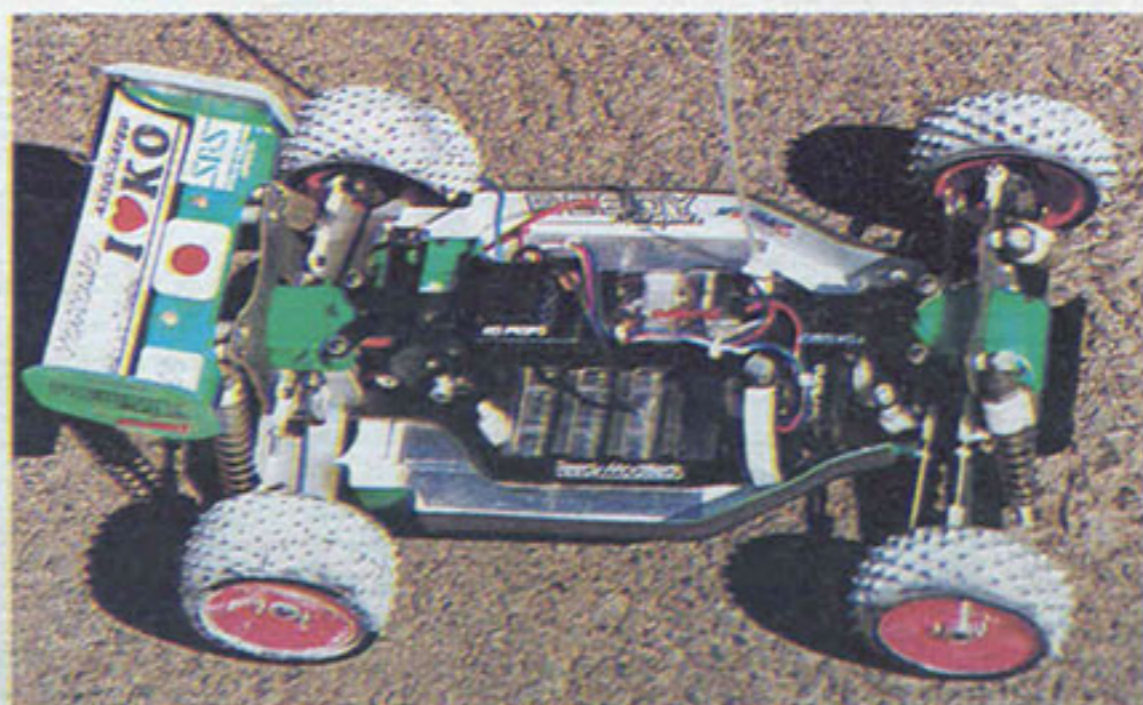




The St. Ives Showground track in Sydney, Australia was the place to be for the running of the IFMAR Offroad World Championships. Teams from around the world competed for the championship. The event was sponsored by Schumacher.



Masami Hirose's winning 2WD car was this RC10 with a Reedy motor, KO radio, and Reedy Sanyo batteries.



Masami's other winning car was this 4WD Yokomo, similarly equipped with a Reedy motor, KO radio, and Reedy Sanyos. The tires have been sprayed with a special anti-dirt compound.



## COMPETITION

BY GENE HUSTING

# IFMAR OFFROAD WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

**W**ithout question, the biggest R/C car race is the IFMAR 1/10 Offroad World Championships, held every two years. The first-ever was held in Del Mar, California, with Jay Halsey winning 2WD and Gil Losi Jr. winning 4WD. Two years later, in Romsey, England, Joel Johnson won 2WD, while Masami Hirosaka won 4WD.

Now it's two years later again, and we're in Sydney, Australia to see who will be the next IFMAR World Champions. We had a 14-hour nonstop flight from Los Angeles, which we thought was quite long, until we heard of the 24-hour flights with stops, that the Europeans had to make! My impression of Australia is that it's as close to being like the United States as any foreign country we've been to. The people are friendly, and they speak English, of course. Sydney is about the same size as the Los Angeles area, from Ventura to Pomona, and they don't have any freeways! And they drive on the wrong side of the road. I can tell you that's exciting! But of the seven TV stations, four of them show American movies and TV programs and the food is just like at home, so you feel very comfortable there.

This race was being held at St. Ives Showground (park) and was sponsored by Schumacher, the current 4WD World Champion in England. A great deal of thanks must go to Cecil Schumacher for sponsoring this race, and I believe the R/C car hobby is fortunate to have great people like Cecil involved.

This race must be important because everyone was here a full week before official

---

*Masami Hirosaka wins the 2WD and 4WD offroad titles with a consistent driving performance.*

