



RYAN CAVALIERI

2015 ROAR NATIONALS SWEEP

Fresh off a dominating performance at the 2015 1:10 ROAR Off-Road Nationals, we sat down with now 21-time National Champion Ryan Cavalieri to talk about event prep and strategy. We will also take a look inside the vehicles he drove, setups he used, and even a few tips from the champ.



PREPARATION

What is your routine to prep for a National where you are running 4 classes?

I prepare months in advance and try to get in as much practice as I can. I like to arrive 100% prepared. When we fly to a race, I will rebuild my shocks due to the pressure change from flight. Other than that it's about prepping the tire that is necessary for the track and the rest is just driving.

What is your tire preparation procedure?

For slicks, we need to trim the center bead of the tire so I use a dremel and just sand them down in the middle to get it flush with the rest of the tire. Then I punch 2 holes on the inside wall of the tire, clean the gluing surface of the tire with Windex and mount them up with CA.

“When we fly to a race, I will rebuild my shocks due to the pressure change from flight.”

APPROACH TO THE EVENT

When racing on such high bite tracks, how do you feel your driving style changes? Or does it change?

It didn't change much, I just had to work on a couple spots of the track that were a little tricky but other than that, it was just about practice and working on trying to figure out how much I could push it to stay out front.

What type of differential do you prefer to run ball or gear?

I run a little of both. For this event I ran **gear diffs** in both buggies and a **ball diff** in the SC5M and T5M.

And why? I just felt more comfortable with the ball diffs in the trucks and didn't want to change to the gear diff where I would also need to make other adjustments to the trucks to accommodate the change. Plus my speed was good enough that I didn't need to change.

When setting up your car between rounds what do you check over?

I just basically cleaned the cars between rounds. I didn't do much wrenching on the cars between rounds as I could have but, that comes with showing up to the event prepared.



FUN FACT:
Ryan has completed the ROAR Nationals Sweep 3 times



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VEHICLE QUESTIONS

How do you choose a body style to run on certain track conditions?

We have done a lot of testing so I pretty much knew what the best bodies were. I changed the wing on my 2wd a couple times and I am not sure which one is the best, I ended up just going with what I thought was the best. We then ended up putting the front wing on the 2wd. We knew we were going to run the wing based on previous testing it was just a matter of when was I going to put it on. We also ended up using the stock [clear AE rear wing](#) which seemed to work best for this track.

Why are you using a front wing on the B5M?

I tested the front wing before the shootout race and I am surprised nobody took a picture of it then because my car was so fast. I decided not to run it however. The track was changing a bunch throughout the week and the front grip it provided wasn't necessary. For the Nationals we busted out the front wing after a few rounds of practice. We stuck with it because it helped make the car corner quicker and kept the nose down under acceleration.

Do you run a 3-gear transmission in all your mid motor cars?

Yes, it helps a lot with keeping the cars planted in the corners allowing for more corner speed, the cars don't want to flip as easy, and they can be driven harder. It also helps with jumping, if the jumps are a little chewed out, it helps keep the nose down in the air.

Do you prefer slower motors with high C rating battery or fast motors with lower C rating and if so why.

