

Racing Report

1/12th Euro-Champs

Lewis Eckett and Pete Winton report

AFTER ONE OF the hardest fought qualifying sessions and a very exciting final, Phil Olson won his first major race ever, to become European Champion 1984. Andy Dobson, who led the final for 7¼ minutes was second, and the ever improving Phil Davies third. Top qualifier Christian Kiel suffered from a faulty servo or radio interference, and never figured in the final, coming in last.

Ulm is in the south of Germany, between Stuttgart and Munich, off the A8 motorway. The venue was a large events hall set in a Donauhalle with the circuit laid out in the centre by taping the felt carpet to the floor using double sided tape. This felt was quite thin and followed the line of the floor exactly, making some parts of the circuit very bumpy. There were additional bumps caused by rucking of the carpet and some corners became more difficult than first appearances suggested. The track was marked out with masking tape whilst wooden batons (2 x 1 in.) stopped cars crossing from one lane to another. Corner cutting was positively discouraged by the use of spun aluminium dots about 4in. high and 18in. dia. These were so substantial that they needed no additional support to keep them down and caused havoc if touched, the cars travelling a very long way in the air after hitting a dot. They made the Stafford 'toblerone' markers look inviting.

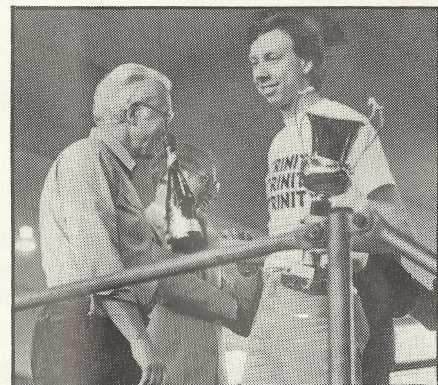
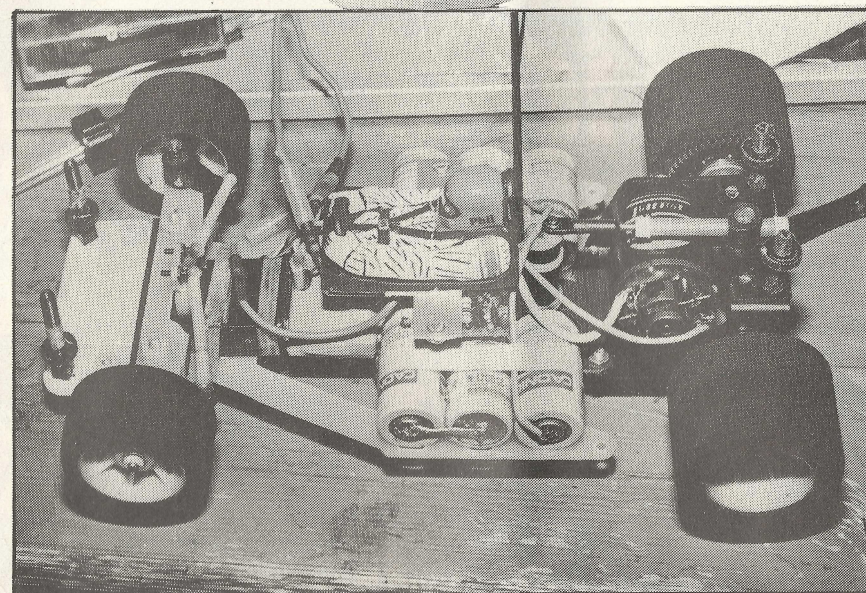
The promised extra practice on Thursday afternoon had not been possible as the track was not laid, so by Thursday evening all the British Team were safely installed in hotels around Ulm. On Friday morning practice started in earnest. Nick Adams had told the BRCA 1/12 Conference last year that EFRA had disallowed the use of wintergreen, but contrary to my and others expectations, wintergreen was in general use throughout the meeting. The smell was not noticeable once you were used to it (like living on a

farm, you don't notice the smell after a while) and had no effect on any of the participants. The British team had a choice of tyre additives from Tractite, TEAC or Wintergreen and additionally free supplies from Dave Towell of an 80/20% Tractite/Wintergreen mix. This was used exclusively by Bill Jones/Jimmy Davis and occasionally by others. A very nice thought by Dave, perhaps we'll see it in use at home particularly as all users had a favourable opinion. The majority of people used Wintergreen, but a variety of other additives in use included Trinity Wintergreen, with a special evaporating agent, a 50/50% Wintergreen/Tractite mix and Rolf Bergen using Polyclens/WD40!. The track was a light pinky red colour, and by the end of Saturday the corners were black with rubber. The blacker they got the higher the grip became and several people had difficulty with this situation. One person who regularly races at three day European events said that the best idea was to use Tractite in this situation as it had less bite. Certainly people using Tractite has less complaint than those using Wintergreen.