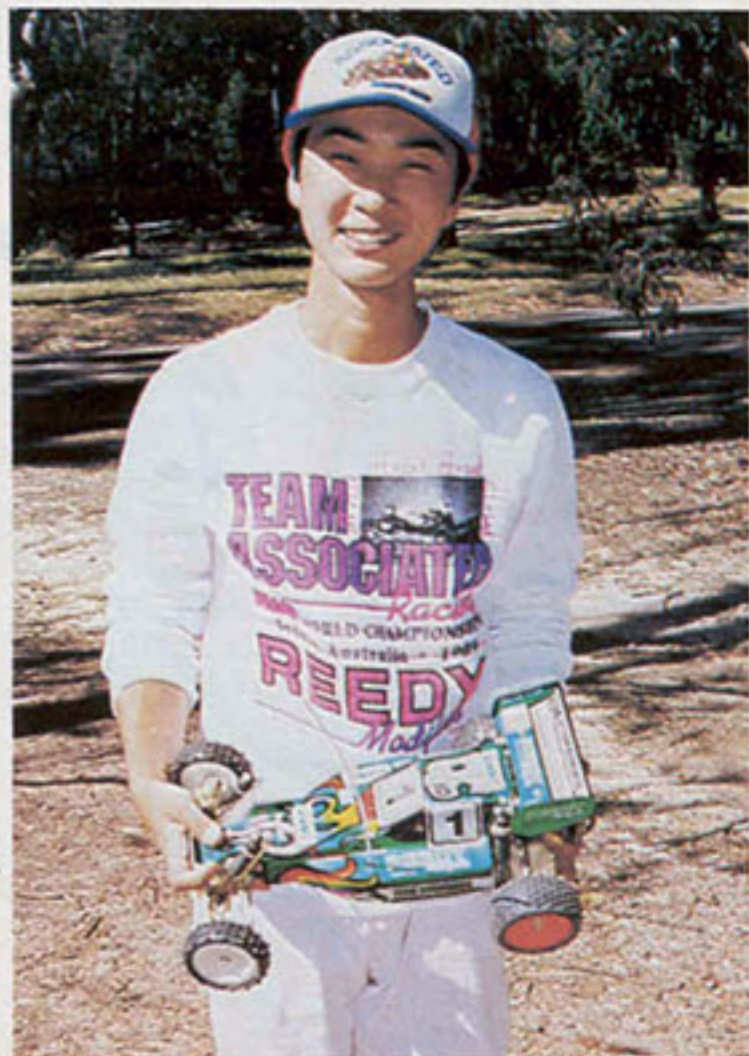
---

practice even began. But in offroad racing, there are so many variables it takes a long time to try as many chassis-tuning combinations as possible.

The track in St. Ives Showground was on the large side, with a couple small jumps and one larger jump. The track had an extremely hard surface of dirt and clay, almost identical to the last World Championship track in Romsey. When you can paint the starting lines on the straightaway and they don't wear off, and you repair the track with cement, and nobody notices, then I consider that an extremely hard surface. But in all the pre-race publicity, the track was well-described, so we all knew basically what the track would be like.

After the ROAR Nationals, we (Team Associated) had made some modifications to the RC10, and we were anxious to start running on the track to test the cars, as did, I'm sure, every other racer. We were fortunate the two weeks we were there that it only rained lightly a couple times at night. So we had two solid weeks of running. The first days were in the low 60s, but then they gradually warmed up to high 70s.

The practice week was always exciting for the drivers, because there were always a lot of drivers running, with half being 2WD and half 4WD. If you were running 2WD, you never knew if it was safe going into a corner with another car, because it could be a 4WD car. Obviously the 2WD and 4WD cars were driven quite differently on this track.



Masami Hirosaka, current IFMAR World Champion in 2WD and 4WD Offroad classes following his stunning victories in Australia.



The corner at the end of the straightaway was fun to watch when Masami Hirosaka was driving. He'd come full-out down the straight until he got to the cement berm, then throw the car sideways in a four-wheel slide, and as soon as he'd cleared the berm, he punched it. Masami did it consistently, lap after lap.

Day by day, the cars were all getting a little better. One interesting thing was watching Joel Johnson. He got twice as much track time as anyone. First he would run his Kyosho Ultima and then he would run his JR-X2, trying to decide which he liked best. This went on for a full week. Everyone was betting which car he would race. When I timed him, he was running virtually identical times with both cars, so he had a tough choice. Ultimately, he chose his Ultima.

Our cars were getting better and better, as different combinations of camber, caster, toe-in and ride height were being tested, as well as tires. About the middle of the week, Masami Hirosaka, who was also testing his Yokomo and RC10 cars, tried some of the Yokomo tires on his RC10 and found they worked better for him, so he offered them to the rest of the Associated team. Everyone who tried them also liked them.

Apparently the RC10 and Yokomo cars were going too fast, because some people

started complaining that the Yokomo wheels and tires were too big. The tires weren't any bigger, but the wheels were 1/8" bigger. The wheels were bigger than ROAR allows, but they were well within the IFMAR rules, which have no maximum wheel size. As all IFMAR World Championships are run using IFMAR rules, they were perfectly legal. It was similar to the Kyosho Ultima car used in Romsey, which was too wide for ROAR rules, but perfectly legal for IFMAR rules. No problem.

So, then they complained because only Yokomo and Associated cars had the tires. I seem to remember in Romsey, that Kyosho had some tires that worked extremely well on that track, but only Kyosho drivers had them. I didn't hear any complaints. At the ROAR Nationals, Losi came up with some tires that worked extremely well, but they were only allowed on JR-X2 cars. It's really hard for me to understand how the same people that found a way to improve their car's performance—legally, could now com-

plain about someone else, who did the exact same thing they did before and did it legally! Everyone did get one good laugh during the week though, when Gil Losi Jr. and Ron Rossetti both tried full-size monster truck tires on their cars. Needless to say, they didn't work too well. But it was worth a try.

