

1:10 OFF ROAD

1997 IFMAR WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

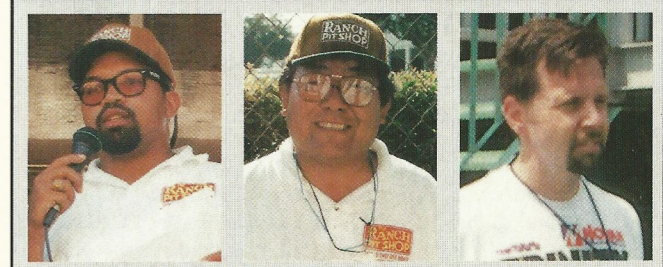


When you hear that the Worlds are being held at the 'Ranch' you know that certain things are guaranteed. First of all the Southern Californian weather in mid-August is going to be fantastic and secondly the Ranch Pit Shop crew are going to organise and host a great event. Sure enough this year the weather was incredibly hot and the whole meeting ran like clockwork. Everyone who's anyone in the World of RC car racing was there and they all seemed very happy to be taking part in the biggest event of the year.

THE QUALIFYING SYSTEM

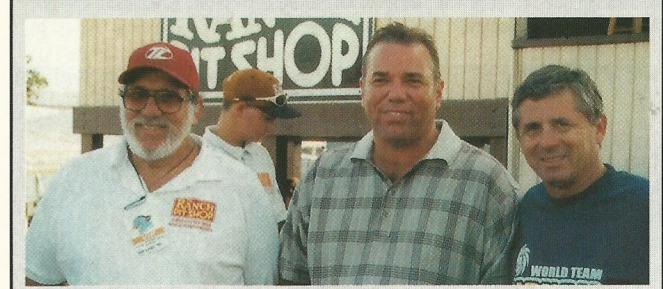
For the first time at an Off Road Worlds the Round-by-round qualifying system would be used. The original idea for this method of qualifying was to even things out and give every driver a fair chance of qualifying usually on a cut-up or constantly changing track. In Britain this rule is only implemented when the conditions require, such as when it rains and the track gets gradually slower during the day. At the Ranch there were no such problems as the track was superbly prepared and stood up to the rigours of a weeks racing very well, but the latest IFMAR rules state that this system has to be used. The format used meant that it was a drivers best three qualifying

THE ORGANISERS

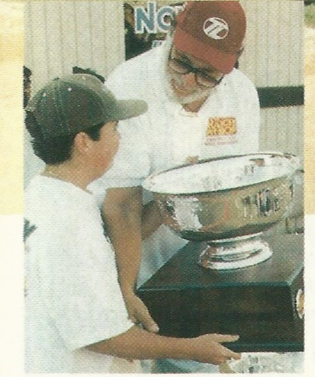


As with any large event there was a team of people who worked extremely hard to organise and run the 1997 Worlds. Jack Johnson was responsible for keeping everything together, producing an excellent Official Programme and keeping the Team Losi web site up-to-date with all the latest times and gossip. Ken Shintani was Race Director and had to sort out many problems for people during the event and Marcus Osbourne kept everyone entertained with his announcements and commentary on the microphone. Allen Losi looked after the track and he had a team of people helping him to brush the track before each qualifying heat and finals. There were also many other supporting staff who kept everything under control and running smoothly throughout the week.

THE SPONSORS



The sponsors for this magnificent event were Team Losi, Team Trinity and Team Novak. They have to be thanked by everyone involved because between them they put a lot of money, time and effort into these World Championships and were a major contribution to their success.



ON TOP OF THE WORLDS

The 1997 IFMAR 1:10 Off Road World Championships were held at the historic Ranch Pit Shop in sunny California, USA. A superb new track was constructed especially for the event and, with all the best drivers in the World gathered together, the scene was set for a momentous event at a superb venue

THE TIMETABLE

For 1997 the IFMAR 1:10 Off Road World Championships were squeezed into just one week. The tight timetable included practice, qualifying and finals for the 2WD event, a day off in the middle followed by practice, qualifying and finals for the 4WD event all rounded off by a large banquet.

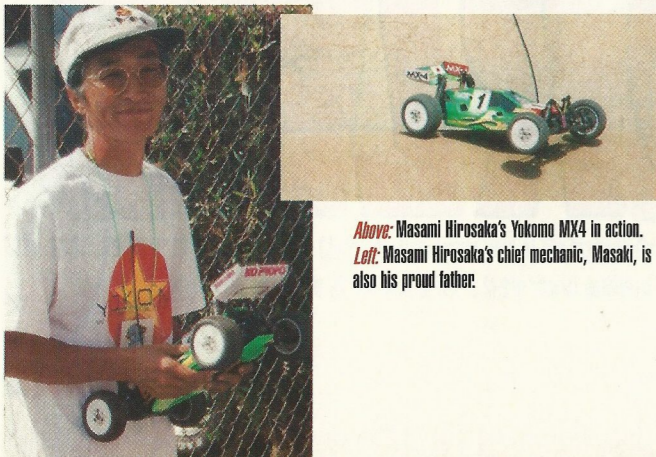
When you are planning to run such a big race and compact it into such a short time you have to be very professionally organised and sticking to the timetable exactly is vital. Of course Jack Johnson and the team at the Ranch have done it many times before and so were sure that they could pull it off and pull it off they did in superb style.



