

## 1:8 OFF ROAD

The pinnacle of any sport is the World championship and over a week's racing the World Champion for 1/8th off road racing (rallycross in the UK) would be found. The bi-annual event was again in Europe, this time in Austria. 150 competitors from 24 different countries had come from all parts of the Globe to compete. Although the meeting was not as well organised as in Germany two years previously, the racing was quite brilliant with the two semi-finals and finals as good as you'll see.

On arrival to the track you could not help but notice the severe slope for part of the track. After the main straight where a large jump was looming the cars would climb a slope which must have been around 70 degrees in inclination. The cars then had to come down before quickly turning back up (this proved to be very tricky) and then a small chicane before descending for the final time over a jump downhill!!!

There was plenty of grass on the track and this looked good for the British. However, this was to prove a false hope as the grass soon disappeared leaving a dry, slippery familiar European track. The lack of grass didn't matter to the British as they would follow on the good performances at Pendle and become the best World Champs ever for the Brits.

After a day and a half of free practice (which ended with some drivers practising more than others - a point to be looked at by IFMAR/EFRA) the official practice round took place. This was the first time drivers could really compare themselves to the best. A good time over the 10 minute heats (not

## WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS - AUSTRIA

Report by Mark Stitson

5 minutes as normally) would be a 12 lapper but a couple of drivers managed 13 laps!

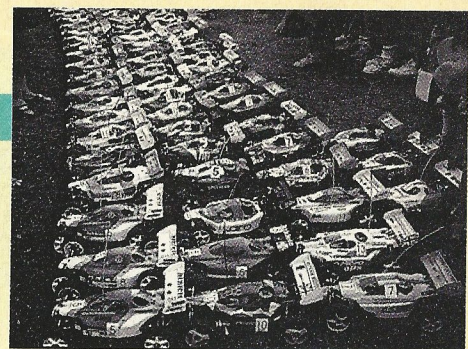
The fastest in the practice round was Alessandro Catozzi of Italy driving a Tag. This car is not seen in the UK and in fact there are very few in the world. Catozzi was the only one present but is always a quick driver. However this was the highest he had ever been. The other 13 lappers were Michel Baruzzi of Italy with a Crono and Daniel Reckward of Germany driving for Mugen. Baruzzi is one of the best drivers in the world and has already been European Circuit champion with BMT. Reckward is a very consistent driver of the highest level and was in the Euro's final for the last two years as well as the World's final in 1990.

### Brit best...

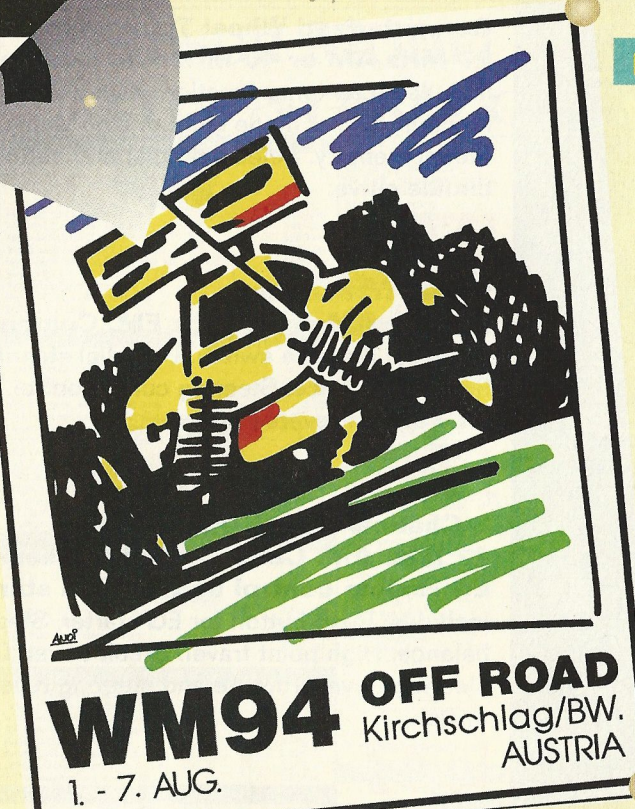
Best of the Brits at this point was Stewart Wilcox (Mugen) in 8th place with two places behind Ian Oddie (Pirate). Stewart is well known in world terms having performed well before, but this was still one of his best runs ever. Ian Oddie is not so well known but as twice national champion we know all about him! It was good to see Ian transferring his form to

the big stage and was by far the best Pirate at the meeting.