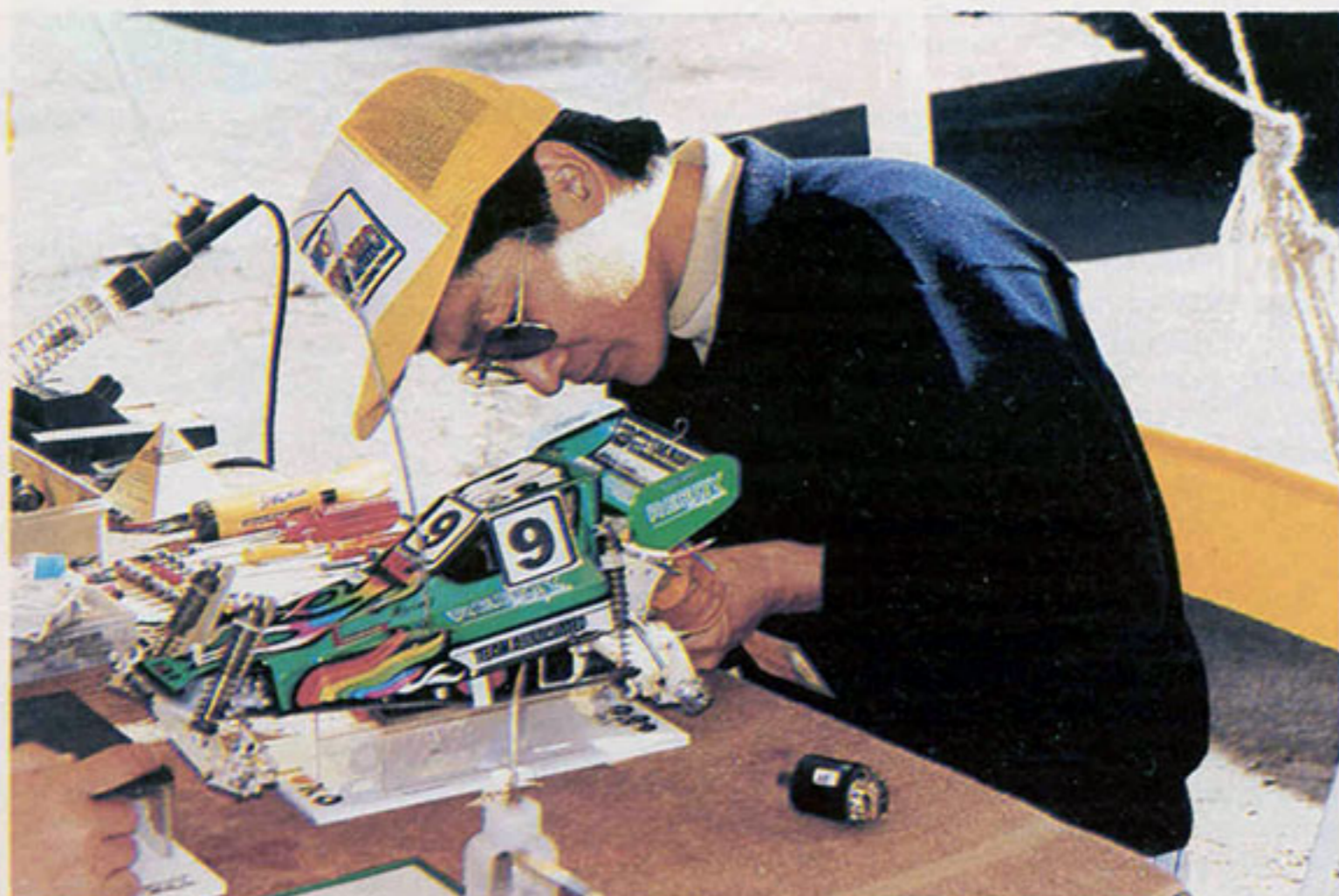
For qualifying, every driver would get six heats. The whole 2WD program would be run and then the 4WD program. Also for qualifying, the random start procedure would be used with the AMB system. Instead of 10 cars tangled up in the first corner, the cars start one at a time, with one-second intervals between cars. This gives everyone their best chance for a good qualifying run. In addition, after the first round, the cars start by how fast they went the previous round. This keeps the cars more spread out. There was also two IFMAR judges always present who would issue warnings to any erratic driver who might cause problems for another driver. Needless to say, the IFMAR races are the cleanest races you'll ever see.

The nightly track maintenance schedule, which was published six months before the event, consisted of repairing any potholes that might have appeared during the day's racing, and then thoroughly watering down the track. The rounds were rotated so everyone got a chance to run on the same type track. The heats were also set up so that there were two or three known fast guys in each heat, and then a mixture of drivers from different countries.

#### 2WD QUALIFYING

Masami Hirosaka, from Japan, led qualifying after the first round, turning 15 laps in 5 min.00.28 seconds or 15-5.00.28. Just a car length back in second spot was Jay Halsey, USA with a 15-5.00.55. Another second back was Cliff Lett, USA 15-5.01.81. Followed by Craig Drescher, England 15-5.08.16.

Masami took quick time in round two again with 16-5.12.69, with Jay again in second at 16-5.17.77, followed by Craig Drescher with a 16-5.18.94. In the next round, Masami was again quickest with 16-5.12.5 followed by Cliff Lett 16-5.18.67. The only two drivers



Masami's father, Masaki Hirosaka busy preparing his son's RC10 for another run.



