

### 1995 1:10 OFF ROAD EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS RAUMA FINLAND



# Cats sharpen their claws

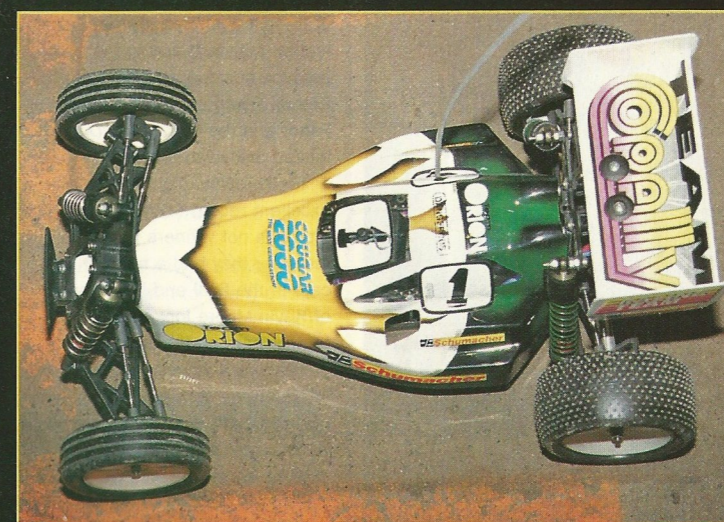
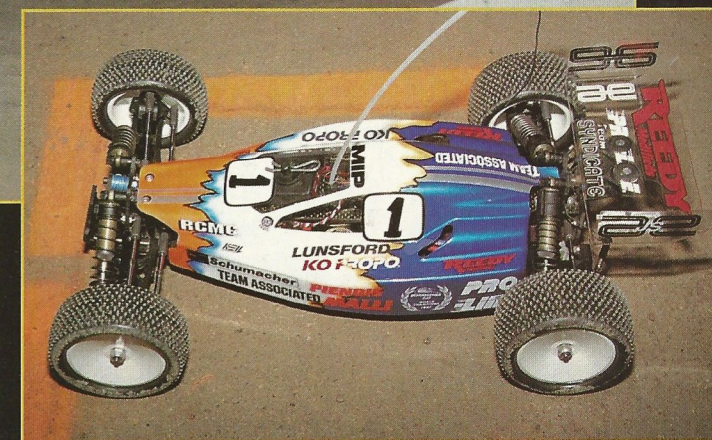
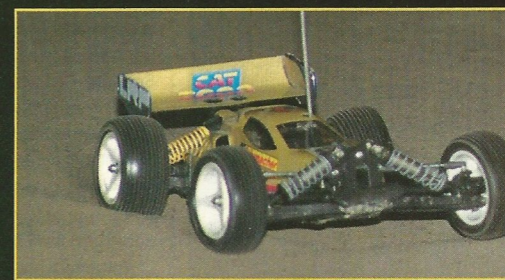
**T**he 1:10 off road European Championships has an image to those who do not attend as being the ultimate off road race apart from the world championships. In reality though, over the past few years the Euros has been somewhat of a letdown with combinations of bad weather, lax organisation or even tracks not fit to hold such an important event.

For 1995 Finland were given the chance to run the race and put the Euros back on the well run map, and this they have done in fine style.

