



The Worlds are a bi-annual event and is obviously the high point of the calendar. The set-up at Beaulieu was incredible. The track and event that went with it was a credit to Mick Hill, who had been planning the event for nearly 2 years, as well as all the rest of the organising committee. A huge track was perfectly set out, with an incredible rostrum so that the drivers had a perfect view of the track. A grandstand was also set up, as well as their being a natural grass bank for spectators to view the racing. Two huge marquees, one for the pit area and one for food/entertainment were set up. The pit area was particularly impressive with a large table per driver rather than the cramped situation we normally find ourselves in at a Euros or Worlds. There were various hospitality containers for the

sponsors, as well as one for the press, race control and technical inspection. All in all, it was a magnificent set-up. As the track had never been raced on before, a perfect green covering of grass was present on the track. The Brits were hoping that this would remain for as long as possible, because nobody from abroad ever encounters such a surface. Whenever there are meetings abroad, the surface is very slippery dirt, and the Brits struggle. With the advantage reversed, at least at the beginning, the Brits were hopeful of success. During the 3 rounds of practice this advantage proved the case. Most of the other drivers were struggling to get the right tyre, whilst the Brits were happily using their Amark Step-Pin or Kyosho BSW-40 or Mugen tyres. In the first round of practice, our own David Crompton led the world with his

Laro. Although it was only practice this must have still felt good! In the second round, the other Europeans got their act together. Sebastien Leonard from France recorded an unbelievable time of 14 laps in 10:18.05. Sebastien was the driver who had FTD at this year's Euros in France and he showed those who were absent in France just what we had been talking about when we came home! This would be the fastest time we would see throughout the week. In the final round of practice, the 4WD 1/10th Off road World Champion, Mark Pavidis set the fastest time. Mark was running for Mugen at this meeting. Using a Rex engine, the electric ace looked really good on the fast flat track, David Crompton had done enough with his first two tuns to secure FTD overall. Although this was only practice it was still a brilliant achievement.

Qualification was scored by the now familiar round by round scoring system, where each round is taken separately, points are awarded for your position in that round, and then a total score is awarded. Although this is familiar now in Europe, this was the first time the system had been used at a Worlds. Qualification was to be over 6 rounds with the best 4 scores to count as the total qualification score. This was certainly difficult especially considering that the heats were 10 minutes in duration and not the normal 5 minutes which we have at home and in Europe. This meant that unlike at a BRCA national the best two 5 minute runs count, we were now counting four 10 minute runs! This would prove very difficult because it needed extremely good concentration to drive for 10 minutes without crashing, let alone put in four clean runs. For the first round of qualifying some grass was still present on the track. This meant that most of the English drivers still used typical grass tyres (Amark, Kyosho, Mugen) whilst the rest used Turbo Rats. All eyes were on David Crompton to see if he could keep his excellent form from practice. Unfortunately David suffered some problems with his servo gears and he failed to complete his run. With 5 rounds left, David now had to put in 4 good runs from 5 which wouldn't be easy.

14 laps was the target for a 10 minute tun, particularly in the early rounds and in this first round, 12 drivers managed to achieve this mark. Two of them came from British drivers, Jamie Booth and Lawrence Harris. Jamie ended 6th in the round

Laffranchi is World's Best

The 6th 1/8th Off Road World Championship took place at the National Motor Museum, Beaulieu, Hampshire. It was the first time the World Championships had been held in Great Britain