With all the best drivers competing it would take too long to talk about all the well known drivers as they all are! There was one major problem however, and that was the deterioration of the track. The first round of qualifying would be most important as the track would soon cut up. Some good times were recorded in the very second round but after that very little changed. With six rounds of qualifying this would mean the last few rounds becoming nothing more than a practice on an ever changing track. The other contentious issue was that the early heats had the majority of the best drivers giving them an added advantage which I think is particularly unfair. To avoid the problem of later rounds becoming practices EFRA, by next year, will hopefully have new rules in place. This will give equal importance to every round. The idea is that drivers will get points in accordance to where they finish in their particular round. So for the best driver in the round, they will get 100 points, 2nd will get 99, 3rd-98 and so on. This would eliminate the trouble of track deteriorates and times being affected as

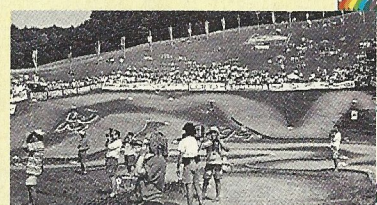
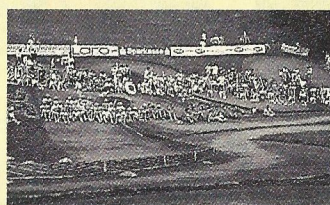


Action from the qualifying rounds.



# World Class

With the best drivers in the world and the top manufacturers bidding for success the 1994 off road 1:8 World Championships produced exciting racing and an Italian winner with the highest place for a British driver so far...

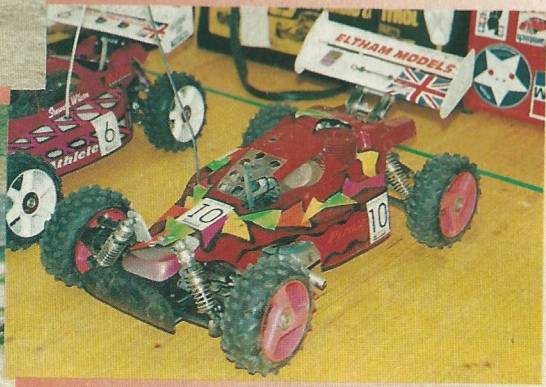
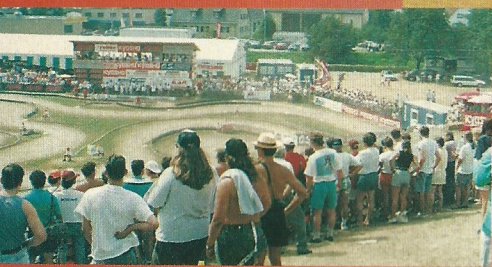
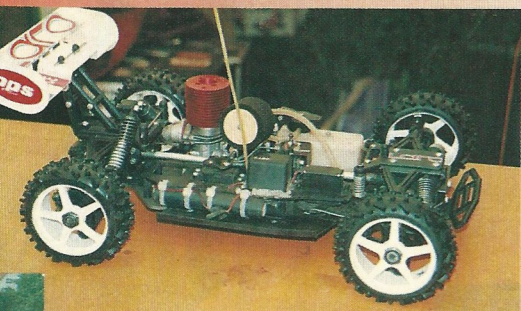
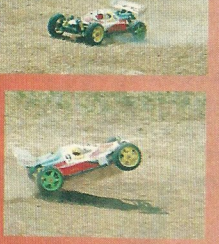


Impressive circuit and surroundings greeted the drivers at the Kirchsschlag venue.





Some of the cars on show including the Mugen, Laro and the winning Inferno.



everyone would be an equal standing. The best 3 rounds from 4 would then get the drivers final qualification points total.

All this talk was irrelevant for these championships and drivers would just have to get on with it. A good lap time at the beginning of round 1 was 47-48 seconds. This would have changed to 54-55 seconds in the final although it was not as bad as Portugal where a 10 second per lap difference was seen!

