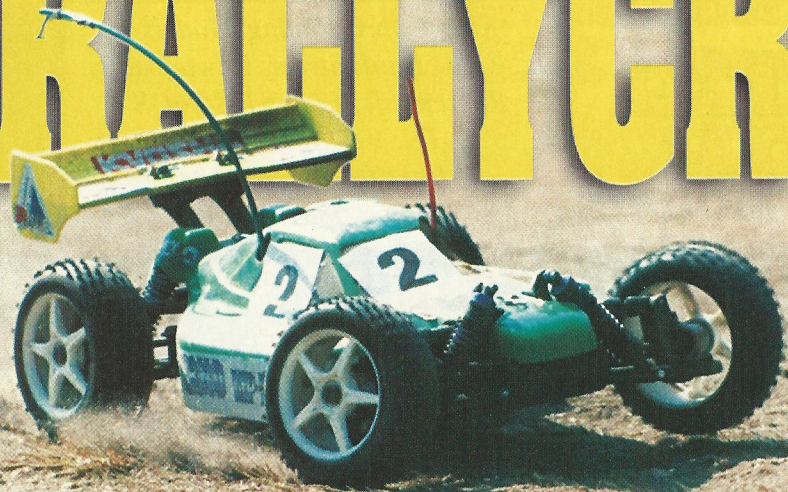


1/8 RALLYCROSS

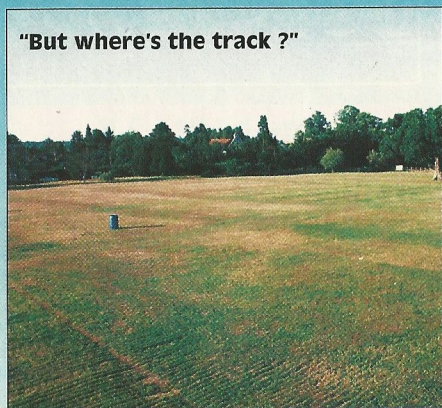
Alex Laffranchi on his winning way.



WORLD CHAMP

Report by Kevin "Legs" Griffin

"But where's the track?"



Two years ago in Kirchslag, Austria it was said "wouldn't it be great if Great Britain could host a worlds" shortly after that the block that were supposed to be hosting the 1996 worlds informed IFMAR that it would not be able to do so, panic stations who could do it? Into the breach stepped Great Britain in the guise of Mick Hill, no problem lads we can do it.

Mick and one or two others namely Ken Weedon and James went to visit Beaulieu Motor Museum in the New Forest, there they were met by John Coleman, Events Manager, the outcome was, "yes Please do come and use all the facilities of Beaulieu". Beaulieu is the home of Lord Montague and one of the leading motor museums in the world, so what better venue could have been wished for. This venue was accepted by IFMAR so too were the officials as these also have to be recognised within the sport as to being competent people.

Time to get our hands dirty

So the venue was set then the work starts Mick Hill has lost nearly all his hair over the last 18 months, mind you he didn't have much to start with, but slowly but surely everything started to come together. Sponsorship for such a major event is of paramount importance all the manufacturers were contacted the two main sponsors being Kyosho and Mugen. In all over £50,000 was raised to be able to make the event happen, as time grew nearer it was becoming more apparent as to how big this event really was. Mick Hill was on the phone day and night talking to sponsors, my little job was arranging accommodation for all the competitors the phone bill was frightening, don't forget there are 150 competitors plus two mechanics for each one plus team managers and don't forget their guests. The New Forest was awash with foreign competitors in the height of the holiday season, in all twenty three nations taking part.

The site was on one of Beaulieu's special events fields with another field adjacent for the campers. As the site had never been used for model car racing before then it was a totally green site to all. Just one week before the start of the event it self, a handful of enthusiasts arrived on site to start the construction of the event. The track had been designed by the race director Dave Mackey, this had been transferred into a computer by

The new World Champion flies the flag for Italy.

