

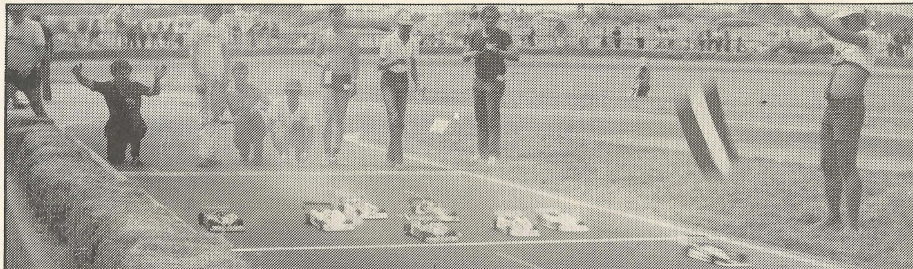
CHAMPIONSHIP

BILL BURKINSHAW TAKES A BROAD BASED LOOK AT THE 1981 WORLD AND EUROPEAN 1/8 SCALE R/C CAR CHAMPIONSHIPS



Left: World Champs startline scene, US car park circuit contrasts with the purpose built Austrian track used for 1981 Euro Champs meeting.

SINCE 1977, alternate years have provided the opportunity for the cream of the world's 1/8 scale IC car drivers to pit their skills against one another for the honour of the title of World Champion, while every year our own European series culminates in a European Championship. Just how do our drivers fare in both a World and European Contest, and how does our own national style of 1/8 racing compare, both from the point of view of technical excellence and out and out speed?



Firstly, remember that out of the whole world of IC racing, the UK's National Association ranks pretty near the top for numbers and using the international organisation's yardsticks, we thus qualify for heavy representation — not that weight of numbers really counts when the flag drops! The UK are most certainly a force to be reckoned with, our drivers consistently figure in the finals at the highest levels, World Championships to Phil Booth in '79, World Cup '78 and Euro Formula '81 Championships to Phil Greeno, Euro Sports/GT to Dave Martin in '78... the list goes on.

Our success is largely a result of good communication, both by frequent close contact for race meetings and by a healthy Association (the British Radio Car Association) with back-up from wide circulation publications. Close competition improves the breed, no question about that state-

ment. Winners, and who doesn't relish the thought of winning, seek constantly to improve the breed and give themselves a little edge, and those improvements have been made on a constant basis by our UK designers and manufacturers. The only real surprise is that given a pretty healthy home market there is no competitive home produced engine.

It is a matter of fact that UK drivers didn't win the World Championship in 1981, nor did we win both classes at the Euro Championships. It is also a matter of fact that two of the finalists at the '81 World Champs were British and both they and the lone French finalist drove British PB 'Alpha' IS cars, a PB car took the Euro F1 title and was unfortunate not to figure better in the Sports/GT Euro final. Place these facts against the other nations' results and you have to realise that 1981 was not at all a bad year for the UK and it definitely pro-

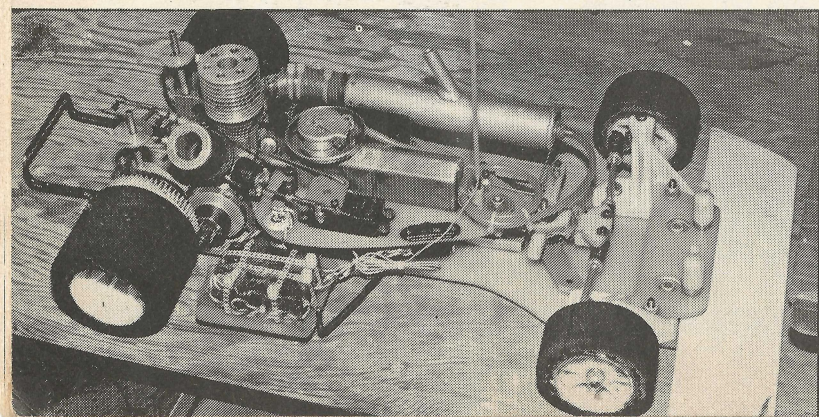
vided a pointer to the racing course of the rest of the 1980s.

World Championships Indianapolis, July 5

How come the PB 'Alpha,' arguably the most sophisticated racing machine on the track, numerically superior, with very heavy works support could do no better than fifth, seventh and eighth place at Indianapolis? The simpler somewhat lighter Deltas of Carbonell and Ishihara, the Kyoshos and Associateds of Kondo and Burch and the hybrid SG 'Monaco VCS' of Bartolomesi were joined by a lone PB 'Alpha,' that of Gary Culver, as straight through qualifiers. During early qualifying when grip on the super smooth tarmac was low, the PB looked very fast. This circuit was superfine 'blacktop' laid on top of an already smooth car park. As oil and rubber started to be deposited on the track as qualifying progressed, grip improved. Very high temperatures and high humidity caused the surface to literally ooze sticky tar, tyre tracks could actually be seen behind the cars as they circulated.

