BUILD AYRTON SENNA'S

LOTUS RENAULT 97T

Ayrton Senna

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Formula 1 chronicles

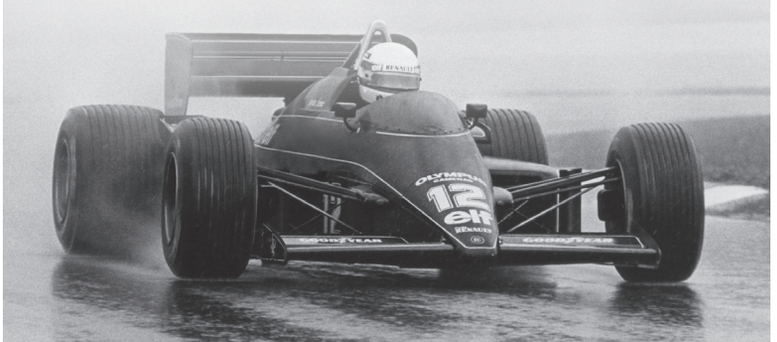
Talented Austrian Jochen Rindt lost his life at the 1970 Italian GP, but he still became a posthumous World Champion

Life of an idol

After some time out in Brazil, Senna returns to win two Formula Ford 2000 Championships in 1982

Assembly

Front suspension (I)



The publishers thank the Ayrton Senna Memorial for its worthwhile contribution to the content on the Driver's story.

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JOCHEN RINDT

The posthumous champion

One month after his fatal accident at the 1970 Italian GP, the Austrian driver was awarded the F1 World Title – with the help of teammate Emerson Fittipaldi

Among the list of Formula 1 World Champions, the name of Jochen Rindt, winner in 1970 for Lotus, has an asterisk. The reason for this is that the German, who raced wearing Austrian colors, was the only driver who could not celebrate the title during his lifetime: his victory was secured one month after the fatal accident he suffered at the Italian Grand Prix. However, behind the cruel distinction of being the only posthumous champion in Formula 1 history lies a driver with an indomitable personality – not even death could prevent him from achieving his ultimate goal in motor racing.

Jochen was born in Germany in 1942, in the middle of World War 2, which meant he had to be raised in Austria: Allied bombing over Hamburg killed his parents, and the young boy was sent to Graz to live with his maternal grandparents. Born into a wealthy family, he was sent to the UK when he was a teenager to learn English, and there he fell in love with motor racing. He started racing at 18, with the Simca-Montlhéry he had received as a gift from his grandfather; at 21, when he could use the money that he had inherited from his parents, he bought a Formula Junior car and joined the single-seater world.

In the lower categories, Rindt's name spread throughout Europe – as did his fearless fame. Always pushing his cars to the max, he was told he would have two possible outcomes: crash or win. In 1964, he bought a Formula 2 Brabham-Cosworth, and on May 18, he hit the headlines by winning the London Trophy at the Crystal Palace circuit, beating Graham Hill. With his skyrocketing confidence, he decided a few months later to make the leap to Formula 1, paying for a place in the Rob Walker Racing Team at the Austrian Grand Prix on August 23 – he would retire on the 58th lap, with a problem in the steering bar.



Nationaal Archief

Number 1: *Rindt stood on the top step of the podium five times in the 1970 season and built an unassailable lead*

A SHAKY F1 START

The following year, Rindt signed with Cooper and joined the Formula 1 circus, with Bruce McLaren as his teammate. However, success was not as immediate as in Formula 2, where he racked up victory after victory – at that time, drivers used to race in several categories.