Practice was a nightmare for many people, the system was to wait for your peg, and then go on to race. Since the rostrum was at least 7ft. up, a helper was essential to put the car down and keep an eye on it for marshalling purposes. The organisers were only allocating 27MHz and



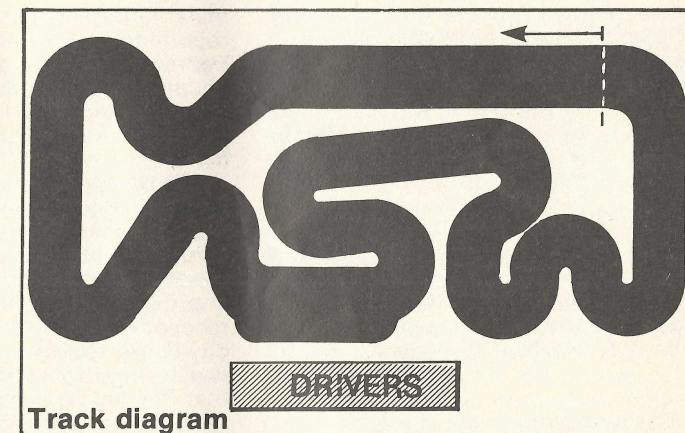
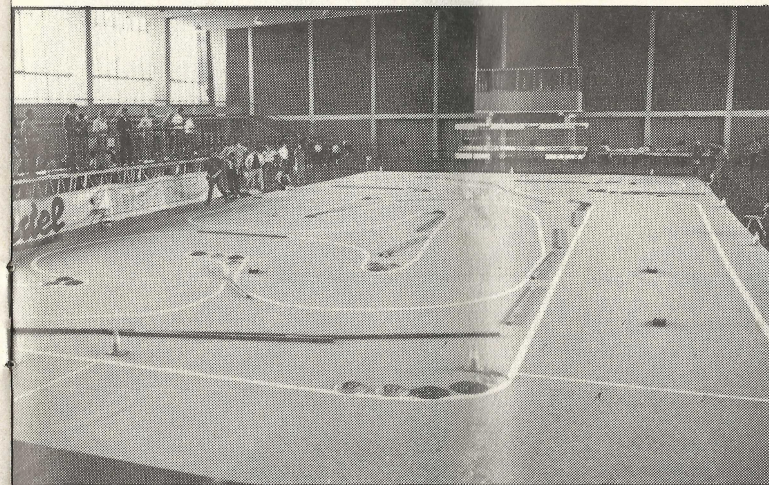
1st place Left; a jubilant Phil Olson clutching the trophy after winning the 1984 European Championship. Below: Phil's Parma 'Panther Euro' car designed by team-mate Chris Arnold.



Above: second place, Andy Dobson wonders just what does it take to be Euro-champ?



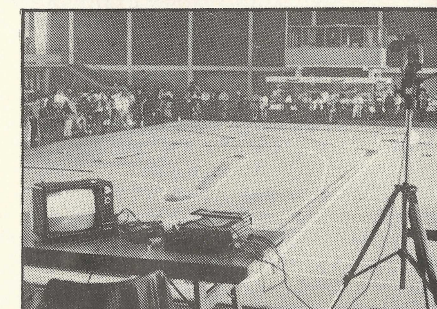
Above: third place, Phil Davies looks pleased after producing the goods when needed most.



Left: the European championship circuit complete with 'sorting the men out from the boys', chicane at the end of the straight.