#### On the moon

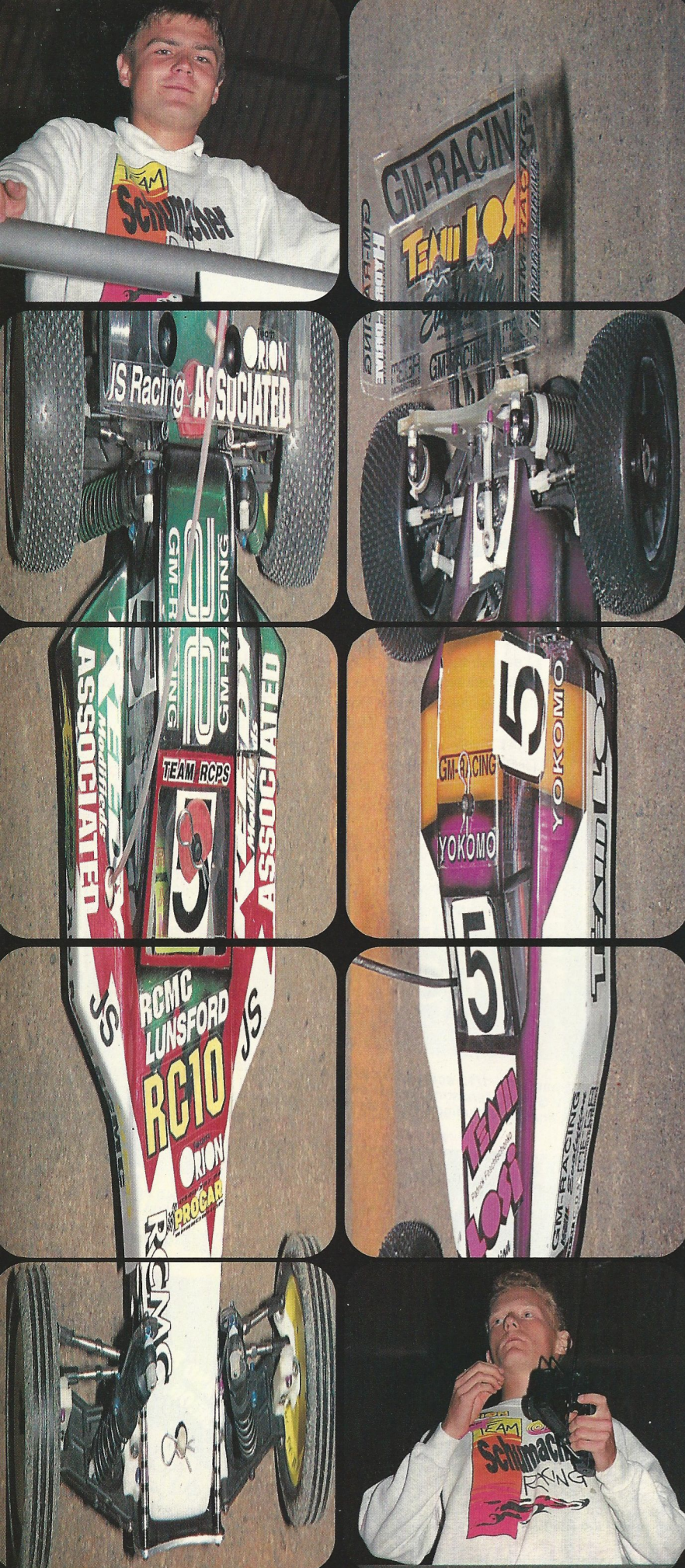
In 1994 Finland held an EFRA (the European RC Car body) Grand Prix with great success. It was held indoors on a dusty clay surface that gave an even racing surface that was dry no matter the weather and the whole event was a great success. The Euros was decided to be held at the same venue in Rauma - a small, clean town around 25 minutes journey north of Helsinki in a light aircraft.

The local RC car club joined forces with the local council to have the track at Rauma's indoor football stadium. This enormous hall was a perfect setting, cool and dry providing all the facilities needed for the ideal meeting. The track was

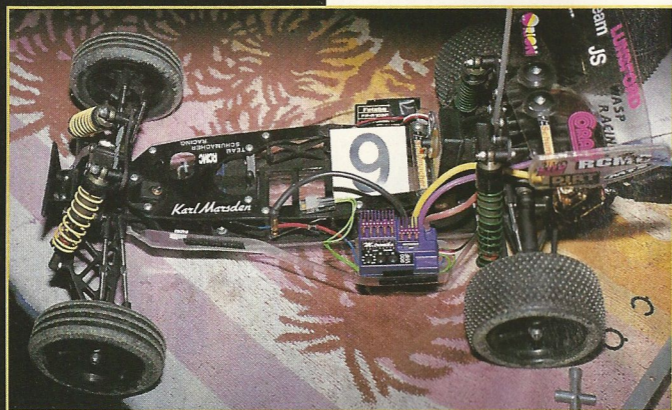
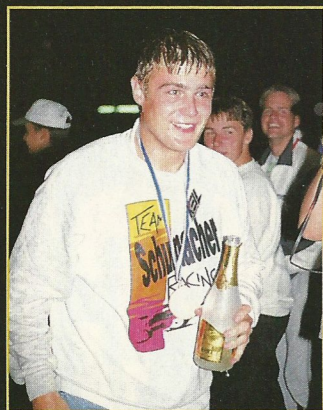
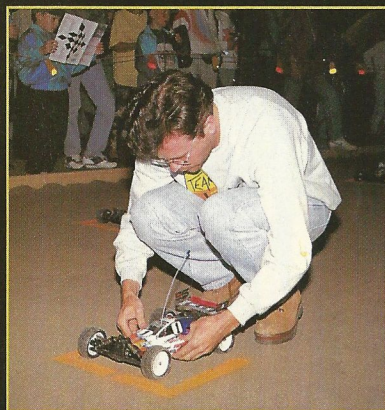
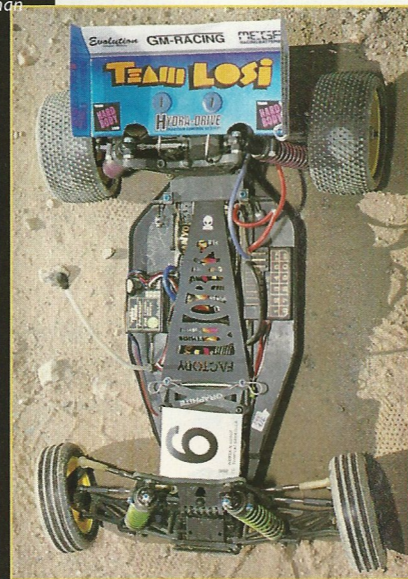


long and fast, 24 second laps were the order of the day but tricky jump sections and a mean chicane made errorless laps a rarity. The surface was extremely slippery requiring a certain driving style - too smooth meant too slow - a controlled power slide being the fastest method to lap the track.

