



# 1991 IFMAR 1/10 OFFROAD WORLDS!

**Masami wins for fifth time; Cliff Lett takes four-wheel drive crown.**

BY GENE HUSTING



From left: 5-time World Champion Masami Hirosaka was pressed hard by Rick Vehlow and Kyle Reed, but Masami prevailed in two-wheel drive.

Every World Championship is a special kind of race, with things happening that never seem to happen at any other race. Possibly because the race is so important to everyone, even the smallest things are more important, and things of normal importance ordinarily, become very important here. What would be happening at this race? We'll see!

The International Federation of Model Auto Racing held the 1991 1/10 OffRoad World Championships in Detroit, Michigan. Actually it was at Freedom Hills Park, in Sterling Heights, Michigan. The SEMROCC club, headed by Race Director John Thawley, and all the hard-working club members did a super job running the event on time, as well as grooming the track after every run. This was no easy job because the track is made up of regular brown top soil, no clay. The track is torn up after each and every 5-minute run, and must be repaired. And they did the whole track in two to three minutes, including watering. The race was sponsored by Kyosho and Trinity, and without their help this race wouldn't be possible.

I suppose this race really started about





Masaki and Masami Hirosaka were odds-on favorites to win another World Championship after winning both classes in Australia.



Above, Jamie Booth is one of the top drivers in England with his Tamiya racer. At left, Kevin Maurer holds Kyle Reed's car on his way to the starting line with a booster ready to plug in.



two months earlier, when SEMROCC held a warmup race for all the W.C.-qualified drivers. I was really surprised to see almost 100 of the 120 qualified drivers here. All the major teams from around the world were here. Cliff Lett TQd both the 2WD and 4WD classes with his RC10 stock Team Car and Yokomo cars, but the races were won by Jurgen Lautenbach in 2WD with his LRP-powered Schumacher car, and Rick Vehlow in 4WD with his Reedy-powered Yokomo car.

There were a lot of rumors about new prototype cars being prepared, but nobody was showing anything. Although we (Team Associated) had a new prototype Stealth car we were working on, we weren't in any hurry to show anyone. I think everyone just wanted to come, get used to the track and test tires, motors and batteries.

But there was something different happening there. The Losi and Trinity teams had combined to form their "Super Team." The Losi team was running Trinity motors and batteries, instead of their own Revolution motors and Prime Time batteries. Later, at the W.C., when I asked Gil Losi Sr. about this, he said, "Gene, we've been very busy prototyping our new car and we just didn't have time to do our own motors and batteries. So, it just made sense for us to join with Trinity, and take advantage of their motor and battery program."

After that warmup race, several teams later went back to the SEMROCC track for more practice time. The Losi team was back a few weeks before the race, and a number of teams were at the track over a week early to run at a club race here, including the Yokomo team. But we were busy trying to finish our new cars, which didn't get done until two days before we left.

When we arrived at the W.C. the weather was in the high 70s and it remained in the high 70s to low 80s the whole time we were there. Unbelievable, but great! There would only be 2-1/2 days of practice, which is definitely not enough for a W.C. but the track was closed for practice the week before.

We started to run our new cars and we quickly learned we had a lot of tuning to do. There was a 70-foot section of track in front of the drivers' stand that had 13 different jumps in it, that made the cars go every which way but straight. This was without a doubt the toughest 70 feet of track we've ever raced on.

This section was called the Whoop-De-Dos or Whoops, although I heard some drivers on the drivers' stand refer to it using slightly different words than that, as their cars were rolling over. It was necessary to carry a high speed through here, or you wouldn't be able to get good lap times. But, when you took the high speed approach, you were inviting disaster.

I'd bet that if you'd ask any driver here how many times they rolled over in the Whoops, they wouldn't be able to give you an exact answer, they'd just say—a lot! Or too many times! Every driver had their problems there.

