

by Don McKay

This World Championship had the largest assembly of the best R/C car racers, largest manufacturers, most important officials, and best writers ever assembled. Walking down the pit area you could easily converse with famous people who you normally never meet in your lifetime. Everyone was very friendly and with a properly worded question you could find out the latest racing tips from world and national champions or information on products still on the drawing boards at manufacturing plants worldwide. To the others not there I can only tell you, it was your loss.

So much happened that I can only tell you some of the highlights and mention items that I felt were interesting, significant, or moving. In addition to this report and results I had an opportunity to interview many of the world's best racers and most interesting people like Bill Jjanas, Re-Pete and Pete Fusco, Phil Greeno, Mike Reedy, and Phil Booth,

the new R/C World Champion. The Booth interview will appear in this issue. The others will appear in later issues.

The organization and facilities were fantastic. All scoring was done by two people inside a trailer. A printout of each driver's laps and relative lap times was available to check any errors—the officials did an excellent job. To my knowledge there were no errors and the only questions raised were the handling of corner cuts.

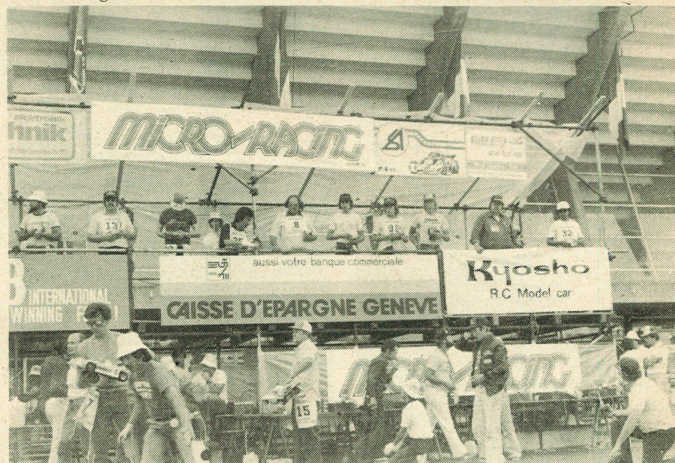
At the start of each day the total schedule showing heat number, heat times, contestants, and frequencies were handed out. Except for the first day of practice everything went on schedule, even the 1 1/2 hour lunch break every day. At first there was some objection from the racers about wasting that time during the lunch break, but after a couple of days everyone seemed to enjoy it. Racing was usually over by 5:30 each day which left about an hour of open uncontrolled practice. During this

uncontrolled practice I once noted 22 drivers with transmitters on. Surprisingly there was only minor interference during this time with most people being careful not to turn on to someone else's frequency. The problems experienced were probably caused by cross modulation.

Because of the language barrier all the starting was done by tone signals over the loud speaker that were easily heard over the engines.

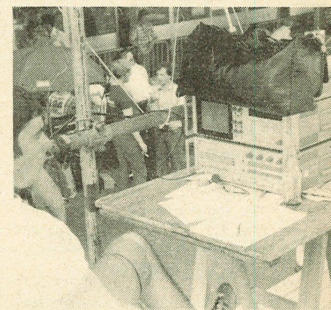
quency only to find out they were on another. If you felt you were having interference you could walk over and they would monitor your frequency. In most cases this helped to isolate problems with the R/C equipment. This saved a lot of trouble for the racers.

