

bet we all have few preferred brands that we always stick with—perhaps McDonalds for fast food because you just have to have the fries, or Mobil 1 oil because your father used it. Or perhaps Sony televisions because every one you owned lasted a long time and you only bought the next version because it had more features. Among my list of known and trusted items is the HPI Nitro MT2 truck. I remember the first one I drove; it had a silver and black body with orange decals. It had a Nitro Star engine with a square, cast-aluminum head. I put gallons through that truck, and I could always count on its engine pattering to life with a few tugs on the starter cord. I had a load of fun launching it off jumps on a BMX track. Like many other popular vehicles, the MT2 has been improved, and the latest version—the Nitro MT2 18SS+—won't disappoint MT2 fans. In kit form, this new machine boasts a lot of improvements that boost power and lock in the handling. I see an all-out bashing session in this truck's near future.

KIT RTR

## 1/10 NITRO STADIUM TRUCK

### AT A GLANCE

WHO MAKES IT:  
HPI

WHO IT'S FOR:  
Beginner to advanced

HOW FAST:  
41.31mph

HOW MUCH: \$520

WHAT WE LIKED

- Easy to build; great instructions
- Handles great; ran well on 1/8 track
- Electronics are easy to remove for maintenance
- Stock tires have gobs of traction

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Cast-aluminum knuckles would be better than the stock plastic ones

THE BOTTOM LINE

The 18SS+ is the perfect midsize stadium truck in kit form for those who want 4WD nitro fury to run in small backyards and on tight tracks.



*Outlaw stadium racer*

# NITRO HPI MT2 18SS+

## FAST TRACK HPI NITRO MT2 18SS+



### PERFORMANCE

When we spend a day at Wolcott, we often call our racing buddies and let them know it's time to play. Matt "Chewy" Ciecowski met me there because he built and painted the 18SS+. I took along the new HPI Nitro MT2 G3.0 RTR to race against him (see page 184). We drove hard and swapped transmitters and had a blast all day. Here are some of the highlights.

The 18SS+ has lots of forward bite and sends dirt flying as it rips down the straights. Its soft, sticky Ground Assault tires on black Scorch rims really give the truck the bite it has always wanted. Going through corners, the tires grabbed and there was very little sidewall roll, so the truck turns like a champ.

The back of Wolcott's track features a huge quad jump that's meant for 1/8 buggies and truggies. With a handful of trigger, I hauled down the back jump run-up and then let off the trigger; this sent the truck sailing off the first jump, and it landed on the downside of the second jump. I punched the throttle again and sent it up and over the second set of doubles; this time, the rear wheels landed on the downside of the last jump and wheeled down it—cool, and it happened a few times.

Slowing the truck down is easy, but I was initially concerned because it doesn't have separate front and rear brakes—just one brake to control all four wheels. Tearing down the long straight and hitting speeds in the high 30s, when I hit the brakes, I could hug the tight, 90-degree turn and carry on—great traction, great speed and great handling. The 18SS+ is a killer truck.



With the diff case removed, the straight-cut bevel gear and plated steel outdrives are visible. Inside the cases are hardened-steel gears that will deal with the abuse the powerful engine subjects the drivetrain to.



The cast-aluminum, black-coated tuned pipe is a major upgrade of the MT2 platform. It took me a little while to get used to the new pipe, and I have burn marks to prove it, but the chamber does let the power roar.



The hard-coated gray chassis features flared edges that strengthen it. The screw holes are countersunk, and notches in the chassis let the gear cases sit low. Check out the gear skid with its molded flame design. It protects the spur gear but gives it room to eject debris.

