



1/10th OFF-ROAD WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Ian Kennedy



The Drivers' Rostrum at Romsey. Parma were the major sponsors.

12 Australians travelled to the United Kingdom in late July to compete in the 1/10th scale World Championships.

The Team included:

From New South Wales

Colin Grenenger,
Andrew Bolton,
Guy Evans,
Scott Kennedy,
Michael Toms,
Scott Salter,
Tony Bouvard.

From Victoria:

Greg Collings,
Jensen Spencer
Robert French

From South Australia:

Andrew Reade
Rob Reade

The team was managed by O.R.R.C.A. (N.S.W) Chairman, Ian Kennedy.

Grenenger, Salter, Andrew and Rob Reade competed in both 2WD and 4WD classes. Bouvard, Spencer and French competed in 2WD class and, Kennedy, Toms, and Collings competed in 4WD class.

In the opinion of the writer, Australia made a strategic error in not compelling all qualifiers, as a condition of entry to run in both classes. In the defense of ORRCA it should be mentioned that they were unaware of the existence of two classes until the arrival of the entry forms, 3 weeks, before entries closed!!

But more about that later,

Andrew Bolton, Michael Toms, Scott Kennedy, Robert French and Jensen Spencer travelled together with Ian Kennedy and Jensen's father Michael and arrived in England on July 24th. Colin Grenenger and Scott Salter departed Australia on July 27th together with Scott's wife Louise, Greg Collings and his wife arrived in England via the U.S.A.

on August 5th. Guy Evans and Tony Bouvard left Australia together and arrived July 30th.

The World Championships for 1987 were granted to the European body (EFRA) who granted the title to Great Britain who in turn granted the Romsey Club the right to stage the event.

Romsey is situated in southern England and is famous as the home of the late Earl Mountbatten of Burma.

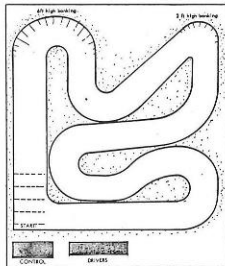
The Romsey circuit is situated 3 miles out of Romsey at the "Malthouse Inn". The circuit has only one track and a sketch of this is printed below.

The officials of the club would not allow any early practice, so, although competitors arrived early from many countries, they were barred from use of the track under any circumstances. A pity really, as later events were to reveal.

The track was a mixture of many compounds. From dirt mixed with cement

powder to oiled dirt and everything in between. On paper the circuit looked reasonable but on looking at it in practice the circuit dropped at one point by 24" at an angle of 60 degrees and then 50 feet later, after traversing a 180 degree hairpin went up by 24" at an angle of 45 degrees!!!

Track Details



TRACK DETAILS

Lap Length:	375 feet (125 yards)
Width:	Straight — 12 feet, 7 inches
	Infield — 10 feet, minimum
Surface:	Red Speedway Shale
Length of Main Straight:	70 feet
	• R/C •

The Pits consisted of a large marquee, which proved not to be large enough.



Open practice was allowed between 9 a.m. & 3 p.m. on Friday. This was a problem as no more than 10 cars were allowed on the track at any time. With 119 drivers competing for this time, drivers were lucky to obtain four practice sessions throughout the day. In other words 20 minutes. One very good idea was that of an organised practice. This was done in heat form to ensure that no radio frequency problems existed between each of the ten drivers.

The competition started at 9.00a.m. Saturday morning with five heats conducted on the Saturday and 1 heat and the finals on the Sunday.

The overall strength of the competition surprised the Americans. Quite a number remarked on the strength of the competition and this had surprised them. Jay Halsey, the current holder was on everyone's lips as the "hot" property, but there were many who pushed him hard each round.

The Japanese contingent was very strong with Kyosho putting in an enormous effort, and Mugen sending a team of four to race their new 1/10th scale car.

Overall the CAT and the OPTIMA had the "numbers". It was like running a "Brookie" at Bathurst.

From heat 1, 17 laps would see you in the 'A' or a very, very high 16. At the end of qualifying, only 6 drivers obtained 17 laps with 15 year old Masami Hirasaka of Japan T.Q. He was followed by Joel Johnson and Jay Halsey of the U.S.A. In fourth Katsunori Kondo, fifth Jamie Booth of Great Britain, sixth was Cliff Lett of the U.S.A. seventh Pete Stevens of Great Britain, eighth was Junichi Koma of Japan and Eric Soderquist and Mike Christensen both of the U.S.A. filled ninth and tenth places.

Australians did, in my opinion, very well with Colin Grenenger being the outstanding competitor.

It should be understood that 16's and 17's were the fastest drivers and only 27 seconds separating 1st, and 69th!!! On Sunday morning in the last heat of practice, an American driver improved his time by 3.75 seconds and went up 26 places!!!

Following the completion of qualifying, Australians were placed as

that drivers run both classes is to ensure they gain "track experience", because in the following session of 4WD, drivers obtained no more than 20 minutes on the circuit to practice for the 4WD championship. The initial 2WD class would have proved invaluable to them.

And to the major class.

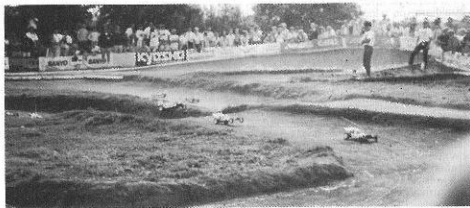
119 drivers started in the 1987 World Championships from the following countries.

