



when tyce toys was looking for a new line in 1985 they settled on a new line of Dinosaur figures. The action figure business was completely foreign to the company known mainly for its train and slot car racing sets. Action figures were even on the product development team's "Don't Even Go There" list. But action figure sales topped \$1 billion the previous year and some ideas resonate so loud they can't be ignored. Kids love Dinosaurs, but Tyco managers were also correct in realizing kids were too smart to try to buy interaction with cave men that didn't arrive for another 65 million years. Mattel's He-Man was at the

height of its popularity, so kids were ripe to suspend belief enough to allow time travelers from a space kingdom to warp back to the earth of 65,000,000 BC. These superior beings (the Valorians) could train these creatures to be the vehicles they needed to wage war against their enemies (the evil Rulons) who had followed them to Earth and developed a "brain box" to get dinosaurs to do their biding. These Dino-Riders outfitted their creatures with weapons and other accessories, which created a unique play environment. The dinosaurs in the line were Museum accurate in every detail. Fantasy was reserved strictly for the time travel-



ing human characters and the props used for play situations. This was Tyco's first action figure line. There was no budget to produce a TV series key to the success of the leading action figure lines of the times, so a videotape was offered at cost for support. The first year Dino-Riders hit the shelves in 1988 the line sold \$35 in the US and topped \$64 million worldwide. The tooling for the prehistoric creatures has since been reused for the Smithsonian Dinosaurs (1992) and Cadillacs and Dinosaurs (1993) lines.









44 Tomart's Action Figure Digest