But, on the first day of practice, we shattered all records for rolls, tumbles, flips, nose dives, crashes, collisions, and moon launchings! A couple of guys told me, "Gene, it doesn't look like your new cars like the Whoops." They were being kind. Actually, it looked like we didn't even belong on the track.

However, we knew the car was technically correct. It was just a question of whether there would be enough time to get them tuned in within 2-1/2 days, to catch the new Team Losi cars that were seemingly flying through the Whoops. On the rest of the track our car was quite good, and slowly but surely we started to get them dialed in. By the time the 2-1/2 practice days were over, we were about the same speed as everyone else around the track.

There was a rumor going around that there was a possibility that someone had some illegal batteries that they might be planning on running at the W.C. so, before qualifying started, IFMAR Vice President Mike Reedy called a meeting with all the team captains from all the countries to solve this possible problem. He asked if anyone actually saw these batteries or knew how to test for them.

It turned out that it was a rumor that everyone heard, but that no one knew how to check for, so it was resolved by teching the batteries according to the rules as written. Kyosho had submitted some new Panasonic 1700 batteries for approval, which were approved for this race and the Trinity/Losi team were using these purple Panasonic batteries, which were legal. Someone probably saw them and started a rumor.

The W.C. was set up so that the 4WD class would be run first, and then the 2WD saved for the weekend, because 2WD is so much more popular in this country than 4WD. Every driver would get six rounds of qualifying: there would be five rounds of qualifying on Tuesday, then one more round on Wednesday, followed by a practice round and then mains.



The top two drivers from England, Craig Drescher (left) and Rory Cull, with Christian Keil looking on. Craig won the British Championships, while Rory took second. Craig then went on to win the European Championships. At right, Mike Reedy (center) was kept busy servicing the team motors, and he also got some help from Chris Doseck (right). Reedy motors placed first and second in both A-mains, as well as winning the B and C mains. This makes 9 IFMAR World Championship-winning cars that have been powered by Reedy motors. Below: just when you think you're on the easy part of the Whoops, you get bitten hard.



**2WD A MAIN NO. 1**

PLACE	DRIVER	LAPS	TIME
1.	Kyle Reed	12	5:16.71
2.	Mark Pavidis	12	5:23.62
3.	Kevin Moore	12	5:24.62
4.	Satoshi Maezumi	12	5:26.36
5.	Masami Hiroasaka	12	5:30.36
6.	Craig Drescher	11	5:02.42
7.	Rick Vehlow	11	5:03.18
8.	Jurgen Lautenbach	11	5:05.05
9.	Scott Montgomery	11	5:10.14
10.	Derek Furutani	10	5:14.98

**2WD A MAIN NO. 2**

PLACE	DRIVER	LAPS	TIME
1.	Rick Vehlow	12	5:10.65
2.	Masami Hiroasaka	12	5:11.39
3.	Kyle Reed	12	5:13.07
4.	Kevin Moore	12	5:20.38
5.	Jurgen Lautenbach	11	5:00.44
6.	Satoshi Maezumi	11	5:03.23
7.	Scott Montgomery	11	5:04.28
8.	Mark Pavidis	11	5:05.84
9.	Craig Drescher	11	5:20.70
10.	Derek Furutani	10	4:37.62

**2WD A MAIN NO. 3**

PLACE	DRIVER	LAPS	TIME
1.	Masami Hiroasaka	12	5:13.43
2.	Rick Vehlow	12	5:15.97
3.	Kyle Reed	12	5:17.64
4.	Kevin Moore	12	5:21.40
5.	Jurgen Lautenbach	12	5:26.32
6.	Scott Montgomery	11	5:01.91
7.	Craig Drescher	11	5:07.17
8.	Mark Pavidis	11	5:09.16
9.	Derek Furutani	11	5:12.07
10.	Satoshi Maezumi	11	5:14.34