40MHz wave bands, making over 30 frequencies available. The result was that at any one time at least a dozen people were on the circuit, that figure going up to around 20 or so on many occasions. The record was 27 on the rostrum at one point on Saturday morning making the circuit worse than Hyde Park Corner in the rush hour. There was no point in going out in these circumstances, you could learn nothing about driving the circuit since learning the lines of the corners was impossible, but picking the right time could at least get you a reasonable run. Practice was time for teams to try tyres and chassis set-ups. Most people used old cells and known motors for this exercise, but the less fortunate souls had to wait until controlled practice to get a 'handling' run on their limited quantities of cells and motors.

Controlled practice was not very indicative of the battles to come, the Associated crew looking for more speed, Sping runners selecting awesomely quick motors, Trinity users having blown motor problems and the non-team runners consulting amongst (one another) as to which motor was working best on this or that chassis. The British amateurs found best results with some triple



Above: video camera set-up to record jump starts. Replaying the action decided categorically what penalties were applied.

Trinity and Free!" They had every reason to want one as they were extremely quick.

Qualifying

After a day and a half of practicing, the time came to get down to business. Round one was the first test and when the lists were posted it was obvious that this was going to be very close racing indeed, Andy Dobson and Wayne Davis were already in trouble down in 98th and 101st place due to mechanical failures. At the top was Christian Keil, the young German Champion (35-10.2). Followed by José Rosas (35-14.7). The first British driver was in third place — Phil Davies (34-0.4) and then came Jean Michele Fraisse. Placings changed considerably in round two. Andy Dobson had to change speed controller to eliminate any potential problems that had caused a motor burn out in heat one. Jimmy Davis was re-adjusting his 12iS to the circuit conditions having tried the new suspension front end and not found it to his liking. Micky Booth was quite happy with his heat and consulting Reedy on more

turn motors, although the teams, Associated and Trinity used various winds, double turn motors looked a good compromise between high rpm and low down torque until the special cells started to appear. Mike Reedy's (Associated) triple turn 'white dot' motors were then in great demand and he seemed to have an inexhaustible supply!

Ernie Provetti (Trinity) was issuing a small quantity of motors to his selected runners, and they were also in demand. "People only know four English words" he said; "Yes, No,

Driver	Chassis	Motor	Ni-Cads	Servo	Speed Cont.	Body	Front	Tyres Rear	Tx Rx	880gms Min. Weight	Tyre Size (R)	Gear Ratio	Ultimate Ratio	Tyre Additive
Phil Olson	GB Parma Panther	Parma Yoko Ferrari Double	Parma Sanyo Wind OC	Futaba FD30M	Laser Special	Parma Osella	Parma Medium	Parma Medium	Futaba 2M Futaba	882g	52mm	11.48	37.44	Wintergreen Tractite (50/50)
Andy Dobson	GB Schumacher C Car	Trinity G Wind	Trinity Matched Sanyo OC	Novak	Laser Special	Alpha Track TOJ	T. Tyres 07	T. Tyres 07	Futaba Futaba	883g	48mm	13.50	39.21	Trinity Wintergreen
Phil Davies	GB Schumacher C Car	M.G.	Trinity Matched Sanyo OA	Novak	Laser Turbo	Alpha Track Skee	T. Tyres 07	T. Tyres 07	JRFM JRFM	915g	53mm	12.48	41.63	Tractite
José Rosas	F Associated 12i	Trinity Triple Wind	Sanyo OC	Novak	Demon 2 CeS	Associated TOJ	Associated Green	Associated Green/Med	Sanwa Sanwa	903g	52mm	12.48	40.84	Tractite
Rolf Bergen	NL Delta Phaser	Parma Yokomo	Sanyo ND	Novak	Resistor	Associated TOJ	Delta B	Delta B	Kraft S/Wheel Novak	882g	50mm	10.48	32.73	Polyclens WD40
Jimmy Davis	GB Associated 12iS	Reedy Triple 24g 27 turn	Associated Sanyo ND	Novak	Demon 2CeS	Associated TOJ	Associated Green	Associated Green	Futaba Futaba	925g	52mm	11.46	42.62	Dave Towell 80/20 mix
Finn Gjersee	DK Schumacher C Car	Trinity Double Wind	Trinity Matched Sanyo OC	Novak	TM-DK Electronic	TOJ	T. Tyres 07	T. Tyres 07	Futaba Futaba	890g	51mm	13.50	41.66	Trinity
Christian Kiel	D Associated 12iS	Reedy White DOT, Triple 25 Turn	Associated Sanyo ND	Novak	Resistor	Associated TOJ	Associated Green	Associated Green	Futaba Novak	890g	52mm	11.46	39.07	Wintergreen