What everybody had come to win.



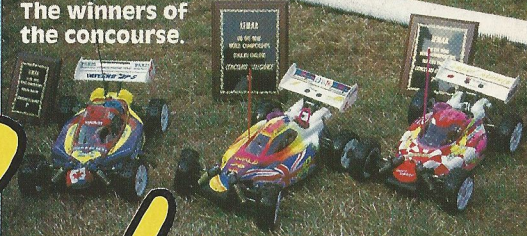
2nd

Lachat's Diablo in action



Sun Baked Beaulieu

The winners of the concourse.

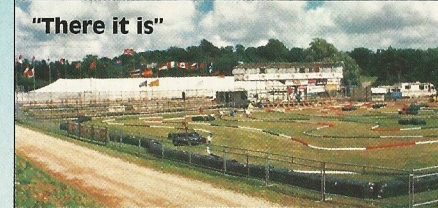


The hard working B.R.C.A. Team who made the event happen. Well done.



Nick Soothill a trainee surveyor, this was then logged into a data machine that could be connected to a theodolite, Nick came along and after a few hours and numerous crosses painted on the grass we had transferred all the track curves onto the grass. That was the Sunday it then took another seven very hard and long days to arrive at the finished site, complete with a pit marquee that could house all competitors and mechanics with each driver having a 6'x3' table, mains electricity was also available for each team. Some 15 porta cabins were acting as hospitality units for the various sponsors reception, press and team managers rooms plus a huge rostrum and drivers grandstand thrown in for good measure. The track was some 400 meters in length with the main straight 90 metres long a real engine breaker.

"There it is"



Jamie Booth took a fighting third place.



Sun baked Beaulieu

The weather had not been typically English it had been more like the South of France each day being hot and sunny, the ground was like concrete. As you can see from the photos the track looked fantastic the main comment from the drivers was that it was brilliant to drive and so big.

Monday and Tuesday of the event was for practise in heat formation and timed, every driver would have three ten minute sessions their best single session being used to seed the drivers for the qualifying heats that would start on Wednesday. Yes each session is ten minutes each

3rd

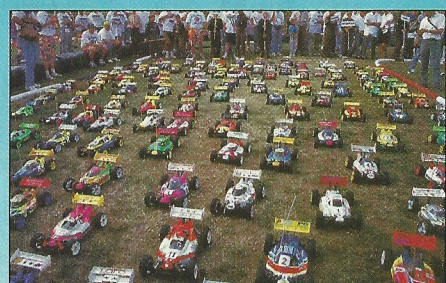
Jamie Booth pushing on.



qualifying heat is ten minutes not like normal race meetings of only five minutes. So fuel economy was the major topic, various racers stating they'd an engine that would run for 10 minutes or 12 minutes or even 14 minutes on one tank of fuel. When the big day arrived they were all proved wrong not one engine managed a run without a stop. The track had been designed in such a way that to complete the ten minute run an engine had to run for 10 minutes plus a warm up lap to the transponder loop which was 40-45 seconds plus at least one run down lap another 40-45 seconds, the track was also fast and the weather hot this culminated in everyone having to call for fuel. As careful as they might drive and as gentle on the throttle as they could be even running restrictors in the intake not one driver managed a run, the best anyone could do was about 9 1/2 minutes.

A Brit at the TOP

At the end of the practise sessions the man at the top of the pile was David Crompton yes a Brit headed the field what a brilliant start. Dave was using his Laro Diablo second was Sebastian Leonard from France with a Kyosho MP5 and third was Mark Pavidis from U.S.A. with a Mugen Super Athlete. Alex Laffranchi from Italy had been the most consistent recording three thirds but this had left him in seventh place Two Brats were in the top ten Lawrence Harris 8th and Jamie Booth 10th. Great Britain was doing alright three in the top ten with Dave leading the world. Where was the world champion of 94 Maurizio Monesi, well he was 62nd.



The line-up for the concourse.