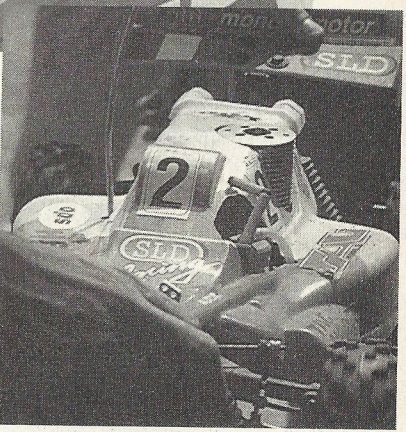
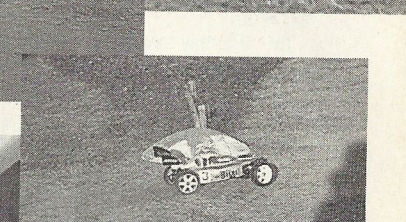
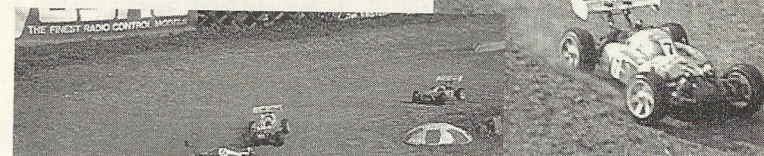
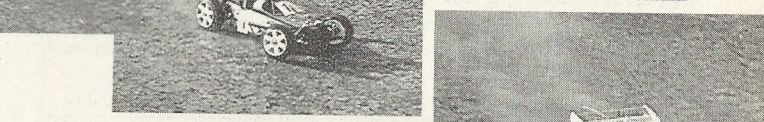
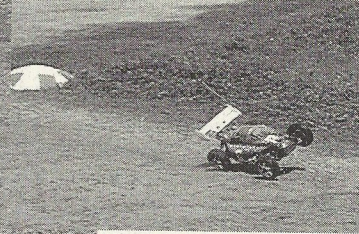
In the first heat the best times were expected. Stewart Wilcox had terrible luck because he failed to make the start after his throttle servo packed up during the warm up. This would mean an uphill struggle for Stewart to qualify high up the order as he would have to do it in the second round. This would be a similar story for World Champion Kunihiro Toge and new

European champion Andrea Gennari as both would fail to finish.

Daniel Reckward did finish in a superb time of 13 laps in 10:43.80 which would remain unbeaten. Catozzi of Italy continued his good form with 13 laps, 4 seconds behind Reckward. These two were the only 13 lappers and would guarantee themselves a place in the main final. (Under new IFMAR rules the top two qualifiers go straight into the final). The fastest of the 12 lappers was Philippe Lachat of France driving a Laro. He continued his good form from Pendle with Crono's Baruzzi 4th.

### Dave's delight

In a quite outstanding 5th position came Britain's David Crompton (Mugen). David in his first ever World Championships, showed no signs of nerves to put in the best ever qualification of a British driver. Tommy Chung (Hodr)



was 11th for the Brits after a very smooth drive and Lawrence Harris (T/Inferno) was in 13th in his first ever championships. Justin Mackey (Mugen) was just in the semi-final placings in 15th (16th is the last place) and James Weedon (T/Inferno) just outside in 18th. This was a tremendous performance from the Brits.

Not only was there surprise at the World and European champions being so far down the list, two others stood out. Former World and European champion Maurizio Monesi of Italy driving his heavily modified T/Inferno was in 19th place. This was the first time he had ever been out of the semi-finals and would find it hard to get in. The second driver was Koji Sanada Mugen's top driver, a former world champion was only 47th after he failed to finish his last lap in the 10 minute run.

Sanada would record the 3rd best time in round 2 but this would only place him 10th, but still good enough for the semi-finals. Monesi, however, struggled and would fail to move up from the 1/4 final position he was in. His best friend, Euro Champ Andrea Gennari, was in a similar position. Although he improved, it was only good enough for 40th and a place in the 1/8th finals. Both were obviously concerned and they did so much testing at the test track but to no avail.

