



No History of IFMAR would be complete without a brief reference to what actually led to the calling of the meeting in Geneva, where it was agreed that a World R/C Association should be formed. Ted Longshaw took part in the first 1/8th scale R/C car meeting to be held in England on Easter Monday 1971 and thereafter was involved with the formation of the BRCA in the U.K., along the way getting very enthusiastic about this exciting new hobby. This led to him taking part the next year in the ROAR Open National Championship at the Briggs Cunningham Museum in California. Subsequently competing in the same Championships in '74 and '75, he tried to persuade some of the U.S. racers to come over to Europe, without success. He therefore suggested that he try to get some Europeans together to come and race in California in 1977, if such a race could be arranged. John Thorpe agreed that ROAR could use his raceway and Ted set about organising the trip, through his position as President of EFRA.

he first so called 1/8th World Championship therefore took place as arranged but, in truth, apart from the 20+ Europeans, the rest of the world was represented by ex-pats living in the U.S. It was suggested and agreed by everyone there that the next W.C. should be in Europe in 1979 and it was left to EFRA to arrange everything.

Meanwhile, Monaco wanted to hold a W.C. in 1978. As it had been agreed at the Thorpe Raceway that the next W.C. would be held in 1979, Monaco compromised with EFRA and agreed to hold a so-called World Cup. Several ROAR members came over and took part and went back to the U.S. with memories, not of the racing, but more of the liberated views of European women whilst sunning themselves at the poolside next to the track. (The pool you all have seen on the T.V. during the full-size Monaco G.P.). Cameras normally used to capture pictures of the latest modifications to cars, were all suddenly fitted with telephoto lens and pointed in a different direction.

EFRA, meanwhile, decided that the application from the Geneva club in Switzerland to host the World Championship had the most merit and it was decided to hold the race there. Splendid pictures exist of the final of this event and, even now, there is no doubt that there were more spectators there than at any other R/C car race before or since!

Ted Longshaw called a meeting of all interested persons on the Monday morning immediately following the race with the idea of creating a world-controlling body that would not only establish uniform construction rules but would also ensure that there was only one World Championship that counted. (There were numerous clubs and organisations starting to advertise that their next race was to be a W.C. and, had this been allowed to continue, the whole prestige of a World Champion title would have been completely devalued.) At the meeting, which was attended by many well-known names, such as Gene Husting (Associated), Ken McDowell (Parma), Keith Plested (PB Racing), Pieter Bervoets (Serpent), etc. - around 30 people in all, it was agreed that such an organisation should be set up. South Africa's Wennie Bester suggested the name International Federation of Model Auto Racing and it was agreed. (It was a compromise to leave out any reference to R/C, as at that time, there was a possibility that the existing round the pole cable racers might want to join.) It was agreed that W.C.'s should be held every two years and rotate alternately between the three blocs, i.e. it only came to your bloc once every six years. As there was effectively only one class then, it was thought that this would allow enthusiasts worldwide to meet every two years. I don't think that even the most optimistic manufacturer there thought that one day it would be as big as it is now and involve the worldwide traveling that is now necessary.

Ted Longshaw was proposed as President/Secretary by Gene Husting and IFMAR was born and on its way. To aid administration, it was suggested that it was made up of three equal voting parts, roughly speaking, Europeans, Americans and the Far East. Each would administer its own area and for W.C.'s would receive an equal allocation of 40 places. (There was only one class racing then, i.e. 1/8th I.C.. circuit.)

Getting the Far East part of the equation to work proved quite a task and the original setting up of FEMCA is another full story in itself. Suffice it to say that it now works very well, with eleven member countries, all under the guidance of John and Marian Grant who really are quite indispensable.

Originally, the only time everyone actually got together to hold a meeting was at the 1/8th W.C. Everyone was kept informed of what was going on by a regular monthly newsletter sent out by the President/Secretary/Treasurer who, at that time, was a one-man committee.

WHAT HAPPENED ALONG THE WAY FROM INAUGURATION IN 1979 UNTIL 1996.

1979

The 1/8th World Championship in Geneva, (strictly speaking not yet really an IFMAR event, for IFMAR was not yet born), was won by Phil Booth from England driving a PB Racing car. Phil is now Development/Design Engineer with Schumacher and is responsible for many of the new ideas seen on these cars. He still retains his driving skills and recently was part of the Schumacher team taking part in the annual PARIS 24 hour race.