The lineup for the 2WD "A" main: Joel Johnson, Jamie Booth, Jay Halsey, Masami Hirosaka, Mike Dunn, Craig Drescher, Rick Vehlow, Cliff Lett, Jack Johnson, and Ron Rossetti.

with 16 laps in that round.

Going towards the end of the day the times started to slow down a little more as the track dried out and got slippery. But Masami was still the quickest with 15-5.01.46 followed by Mike Dunn, USA 15-5.04.46 and Rick Vehlow 15-5.05.62. The final round of the day had Cliff Lett quickest with 15-5.00.37, followed by Jay Halsey 15-5.02.81 and finally Masami with 15-5.03.13.

The next morning, on a fresh track, everyone expected the times to drop, and that's just what happened. Mike Dunn took top spot with a quick 15-5.16.4, which placed him second overall to Masami. Cliff Lett and Rick Vehlow had identical times of 16-5.18.12 followed by Masami with 16-5.18.42. As close as these times were, it looked like it would be anyone's race.

#### 2WD "C" FINAL

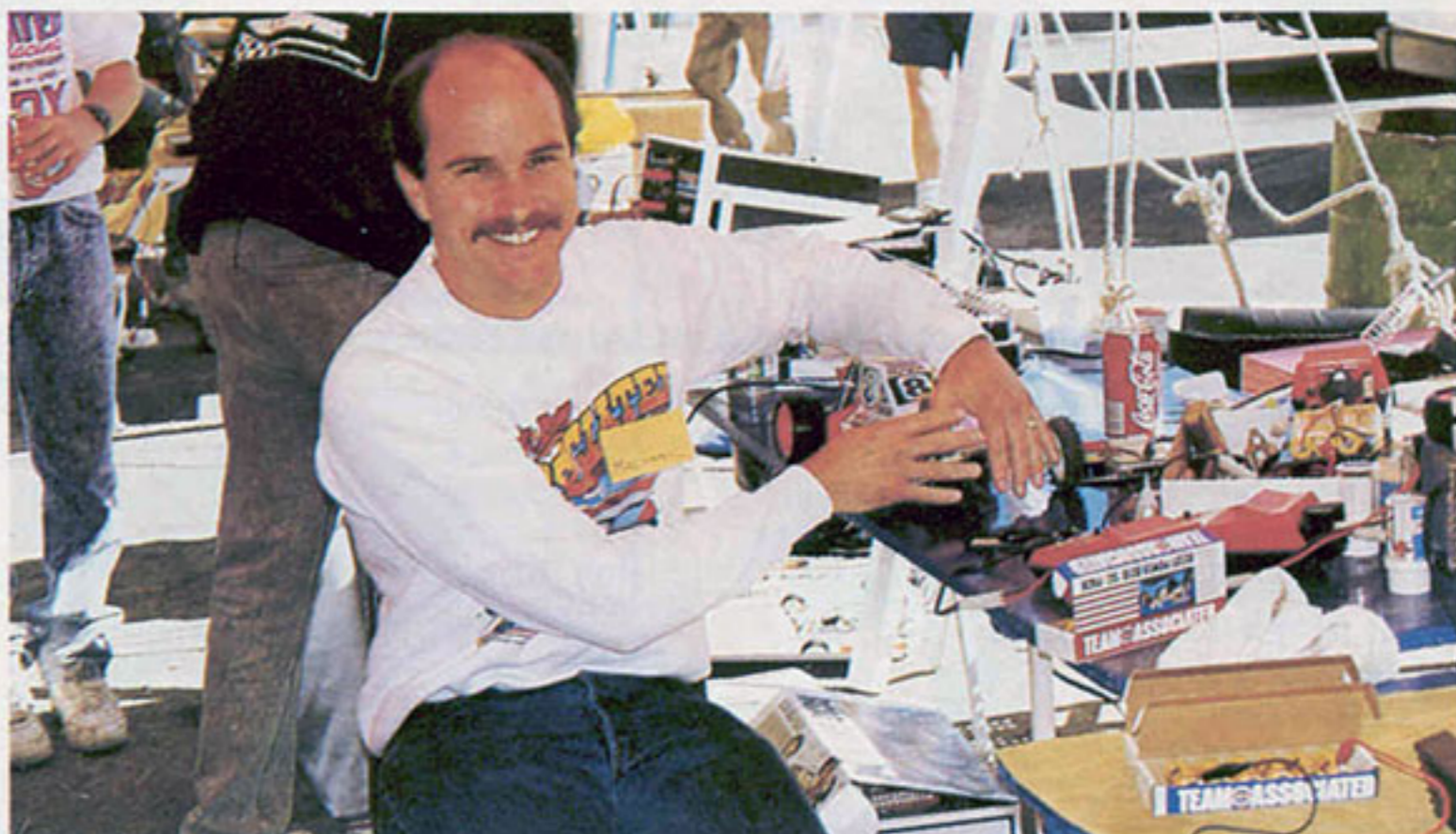
Gil Losi Jr. started from pole position and led wire to wire. Gil and Joe Schmitz were in the same qualifying round and both lost their best qualifying round, because they failed to marshal once. But, as Joe said, "I knew I was supposed to marshal, I wasn't there, it was my responsibility to be there." But both of their backup times were good enough to keep them in the same main.