With perfect precision tables for each competitor were neatly laid out on arrival, power points, storage bins, a restaurant and even tour guides were all part of the amazing organisational package presented by the Fins. The atmosphere in the hall was cool and slightly damp - the venue was soon to be tagged 'the Moon'.



Amazing indoor venue gave consistent conditions although hid the racers from the excellent weather...Below; Alan Harman places Craig Drescher's car on the line and ... five minutes later the celebrations begin. Also seen latest spec Losi, Marsden's Cougar and Drescher's last outing for old RC10.



### The contenders

The British have tended to dominate the European Championships, there are some drivers that do come close and did again this year but the Brits and especially one Craig Drescher have tended to make the Euros their own. As reigning champion in both 2WD and 4WD Craig Drescher was

out to take yet more titles to add to his amazing record. Driving a Cat 2000EC and RC10 with Reedy motors and Novak speedos Craig went to Finland as favourite.

Kevin Moore has been second and third at the Euros more times than I can remember, this year driving a Tenth Technology Predator and Losi XX Kevin went to the Euros as double British Champion -

and with the knowledge that he can beat Craig Drescher - could it be Kevin's year?

Sasha Falter from Germany is amazingly fast, driving a Yokomo and RC10 he was the main threat to Craig Drescher in 1994 and is hungry for a Euro title.

Patrick Feschtschenko is also a German driver with flair and speed. Driving a Yokomo and Losi, Patrick has been testing recently in the US with Losi and entered the Euros with a strong will to win.

Other top drivers in with a chance of winning included the local hero Jukka Steenari, driving both the Schumacher cars - Cat 2000EC and Cougar. Jukka had a real chance in 4WD on home soil and a chance of making the 2WD A.

### The equipment stakes

Reigning 4WD Champions Schumacher had their new Cat 2000EC, the car named after Craig Drescher's 1994 title that needed to win to justify its name! A strong back-up from Schumacher was

present with Phil Booth, Tim Walden and Christine Eaton on hand to service the drivers. Schumacher were the largest force at the meeting with their own spares area and the highest entry in 4WD. New developments on their cars included different shock pistons, a new rear toe-in set-up and the new Bibx tyre compounds.

Yokomo were represented by a number of drivers but were not in attendance in force. Their cars looked standard and in the early practice sessions the cars of Patrick Feschtschenko, Sasha Falter and the UK's Dave Duggan looked dialled to the track.

Tenth Technology have an excellent record at the Euros, although not winners first time out last year they had a number of cars in the final and in the hands of Kevin Moore looked to be the fastest cars on the track in practice for this year's race. Although the cars did feature new parts Richard Weatherley said they were simple set-up changes and that the cars went well from the start.

### Rear wheel drive

In the 2WD event Associated cars were as per normal. Some fine tuning could be found on Craig Drescher's car but the amazing RC10 was basically in standard form.

Losi is yet to win the European Championships, with Kevin Moore and Alan Harman representing the factory along with Patrick Feschtschenko and Heikki Naulapaa Losi looked to have their best chance yet. Small mods were seen on the XX cars including inboard rear toe-in and modified damper pistons.

Schumacher had their Cougar in various slightly differing forms to suit their drivers, the cars were fairly standard and with a fairly smooth slippery surface looked very much on the pace.

### The rest

There were a number of other cars in use, Tamiya were represented with Spain's Danny Vella making the TRF cars look excellent and there were the odd Kyosho cars entered that also looked very competitive.

### Tyres

The slippery surface meant that finding the right grip levels and balance for your car was essential. Many of the drivers had taken ample supplies of Losi Silver tyres, Proline M2's and Yokomo TR39Y's. After the end of practice it appeared that the Proline M2's just had the edge and this became the tyre to use in four wheel drive and on the rear of two wheel drives with Losi front ribs and Proline front ribs.

### Speed controllers

LRP had the new ICS speed controller on hand for many of the top drivers. The speed controller is quickly building a reputation as the best yet and many drivers chose the tiny, neat unit over other makes.

M-Troniks had a modified version in use looking for the edge they seem determined to find. The

M-Troniks drivers always looked smooth and fast.

Reigning Euro Champs Novak were still installed into the car of Craig Drescher with a mysterious code on the box - whether this was a new controller or not was not revealed.