### NEEDED TO COMPLETE

- 2-channel radio system
- 2 high-torque servos
- 8 AA batteries
- Receiver battery pack
- Fuel
- Glow-plug igniter
- Paint

### WHAT WE USED

- HPI Power Fuel—74318, \$10
- TempGun.com PE2—PE2, \$45
- Futaba 2PH Radio w/S3003 servos—FUTJ14\*\* \$50
- Futaba S3010 steering servo—S3010, \$25

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

■ Shiny CV-type universal driveshafts spin the wheels on the 18SS+; the older models have standard universals and even dogbones. The shafts have a unique captured-pin design that allows easy rebuilding without having to deal with the pesky pin-retaining setscrew. The gearing has been tweaked to pull more speed out of this racer; gear diffs with a slipper unit in place of a center diff spin the shafts.

■ Firm springs give the long, oil-filled coil-over shocks their rebound push. They're mounted far out on the rigid arms to increase the stability of this powerful, 1/10-scale platform. The upper tie-rods are adjustable with ball studs and cups at the hinging points. For the pinned hinges, HPI throws in stainless-steel hinge pins.

■ The body mounts on the truck are adjustable, so you can use other bodies, but we think the stocker is sporty as is.

■ The 1/10 4WD trucks are pretty much an outlaw class, so HPI bolted in an outlaw motor—the 18SS. HPI claims 1.5hp from this side-exhaust engine with pull-starter, easy-to-tune carb and large, black-coated head. The Fort Knox air filter has two elements with a sturdy skeleton that keeps nasty bits out and lets lots of clean air in.

■ A composite 2-shoe clutch swings off a cast flywheel and grabs the steel clutch bell. Steel pads grab the fiberglass brake disc—the same system as is used on all Nitro MT2s simply because it works.

■ One area that leaves 1/10-scale gas truck drivers tweaked is the 75cc tank rule. This outlaw rig packs a 100cc tank for longer run times.

■ Electronics aren't included. HPI leaves that choice up to you, but when you do install the steering servo, it will swing composite plastic cranks with a plastic drag link.

# HPI'S MT2 G3.0

KIT RTR

1/10 NITRO  
OFF-ROAD  
TRUCK



## PERFORMANCE

A few quick taps on the Roto Start button, and the G3.0 crackled to life and then sputtered until it went quiet. The high-end needle is set to a safe, rich, break-in setting, so it took a few fire-ups to get the engine running smoothly. After break-in, I leaned the high-speed needle ever so slightly and went racing.

Over the bumps and jumps, the G3.0 handled great and was very close to the race-oriented 18SS+. The truck flew level over large jumps and stuttered while staying under control over the rutted sections.

Under acceleration, the big lugged tires spun a lot in the loose dirt, but the brakes did just as good a job as they did on the 18SS+. The lugs were great on grass and also gripped well on asphalt; they're a good all around long lasting tread.

This is an awesome RTR package; what you see here is how the G3.0 comes out of the box. Install batteries, squirt some fuel in the tank and go out for some 4wd nitro fun!



## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

■ Unlike the 18SS+ you see on most pages of this article, the G3.0 is in ready-to-run form and has HPI's pistol-grip radio, receiver and two servos

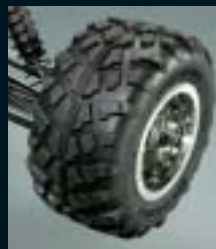
■ The powerful G3.0 engine has a 2-needle barrel carb, a large heat-sink head, a finned heat-sink case and HPI's Roto Start backplate for easy starting with the hand-held starting wand.

■ The aggressive, all-terrain treads on chrome Scorch rims bite into dirt, rocks, pavement, grass, air ... OK, while jumping.

■ Some other differences between the G3.0 and the 18SS+:

- > Dogbones instead of universals
- > Fixed rods instead of adjustable turn-buckles
- > Standard diffs and a choice of two printed bodies.

The G3.0 gets rubber block-tread tires for use on just about any terrain. They're mounted on stylish chrome Scorch rims.



Here's where the truck gets its name, the powerful G3.0 engine equipped with a 2-needle carb, Roto Start backplate, finned case and large head for improved cooling and an ABC constructed piston and sleeve.