The pits at the Worlds is always very busy.

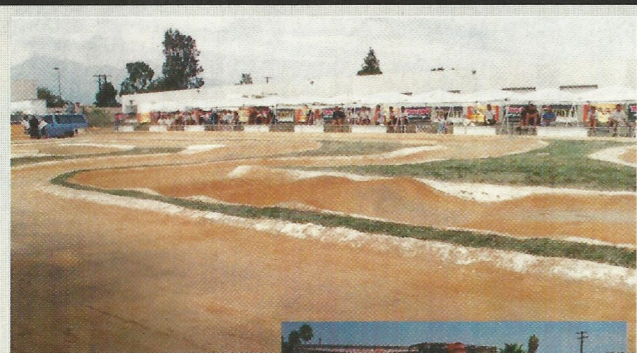


The chief referees for the event were Bill Beltran and Dallas Mathiesen.



Above: Masami Hirotsuka's Yokomo MX4 in action. Left: Masami Hirotsuka's chief mechanic, Masaki, is also his proud father.

THE TRACK



The Ranch Pit Shop off road track is actually built over the top of the old on road circuit which was the venue for the 1987 1:8 Gas and 1992 Pro-10 World Championships. For 1997 Jack Johnson, Gil Losi Jr and the rest of the Ranch crew worked very hard on designing a special track for this special event. RCMC asked Gil Losi Jr about the tracks design.

"When we set out to do this track we knew that it could potentially be 110 degrees out here which is really hard on motors and batteries, so we tried to do something which was not going to be too hard on the motors and batteries, but yet be challenging and technical for the drivers and the sponsors - the motor and battery guys.

When designing the layout I tried to incorporate a lot of on-power-off-power sweepers, on-power-off-power hairpins, jump sections that weren't hard to survive, but hard to do right to go fast so that you definitely saw the skill level of the drivers and tried to make a track that was patient, did have some passing zones - double lefts and double rights where you could set up a guy and make passes and hopefully we accomplished that.

We worked really hard on getting a surface that would stay together for the entire event. It's difficult with the 100 degree weather that we have in the Summertime, but we have got it to hold up pretty good. A lot of people put in a lot of hours in working the dirt and packing it in. We used a lot of Calcium Chloride in the surface to help the water get in and then dry out consistently so that it stays in bigger chunks so that it doesn't fall apart as bad. I was hoping that we wouldn't get as many cracks as we have, but we have managed to keep up with it and maintain a good racing surface."

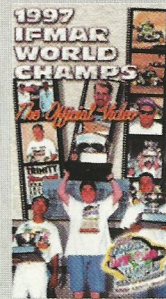
The track certainly looked good and when talking to the drivers most of them seemed to like the combination of tight and sweeping corners, stutter-bumps and fairly easy jumps.

times from five rounds which would count for his overall qualifying position using a points system starting with 155 points for first place, 153 for second and then one point deducted all the way down to 150th place. The three best scores were then added together to determine final positions.

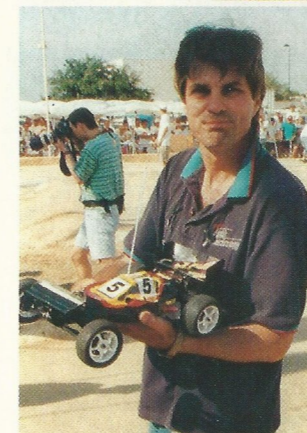
This system means that a driver has to be consistent and get three good times rather than just going for it each time. The system does tend to penalise heavily if a driver suffers a couple of breakdowns and basically cuts the number of qualifying chances in half. Not only that but the qualifying was split with four rounds on one day

THE VIDEO

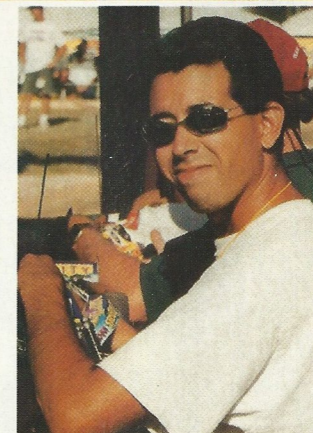
The official video of the 1997 IFMAR Off Road World Championships was commissioned by Team Trinity and produced by Pete Schneider of Comm-Video. Pete was seen all round the track throughout the duration of the event with his big camera and microphone. RCMC lent a hand to Pete and helped him to interview a few of the drivers and organisers. The video should be available very soon and we will be bringing you a full review of what promises to be a very professional production.