His luck would only change in 1969, after he had been hired by Lotus. In his first season with the Norfolk outfit, he raced alongside Graham Hill, who was defending his World Title. Rindt ended up performing better than the Englishman, finishing the championship in fourth place with 22 points, compared to 19 points for Hill, who came in seventh. In the penultimate race of the

Born in Germany, Rindt would race with an Austrian license and was the country's first Formula 1 champion; Niki Lauda would follow him

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"Motor-racing is such a professional job today that you devote most of your time to it and lose touch with the normal world," Rindt was quoted saying after his friend Piers Courage's death



Nationaal Archief

Dutch courage: *Rindt steps on the throttle of his Lotus 72C to win the 1970 Dutch Grand Prix at Zandvoort*

season, the US Grand Prix at Watkins Glen, Rindt secured his first F1 victory, ahead of his friend Piers Courage, from Brabham, and BRM's John Surtees. The following year was even more promising.

SERIAL TRAGEDIES

In 1970, after a poor start to the season, when he finished 13th in South Africa and had to retire in Spain because of ignition problems, Rindt bounced back in style: he won what is considered to be one of the most exciting Monaco Grands Prix in history, beating Jack Brabham on the last lap. Engine problems meant he did not finish the next race, in Belgium, but then he won four races in a row – The Netherlands, France, England, and Germany – and was one win away from the title, which could be secured at the Austrian Grand Prix, scheduled for August 16, 1970.

At this time, Formula 1 was already shaken by two terrible losses. On June 2, Bruce McLaren had suffered a fatal accident on the Goodwood circuit, driving a touring car; on the 21st of the same month, Piers Courage died in an accident at the Dutch Grand Prix. "It certainly makes you think about giving up," Rindt said after Courage's death. "But you gotta carry on."

Racing at home in the Austrian Grand Prix, the Lotus driver started on pole, but retired before the midpoint with engine trouble. In any case, a win at the Italian Grand Prix, in Monza, would have been enough to secure the title. However, during practice sessions for the race, Rindt lost control at the Parabolic turn and hit the guard rail at 150 mph (241 km/h), overturning several times. He died before reaching hospital.

A BRAZILIAN HELP

The now-departed Jochen Rindt had a big lead in the standings. With three races to go, he was 26 points ahead of Ferrari's Jacky Ickx – which meant that he would only lose the title if his rival won all the remaining races. The Belgian triumphed in Canada, but in the second-to-last race of the calendar, the US Grand Prix, he met a rookie who was only driving his fourth race in the category, Emerson Fittipaldi. The Brazilian's first Formula 1 victory secured the title – and a place in history – for his teammate at Lotus.

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1982 FORMULA FORD 2000

A triumphant return

After spending time out engaged in his family businesses, Senna returned to the track and won the British and European Formula Ford 2000 Championships

His personal dilemma dragged on for about five months. Between the end of 1981 and the beginning of 1982, Ayrton Senna was physically present in Brazil, working as his father's right-hand man in managing the family's companies. But everyone could see that his mind was in Europe, spinning with the rhythm of the teams' adjustments for the racing season that would begin within weeks. Milton decided to leave it to his son to decide whether or not to return to England, where Ralph Firman and Dennis Rushen were waiting for him with a Formula Ford 2000 car. A few days later, of course, Ayrton was already on the track at Snetterton.

"Without my father's help, things would have been much more difficult, for sure. But we made a deal: the day I could afford it, I would repay all his investment. That happened when I got to Formula 1," the driver revealed in Christopher Hilton's book *Ayrton Senna: The Hard Edge of Genius.*

Senna arrived shortly before the season-opening race, at Brands Hatch on March 7, 1982 – he only tested his Van Diemen RF 82 of the Rushen Green team twice. Yet that did not stop him from taking pole, clocking the fastest lap of the race, and crossing the finish line almost ten seconds ahead of the runner-up, Irishman Calvin Fish.

"I quickly got used to the car, which, in my opinion, has the same driving characteristics as the go-kart. I still have an extensive training schedule ahead of me, which is why I think I will drive even harder in the races on the 27th at Oulton Park and the 28th at Silverstone," he predicted to *Jornal do Brasil* on March 8, 1982.

