



At the World Championships earlier this year at Basildon there was in 4WD only one winner. Masami Hirotsuka is still the best 4WD man there is and at Basildon he proved it. Masami took TQ in the 4WD event by an amazing six seconds! This amount of time lower in the lists could cover five finals...

So the title of best driver fell to Masami, in my mind though, the title of best 4WD car fell to the all new Schumacher CAT 2000.

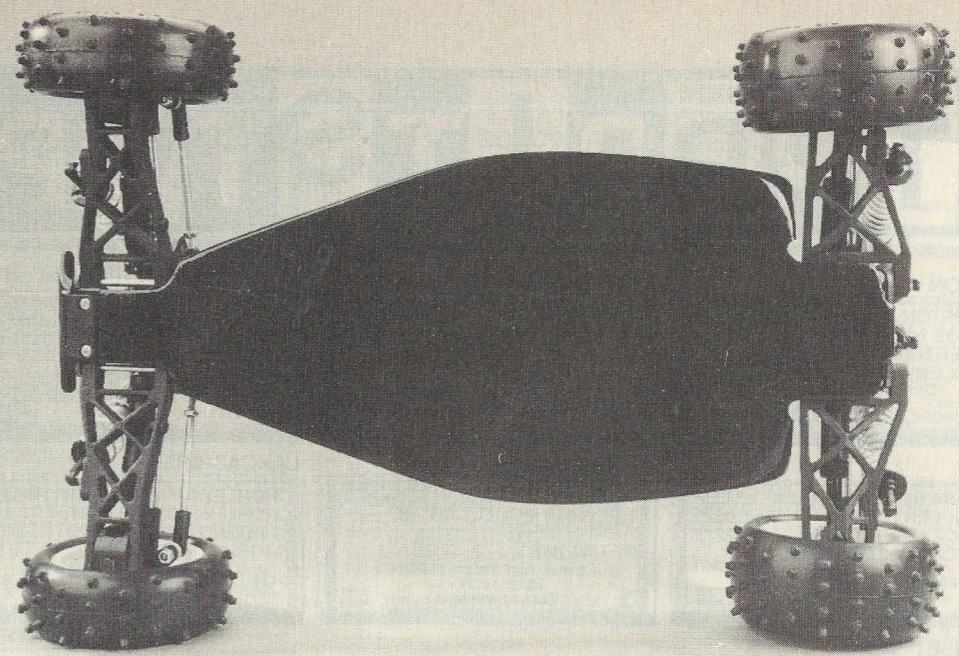
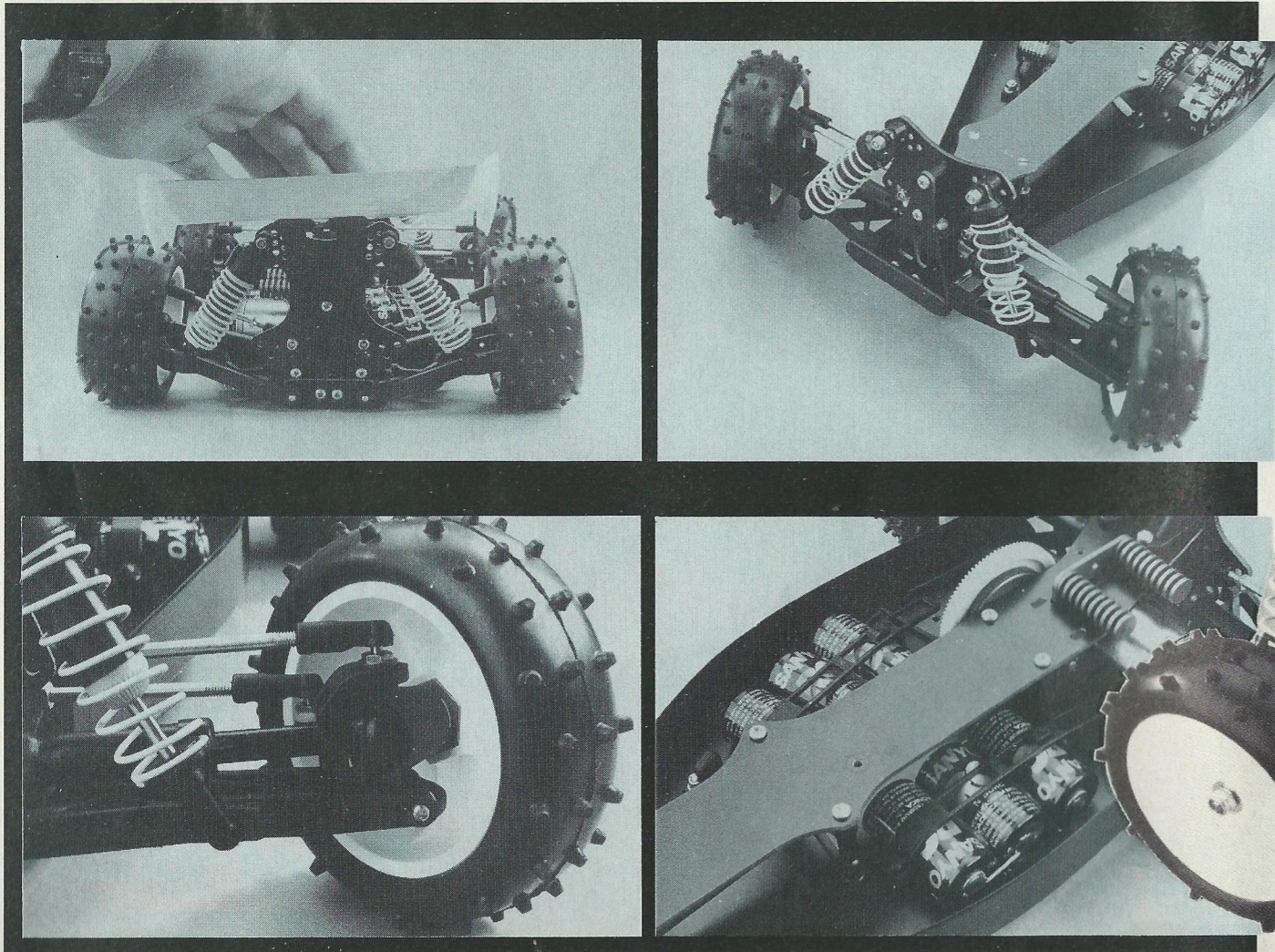
- Schumacher last took a World title at Romsey, their
- Cat driven by Masami was the best car there, and it
- deserved to win. The CAT 2000 was driven at the latest
- World Champs by some very good drivers, Kevin Moore,
- Ben Sturham, William Mitcham, Matt Francis and Jay
- Halsey to name just a few. The car looked excellent
- and if it weren't for Masami would surely have won
- taking 2nd, 3rd and 10th places overall.