**4WD A MAIN NO. 1**

PLACE	DRIVER	LAPS	TIME
1.	Cliff Lett	12	5:05.88
2.	Masami Hiroasaka	12	5:07.53
3.	Jack Johnson	12	5:14.79
4.	Joel Johnson	12	5:15.25
5.	Kris Moore	12	5:15.96
6.	Mike Dunn	12	5:17.07
7.	Scott Anfinson	12	5:19.76
8.	Mark Francis	12	5:22.54
9.	Satoshi Maezumi	12	5:22.61
10.	Kevin Moore	11	5:00.41

**4WD FINAL**

PLACE	DRIVER	POINTS	COUNTRY	CAR	MOTOR
1.	Cliff Lett	19	USA	Yokomo	Reedy
2.	Masami Hiroasaka	19	Japan	Yokomo	Reedy
3.	Jack Johnson	18	USA	Kyosho	Trinity
4.	Joel Johnson	15	USA	Kyosho	Trinity
5.	Satoshi Maezumi	13	Japan	Yokomo	Atlas
6.	Scott Anfinson	12	USA	Yokomo	Reedy
7.	Kris Moore	10	USA	Kyosho	Twister
8.	Kevin Moore	9	England	Schumacher	LRP
9.	Mark Francis	8	USA	Yokomo	Reedy
10.	Mike Dunn	8	USA	Kyosho	Race Prep

**4WD C MAIN**

PLACE	DRIVER	LAPS	TIME
1.	Satoshi Kayano	12	5:14.98
2.	Brent Wallace	12	5:18.14
3.	Jurgen Lautenbach	12	5:26.71
4.	Jay Halsey	12	5:29.10
5.	Hiroyuki Matsumo	12	5:33.00
6.	Gary Kyes	11	5:04.46



**Masami Hiroasaka, winner of his fifth World Championships. Unbelievable!**

**2WD FINAL**

PLACE	DRIVER	POINTS	COUNTRY	CAR	MOTOR
1.	Masami Hiroasaka	19	Japan	RC10	Reedy
2.	Rick Vehlow	19	USA	RC10	Reedy
3.	Kyle Reed	18	USA	Losixx	Trinity
4.	Kevin Moore	15	England	Schumacher	LRP
5.	Mark Pavidis	12	USA	RC10	Reedy
6.	Jurgen Lautenbach	12	Germany	Schumacher	LRP
7.	Satoshi Maezumi	12	Japan	RC10	Atlas
8.	Scott Montgomery	9	USA	Traxxas	Peak Performance
9.	Craig Drescher	9	England	RC10	Reedy
10.	Derek Furutani	3	USA	RC10	Peak Performance

**4WD A MAIN NO. 2**

PLACE	DRIVER	LAPS	TIME
1.	Jack Johnson	12	5:04.99
2.	Cliff Lett	12	5:05.38
3.	Scott Anfinson	12	5:10.25
4.	Satoshi Maezumi	12	5:15.53
5.	Masami Hiroasaka	12	5:18.10
6.	Mark Francis	12	5:24.06
7.	Joel Johnson	11	4:50.34
8.	Kevin Moore	11	5:00.63
9.	Kris Moore	11	5:02.20
10.	Mike Dunn	7	3:34.23

**2WD B MAIN**

PLACE	DRIVER	LAPS	TIME
1.	Scott Anfinson	12	5:28.37
2.	Jack Johnson	12	5:38.88
3.	Chris Allec	11	5:03.28
4.	Sumida Kazutaka	11	5:05.63
5.	Brent Wallace	11	5:07.36
6.	William Mitcham	11	5:08.58
7.	Kris Moore	11	5:09.37
8.	Heikki Naulapaa	11	5:10.10
9.	Rick Hohwart	10	5:01.26
10.	Cliff Lett	5	2:23.51