### Motors

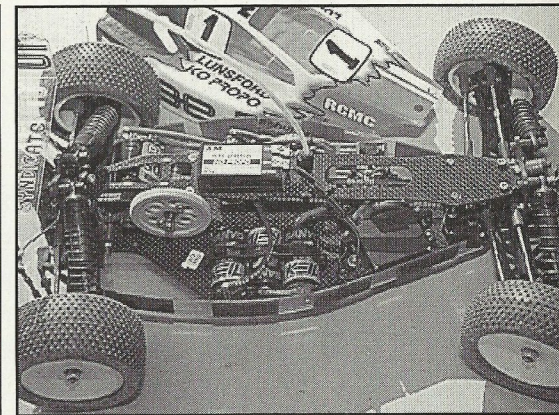
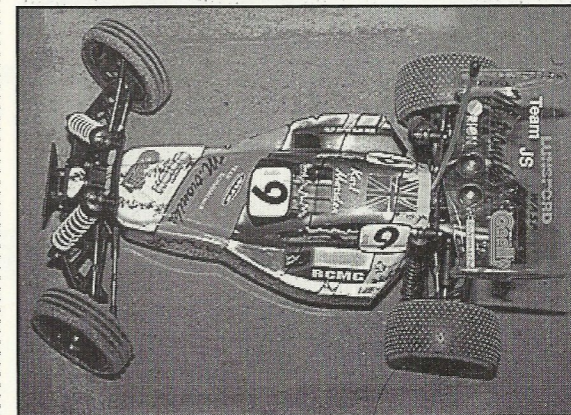
Reedy had their new Sonic series in use and looked fast and competitive, as did Corally still looking for their first off road Euro title. LRP had their new motors in use - and they looked superb.

Trinity had a number of drivers using the Kinwald range but a new set of motors are on their way from the east coast...

### 4WD first

The European organising body had decided to run the 4WD event first at this year's Euros. This decision was taken because at past races the 2WD cars seemed to cause more damage to the track and therefore make qualifying in the early rounds ultra important. In the end the Finish track held up superbly enabling the drivers to race on a near totally stable surface.

After a days open practice that actually gave each driver 5 runs on the track a round of 'qualifying' was run to make sure there was no frequency problems. This round also gave the drivers their starting position on the grid for the first round of real qualifying - this was actually taken from the fastest lap - so bansai flying laps were often seen with drivers trying to get the ultimate lap time.



In the first round of real qualifying it was time to see who actually was on the pace. Many had looked fast in practice but as the saying goes - when the flag drops the bullshit stops...

Sascha Falter from Germany driving a Yokomo was the fastest man. Thirteen laps was the required amount with a finishing time of around 12 seconds to take the top slot. A fine 13 laps 5:12.96 was Sascha's time and that was top of the heap. Second was Kevin Moore with the Predator with local driver Teemu Leino in third.

Other notable performances in the first round were William Mitcham's 4th, Jon Tucker's 8th, Rob Gammon's 10th, lan Kenningley's 12th, Jon Leonard's 13th and Hannu Worsley's 17th. A solid drive from the UK's lan Flynn bagged him 37th in front of many of the UK's top drivers.

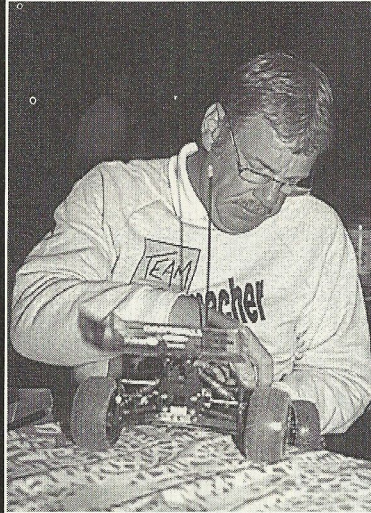
So at the end of round one we had a closely fought top ten involving most of the manufactures and top drivers. Craig Drescher however was in 125th place and not looking so good to retain his championship.

### Yet more qualifying

At the end of 2 rounds of racing with three to go a young British chap named Craig Drescher heading the time sheets. Craig had changed his car dramatically from practice and had found a set-up that suited him and the car. TQ by 4 seconds was the result and Craig looked set again to be a top contender for the title. Sascha Falter remained second with Germany's Patrick Feschtschenko in third, Kevin Moore fourth and Teemu Leino rounding off the top five.

With William Mitcham, Dave Duggan and Matt Needham also in the top ten making 5 Brits it looked as if a UK domination of the finals was likely again.

The last round of qualifying on the first day was a real cracker, Craig Drescher improved his TQ by a second putting the pressure on the other top drivers to improve. Sascha Falter who is emerging as the real challenge to Craig in European 4WD events responded by improving but was still 3 seconds off Drescher's time. At this point all drivers were using



Proline M2's and the track was keeping totally consistent.

Kevin Moore moved his Predator into third place just 7/10ths of a second slower than Sascha Falter. If Craig was removed from the results the Euros would have been totally open - with him firmly at the top of the time sheets it was looking like the Cat EC would soon actually deserve its initials.

After round three was over the top ten look like this;

1. Craig Drescher
2. Sascha Falter
3. Kevin Moore
4. Patrick Feschtschenko
5. William Mitcham
6. Jukka Steenari
7. Dave Duggan
8. Daniel Vega
9. Teemu Leino
10. Ian Kenningley

Moving up in this round was Jurgen Lautenbach, looking fast and neat 14th overnight was a good position. Jon Leonard was in 17th and Jamie Booth 29th.

### Time to get busy

The following day that would contain 2 rounds of qualifying and the finals was a little cooler, the



track seemed damp and many felt this meant the dust would be reduced along with lap times.

It is a very difficult time for the drivers - the second day.

