, grab a cuppa and I'll tell you all about it!

CENTURY UK

Are (unsurprisingly with that name) a UK importer/distributor of various R/C models, from quadcopters, through various scales of helicopters and planes and now cars. They

have a massive range of everything you could ever want for these classes including spares, batteries and other accessories, so are truly a 'one-stop shop' for any of their brand portfolio. They sell via hobby stores and model shops, and as increasingly more and more brands do, direct from their own website.

The BSD Racing brand covers the majority of their range of RTR R/C cars, which are



Words and images: Clive Pratley

**“S A LITTLE, THINK
ST HAVING FUN...”**

available in a number of guises from 1/8th scale electric and nitro trucks, through 1/10th electric and nitro trucks and buggies, to their super-realistic 1/10th, 1/14th and 1/20th scale electric cars, with every single one promoting the ‘fun’ side of R/C.

This car, the Flux Rampage sits somewhere in the middle of their full range – not the biggest (which is a worry in itself), and not the noisiest, but still ready to give you many

giggles to the pound, both monetary and in weight!

And so it’s back to the enormous box, currently sat on my dining room table and providing somewhat of an impeded view of my TV. Surely this can be packed up smaller? Well, if it was a kit then yes, it certainly would be, but that’s not the aim of the game with this. This Ready-To-Run is properly true to its word here. There’s no

‘screw on a wing here – bolt on a wheel there’ before you can run, this is ready to go (admittedly you need AA cells for the Tx and to charge the main pack but...). With the lid off the box, you remove the truck, grab the steer-wheel transmitter from its packaging, charge the LiPo and then go. That’s it – no meddling around, no parts to lose in assembly, nothing... just get out bashing!



That's one mean looking truck for £229.00

THE TRUCK

As you've probably understood, a massive box normally means a massive car, and the Flux Rampage is no lightweight on these stakes. Measuring over 0.5 metres in total length (yes you ready that right 0.5 METRES, for a 1/10th scale!) you certainly know this car is around. The weight of it is something quite astonishing too, coming in at the best part of 3 kg. This can only mean one thing, a perfect solid basher!

The first thing to strike you on removing the car from the box (after its size and weight) is just how well made



Cool looking and full of features, the provided 2.4 GHz radio gear works a treat

it actually is. The general market for this type of RTR is for fun, shown even more by its comparatively low purchase price.

With a low-cost car in this field, it's usual to see nothing more than cheap plastic shock bodies, rigid plastic tub chassis, plastic fixed length suspension links and all that jazz, but not with the Rampage.

Starting with the suspension components, the dampers are oil-filled units with good quality plastic, yet accurately threaded, bodies allowing easy ride height adjustment with aluminium screw collars normally found on much more expensive models. These seem to be very well built with a smooth and extremely long travel, all be it feeling slightly harder than I would have expected when operated by hand.

That said it has a lot of bulk to support on the inevitable heavy landings so this heavy damping could be needed after all. The screw collars and shock caps are all anodised in an attractive blue, and when combined with the white coated springs and black main bodies they certainly look better quality items that you'd expect with an RTR at this price point. Construction of the bladder-type dampers is very conventional, with the shaft seals housed in a plastic housing screwed onto the lower end of the shock body, a silicone bladder covering the top of the oil-filled chamber and finished with an O-ring seal under the cap.

The suspension connects to a double-wishbone arrangement, which to further amazement also allows you to tweak the camber settings front and rear with a short turnbuckle section in each upper wishbone assembly. This is well beyond what most users of this level of truck would ever need, but is still a nice addition.

The other end of the dampers are connected to rigid moulded plastic shock towers front and rear. These are very substantial and look that they're definitely designed with strength in mind over weight! Steering to the front-end is provided by yet more adjustable steel links, which is almost guaranteed to give some additional rigidity over solid plastic links usually included as standard at this level.

MOVING INBOARD

The usual plastic chassis plate is evident, but in this case acts as little more than



For the money this truck has specs way beyond our expectations



Threaded shocks with alloy caps 'n' collars!



Turnbuckles are built into the upper arms and linkages, this means one thing... TUNING!



For a RTR servo, the included 9 kg unit did a sterling job, and is waterproof too!



The electrics sit high and dry in a purpose made box



Diff's are hardened steel, planetary type and packed with grease



mechanical protection from the rocks/mud/sand/water that is bound to be attacking it. Yes, you did read 'water', the Rampage is reported 100% waterproof, but more on that later! The steering hinge points are located on the plastic chassis plate, but the remaining equipment is actually mounted on a bright blue anodised aluminium upper chassis plate.