Masami's dad works on his new Associated RC10 B3 which took TQ in 2WD.



Richard Weatherley of Tenth Technology made the trip to the Worlds. He set up William Mitcham's XK5 with which he finished an excellent 5th.



Losi Team Manager, Richard, kept the drivers organised.

and the last round the next morning.

THE DRIVERS

As you would expect at any Worlds all the top drivers were present. Team Losi were hopeful of winning their first World Championship and had a full team of drivers present including Brian Kinwald, Greg Hodapp and Matt Francis.

The Associated/Yokomo team had their top stars present

including Masami Hirotsuka, Mark Pavidis and Craig Drescher.

Tenth Technology had their top driver William Mitcham at the Worlds whilst the Schumacher team were relying on the talents of Jukka Steenari and Teemu Lieino.

THE 2WD QUALIFYING

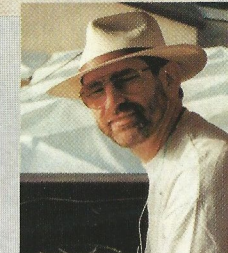
Watching the cars during practice it was very difficult to judge who was going quickly enough to be in with a chance of doing well at

THE TIMING



Timing for the 1997 Worlds was looked after by Rob Nelson of bbk Timing Systems. Rob has a lot of experience in this field and his timing systems have been used at many large events around the World.

Rob actually flew out to California a couple of weeks before the Worlds to help get everything set up and running properly. The entire timing system was linked into a giant scoreboard at the trackside which gave spectators information as the races progressed. Rob even arranged for the results of all the qualifying heats and finals to be available on the Internet on both his own bbk World Wide Web site and the Team Losi site.



The Novak Electronics employees had a day trip to the World Championships. It's a short trip as their factory is only a couple of miles up the road.

these championships because, with a fairly easy to drive track, everyone looked to be going well.

When we got to qualifying proper it was a different story as a

few drivers upped the pace and looked to be going extremely fast. Masami 'Mr Consistent' Hirotsuka looked very quick right from the first round with his new Associated

THE EQUIPMENT

The World Championships have traditionally been the place where new products are either used or shown to the public for the first time. This year was no exception with Team Losi introducing some new tyres named 'X-Pattern 2000' in the Losi Silver compound. These proved very popular in 2WD with many of the A-finalists using them.

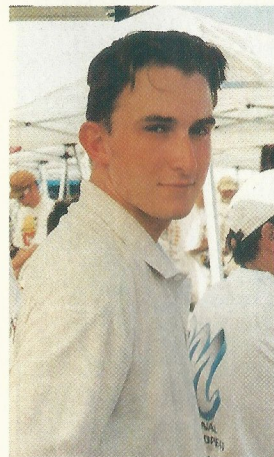
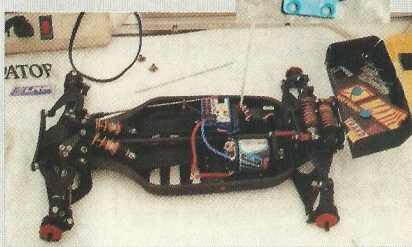
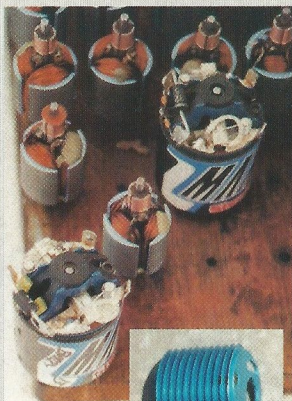
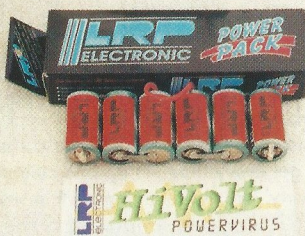
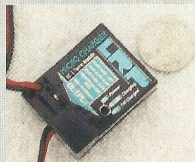
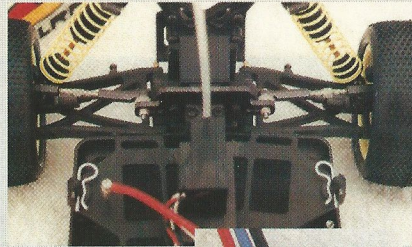
Team Losi were using pretty standard cars in both classes although they did try some tune-up parts as well as a few parts from other cars in their range. One of the main changes to the cars was a strengthening brace across the rear top link mount.

