



# 1:8 Scale Off-Road Euro Champs

LAUSANNE, JUNE 25/26th

DESCRIBED BY  
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BRILLIANT SUNSHINE, thick clouds of dust, rain and the toughest circuit yet experienced by many of the competitors, yet it only took a 12 year old Spaniard, Martiñez, to win through and become the 2nd 1/8th scale I.C. Off-Road European Champion, to the delight of the huge crowd at Lausanne, Switzerland, on June 26th.

Martiñez performance was indeed exceptional, few of the more experienced drivers present had expected that his lack of driving experience would enable him to stand up to the tough hurly-burly of a 40 minute final, but in spite of an obvious and determined effort on the part of several of the Italian team to force him off the circuit, he maintained his self-control and out-drove them all.

The Lausanne circuit has been built by the local club at Chrissier on the outskirts of the city on a piece of rough, level, reclaimed ground and is mainly hard stoney clay. Several artificial humps and dips have been introduced, but the circuit is essentially flat. As was to be expected not a vestige of grass

was present on the surface which was generally covered in a thick layer of loose gravelly dust. The occasional rain storms, and heavy usage of the circuit during the run-up to the race proper and the weekend's racing, gradually eroded the soft spots leaving the harder sections standing, until the main straight became pot-holed to a horrifying extent. To say the resulting circuit was hard on cars is an understatement. For one would not consider racing on that circuit again and I sincerely believe that such arduous conditions will not do the sport any favours in the long term, as few can really afford the damage, or even wear and tear, that such surfaces cause.

Expense was not spared by the works supported teams from France, Italy and Germany. The Italian *Garbo* team having been at the circuit for over a week practising and preparing. *Cipolla* engines were being handed out right, left and centre and judging by the number of *OPS* engines worn out by the Italians during practice, *OPS* are good shares to buy!

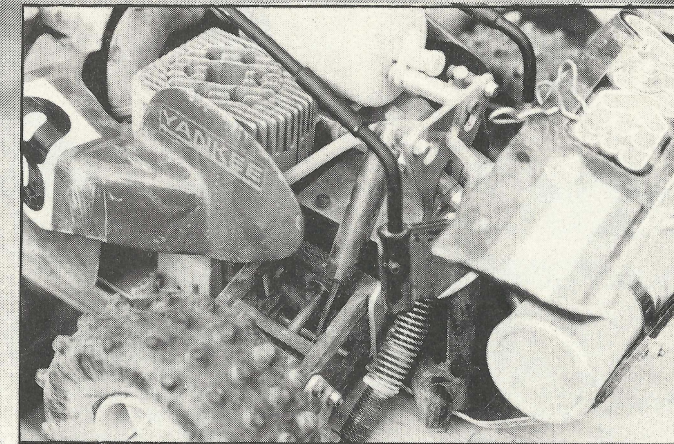
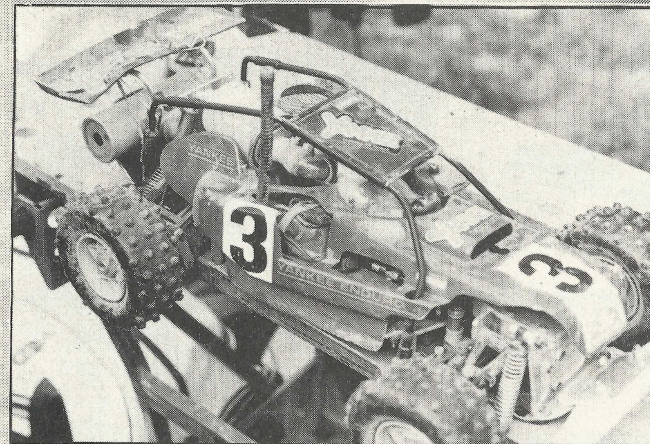