This upper plate sandwiches the motor and front and rear gearboxes and also provides a mounting plate for the radio equipment and battery location, keeping them high off the ground allowing even better clearance for water and mud-plugging. The steering servo is also suspended from this rigid upper plate meaning there is no flex in the steering assembly at all useful to stop the truck heading off in unexpected directions on hitting an obstacle!

Of course, in true RTR fashion, there's a full installation of electronics to get you up and running quickly. The first thing of note is the brushless motor, a good step over the older style brushed motors that used to be the staple diet of RTR's up until fairly recently.

Although generally having a higher initial purchase cost over traditional brushed types (this gap is closing all the time now though), brushless motors are ideal for this type of truck as they're much less reliant on regular maintenance and can provide amazing amounts of torque. This 3000 kV variant fitted in this truck isn't the fastest unit on the market rpm-wise but is certainly still going to be enough to provide some serious welly in something of this weight, and with 22,200 rpm on tap its fast enough to put a grin on most R/C fans faces.

This is provided with power by the 2S 3200 mAh hard case LiPo battery sited on the upper plate directly above the motor. Again, a good 'upgrade' over the older NiCad/NiMH battery packs that tend to be packaged with usual RTR's, the Lithium Polymer packs are an ideal match for brushless motors. The higher current demands of the torque brushless motors



The diff's each end fit into casings that are then held in place within the bulkheads



Lower wishbones are made from a quality composite and beefy where they need to be!



Upper wishbones are made just as tough, but with turnbuckles built-in

Linkages for steering are also adjustable for toe-in/out



Built back up they are one well-made unit



CVD's as standard are a feature you would never expect on a sub £230 bashing vehicle



The shocks laid bare, that's no cheap and cheerful design



can sometimes be a struggle for traditional packs to meet, but with the high energy Lithium Polymer packs this doesn't tend to be a problem.

With this being included as standard it also means that you'll get longer run times over a NiMH, which directly translates to more fun, and with no 'memory effects' of traditional packs, there's nothing to stop you recharging the pack many times a day. This, of course, does come with a cautious note...

RRCI EXPLAINS

Although during normal day-to-day use LiPo packs can be perfectly safe, they are also extremely explosive and must therefore be stored and charged correctly. This RTR does not include a charger so care must be taken to ensure that the charger you select is capable of handling LiPo packs. Caution must also be taken over any damage to the pack. Although being hard cased they are much less susceptible to damage, any signs of inflated cases or cracking should start alarm bells ringing, stop using the pack and dispose of properly.

That said, this is in extreme cases, and many, many people (this reviewer included) have used LiPo packs for years with no issues at all, in fact, in my case even less issues than I ever had with NiCad and NiMH packs!

delivery should you be struggling with traction or able to get some more of that power down without worry.

The 2.4 GHz receiver is then sat loosely in front of the ESC. Initially a worry that this isn't fixed down, any fears are allayed once the lid is placed back on the box as this secures the unit in place, with the waterproof power switch locating through a hole in the lid allowing easy access.

MECH TECH

Coming back to the mechanical side of things, that brushless motor connects directly to a centre transfer box, which sends power both forward and rearward via long steel dog-bone drive shafts. Gear ratios within this box are pretty much set due to the 'non-standard' gear pitch used, but that shouldn't affect many of the target market for this truck.

The plus side to this is that, following most other things on this truck, each gear tooth is extremely chunky which will

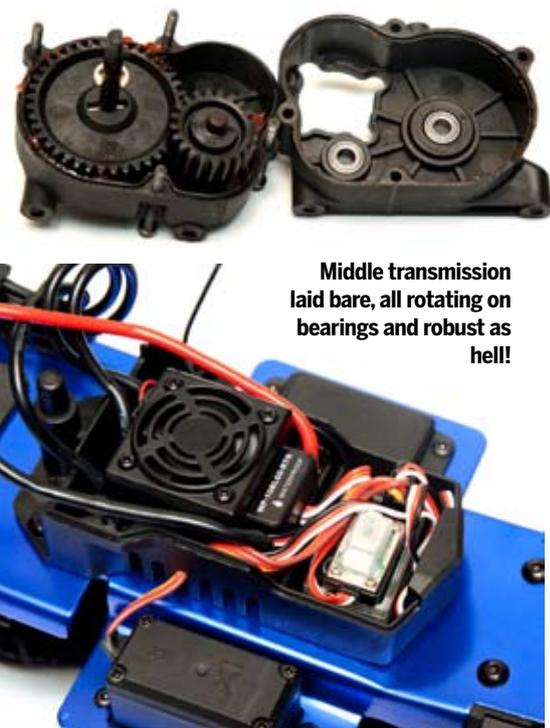
Not bad for free, the included 2S pack is only 20C and 3200 mAh but it's a great starting



Hobbywing's finest, the 3000 kV Sensorless motor used



Middle transmission laid bare, all rotating on bearings and robust as hell!



