

SuperCar 8865

The eightightsixfiveism

Text by arvo

Images from Blackbird's Technicopedia

It was 1988 when the sexiest, reddest and most technical SET ever designed appeared on the scene.

(Now is when the editors should add that "... the magazine is not responsible for the opinions ... etc, etc ...")

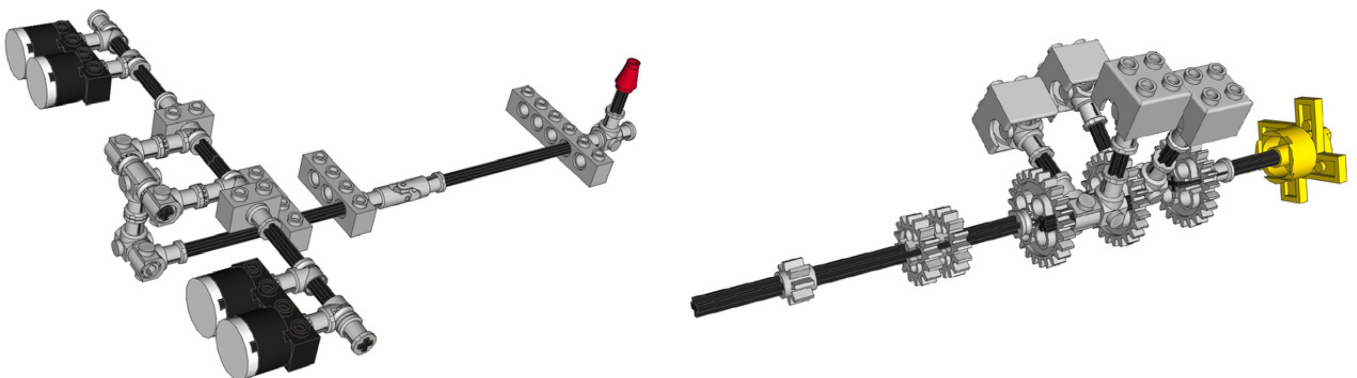
At that time, someone, back in the Denmark, in a cold and white room jumped up from his seat shouting, "I demand my canonization...my canonization ... !!!". Although probably the artist responsible of the design was never aware of his achievement. Unless he were an Illuminati, most likely after turning off his computer, he took his ham sandwich and his umbrella and went to have lunch on his favourite bench (BTW, in 1988, Did computer design exist?, "Did they use an Amiga?, or an ATARI?)

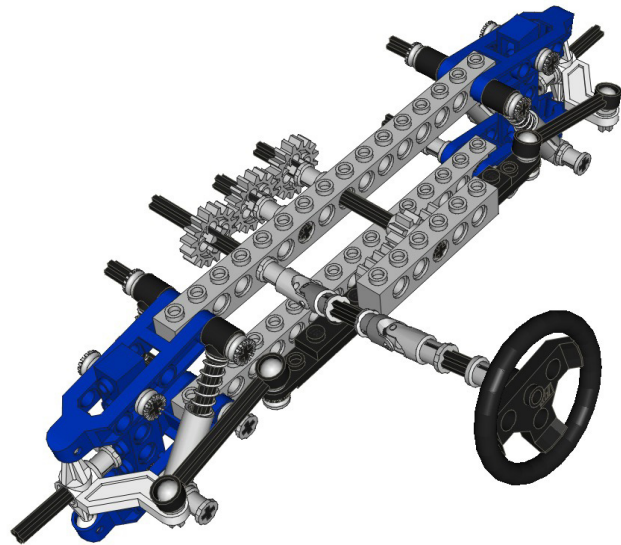
But let that go. Let's talk about 8865, of what it meant, of what it inherited and of what it introduced, but above all, of what would become impossible to improve in later models. It fits into the famous series of supercars.

Starting from the outside in, the box was more compact and discreet than its predecessor (SET 8860). Its image, something more technical with all those dimensions in the background, gave it an air of prototype (we must remember that after 8 years, trends in the field of design were very different.) In any case its weight told us that it contained one of the most complete constructions of that time.