CROSSING BORDERS

Senna's crystal ball was right. At the end of the season, the Brazilian driver scored five consecutive wins in the British Championship, setting the pole position and the fastest lap. At the same time, Senna was also racing in the European Championship, with rounds in Belgium,



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"I am at an incredible moment in my career and opportunities are really coming my way. I have to be calm and patient to make up my mind"

Ayrton Senna

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Ayrton's Formula Ford 2000 resume is one of the best of his career: in 28 races, he had 21 wins with 22 best laps and 15 poles



***Austrian victory:** at Österreichring, Senna started on pole position and easily won his European Championship race*

The Netherlands, Germany, Austria, Ireland, and Denmark, besides England. In this tournament, Senna's start was not so fruitful: three retirements in the first four races. Around the middle of the season, Senna was comfortably in the lead – and he would keep it until the end, becoming British and European Formula Ford 2000 champion without too much difficulty.

The final numbers for the year were staggering: 28 races, 21 wins, 22 best laps, and 15 poles. In the season-end points tally, Senna beat Fish with 376 compared to 271 in the British Championship and 140 to 83 in the European.

ONE STEP AT A TIME

In July, when he was already looking like the probable champion of both tournaments, the Brazilian driver attracted his first major sponsorship deal: Bank of the State of Rio de Janeiro (BANERJ). In the second half of the season, the bank started using its brand on Senna's helmet, overalls, and car, significantly reducing the family's expenses on the driver.

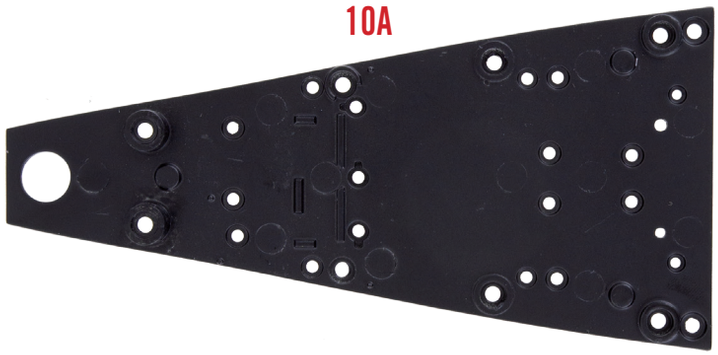
On July 23, 1983, Ayrton was in Rio de Janeiro to sign the contract with BANERJ. In view of his roaring success in Formula Ford 2000, journalists asked him about transferring to Formula 1 – McLaren and Tyrrell had, in fact, already inquired about him in 1982.

The driver's answer displayed another of his distinguishing features: his unusual maturity in managing his own career, at the age of 22. "I have to be calm and patient to decide. There have been several proposals, but I know that I have to go with the flow, step by step. I can't just jump into Formula 1. I have great chances to do some races in Formula 3, where I should race in 1983," he said to *Jornal do Brasil* on July 24. "A Formula 1 car is a masterpiece and to get to it you have to learn a lot. That's what I'm doing."

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FRONT SUSPENSION ASSEMBLY (1)