LRP had a new speed controller which is a development of their very popular IPC called the V6. It features a blue metallised case for increased interference suppression as well as more mid-range punch. LRP also had a some new batteries named 'HiVolt Power Virus', a new range of 'Generation X' motors as well as an incredibly small charger the size of a receiver.

Team Associated had a new 2WD car named the B3. This is an evolution of the B2 featuring suspension and steering geometry. The car certainly looked good on the track and in hands of Masami Hirotsuka took TQ.

Yokomo also had a new car albeit in prototype form. The new 'MX4' was used by the whole Yokomo team and helped Masami to once again take TQ spot and win the 4WD class.

A new name in accessories arrived on the scene at the Worlds called 'Team Homies'. They feature a small range of anodised aluminium parts manufactured by Derek Furutani one of which is a very nice motor heatsink for use with the Losi XX-4. This was used by many Losi drivers and certainly seemed to help keep the motors running a lot cooler.



Far Left: Schumacher driver, Karl Marsden.
Left: Schumacher Team Manager and top R&D man Phil Booth.



Inside Brian Kinwald's immaculately prepared Losi XX4.



Inside the 4WD winning Yokomo MX4 of Masami Hirotsuka.

B3 car. Masami took the FTD in rounds one, three and five to give him overall TQ spot.

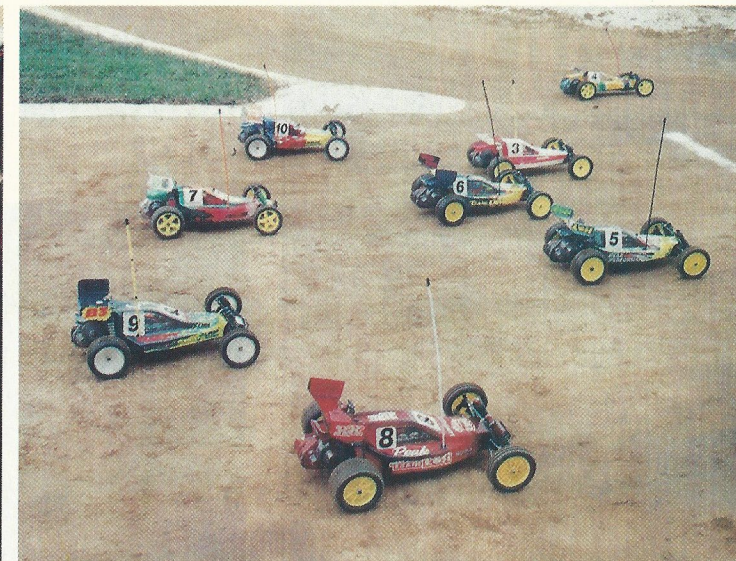
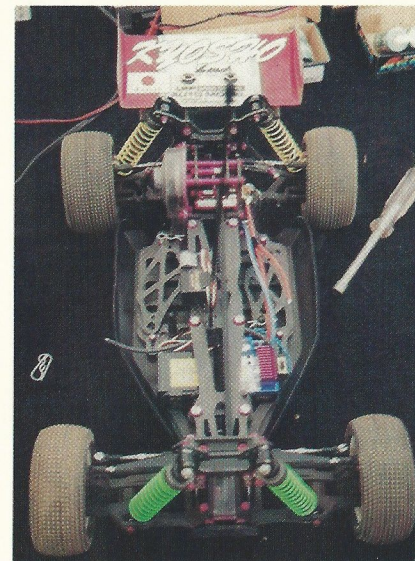
In second place overall was Greg Hodapp driving his Losi XXCR. Greg took the fastest time in the second round and actually held TQ after round four, but lost out to Masami in the last round.

In third place was ex-2WD World Champ Brian Kinwald with his Losi XXCR. Brian was also very

consistent and took the fastest time in the fourth round. These three drivers dominated the 2WD event and between them took every round TQ and it looked like we were in for three very close A-finals.

THE 2WD FINALS

With 150 drivers taking part in the 2WD event the finals went down to 'O'. The minor finals



Far Left: Team Kyosho were at the Worlds with a new prototype car based on the old Lazer ZXR.
Left: Cars on the start line waiting to qualify.

were scheduled to take place between the main A-finals, giving the top ten plenty of time to get their cars ready.

With the A-final split equally between five Associated B3s and five Losi XXCRs we were expecting a really exciting and tense 'clash of the Titans' and we weren't to be disappointed.

After a clean start there was a pile up on the first lap of the first A-final which allowed eighth place qualifier Mark Pavidis through and into second place. Meanwhile Masami was able to get away at the front and start to build up a lead. At the halfway point Masami

had a one second lead over Mark followed by Scott Hughes in third.

