

Bodybuilding_2



Here the plaster sculpture was ready for the next stages...



... accurately contouring the cockpit opening and fairing ...



... followed by a layer of hard fiberglass over the entire sculpture.



The surface was sanded and a layer of fine cloth and a sandable layer was applied ...



followed by ...



... more sanding and detailing - each stage achieved more precision and a progressively higher quality of surface finish.



The sculpture, now weighing about 300 lbs, was transferred into the paint booth for a layer of sandable primer.



Primed and “blocked” (i.e. sanded), wheel vents cut, the sculpture shown ready for the final layer of moulding material that yields a high-gloss finish in the mould.



The sculpture, “buck” or “plug” shown ready for the mould-making process ...



Moulding started with waxing the buck followed by a layer of moulding gelcoat to provide a smooth finish within the female mould. Specially formulated “tooling resin” was applied on top of the gelcoat with many layers of glass mat to form a hard, heavy shell.



A rigid supporting frame was required to sustain very high forces during the vacuum forming process.

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was the technical consultant on the mould fabrication process.



The moulds were finished in mid-November 2001 and the prototype bodyshell was commenced in May 2002, after construction of a vacuum pump and propane fired oven...



Advanced composite material being laid up in the mould. The next step is vacuum bagging and oven curing.



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The first article bodyshell fresh out of the oven and with only minor bodywork it is ready for its paint job.



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The finished prototype.
Next step: the test track.

Videos of initial testing can be seen at <http://www.traXstar.biz>.

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