This championship was run under the auspices of EFRA (European Federation Radio Autos) and 12 member nations were represented by 104 drivers, the largest contingents coming from France, Germany and Italy. Allocation of places is based on the known level of interest in the member nations association. UK allocation being six drivers. The UK contingent comprised Alan Brown (*Kyosho* 'Land Jump' 4 x 4), Bill Burkinshaw (*PB* 'Alpha'), Steven Dean (*Yankee* 4 x 4), John Glazbrook (*Kyosho* 'Land Jump' 4 x 4), Steven Marr (*Kyosho* 'Land Jump' 4 x 4) and Gary Marsden (*Yankee* 4 x 4). Of the six, only I had any experience of European Off-Road racing and was the only member of the UK driving a two-wheel drive car (and indeed, one of only three in the competition!)

### Practice and qualifications

All of the UK contingent arrived for a full day of practice on Friday 25th and once the minor problems of carburettor adjustment and tyre selection were overcome, settled down to make an attempt to learn the circuit. Damage rate was high particularly to the more complex *Yankee* 4 x 4s. The *Kyosho* 'Land Jump' surprisingly appearing to suffer less from the spectacular end over end spins and flips, probably because their actual speed on the faster parts of the track was lower.

John Glazbrook had the fastest of the 'Land Jumps' a car which he proudly claims



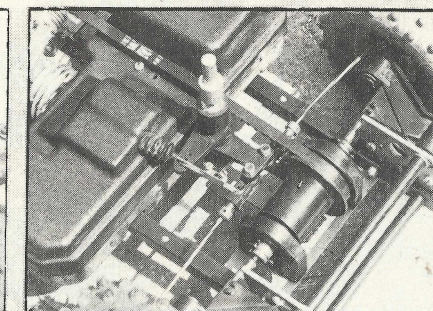
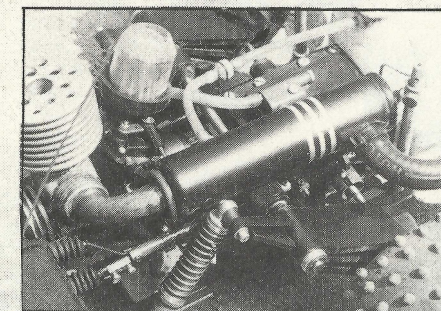
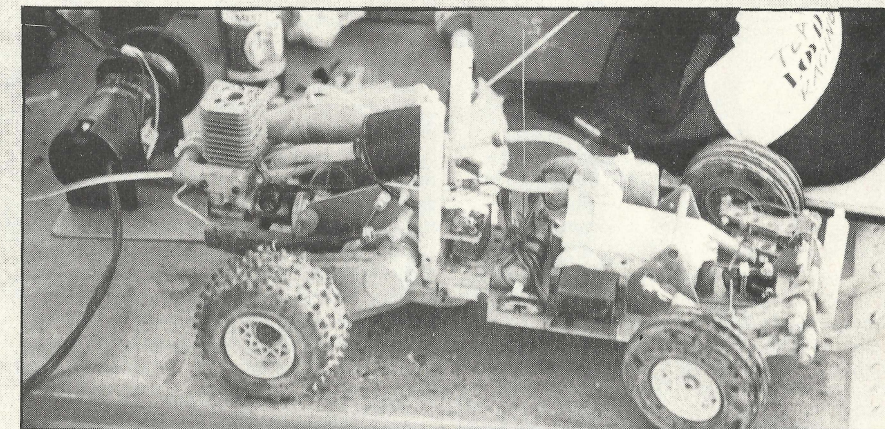
Heading; twelve year old Martinez of Spain wears the laurel wreath of Champion of Europe, what an achievement; Above left and right; Martinez' *Yankee* features modified rear suspension and also note the tiny 'Helicoil' receiver aerial.

has "a whole year's development work put into it". Easily understood when the none-too-obvious detail differences are pointed out. Both Steve and Gary with the *Yankees* suffered badly from wear and breakages and were forced to approach the *Yankee* manufacturers for assistance which, when unforthcoming, was generously provided by the Swedish distributor!