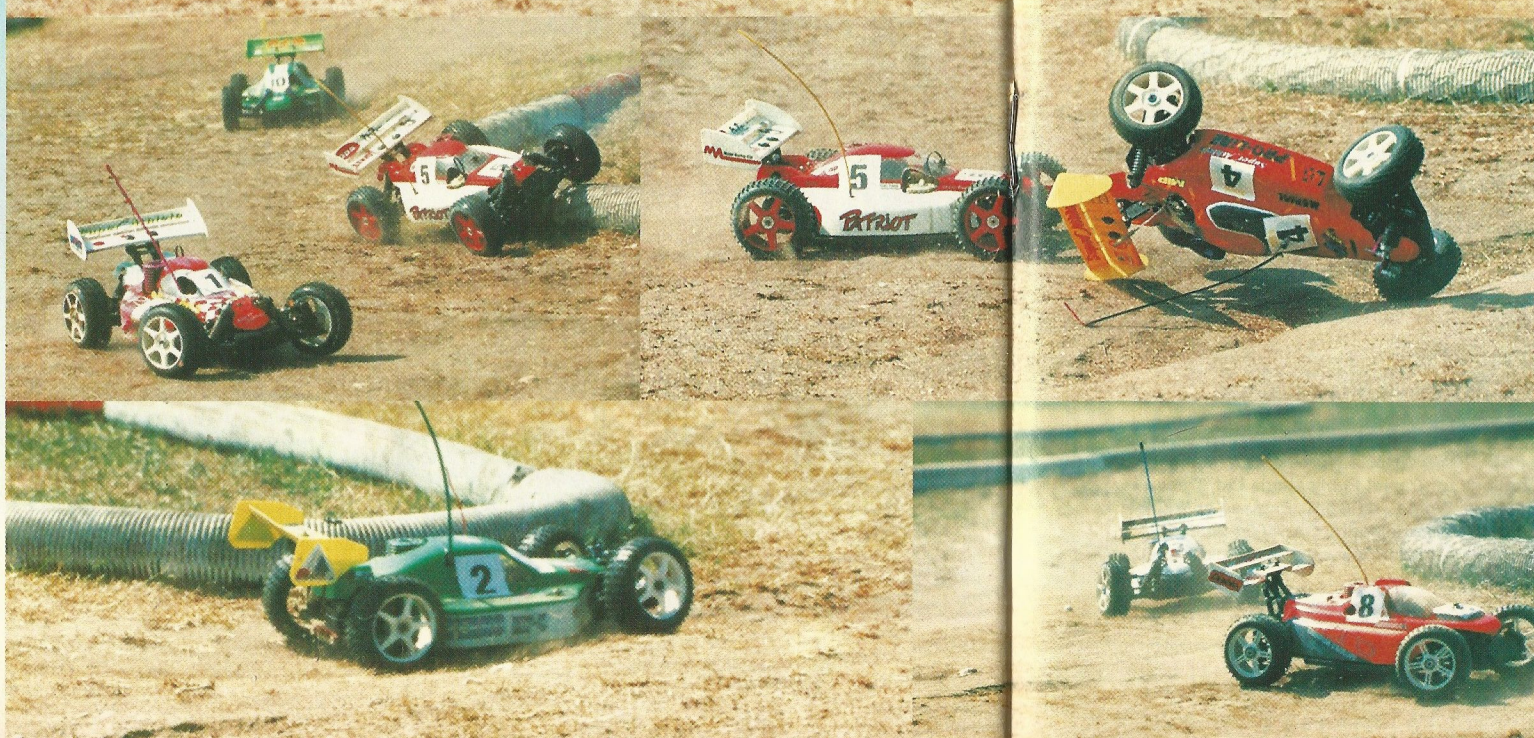
Qualifying begins

Wednesday arrived with now what was regarded as the norm, hot sunshine. Qualifying began, the final allocations had been made, Great Britain had increased its share of drivers from originally 9 at the start of the week to now 15, courtesy of Thailand and the Czech Republic not arriving.

