

# 1/10

## Off Road World Champs

Gene Hustings reports from Sydney, Australia on the 1989 one tenth off road champs.



Masami's RC10 features Reedy motor, KO radio and Reedy Sanyo batteries.



Cliff Lett was right in there with his 3rd place finish. Cliff's RC10 has Airtronics radio, Novak speed control, Reedy Sanyo batteries, and of course a Reedy motor.

After winning the 2nd class, Masami Hirotsuka, from Japan, is now 3 times IFMAR World Champion.

Jamin' Jay Halsey takes a well deserved 2nd place in a very close finish with his Reedy powered RC10 with Airtronics radio, Novak speed control and Reedy Sanyo batteries.

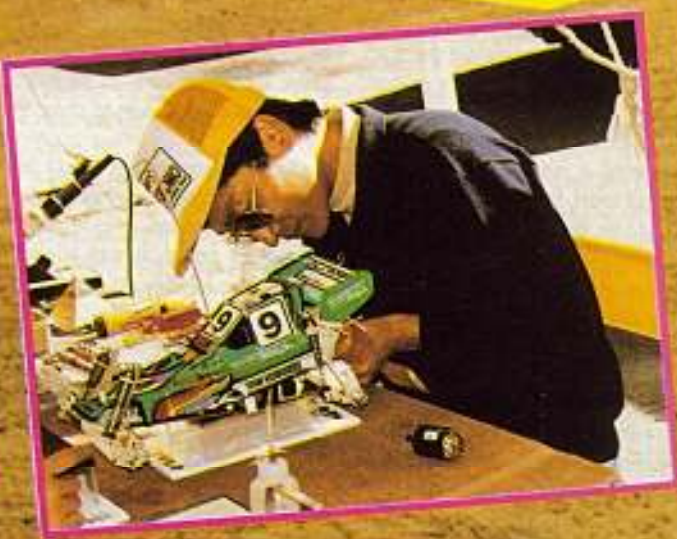




● Driver line-up for the 4wd final from the left, Phil Davies, Jurgen Lautenbach, Jay Halsey, Butch Kloeber, Rick Hohwart, Masami Hirotsaka, Mike Dunn, Rory Cull, Satoshi Kayano and Cliff Lett.

● Part of the Associated tent with Butch Kloeber, Christian Keil, Don Jones, as Rick Vehlow is getting his motor cleaned by Mike Reedy. Reedy motors not only won both mains, but Mike had an unbelievable 13 out of 20 motors in the finals.

● Masami's father, Masaki Hirotsaka is busy preparing Masami's RC10 for another run.



Without question, the biggest R/C car race is the IFMAR 1/10 Off Road World Championships, held every 2 years. The 1st ever was held in Del Mar, California with Jay Halsey winning 2wd and Gil Losi Jr. winning 4wd. 2 years later, in Romsey, England, Joel Johnson won 2w, while Masami Hirotsaka won 4wd. Now it's 2 years later again, and we're in Sydney, Australia to see who

will be the next IFMAR World Champions. We had a 14 hour non stop 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, they speak English, of course. Sydney is about the same size as 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 7 TV stations, 4 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 and was sponsored by Schumacher, the current 4wd World

Champions. 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 kind of important because everyone was here a full week before official practice even began. But in off road racing, there are so many variables it takes a long time to try as many chassis tuning combinations as possible.



The track was located in St. Ives Showground, which is like a park. The track was on the large side, with a couple of 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, England. 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, it described the track, 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, I'm sure, every other racer wanted to do likewise. We were fortunate the 2 weeks we were there, that it only rained lightly a couple of times at night. So we had 2 solid weeks of running. The first days were in the low 60's, but then they gradually warmed up to high 70's. A lot of guys got bad colds like Jay Halsey, Ron Rossetti, Kris Moore and others.

The practice week was always exciting for the drivers, because there was 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.

Day by day, the cars were all getting a little better and 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 JRX2, 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, castor, toe in ride height were being tested, as well as tires. About the middle of the week,

Masami Hirozaka, who was also testing his Yokomo and RC10 cars, tried some of the Yokomo tires on this RC10 and he thought they worked better for him, so he offered them to the rest of the Associated team. Everyone that 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

☉ The track surface was quite hard and had one jump at the start of the straightaway just after the sweeper.

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, but they were only allowed on JRX2 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 complain 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 6 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 1st 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

☉ As Masami is busy giving his speech, in newly learned English, Cliff Lett and Jay Halsey are all ready to pop the champagne corks.



fast they went the previous round. This keeps the cars more spread out. There was also 2 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 6 months before the event, consisted of repairing any potholes that might have appeared during the days 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 2 or 3 known fast guys in each heat, and then a mixture of drivers from different countries.