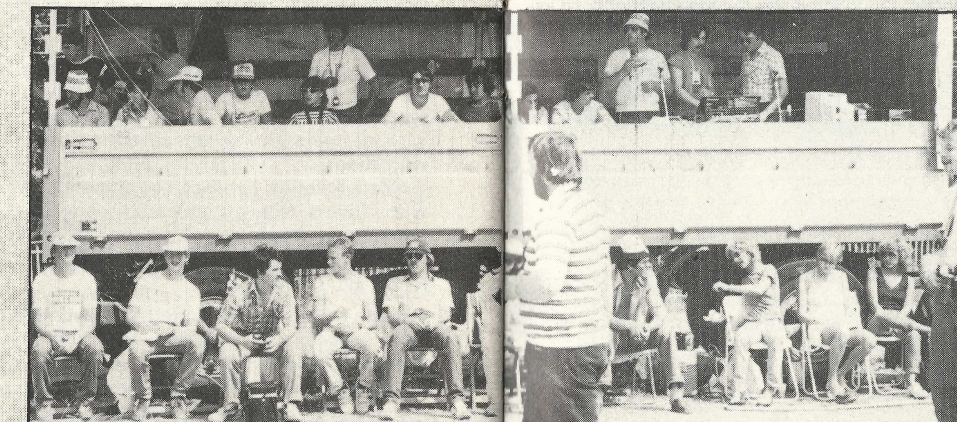
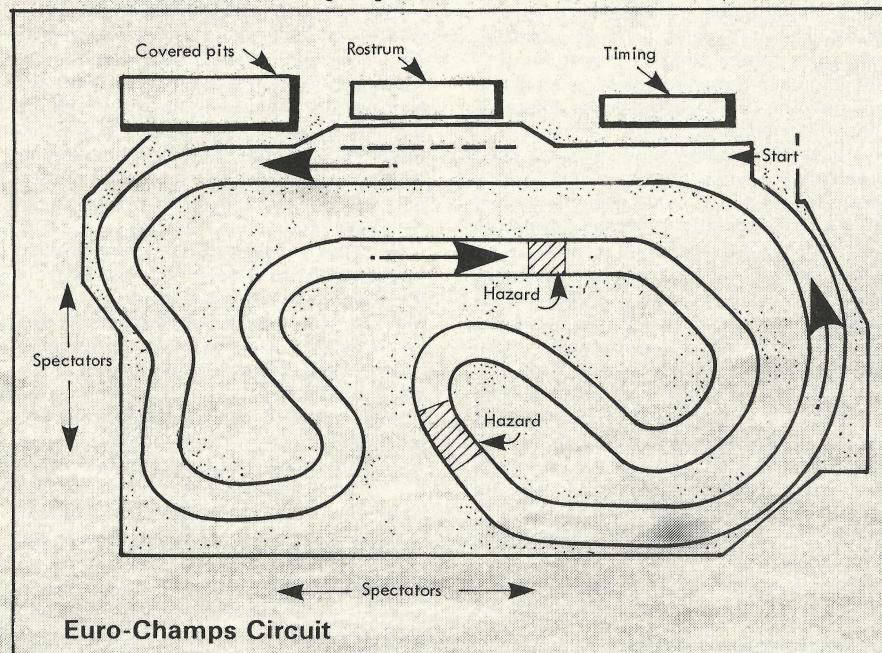
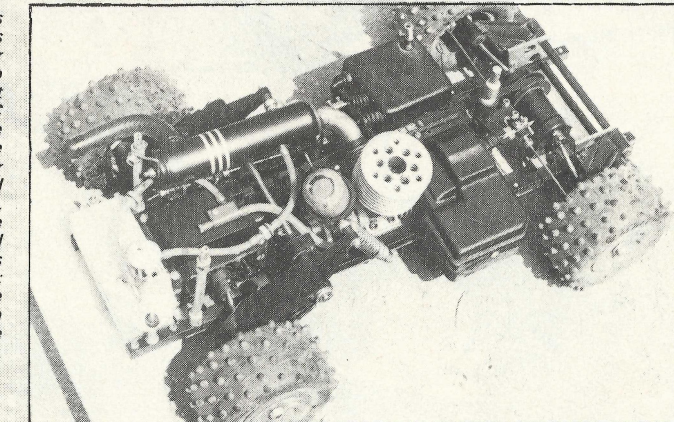
Once the lads had seen the performance put up by the Italian *Garbo* team and the young Spaniard, Martiñez, some glum looks were apparent. As Tony Marsden, Gary's father put it, "we're light years behind, there just isn't any competition like this back home".