**2WD C MAIN**

PLACE	DRIVER	LAPS	TIME
1.	Butch Kloeber	12	5:21.64
2.	Andrew Nelson	11	5:02.89
3.	Jon Anderson	11	5:04.45
4.	Rory Cull	11	5:06.83
5.	Curtis Strawn	11	5:08.90
6.	Brian Kinwald	11	5:09.84
7.	Gil Losi Jr.	11	5:10.03
8.	Ralf Helbing	11	5:11.09
9.	Jay Halsey	7	3:12.88
10.	Joel Johnson	0	0

**4WD A MAIN NO. 3**

PLACE	DRIVER	LAPS	TIME
1.	Masami Hiroasaka	12	5:05.61
2.	Cliff Lett	12	5:06.50
3.	Joel Johnson	12	5:17.89
4.	Satoshi Maezumi	12	5:21.30
5.	Kevin Moore	12	5:21.31
6.	Jack Johnson	12	5:21.51
7.	Kris Moore	12	5:22.52
8.	Mike Dunn	12	5:24.04
9.	Mark Francis	11	5:15.90
10.	Scott Anfinson	8	3:35.70

**4WD B MAIN**

PLACE	DRIVER	LAPS	TIME
1.	Brian Kinwald	12	5:18.00
2.	Darrin Stump	12	5:19.01
3.	Kazutaka Sumida	12	5:20.85
4.	Matt Ledger	12	5:28.13
5.	Rick Vehlow	11	4:52.51
6.	John Koonce	11	5:00.41
7.	David Crowe	11	5:03.87
8.	Curtis Strawn	11	5:03.88
9.	Mark Pavidis	6	2:43.04
10.	Darrin Campbell	4	1:53.65

7.	Hiroshi Suzuki	11	5:04.95
8.	Masato Sasaki	11	5:07.01
9.	John Walters	11	5:07.28
10.	Butch Kloeber	11	5:08.68

fastest car, the other driver would move over and let him by. I seem to remember the same type of agreement between two F1 drivers: Senna and Prost, who were both driving for McLaren at the time. They were both in a tie for the World Championships, too. Their agreement didn't even last one race and they became bitter rivals. I'm sure you're asking yourself about now, if I had a chance to win the W.C., would I back off and give the lead to someone else? Interesting question, isn't it?

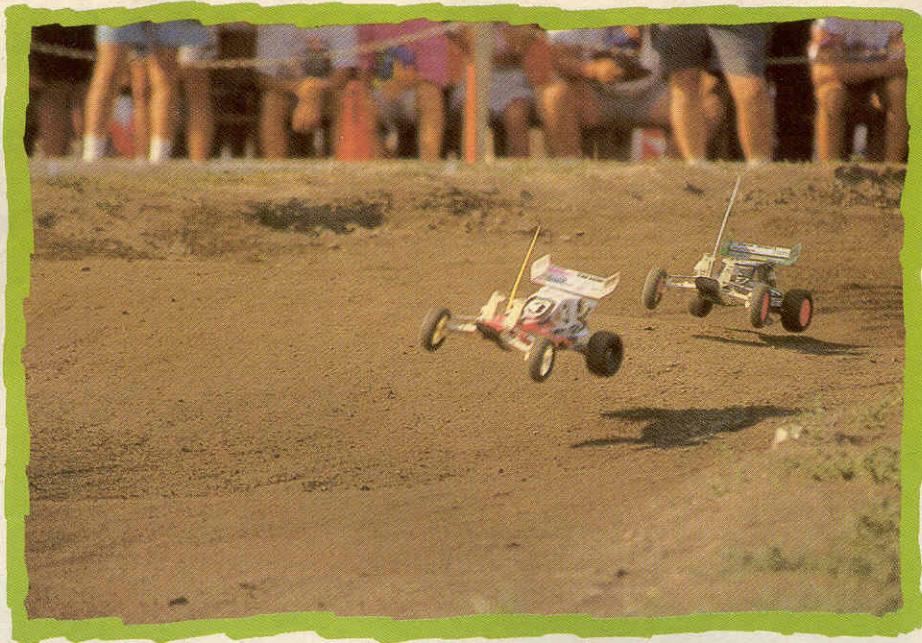
The cars were lined up in qualifying order again, the horn sounded and we were underway. Masami jumped in the lead with Jack Johnson right behind. Jack tried to make an inside move on Masami going up the staircase, but rolled over and Mike Dunn went into second with Cliff already up to third. Cliff seems to have a sixth sense about avoiding all those first corner pileups.