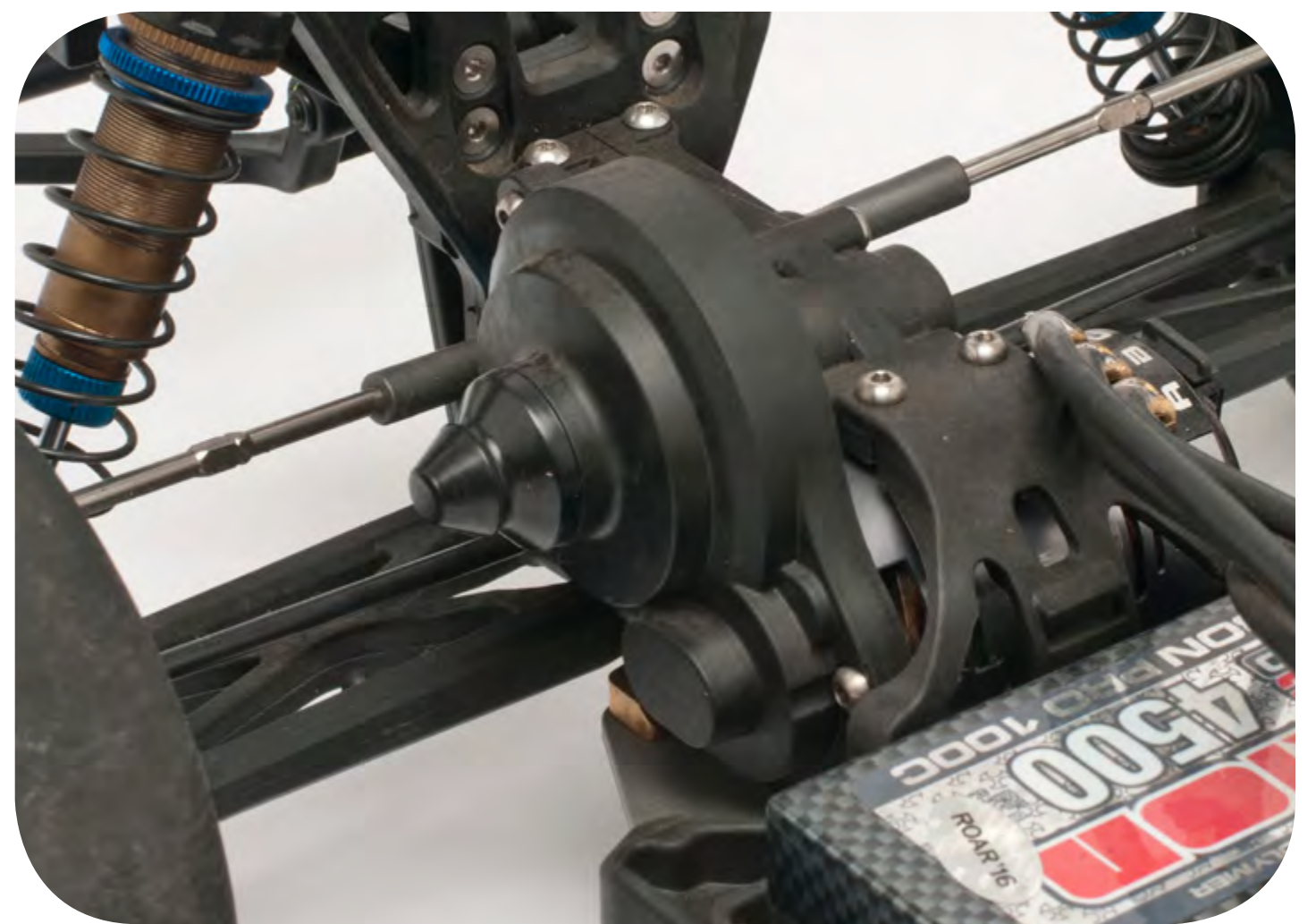
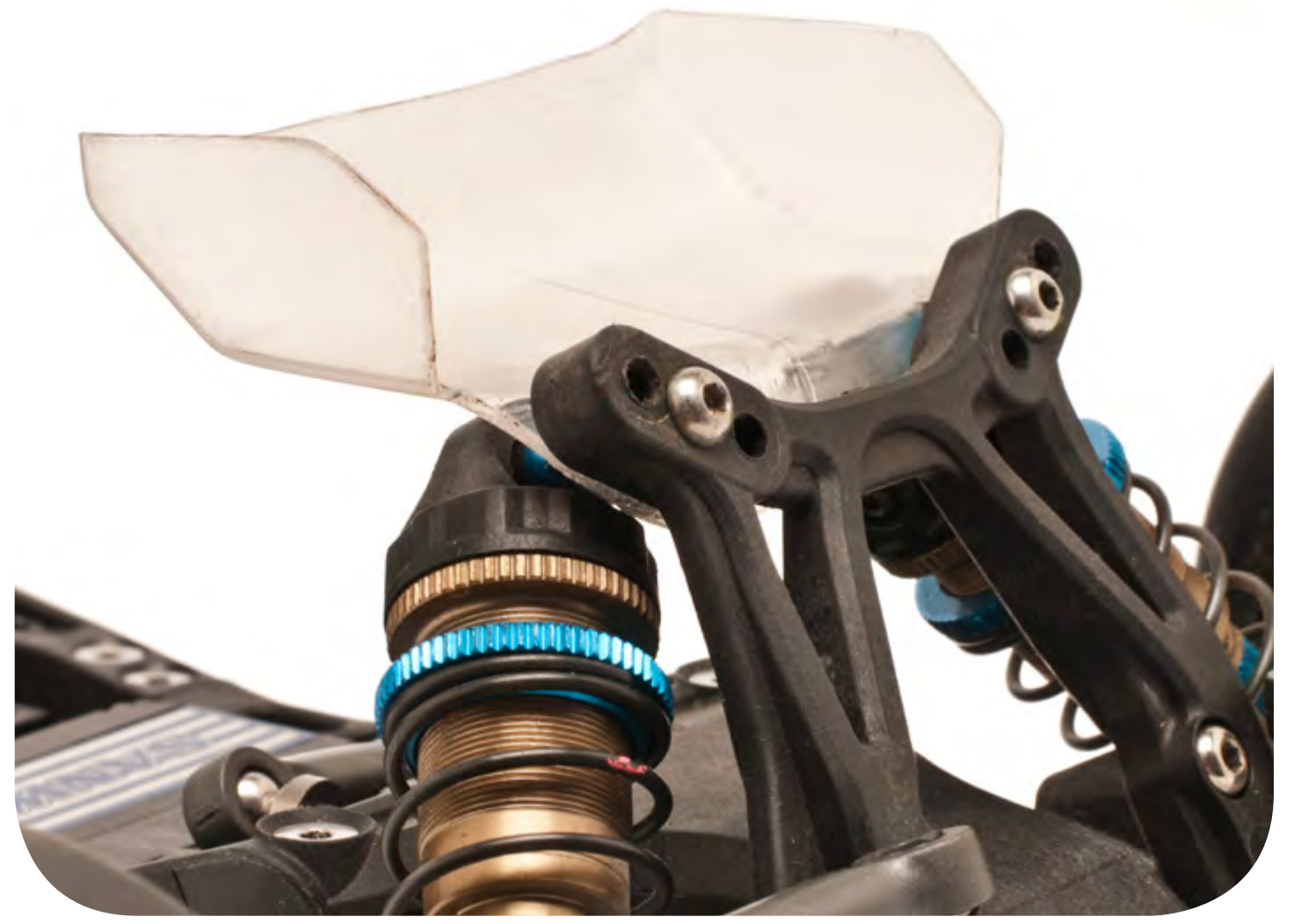
I don't really tune much with the motors, I pretty much run the same wind in all my cars. I really only adjust the timing if I need a little more or less. We get new batteries at the beginning of the year and run those, not much tuning via the c rating.