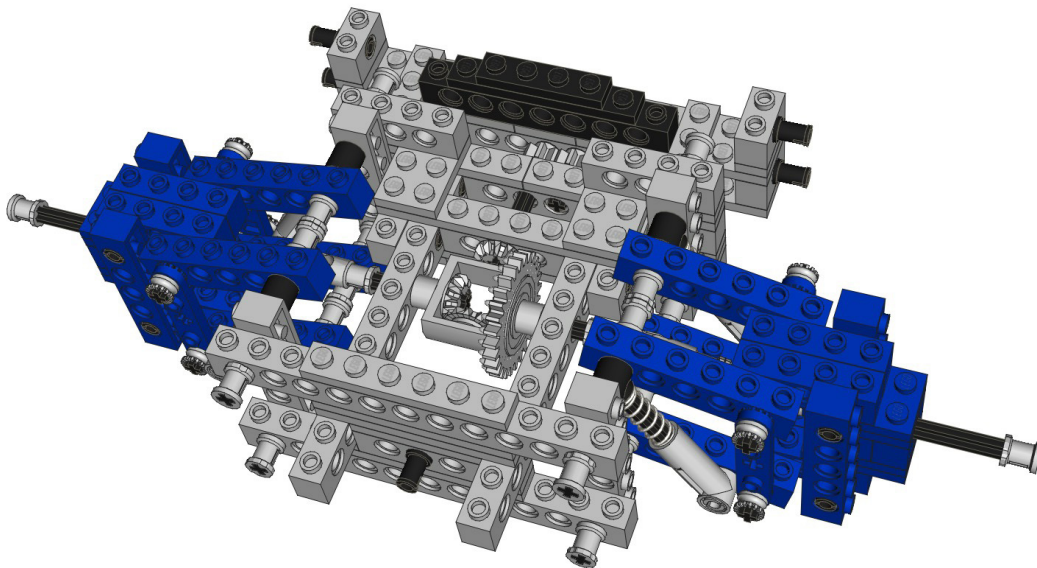
A clear plastic thermoformed tray housed some of the characteristic parts of the model (wheels, gears, technic bricks, etc) and protected the compartments, made in cardboard, which contained the remaining parts, 892 in total.

A more than worthy evolution of the fabulous 8860, it inherited much of its technical specifications but introduced important innovations. The first and most obvious, its striking red fairing, with the folding seats in blue, and Technic Wheels 24 x 43, this time in white, endowed the model with an exclusive sporty look. On the other hand, the chassis, denser, increased in complexity to be able to host a great amount of detail, as the front suspension and steering compatible with the use of rods (even closer to a real system and becoming a standard from this model), headlights with activation lever (it wasn't state of the art, but it was amusing to be able to lift them from a lever, especially effective when dealing with a double lamp model) or V-engine.





Its construction is not very complex (instructions has no more than 19 pages, 12 for the main model and 7 pages for the secondary model), but again it seems perfectly optimized. It uses large Technic bricks and building frameworks to create its structure, obtaining a rigid and light scheme where all its parts are fully integrated.



In short, a fun model to build, with a perfect size that makes it manageable without ceasing to be what it truly is ... a big torpedo!

But none of this would result in the masterpiece we believe it is, even now, if we were talking about a handful of good details that are lost in a mediocre result. No.

This is the real feat. They managed to cram all that technique in a sleek, attractive and inspiring evening dress. The proportions were chosen with care, especially the height of the suspension, ridiculously accurate, the front appears to counterbalance the "excess" in the rear, without altering the profile. No other model gives a cushioned feel like this one does, it is not the number of shock absorbers, their inclination or distribution, whether or not soft ... the secret seems to lie outside the system: it is the general sense of delicately supported poise, where each of its four wheels enjoy the right amount of space (while the rear wheels have vertically space, the front wheels, thanks to the inwards alignment of the Technic bricks, have it horizontally ... what genius!)



But, why not repeat this feeling in later models? ... We believe there are several reasons, the famous and criticized "abandonment" of the Technic brick in favour of the lift arm may be one, but not decisive. In our opinion this is a model that "suggests" but there is nothing explicit ... the fairing is so simple that there are more pieces "unseen" than "seen" ... the gaps are distributed in a very balanced way that let you see all the model without "impregnating" it with a non-existent vacuum. To put it more graphically and brief, the designers were able to stop in time.

The secondary model, a pretty good Jeep, could have been a set in its own right (like almost all secondary models), although it would have been impossible to stand out next to the this 8865 TEST CAR. Technically it included almost all the details of the main model, except the V engine and the change in rear suspension (much simpler and borrowed from other "minor" models). Although the design is very successful, this was not the first time we saw a jeep, so if repeated in a larger size it would have gone completely unnoticed.

In conclusion we must confess something you will have surely noticed. We can not write about this model without spending more time on describing the feeling it gives us than on its specifications. At the end of the day it is just a LEGO® car that almost drove us crazy.

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