PARTS











10A Front nose base

10B Front left suspension lower wishbone arm

10C Front right suspension lower wishbone arm

10D Front brake line, 2 pcs

DM Screws 2 x 4 mm, 5 pcs*

* Including spares

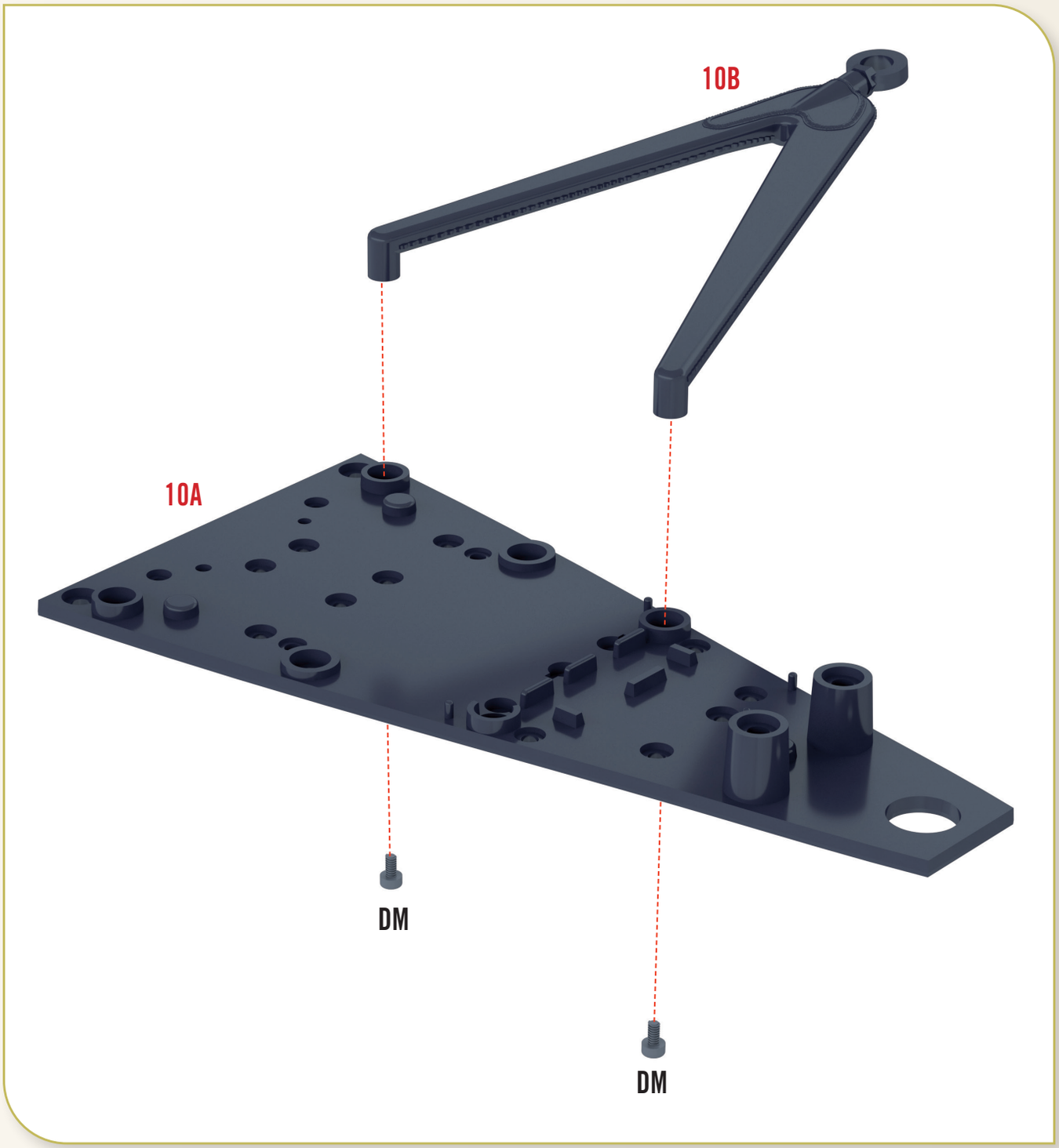
Publisher's note: the finish of the parts in the pictures may differ from the parts enclosed in this issue. This in no way affects either the product quality or the assembly instructions.

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STEP **10-1**

Place the edges of the front left suspension lower wishbone arm **10B** into the two holes indicated in the front nose base **10A**. Secure the parts with two **DM** screws.