On the third lap Cliff passed Dunn going up the staircase to move into second. But Masami now had what appeared to be an insurmountable lead a whole straightaway. But in a couple of laps Cliff has closed the gap to within five feet of Masami.

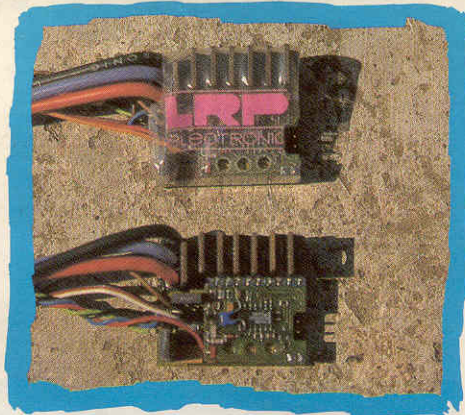
On the next lap Cliff moved within two feet of Masami. All I could think of was, this was too close together for this kind of track. All they would have to do is tangle and the rest of the world would go by. Masami must have been thinking exactly the same thing, because at the top of the staircase, he moved over and let Cliff by! They were both racing for the win at a W.C. Would you have done this? Another good question!

On the very next lap Cliff got sideways in the Whoops, and Masami went back in the lead. Then, the following lap Masami got sideways in the Whoops and Cliff went back in the lead. This was a great crowd pleaser kind of race, but I'm not sure how much more I could stand.

It looked like Cliff had it made, but on the last lap, he cut the inside of the sweeper too close, got hung-up, and Masami went by to take the lead and the win, with Cliff one second behind in second and Joel Johnson 11 seconds back in third.



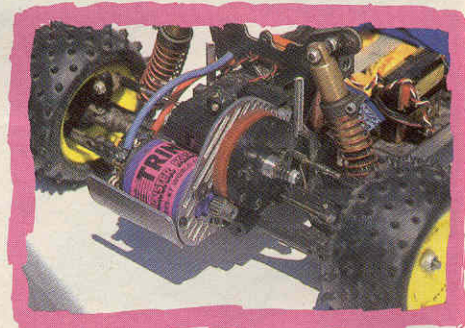
**Above: Rick Vehlow and Masami dice it out in the Main. Right: Jurgen Lautenbach's soon-to-be-introduced LRP speed control.**



The next day, Thursday, was a scheduled day off and it rained all day long from morning till night without stopping. How did it know to do that? The following day, Friday, was the practice day for 2WD. The first practice days the Yokomo team concentrated on tuning their Yokomo cars, and the Associated team concentrated on tuning their new RC10 Stealth cars. To save you asking, yes, Associated will be making the Stealth cars to sell, but they won't be available until next year. Gil Losi Sr. also said their new car would be available next year.

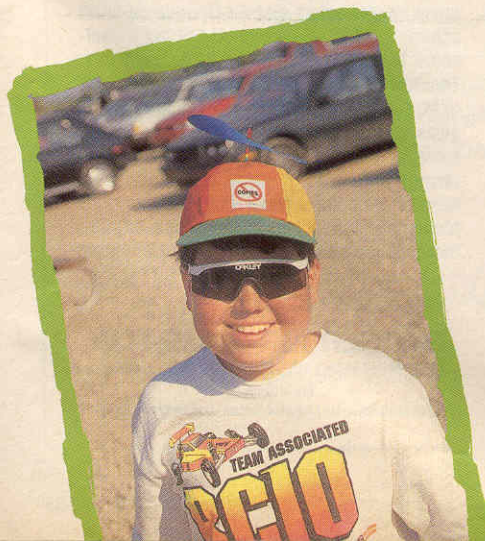
With both the Yokomo and Associated teams concentrating on tuning the new RC10s, the cars were getting better and better. Masami came up with a spring and oil combination that worked on his car, and that combination was immediately tried on all the cars, and everyone was now going quite a bit faster.