Year of the cat



The Cat 2000 follows a set of design patterns already seen but in a new neat and lightweight version. Lexan body seen here is still a prototype.

Undertray on the Cat 2000 covers in all the internals and cleverly wraps around the motor. Below; With motor fitted and the alloy heatsink in place.



An all new car

The CAT 2000 is virtually all new. It has followed some of the successful theories seen on the Cougar 2000 using extremely long wishbones all round with very short hubs. This allows the car to have good ground clearance without massive changes in suspension arm angles. New steering set up is very neat and clever allowing good lock, no bump steer and keeping all the moving parts well protected. The chassis is a two deck system that clamps around the gearbox mouldings and strengthening supports. This gives a very stiff assembly. The CAT 2000 seems to take very little from its predecessor as the drive system is of a totally new design. Two belts venture to the front and rear from a central mounting point, this is also where the motor is housed. The rear gearbox and motor mount is a masterful piece of moulding and keeps everything neatly and securely in place. An alloy mount that doubles as a cooling device bolts between the motor and gearbox and is made from red anodized aluminium.

Drive away

The CAT 2000 that we had to look at was still an early sample. The drive system was extremely smooth and free as were the diffs. The whole drive system is actually at an angle in the car, this allows the use of non-handed diffs, ie; both the diffs have the pulley in the centre so the drive system sits at a slight angle, this seems to have no bad effect on the handling but does look a little strange when viewed from above! The drive system on the car is also very light. Plastic drive shafts and lightweight diffs aid to the lightweight efforts made by Schumacher. The dampers on the car are from the Cougar, they are super smooth and free but do require a bit of practice to get the hang of filling them up properly. Schumacher seem to have really hit upon a winner with the CAT 2000, it is handling well, and getting better every race. The Team drivers are now finding set-ups for the car that work very well and on bumpy tracks the car looks superb. Well that's it for the first close look at the CAT 2000, as soon as the car is released we will bring you a full kit review.

Our thanks to Schumacher for the loan of the car.