Racing Report

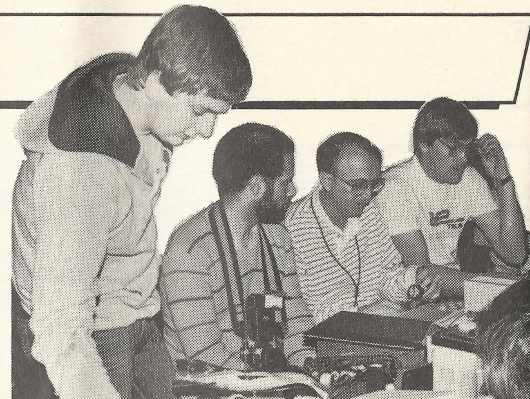
power. Round two was the last racing of a long Saturday and after all the heats were completed, the top twenty were:

Keil	35-1.2	Peglar	34-7.9
Dobson	35-7.4	Roem	34-8.0
Klier	35-10.1	Davis	34-8.8
Rosas	35-14.7	Bulck	34-9.4
Davies	34-0.4	Davis	34-12.6
Marchi	34-4.1	Gjersoe	34-12.9
Fraisse	34-4.2	Benson	34-13.9
Olson	34-5.2	Sterr	34-14.8
Booth	34-5.6	Adams	34-14.9
Pipe	34-6.3	Bergen	34-15.3

On Sunday morning it was a case of carry on where they left off, Round three started at nine o'clock and once again Christian Keil was the man who set the pits buzzing with the first 36 lapper of the event (36-5.4). This certainly sent everyone looking for that all important motor/cell combination. Meanwhile Phil Olson drove a storming heat, but was blocked on his last few laps so only recorded 34-0.5, very close to 35 laps. Life, however, was not so bright for others in the British team. Those without team backup were finding that motors that flew round in practice went like dogs in the timed heats. Some motors previously

mate hard for a good placing, recording 34-5.7 for 17th fastest. Pehrsson (*Associated/Sping*) made his mark for seventh place in heat 11 (35-13.4) and heat 12 was of great interest to see if Dobson could regain his 'sit-out' place. That he failed by over five laps seemed to spur on heats 13 and 14. Les Pipe (*Schumacher/Trinity*) (34-0.8) and Jimmy Davies (*Associated/Reedy*) (35-10.6) had a terrific race, their times improving them to 11th and 6th place respectively. By the last heat of the day Gerry Goldberg of team *Parma* was losing hair by the second hoping that Phil would keep his second fastest place. Finn Gjersoe (*Schumacher/Trinity*) and Klier (*Associated/Reedy*) were the pace setters in heat 14, but failed to break 35 laps, even though Gjersoe recorded his fastest time (34-2.4).

A look at the listing after round four showed that Glynn Peglar and Tony Wells has been bumped out of a place in the semis by the late charges of Chris Arnold and Pehrsson. Chris Arnold failed to realise this fact and drove into Ulm to fetch a *McDonalds* for the Parma team, reappearing only 12 minutes before the start of his semi, he nevertheless still made it to the line. The route to the final was clear. The



Above: Model Cars correspondent, Pete Winton (centre, left) gets the low-down from Mike Reedy on the *Associated* story. Jimmy Davis can't believe his eyes.

winners of each semi went through to join the top two qualifiers followed by the next four fastest from both semi-finals.

Semi-Finals

Semi-Final A was an Andy Dobson benefit for most of the way, until he was caught by José Rosas of France on the last lap. Andy made a mistake on a dot and José was through, only for Andy to retake the lead when Rosas faltered two corners before the finish. It was a slow final, only the first two breaking 35 laps. Chris Arnold had made a good start and looked capable of going all the way until uncharacteristic mistakes began to creep in (must have been the 'Big Mac').