MOVING FORWARD

In front of the battery pack strap there is a large casing which houses the ESC and receiver and provides some light splash protection for the units. Removing the cover you find the 60 A brushless ESC firmly fixed in place and fitted with a heatsink cooling fan to help transfer some of the temperature away from the unit when the cover is fitted.

Some searching around on the Internet for the identified part number shows this ESC is actually an unbadged Hobbywing unit, so there should be no worries about its capabilities in service; Hobbywing has become a brand that has a very positive reputation for reliability and performance.

The instructions also detail the tuning/set up options for the ESC and highlight the use of a set up box if you want to make things even easier. The Hobbywing unit should be fairly easy to track down should you wish to start changing thing, but if in doubt, ask Century UK.

As default, the unit is set up for the important items – such as cut off voltage for the LiPo drive batteries – with other options that can be tweaked such as 'drag brake' (effectively engine braking for electric motors, providing some braking action when the transmitter is in the neutral position) and 'punch' which allows you to tune the initial power



That bumper will take quite a big hit and incorporates a crush-zone to absorb any undue impact and stress



The narrow chassis design makes a nice change for a monster truck



Note that the steering knuckles are moulded symmetrically, so less spares required

help to withstand any rough treatment or heavy landings that they are bound to be subjected to. Taking the power out to each corner is a duo of well-greased gear differentials (again chunky metal-gearred units), more steel dog-bone drive shafts and on to the super-large plastic truck wheels and tyres.

What is really refreshing to see is the use of ball races throughout the transmission parts of this model, instead of bronze bushings. It's a cheap addition nowadays but is still usually left off the cheaper end of the market. Use of these ball races allow for a much looser running drivetrain, in turn helping speed, temperature and runtimes to be optimised for more play time.

They also help to cut down on some maintenance, as the sealed units will help to fend off some of the dirt that usually gets dragged into oiled bushings reducing their lives. They're not completely maintenance free though, so will also benefit from a bit of a clean and re-oil every so often, but are

Love the design of the front of the shell, mean 'n' moody

certainly less hassle than their alternatives.

Each corner features a sharply moulded hub carrier which houses a pair of ball races prior to the drive shaft axles pushing through and being retained with a drive pin and plastic drive hex, which will help should you wish to change wheels and tyres at some point as these are quickly becoming a standard fitment across most of the R/C range.

That said the wheels and tyres that are included appear pretty good quality. There is a degree of 'flex' to the wheels which I can imagine is down to a combination of material selection and size, but importantly this is a 'flex' rather than a brittle rigidity which will help them survive in day to day use.

The tyres feel a fairly soft compound and have a comparatively low tread pattern, but they still look like they're more than up to the job of providing the grip you need to get this thing moving along well on the terrain that it is designed for - it's unlikely that it will see much in the way of hard surfaces to scrub them down!

Topping everything off is a swooping pick-up truck

polycarbonate shell. This has been screen printed in a bright eye-catching design that can be seen

from quite a distance, an added bonus with the aging eyes of this reviewer!

So, overall, this appears to be a very well designed RTR with many thoughts put towards the punishments it's likely to face! With a massive ground clearance, then even further distance before you reach the electrics, the possibilities of places to enjoy this truck become endless, and that's now what I'm heading out to do.