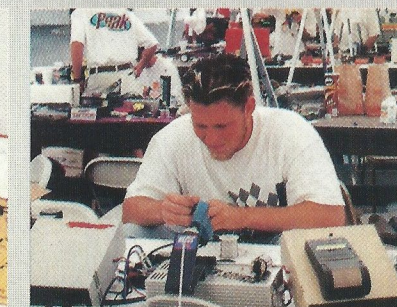
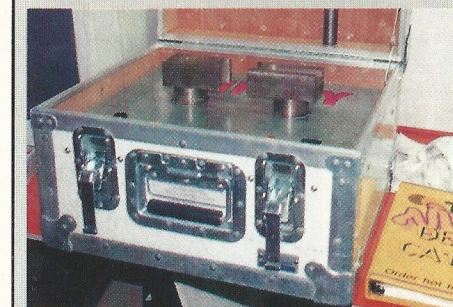
At the three minute mark Masami made an uncharacteristic mistake and rolled his car which allowed Mark Pavidis to take the lead. At four minutes the top six cars were all in with a chance of winning. Masami continued to put pressure on Mark at the front throughout the last minute of the race, but Mark was able to hold on to take victory in the first leg.

There was a bit of a messy start to the second leg as Greg Hodapp tried to get past Masami for the lead and they collided. This allowed Brian Kinwald through



Craig Drescher's Yokomo MX4.

THE POWER MEN



One of the most important members of any racing team is the 'Motor Man'. They are responsible for giving the drivers the power and speed required to win.

Team Trinity employed their latest on road racing recruit David Spashett to look after their motors and he along with Rob Cutman prepared every motor for Team Losi/Trinity including the one used by Brian Kinwald to win the 2WD title. They used the Gale Force/Intronics dyno to analyse the motors and worked extremely hard throughout the championships.

Team Associated relied on the talents of Mike Reedy once again to prepare their motors and he provided Masami Hirotsuka with the



power to take TQ in both classes as well as win the 4WD championship.

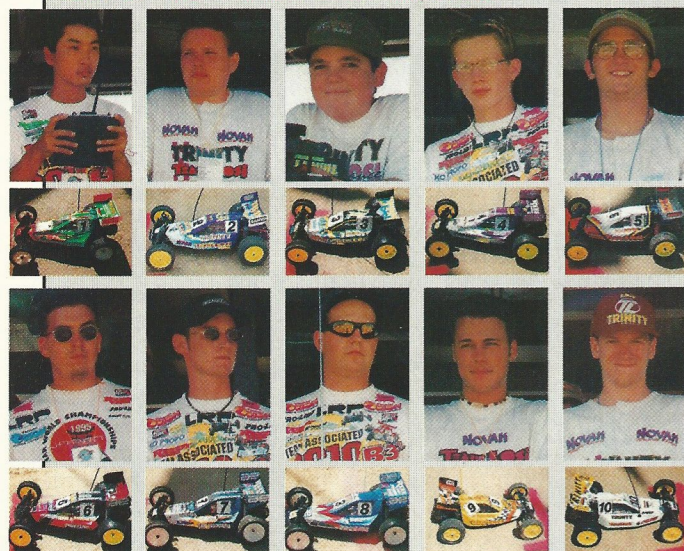
Maxtec had a very successful event and generated a lot of interest in their new range of US designed and built motors. Their designer Jo Maloney was on hand to build and tune his drivers' motors. Their best result was fifth place in the 4WD event with William Mitcham.

Oscar Jansen was at the Worlds looking after Team Corally's top drivers. They had a very good result with second and third places

in 4WD with the Schumacher CAT 2000s of Jukka Steenari and Teemu Lieno. Oscar was using the latest dyno from Austrian manufacturers Robitronics to test and tune the Corally motors.

2WD RESULTS

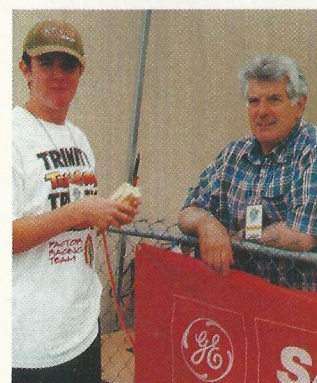
2WD TOP TEN QUALIFIERS



- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Masami Hirotsuka | 6. Mark Francis |
| 2. Greg Hodapp | 7. Jason Ruona |
| 3. Brian Kinwald | 8. Mark Pavidis |
| 4. Scott Hughes | 9. Brian Dunbar |
| 5. Scott Brown | 10. Gabe Boudreau |

2WD FINAL POSITIONS

- | | |
|---------------------|---------|
| 1. Brian Kinwald | 5,1,1 |
| 2. Brian Dunbar | 8,2,2 |
| 3. Masami Hirotsuka | 2,7,3 |
| 4. Scott Hughes | 3,9,4 |
| 5. Scott Brown | 4,4,7 |
| 6. Greg Hodapp | 7,3,8 |
| 7. Jason Ruona | 10,5,5 |
| 8. Mark Pavidis | 1,10,10 |
| 9. Gabe Boudreau | 6,6,6 |
| 10. Matt Francis | 9,8,9 |