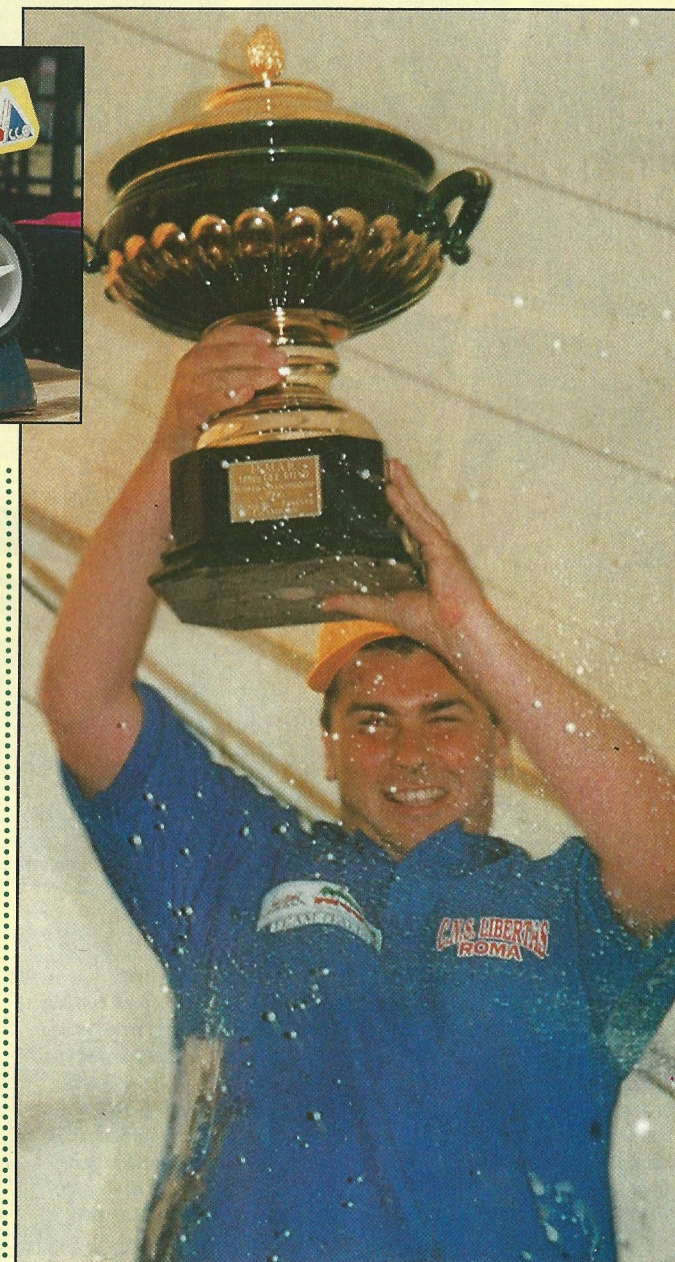


with Lawrence 11th. This was a superb start for the two Kyosho drivers, who were under some pressure to perform from Kyosho and OS. Stewart Wilcox put in a good run to end 26th with several British drivers lying between 30th and 40th including Trevor Cadby, Mike Cradock, Danny Conway and myself. Top of the tree, however, was the Tag. This car has really been improved since the last World Champs culminating in its recent European Championship victory in France. Marco Orandesso of Italy was fastest in R1 just ahead of his Tag team-mate, Marteo Dapporto. With European Champion, Alessandro Catozzi in 5th, the Tag had an incredible 3 in the top 5, which was even more amazing when you consider there was only 3 Tag cars at the whole meeting!

Mark Pavidis (Mugen) continued his good form in 3rd as did Italian Champion Alex Laffranchi in 4th who was the only driver to have recorded 14 laps in all 3 practice runs and now in the first round proper.

By round 2, most drivers were

turning to Medial Pro Turbo Rats as the grass disappeared. It wasn't slippery and dusty like abroad just yet, but you couldn't really use a grass type tyre as they would probably wear out. Round 2 was also the first round in which we noticed the difference in lap times between early heats and later heats in the same round. The heat order at major Championships are shifted around from round to round in order to try to give everyone a fair deal. It was noticeable that with the 10 minute heats there was a fair difference between those early on in the round and those later. This didn't affect it too much at this stage, as all the top drivers had been seeded in heats 1-2-3. However, a few good drivers had not been seeded so high and this was their chance to take advantage of the conditions. One such driver was Daniel Vega from Spain. The Mugen driver had been exceptionally quick in France at the Euros but had not had the best of times up until now. However, he was in heats in this round (which was 2nd on the track) with the majority of the top