### 2wd Qualifying

Masami Hirotsuka, from Japan, led qualifying after the 1st round, turning 15 laps in 5 min. 00.28 seconds or 15-5.00.28. Just a car length back in 2nd 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 2 again with 16-5.12.69, with Jay again in 2nd at 16-5.17.77, followed by Craig Drescher with a 16-5.18.94. In the next round, Masami was again quickest with a 16-5.12.5 followed by Cliff Lett — 16-5.18.67. The only 2 drivers 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 2nd 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 from wire to wire. Gil and Joe Schmitz were in the same qualifying round and both lost their best qualifying round, because they failed to mar-



**○ Masami Hirotsuka and Hiroyuki Watanabe check the program to make sure they have time to charge the batteries.**

shall 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 tapped in the rear, spun out and Kris Moore went into the lead with Darin Stump 2nd and Gary Kyes 3rd. But one by one Butch moved back up to take the win with Kris 2nd and Rick Hohwart 3rd.

### 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 3 "A" Finals, interspersed between the other finals, and

about one hour apart. Each driver's best 2 out of 3 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 2 by 2, the recorded tape message said GO, and the race was underway.

From his starting spot, Masami took the lead with Dunn in 2nd, but Dunn got a little wide in the 2nd corner and Halsey went by to take over 2nd with Dunn 3rd, Lett 4th, Drescher 5th and Booth 6th.

Masami opened up a 25 foot lead with Halsey another 5 feet ahead of Dunn. During the 6th 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 2 seconds back at 17-5.13.04 and Dunn following in 17-5.18.74.

### 1st 2wd "A" Final Results.

- 1 Masami Hirotsuka 17-5.11.23.
- 2 Jay Halsey 17-5.14.04.
- 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.

### 2nd 2wd "A" Final

When the race started, Masami got a little too wide in the 1st corner and

Mike Dunn went by to take the lead, with Masami 2nd, Halsey 3rd, Joel Johnson 4th and Drescher 5th.

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 4 and Halsey got by to take over 2nd.

On the 4th lap Jay catches Masami on the straightaway, they go into turn 1 together, but Jay gets in the loose stuff and Masami keeps the lead, with Dunn going by Jay. Jay is still a little out of shape in the next corner and Joel tries to pass but they both get tangled up, as Cliff and Vehlow go by.

Cliff is slowly closing on Dunn and as he gets closer, Dunn rolls and Cliff and Vehlow go by. So Masami wins the 2nd one, but 4 drivers still have a mathematical chance to win the overall.

### 2nd 2wd "A" Final Results.

- 1 Masami Hirotsuka 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 16-5.23.69.

### 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 2nd 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 2 seconds the first round, and if Jay beat him by more than 2 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 5 laps to go, and plenty of time left, Jay is just 2 feet behind Masami, looking for a way past.

Jay lost another 5 feet in traffic, made that up, then lost another 10 feet when he rolled. In another 2 laps Jay is right on Masami's bumper again, but now it's the last lap. They're side by side going down the straightaway, Jay pulls slightly ahead, just 2 corners to go now, Jay goes into turn one with Masami right alongside. They bump, and both get spun out. Jay gets straightened out first and wins by a car length. But not by 2 seconds, so Masami wins his third IFMAR World Championships. No other driver has won more than 2. Lett finished just 2 seconds behind to take 3rd. The crowd was yelling and screaming

while all this was going on and then they gave a long applause when it was over.

#### 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.

#### Overall 2wd "A" Finals

- 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, JRX2, 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, JRX2, Revolution.
- 9 Joel Johnson, USA, 32-10.25.05, Ultima, Trinity.
- 10 Ron Rossetti, USA, 32-10.39.21, JRX2, Revolution.

#### 4wd Qualifying

Time for the fast ones. This track was made for 4wd cars. It should be interesting. The drivers were given one more full days 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 3rd with 17-5.18, the only 17's 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 17-5.14.9 and Jay Halsey 17-5.14.24. The main events were going to be close and fast indeed.

Butch Kloeber came so very close to take 2nd spot with his Reedy powered Yokomo car with Airtronics radio, Novak speed control and Reedy Sanyo batteries.

#### 4wd "C" Final

Joel Johnson won this race by just one second over Australian Andrew Bolton who had the crowd screaming him on.