Results

Semi-Final A

Pos.	Name	Nat.	Laps
1	A. Dobson	UK	35/490.6
2	J. Rosas	F	35/495.0
3	H. Klier	DL	34/484.7
4	H. Carstens	DK	34/486.9
5	L. Pipe	UK	34/488.6
6	C. Arnold	UK	34/489.7
7	M. Marchi	I	34/491.2
8	H. Pehrsson		34/498.9

Semi-Final B

Pos.	Name	Nat.	Laps
1	J. Davis	UK	35/483.7
2	R. Bergen	NL	35/483.9
3	P. Davies	UK	35/489.9
4	F. Gjersoe	DK	35/495.5
5	R. Roem	NL	33/491.9
6	J. M. Fraisse	F	32/482.2
7	W. Davis	UK	32/491.9
8	M. Booth	UK	3/47.9

Semi-Final B was both faster and closer. Throughout the race Jimmy Davis, Rolf Bergen and Phil Davies were within striking distance of each other, but Jimmy was across the line first and straight through to the final. The next three, Davies, Bergen and Gjersoe, all got 35 laps and subsequent qualification for the final. Micky Booth, up until then the

current Euro Champ. suffered disaster as his speed controller stuck in reverse after only three laps. A truly saddening end to his weekend.

The main event

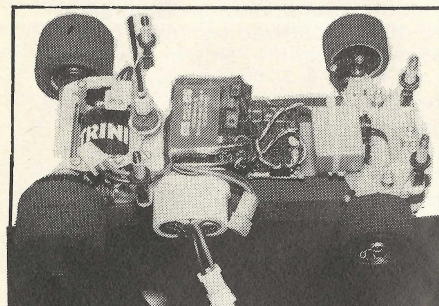
There was drama before the final when a loud bang was heard in the hall which immediately drew a large crowd to the *Associated* pit. Jimmy Davis' cells had vented so much that the heat shrink exploded. There was no damage to the cells, but a second pack was installed to be on the safe side. Then when the cars came to the line, Phil Olson and Andy Dobson suffered interference due to the organisers not asking Andy to change frequencies! As a result Andy's car punched itself into a wooden barrier and was rushed off for damage inspection.

So, at just after 6-15 p.m., 57 hours after the first car started practice the eight best drivers lined up for the start of the final. At the horn it was Andy Dobson who shot through the chicane first and into a lead which he stretched to 3/4 of a lap by halfway. Behind him Phil Davies came out of the seven-car pile-up first and took up station in second.

Christian Keil suffered radio interference or a faulty servo after

seven laps, his car performing violent pirouettes every time it approached his end of the drivers' rostrum, so that was his lot. When the problem cleared he put in a string of sub-13 1/2 second laps to confirm his status as the fastest man of the meeting. Meanwhile, Phil Olson was closing on the leading two whilst Jimmy Davis made two mistakes early on to end his challenge. Thinking that he was going to have to beat Keil, Andy's car was geared to find the extra lap he thought necessary. As it turned out Keil was out of it and Andy's cells marginal. So on the penultimate lap, as Andy started to slow Phil Olson kept his nerve to close the gap.

Andy's car was by now painfully slow and the gap was only a matter of yards. Phil Davies made a slight error of judgement with a back marker and the seconds lost were enough to only allow him third place. Phil Olson swept by Andy a few feet before the finish line and as Andy passed the line the hooter went leaving only these two drivers to finish the last lap. Phil with volts to spare drove carefully around the circuit to win the 1984 European Championship. At the end he looked on the point of collapse, leaning on the rostrum rail with head in hands.



Above: just one of the numerous products on show, this speed controller is produced by CS Electronic from Germany.

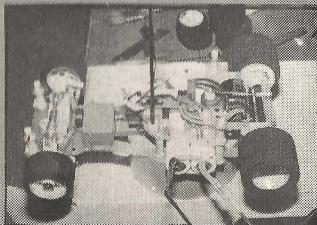
rejected were re-substituted and flew round like rocketships, a very odd phenomenon which was without explanation. There was no qualifying list posted at the end of round three, so people were trying to work out their positions from the round two list and the round three heat times. The top two qualifiers go straight through to the final, the next 16 fight it out in two semi-finals for the remaining six final places.