On the first day they drive in a practice race and then qualify but on the second day the first time the power is hit on the transmitter you are qualifying. Mistakes are often made and for this reason the top three places didn't alter in the fourth round.

Some people did improve in this round but the real chance to make or break would come in round five - the final round.

Unusually, the top drivers were placed in the first heats at this European Championships. This meant top drivers such as Craig Drescher were out first. In the final and 5th round Craig Drescher displayed why he is number one in Europe. Taking a further 2 seconds off his best time with a perfect run in which Craig and his car looked in perfect harmony. This track was tricky, even the best drivers Europe had to offer were making mistakes and Craig's faultless run was a blow for anyone hoping to beat him.

Sascha Falter remained in second spot 5 seconds off of Craig's tie.

Kevin Moore and the Predator team had worked hard the evening

prior adjusting their cars to suit the track, a specially made set of parts changed the rear suspension of the car and in a final all out run to try and take TQ Kevin's Predator looked just capable of a least second on the grid. Unfortunately for Kevin his car caught a but that just managed to turn it over with just a few laps remaining. Third on the grid would be a difficult place to start the race from if Kevin was serious about winning the meeting.

In a fine 4th on the grid was Jukka Steenari from Finland. Jukka is a likeable young man and a change to the EC version of the Cat during qualifying from the older version helped him grab a grid position that would give him a chance of winning in front of his home crowd.

In fifth was Patrick Feschtschenko, driving a Yokomo. His car had always looked capable of being a real contender for the top three but somehow a real challenge from him didn't appear, Patrick is still and up and coming driving - capable of winning but as yet not quite there.

Schumacher's Karl 'Boy Wonder' Marsden drove a stunning 5th round race to make sixth on the grid. Karl had looked good in all rounds but just managed to get it all together in the last race to

make his first European A final. Karl has been a real driving force within Schumacher during 1995 and his 'Boy Wonder' nickname is well deserved - a place in the final was a nice topping for his 1995 season.

In seventh place helping to encourage older drivers the World over was Jurgen Lautenbach. Jurgen is very much a business man in the RC world now and many felt his competitive driving days may have been over, Jurgen put the record straight in Finland taking his LRP powered and speed controlled Yokomo into the top ten.

The second of the 'works' Tenth Technology Predators was in eighth. William Mitcham made the top ten with a steady drive that at times looked almost too careful, it seemed that William was determined to make the A final with no mistakes.

In ninth place was a Schumacher Cat 2000EC driven by Teemu Leino. His car had looked awesome throughout qualifying sometimes being the fastest car overall in terms of lap times. Mistakes were always Teemu's problem but, a top ten place on home soil was now guaranteed.

The last man to make the top ten was Britain's Dave Duggan. His first Euro A final place was well deserved as his Yokomo car had looked good from the first lap of practice.

So that was the top ten that would contend the finals, unlucky man of the meeting was Danny Vega. He had been in the A final right from the start and was cruelly knocked out at the last second - 11th place is a terrible result and the Tamiya 411X driver deserved a place.

### Could Craig be King?

With pole position and a clear advantage it looked likely that

the slippery, dry surface was a stupid place to start the race from; it needed to be swept and a large piece of track marking removed to make the start remotely fair.

For the first leg we had Craig in position one, Falter in two and Moore in three. As the light turned green the race for 1995 Euro honours was on!

The first start was clean, Drescher lead with Falter and Moore in close company. The next five minutes could be described as tense, exciting or even boring! - Craig lead from the start to win, eventually by a couple of seconds but at all times a single mistake would loose the race. Kevin Moore managed to get past Sascha Falter for second but in real terms Craig Drescher had done his usual faultless job and won the first leg.

### Leg two

Without a lap by lap description of leg two the result may speak for itself, Craig Drescher won the race from Kevin Moore by 5/10ths of a second. This was Kevin's big chance, he disposed of Falter and moved in on Craig. A tight close battle took place but in the end Craig Drescher's nerve held and the 1995 title was his, Schumacher's and Reedy's.

This left the third leg open to nine drivers to do well in, Drescher could do no more - the title already safely tucked in his pocket.

From the start Sascha Falter made contact with the Drescher Cat.

that these three are the tops in Europe. A Schumacher first, Yokomo second and Predator third.

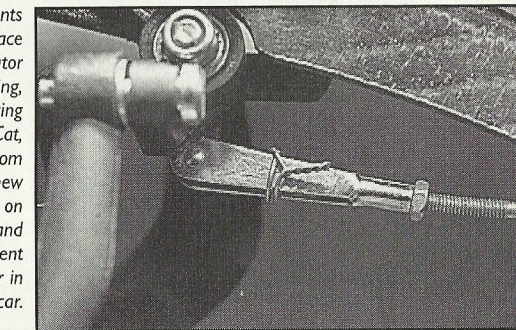
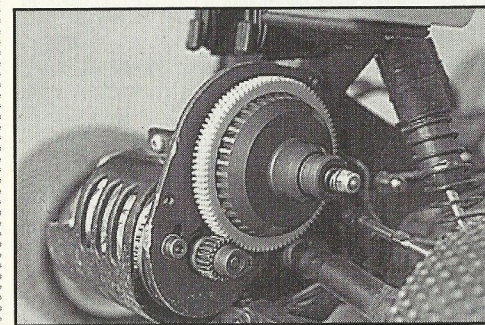
### Four Wheel Snips

● Predator changed the car of Kevin Moore to have inboard tow-in for the finals and last qualifying runs. The car was reported better on the slippery sections of the track.

