



## EURO-CHAMPS AT LILFORD

THE "once in ten years" occasion of hosting the European Championships in Britain presented a challenge to the BRCA and the Lilford Park Club that all were quick to take up. Tom Martin, BRCA secretary and prime mover at Lilford took all the necessary steps to enthuse his numerous band of helpers with first task

the extension of the circuit to meet international requirements. This done and offered earlier to visiting Europeans as a taster was really the opening shot of the campaign.

Lap times looked fairly even across the board with 20 secs a lap, making a 15-lap five minute heat seem about the qualifying level. Formula programme for Saturday's racing was arranged to take the slower cars in the earlier heats, working down to the aces for heats eleven onwards. The Italians who had arrived later than most did not practice very hard and were generally allotted fairly low number heats.

This then was the pattern for Saturday. Racing started immediately after breakfast, and from heat five onwards times were getting better and better with thirteen laps to the 5-minute heat coming up fairly freely, plus a couple of fourteens and one solitary 15 lap turned in by Franco Sabattini. Then at about heat ten of the first round disaster struck! The rain which had been threatening with occasional spitting came down in buckets and brought racing to an abrupt end. Under the rules the maximum break in a day's racing must not exceed one hour, during

*Drivers stand behind their mechanics for start of Sports/GT Final. Left to right: Peter Bervoets (2nd), Debbie Preston (3rd) — Dad is mechanicking — Ronnie Ton (4th), Dave Martin (1st) with slick Ted Booker mechanicking, Peter De Carro (5th), Phil Greeno (6th).*

*Left: Sabattini in the wet on Saturday — faithful team mate shelters him.*

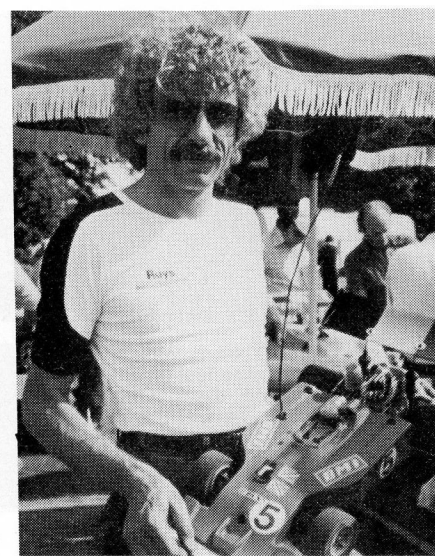


*Thirans of Belgium, surprise winner of Formula on Saturday, poses his car in the sunshine of Sunday.*

which time organisers and team managers must agree on procedure for continuation, or abandon the meeting, or postpone to another day. Some years ago in Italy (of all places) a similar situation arose and it was then agreed that the show must always go on whatever the weather. Consequently, when a vote was taken, all but two votes, were in favour of a straight continuation after the one hour pause. A suggestion that heats already run should be cancelled and new start made was not adopted.

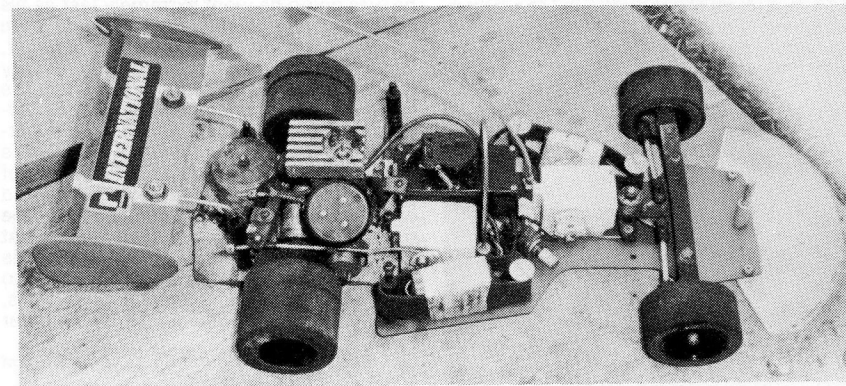
Rain had nearly stopped by 12.30 when resumption was required. Brooms were sweeping the circuit, and an escape hole for the surplus water had been driven into the off circuit concrete. Swirling round with spumes of water spurting from wheels, the aces of the r/c world were set the almost impossible task of getting on terms with the early runners. No one in fact achieved even another 14-lapper . . . best being Vincent of France, Bob Denton GB, Bernascone, I and Errington GB . . . with the big names down among the high twenties to forties. This produced a straight-in top four of Sabattini, Italy Olsson, Sweden, Thirans, Belgium and Collina, Italy. The two Italians had indeed been Euro-champions in their day — the other two were amongst the up-and-coming youngsters. The sub-final had Ruchat, Switzerland, Strupler also Swiss, Kruhsberg of Sweden, Van Helden, Holland and two newcomers from Austria Maringer and Andexlinger. Ruchat and Andexlinger proved the winners and moved into the final.