In round four, heat 2 the first of a number of last ditch attempts was paying off. Rolf Bergen (*Delta* chassis, *Sping* motor) knocked 15 seconds off his round two time for tenth fastest (34-0.2). Heat seven had Phil Olson (*Parma/Parma*) driving beautifully for 35-5.9 to take the second 'sit-out' spot from Andy Dobson (*Schumacher/Trinity*). Three heats later Chris Arnold (*Parma/Parma*) was chasing his team

Chassis talk

A fair cross section of manufacturers' marques were in evidence which still goes to show that a choice is available. As far as 'Teams' were concerned, these can be divided into three basic categories, 'Professionals', 'Expert/Enthusiasts' and 'Also Rans'.

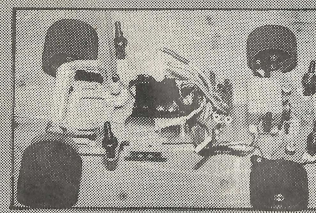
Of the professional we immediately focus on *Associated*, whose philosophy seems to be "here is the problem, let's throw money at it". Mike Reedy had made the trip to supply his 'super selected' drivers with the best in motors and cells. He tried to spend most of his time with the following drivers, Jimmy and Wayne Davis, Micky Booth, Henrik Carstens, Christian Kiel and to a lesser extent Bill Jones, Marco de Marchi (Italy) and Tony Wells. Basically though, if you ran an *Associated* car you were entitled to a Reedy motor and Mike was prepared to give them out. The new *Associated* sprung front end also featured on a fair few cars, but some drivers reverted back



to their standard set-up. Cells also played a major part in the fight for first place. *Associated* cells were issued in General Electric style heat shrink to confuse and psyche out the opposition. However a sneak look under the shrink wrap revealed the ubiquitous Sanyos (O.C's). Despite their rank professionalism, the *Associated* crowd were an extremely likeable and friendly lot.

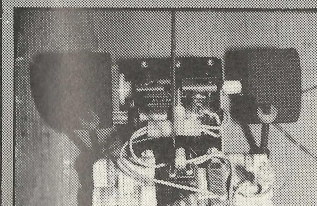
Team Trinity in the shape (or bulk) of Ernie Provetti had joined forces with the *Schumacher* concern to beat the *Associated* machine. The percentage of top billing should be accorded thus; 20% Trinity, 20% Schumacher, 60% Andy Dobson. At this type of meeting, after this much practice the high grip available certainly caused the *Schumacher* cars problems. The 'C-Car' tended to judder into the corners and once committed tended to search for the correct line. The emphasis on winning had been firmly placed on Andy Dobson's shoulders to the detriment of his team mates, Les Pipe and Phil Davies. Amazingly Phil didn't get a crack with a Trinity motor until he had qualified for the semi-final. Other drivers under the Trinity banner were Finn Gjersoe of Denmark who had changed from Parma to Schumacher in readiness for

this event, he started to go well once his car had been set-up properly by a non-team British representative. Up till then help from Team Schumacher had not been forthcoming. Ernie also supplied the latest grade of Sanyo cells and these were used for one run only, a new pack being issued for each heat.



Moving down the list and *Team Parma*, the main constituents of which were Phil Olson, Chris Arnold and Fred Hatfield. Fred had only joined the team weeks beforehand, as a result no car other than Bud Barto's latest prototype was available to him. Fred duly tried the car and then proceeded to butcher it with hacksaw, file and scalpel (and not necessarily in that order) until he was partially happy with its performance. As work on the car proceeded - Fred's heat times proceeded to drop, until a last ditch time in the fourth round arrested the slide. Chris and Phil however were both using Chris Arnold chassis to good effect, this particular set-up places the

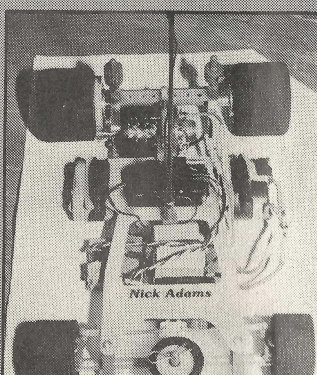
cells much closer together to give a lower roll tendency. These cars were not only stable but also quick due to Parma 'Yokomo' and 'Pulsar' motors released by Buddy Bartos. On the cells front problems were encountered in finding the necessary quality. In fact Gerry Goldberg paid money to various sources for



stocks of new, but unselected Sanyo Ni-Cads. The Parma team attitude to winning was clear, "we know it works, let's use it." In the event they were proved correct.