*Continued on page 60*



**Losi unveiled their new JR-X2 with the hydrostatic clutch.**

**Left: Brian Kinwald, the Beenie Boy. Below: "Chez Epic," as it became known, an elegant hospitality tent for Trinity/Losi drivers and guests only, emulated the bucks-up spreads at full-size races.**



Continued from page 66

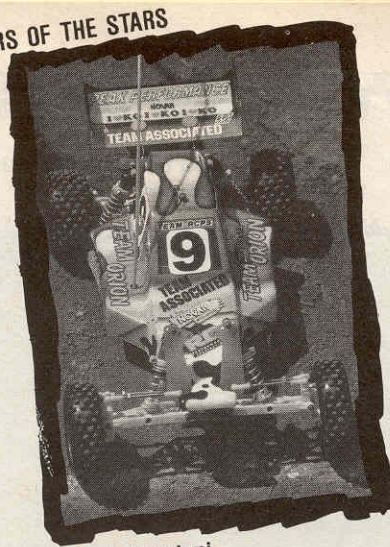
The next day was qualifying and Cliff's luck started off the same as before. In the first round he turned a 12-5.17, which was top time for the round, but he was then given a five-second penalty after the race. What happened was, there was a section of grass on the RH side of the Whoops that some drivers were deliberately driving on during the previous practice day, so they could bypass some of the Whoops section. It was announced that if you drove on the grass you would receive a five-second penalty. On his very last lap, he came off one of the jumps sideways which shot him toward the grass. He did touch the grass but immediately turned off it, and didn't pick up any time advantage. This was right in front of the three IFMAR referees, who saw it happen, who knew that it wasn't deliberate, who knew he didn't gain any advantage, so none of the referees issued a penalty. However, someone went over to the referees after the race and started complaining and shortly an announcement came over the P.A. that Cliff was penalized five seconds, which effectively took him out of the A-main.

Masami then led qualifying after the first round with a 12-5.18.56 followed by Chris Allec 12-5.22.33 and Rick Hohwart 12-5.22.47. Round 2 saw Craig Drescher move into second spot with a 12-5.20.60 and Kris Moore take over third with 12-5.21.45. In the third round, Kevin Moore took second spot with a 12-5.19.49. Nobody improved in the top 10 in the fourth round.

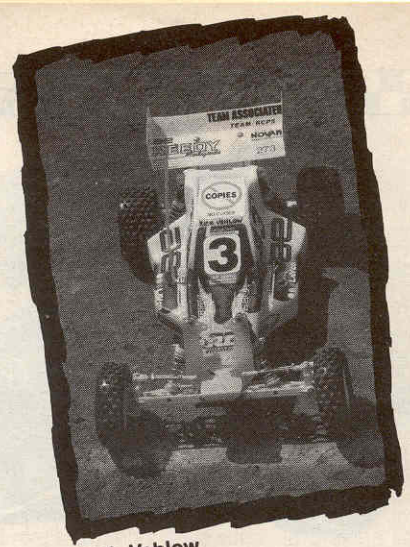
For some reason the SEMROCC club members did a more thorough track grooming for the final round and Kyle Reed took advantage of the track conditions to turn a super quick 12-5.15.27 to take over the top spot. Rick Vehlow also moved into the top 10 with a 12-5.21.06.