#### 2WD "C" FINAL RESULTS

- |                   |              |
|-------------------|--------------|
| 1. Gil Losi Jr.   | USA          |
| 2. Ric Bartolozzi | Australia    |
| 3. Rory Cull      | England      |
| 4. Don Jones      | USA          |
| 5. Kurtis McElroy | USA          |
| 6. Mike Burnette  | USA          |
| 7. Chris Allec    | USA          |
| 8. Michael Ebert  | USA          |
| 9. William Silver | USA          |
| 10. Klaus Wilhelm | West Germany |

#### 2WD "B" FINAL

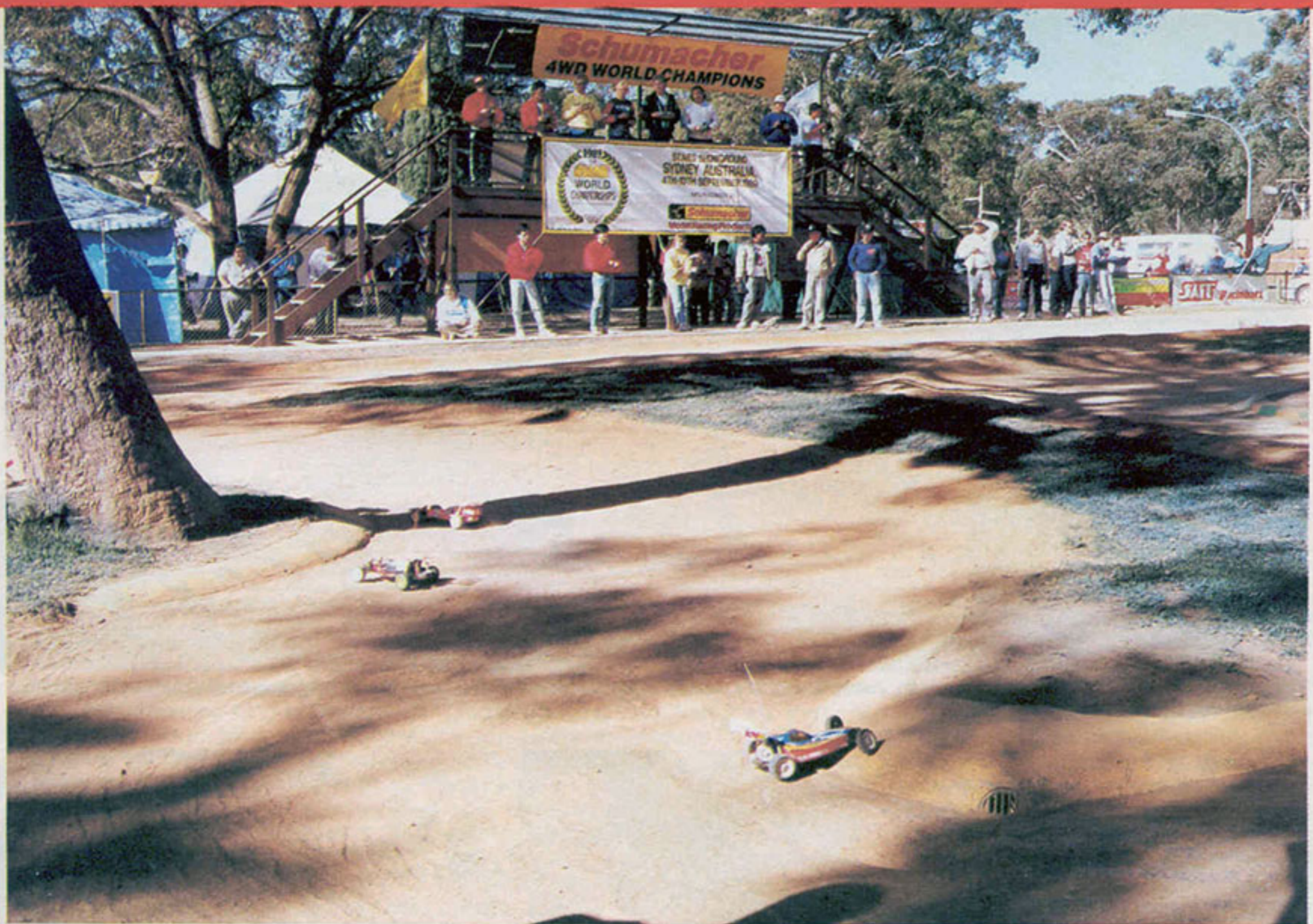
Butch Kloeber missed the "A" finals by 1/2 second, but he didn't let the "B" final get away from him. But it wasn't easy. He got



Curtis Husting jokingly tries to hide the newly modified RC10 from the camera. Curtis made each and every piece on the first original RC10s, including the chassis, and also does all of Associated's prototype work, as well as run the machine shop.



Under the Associated tent with Butch Kloeber, Christian Keil, and Don Jones, as Rich Vehlow watches Mike Reedy clean his motor. Reedy motors not only won both mains, but Mike had an unbelievable 13 out of 20 motors in the finals.



The track surface was fairly hard, compounded of dirt and clay, similar to the track at the last World Championships in Romsey, England.

tapped in the rear, spun out and Kris Moore went into the lead with Darin Stump second and Gary Kyes third. But one by one Butch moved back up to take the win with Kris second and Rick Hohwart third.

