

## EURO CHAMPS: NUREMBERG

A SERPENT driven by Peter Bervoets took the Formula event at Nuremberg; and Ronny Ton only failed by some three seconds to achieve an amazing double for the marque in the Sports/Proto final when beaten by Italy's Gherzi driving his SG Futura in a stupendous finish. But behind these two memorable victories lies a weekend of frustration which must be told.

The circuit lies just outside the city limits in beautiful wooded country — with cranberries and blueberries there for the picking — and was the first purpose built track to be operated in West Germany. As such it may be considered a little narrow for present needs, only just wide enough to take an eight-start event, but with a delightfully smooth surface in the dry and very little that cars can do to harm themselves anywhere. In wet weather it is almost undrivable with a glass like surface that rain tyres struggle in vain to overcome.

Even quite early arrivals a week before racing started were disappointed to find the camping site already full, and had to camp out in the woods without water or sanitation (Perhaps this explains Paul Padgin's newly started beard?). However, weather was fine until the Thursday and practice proceeded happily. Friday the weather deteriorated and on Saturday morning when the qualifying heats for the Formula event began it proved almost impossible to run rain heats as laid down under the rules since cars were hardly managing to get round. Fortunately

weather improved, the rain stopped and it was possible to ignore the wet runs — casualty here was Phil Booth with two wet runs and a failed servo on his only dry attempt. He had the doubtful honour of being bottom of the list! Sometimes you win; sometimes you lose.

Throughout the day it had become increasingly plain that timing was not up to championship standard and most teams were taking careful timing checks. Four through into the final direct with 19 laps plus proved to be Phil Greeno, Bob Errington, Reiner Heller of Germany and Peter Bervoets, Holland. First semi went to Hans Johansson of Sweden driving the interesting new kit car the Carlsson with its hub-enclosed diff — straight out of the box he claimed. Dave Martin came 2nd a lap behind. The second semi proved a ding-dong struggle with three on the same lap, and two more only a lap behind, final places going to Gherzi and Debbie Preston — Steve White the third 69 lap-er being the unlucky one by a few seconds.

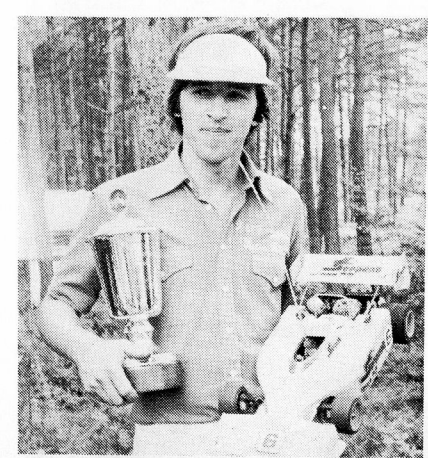
The final started quite happily with Peter Bervoets leading the field, until after twelve minutes the black flag stopped the event. A somewhat embarrassed organiser explained that something had gone wrong with the timing mechanism and he had no times after twelve minutes. Everybody hung around for some half hour with various huddles until it was decided to continue the race with by then restored timing for the remaining 28 minutes. This duly happened and after the allotted time it appeared that Phil Greeno had won from

Peter Bervoets with his hardwon trophy and the car that achieved it, after some 250 plus laps!

Peter Bervoets. This was by no means certain as there were two schools of thought — but Peter was quite resigned to his second place. Meanwhile, however, the Italian team had registered a formal protest that the whole split race idea was wrong. The international jury consisting of the Race Director, Team Managers and EFRA reps as set out in the rules crowded into the small caravan-office and talked and talked . . . until the light failed. Three options were (1) to declare the Formula event void and cancelled for 1979 (2) to accept the result (whatever it was!) (3) to re-run the race. The last choice was taken and the race re-run on Sunday morning at 8.30 am. I was not there but am informed that no practice time was allowed drivers went straight out and raced.