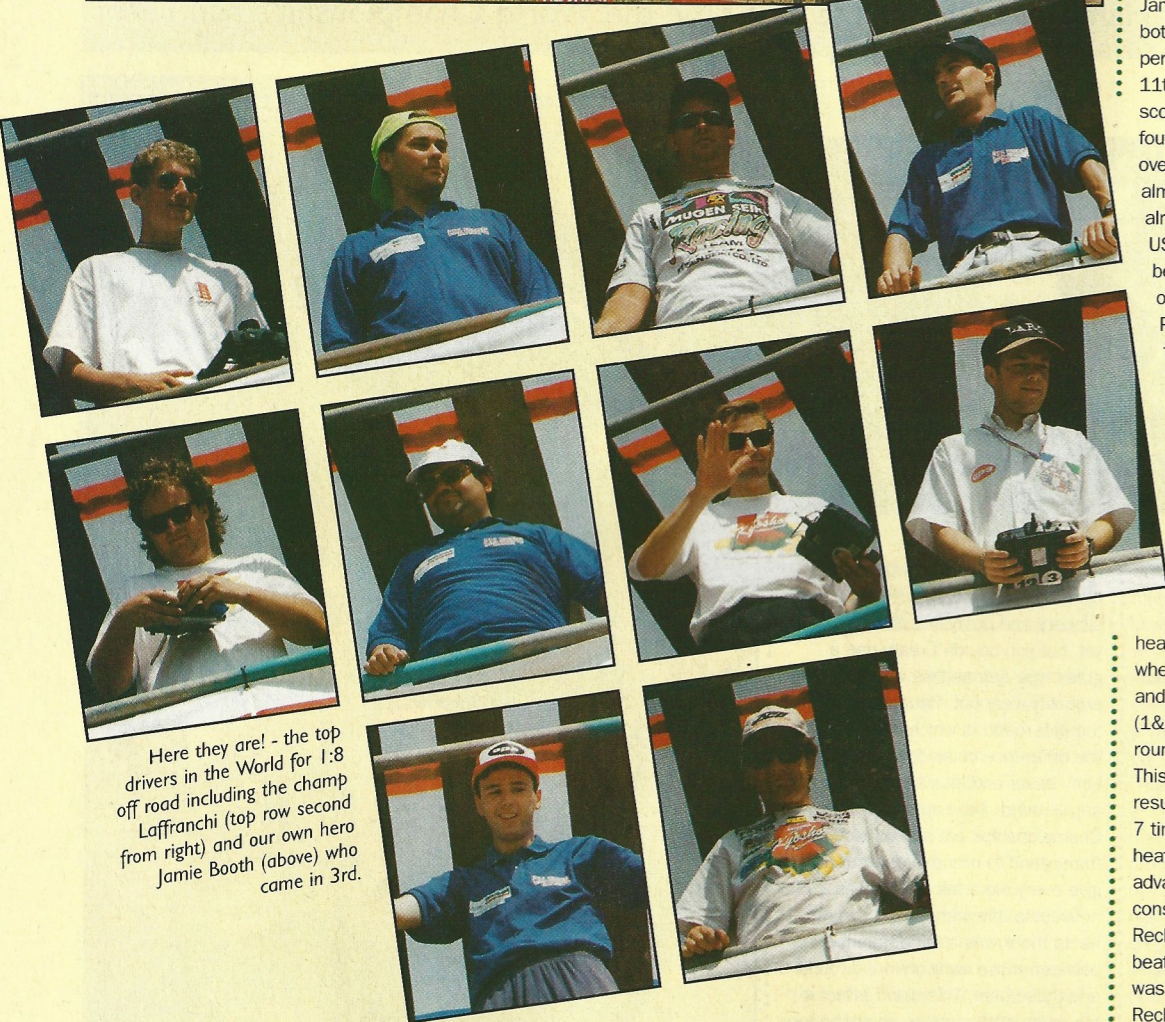
4th in the round. Jamie Booth also had a brilliant run ending 10th, just ahead of Lawrence Harris who was very consistent in 12th place.

In the 4th round, Reckward was again top. He had decided that the Beaulieu track was now dusty enough to see a true 'dust tyre' and used the Medial Pro Pulsar tyre. He recorded his 2nd top spot by beating the very consistent Mark Pavidis by 4 seconds. Laffranchi of Italy was again near the top in 3rd with David Crompton repeating his tremendous achievement of R3 by finishing 4th. Jamie Booth and Lawrence Harris both kept up their superb performances by finishing 10th and 11th in the round. They had now scored 4 good scores from 4 and so found themselves in 7th and 8th overall respectively. They were almost guaranteed a semi-final berth already. At this stage Pavidis of the USA was top with his 4 scores being two 2nd places, a 3rd and one 4th. It would be between Pavidis, Reckward and Orandesso for FTD overall.

The 5th round underlined the trouble with varying conditions during a qualifying round. With heats 1-2-3 always together it was not too much of a problem as the majority of the top drivers faced similar conditions. However in this round the heat order was 3, 4, 5, 10, 1, 2. This meant

heat 3 started first in the morning when the track was slightly damp and quicker. The other top heats (1&2) were right at the end of the round when the dust had returned. This fact shone through in the results of the round as 6 of the top 7 times for the round were made in heat 3. Daniel Reckward took full advantage as he took his third consecutive top spot. This gave Reckward a total which could not be beaten and so he was in the final! It was an amazing achievement from Reckward because for the second World Championships in a row, he had FTD. He did the same Austria two years ago, but since then he had not really performed.

An amazing 4th place in the round was Trevor Cadby (Laro.) Although Trevor was also in heat 3, he made no mistakes in his run and took full advantage of the conditions. The same could be said of Danny Conway (MP5) who ended 7th in the round.