The only major oversight, as far as organization, was the total lack of tech inspection past the first day of practice. Literally, there were no cars checked after that day and the only thing they



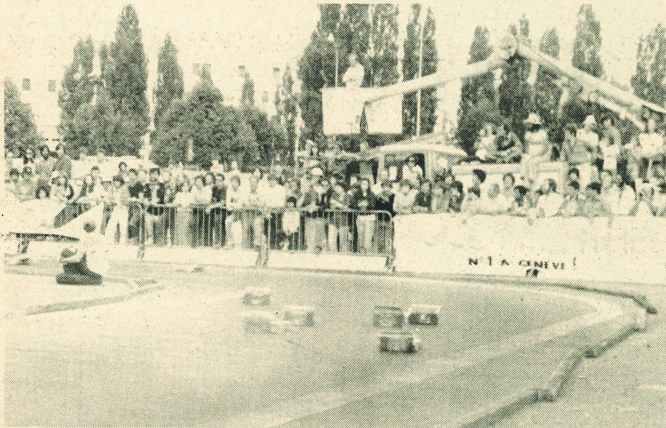
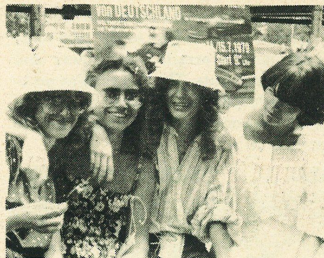
The drivers stand was a two stage structure with a covered driver stand on the second floor and transmitter impound underneath. There were 10 starter boxes provided in front of the pit area for the racers and a couple extra starters set up in back of the drivers stand for people to test engines.

The race committee had set up on the drivers stand a Spectrum Analyzer used for constant frequency control. It was supplied by Marconi. Its mere presence prevented a lot of possible problems due to people using illegal unassigned frequencies. In several cases, dirty transmitters were found and in some cases people thought they were on one fre-



checked then was car width and wing height. I don't feel, however, there was anything illegal about the winning cars, but the point is we will never know for sure.

All announcing of the races was only in French. Not until after the Main Event did any English speaking people find out who won. At the time I figured Booth to be in the lead, but had no idea who was in second or how close they were.



There was quite a crowd at the race most of the time. I would guess that on Saturday and Sunday for the finals there were 4000 spectators that paid about \$4.00 US to get into the race area and another \$2.00 to sit in the spectators bleachers provided just for the racers, pit men and accompaniments.

An interesting point to note is at this World Championships it was not one person competing against another, or one country competing against another, but rather one brand of car against another. Many times I noticed racers from different countries cheering for people from another country who ran the same brand of cars even though racers from their country using different brand cars were in the same heat.

This was even apparent in the pit areas where people banded together, not by their language or by country, but by the brand of cars they ran.

Associated cars from all over the world pitted in the same area. Debby Preston, from Great Britain, pitted with the Associated Team, the type of car she uses rather than with her own father who pitted with the P.B. cars like he and the rest of the British ran. Even though they couldn't speak English, many Japanese who ran Associated cars preferred to pit with Associated rather than with their own countrymen on the Phoenix and Kyosho Teams.

There were other cases of this international brand team spirit and I'm not sure if it was good or bad, but it does seem a little ridiculous to limit countries to a certain number of entries, as was done, when under the circumstances maybe we should limit the number to one brand of car entered.

Perhaps the reason for this "Brand" team spirit was that most of the racers present are either manufacturers of R/C cars or factory sponsored. I would bet there were less than 30 of the 140+ entries that are independents and not sponsored in some way.

One of the very pleasant aspects of this race was the quantity, quality, and speed of some of the pit crews. Here is the German pit team. The American

team voted them the ones they'd most like to tweak their needle valves.



This Siamese cat spent a lot of time sleeping in the pits. When this particular photo was taken someone was testing an engine only five feet away with the muffler pointing toward the cat. Now I know where the expression "cool cat" came from.

BILL JIANAS

Bill Jianas won second at this year's World Championship and was second at the 1977 World Championships. Consistent I would say. I'll also have to say he is fast being the T.Q. at the 1977 W.C. and he turned in the fast official one lap times at this year's World Championships three years in a row.