#### 2WD "B" FINAL RESULTS

1. Butch Kloeber	USA
2. Kris Moore	USA
3. Rick Hohwart	USA
4. Chris McElroy	USA
5. Steve Dunn	USA
6. Darin Stump	USA
7. Christian Keil	West Germany
8. Joe Schmitz	USA
9. Gary Kyes	USA
10. Mike Geddes	Australia

#### 2WD "A" FINALS

There would be three "A" Finals, interspersed between the other finals, and about one hour apart. Each driver's best two out of three results would count toward the championships. Eustace Moore had taken over the P.A. duties and did a great job informing the drivers and large audience of placings and what was happening during the Finals. Eustace introduced the drivers to everyone, photos were taken, the cars lined up two-by-two, the recorded tape message said GO, and the race was underway.

#### 1st 2WD "A" FINAL RESULTS

1. Masami Hirosaka	17-5.11.23
2. Jay Halsey	17-5.13.04
3. Mike Dunn	17-5.18.74
4. Craig Drescher	16-5.02.70
5. Cliff Lett	16-5.02.88

6. Jamie Booth	16-5.04.90
7. Rick Vehlow	16-5.06.40
8. Jack Johnson	16-5.07.81
9. Joel Johnson	16-5.09.75
10. Ron Rossetti	16-5.15.53

From his #1 starting spot, Masami took the lead with Dunn in second, but Dunn got a little wide in the second corner and Halsey went by to take over second with Dunn third, Lett fourth, Drescher fifth and Booth sixth.

Masami opened up a 25-foot lead with Halsey another five feet ahead of Dunn. During the sixth lap Lett rolled and Drescher and Booth got by. Lett was able to move past Booth.

Masami went on to win with 17-5.11.23 with Jay just two seconds back at 17-5.13.04 and Dunn following in 17-5.18.74.

#### 2nd 2WD "A" FINAL

When the race started, Masami got a little too wide in the first corner and Mike Dunn went by to take the lead, with Masami second, Halsey third, Joel Johnson fourth, and Drescher fifth.

On the next lap Dunn went a little too wide and Masami got by to take the lead back. The very next lap Dunn went wide in turn four and Halsey got by to take over second.

On the fourth lap Jay caught Masami on the straightaway, and they went into turn one together. Jay got in the loose stuff and Masami kept the lead, with Dunn going by Jay. Jay was still a little out of shape in the next corner and Joel tried to pass, but they both get tangled up, as Cliff and Vehlow went by.

Cliff was slowly closing on Dunn and as he got closer, Dunn rolled and Cliff and Vehlow went by. So Masami won the second one, but four drivers still had a mathematical chance to win the overall.

#### 2nd 2ND "A" FINAL RESULTS

1. Masami Hirosaka	17-5.16.65
2. Cliff Lett	17-5.18.79
3. Rick Vehlow	16-5.01.34
4. Mike Dunn	16-5.04.69
5. Craig Drescher	16-5.11.25
6. Jamie Booth	16-5.12.21
7. Joel Johnson	16-5.15.30
8. Jack Johnson	16-5.17.26
9. Jay Halsey	16-5.18.09
10. Ron Rossetti	16-5.23.68

#### 3rd 2WD "A" FINAL

This was it. The one that would decide it all. Every driver knew what he had to do to win overall. Masami's start was quick and clean. Dunn followed in second with Jay right on his tail. Jay was waiting for Dunn to go wide, but Dunn was driving nice tight lines. Finally Jay got by Dunn on the straightaway. Then on the next lap, Dunn got quite wide and Lett and Booth both went by.

Masami and Jay were both going for it. But Masami had a full straightaway lead. Jay was going as fast as he could and was slowly closing in on Masami. Lap after lap he was getting closer and closer.

Masami knew he only beat Jay by less than two seconds the first round, and if Jay

*Continued on page 80*



Jammin' Jay Halsey took a well-deserved second in a very close finish with his Reedy-powered RC10 with Airtronics radio, Novak ESC, and Reedy batteries.



Butch Kloeber came close in taking second with his Reedy-powered Yokomo in 4WD class. Butch's car used an Airtronics radio, Novak ESC, and Reedy Sanyos.



Cliff Lett was close behind in third in 2WD. His RC10 used an Airtronics radio, Novak ESC, and Reedy motor and batteries.

beat him by more than two seconds this round, Jay would be World Champion again. Although Masami was trying to stay as far ahead as possible, Jay was just going too fast. The distance closed to 50 feet, then 25 feet, then 10 feet and then with five laps to go, and plenty of time left, Jay was just two feet behind Masami, looking for a way past.

Jay lost another five feet in traffic, made that up, then lost another 10 feet when he rolled. In another two laps Jay was right on Masami's bumper again, but it was the last lap. They were side by side going down the straightaway, as Jay pulled slightly ahead. Just two corners to go, Jay went into turn one with Masami right alongside. They bumped, and both spun out. Jay got straightened out first and won by a car length. But not by two seconds, so Masami won his third IFMAR World Championships. No other driver has

**4WD "B" FINAL**

Jamie Booth ran away with this final, winning by six seconds. All the racing was going on for second place, with Rick Vehlow finally finishing in second just a few feet ahead of Katsundri Kondo.