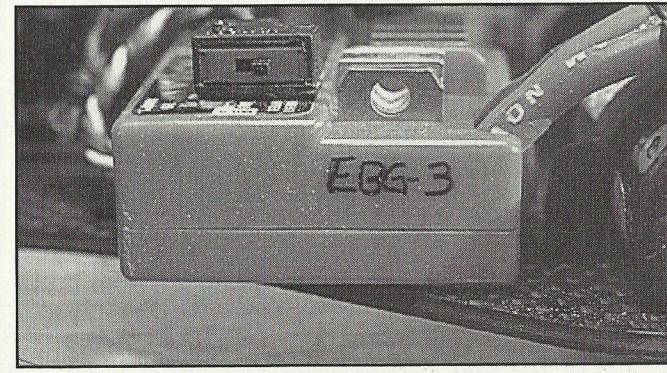
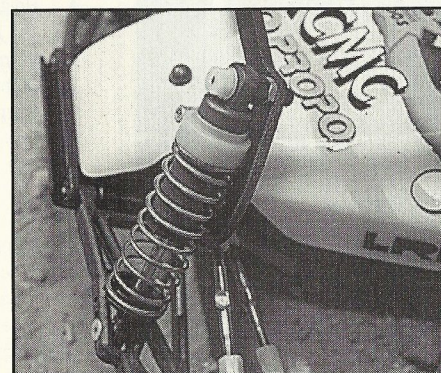
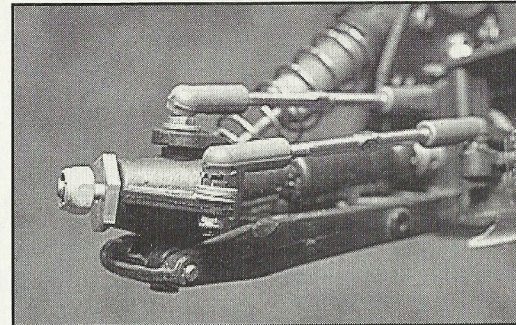
● Schumacher had four versions of their inboard toe-in system for the EC in Finland. A neat alloy set of suspension holders was the main part of the modification that was used on the winning car of Craig Drescher.

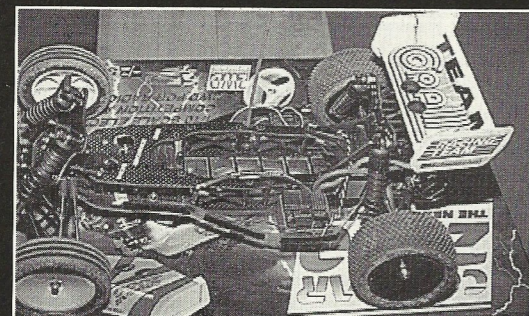
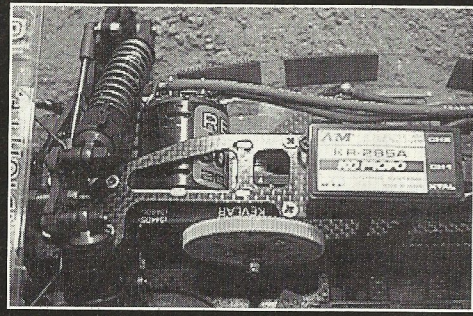
● Danny Vega's Tamiya 411X was at times a threat to Kevin Moore's Predator during qualifying. The Japanese machine qualified 11th and had been in the top ten for most of the meeting.

● Eirik Andreassen from Norway took his Lazer ZXR to victory in the B final proving that the very latest car technology is not always needed, the Lazer in first form was

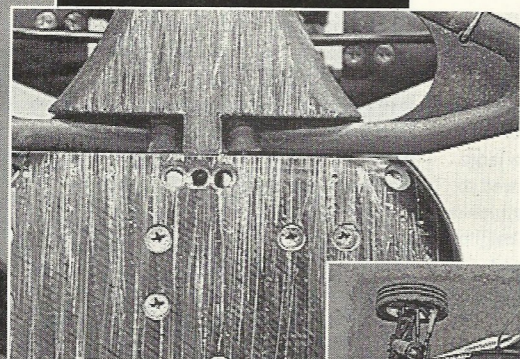
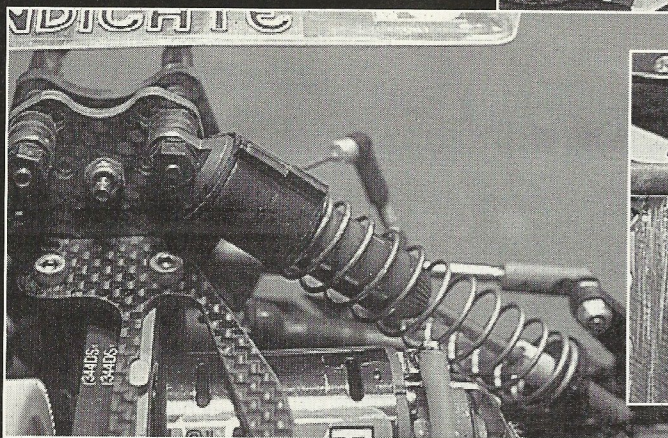