The hopes of Great Britain staying at the top disappeared faster than a Picco down the main straight with David Compton having a steering servo fail in the first run, the car that was on the pace was the Tag, not only did they take FTD but second as well with Marco Grandesso and Matteo Dapporto respectively, both powered by OPS. Our hopes were being kept alive by Jamie Booth in 6th place.

The track was still looking great for don't forget by Wednesday evening already there had been 3 days of racing on it, lap times were between 43 and 44 seconds.

In the Italian pit it was noticed that a few violin cases were present Neil Ward our intrepid scrutineer, had failed Maurizie Monesi's car in the first round for being too wide, his name was on top of the hit list would he be seen at breakfast on Thursday morning or would he be found floating face down off Bournemouth Pier. One day over two more to go each driver completed



two runs every day with the rounds being started at a different time making it fair for everyone. At the close of the first day the Tag stayed 1st 2nd the top Brits being 11th and 12th Jamie and Lawrence.

Thursday and during the morning our two brilliant commentators Murray and Jonathan, sorry James Weedon and Pete Winton were caught out, Pete assumed that all the competitors were male, wrong Bev Winter is most definitely female, oops an apology was offered and accepted as New Zealand are still trading with Great Britain. This was also the first day that the TV cameras arrived I was so glad I had washed my hair. Neil Ward was still alive and was quite adamant that he would not have any problems dealing with the Italians he had the ultimate deterrent, no underarm deodorant no one would dare go near. At the end of day two the American Mark Pavidis was leading with his Mugen powered by a Rex, and boy was he quick down the straight. Daniel Reckward was up to second with a Laro, but not a Diablo no it was a Spoletto, or perhaps to be more correct it was a Diablo in Spoletto form, confused well let me explain. Laro after their success with the car in Italy at the Euro's in 95 called their car after the venue, Spoletto then in 96 the new car became the Diablo, taken for the devil I believe, the two cars differ in that the Diablo has inboard shocks at the front whereas the Spoletto does not, and it seemed that the more conventional set up was working better.

S.O.B.

Its Friday already the last two rounds of qualifying, don't forget four out of six rounds count so a lot of changing places would be taking place today for those drivers who had non finishes in an early round. Daniel Reckward was the fastest in Round 5 looking strong to set overall FTD which would give him an entry straight into the Grand Final. In round 6 it was Alex Laffranchi with his Kyosho MP5 who showed his hand and put in a time almost ten seconds faster than anyone else. Alessandro Catozzi the European Champion came in second with the Tag with our man Lawrence Harris third. So the top 15 places were;

Number One Daniel Reckward 617 points this gave Daniel pole position in the Grand Final the following fourteen were split into the two semi's

The British Team, don't they look smart!!!



SEMI A

USA	MARK PAVIDIS	MUGEN
ITA	ALESSANDRO CATOZZI	TAG
FRA	ADRIAN BERTIN	MP5
ITA	MATTEO DAPPORTO	TAG
GB	JAMIE BOOTH	MP5
SP	ADANIEL PEREZ	MUGEN
FRA	PHILIPPE LACHAT	DIABLO

SEMI B

ITA	MARCO GRANDESSO	TAG
ITA	ALEX LAFFRANCHI	MP5
JPN	YUICHI KANAI	MP5
GB	LAWRENCE HARRIS	MP5
SWI	DIDIER PERRIN	MUGEN
GB	DAVID CROMPTON	DIABLO
FIN	JULLE PEDERSEN	MP5

Party Time

Before Saturday morning arrived we had Friday night and that was reserved for party time, and what a great time was had by all. Mick Hill had booked the group "Magic" to play at the banquet, they play all Queen, which was accepted well by all, the food marquee was the venue and over 450 attended, what a great night 23 nations all dancing and enjoying themselves as one, a sight not often seen. Midnight was when the ball was over and many bleary eyes were around early on Saturday morning even the campsite wardens looked bleary eyed, I believe the campers partied until 3.a.m. a good night was had by all.