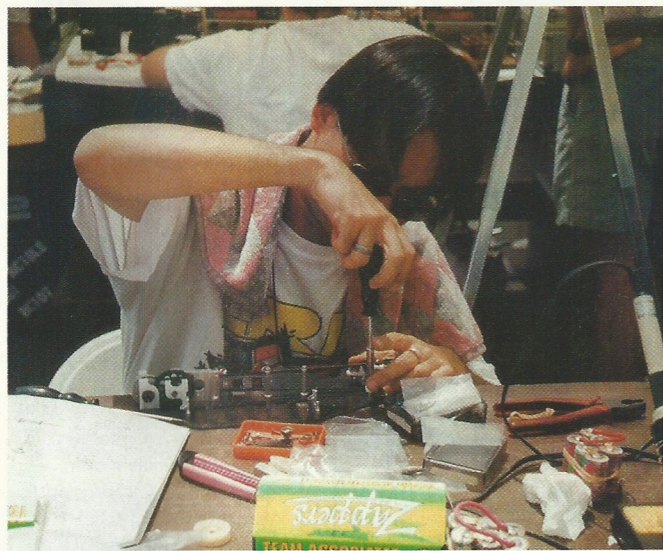
Jon and Mike Leonard at the Worlds.



The 4WD A-finalists are introduced to the spectators.

into the lead followed by Scott Brown and Brian Dunbar. At the two minute mark Brian Kinwald only had a half second lead over Scott Brown. Brian Dunbar then made a good move on Scott Brown to take second place. With these two fighting it out Brian Kinwald was able to stretch his lead slightly. Once safely into

second place Brian Dunbar set about catching Kinwald whilst Scott Brown in third was preoccupied with Greg Hodapp who was challenging him for third. Kinwald was able to hold on to take the win of the second leg followed by Brian Dunbar with Greg Hodapp passing Scott Brown to take third on the last lap.

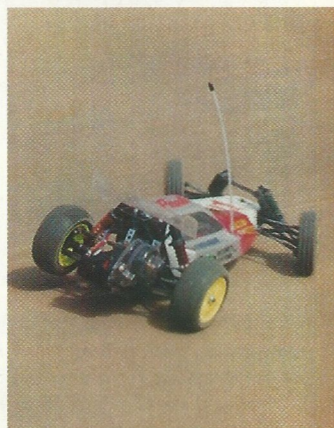


Most of the Yokomo team had to build their new MX4 prototype cars at the Worlds and then give them back.



The referees consult after the 4WD finals.

After a short delay to the start of the last A-final tension was really building. Brian Kinwald was at his 'Dirtinating' best as he jumped straight into the lead at the start with a superb move on the inside of the top two qualifiers. With Masami getting tangled up Brian was able to get away and build up a lead. Mark Francis got



into second place followed by Brian Dunbar. Mark Francis then rolled his car which allowed Dunbar to take over second spot whilst Kinwald continued to lead. After putting in some fantastic lap times during the race Brian Kinwald crossed the finishing line to take his second A-final win and with it the 1997 2WD World

4WD RESULTS

4WD TOP TEN QUALIFIERS



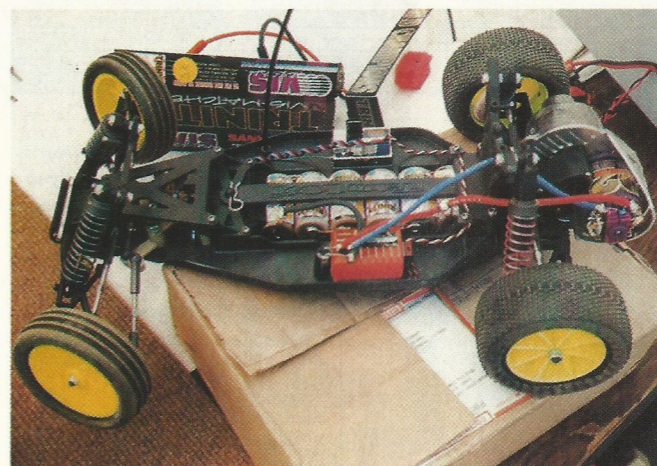
- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Masami Hirotsuka | 6. Greg Hodapp |
| 2. Mark Pavidis | 7. Billy Easton |
| 3. Teemu Lieino | 8. Craig Drescher |
| 4. Jukka Steenari | 9. Rick Hohwart |
| 5. William Mitcham | 10. Matt Francis |

4WD FINAL POSITIONS

- | | |
|---------------------|--------|
| 1. Masami Hirotsuka | 1,1,7 |
| 2. Jukka Steenari | 3,2,10 |
| 3. Teemu Lieino | 9,5,1 |
| 4. Craig Drescher | 4,6,3 |
| 5. William Mitcham | 8,4,4 |
| 6. Billy Easton | 7,8,2 |
| 7. Mark Pavidis | 2,7,9 |
| 8. Matt Francis | 5,10,5 |
| 9. Rick Hohwart | 10,3,8 |
| 10. Greg Hodapp | 6,9,6 |



A Losi XX4 having a serious rebuild.