Here they are! - the top drivers in the World for 1:8 off road including the champ Laffranchi (top row second from right) and our own hero Jamie Booth (above) who came in 3rd.

drivers at the end of the round in 1-2-3. Vega recorded 14 laps, and with the grip disappearing this would be the only 14 laps of the round. In the very last heat of the round Orandesso recorded a 13 laps in 10:01.39 which, given the conditions, was by far the best run of the round. David Crompton (Laro) began his difficult task of getting 4 good scores from 5 with a 9th place

finish, the best of the Brits. Lawrence Harris (MP5) was building a good score with 15th place added to his 11th in R1. The 3rd round saw the grip continue to diminish and in fact there would be no 14 lappers from this stage onwards. Round 3 was also the stage at which Daniel Reckward of Germany, took control of qualifying. Reckward was using a Laro but unlike the Diablo with the

laid-down shocks at the front, Reckward was using the more normal Spoleto set-up with the shocks angled at the front. He was also using Mugen shocks on his car. It obviously worked as Reckward was 7 seconds clear of 2nd placed Mark Pavidis. Orandesso of Italy kept the Tag at the top overall with 3rd place, just ahead of David Crompton. David Laro but unlike the Diablo with the

Things could all change in R6. Conditions were beginning to get slightly bumpy at this stage and together with a lack of grip, the conditions were much slower. Many drivers were now using Pulsar tyres although the British Kyosho and Laro drivers were to remain on Turbo Rats.

With the dust and bumps really beginning to show, it was no wonder that the Italians began to shine. Alex Laffranchi took top spot with his Picco powered MP5. He is the only Italian driver to use the MP5 and had been solely sponsored by Picco up until this meeting. He usually keeps out of the limelight with his father looking after his car. It was noticeable that Kyosho staff were taking an interest in Alex by this stage as it looked like he was their best bet for winning. Euro Champ Catozzi secured his semi final place with 2nd in the round, just ahead of Lawrence Harris. Lawrence had really come alive at these Championships and his outstanding result in R6 was the highest position for a British driver throughout qualifying. It meant Lawrence had qualified comfortably for the semi-finals in 8th place and he had not once been out of the top 15 in any of the 6 qualifying rounds which was a superb achievement.

Jamie Booth had also qualified directly for the semis in 10th place. He had never needed to improve on his first. 4 rounds which were good enough. David Crompton completed the British trio who directly qualified for the semis. David had engine trouble in the last round but his three excellent runs in the middle part of qualifying together with a 27th place in R5 was enough for 12th overall. Trevor Cadby and Danny Conway had already put in really good performances to qualify for the 1/4 finals, and they would hope to finish in the top 3 of their race in order to join the others in the semi finals. Stewart Wilcox could have thought himself unlucky to finish 30th overall, just one place off direct 1/4 final qualification.

It was hard to see the winner coming from outside the top 5 qualifiers. Reckward obviously had the advantage as he was already in the main final having secured FTD. The rest still had to qualify for the final through the semis, although if they did, they would have an advantage on Reckward in that they could adjust the set-up of their cars

between the semi and main final whereas Reckward would have to get the set-up right first time, in the final. Orandesso of Italy (Tag) ended 2nd overall with the Tag seeming effortless to drive. Electric World Champ, Pavidis was 3rd although in the latter rounds his Mugen didn't seem too happy on the bumps. Laffranchi of Italy (MP5) was looking really good in 4th overall especially as he was the Best in the final round. European Champion, Catozzi of Italy (Tag) also had a great chance of winning as he was 2nd in the final round and the conditions were only to become more like those in Italy.

Friday night saw the driver banquet take place. As in Pendle the event went down brilliantly with everyone having a great time.

Finals under way

The first of the Brits out on the track were John Hazelwood (Laro) and Nick Simmerson (Crono) in the 1/128 finals. Both were good enough to go through, but problems meant they would not do so. BRCA Junior Championship leader, John Isherwood, had a bad qualifying week with various problems. He found himself in the 1/64 finals and again should have qualified up. He was on course to do so, when he was shunted from behind on the second of two jumps. This knocked John's engine out of mesh with the centre gear and his race was run.