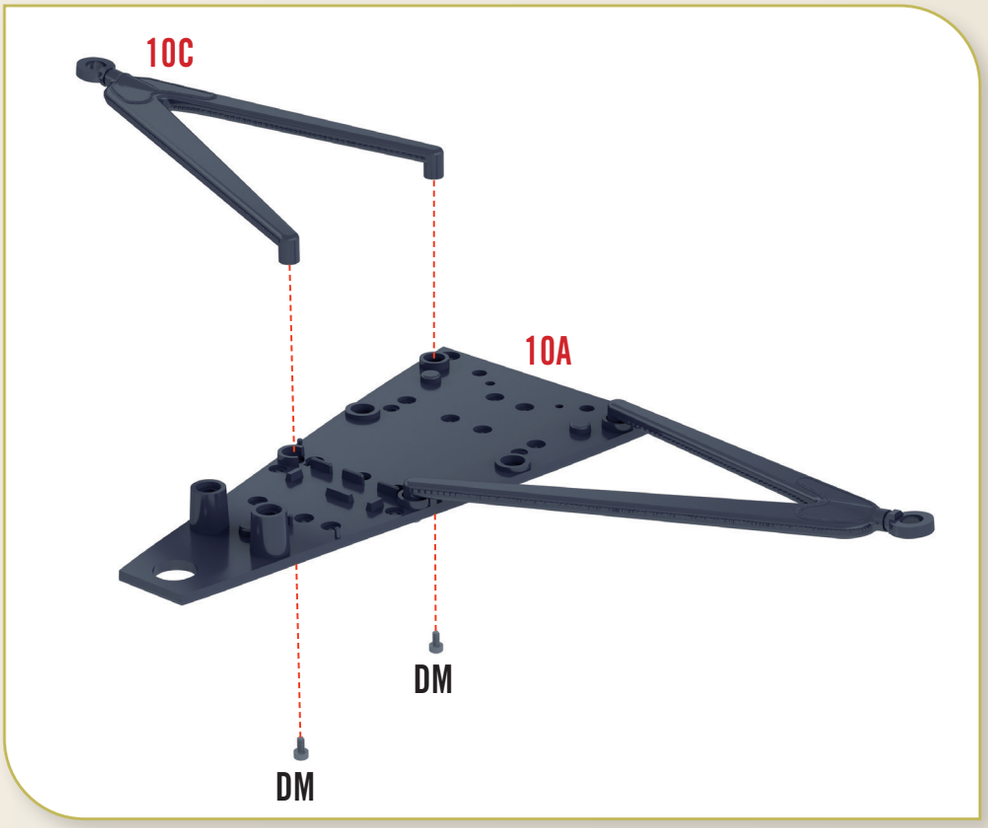
BEFORE STARTING
Make the necessary checks to identify each of the parts. Read all the steps beforehand to get an idea of what to do during assembly.