Stewart Wilcox's nightmare continued when in his second run he came in to the pits thinking he had finished when he had one lap to go. That meant after being one of the top drivers, Stewart was now 60th. Other Brits balanced this out with the top two times of the round being recorded by two Brits. Tommy Chung improved his time to go 6th overall with the 2nd fastest run of round two. The quickest time was set by David Crompton who just failed to improve on his first round time but obviously he was very pleased to be the best in that round. Lawrence Harris would have a nervous wait as he was 3rd and final Brit in the semis in 16th place! However there was no cause for concern as the deterioration of

the track ensured no-one would manage a semi-final time.

The Americans had sent over a very strong team for the first time with most being top electric drivers who had been paid to race the 1/8th scale machines. The three drivers in the semis were Mark Pavidas, (winner at the electric Reedy meeting shown in RCMC a couple of months ago). Matt Ledger (Losi driver) and Brian Kinwald (2WD World Champion for Associated, now with Losi). All three were driving for Mugen with the top American Kyosho driver, Kris Moore in 20th place.

Matt Ledger looked to be the one who was the best in the latter rounds as he put his best in round 3 although he remained 11th. This was the best in this round. Not far behind came Ian Oddie who put in an excellent run to 28th with his 3rd round time which was very impressive. Stewart Wilcox also got a very good time on the board to move just outside the 1/4 finals.

In round four Stewart improved again. His time was the 4th fastest in the round and put him into there 1/4 finals in 29th place. Sanada from Japan was the quickest in the round but only six seconds quicker than Stewart. Lawrence Harris also made 12 laps which was becoming very difficult to achieve by any driver.

### Last rounds

The last two rounds were totally non-events with only one driver in the top 100 moving and he moved to 100th! In the 5th round only six drivers managed 12 laps. World champion Toge was one of them along with the runner up at the last World champs, Yoshida. However this was too little too late. Lawrence Harris again made 12 laps for the British to cheer and was 4th in the round behind Pavidas of USA, Sanada of Japan

and at the top again Matt Ledger (USA).

In the last round the elite 12 lapper narrowed down to two. Reckward from Germany just made 12 laps with his Mugen, but top again was Matt Ledger (Mugen) who was showing how it should be done over the horrendous bumps.

The first day of finals would see finals 1/1024 to 1/16th being run. The 1/8th finals up to the grand final would run on the Sunday. Only three Brits would compete on the Saturday and first up was Mike Cradock (T/Inferno) in the 1/128th final.

Mike had a terrible start and I don't think he ever recovered. Just as he seemed to be picking up places his car ran out of fuel. The pit crew could not really be blamed as it was a very difficult decision when to refuel. This was because of the very long lap time. When Mike passed the pits it was too early on, and if he had come in he would have had to refuel one more time. In order to gain time to get

into the top three he had to gamble. Unfortunately it didn't pay off!

John Zottl (Mugen) was next up in the 1/64th final. John would have easily qualified but a mistake on the large jump left him on his roof. By the time he was marshalled the engine had stopped and John's chance had gone. He had not had the best of luck all week after being placed in heat ten and his engine cutting in round 1. It was always going to be hard from there on!

The last race of the day saw yours truly battling it out. I had a similar week to John alter my engine cut in round 1 when I was on for a good time. After that it was an uphill battle! In the final itself my first 4 or 5 laps effectively ended my race. I had a few mistakes through myself and others and was a long way back. Slowly I pulled the field in and was up to fourth. The third place man world no. 2 Yoshida, was a way ahead but had a ten second penalty for a jump start. At the finish I was 1.1 seconds behind and had missed qualification by 1.4 seconds! World Champion Toge also qualified from my race (just my luck to have these two in my race!).

The final day saw Britain's Mark Chaplin out first in the 1/8th finals. He began well but a couple

of knocks from other drivers sent him backwards. His fate was sealed when over the large jump he landed badly and his exhaust pipe fell off. In the other 1/8th final, European Champion Andrea Gennari driving his heavily modified T/Inferno was comfortably even though his car didn't look good. However with such a professional attitude, together with his mechanic and Monesi they were sure to improve the car.