Which one of your four cars was the best and why?

My B44.3 was the best of my cars. I threw it down the first time and it was pretty much dialed. It was pretty good at the Cactus so I duplicated the car and it was probably even better than it was at the cactus. All my other cars were pretty good.

FUN FACT:

Ryan has won the Mod SC class 3 years in a row



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THE SWEEP

At what point did you think sweeping the Nats was a possibility?

Probably after the first set of mains, I had everything going in the right direction and it seemed like the others were struggling a little bit to get up to the race-pace. In 4 wheel I got passed by Dakotah (Phend), then he bobbed and I got into him and fell back to 4th which was the lowest I was all weekend. I ended up fighting back to the lead and taking the win. Once I got that win I think it showed me that I could do it because I was a lot quicker than the rest of the field.

[▶ Click here to check out the 4wd video](#)

After sweeping all of the first A mains, was the pressure off?

I didn't really feel that much pressure because the first mains went so good. I was feeling it, things were going in my direction so I just took advantage of it. The second set of mains were really good for me, the only one that was close was 2wd. By the end of it, second place was within a second and that's really as close as anybody was for that round.

How do you remain focused for the event having already won the first two titles?

I just kept my excitement of winning the first of the 4 titles to myself until all was said and done. I didn't really show any emotion at all because I didn't want that to get anybody fired up to push harder.

In which class did you feel the most pressured to win?

I would say 2wd, it's the car we run the most, we work the most on it. 4wd was pretty good because I was pushed by Dakotah the entire weekend and I had an answer for him each time he pushed the envelope. We qualified pretty close and raced each other hard in every main. Stadium truck was good because he (Dakotah) beat me last year and I thought I was a little quicker. This year he was maybe a little quicker just wasn't as consistent. The short course was great because it was my 3rd one in a row and the first for the SC5M, which was good because it kept the streak alive.

[▶ Click here to check out the 2wd video](#)



“The short course win was great because it was my 3rd one in a row and the first for the SC5M”



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TRACK SURFACE

What did you think of the layout?

I actually thought the layout was pretty good, it was a lot better than the Cactus. I still think it needs to be a little more race friendly where you can pass. Everything was really tight, it was really hard to drive with someone and with that much traction you are kind of on the edge any ways. I think they (HobbyTown) did a good job with the track. That type of dirt is really hard to work with, to get it smooth, and I think they did the best they could.

Do you enjoy racing on slicks?

I really don't care what we race on, I mean, it's not something that you probably want to race on every weekend but, it's nice when you are out front because it's really hard for people to pass you. Last year's national track had lots of room for passing which is good if you need to make a pass. It's not my favorite but, it's a bit easier because you don't have to worry about traction.

At any point, did you drive as fast or as hard as you could?

I drove 100% in 4wd, I think it was the third round of qualifying, Dakota and I were so close that I drove it 100% because I wanted that TQ. He had the speed to take the TQ and I knew if he did he would get some momentum and I didn't want that. In the 4wd main when I was bumped back to 4th, I remember I was behind Maifield (Ryan) and I got him to make a little mistake and I got around him, then I was able to back it down. 2wd I never really had to drive 100%. I could, but I felt that my pace was good so I didn't need to. In SC truck I pushed in the beginning to build a cushion and then was able to cruise. It's hard to make up time in that class.

Did you ever take any risks during the event?

At the end of the straight I risked it a lot, I was carrying a lot of momentum. I ended up putting a little bit stiffer foam in the rear tire and that helped me carry more speed and the car wouldn't want to flip as easy. I knew that if I could push my car there, I would make up time.

“ In 2wd I never really had to drive 100%. I could, but I felt that my pace was good so I didn't need to. ”



FINAL THOUGHTS

These are the first National Titles for the “5” platform vehicles and you won three of them. What does that mean to you?

It means a lot, B5M probably means the most because everyone at Associated has put in so much time and effort with the B5M to get it where it's at today. I'm sure the consumer is saying the same thing, the car is amazing to drive. The SC5 was awesome, second time out, 2 wins. I knew the truck was going to be good but, I couldn't believe it was as good as it was. All my cars were good and it feels good to win with all of them.

Does sweeping the Nats give you some added confidence for the upcoming worlds in Japan?

I think we are looking pretty good heading into the worlds. I feel like the team and I have a good shot. As long as I feel that way, I think I will be right there.

“ She is bone stock. ”