Bill did a very strange thing at the World Championships. He was third Overall during final qualifying and, therefore, was a sitout from the Main Event and didn't have to run in the semi-mains. His car wasn't perfect so he completely rebuilt the car prior to the Main and as it turned out it was terrible—a real egg-sucking dog. It hopped around all the corners and would hook at the least likely times all during the Main. It did hold together and for the 40 minute Main Bill babyed this hunk until



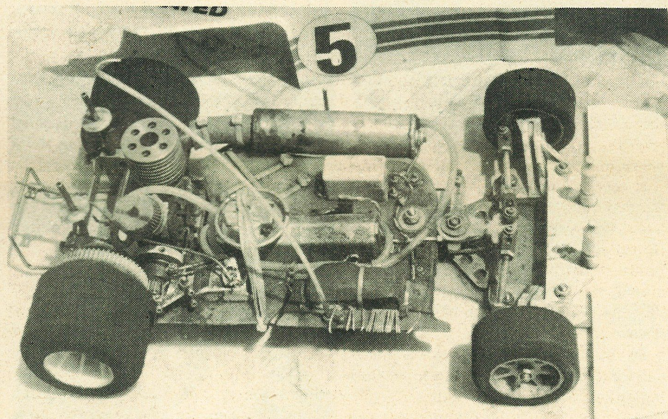
at the end he was in second, a lap behind. This proved his driving ability if only to add doubt about his building ability and good sense to take a not-quite perfect car (only third fastest) and can it in favor of a new untried car for the Main. Bill summed this matter up with a statement that being the third fastest isn't what counts, only the fastest matters and he didn't feel he could be assured a win with the car he qualified with. As it turned out the old car was much faster than the car that won, but then, hindsight is great.

He used a P.B. differential muffler and Kroll body. This car is not identical to present production P.B. cars, but is the same as the rest of the P.B. team. Phil says this will be the production version soon.

ART CARBONELL

Going into the race Art Carbonell (#72 Team Delta-USA) was the person favored with the best chance to win. Art is the present US Expert Can Am Champion. Art did well up to the semi-main where a rough race and bad luck struck putting him out.

While the Main Event was in progress Niel Tilbor turned to Art (who was watching from the sidelines) and said,



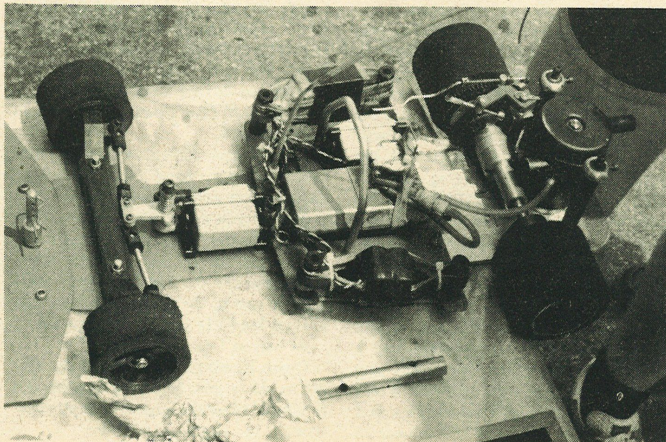
Bill Jianas's car was an Associated RC 200 rear end, 300 chassis, front end, and wheels. He used a custom fiberglass shaker plate and MRP type tweaker plate, plus the new adjustable clutch. Bill used an Elfin body, mounted as low as possible to prevent air from coming under it creating lift.

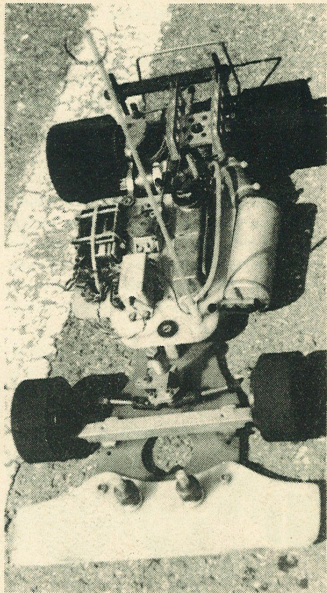
Phil Booth's car was basically a P.B. with fiberglass chassis and shaker plate.