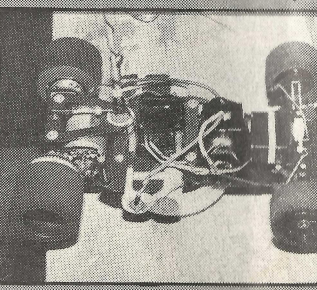
Demon Cars featured well, numerically, but less so out on the track. Once again the high grip quotient adversely affected the 'MF83' Cars despite the full length shaker plate fitted to their cars.

Unfortunately for team *Demon* they did not possess the driver to overcome the problem



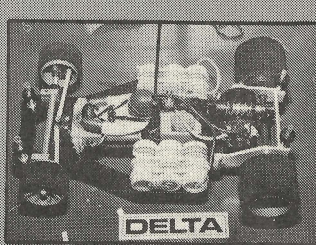
although Andy Benson looked set for a fast time until a violent shunt 'tweaked' his car out of the semi-final.

Alan Blakeman, proprietor, manufacturer and distributor of *Alpha Track Parts* Products once again provided the only



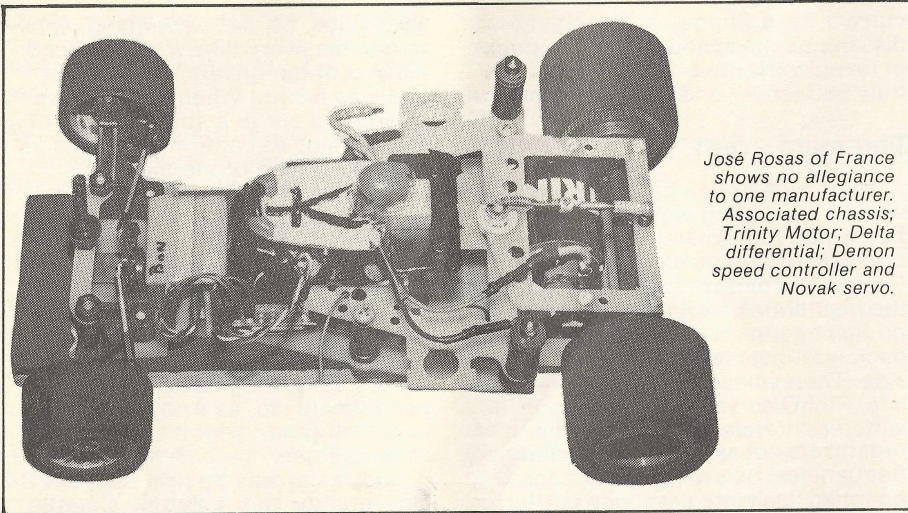
challenge with his carbon fibre 'Omega' chassis. His car looked super smooth on the circuit and his low qualifying was only the result of bad luck and a bad heat. It is almost certain that Alan will be recruiting new drivers into the fold as a result of some drivers chassis dissatisfaction at this event. Bodyshells seemed to be Alan's main business, particularly the new 'Sckee' which was used by many of the British drivers.

Delta drivers, although few in number made up for it with speed and quality. Rolf Bergen qualified for the semi and then the final with as standard a 'Phaser' as you ever likely to see. Hans Hippe fellow



countryman and team mate fared less well although was phenomenally fast on the straight bits. Hippe's car also sported a prototype transistor, Delta electronic speed controller plus a rear anti-sway device to stop the car from rolling.

Racing Report



José Rosas of France shows no allegiance to one manufacturer. Associated chassis; Trinity Motor; Delta differential; Demon speed controller and Novak servo.

Gerry Goldberg, Parma team manager and Buddy Bartos were jumping up and down with unabashed glee.

The race was an extremely close one, Phil only managed to win by seconds; if he had not failed to catch Andy before the hooter the results would have been reversed.

Spare a thought too for Andy who once again came so close to victory.

Phil was congratulated by almost everyone present and still looked slightly dazed as the prize-giving ceremony began. Trophies were awarded to the top 18 with Gold Medals for all the finalists plus the essential champagne for the winner.

And so ended three days of well organised and friendly racing of the highest order. High praise must go to the race organiser, Heiner Martin and his army of efficient volunteers. The only problem was that every day the programme ran late, but since we had nowhere else to go, that hardly mattered. They had two computers to count lap scores as well as a manual

push-button system, plus an excellent P.A. and even a video camera to record the false starts for those dispute-free penalties!