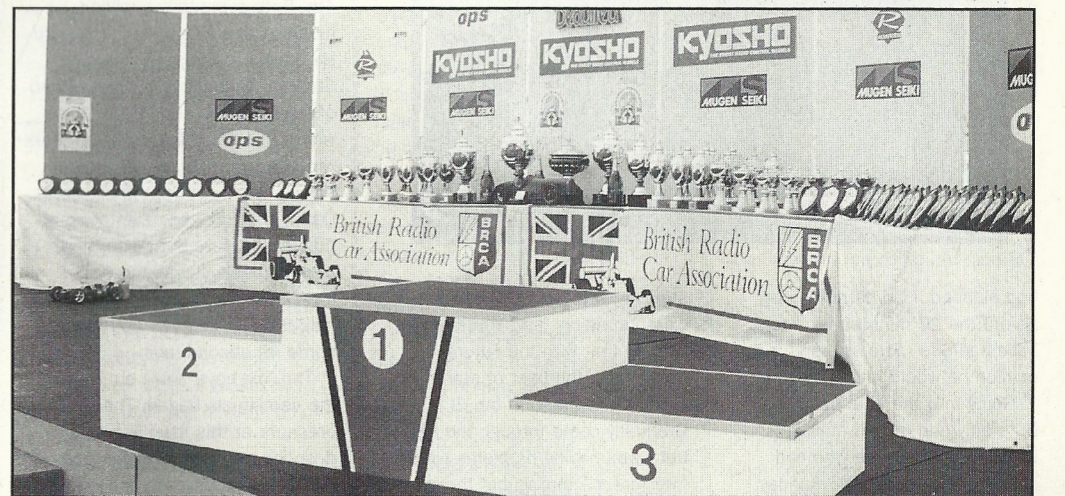
Next out was Tommy Chung (Mugen) in the 1/32nd finals. Tommy began to make his way through the finals with the first British success to cheer. He finished

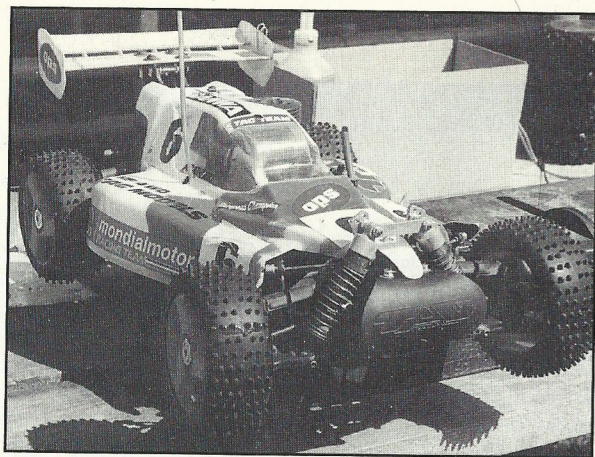
3rd, but only after holding Inserra of Switzerland by just 3 seconds! It noticeable that by this stage, just as in France, the racing was very fast indeed and was very competitive. The last races of the day would be the 1/16th finals. Ian Oddie (Crono) and yours truly (Futura) were on the rostrum for Great Britain. With 1994 European Champion, Andrea Gennari and 1990 World Champion, Koji Sanada also in the race it was going to be a hard battle to get through to the 1/8ths on Sunday. Yours truly made an excellent start from pole position, only for there to be a re-start! Second time around I once again got a good start with the rest of the field on my tail. Ian Oddie didn't get the best of starts and would fail to qualify upwards.

Meanwhile I had built up a comfortable lead at the front by half distance. Gradually the field began to close in and I slipped to second place. With about 5 laps left I was still 2nd, but Gennari and Kenny Chua of Singapore were only a corner or so behind. Chua crashed and this left a battle between myself and Gennari (Crono). One mistake and that would be it. I just tried to keep my lines, making sure he couldn't get through. As we went down the straight, I slowed down early for the corner at the end of the straight, Gennari failed to anticipate this and went right into that back of me! A huge groan went up from the crowd only for a big

cheer to follow when I landed on my wheels and Gennari on his roof, I duly completed my lap to go through to the final day!

In the other 1/16 there were 3 Brits so surely we could get someone else through to the final day? Justin Mackey would surely have done so but for an engine cut on the start line. Tommy Chung also failed to progress as his car looked decidedly unsafe on the now bumpy track. Mike Cradock was our best bet in this race. Mike came through the pack with his MP5 and was pressurising 3rd placed Sato from Japan. Unfortunately Mike needed just one more lap to be right on the tail of the Japanese driver. Mike went under the bridge just 0.82 seconds after the 20 minutes





which cost me what were to prove vital seconds. This time I would be the one to just miss out as I went under the timing bridge just 0.4 seconds after Yagi.