This re-run event was won by Peter Bervoets with 120 laps from Hans Johansson of Sweden (115), Dave Martin (109). All credit to Peter Bervoets who now enjoys the distinction of having raced more laps for a single trophy than any other international driver (must be well over 200 laps in all!) Congratulations Peter, it is nice to have beaten your jinx that so far always seemed to put you 2nd!

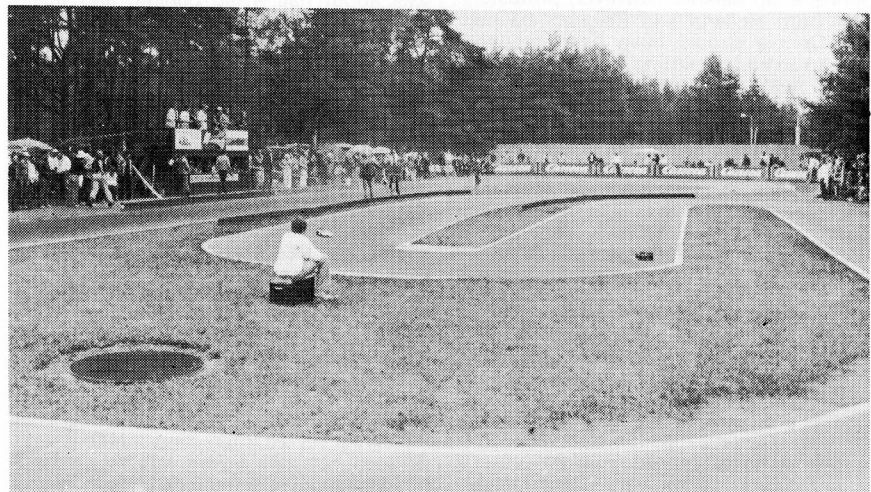
(A sad thing about it all is that the highly efficient Wiesbaden timing gear was available on loan but the organisers were unwilling to pay the hire charge very

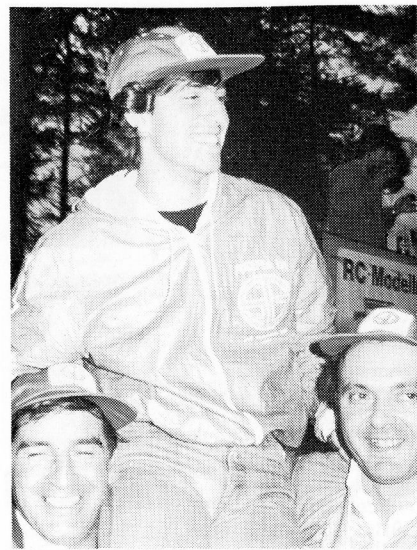


reasonably requested. No stand-by timing apparatus was in use. All this trouble was unnecessary)

After this early start to Sunday the weather brightened up considerably, and what must be a record crowd began to arrive. Porsches were as common as Cortinas in the crowded parking areas, and a beautiful Dino Ferrari from Basle vied with an immaculately restored Citroen Light Fifteen as the Queen of the park. With finer driving conditions the general

*Heading and below: These two pictures give a good impression of the circuit and the excellent Sunday afternoon attendance.*





Giulio Ghersi lifted aloft after winning the Sports/GT race — a magnificent feat of driving. Franco Sabattini on the right looks over the moon!

the list of times instead of alternating times to distribute the top men equally between the two semi-finals. This took quite a time to arrange, including problems of frequencies. I had three separate sets of semi-finals in my note book before the true and official set was agreed.

Back to the second semi: here Swedish driver Johansson won from Peter Bervoets with Paul Padgin the unlucky third. Although all three were on the same lap, miraculously the timekeepers got the order right without challenge.