Christmas Tree Day

Saturday would see the start of the finals the event had run like clockwork no problems had been incurred. The penalty system that had been operated was that of stop and go with more severe offences incurring a 10 second stop and go, very few drivers had incurred any penalties at all the only serious offence being that of Mikael Palsson from Sweden, he drove through the pit lane flag which is an offence in itself which incurs a 10 second stop and go. But the more serious offence was then committed by both his mother who happens to be the Swedish Team Manager and himself, she shouted to him not to come in for his penalty, this he would normally have to do within three laps otherwise risk disqualification, the Swedish referee Dallas heard this and quickly had a quite word in the drivers ear from behind him on the rostrum. The car came into the pit area and up to the stop and go box where two



Some of the Grand Final cars.

officials one with stop watch and the other to pick up the car issued the penalty, afterwards Mikael entered the referee's area shouting that it was very unfair, this is not done, the referee's area is most definitely out of bounds to all drivers, the argument went on until the end of the day when finally the referee issued a final warning to the Swedish Team Manager that if this behaviour continued the whole team would be disqualified from the event.

For the first time ever Israel had sent an entry to the worlds, he was Oren Levy they had built a similar track out in Israel to practise on but it did not help as Oren only managed to qualify in the 1/1024ths. On talking with Oren it was interesting to find that he bought all his bits from the UK, using the very efficient mail order service of R.C.P. in Bridgnorth, but while he was at the worlds he was able to obtain his parts direct from Mugen. Oren was very happy with his qualifying and was enjoying the event he finished third in his final so therefore climbed the ladder to the 1/512th he also looked good in this final but a cut two laps from the end finished his hopes for 1996. The team from Singapore consisted of four drivers one of these drivers Sam Cheng Meng Fatt was using his own car the Boyseen MX5, he is looking to find a distributor for this car in the UK. More news of this to follow, this company also works closely with Sheng Horn from

Taiwan who make the S.H. engine plus

numerous other add on goodies including a limited ship diff which I am hoping to see in more detail very shortly, so news on this soon, it will fit Kyosho and Mugen and I believe is reasonably priced

Brit's to the track please.

Our first racers to take to the track were Nic "Boogie on Down" Simmerson who would definitely be a serious threat to John Travolta as he certainly enjoyed himself to the full dancing to the music of Magic at the Banquet from start to finish with his bottle of Newcastle in his hand. But I am afraid it didn't help him in the 1/128th and failed to go through the same fate befell Jon Hazlewood so two brits fall by the wayside.

Saturday morning had gone the race schedule had run a little late with a couple of finals having to be restarted. The problem was that the race director had wanted the finals to start on the sweeper as the cars exited the pit lane which would have been a lot easier, but the referee's insisted that they should start on the main straight this meant that it was the furthest point from race control and communication was difficult. Dave Mackey found it difficult to hear the 10 second countdown as did the mechanics, also if a car cut on the start line that driver effectively found himself out of the race for he had to start from the pit lane almost half a lap down on the field.

After a shortened lunch break the first race was the 1/64th A Eustace Moore was amongst the drivers Eustace is well known in the 1/10 electric fraternity for his M.I.P. products but in 1/8 rallycross he was off the pace this coupled with an engine cut ended his chances finishing last in his final.

John Isherwood was our next hope, John had not had a good time in qualifying what with breakage's to his Diablo, then most of the drivers switched their cars set up to the Spoletto mode, John did this with Mugen rear shocks but used the Laro ball end, this must be slightly bigger in bore to that of the Mugen and both shock shafts pulled out of their ends on the first bump. So not a good time for John but he had the car sorted for the final but a lengthy pit stop put paid to his chances, with transmission problems finally ending his day.