Glum looks were not confined to the UK drivers, for with all the might of *Graupner* behind them, the German team of *Kyosho* cars could not match the speed and handling of the *Yankees* and *Garbos*; their frustration was very apparent.

As practice proceeded it was obvious that the enormous lap-length and tough surface were going to spread the cars out very quickly and that even if it could very rarely be called 'racing', results during 5 minute heats would be close. Lap times for the UK drivers ranged from 41-48 seconds whereas for the fast Italians 37 secs. was possible. It was not easy to compare performances, for few, if any, drivers were able to complete more than a single lap in a 5 minute heat without incidents.

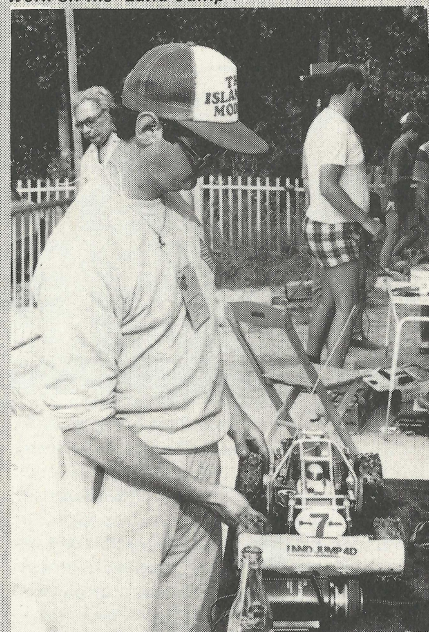


Left; timing was handled by no less than 11 people, 1 per car plus a back up system. Above left and right; new MRC 'Buxy' 4 wheel drive uses toothed belt drive between front and rear wheels. Right; overall view of the 'Buxy', note the angled engine mounting, and several P.B. produced items incorporated. Below; lone 2 wheel drive semi finalist Erwyn Peterson drove the *Tomo Lupus*.





Left: Steve Marr and Gary Marsden await the start of their 1/8 final. Below, Steve Marr at work on his 'Land Jump'.



the step up into the next final disappeared altogether when the 'Land Jump' shed a drive shaft.

Three UK drivers Gary Marsden, Steve Marr and John Glazbrook figured in the 1st 1/8 final, the latter taking the lead straight from the start signal. Gary's engine cut almost immediately losing a vital lap and in his endeavours to make up the lost time, with a car which seemed easily able to do so, flipped over. The R/C switch must have knocked into the 'off' position, and as the marshal didn't see to appreciate the problem, the car ran amuck, eventually destroying the main drive gear from the repeated shocks.

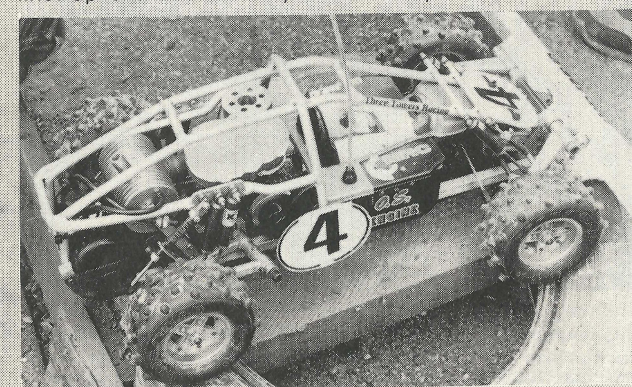
Meanwhile, John Glazbrook was not quite getting the better of one of the faster Germans until his engine appeared to cut. This proved to be a wrong diagnosis for in fact the clutch 'O' ring had broken. During the trials of the more exuberant UK pair, interest in Steven Marr had been eclipsed but, as the last few minutes of the race approached, it was apparent that he was lying in a very strong 4th place contesting 3rd. Just before the end of the race, the second place car's engine cut allowing Steven to capture his necessary 3rd spot.