"Don't worry Art, you're still favored to win."

Art Carbonell's Delta car was a fairly stock Delta with a side mounted tuned muffler. Art used the optional fiberglass chassis because as hitting the corner cones might tweak an aluminum chassis that he normally prefers. He also added a stiffener under the chassis shake plate.

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PETE & RE-PETE

Pete is a one time US National Champion and Re-Pete, at age 12, is a four-time National Champion. During the



preliminary qualifications Re-Pete was the third fastest qualifier overall. He accomplished this in what I would consider a very slow heat with a lot of traffic. It concerns me that some drivers are so inconsiderate and dumb not to move over and let a faster driver, like Re-Pete, pass during qualifying. Rather than bang door handles, slowing both yourself and someone like Re-Pete, it is better to let them go and save the banging for the Main. I guess some people's egos get hurt when a 12-year-old passes them. During the semi-main event Re-Pete was banged and belted by two drivers in particular (one from Italy and one from Great Britain) so much that his muffler was destroyed and he was black flagged off the track. Upon retiring the Swiss crowd of 4000 people applauded Re-Pete for his fantastic driving. Re-Pete used a stock Associated RC 200 with the only modification being RC 300 spindles. He and his dad's were one of the few stock cars I saw at the race. I have watched Re-Pete for four years on the Jerabee Racing Team develop into a great racer with fantastic reactions and a cool head. Given equipment and a little driver courtesy I don't think any racer could beat him. At the World Championships I interviewed Pete and Re-Pete. That interview will appear in

future *Race Car World* issues.

Debbie Preston, one of the top British racers, had been in exile in the US since



joining the Associated team. Rumors had it that she was an undercover agent spying on the Americans.



Gene and Curtis Husting ran Associated stock RC 300 with side mufflers. Curtis was one of the fastest qualifiers and I asked him if that gave him any special privileges on the Associated team. He said "Yes, it gives me the privilege of having Gene Husting clean the body each time I run." I looked over and Gene was.

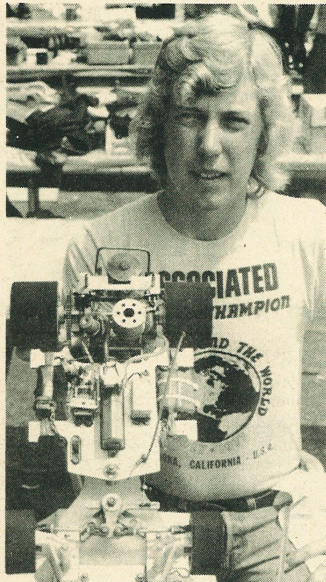
The Japanese Phoenix cars were very fast if not very strong. Note the lack of rear air dam and low wing angle.

Most of you might like to know what happens to the best racers during a 40-minute Main Event. Now, keep in mind that these are the best prepared, most reliable cars in the world, not the bash-around kind like we regular guys run.

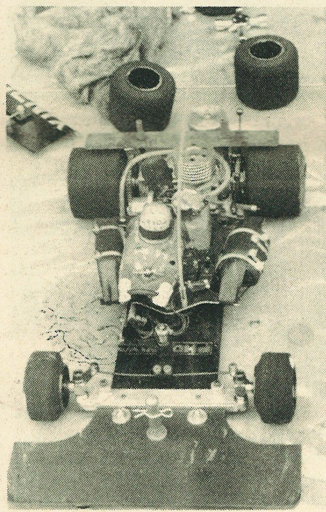
As best as I can remember:

Curtis Husting had his brake disc slip off its drive pins jamming against the flywheel killing the engine—his pit crew thought the engine had blown.

Jeff Rold had the screws that hold the front end of his engine to the case come loose causing erratic poor power and many flame-outs. This is a regular problem with K&B 21 engines. You would think someone would develop a way to prevent it.