Tommy Chung was in the 1/32nds don't forget Tommy only got a drive on the reserve list, Tommy's Mugen didn't look easy to drive but Tommy's ability brought him through to take third place and into the 1/16ths, the car that did look good was the MP5 of Stefan Danz, Stefan after a bad start dropping to the back of the grid came back to second place quite easily his car was ballistically quick on the straight.

The 1/16ths A was next and was the only final that the referee's issued a time penalty in, this happened on the last lap it had been a nail biting race for Mark Stitson, he was in third place driving very well but in fourth place was Andrea Gennari the Italian Crono driver. The cars went down the long straight about 10 metres apart, Mark backed off to take the corner, Gennari held his throttle wide open ramming the back of Mark's car both cars rolled but Gennari came off worse, Mark's car landed on its wheels luckily undamaged and crossed the line. Gennari crossed the line fourth but was given a 20 second penalty this put him in fifth and out of the worlds. Also in this final was Sanada the Mugen designer he finished sixth, Ian Oddie also failed with his Crono finishing eighth. The 1/16th B had three brits in it. Justin Mackey had a cut on the line which effectively put him out, Tommy had come up from the 1/32nds but was off the pace. Mike

Cradock just missed out finishing fourth but ahead of Monesi who was still the current world champion, but not for much longer. Stefan Danz who had come up from the 1/32nd finished second just behind Kazushige Yoshida the development engineer from O.S. engines.

One day to go

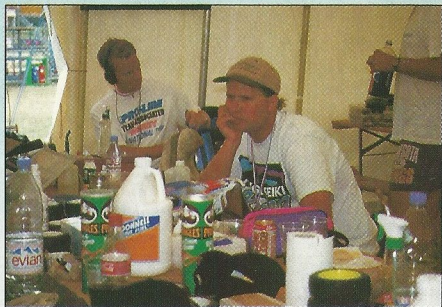
Racing was over for another day just one day left. Sunday arrived yet again sunny, all week the weather had been fantastic and the forecast was 30 degrees centigrade the hottest day to date. Just 49 racers were left to fight it out.

The first Brit to go out on the track was Mark Stitson, Mark raced the wheels off his Mantura finishing fourth just 1/2 second behind third place, he was out but not for the want of trying. Both Stewart Wilcox and John Zottl were in the 1/8th B final Stewart did just enough to finish third, John had engine problems blowing a plug and his chances, Stefan Danz who had come up through two finals already, failed to make the start, his mechanics had to change a collapsed bearing on his front diff amazingly he only missed the start by 30 seconds, but a cut whilst refuelling led to his failure to move on. The winner of this final was Cliff Lett better known for his electric success.

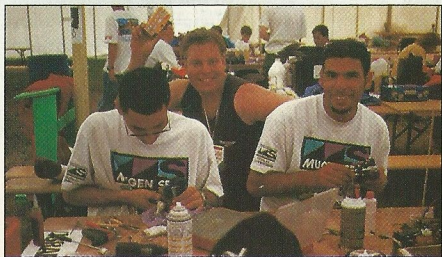
Into the 1/4 finals Michele Baruzzi another favourite started on the second row, but a broken transmission put paid to his chances on the fifth lap. Erwin Weinmann from Germany took the win Erwin was in the Grand Final in 1992 in Germany, second was Trevor Cadby from Britain with his Laro and third was Kris Moore the most experienced 1/8th rallycrosser from the states with his Kyosho MP5.

The other side of the quarters was won by Cliff Lett who had already gone through one final. Second just four seconds behind him was Stewart Wilcox with his Laro and third was Danny Conway with his MP5, so 3 Brits into the Semi's. The tyres that had been used all week had mainly been from Medial Pro, the most popular being Turbo Rats, which is a basic spike tyre, but by this time other tyre patterns were being used such as the Pulsar tyre which is of a directional tread pattern, also the Senso tyre was tried by one or two this can be described as equal spikes around the tyre with rows at right angles to one another.