Last of the UK drivers figuring in this stage of the event, Steve Dean, certainly appeared a lot more composed than he proved to be once on the track. His wife and mechanic Susan was obviously in a very nervous state! Steve proceeded to put on a spectacular display of acrobatics which earned him a special commendation from the organisers, but no third place! During the race Tony Marsden managed to change a Yankee rear drive shaft in little more than three minutes flat.

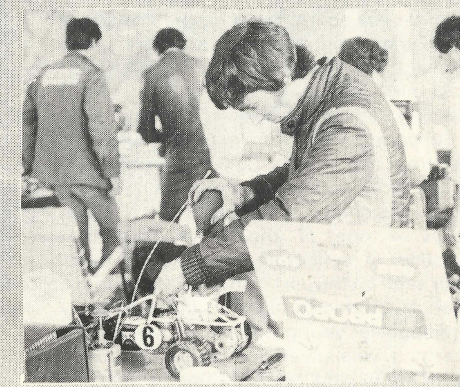
Now that only one UK driver remained in

the competition, interest in the progress of other drivers further up the qualification ladder quickened. In 1/4 final 'B' 1982 Euro Champ Rodriguez of France figured, giving Steve Marr his stiffest competition so far. Uncharacteristically the engine in Steve's immaculately prepared and absolutely standard 'land Jump' stopped. Even with a very quick re-start from Tony Marsden, he was well out of touch. Steve was not the only driver out of luck, Rodriguez stripped the main gear in the Yankee then, after a rapid change, returned to the track only for the engine to cut 30 seconds from the end of the race. Steve Marr's 8th place unfortunately ending all UK hopes of success.

Semi-Final B ran first with ten 4x4 cars lined up for the Le Mans style start. A very



Left: completely standard kit built 'Land Jump' 4x4 very well prepared by Steve Marr who achieved best U.K. placing.



Right: Alan Brown, also a 'Land Jump' driver, qualified but suffered engine cuts in his final.

close race followed. Di Lorenzo (France) leading for most of the distance even pulling out a big enough lead for an engine cut near the end to cost him only one place. A close tussle for 3rd place between Desarmerien (France) and Boulmier (Switzerland) was eventually resolved in Boulmier's favour within seconds of the end. Semi-Final A brought Erwyn Petersen of

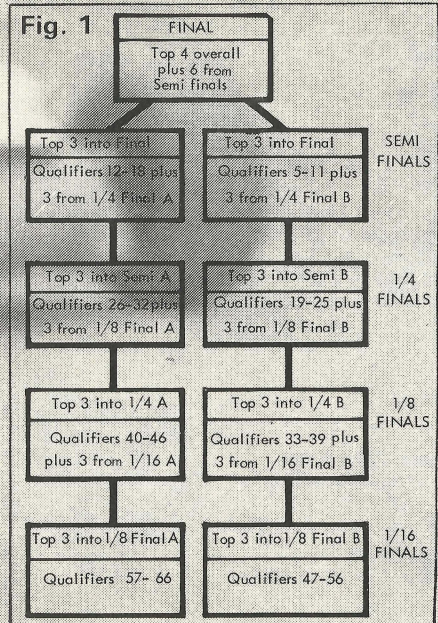
Norway into the limelight as the only driver in the competition to qualify within the top 30 with a two wheel drive car. Very quick reactions and a flamboyant style enabled Petersen to fight his way up to 3rd place by halfway through the Semi, but something broke as he left the track causing the Tomo 'Lupus' to retire. The Semi was won by Lachat (France) followed by Rousseau (France) and Strumpen (Germany) in 2nd and 3rd places respectively.