The Losi team used pretty standard XXGR's in 2WD with five making it into the A-final.

Championship. Brian Dunbar held on to take second, giving him second overall with Masami getting back up to take third place and third overall.

This was a great and very popular victory for Brian, taking his second World Championship title and for Team Losi taking their first after many years of trying.

THE 4WD QUALIFYING

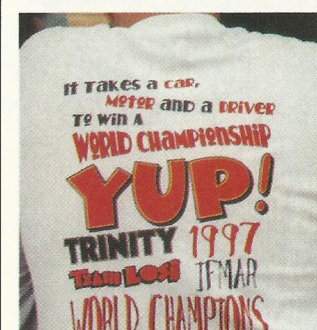
With the 2WD title decided and after a days rest, on which many of the drivers either built their new 4WD cars or went practising at the nearby 'MnM Raceway', everyone was ready to resume racing.

4WD qualifying was dominated by one man - Masami Hirotsuka. His new prototype Yokomo MX4 looked incredibly smooth all round the track and looked superb both on the flat and over the jumps. The round by round qualifying system being used suited Masami very well as he was

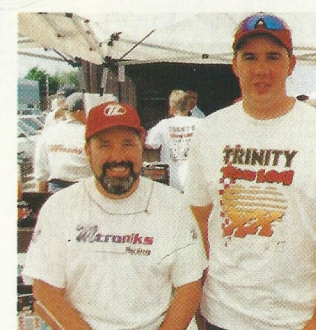
able to string together three consistent FTD runs and take overall TQ after the first three rounds. This did create an atmosphere of anticlimax as Masami couldn't be beaten and had TQ with two rounds still left to go.

Mark Pavidis was also very consistent putting in three second place runs to secure second place on the grid with is Yokomo MX4. In third place it was a superb performance from Finland's Teemu Lieino who after mixed fortunes during qualifying ended on a high by taking the FTD in the last round with his Schumacher CAT 2000SE. Jukka Steenari followed his Schumacher team-mate in fourth spot whilst there was a very happy William Mitcham in fifth place. Richard Weatherley came over to the Worlds specially to set-up William's Predator XK5 and it definitely paid off as the car looked to be handling very well.

The main news in the 4WD class was the absence of the new



The Trinity and Losi teams had special T-shirts made after their victory in 2WD.



Jim and Paul Mitchell made the journey from Scotland to compete at the Worlds.

2WD champion in the A-final. Brian Kinwald had a nightmare in the 4WD class with the round by round qualifying system really taking its toll and stopping him from being able to qualify. With three breakdowns in five rounds he was only able to put in two good times which meant only making the H-final.

THE 4WD FINALS

After being beaten in 2WD where he started on pole, Masami wasn't going to suffer the same fate in his favourite class. With his car looking so good all through qualifying it would have been a brave man who bet against him winning in 4WD.

TECH CHARTS

1997 IFAMR OFF ROAD WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS - 2WD

Pos	Name	Car	Motor	Speedo	Batteries	Front Tyres	Rear Tyres	Servo	Radio
1	Masami Hirotsuka	RC10 B3	Reedy 10x2	Tekin M-Star Red	Yokomo	Losi Rib	Losi Sprint	KO PS-2015	KO Vantage
2	Greg Hodapp	Losi XXCR	Trinity D2 14x3	Novak Cyclone	Trinity Vis	Losi Wide Silver	Losi Silver X2000	Airtronics ERG-ZR	Airtronics M8
3	Brian Kinwald	Losi XXCR	Trinity D2 13x2	Novak Cyclone	Trinity Vis	Losi Silver	Losi Silver X2000	Airtronics 151	Airtronics 3PS
4	Scott Hughes	RC10 B3	Reedy 11x5	LRP IPC V6	Reedy/Orion	Losi Silver	Proline Holeshot M2	Futaba	Airtronics 3PS
5	Scott Brown	Losi XXCR	Trinity D2 13x5	Novak Cyclone	Trinity Vis	Losi Wide Gold	Losi Silver X2000	JR 4735	JR R-756
6	Mark Francis	RC10 B3	Reedy 11x2	LRP IPC V6	Reedy/Orion	Losi Silver	Proline Holeshot M2	Airtronics 94157	Airtronics 3PS
7	Jason Ruona	RC10 B3	Reedy 10x4	LRP IPC V6	Reedy/Orion	Losi Silver	Proline Holeshot M2	Airtronics 94157	Airtronics 3PS
8	Mark Pavidis	RC10 B3	Reedy 11x2	LRP IPC V6	Reedy/Orion	Losi Silver	Proline Holeshot M2	Airtronics 94157	Airtronics M8
9	Brain Dunbar	Losi XXCR	GM EVO II 12x4	Novak Cyclone	GM-Vis	Losi Silver	Losi Silver X2000	Airtronics 94157	Airtronics M8
10	Gabe Boudreau	Losi XXCR	Trinity D2 13x3	Novak Cyclone	Trinity Vis	Losi Wide Gold	Losi Silver X2000	Airtronics 94155	Airtronics 3PS