## AT A GLANCE

WHO MAKES IT: HPI  
WHO IT'S FOR: Everyone

CLASS: 1/10-scale off-road nitro

HOW FAST: 42.1mph

HOW MUCH: \$335

## WHAT WE LIKED

- Killer printed body
- The G3.0 is a torque and speed monster in a small-block package
- All-terrain tires—perfect for bashers
- Cast tuned pipe lets the engine deliver the power
- Excellent instructions

## WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Cast-aluminum knuckles would be better than the stock plastic

## NEEDED TO COMPLETE

- 12 AA batteries
- Fuel
- Fuel bottle
- Glow-plug igniter

## WHAT WE USED

- Futaba 2PH Radio w/ S3003 Servos—FUTJ14\*\* \$50
- Futaba S3010 steering servo—S3010, \$25
- HPI Power fuel—74318, \$10
- TempGun.com PE2—PE2, \$45

## THE BOTTOM LINE

If you like the looks of the 18SS+ but are intimidated by having to build and paint the truck and pick out electronics for it, here is a perfect alternative—the Nitro MT2 G3.0. The G3.0 is well built and has standard radio gear that's on par with many other RTRs'. The engine is fast and reliable, and the truck thrives on just about any terrain. This platform gets high marks in my books and is sure to score with you as well.



### THE SPECIFICS

#### CHASSIS

**LENGTH:** 17.4 in. (443mm)

**WIDTH:** 12.5 in. (317mm)

**WHEELBASE:** 11.75 in. (298mm)

**WEIGHT:** 4.96 lb. (2,250g)

**MATERIAL:** Aluminum

**TYPE:** Lower plate w/molded upper deck

#### SPECIAL FEATURES:

Easy-to-access battery box

The thick aluminum plate serves as a sturdy foundation. Thumbs up to HPI for fitting a rock shield to the bottom to keep debris out of the main mesh.

#### SUSPENSION

**TYPE:** Independent double-wishbone

**SHOCKS:** Plastic oil-filled

**WHEELS:** Black BBS style

**TIRES:** High-grip rubber spike

**MATERIAL:** Molded plastic

The shocks are smooth, the arms are rigid, and the suspension has noteworthy tuning options; with high-grip tires, this package will suit just about any drivers' needs.

#### DRIVETRAIN

**TYPE:** Full-time 4WD

**DIFFERENTIALS:** Hardened gear diffs

**BEARINGS:** Metal-shielded ball-bearings

**BRAKES:** Single fiberglass disc, steel plates

**DRIVESHAFTS:** Shiny captured universals at the corners

As an 1/8-scale driver, I was, like, where's the center diff? But the slipper works well and lets the truck lay down power in the rough. The bearings, gearing and axles are all top quality and let the rig freewheel effortlessly off power.

#### POWER PACKAGE

**TYPE:** HPI 18SS engine

**CARB:** Barrel type, low- and high-speed needle adjustments

**EXHAUST:** Cast-aluminum two-piece tuned pipe w/aluminum header

**CLUTCH:** 2-shoe composite, cast-aluminum flywheel

HPI knows that newbies will pilot the 18SS+, so they dropped in their reliable and durable 18SS engine. It's easy to start and tune and should put a smile on any speed junky's face.

### THE LAST WORD

HPI has kept this chassis around a long time, and now that I've driven the 18SS+ version, I know why. The MT2 is fun and can be run on tracks, so you get that racing feel. Props to the HPI team for the beefed-up drivetrain, powerful engine with easy-to-tune carb, awesome tires and big tank. Building the truck was as much fun as running it; I'll know how to fix it if something gets broken, and I know how maintain it. I'll enjoy the all-action 18SS+ both on the track and on the bench. ☺

### LINKS

**HPI Racing**, [hpiracing.com](http://hpiracing.com)  
(949) 753-1099

**Futaba**, distributed exclusively by Great Planes Model Distributors,  
[futaba-rc.com](http://futaba-rc.com) (800) 682-8948

**Pro Exotics**, [tempgun.com](http://tempgun.com)  
(303) 347-0500

For more information, please see our source guide on page 225.