In the other 1/8th final, John Zotti (Mugen) failed to progress

by praying for a good start. In the first semi, Mark Pavidis (Mugen) led from pole with our own Jamie Booth moving through to 2nd, much to the delight of the Beaulieu crowd. Trevor Cadby had a blistering start and was up to 3rd. Then disaster struck for Trevor as his pipe came loose. This put Trevor out of contention as he had to come in for repairs.

Back at the front Pavidis took the win, with Jamie Booth 2nd ensuring we had at least one driver in the final. European Champion, Catozzi of Italy (Tag) ended 3rd and was still many people's favourite for the title. 1995 European Champion, Philippe Lachat (Laro) captured the crucial 4th place to book his place in the final having only just qualified for the semis in 15th place overall. Matteo Dapporto of Italy (Tag) ended 5th but eventually qualified for the final as the fastest loser from the two semis.

In the second semi there were 4 Brits racing so hopes were high that we would have others to add to Jamie Booth in the final. On the 3rd lap, Orandesso (Tag) lost the lead to Italian team-mate, Laffranchi (MP5). Laffranchi then went on to win by an incredible 22 seconds! He recorded the only 25 lapper from any of the semi finals so he looked like the man to beat in the finals. After his first full lap, Laffranchi put in 7 laps under 50 seconds, including two 48 second laps, which at this stage was truly remarkable.

Stewart Wilcox failed to progress to his 2nd consecutive World final alter his car ran out of fuel agonisingly close to the lap counting bridge. David Crompton also had a cut just short of the halfway mark, just as he looked good for a final place. Nevertheless, David had proved that he is one of the quickest drivers in the World with some scintillating performances throughout the week.

Danny Conway looked for the best part of the race to be joining his MP5 team-mate, Jamie Booth in the final as he held the crucial 4th spot. With about 5 laps left he was overtaken by Cliff Lett and was having a good battle with both Cliff and Kanai of Japan for the 4th place. Cliff eventually got 4th, but Danny still had a chance of being the fastest loser. On his last lap his engine cut, leaving Kanai to take 5th - but then Kanai cut! There was

chaos as nobody knew who was 5th, so Danny restarted his engine and went out for one lap. It was all to no avail as the referees ruled the race was already over.

That left Lawrence Harris (MP5). Lawrence hardly put a foot (or wheel) wrong throughout the race and qualified comfortably for the final in 3rd place. It was Lawrence's 2nd final in a row and showed he had bounced back after his recent European disappointment. Laffranchi was well clear with Orandesso (2nd) completing a Tag trio in the final. Cliff Lett (MP5) finished 4th to make the final, having, started in the 1/8th finals!

The main event

The final we had been waiting all week for arrived. The level of anticipation was immense as the drivers were introduced to the crowd. With the track quite rough indeed it would need unbelievable concentration on the part of the drivers and reliability from the cars and engines in order to win. There were three Italians, two British, one American, one Frenchman and a German. Kyosho did best on the car front with 4 in the final along with 3 Tag, 2 Laros, and a rather disappointing solitary Mugen. On the engine front OPS was the most successful with 4 along with 2 OS, 2 Picco 1 RB, 1 Rex and a Dutch engine which we have not seen in England.

Right from the start, Laffranchi of Italy began to dominate with his Picco powered MP5. However, pole man Reckward of Germany (Laro) as well as France's Philippe Lachat were not too far behind. Lachat had a brilliant spell early on having started 8th on the grid. Grandesso (Italy, Tag) had slipped to 4th with Jamie Booth and Lawrence Harris in 5th and 6th. Euro Champ, Catozzi (Tag) really lost his race in these early stages when he uncharacteristically made a lot of mistakes.

After 15 minutes Reckward slipped back after an engine cut in the pits as did Catozzi. Soon after, Lawrence Harris disappointingly left the race for some time with a broken universal joint on his MP5. Incredibly this was the only serious breakdown in the 1 hour race, showing how strong and reliable 1/8 off-road cars

tech chart

IFMAR 1.8 OFF ROAD WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS - BEAULIEU, ENGLAND