Mark Pavidis deep in thought, what to try next, Pringles or Nitro.



A first, the team from Israel.



NAME	COUNTRY	QUAL POS	FINAL POS	RESULT	SPONSORS	CAR	ENGINE	FUEL	TRANS.	STEERING SERVO	FRONT TYRES	REAR TYRES
Daniel Reckward	Germany	1	4	69 Laps 60.24.25	Laro, R.B. Concept R.M.V.	Laro Diablo	R.B.	R.B. Concept	Futaba Megatech	Futaba 9302	Medial Pro Pulsar	Medial Pro Pulsar
Alex Laffranchi	Italy	2	1	71 Laps 60.48.94	Kyosho, Picco Lunsford	Kyosho MP5	Picco	Picco	KO EX10	KO 1006	Medial Pro Turbo Rats	Medial Pro Turbo Rats
Mark Pavadis	USA	3	9	65 Laps 60.42.72	Mugen, MIP, Rex Medial Pro	Mugen Super Athlete	Rex XS	O'Donnell 30%	Airtronics 3PS	Airtronics 94156	Medial Pro Woops	Medial Pro Woops
Marco Grandesso	Italy	4	6	68 Laps 60.37.84	Tag, OPS	Tag	OPS	Tag	Sanwa Exzes	Sanwa ERGZZ	Medial Pro Pulsar	Medial Pro Pulsar
Jamie Booth	Great Britain	5	3	69 Laps 60.14.58	Kyosho, Ripmax, OS Sanwa, 3/5 Models	Kyosho MP5	OS RZB	Modeltechnics Superglo 25%	JR Apex	Sanwa ERGZZ	Medial Pro Turbo Rats	Medial Pro Turbo Rats
Alessandro Catozzi	Italy	6	5	69 Laps 60.28.75	Tag, OPS	Tag	OPS	Tag	Sanwa Exzes	Sanwa ERGZZ	Medial Pro Pulsar	Medial Pro Pulsar
Lawrence Harris	Great Britain	7	10	56 Laps 59.14.55	Kyosho, Ripmax, OS Futaba, 3/5 Models	Kyosho MP5	OS RZB	Modeltechnics Superglo 25%	Futaba FF3	Futaba 9402	Media Pro Senso	Medial Pro Senso
Philippe Lachat	France	8	2	69 Laps 60.10.66	Laro, OPS	Laro Diablo	OPS	Modeltechnics Dynaglo 25%	Sanwa Exzes	KO 1003	Medial Pro Turbo Rats	Medial Pro Turbo Rats
Matteo Dapporto	Italy	9	8	65 Laps 60.00.95	Tag, OPS	Tag	OPS	Tag	Futaba Megatech	Futaba 9302	Medial Pro Pulsar	Medial Pro Pulsar
Cliff Lett	USA	10	7	67 Laps 60.39.57	Kyosho, Paris Racing Picco, Sanwa, Oakley MIP, RCPS, Jesus Christ	Kyosho MP5	Paris Picco	O'Donnell 30%	Sanwa Exzes	Airtronics 152	Medial Pro Turbo Rats	Medial Pro Turbo Rats



Lady Montaque kindly presented the trophies.

The final four

Before the quarters the two semi finals had a chance to practise on a track that they last raced on Friday in their final rounds qualifying. This gave them a chance to change their car set ups for a much bumpier track, so the last two races before the Grand Final.

The first semi was led away by Mark Pavadis with a Mugen he maintained his position. The top four from each semi would qualify through to the Grand Final. Daniel Reckward already had his place there, the final position would be given to the fastest fifth place from either of the two semi's. Mark Pavadis was followed home by Jamie Booth who had a race long battle with Alessandro Catozzi the Tag driver and European champion, he came in third and Philippe Lachat came in fourth, fifth place was taken by Matteo Dapporto again with a Tag. He would have to wait until the other semi had run to find out if he had that last place in the Grand Final.