Now for the Final! Almost from the start Ghersi dominated the race, and indeed was never placed lower than second at any stage. Close on his heels for the first few minutes were Dave Martin and Swede Johansson with Ronny Ton not far away, and a momentary showing in second place by Swiss Wiedler. From about the twelfth minute it resolved itself into a needle match between Ghersi and Ton with Johansson occasionally intervening, and the steady Dave Martin in fourth place waiting for the mistakes which never came. After 25 minutes Ghersi was nearly two laps ahead of Ton with Johansson a further two laps back. Then at 30 minutes, Ton got onto the same lap as Ghersi and began to close steadily a few yards per lap, until at about minute 33 he forged ahead in the lead. It was but a momentary flash in the pan, with five minutes still to go Ghersi reclaimed the No.1 spot. Ton was about half a lap behind, and again began to close until the last minutes when it looked as if there might be only lengths in it, but as the pair raced for the finishing line Ton spun round and lost his impetus, leaving Ghersi to win by some forty yards and three seconds! Ghersi drove an impeccable race maintaining a perfect line for lap after lap and it would have required a super man to beat him on that form. Ronny was very nearly that man, always fractionally faster but nothing like so steady and free from over impetuous run outs.

Then the kissing had to start. The Italian team all kissed each other and Ghersi like a Cup Final goalscorer — only good footwork saved me from a couple myself — and a jubilant Franco Sabattini helped hoist the victor aloft in traditional style. It was a great occasion and a deserved win.

Technically an interesting meeting with Serpent cars doing very well — almost a double win — with three cars in the Sports

Typical start: Look guv' — no hands!

Final (Ton, Bervoets, Tassaux) plus Steve White and Paul Padgin in the semis. Incidentally, Paul's pitman John Russell made the trip to Germany solely to pit for him all for the good of the Hobbycard/Serpent team. Then a new star seems to be rising from Sweden in the shape of the Carlsson kit (soon to be built and reviewed). Also to be noted was Reiner Heller with a Carrera, one of the four fastest in the Formula heats. Most of the EFRA countries were there including Spain, Lichtenstein, Austria, Jugoslavia. . . in fact only absentees were Ireland and Denmark. But what a pity that a rather



inexperienced team was left to run the meeting without Headquarters help and guidance.

## RESULTS

### Semi Final I

Johansson, Hans	S	72
Dave Martin	GB	71
Per Gustafsson	S	69
Elias, J.	NL	67
Paul Padgin	GB	66
Goosemans, J	B	60
Orazi, V	I	56
Vasselli, Sandra	I	23

### Official Final

1	Peter Bervoets	NL	Serpent	OPS	AMPS diff	120.66
2	Hans Johansson	S	Carlsson	K & B	Carlsson	115.11
3	Dave Martin	GB	PB Int.	OPS	PB	109.83
4	Bob Errington	GB	PB Int.	OPS	PB	108.11:7
5	Phil Greeno	GB	Greeno/PB	OPS	PB	106.17:8
6	Debbie Preston	GB	Associated	OPS	AMPS	102.26:5
7	Reiner Heller	D	Carrera	K & B	Carrera	91.14:8
8	Ghersi, G.	I	SG Futura	STX21	SG	80.7:03

(12 Minute Final: Bervoets 28 Minute Final: Greeno)

## Sports/GT

### Semi Final I

Tassaux D	B	76
Groeschl, F	D	76.82
Greeno, P.	GB	76.88
Gabbiani, P	MC	75
Booth, P.	GB	73
Naser, J.	D	73
Sabattini, F.	I	

### Semi Final II

Johansson, H	S	75:0.9
Bervoets, P.	NL	75:8.3
Padgin, P.	GB	75:15:2
Heller, R	D	69
Errington, R	GB	62
Vasselli, S.	I	61
Cromberge, F	NL	15

## Final

1	Ghersi, G.	I	SG Futura	STX21	SG diff	152 3:7
2	Ronny Ton	B	Serpent	Picco	SG diff	152 6:8
3	Johansson, H	S	Carlsson	K & B	AMPS	151
4	Martin, D	GB	PB Int.	OPS	Carlsson	148
5	Bervoets, P.	NL	Serpent	OPS	PB	147
6	Wiedler, R	CH	SG Futura	STX21	AMPS	138
7	Tassaux, D.	B	Serpent	OPS	SG	136
8	Groeschl, F	D	Special	K & B	AMPS	97