FINAL POS.	NAME	RESULT	SPONSOR	CAR	ENGINE	FUEL	TRANS MITTER	SERVO	F.TYRE	R.TYRE	QUAL. POS.
1st	^(I) Alex Laffranchi	71 laps 60:48.94	Picco Kyosho	Kyosho Inferno MP5	Picco	Picco	KO EX-10	KO 1006	Medial Pro Turbo Rats	Medial Pro Turbo Rats	4
2nd	^(F) Philippe Lachat	69 laps 60:10.66	Laro OPS	Laro Diablo	OPS	Model Technics Dynaglo 25%	Sanwa Exzes	KO 1003	Turbo Rats	Turbo Rats	15
3rd	^(GB) Jamie Booth	69 laps 60:14.58	Kyosho, Ripmax, OS Sanwa, Three 5 Models	Kyosho Inferno MP5	OS RZB	Model Technics Superglo 25%	JR Apex	Sanwa Erg-ZZ	Turbo Rats	Turbo Rats	11
4th	^(GB) Daniel Reckward	69 laps 60:24.25	Laro, RB, RMV	Laro Diablo	RB	RB Concept	Futaba Megatech	Futaba 9302	Medial Pro Pulsar	Turbo Rats	1
5th	^(I) Alessandro Catozzi	69 laps 60:28.25	TAG OPS	TAG	OPS	TAG	Sanwa Exzes	Sanwa Erg-ZZ	Pulsar	Medial Pro Pulsar	5
6th	^(I) Marco Grandesso	68 laps 60:37.84	TAG OPS	TAG	OPS	TAG	Sanwa Exzes	Sanwa Erg-ZZ	Pulsar	Pulsar	2
7th	^(USA) Cliff Lett	67 laps 60:39.57	Kyosho, Paris Racing Picco, Sanwa, MIP	Kyosho Inferno MP5	Paris Picco	O'Donnel 30%	Sanwa Exzes	Airtronics 152	Turbo Rats	Turbo Rats	32
8th	^(I) Matteo Dapporto	65 laps 60:00.95	TAG OPS	TAG	OPS	TAG	Futaba Megatech	Futaba 9302	Pulsar	Pulsar	9
9th	^(USA) Mark Pavidis	65 laps 60:42.72	Mugen, Rex, MIP Medial, Pro, Proline, Associated	Mugen Super Athlete	REX XB	O'Donnel 30%	Airtronics 3PS	Airtronics 94156	Medial Pro Whoops	Medial Pro Whoops	3
10th	^(GB) Lawrence Harris	56 laps 59:14.55	Kyosho, Ripmax, OS Futaba Three 5 Models	Kyosho Inferno MP5	OS RZB	Superglo 25%	Futaba Field Force 3	Futaba 9402	Medial Pro Senso	Medial Pro Senso	8

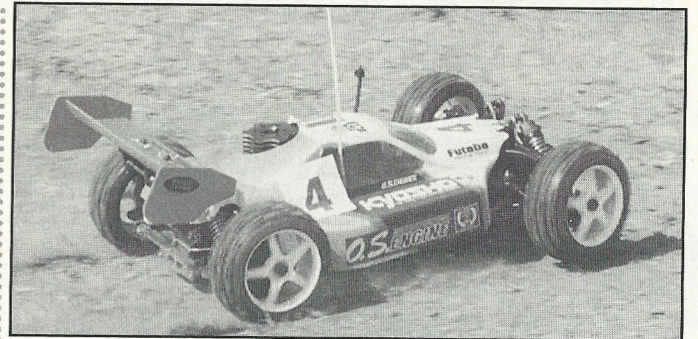
have become. At the front, Laffranchi didn't seem concerned with breakdowns as he relentlessly churned out 49 second laps to open up a huge advantage over Lachat, Reckward and Jamie Booth.

Dapporto (Tag) suffered from engine trouble during the race and could only finish 8th. Nevertheless he has still had a tremendous year, making both the Euros and Worlds final for the first time. Cliff Lett (USA, MP5) finished 7th also after engine trouble, but he had done extremely well having started in the 1/8ths.

With around 50 minutes of the race run and with Laffranchi having lapped the entire field a good battle developed for 2nd, 3rd and 4th. Lachat (Laro), Grandesso (Tag) and Jamie Booth were still running close together. Jamie, with the crowd behind him made a charge for Grandesso towards the end, and overtook as the Italian tumbled. The Italian's misfortune was compounded when his engine cut with a minute to go and he ended 6th. His Tag team-mate, Alessandro Catozzi ended 5th despite engine cuts and towards the end he was one of the best on the track. Reckward of Germany (Laro) ended 4th, again, despite engine trouble.

Jamie Booth couldn't quite catch Lachat for 2nd place and ended 4 seconds adrift. He had done superbly well to catch Grandesso towards the end and finished a brilliant 3rd place.