The next day, Sunday, was the final round of qualifying. The track was in good shape and a number of drivers moved into the top 10, bumping Cliff out of the main. Cliff simply never got another clean run in to improve on his time. Then, in the next to last heat, when the track was at its worst, Masami put it all together to turn a fantastic 12-5.10.49 to take Top Qualifier honors again!

After qualifying, while there was a break when they were setting up the heats, Masami gave a driving demonstration for the crowd. He took an RC10 and drove it in reverse, I mean so the car was going in reverse around the track, as fast as most guys drove normally around the track. Then, while driving in reverse he would spin the car 180 degrees and continue driving in the same direction, only now the car would be going in the right direction, then he would spin it 180 degrees, now going backward and not lose any speed! Masami normally uses a stick radio, but now he took a steering wheel radio, and proceeded to drive his Yokomo car around the track, while holding the radio by the antenna with his left hand, and using his right hand only to operate the steering wheel and throt-



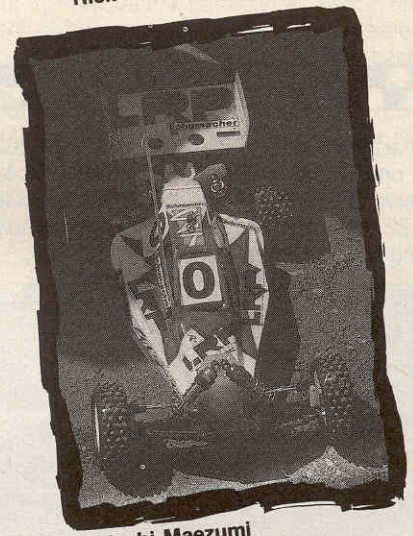
Derek Furutani



Rick Vehlow



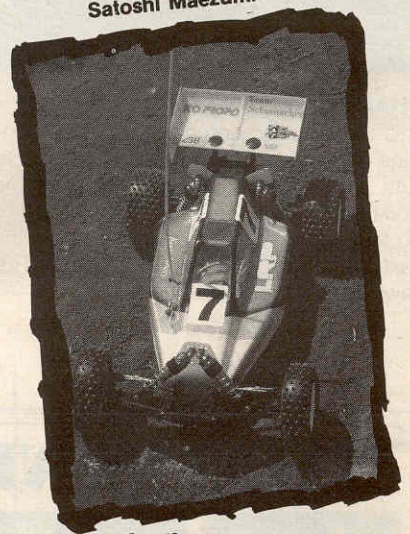
Scott Montgomery



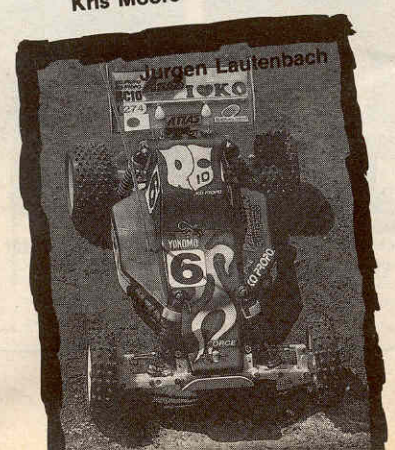
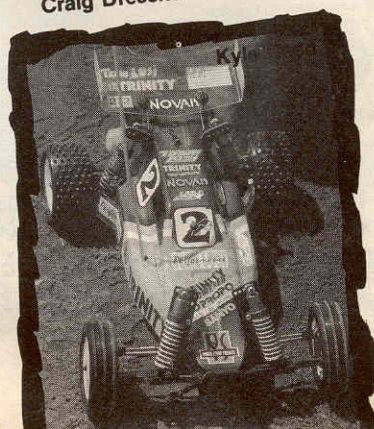
Satoshi Maezumi



Craig Drescher



Kris Moore



Jürgen Lautenbach

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tle. As if that wasn't hard enough, he then sat on a chair and used his toes to operate his stick transmitter and drive his car around the track. You just had to see it all to believe it!