*Technical points from the race included Predator anti ball joint wiring, bump steer spacing on Drescher's Cat, Hydra Drive from Schumacher, new coated dampers on Moore's XX and new development speed controller in Drescher car.*

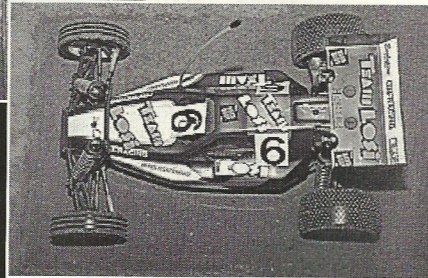




Neat topplate work on Craig Drescher's car. Steenari's Cougar that shocked the RC world...



Lay down shocks on EC Cat worked very well... Predator changed their car to in-board toe-in. Patrick F's Losi on the grid.



start, these early laps between Kevin and Craig were very important. First the race was in Kevin's hands but as the 5 minutes was up a couple of slides from Kevin had given Craig the race. He was to be fastest of the round and psychologically in front of his main rival Kevin Moore.

### First rounders

At the end of the first round Craig Drescher topped the times. The 4WD title was again already his and now 2WD looked like a matter of time.

Second was a surprise, Holger Rabenseifner from Germany had put his Losi XX within a few 1/10ths of Craig and was the only driver along with Craig to break the 13 lap barrier.

Third was a real surprise. In practice the Cougars had looked good, but with the might of the Losi and Associated cars the Schumacher team summed up their chances realistically - a few cars in the A main would be viewed as successful. Jukka Steenari seemed to have other ideas. His third place on the grid after the first round was no fluke. In fact it looked easy and Jukka looked capable of going faster.

Kevin Moore was in a disappointed fourth, his car had looked excellent in practice and had the fastest lap time in the first round by half a second! He was annoyed with his first round performance but knew he was capable.

In fifth was Germany's Patrick Feschtschenko. Patrick had been in the USA testing with Team Losi and

flew straight to the Euros. He came to the meeting to win and his first round time was a little disappointing.

Sixth spot went to another Cougar. Boy Wonder had done it again! Karl Marsden is becoming a top driver. In the UK he could realistically take over the top mantle from Craig and Kevin in the future as at present he is still only 16 years old. Karl's first round run was smooth and well deserved the position.

In seventh was Matt Needham, after a B final in 4WD Matt was looking as if he was going to make the top ten from the start. His new Lesro Infinity motors were right on the pace and he made it 3 Cougars in the top 7.

In eighth was Sascha Falter. In an interview in the local paper Sascha stated that a B final place would be good for him in 2WD - so an A final place must have been a bonus.

Ninth was Ralf Helbing, he had driven a smooth controlled race to slip in the top ten and surprised many by being so near the ultimate pace.

Last place in round 1 in the top ten went to Jamie Booth. 4 Cougars in the top ten was an amazing result even if this was only the first round.

### So who would be in?

The main story of round 2 was Kevin Moore, but just 1/10th of a second Kevin grabbed top slot from Craig Drescher. Remember that it is 1/10 of a second over a five minute race - involving 13 laps and it becomes obvious how close the

was.

William Mitcham and Ian Kenningley moved in to the A and Jon Leonard made a fine 12th place.

In round three the pattern for the rest of the meeting was set. Local man Jukka Steenari took TQ and pole position by over a second from Kevin Moore, both Moore and Drescher had good runs but Jukka's Cougar to the amazement of even himself took a fine fastest time seen so far at the meeting. Schumacher were elated, Corally very pleased and LRP chuffed that their new speedo had TQ at the end of the first day of qualifying.

At the end of play on the first day there were 4 British, 3 German, 2 Swiss and 1 Finnish driver in the final - but the Finnish driver was at home and at the top of the lists...

The top ten drivers were covered by less than 6 seconds.

### The top ten

After the end of qualifying on the first day it was apparent that the next day could be faster. It is rare that a track is so consistent but the Finnish organisers had presented a track that was totally fair, the grip stayed the same, the bumps hardly changed and at every point TQ could have been set - very impressive.

In the fourth round there were no improvements in the top six, but Britain's Jon Leonard did a fine time to put himself 7th overall at his second ever Euros.

The final round was where the times would be set to define the

ten European Championship A finalists.

In the final round the top four remained consistent. Jukka had completed another 13 lapper whereas Drescher and Moore had not, Schumacher were pleased and shocked that TQ was there's. The main mover in the final round was Jon Leonard. Fifth on the grid was the result for Jon who's car was beautifully set-up and worked perfectly on the slippy sections of the track.