Lachat finished a remarkable 2nd. I say remarkable because he

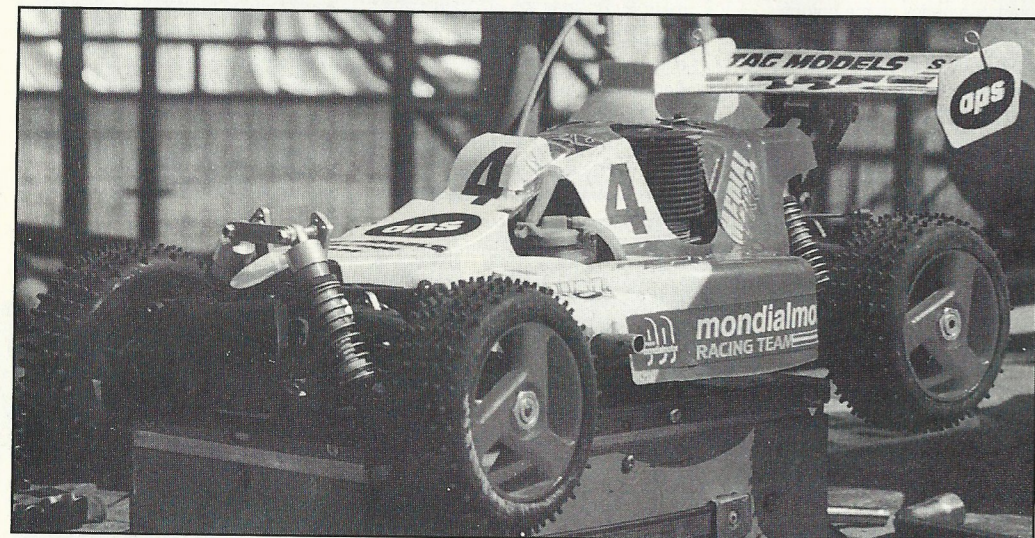


had never looked on the pace all week until it mattered.

However, nobody was going to touch Laffranchi. He won by over a lap, a staggering margin in any race. He has always been thought of as a very quick driver, but we have never seen keep it all together in a final. Kyosho will obviously want to keep hold of Laffranchi and rumour has it that next year another Italian, Andrea Gennari will leave Crono to drive once again for Kyosho. Gennari won the Euros at Pendle with an Inferno and up until France this year, he had not been out of the top 3 in any World or European Championship since 1992. Also I spotted Maurizio Monessi (World Champion in 1988 and 1994) with some Mugen items in his grasp. Although I find it hard to believe he will drive for Mugen whilst Gennari will use Kyosho (they tend to work together) nothing surprises me in 1/8th off-road!

Finally, can I once again congratulate everyone involved in the running of the Beaulieu World

Championships. It is hard to remember all those that gave up their time to help run the event but Mick Hill did a grand job along with Paul Dudley, Dave Mackey and Kevin Griffin also put in a lot of the work down at trackside making sure the races ran smoothly. James Weedon gave us an absolutely brilliant commentary throughout the week. With some assistance from Pete Winton, they made the racing so much more enjoyable to watch, and I know that some people who had never seen the racing before thought that it was brilliant because of this. I would also like to give a special mention to Ken Weedon who puts in hours of work unnoticed on the computer side of things. The program he designed for the event ran faultlessly, with results published for everything you could want. It is an incredibly time consuming job and things could not have been done without Ken. Well done to all who made the event so memorable!



had elapsed. Had he got under before the 20 minutes he would have had one more lap, and in my opinion he would have got Sato.

Going into the final day, the Brits only had myself moving through to join those who had already qualified for the Sunday,

starting with the 1/8ths which were incredibly fast! Yours truly was up first with the Futaba. I didn't have the best of starts as I found myself last on lap 2! Gradually came through the field, but I was having problems with interference throughout the race

due to an engine cut. Stewart Wilcox (Laro) put in a steady drive to finish 3rd and move up to yet another 1/4 final appearance. Former World electric Champion, Cliff Lett won the race.

In the first 1/4 final, Trevor Cadby put in the best drive of his life to end 2nd. The Laro driver had never been this high up at a major event but he had been going well all week, and his semi place was well deserved.

In the second 1/4 final Stewart Wilcox (Laro) made a terrific start from 10th on the grid, and Danny Conway also got away well from 4th. Both eventually qualified meaning that Britain had a superb six drivers in the semi finals.

Stewart Wilcox finished just ahead of Danny at the end in 2nd place with Cliff Lett (USA) taking his 2nd win in a row. Stewart once again showed his worth at the big event. Danny Conway had never been at this level before but performed tremendously. It was the best I have ever seen Danny drive and his MP5 looked good as he put in some 49 second laps.

The 'big boys' were out now as the semi-finals began. The pressure at this level is hard to describe and although the race was 20 minutes everyone would