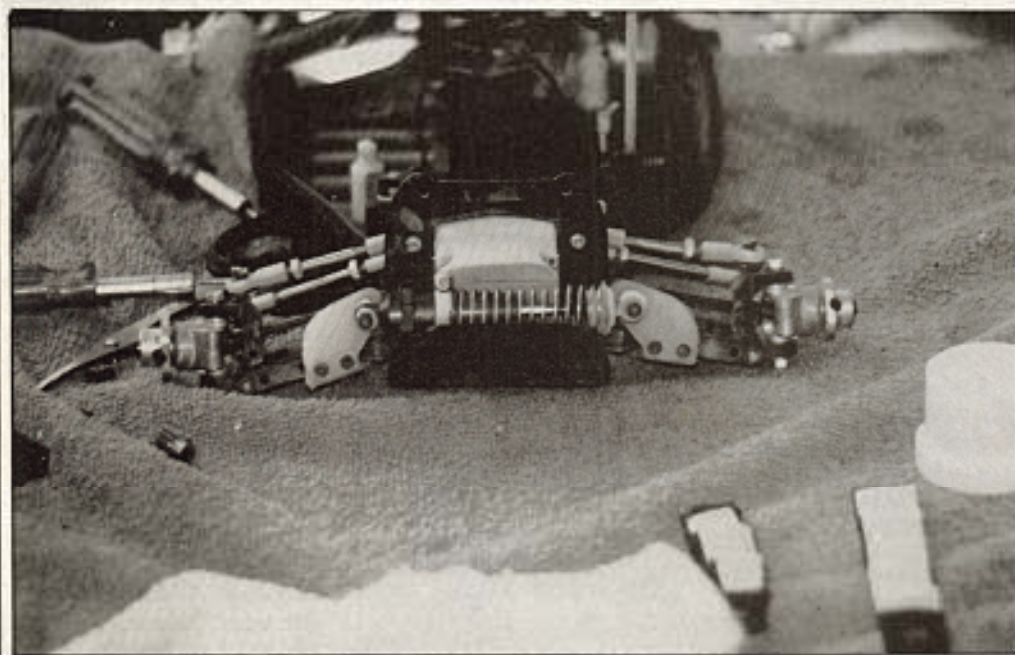
#### 4wd "C" Final Results.

- 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.

#### 4wd "B" Final

Jamie Booth ran away with this final, winning by 6 seconds. All the racing was going on for 2nd place, with Rick Vehlow finally finishing in 2nd just a few feet ahead of Katsunori Kondo.

Jay Halsey came up with his mono shock set-up on his Yokomo car. Butch Kloeber and then Cliff Lett copied it and they all said their cars worked better.





**● Rick Hohwart finished in a strong 3rd place with his Kyosho Optima, powered by Peak Performance, with Futaba radio, Tekin speed control and Peak Performance Sanyo batteries.**

**4wd "B" Final Results.**

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

**1st 4wd "A" Final**

Could Masami do it again? Not if 9 other drivers had their way. Well, Masami jumped in the lead again from his starting position. Then Lett and Kloeber bumped together in the 2nd corner allowing Rick Hohwart to move into 2nd with Jurgen Lautenbach to take 3rd.

Jurgen had some good power and managed to get by Rick to take over 2nd. Then Rick rolled and Jay went into 3rd with Butch 4th and Cliff 5th. Butch caught and passed Jay on the inside of the sweeper. 2 laps later

Butch passed Jurgen in the same spot. Butch was flying.

Butch closed to within 10 feet of Masami while Cliff was passing Jurgen. Butch got within 2 feet of Masami then rolled. Then he rolled again and Cliff got by to go into 2nd. Masami doesn't beat himself. You have to beat him. But there were still 2 more heats.

**1st 4wd "A" Final Results.**

- 1 Masami Hirotsuka, 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.

**2nd 4wd "A" Final**

Masami has the lead again, Cliff 2nd, Butch 3rd and Jurgen 4th. It takes Butch 4 laps, but he finally gets around Cliff to take over 2nd and start his chase of Masami again. But this time he can't catch Masami and Masami wins by 70 feet over Butch with Jurgen just 10 feet back in 3rd.

**2nd 4wd "A" Final.**

- 1 Masami Hirotsuka, 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**

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 2nd, and start his chase of Masami. Meanwhile, Jurgen taps Rick and goes into 4th, but Rick soon gets back by Jurgen.

Butch is closing fast on Masami and soon passes him for the lead. The crowd is screaming. Masami is staying right on Butch's tail but he can't quite catch him. Then Butch starts to pull away, but then rolls it and Masami closes right up again. The last lap they're both full punched around the track, but Butch is keeping his lead down the straightaway to the checkered flag just 5 feet ahead of Masami.

So Masami wins his 4th 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.

**3rd 4wd "A" Final Results.**

- 1 Butch Kloeber, 18-5.18.50.
- 2 Masami Hirotsuka, 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.

**Overall 4wd "A" Finals**

- 1 Masami Hirotsuka, 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, West Germany, 34-10.20.15, Schumacher, LRP.
- 6 Phil Davies, England, 34-10.30.69, Schumacher, Reedy.
- 7 Mike Dunn, USA, 34-10.34.84, 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.