**1st 4WD "A" FINAL**

Could Masami do it again? Not if nine other drivers had their way. Well, Masami jumped in the lead again from his #1 starting position. Then Lett and Kloeber bumped together in the second corner allowing Rick Hohwart to move into second with Jurgen Lautenbach to take third.

Jurgen had some good power and managed to get by Rick to take over second. Then Rick rolled and Jay went into third with Butch fourth and Cliff fifth. Butch caught and passed Jay on the inside of the sweeper. Two laps later Butch passed Jurgen in the

**OVERALL 2WD "A" FINALS**

DRIVER	COUNTRY	TOTAL TIME	CAR	MOTOR
1. Masami Hirotsuka	Japan	34-10.25.68	Associated	Reedy
2. Jay Halsey	USA	34-10.27.23	Associated	Reedy
3. Cliff Lett	USA	34-10.35.24	Associated	Reedy
4. Mike Dunn	USA	33-10.23.43	JR-X2	Race Prep
5. Rick Vehlow	USA	32-10.07.74	Associated	Reedy
6. Jamie Booth	England	32-10.11.36	Schumacher	Reedy
7. Craig Drescher	England	32-10.13.95	Associated	Reedy
8. Jack Johnson	USA	32-10.17.30	JR-X2	Revolution
9. Joel Johnson	USA	32-10.25.05	Ultima	Trinity
10. Ron Rossetti	USA	32-10.39.21	JR-X2	Revolution

**3rd 2WD "A" FINAL RESULTS**

1. Jay Halsey	17-5.14.29
2. Masami Hirotsuka	17-5.14.45
3. Cliff Lett	17-5.16.45
4. Jamie Booth	16-5.06.46
5. Jack Johnson	16-5.09.49
6. Rick Vehlow	16-5.09.55
7. Mike Dunn	16-5.11.67
8. Craig Drescher	16-5.14.78
9. Joel Johnson	16-5.17.13
10. Ron Rossetti	15-5.01.25

**4WD "C" FINAL RESULTS**

1. Joel Johnson	USA
2. Andrew Bolton	Australia
3. Gary Kyes	USA
4. Hiroyuki Matsumoto	Japan
5. Darin Stump	USA
6. Kurtis McElroy	USA
7. Ralf Helbing	West Germany
8. Koichi Ishikawa	Japan
9. Craig Drescher	England
10. Gil Losi Jr.	USA

won more than two. Lett finished just two seconds behind to take third. The crowd was yelling and screaming while all this was going on and then they gave a long applause when it was over.

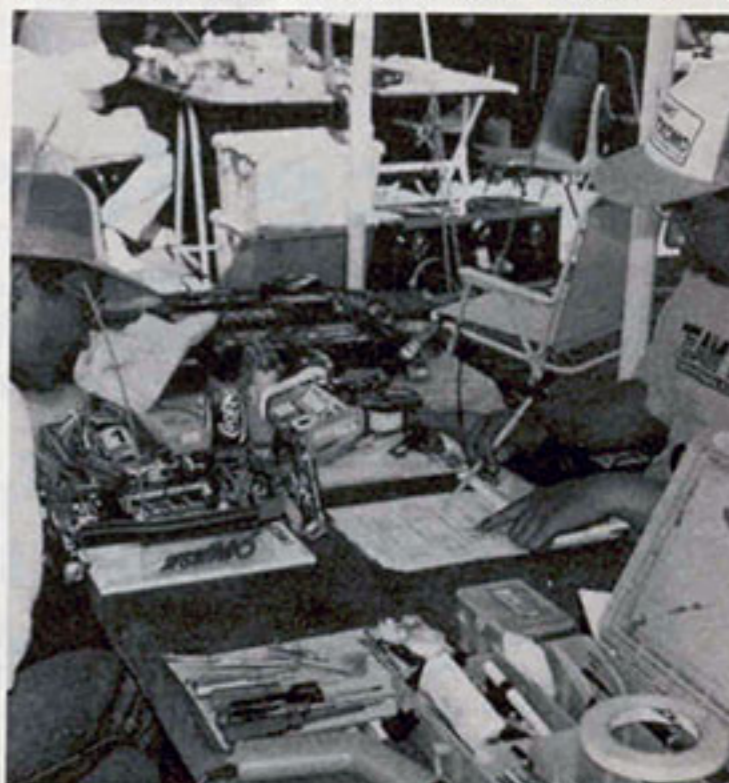
**4WD QUALIFYING**

Time for the fast ones. This track was made for 4WD cars. The drivers were given one more full day's practice and then it was qualifying time. You guessed it. Masami led the first round again by a comfortable margin with a fast 17-5.12 and then backed it up in the next round with a 17-12.96, but right on his tail was Butch Kloeber with a quick 17-5.13.58, with Cliff Lett third with 17-5.18, the only 17s in round four. Masami led again with 17-5.14.02 followed by Mike Dunn with 17-5.18.8. Rory Cull was the only driver to turn 17 in the fifth round with 17-5.17.74. All the 17s would start coming again tomorrow morning.

Cliff Lett was fastest in the last round with a 17-5.13.02 followed by Rick Hohwart 17-5.13.16, Masami 17-5.13.82, Butch Kloeber 17-5.14.93 and Jay Halsey 17-5.14.24. The main events were going to be close and fast indeed.

same spot. Butch was flying.