1997 IFAMR OFF ROAD WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS - 4WD

Pos	Name	Car	Motor	Speedo	Batteries	Front Tyres	Rear Tyres	Servo	Radio
1	Masami Hirotsuka	Yokomo MX4	Reedy 10x2	Tekin M-Star Red	Yokomo	Losi Silver Sprint	Losi Silver Sprint	KO PS-2015	KO Vantage
2	Mark Pavidis	Yokomo MX4	Reedy 10x2	LRP IPC V6	Reedy/Orion	Losi Silver Sprint	Losi Silver Sprint	Airtronics 94157	Airtronics M8
3	Teemu Lieino	Schumacher CAT 2000SE	Corally 11x3	LRP IPC V6	Orion V-max	Losi Silver Sprint	Losi Silver Sprint	Airtronics 94157	Airtronics M8
4	Jukka Steenari	Schumacher CAT 2000SE	Corally 11x3	LRP IPC V6	Orion V-max	Losi Silver Sprint	Losi Silver Sprint	Sanwa GRG-RR	Sanwa
5	William Mitcham	Tech XK5 'Worlds Spec'	Maxtec 11x2	LRP IPC V6	Maxtech V-tech	Losi Silver Sprint	Losi Silver Sprint	KO 1002	KO Vantage
6	Greg Hodapp	Losi XX-4	Trinity D2 11x3	Novak Cyclone	Trinity Vis	Losi Silver Sprint	Losi Silver Sprint	Airtronics 94157	Airtronics M8
7	Billy Easton	Yokomo MX4	Reedy 10x2	LRP IPC V6	Reedy/Orion	Losi Silver Sprint	Losi Silver Sprint	Futaba 59402	Futaba 3PJ
8	Craig Drescher	Yokomo MX4	Reedy 10x2	LRP IPC V6	Reedy/Orion	Losi Silver Sprint	Losi Silver Sprint	Sanwa GRG-RR	Sanwa
9	Rick Hohwart	Losi XX-4	Peak 11x3	Novak Cyclone	Reedy/Orion	Losi Worlds	Losi Silver Sprint	Futaba 59402	Futaba 3PJ
10	Matt Francis	Losi XX-4	Trinity D2 11x2	LRP IPC V6	Trinity Vis	Losi Silver Sprint	Losi Silver Sprint	Airtronics 94157	Airtronics M8

Matt Francis readies his Losi XX4 for the A-final.



Scrutineering at the World Championships was very strictly controlled.



The cars are very carefully placed in their grid positions before the start of the 2WD A-final.

Sure enough in the first A-final Masami made a superb start to lead the whole race from start to finish and take the win with his team-mate Mark Pavidis and Schumacher's Jukka Steenari coming in second and third after a very close race long battle.

Masami jumped straight into the

lead once again at the start of the second leg. Looking incredibly smooth Masami walked away with the second leg of the final to claim his ninth IFMAR World Championship title. Jukka Steenari came home in second followed by Rick Hohwart and William Mitcham.

challenge for the lead and was able to get past Easton and try to pull away. Billy was having none of it and stuck to the back of Teemu's car looking for a way back past. Teemu was able to withstand this tremendous pressure right to the end crossing the line to take the win of the third leg from Billy Easton with Craig Drescher third and William Mitcham fourth.

With Masami already champion it was Jukka Steenari who took second overall with Schumacher team-mate Teemu Lieino an excellent third.

THE END

The 1997 Worlds will be remembered for many things. It was Team Losi's very first World Championship win, something they have been working very hard to achieve for a long time and Brian Kinwald became the first driver to win a World title for two different manufacturers.

The spectators were treated to a great display of driving from Masami Hirotsuka who took TQ in both classes and was dominant in the 4WD event.

The meeting ran without a hitch and the whole organisation was superb. The venue was great and the entire Ranch Pit Shop crew were very friendly and welcoming. Well that's it for two years. Congratulations to two worthy champions and well done to everyone who competed in the 1997 IFMAR Off Road World Championships.