### 2WD A MAIN NO. 1

There was a much larger crowd on hand today, Sunday, for these mains, as the drivers were introduced to the crowd. The cars were lined up in staggered start again on the back straightaway according to qualifying times, the horn sounded and the first race was underway.

Masami took the lead with Kyle Reed in second and Rick Vehlow third, just as they qualified. Reed pulled up alongside Masami through the Whoops, and had the inside line through the right hander and took the lead. But then down the straightaway Reed tried to carry too much speed into the corner, rolled over straight into the hands of a marshal, and managed to hold onto second spot.

On the fourth lap, Vehlow caught a pipe, rolled over and lost three places. Masami was leading, Reed was second but cut a corner too short and Mark Pavidis and Kevin Moore pulled right in behind Reed.

The positions stayed that way with Masami opening up what looked like an insurmountable lead, then with just two laps to go, Masami's car caught a rut going up a small infield jump in the most unlikely of places, rolled over on its top, and Reed took the lead, with Masami recovering just in front of Pavidis. Pavidis was a little too close to Masami and they bumped, spinning Masami out and dropping him three places farther back. Reed took the checkered flag with Pavidis second and Moore third.

### 2WD C MAIN

Rory Cull took the early lead but was soon

passed by Butch Kloeber. Butch started to leave the field far behind. There was a lot of talking and joking going on among the drivers. I could hear Jay saying, "Hold it up Butch, I want to race with you." Then Butch came back with, "I am holding it up Jay, what's taking you so long?" I think they were having more fun talking than racing because Butch had opened up a nine-second lead, with Andrew Nelson in second and Jon Anderson third.

### 2WD A MAIN NO. 2

When the horn sounded Rick Vehlow got a great start and pulled up along the inside of Kyle Reed going into the first corner. Neither driver backed off; they bumped and Reed rolled over, with Vehlow now second right behind Masami, and Kevin Moore third.

Masami opened up a two-turn lead. Meanwhile, Reed caught up to Moore going up the staircase, they bumped, got tangled, and Reed got marshaled ahead of Moore to take over third. At the 3-minute mark, Masami big lead disappeared when he caught the pipe at the end of the Whoops and Vehlow went by to take the lead. Reed was now only 30 feet behind and waiting for the leaders to make another mistake.

Vehlow and Masami were as close together as it's possible to be without touching, too close, I thought. Then on the last lap, going down the Whoops, Vehlow's car did a barrel roll but landed back on his wheels, but he kept the lead and won the race, with Masami second and Reed third. And we still had another one to go!

### 2WD B MAIN

Jack Johnson took the lead with Cliff Lett second and Rick Hohwart third. A couple laps later Cliff rolled in the Whoops and the field went by. Hohwart held on to second for awhile until he was passed by Scott Anfinson. Jack led the whole race until he dumped on the last lap, and Anfinson went by to win. Jack followed in second with Chris Allec third.

### 2WD A MAIN NO. 3

This was it! The final and biggest race of the week. Pressure city. Three drivers still had a chance to win. It was all on the line. When the horn sounded, Vehlow got another great start and pulled up alongside Reed again going into the first turn. But this time they both made it through cleanly, and Vehlow took over second spot in the next corner.

For the next two minutes it was Masami followed by Vehlow followed by Reed. Then Vehlow rolls in the Whoops, but Reed is too close and got caught up with Vehlow. Two marshals raced out to get the two cars. Vehlow got free first and held on to second.

Then, two laps later, Reed rolled in the Whoops and Kevin Moore went by to take over third. Masami now had a straightaway lead over Vehlow, who had a straightaway lead over Moore. Reed caught up to Moore on the last lap, just as they went over an infield jump. They bumped, Moore rolls over, and Reed took over third. Masami went on to win his fifth IFMAR World Championship. Unbelievable! He's a one-man team. Congratulations, Masami.

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