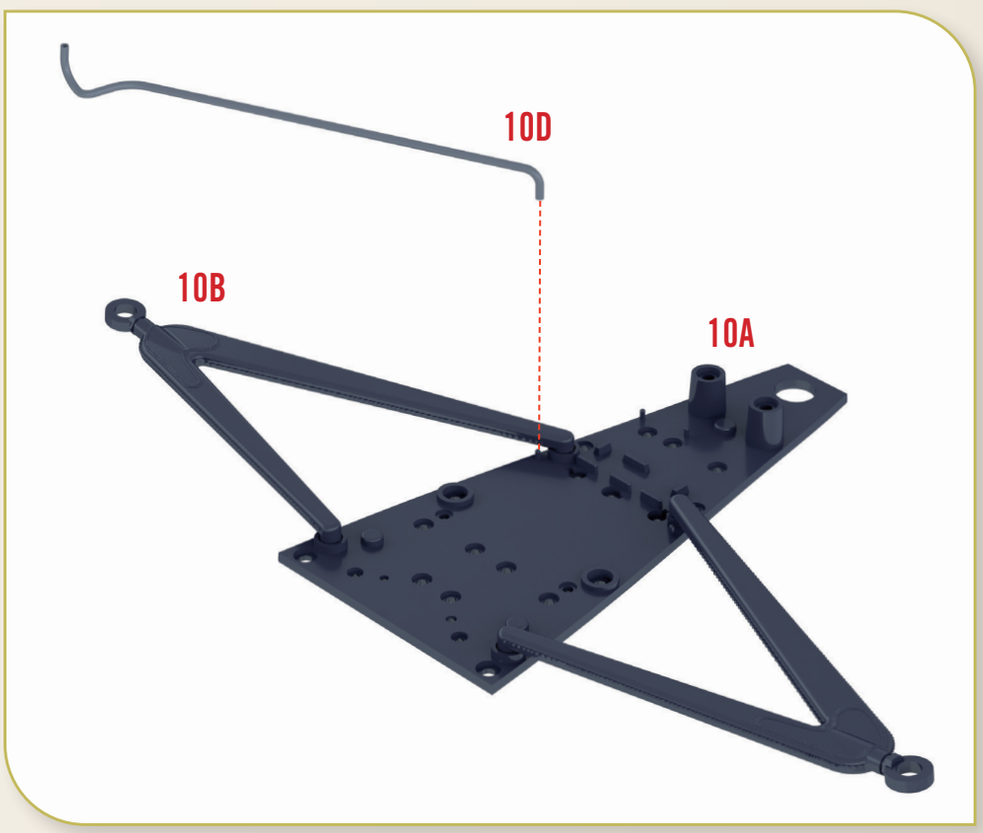


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STEP 10-2

On the other side of the front nose base **10A**, attach the edges of the front right suspension lower wishbone arm **10C**. Secure the parts with two **DM** screws.





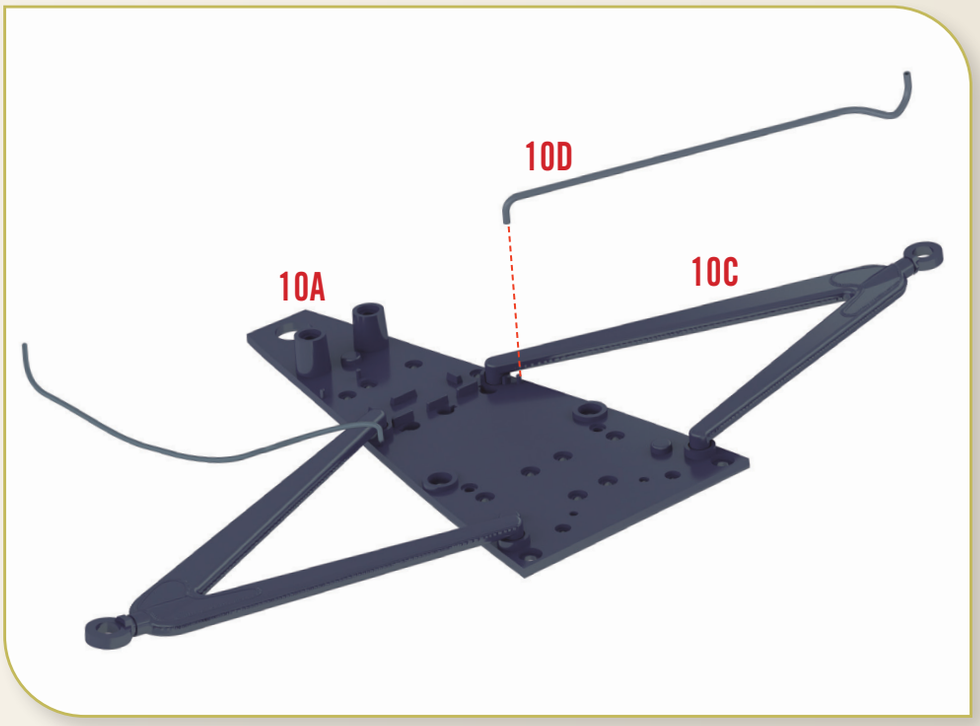
STEP 10-3

Take one of the two front brake lines **10D** and attach one of its ends to the indicated pin, next to the front left suspension lower wishbone arm **10B**. For now, leave the other end of the line free.

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STEP 10-4

Take the other front brake line **10D** and attach one end to the pin beside the attachment point of the front right suspension lower wishbone arm **10C**. Leave the other end free.



FINAL ASSEMBLY

This is the image of the set of parts that we have assembled in this issue:



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Ayrton Senna
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