The race was run at a very moderate tempo with Collina and Andexlinger trailing



behind the tightly bunched leading four who stayed on the same lap virtually throughout the race with lap times only in the 26 second range! Thirans and Sabattini enjoyed the advantage for the most part of being out of the spray cast up on following cars, but this was a very minor gain with Ruchat and Olsson so close on their heels. Significantly all were running with differentials of one or other of the makes now available. As the finish

*Keith Plested's own PB Int. full of his latest devices, new air filter, diff., slide carb., servo "wet covers" . . . PB winners were virtually both straight out of the box!*





TV camera crew spent a busy morning on pre-race Friday for a December issue of *Modellers' World*.

The winners: Peter Bervoets (2nd), Dave Martin (1st) and Debbie Preston (3rd) with Ted Longshaw at the mike.



hooter sounded Thirans was in the lead with Sabattini closing fast on Ruchat with only feet between them, Olsson a lap behind. With Thirans over the line crowds surged onto the track and Sabattini slowed up instead of pressing on to the line when he would very probably have overtaken Ruchat.

A heated enquiry followed, with Sabattini claiming he was unaware of the rule requiring the last lap to be completed, and claiming that in any event he was impeded by the crowd and could not have run on at full speed. Race result as given stood, and Sabo was a very unhappy man. He declared he was going straight home without further participation; this he did not do but refrained from running in the Sunday event. With bad weather as the villain of the piece, the one virtue that came of it was that comparative newcomers to racing, the Austrians managed to get two places in the top ten to their great joy and encouragement, and that Thirans, a very competent and hard-working driver was given a first share of the limelight.

With the usual inconsistent English weather Sunday dawned bright and lovely and times immediately reflected the better conditions. Fourteen laps became almost the norm (35 out of 87 achieved this or better); the leading eighty drivers all got 12

or more laps in. Leaders with 15 laps were Ronny Ton, Phil Greeno, Peter Bervoets and Peter De Carro — distinguished as the only one of the top ten in each day's racing NOT to be running with a differential. As a Delta driver it rather points the truth of the Delta claim that their road holding is superior.

Sub Final saw a strong British contingent in pursuit of a final place in the shape of Dave Martin, Debbie Preston, Steve White, Ken Wright and Bob Errington, with Mares of Italy the solitary European visitor to make it. Dave Martin and Debbie Preston proved the popular winners.

Final had a nice range of cars involved with two PB Internationals, a Dutch Serpent, Italian Futura, and two from USA Debbie's RC200, now with AMPS differential and Peter De Carro's Delta — the latest Super J, first seen in Art Carbonnel's hands at Monaco. Once again the final soon split into two groups Dave Martin leading from the hotly contesting Debbie Preston and Peter Bervoets. Phil Greeno never really showed as radio failure, principally servo trouble at the steering end left him a trailing sixth. When he was going he went extremely fast as his qualifying 15-laps showed and could have provided strong competition. However, Dave Martin, running what was a very nearly standard PB International, with the latest glassfibre chassis and PB differential, put up such a remarkable performance that only a superman could have bettered it. His 93 laps in an official time of 30:13.7 if we take out refuelling time and one flame out gives an average lap time over the half hour better than the fastest qualifying time! That Peter and Debbie were within one and two laps of him is also a great credit to their driving skills. Alas, Peter seems fated always to be Number

Jeff Lindstrom demonstrates his superefficient Thom monitoring equipment.

Two on these occasions — it must be his fourth 2nd place! Debbie, too, did excellently with impeccable driving, and a furious dice with Bervoets, with places changing lap by lap, to the joy of a large and enthusiastic crowd. Ronnie Ton and Peter De Carro were by no means disgraced in a really racing pace event.

As a graceful tribute to a great occasion Lord and Lady Lilford, whose estate Lilford Park is, hurried back from holidays to enjoy the final and present the prizes. BBC television cameramen were also present to take material for use over the Christmas period in a new *Modellers' World* programme.

What are the salient points of the meeting? First and foremost that the introduction of differentials is having a vital influence on r/c car racing. The fact that John Thorp's (and the Brem version) differential made little or no impact over the years that it has been in existence can be put down to the fact that it was associated with a belt drive, and thus its particular value was until recently not appreciated. We now have three major differentials in new production: AMPS which is the most developed so far, and is already being adapted for use with Serpent, SG, and Associated cars in addition to original PB International version. Then we have PB's own variant which uses spur gears instead of bevel with some slight theoretical advantages. These two diffs.

Very useful starterbox cum worktable, cum wheel and tool storage now on offer from H. Fett, Lovenicher Weg 15, 5,000 Cologne.

have shared the honours so far — Thirans used AMPS, Dave Martin used PB. Since both were running what were very nearly bog standard kits the answer is inconclusive. Dave's motor was OPS (the in motor by the way just now) and Thirans' Super Tigre X21. They performed in very different conditions equally successfully.