Semi Time

In the semi there were four Brits, only one made it through David Crompton our early hope went out after only ten minutes after a pressure pipe came off and caught in a wheel, Stewart Wilcox lost a chance of a place after running out of fuel, he tried to extend his fuel stops to give him a better chance but his calculations were slightly out. Alex Laffranchi the current Italian Champion raced to victory by almost a lap with his MP5 second was Marco Grandesso with his

"If I hit him over the head with my car, the Trophy's mine, all mine"

Tag and third was Lawrence Harris fourth was Cliff Lett doing just enough to get him to that Grand Final. Cliff had said earlier that to have a chance of becoming world champion first of all you have to make the Grand Final, well he had done just that.

After lunch the drivers were introduced one by one on the rostrum to the spectators. Daniel Reckward was number one the second time in succession this must be a record for in 94 he also was Number one.

Just One Hour Left

The big race was just one hour of racing left after a week long battle it was down to the final ten to battle it out for the coveted position Number one in the world and for the next two years. Just before the race started I managed to chat with Mr Spongia the designer of the Tag, three cars were present at the worlds and all three were in the grand final, no mean feat. Okay they were good drivers but we are talking of the world championships so therefore all the drivers are good. He said that he was very pleased with his car, the drivers were driving well, the three cars were all set up the same using a Thorsen diff in the front with standard diffs in the middle and rear they also used the same tyre, the Medial Pro Pulsar, the car had looked the most easy to drive all week, whereas the Mugen, Kyosho and Laro cars all at times looked unhappy so would it win?

The race started and straight to the front went Marco Grandesso with his Tag. He began to pull away but he made a mistake after about six laps letting Alex Laffranchi take the lead, pulling away from the rest of the field. Both Mark Pavadis and Lawrence Harris had drive shaft problems both having to be in the pits for a considerable time, Mark Pavadis who is current electric 4wd World Champion lost over five minutes while his mechanics changed a broken UJ on his Mugen. Lawrence over 10 minutes for a similar fault on

his Kyosho. After 30 minutes Alex Laffranchi had over half a lap lead. Daniel Reckward was on the pace but at the forty minute mark his car came to a standstill on the track, the marshal raced with it back to the pit lane, the problem his battery connection had come disconnected, quickly it was reconnected but he had lost nearly two laps. Philippe Lachat was second, third was Marco Grandesso and fourth was our last hope Jamie Booth. With just two or three minutes remaining Laffranchi's car was 11/2 laps in front and still lapping quicker than any other car, his car was set up quite differently to the other MP5's he ran a lot of negative camber all round, the car was very low and looked as though it shouldn't handle but we were all proved wrong, Philippe Lachat was second but being caught by Grandesso and Booth, all the Brits were willing Jamie to make third place. Then with 2 laps left Grandesso's car rolled to a halt out of fuel, Jamie was third could he make second? No he couldn't the win went to Laffranchi, Kyosho and Italy second was Lachat, Laro and France and third was Jamie Booth, Kyosho and Great Britain.

The event was coming to a close, all cars had to be scrutineered they all passed even Laffranchi's Picco engine was stripped to check for any irregularities, none were found. Lady Montaque presented the trophies to everyone.

I need sleep

It was over what had taken 18 months of planning many late nights with lots of sleep lost over numerous problems had all culminated in what will be remembered as possibly the best ever World Championships in 1/8 Rallycross. Certainly the venue will never be beaten and the organising body will be hard to beat. The final comment must come from Mike Paganelli from America he said to me as he was leaving "Hey you guys certainly put on a class act" thank you Mike it says it all.

Interesting but unusual statistics

- Over 15,500 photo copies of results were made.
- Total distance travelled on the track was nearly 5,000 miles
- Nearly 2,000 fuel stops were made
- 70 gallons of fuel were used
- 5 gallons of paint
- 2000 tie wraps
- 1000 official passes were laminated
- 400 gallons of diesel consumed by the two main generators.