Jeff Rold's car was an Associated made from a 200 rear end, 300 chassis,



The Phoenix cars weighed only about four pounds, considerably lighter than the five-and-a-half-pound US cars. The wheels and spindles seemed to be the weakest parts. Several of these cars used the new OS Max. engines which seemed very strong.



front end, and tires. His radio layout was fairly stock and his muffler was in the rear.

Rick Davis and Chuck Phelps crashed and got crashed enough that their cars stopped working well, but finished the race.

Bill Jianas's car handled terrible during the whole Main Event as explained in the text.

The two Japanese cars were fast, but spent much time in the pits each time they crashed. I can't figure out what value is a fast car that can't take the banging you get in racing. All the Phoenix cars kept falling apart.

Only Phil Booth, the ultimate winner, ran clean with no problems.

I can't remember what happened to the rest, but that's not saying much for the best cars.

THE FASTEST DRIVER AND CAR

Bill Jianas, USA, "Associated," turned the fastest official single laps recorded and was fifth and fourth during heat qualifying.

Ishihara, Japan, "Phoenix," turned the fast preliminary and final qualifying heats, he had a clean run both times and required no pit stops.

Curtis Husting and Jeff Rold, USA, "Associated," were fastest in heats of those making a pit stop. Curtis was second during the first qualifying and Jeff was second during final qualifying.

Re-Pete Fusco, USA, "Associated," at only 12 years old, was fourth fastest in preliminary qualifying and 15th in final qualifying with a flame-out during that heat.

Bervolts, Netherland, "Serpent," was seventh during initial qualifying.

Ronny Ton, Netherland, "Serpent," was third during final qualifying.

Art Carbonell, USA, "Delta," was the third fastest in every qualifying. RCW

1979 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS FINAL RESULTS

Name	Country	Car	Laps	Time	Finals Qualify
Phil Booth	G.B.	P.B.	116	7.356	
Bill Jianas	USA	Associated	115	7.31	
Chuck Phelps	USA	Associated	115	7.354	
Fujio Sasuga	Japan	AAT	114	7.38	
Ishihara	Japan	Road Ace	109	7.24	
Rick Davis	USA	Associated	102	7.37	
Jeff Rold	USA	Associated	91	7.28	
Ronny Ton	Neth.	Serpent	81	7.30	
Bill Martin	G.B.	P.B.	77	7.45	
Curtis Husting	USA	Associated	38	7.33	

Note: All 161 entries had to go through initial qualifying which eliminated the slower cars and the final qualify in order to get into the semi-main. The six top people in the semi-main and the four top qualifiers in the final qualifications made up the main event.

INITIAL QUALIFYING

Ishihara, N.	Japan	20	7.18.57
Husting, C.	USA	20	7.28.83
Carbonell, A.	USA	20	7.29.89
Fusco, RePete	USA	20	7.34.50
Jianas, B.	USA	20	7.34.57
Rold, J.	USA	20	7.40.35
Bervolts, P.	Netherlands	20	7.40.44
Phelps, C.	USA	20	7.41.82
Sasuga, F.	Japan	20	7.44.21
Takeda, K.	Japan	20	7.44.27
Ton, R.	Netherlands	20	7.45.00
Kishi, K.	Japan	20	7.45.63
Booth, P.	Great Britain	20	7.46.60
Seveso, P.	Italy	20	7.49.00
Tomita, N.	Japan	20	7.49.48
Suzuki, A.	Japan	20	7.49.81
Hassig, R.	W. Germany	20	7.50.65
Davis, R.	USA	20	7.51.26
Greeno, P.	Great Britain	20	7.51.41
Sabattini, F.	Italy	20	7.51.66
Marzocchi, M.	Japan	20	7.52.36
Mochizuki, S.	Japan	20	7.53.06
Kondo, K.	Japan	20	7.53.50
Franko, U.	W. Germany	20	7.54.45
Husting, G.	USA	20	7.54.64