### Final

As can be seen from the table the Italian made Robbe 'Presto' (Garbo) 4x4 dominated the line-up numerically. Calpista, Constantini and Spongia qualifying 1st, 2nd and 4th overall separated by Martínez, the 12-year-old Spaniard with his Yankee. Three

Frenchmen with Yankees and a lone German 'Land Jump' and Swiss Micro-Racer balanced out the grid.

Following a thorough check on frequencies, and a practice start, the large crowd settled down for an exciting 40 minute final under a blazing sun. The Garbo cars of the Italians had definitely looked the favourites during all of the qualifications and finals ladder, suffering remarkably few mechanical problems and handling very well. In contrast the Yankee of Martínez looked very wild, but very quick. As the flag dropped the first lap developed into a stock car race with Martínez momentarily coming out on top only to have his engine cut as the car flipped over. Probably the flywheel caught a stone, for it didn't miss a beat once re-started for a further 35



Results				Car	Engine	Tyres	
1	P. Martínez	Spain	61	40-35.45	Yankee	Picco 21	Spikes F & R
2	S. Calpista	Italy	60	40-13.00	Garbo	OPS 21	Spikes F & R
3	P. Rousseau	France	59	40-39.75	Yankee	ECM	Spikes F & R
4	H. Strumpen	Germany	55	40-22.25	Land Jump	O.S.	Spikes F & R
5	G. Di Lorenzo	France	55	40-29.40	Yankee	OPS	Spikes F & R
6	X. Lachat	France	52	40-00.00	Yankee	ECM	Spikes F & R
7	D. Boulmier	Switzerland	47	40-14.40	Micro-Racing	Picco	Spikes F & R
8	M. Constantini	Italy	34	40-18.90	Garbo	OPS	Spikes F & R
9	L. Visentini	Italy	25	40-00.00	Garbo	OPS	Spikes F & R
10	D. Spongia	Italy	4	40-00.00	Garbo	OPS	Spikes F & R
29	S. Marr	G.B.	24	20-35.8			
40	S. Dean	G.B.	22	20-11.6			
48	J. Glazbrook	G.B.	13	20-00.00			
??	G. Marsden	G.B.	3	20-00.00			
57	A. Brown	G.B.	15	20-36.8			
72	W. Burkinshaw	G.B.	6	5-07.9			

20 minute final.  
5 minute heat.

Position based on heat qualifying times.

### Heats

Saturday morning started with an overcast sky following overnight rain. The track was damp for the early heats which favoured my PB and in the first heat I produced my best time of the meeting, unhappily not good enough. However, Steven Dean lost a drive shaft during his first run, Gary Marsden finished a moderately good run but both Alan Brown and John Glazbrook had steering linkages break. Only Steven Marr seemed to have a really smooth run putting in a calm steady drive which characterised his performances throughout the whole meeting. Minor problems dogged all six UK drivers but eventually five produced times good enough to qualify for the all important Sunday finals. My own car succumbed to a problem which has occasionally been noted but never to the extent experienced

at Lausanne, that of small stones catching in the rear wheels and locking them up. As the day drew on and the track dried, the wheels became locked almost every other lap. At the end of the four rounds racing, 66 drivers remained in the competition and lived to fight another day.

### Finals Day

With five UK drivers through to the knock-out ladder of the finals, See Fig. 1 serious preparation work continued until the early hours prior to a 9.0 o'clock start on Sunday morning. Heavy rain drenched the circuit during the first 15 minute 1/16 final, but the track had dried a little by the time Alan Brown went out for his race. Alan drove steadily through the early stages of the race holding a comfortable 4th position but soon after his first fuel stop the engine cut. Two more engine cuts followed and fading hopes of the coveted 3rd place needed for

Left and Below: Didier Boulmier (Switz) gained 7th place with the Micro Racing 4 wheel drive. All the internals nicely enclosed with see-through plastic cover.