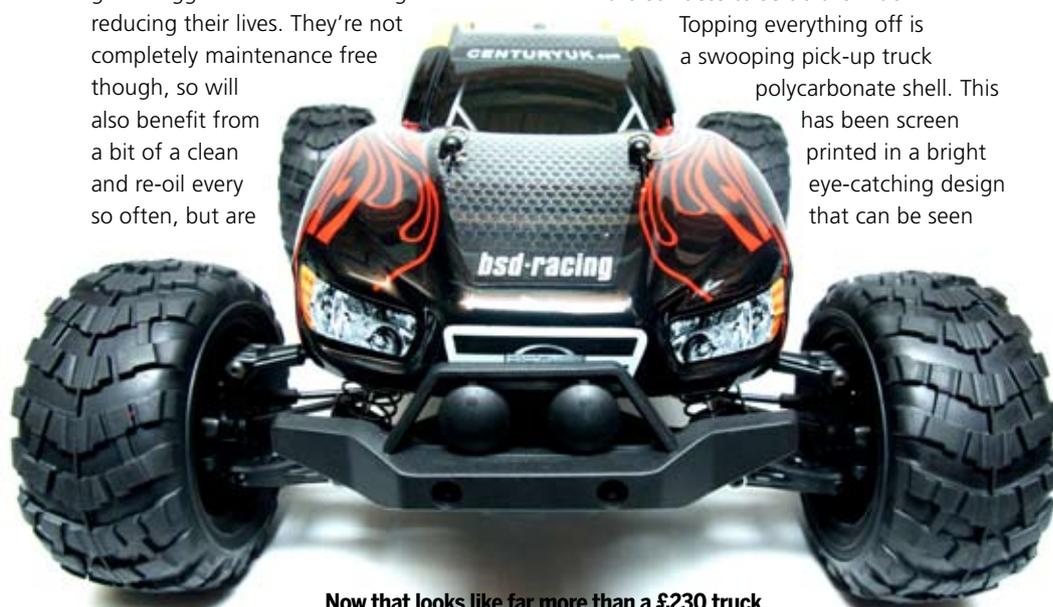
OFF ON A RRCI RAMPAGE

With the battery charged on my trusty multi-format charger, and four AA batteries installed in the included steer wheel, I loaded my stuff in to the car and headed out to a local bashing area for some fun... and what fun it was!

The turn of speed from the supplied motor is quite something when you consider the mass it is having to pull along. Standing starts show enough torque to provide some wheelie action on a fully charged pack on the right surface, and certainly allow you to throw it around enough to give the suspension a work out.

Talking of the suspension, that long travel soaks up the smaller bumps excellently, even if those smaller bumps are enough to knock some of the less-sturdy cars off track, the Rampage takes it in its stride. Cornering is accurate enough for having plenty of fun with, providing enough grip to flip the car if pushed too hard, but generally being on the safe side and pushing wide. Some careful throttle control can see it follow some decent lines though should you have a local BMX track or something like that to razz around.

With the small bumps and flatter ground out of the way it was time to get some cross-country running done and



Now that looks like far more than a £230 truck

hit some big air. This is where the robust build of the Rampage comes to the fore, with it hitting up-ramps at speed without bottoming out, flying (as well as a 3 kg 0.5 m long car can fly) through the air with some kind of finesse, before hitting the ground and carrying on its merry way.

Weight balance appears pretty good with a touch of throttle or brake having a decent impact on the direction of the nose when in the air to help you nail the landing, but don't worry if it goes wrong as the chunky suspension components appear to shrug off a lot of mistakes – as I found out on many occasions... some call it durability testing (Yeah, me! ED).

The waterproofing of the electrics appears to be fairly good too, with any boggy sections undertaken without worry. I have yet to test just how far you can submerge it before any issues may arise (100% waterproofing statements always worry me), but with the plunges getting ever deeper and muddier as the fun went on, and the massive ground clearance before the water hits anything important anyway, it appears there's not a lot this side of a river crossing that will cause it much damage.

The provided LiPo gives enough power to keep you running for an impressive amount of time considering it's a beast of this size, but with the price of LiPo packs dropping quickly it's not expensive to pick up a second pack if you want to carry on for longer between charges.

To summarise, the BSD Racing Flux Rampage is a model to be highly considered if you're in the market for a ready-to-run monster truck. Be under



no illusions, it's no super-agile track contender, but what it is, is a solid, fun, chuckle-inducing basher. It comes with everything you need to get running apart from a LiPo charger and four AA batteries for the transmitter, but with all these available for less than £25 you can end up with a cracking low-budget example to keep you going for many years.

The plastics used in the construction are well moulded and are suitably robust where needed, yet flexible enough in other places to soak up any impacts rather than break, and the aluminium

back-bone and suspension braces provide immense strength for even the hardest of landings. The RTR truck market is expanding day-by-day, and with so much choice there has to be some standout features to draw you into a particular car.

For me those features are strength and the reassuring feel of solidity, which the Rampage has in abundance, you'd do much worse than to settle for one of these for its sub £250 price point. **RRCi**



TECHNICAL SPEC

REQUIRED TO COMPLETE

A balancing LiPo charger
AA cells for the Tx

DISLIKES

No charger included, not even a slow one

LIKES

Great overall package for sub £250
Brushless & LiPo powered
Quality 2.4 GHz radio gear
Waterproof everything
Programmable ESC
British distributor

CONTACT

www.centuryuk.com