Such conditions are common in the USA, indeed our regularly rain-washed tracks and low temperatures would horrify US drivers by their lack of grip. US cars are designed for such grip, tyre rubber compounds suit the grip, drivers expect the grip. What is almost equally certain is that in spite of the experience and suitability of the

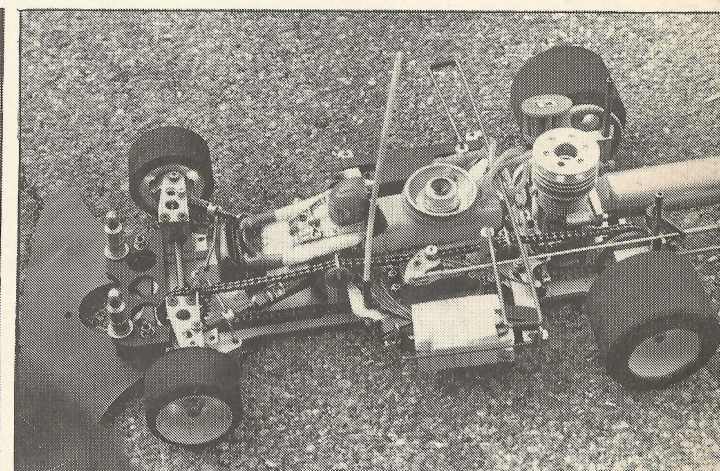
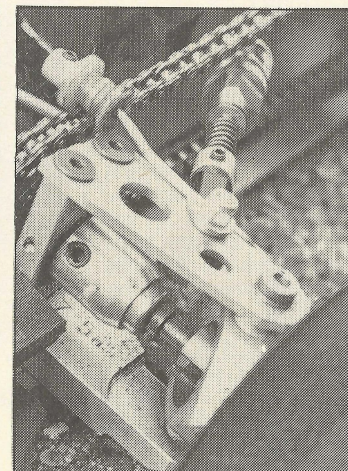
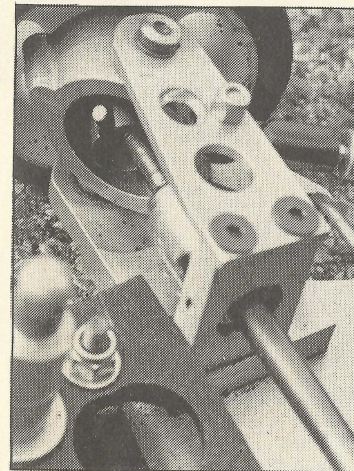
Left: Ralphie Burch, youngest qualifier for the final at the Indy World Champs, was not even a works driver, his Associated RC300 shown here.



TECHNICALITIES

EFRA EUROPEAN FEDERATION RADIO AUTOS

IFMAR INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION MODEL AUTO RACING



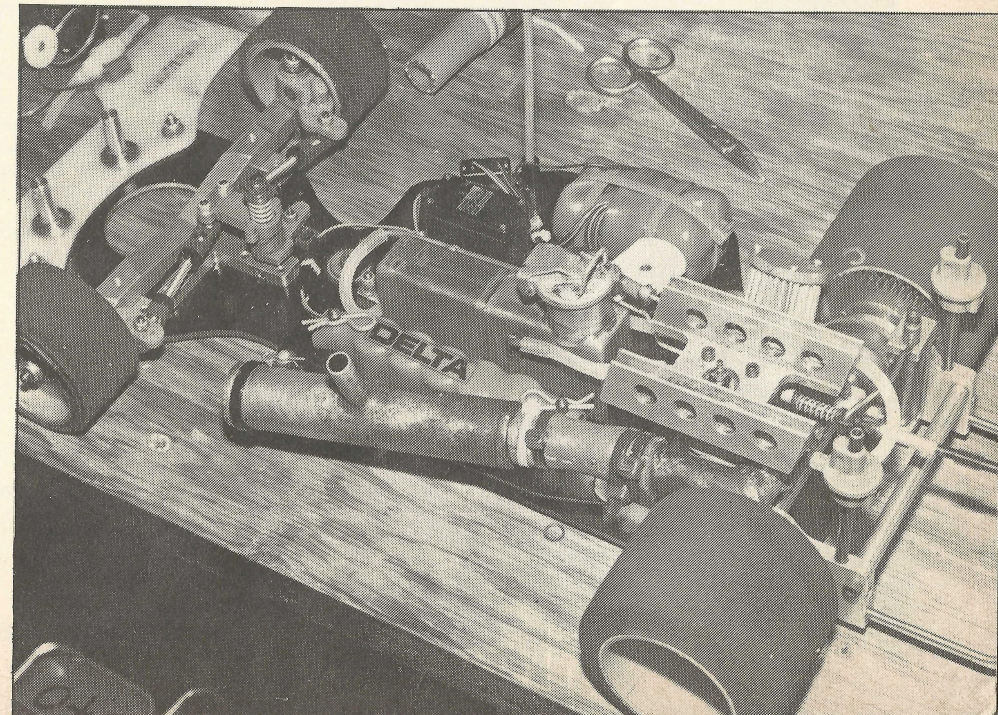
simple flat-bed cars, the 'Alphas,' Associated and even the lone *Serpent* suspension cars were capable of putting down power and more power on to that track. With more power available the undoubted ease of driving of the suspension equipped cars would certainly have been a benefit. Suspension cars will almost certainly move on, whilst the simpler models become out-classed, the almost overwhelming reaction of drivers when first experiencing a suspension car is that it is slow — this is not so, invariably they are much faster, but so much smoother, that almost all experienced drivers could use more power.