U.S.A.	39
G.B.	15
Japan	15
France	6
Australia	9
Germany	10
Italy	5
Switzerland	1
Belgium	2
Finland	1
Sweden	1
Austria	2
Hong Kong	5
Ireland	1
Holland	3
Norway	2
Denmark	1

Cars represented included:

Schumacher	36
Kyosho Optima	35
Yokomo	17
RC10/MIP	5
SG Coyote	4
AYK	2
Mugen	4
Walker Special	1
PB	11

The track was a mixture of many compounds, and proved to be tricky.



Action!!

The "Pits" consisted of a large marquee, which proved not to be large enough for 120 competitors and crew. A lesson to be learnt for the next world titles.

Technical inspection or scrutineering, was very strict, and was conducted by Cecil Schumacher and Keith Plested of PB, with weight limits being checked before and after racing. Scoring was by way of AMB transponders.

2WD

Drivers from the following countries competed in this class:

U.S.A.	39
Japan	15
G.B.	26
Holland	2
Italy	4
Germany	5
Finland	1
France	9
Sweden	2
Australia	6
Austria	2
Ireland	2
Hong Kong	3
Switzerland	2
Belgium	2

Of course the majority of cars were Associated RC10 but Kyosho of Japan put up an enormous effort with their new Ultima. The Americans were truly a picture to watch. They have 2 wheel driver class down to a "T".

Both Andrew Reade in a PB and Colin Grenenger in a 2WD CAT proved to be amongst the leaders. Andrew finished the 2WD series in 46th position and Colin in 56th position. Our other Australian finished as follows: Jensen Spencer in 95th, Tony Bouvard in 104th, Scott Salter in 110th and Robert French in 114th.

The overall winners though were Kyosho with their "Ultima". Taking 1st, 2nd, & 3rd positions with Joel Johnson of the USA 1st, Katsunori Kondo of Japan 2nd Kris Moore of the United States 3rd. The Champagne corks were popping in the "Kyosho" tent for hours afterwards.

3.4 seconds separated 1st, 2nd, & 3.5 seconds between 2nd & 3rd. The remaining positions in the "A" final were taken by 6 RC10's and 1 MIP/RC10.

The reason I mentioned earlier that we should make it a condition of entry

follows

Australia votes will have to be taken by ORRCA Australia.

34th	Colin Grenenger	16.309.46
57th	Michael Toms	16.316.90
58th	Andrew Bolton	16.316.98
63rd	Scott Kennedy	16.319.11
73rd	Andrew Reade	15.301.78
81st	Rob Reade	15.313.50
98th	Scott Salter	15.313.76
109th	Guy Evans	14.293.15

The "A" final was conducted over three legs with no driver winning more than 1.

The overall winner was the top qualifier, Masami Hirotsuka of Japan driving a Schumacher CAT, and he was a deserving winner.

I saw the actual split times to 100th of a second and Hirotsuka had, in one of the finals, eight consecutive laps all within 2/100 seconds of each other. Really quite amazing.

A great win also for Cecil Schumacher. At the presentation, when the champagne was being sprayed "everywhere" Cecil and his wife were stand next to me, and Mrs. Schumacher said "move out of the way Cecil, you'll get wet" and Cecil replied "I'm feeling so good I couldn't care if they drowned me in it!!"

Following the completion of the finals, Australians finished as follows.

Colin Grenenger	32nd
Andrew Bolton	51st
Michael Toms	56th
Scott Kennedy	62nd
Andrew Reade	65th
Greg Collings	81st
Scott Salter	95th
Rob Reade	99th
Guy Evans	106th

IAN'S OBSERVATIONS:

The "marshalling" was terrible. Overall the Australians showed what "marshalling" was really about, and I received a lot of comment about the "terrific" Australian marshalling.

IFMA will make a decision within a year on the format of the next world titles. It will certainly be both 2WD and 4WD but the decision on whether it will be 7 cells and 4 minutes or 6 cells and five minutes will depend on a vote of the member states. A decision on how

Australia votes will have to be taken by ORRCA Australia.

The next World Championship will be held under the guidance of FEMCA, and both Australia and Japan have submitted applications for the event. It will be decided by a vote of the FEMCA states sometime over the next four months. We hope very much that the vote will go Australia's way.

All of the Australians who visited the World Championships were outstanding ambassadors for Australia and for the sport and we should be all proud of our drivers.

Technology still remains the greatest problems to Australians and where the technology appears to now matter most is in the choice of "cells". An enormous amount of effort and matching has gone into the top drivers' batteries and the standard of batteries that were raced at Romsey compared to what we buy as "over the counter" is the difference between a Rolls Royce and a Mini!! An area we will have to watch and learn to live with.

In driving skill, we are up there with the best. A close look at Lap time shows that our Drivers were lapping at times similar to the top 10, they were just not as consistent. If we are to obtain world standards then the only way we can do this is through competitions such as Romsey and to keep a close watch on World Technology.

ORRCA Australia should start NOW to commence plans for the next world championships, no matter where they are held. Decisions should be made now for the way in which drivers qualify for the next event and the conditions under which they may qualify. It would also be my recommendation that a condition of qualifying should be that drivers run both classes.

I believe that at Club level, Club's should now introduce a 2WD open class and allow dual nominations from open class drivers at each Club day to contest a 2WD Open class.

The attendance of the Australians at Romsey can only benefit the sport in Australia.

I was pleased to be there.
I.J.K.



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