1980

First attempt at forming FEMCA in Hong Kong.

Monaco World Cup won by Phil Greeno from England, also driving a PB.

1981

A 1/8th I.C.. IFMAR World Championship was held in Indianapolis which was won by probably the only driver from the original 1977 race still capable to-day of making the A main at a World Championship, Arturo Carbonell. Art is now part of the Serpent organisation in the U.S.A.

1982

First 1/12th W. C. It had been decided to run this electric race in alternate years to the 1/8th I.C. Associated Electrics won the stock class (driver was Kent Clausen) and started their domination of Electric R/C racing W.C. titles. The modified class was won by Art Carbonell driving a Delta car.

1983

The 1/8th Circuit W.C., back in EFRA this year, was held at the Carnoux track, a superb purpose-built facility, now, unfortunately, no more. The race remains memorable now, more for the disputed result, (there was no electronic timing in those days) and the resultant Court case, than for the superb presentation of the whole event, which is a pity. IFMAR though learned something, especially the President, who ended up being sued in the French courts for approximately 250,000 pounds damages. This lesson resulted in the first version of the World Championship Contract, now refined several times, between the promoter and IFMAR. This dispute also has another interesting story in that it reinforced the determination of a young University scholar in Holland to perfect a way of automatically timing and counting the laps on R/C cars. He used the project as part of his studies to obtain his degree in Electronics. He is now responsible for the timing equipment used at almost every major motorised race you see on T.V There may be advertisements showing various clock and watchmakers, but the signals that feed their equipment all come from the same source that originally started out trying to stop arguments at R/C car races about how many laps each car had achieved. This most successful of businessmen is Pieter Bervoets' brother, Fons.

1984

The first 1/10th Off-road W.C. Electric racing was now getting very big in the U.S.A. and this first event was held at the very heart of the most active area in the world at that time, Del-Mar, California. Associated Electrics were instrumental in helping this along and one began to hear more and more a name that is now a legend in R/C car racing and motor building in particular, MIKE REEDY. Mike was asked to head up the Electric Section of IFMAR and served as Vice-President until last year. He played a big part in forming the rules that now govern all Electric racing, whatever scale, and is still part of the ROAR Executive.

1985

FEMCA, at the third attempt, was now up and running successfully and hosted its first W.C. event, the 1/8th track event in Tokyo. Mike Reedy, in his position as Vice-President of IFMAR, acted as Race Director and says he lost count of the number of approval dockets he signed during the race. Suffice it to say that it was a well-run race enjoyed by everyone who was lucky to be there.

1986-1996

World Championships continued, alternating each year. Bi-Annual General Meetings came and went, more countries joined. At the 1987 1/8th Race in Holland, EFRA pushed for a fourth non-voting to be formed, comprising countries outside the geographical areas of the existing blocs. In 1986, the first 1/8th I.C. Off-road W.C. was held in France and in 1992, at Ranch Pit Shop, California, the first 1/10th Electric Circuit W.C. was organised. There are now nine different IFMAR W.C.'s and Ted's original ideas, some of them incorporated in the first paragraphs of the Constitution have been realised. The first clause, even to-day, is that IFMAR exists to promote international friendship. The other prime reason stated at the formation that there should only every be one recognised World Champion of any particular class, has also been achieved. Without IFMAR, R/C car racing could have ended up like boxing with a myriad of titles, none of them recognised by everyone. As it is

to-day, an IFMAR World Championship is truly just that. In 1995, at the Bi-AGM held at the 1/8th W.C. in Phuket, Thailand, Ted stepped down, was appointed Hon. Life President and handed over to the new President, John Grant and Marian Grant was appointed Secretary/Treasurer.



NOW

IFMAR to-day is a professional organisation, using volunteers who give their time but do receive something towards their expenses.

It has its own legal adviser and the Hon. Life President is also available, if needed, at any time.

A total of 42 countries worldwide are members through their various blocs.

There are two Sections within IFMAR - one for I.C. classes and one for electric classes.

Rules are formulated.

Dates, venues and driver allocations are all agreed for W.C. events.

The chief Referee is now appointed by IFMAR and Race Directors, Official Time-Keepers, etc. etc. are all approved before they are appointed to ensure smooth running of the events.

All in all, from very humble beginnings, IFMAR has grown up into an organisation firmly guiding the sport into the future.

TED LONGSHAW
HON. LIFE PRESIDENT, IFMAR.
March 24, 1996.