Non-Europeans, US drivers in particular, might have been surprised at how well the flat-bed machines went, but US drivers were not, they were very surprised at how well our European full suspension and hybrid types performed against their own Deltas and Associateds. Both Ken Campbell of Delta and Gene Hustings of Associated looked pretty glum by the end of the qualification, for although Ken Campbell had the pleasure of seeing two of his cars in the final it was becoming all too obvious to him that suspension could well be the future for the USA, as well. Gene Hustings may have been able to take comfort from the showing of Phil Booth with his Associated for if the promised rounds had all been held Phil's rapidly improving form could have placed him higher than 33rd (13th on the basis of the cancelled rained-

off fifth round).

The 'Alpha,' Associated and 'Rapier' suspension cars are by now familiar to most UK drivers. Other less familiar types such as the Delta, are seen in the UK some even receive works support from their overseas manufacturers, it is difficult to see how though that even World No. 1 position would affect sales of the Delta in the UK.

Above: prototype Kyosho four wheel drive car. Solid rear axle has small sprocket attached to transmit power via a chain to the front axle. A free wheel device is fitted to the front end but no differential. The system was certainly no disadvantage, but conversely did not show signs of any superiority. Below: a World Championship winner, very high quality engineering is the hallmark of the Delta, many machined light alloy parts are used. This version of the Super J has a full length carbon fibre reinforced epoxy chassis and front mounted mini-pipe.



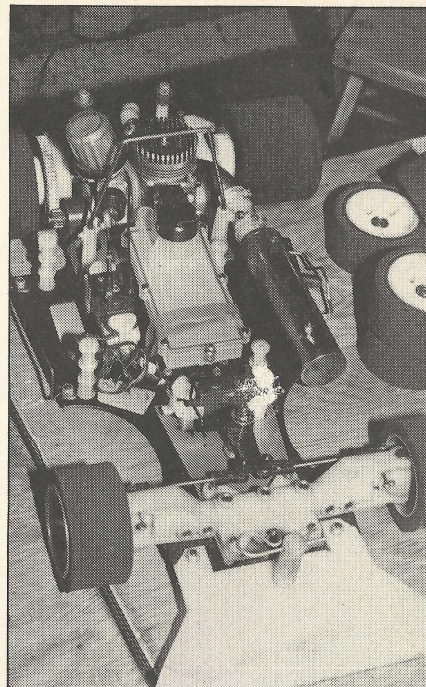
European Champs, Solenau, August 8 and 9

Perhaps a little chastened by their American experience, the UK team duly turned up at Solenau, Austria, to do battle on more familiar terms with fellow EFRA members. Racing was almost certain to be a PB/SG battle with perhaps a little sniping from *Serpent's* top drivers Peter Bervoets and Ronnie Ton. Still undecided about suspension or not, the *Serpent* lads ran one car of each type. No such doubts from SG, 'Monaco VCS' plus STX21 RE80 and *Sanwa* radios were pitted against PB 'Alpha' IS, *Picco* 21 and *JR*. Other European makes were represented, *Mantua*, *Graupner*, *Black Fire*, *Carlsson* and not to be forgotten, our own UK *Team Associated* suspension cars.