In the first 1/4 final Justin Mackey (Mugen) saw his chances go before he had even started. The pit crew tried to adjust his engine and as they went to the start line they were told they were too late and would have to start from the pit lane. To get into the top three

would now be impossible but he certainly tried and finished 4th. No such trouble for his team mate, Stewart Wilcox, who drove superbly to sail through into the semi-finals and make the British contingent four, our best ever. In this race Andrea Gennari continued to progress with his car looking better and better.

The other 1/4 final looked hopeful when Ian Oddie (Pirate) led for Britain. James Weedon (T/Inferno) didn't have such a good start but was well on the pace. Unfortunately both suffered engine cuts, but both should be pleased with their performance - a 1/4 final placing at the World's isn't bad! Former World and European champion Monesi scraped through

It would be the top four who would qualify into the main final from the 20 minute semi and by halfway David Crompton had moved into the lead, much to the delight of the British contingent. Suddenly Stewart Wilcox was right up with him. David, very sensibly didn't want any collisions and let Stewart past. After a few stops had taken place Stewart still led and would continue to do so until the end, although Gennari led for some time. This was quite an amazing performance by Stewart - actually winning a World's semi-final! David Crompton was 4th behind Gennari and American Matt Ledger but was well in control of 5th place Magnus Amilon of Sweden. Lachat from France finished sixth with electric World Champion Brian Kinwald way back in 7th. Double European Champion, Roberto Ghedini was last after breaking his Bergonzoni 'Flash' in the warm up!

### Second semi

The second semi-final had both Tommy Chung (Hodr) and Lawrence Harris (T/Inferno) in for Britain. Tommy didn't really get into the race and finished 8th, but still another good performance at a major championship. The leader was pole man Michele Baruzzi of Italy (Crono) in the lead from the two Americans, Pavidas (Mugen) and Moore (T/Inferno). Britain's Lawrence Harris was just behind Monesi of Italy who was beginning to perform as he usually does - extremely quick and consistent! It seemed Lawrence could just miss the final when in the last lap leader Baruzzi ran out of fuel - much to the disgust of the Crono bosses!

and would need to improve in the semi.

The atmosphere for the two semi-finals was amazing with horns and sirens blaring out. The first semi saw Gennari of Italy get an amazing start from 8th up to 2nd in one lap! He would then go into the lead from Matt Ledger of USA with our own Stewart Wilcox and David Crompton not so far behind.

Lawrence kept his nerve to complete the lap, finish 4th and join the other two Brits in the final. Monesi finished third with Pavidas second and Kris Moore 1st.

There was a break until the final when all the drivers were presented to the crowd. The noise was unbelievable for the start of the race. Hopes were high for the Brits because previous to these championships we had never had a world's finalist - suddenly we had three!

The start of the race was so fast and furious it was ridiculous. On the first lap pole man Daniel Reckward suffered an engine cut. This would end his chances of winning after 50 seconds of a one hour race (yes one hour!). Catozzi from Italy with the Tag was nearly in a class of his own with only Stewart Wilcox (Mugen) able to keep up. Catozzi looked like when with 15 minutes left disaster struck again. David was trying to get passed two American back markers when once he was passed he gave his car too much throttle over the jump, hoping to pull away. The car crashed and then limped away sadly. The front end of his Mugen had also broken and David's disappointment clearly showed as he held his head in his hands.

All of a sudden with under 15 minutes left, Monesi of Italy was leading with his best friend Gennari in second. They had both improved their cars throughout the day and this was showing. Monesi never made a mistake for the remainder of the race and would win by a fair margin. Meanwhile Lawrence Harris kept the British flag flying as he moved into third place. Lawrence

Alter Stewart's exit, Andrea Gennari was in the lead but a mistake allowed David Crompton to