Sascha Falter also improved and slipping in at tenth on the grid was Ireland's Richard Cree driving a Trinity powered Losi making himself the first competitor from Ireland to make a European A final.

The top ten for the final were;

1. Jukka Steenari
2. Kevin Moore
3. Craig Drescher
4. Holger Rabenseifner
5. Jon Leonard
6. Patrick Feschtschenko
7. Matt Needham
8. Sascha Falter
9. Karl Marsden
10. Richard Cree

So Schumacher were pleased with their top of the heap qualifying position, Kevin Moore felt he could win from second on the grid and Craig Drescher must have felt very

strange being third on the grid with cars actually in front of him for once!

There were 4 Losi, 3 RC10 and 3 Cougars making up the top ten.

Other good UK results were; Dave Duggan 14th, Ian Kenningley 15th, Jamie Booth 18th, William Mitcham 20th and Richard Taylor a fine 30th.

Qualifying had been a tense affair but overall, Jukka Steenari and his Corally powered Cougar had looked as though they were the best combination to take the title...

### Jukka, Kevin or Craig?

The finals seemed to be between these three guys. They had been the fastest at all times and the guy with the best nerves would probably come out on top, each driver used Proline Flat Fuzzie M2's on the rear with ether Losi or Proline front ribs.

The question was could Jukka make a start and if he could, could he take the pressure?

With 40 seconds to go to the start of the first final, while the drivers tested their cars on the track Kevin Moore managed to clip a track marker and break his car! The markers were vicious but Kevin was instantly in a state of disbelief and panic. Alan Harman was mechanicing Kevin's car and had it unexpectedly on the line with a few seconds to go!

This left the start of the first final on! As the lights turned green Jukka made a good start as Kevin Moore spun inwards towards Craig Drescher's car. The result was an amazing first lap lead for Jukka that could easily allow him to win the first leg if he drove with no mistakes. This he did to take a memorable first leg win with Craig Drescher fighting back to second to give him a chance of winning. Third went to Karl Marsden and Kevin Moore came back to fourth. Fifth went to Jon Leonard with the rest fighting for the lower positions.

### Could the Cougar hold on?

It was now getting serious, the bad start for Kevin Moore and

Craig Drescher was no-bodies fault but it allowed Jukka a clean getaway. In fact Drescher and Moore were seen in the pits before the next leg of the A final in closed conversation.

The lights turned green on the biggest ever race for Jukka Steenari and he managed a clean start with Kevin Moore tightly in second. Again Drescher had a naff start and was virtually out of contention.

It was all about Kevin and Jukka, in the early laps Kevin harried Jukka sliding up the inside a number of times but just not quiet getting the lead. Kevin looked faster and sharper but Jukka was steady and in control.

On the corner just before the rostrum Jukka slipped wide and Kevin was in!

He then proceeded to pull away a little and it looked as if Jukka wouldn't have it all his own way. The only area Kevin looked a little loose was coming onto the straight and on lap 6 Kevin got sideways, Jukka was still in second and as Kevin's car lost grip it hit a track marker and left the circuit. This left Jukka being chased by Craig Drescher. The pressure was still on as Craig had at least 5 laps to make up the 2 second gap, try as he might the gap remained almost the same and with just a single lap to go the gap was 1.5 seconds.

Craig pushed extra hard to catch Jukka on the last lap but it was all over with two corners to go as Jukka took a memorable victory on his home soil.

Schumacher personnel Tim Walden and Phil Booth were ecstatic as was a shaking Oscar Jansen who could be found in the pits during the racing too nervous to watch Jukka's Corally powered car.

It was a stunning set of finals in which the Cougar of Steenari looked amazing and the might of Losi and Kevin Moore and Associated and Craig Drescher could do nothing about stopping him.

### The end result

A super win for Jukka Steenari was backed up with 2nd for Craig Drescher (the outgoing champion), 3rd for Kevin Moore, a fine 4th for

Jon Leonard, 5th for Patrick Feschtschenko, 6th for Karl Marsden, 7th for Holger Rabenseifner, 8th for Richard Cree, 9th for Matt Needham and 10th for Sascha Falter.

The event had been magnificent with only the smallest criticism being the lack of commentary and therefore slight lack of atmosphere. The track was superb and Jukka Steenari and Craig Drescher worthy champions.

Schumacher had not dominated the racing but had won both classes, there 4WD was always a threat but the Cougar win will send a shiver across the Atlantic to the US manufacturers of 2 wheel drives...

### Two wheel facts

● Jukka Steenari's Cougar was near standard apart from a set of

slimmer front wishbones to allow more turning.

● Losi cars were fitted with inboard toe-in that has proved popular with team drivers in the US.

● Corally have won their first European off road title with Jukka Steenari.

● LRP also managed to win a European title - Jukka Steenari used the new ICS speed controller to take the two wheel drive title.

● Jon Leonard was the youngest finalist at just 15.

● The British Team manager was elected as Christine Kenningley, the Brits having a female manager for the second year running. Christine lead the team in the opening ceremony and represented the Brits excellently.