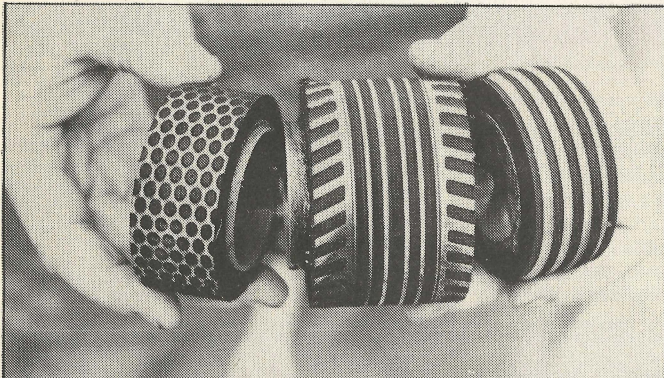
The SG cars are a definite interim stage car featuring a swing axle front end. Almost certainly Franco Sabbatini will unveil a full suspension car for 1982 but for this meeting, the 'Monaco VCS' still proved very competitive. This car is quite sophisticated by flat-bed standards. King pin inclination is adjustable, R/C equipment is shaker

plate mounted and the steering servo is mounted on its own little shaker plate to prevent bump steering. All the SG team cars used the latest version of the RE80 *Super Tigre* with the ST 10mm bore slide carburettor and a new low profile heatsink head. Keith Plested was offered a drive of one of the SG team cars and felt that although it handled nicely, it lacked 'get up and go,' surprising as the car is a little lighter than the 'Alpha' and has only a single stage gear reduction, so one would expect better performance. Gear ratios were for many the key to the Solenau circuit. This 375 yard track is very fast with an incredibly long straight. Under gearing cost many drivers a blown engine. Realisation that the pace was likely to be hectic dawned on Phil Booth and Walt Bailey of *Associated* too late. Their hastily fabricated 'Solenau Sprocket' didn't stand the pace and constant clutch bearing failure cost them both any chance of a final place.

UK drivers had therefore to be content with Phil Greeno's F1 win and the rain-drenched final saw a victory for wet weather master Peter Bervoets with the *Serpent*.



Above right: SG Monaco VCS of Batolomasi not almost mandatory front, mounted mini pipe silencer. Below: moulded tread on Peter Bervoets Euro champs winning rain tyres. Bottom: Kondo of Japan with his Kyosho car at Indianapolis.



World Championship Results

	Car	Engine	Diff	
1. A. Carbonell	USA	Delta Super J	Picco	No
2. E. Tadiello	Italy	SG Monaco VCS	STX21	No
3. K. Kondo	Japan	Kyosho	OS21	No
4. N. Ishihara	Japan	Delta Super J	OPS	No
5. G. Culver	GB	PB Alpha	Picco	Yes
6. R. Batolomasi	Italy	SG Monaco VCS	STX21	No
7. S. White	GB	PB Alpha	Picco	Yes
8. D. Lecat	France	PB Alpha	Picco	Yes
9. P. Bervoets	Holland	Serpent Proto	Picco	Yes
10. R. Burch	USA	Associated	K&B	Yes

FTD Kondo and Steve White.

European Championship Results

Formula

Place	Name	Nat.	Car	Engine	Diff
1.	Phil Greeno	GB	PB Alpha	Picco	Yes
2.	Ermeo Tadiello	I	SG VCS	ST	Yes
3.	Roberto Bartolomasi	I	SG VCS	ST	Yes
4.	Franco Sabbatini	I	SG VCS	ST	Yes
5.	Steve White	GB	PB Alpha	Picco	Yes
6.	Paul Pagdin	GB	PB Alpha	Picco	Yes
7.	Sergio Veronesi	I	SG VCS	ST	Yes
8.	Bob Errington	GB	PB Alpha	Picco	Yes
9.	Alfred Schön	Gr	PB Alpha	OS	Yes
10.	Masse Mares	I	SG VCS	ST	Yes

Sports GT

Place	Name	Nat.	Car	Engine	Diff
1.	Peter Bervoets	NL	Serpent	OS	Yes
2.	Norbert Mayerhoffer	Gr	SG VCS	ST	Yes
3.	Vittoriano Orazi	I	Mantua	OPS	Yes
4.	Gary Culver	GB	PB Alpha	Picco	Yes
5.	Gianfranco Pezzino	I	Mantua	OPS	Yes
6.	Bob Errington	GB	PB Alpha	Picco	Yes
7.	Roberto Bartolomasi	I	SG VCS	ST	Yes
8.	Franco Sabbatini	I	SG VCS	ST	Yes
9.	Phil Greeno	GB	PB Alpha	Picco	Yes
10.	Keith Plested	GB	PB Alpha	Picco	Yes