Third diff. coming along nicely is Franco Sabattini's. It looks a splendidly robust affair. I have not seen it in pieces, but it



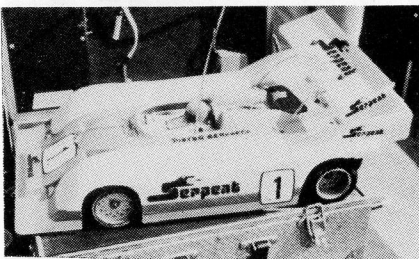
certainly showed some signs of its short development time (the nine weeks since Monaco) with reports of axle bending. When it worked it worked well; only need is to find the ideal metal combination, and this is simply a matter of time.

The SG Futura also showed up well in competition with six places in the first twenty places (two runs of ten). Also with new kits on trial were Sweden's Minicars' Challenger in latest form and FWF's Serpent. Two Deltas in hands of De Caro and Strupler (Swiss) were seen, and Debbie Preston's Associated RC200. Finally, there comes the seven PB Internationals to make up the twenty; this needs no further comment other than to repeat that first place in each event went to a PB car in more or less standard trim. This is as opposed to the winning Monaco PB which in Phil Greeno's hands had received a great deal of attention.

All the Italian cars and the SG supported entries were running on the latest Super Tigre X21 RE, numbering four in the top twenty, plus three other earlier STX21 engines. K & B claimed another seven leaving the last six for OPS. In other directions, improved disc brake systems with better adjustments were seen; better air filtering with very fine screen dirt kept out; and more attention paid to protection from wet and other hazards of radio equipment.

Mention must also be made of the splendid radio equipment monitoring provided by Jeff Lindstrom with equipment on loan from Thorn's. This enabled a positive check to be made at all times and on all frequencies. With a wide European spread there were in fact many unknown wavelengths involved but Jeff could catch them all. The illuminated screen produced hillocks for each band when receiver on, extending this to a line when Tx also on. Any maverick would also show up. Screen could be switched in a moment to any other frequency band for checking. There

*The Dutch Serpent, latest version soon to be available here. This is Peter Bervoets' car.*



was not a single racing failure due to radio interference. In case clubs might fancy similar equipment I am told it costs around £8,000 plus and demands a skilled operator (and rich).

The social side of a meeting of this nature was also in evidence with a Championship Banquet in nearby Peterborough. Tom Martin told me rather whimsically that many more attended than tickets had been sold but added that perhaps some of the visitors did not know that money was required! It proved a great success, with straw-hatted chefs cutting the roast beef at the table and speeches from the top-table. This provided the one electronic breakdown of the meeting when the mike was positively coy, and Ted Longshaw gave us an unrehearsed "Danny Kaye" performance in his endeavours to communicate.

### Formula Class

Champion: G. THIRANS B 67 laps

2. Ruchat	CH	67 laps
3. Sabattini	I	67 laps
4. Olsen	S	66 laps
5. Collina	I	56 laps
6. Andexlinger	A	55 laps
7. Kruhsberg	S	32 laps
8. Strupler	CH	30 laps
9. Maringer	A	30 laps
10. Van Helden	NL	30 laps
11. Vincent	F	13/4 52 4
12. Denton	GB	13/4 53 6
13. Bernascone	I	13/4 53 6
14. Errington	GB	13/4 57 0
15. Seveso	I	13/4 58 9
16. Dognon	F	13/4 59 4
17. Fiocchi	CH	13/4 59 5
18. De Permentier	B	13/4 59 6
19. Blouet	F	13/4 59 7
Kuttner	D	13/4 59 7
21. Hassig	CH	12/4 25 5
22. Poulain	F	12/4 41 4
23. Preston	GB	12/4 42 6

### Sports/Proto Class

Champion: D. MARTIN GB 931 laps  
(Official time 30.13.7)

2. Bervoets	NL	92 laps
3. Preston Debbie	GB	91 laps
4. Ton	NL	88 laps
5. De Carro	S	78 laps
6. Greeno	GB	54 laps
7. Errington	GB	44 laps
8. White	GB	44 laps
9. Mares	I	44 laps
10. Wright	GB	43 laps
11. Plested	GB	14/4 40 9
12. Marani	I	14/4 43 4
13. Pagdin	GB	14/4 43 6
14. Angelin	F	14/4 44 9
15. Johansson	S	14/4 45 3
16. Booth	GB	14/4 45 7
17. Alberti	CH	14/4 46 3
18. Coosemans	B	14/4 47 0
19. Bartolomasi	I	14/4 47 9
20. Collina	I	14/4 50 2
21. Tassaux	B	14/4 50 8
22. Soderholm	S	14/4 50 9
23. Robkothén	D	14/4 52 7
24. Gustafsson	S	14/4 53 1