# RESULTS

## 1:8 Off Road World Championships, Kirschlag, Austria

Final Pos.	Name	Nat	Result	Sponsor	Car	Engine	Fuel	Transmitter	Servo	Front Tyres	Rear Tyres	Qual Pos.
1	Maurizio Monesi	I	64 laps in 1:00:27:33	OPS	Kyosho T/Inferno	OPS	OPS	Futaba Field Force 3	Sanwa ERG-X2	Courton Atlas	Courton Atlas	26
2	Andrea Gennari	I	64 laps in 1:00:47:47	OPS	Kyosho T/Inferno	OPS	OPS	Futaba FF3	Sanwa ERG-XZ	Courton Atlas	Courton Atlas	41
3	Lawrence Harris	GB	62 laps in 1:00:15:36	Kyosho Ripmax OS	Kyosho T/Inferno	OS	Model Technics Duraglo 25%	Futaba FF3	Futaba 9303	Medial Pro Senso	Medial Pro Senso	16
4	Daniel Reckward	GER	62 laps in 1:00:19:96	Mugen SMI Hobbytech	Mugen Athlete	REX	Homemade 20%	Multiplex	Profi-MC	Medial Pro Pulsar	Medial Pro Pulsar	1
5	Mark Pavidis	USA	61 laps in 1:00:43:20	Mugen	Mugen Athlete	REX	Mu-Juice	Airtronics	KO 1003	Medial Pro Quark	Medial Pro Quark	8
6	Matt Ledger	USA	58 laps in 1:00:39:04	Mugen JR Medial-Pro	Mugen Athlete	Nova Rossi 2000	Mu-Juice	JR Apex	JR4735	Medial Pro Quark	Medial Pro Quark	11
7	Kris Moore	USA	57 laps in 1:00:48:63	Kyosho KO	Kyosho T/Inferno	Picco	O'Donnell	KO EX-10	KO 1002	Medial Pro Quark	Medial Pro Quark	20
8	Alessandro Catozzi	I	56 laps in 1:00:08:62	TAG Models	TAG	OPS	TAG	Sanwa	Sanwa ERG-XZ	Medial Pro Pulsar	Medial Pro Pulsar	2
9	David Crompton	GB	54 laps in 1:00:34:42	Mugen Ted Longsman Nova-Rossi	Mugen Athlete	Nova Rossi 2000	Model Technics Duraglo 25%	Futaba FF3	KO 1003	Medial Pro Senso	Medial Pro Senso	5
10	Stewart Wilcox	GB	44 laps in 1:00:35:96	Mugen Ted Longshaw Mondial	Mugen Athlete	Mondial	Model Technics Duraglo 25%	KO EX-10	KO 1003	Medial Pro Senso	Medial Pro Senso	29

take over. To have two British leaders in the race seemed unbelievable but we were willing David on. He led for 10 minutes when with 15 minutes left disaster struck again. David was trying to get passed two American back markers when once he was passed he gave his car too much throttle over the jump, hoping to pull away. The car crashed and then limped away sadly. The front end of his Mugen had also broken and David's disappointment clearly showed as he held his head in his hands.

All of a sudden with under 15 minutes left, Monesi of Italy was leading with his best friend Gennari in second. They had both improved their cars throughout the day and this was showing. Monesi never made a mistake for the remainder of the race and would win by a fair margin. Meanwhile Lawrence Harris kept the British flag flying as he moved into third place. Lawrence

(T/Inferno) had started off very steadily but gradually came through the field very well.

The breakage to David Crompton left him to finish 9th ahead of Stewart Wilcox and behind the other unlucky driver, Catozzi. Americans Moore, Ledger and Pavidas came 7th, 6th and 5th respectively after engine cuts for each. Reckward of Germany stormed through the field to 4th after his engine cut and only just missed catching Lawrence Harris by 4 seconds. Lawrence, finishing third, produced the best ever performance by a British driver and this was thoroughly deserved. He was also the top O.S. driver, which pleased the Japanese, since they didn't have a driver in the final. This compared to 7 last time! Tyre manufacturer, Medial Pro, can't have been happy either, they spent around £50,000 on tyres for the top drivers and they still didn't win!

The top two of Monesi and

Gennari had confounded the rest after looking so bad in qualifying. Gennari, after qualifying 41st ended two hours' racing on the day to end in 2nd place overall which was a tremendous achievement. Monesi showed that he is probably the best driver ever with his second World title. He hadn't looked that good, but got it right when it mattered. As the top two OPS drivers they pleased the engine manufacturers tremendously with the 1-2. Overall the championships were superb. Deterioration of the track was a pity but great racing prevailed. I don't think anyone could begrudge Monesi the win as he was the best in the hour final. For the British it was by far the best results ever. Lawrence Harris put his name on the World scene as did Stewart Wilcox and David Crompton after they both led the final. Well done to all three and the rest of the British team.