Butch closed to within 10 feet of Masami while Cliff was passing Jurgen. Butch got within two feet of Masami then rolled. Then he rolled again and Cliff got by to go into second. Masami doesn't beat himself. You



Masaki Hirotsuka and Hiroyuki Watanabe check the race program to make sure they have time to charge the batteries.

have to beat him. But there were still two more heats.

### 2nd 4WD "A" FINAL

Masami had the lead again, Cliff second, Butch third and Jurgen fourth. It takes Butch four laps, but he finally got around Cliff to take over second and start his chase of Masami again. But this time he couldn't catch Masami and Masami won by 70 feet over Butch with Jurgen just 10 feet back in third.

### 3rd 4WD "A" FINAL

We were down to the final race. Every driver but Jay had a chance to win in the final round. But they would have to go faster than they've ever gone before. We'll see.

Masami again led off, with Cliff, Butch, and Rick following. Butch wasn't waiting. Within a lap he passed Cliff to take over second, and start his chase of Masami. Meanwhile, Jurgen tapped Rick and went into fourth, but Rick soon got back by Jurgen.

Butch was closing fast on Masami and soon passed him for the lead. The crowd was screaming. Masami was staying right on Butch's tail but he couldn't quite catch him. Then Butch started to pull away, but then rolled it and Masami closed right up

again. The last lap they're both full-punched around the track, but Butch was keeping his lead down the straightaway to the checkered flag just five feet ahead of Masami.

So Masami won his fourth IFMAR World Championship, including his 1/12 win in Holland. INCREDIBLE!! And he's deserved every one of them. He's earned them. I believe Jay had the best 2WD car and Butch had the best 4WD car, but what Masami had was consistency. He was certainly fast, but equally important, he never had one bad run all through qualifying and the mains! Together with his super driving and his father, Masaki and Hiroyuki Watanabe, both of whom were the super mechanics on Masami's car, you come up with an awesome team! They're tough to beat.

I'd like to thank Jack Grenenger and the whole Australian club who put on a perfect World Championship event. Every practice round, every qualifying round and every final went off exactly on time as printed in the program. The results were posted on the bulletin board immediately. And somehow they managed to stop it from raining for two weeks so we could race. And I'd especially like to thank Ian Bannister for his help. •



Rick Hohwart finished a strong third with his Kyosho Optima, powered by Peak Performance, with a Futaba radio, Tekin ESC, and Peak Performance Sanyo batteries.

## FINAL RESULTS IFMAR OFFROAD WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS Sydney, Australia

### 4WD "B" FINAL RESULTS

1. Jamie Booth	England
2. Rick Vehlow	USA
3. Katsundri Kondo	Japan
4. Kris Moore	USA
5. Peter Philiposian	Australia
6. Don Jones	USA
7. Jack Johnson	USA
8. Joe Schmitz	USA
9. Ron Rossetti	USA
10. Reece Birtles	Australia

### 2nd 4WD "A" FINAL

1. Masami Hirosaka	18-5.16.56
2. Butch Kloeber	17-5.02.12
3. Jurgen Lautenbach	17-5.09.23
4. Cliff Lett	17-5.11.41
5. Phil Davies	17-5.11.68
6. Rory Cull	17-5.16.10
7. Mike Dunn	17-5.17.45
8. Satoshi Kayano	17-5.17.63
9. Rick Hohwart	16-5.04.25
10. Jay Halsey	5-1.27.00

### 3rd 4WD "A" FINAL RESULTS

1. Butch Kloeber	18-5.18.50
2. Masami Hirosaka	18-5.18.72
3. Rick Hohwart	17-5.05.27
4. Jay Halsey	17-5.08.87
5. Jurgen Lautenbach	17-5.10.92
6. Phil Davies	17-5.19.01
7. Satoshi Kayano	16-5.03.82
8. Cliff Lett	16-5.08.51
9. Rory Cull	15-5.02.01
10. Mike Dunn	9-2.44.19

### 1st 4WD "A" FINAL RESULTS

1. Masami Hirosaka	17-5.01.67
2. Cliff Lett	17-5.05.98
3. Butch Kloeber	17-5.09.91
4. Rick Hohwart	17-5.10.57
5. Jurgen Lautenbach	17-5.14.27
6. Mike Dunn	17-5.17.39
7. Satoshi Kayano	17-5.19.19
8. Phil Davies	16-5.00.61
9. Rory Cull	16-5.02.91
10. Jay Halsey	13-4.13.25

### OVERALL 4WD "A" FINALS

DRIVER	COUNTRY	TIME	CAR	MOTOR
1. Masami Hirosaka	Japan	36-10.35.28	Yokomo	Reedy
2. Butch Kloeber	USA	35-10.20.62	Yokomo	Reedy
3. Rick Hohwart	USA	34-10.15.84	Kyosho Peak Performance	
4. Cliff Lett	USA	34-10.17.39	Yokomo	Reedy
5. Jurgen Lautenbach	W. Germany	34-10.20.15	Schumacher	LRP
6. Phil Davies	England	34-10.30.69	Schumacher	Reedy
7. Mike Dunn	USA	34-10.348.4	AYK	Race Prep
8. Satoshi Kayano	Japan	34-10.36.82	Yokomo	Reedy
9. Rory Cull	England	33-10.19.01	Schumacher	Reedy
10. Jay Halsey	USA	30-9.22.12	Yokomo	Reedy