There is no doubt that the Continentals are getting quicker. We were the biggest contingent (21), 17 of whom were in the top 50 (of 106). We had eight of the top 18 and took first, second and third. The competition was friendly, but very tough. To see the *Associated* and *Trinity* machines in action at close quarters was very interesting. *Associated's* Mike Reedy spent hours setting up cars and issuing motors to his selected runners. Basically he did not allow the really fast motors to be run until drivers had their cars set up properly. From then on he used his experience of European events to interpret the feedback from his drivers before selecting which motors and cells to run. It was all to no avail. The *Associated* chassis looked nervous in the corners, Keil being the only runner to set a really smooth flowing style which well earned Mike

Reedy's praise. It seemed that the new independent front end was helping only slightly in this respect, but since Keil and Booth *can* make it work, comment must be withheld to see how things develop.

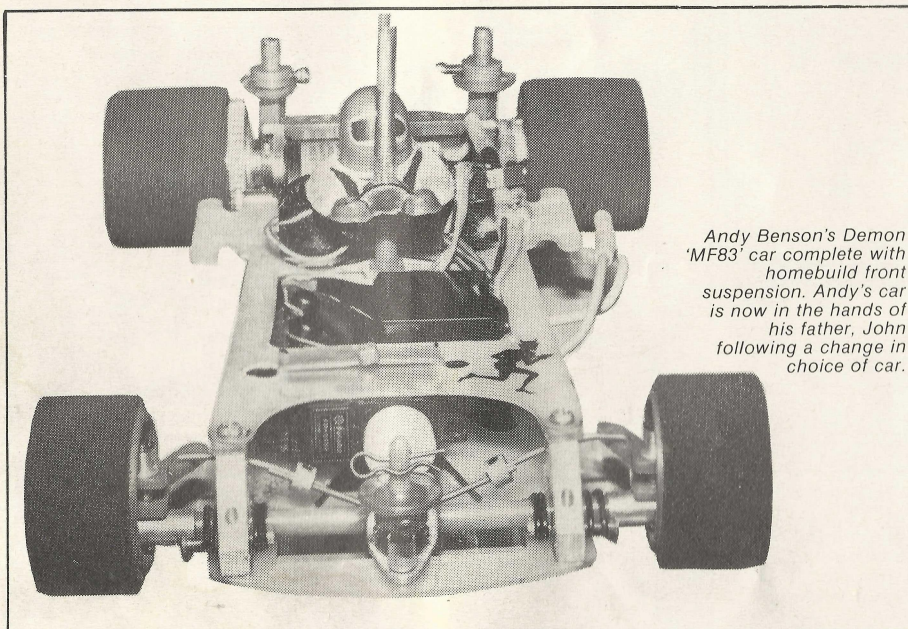
Ernie Provetti (Mr. *Trinity*) was a completely different style. He rushed hither and thither to get reaction from his drivers and seemed to be unsure of what the ultimate ratio meant. *Associated* use new tyres every time, so the gear ratios can be selected in advance. When you use tyres, two or three times as do team *Schumacher* they wear and thus the ratio which was right on 53mm tyres is wrong on 50mm. When Mike Reedy realised all his pre-planned ratios were falling 15/20 seconds short on duration he ordered the team tyres reduced by 1mm or so on diameter to give the required results. Ernie Provetti had the problem off pat by Sunday, maybe we even taught the Americans something! As for equipment in use I can give no hard facts. With 106 people present, 85 of whom were complete strangers, it was very difficult to find exactly what was in use. I found:

- 26 *Associated* 12is,
- 26 *Schumacher*,
- 10 *Demons*,
- 8 *Deltas*,
- 3 *Parmas*,
- 1 AYK (Delta copy),
- 1 *Associated* 12e (really!).

Finally one four wheel drive *Kyosho* machine plus Paul Hobbs' *Schumon* or *Demacher* combo. Paul was fairly embarrassed by the 4WD machine, having reviewed the thing and given it a moderate pasting, the intrepid Herr Lawenhack, using a *Kyosho* '480T' motor no less, proceeded to hurl it round one lap faster than Paul and qualified 18 places higher. Ah well, it's all in the preparation, eh Paul?

And so what of the result? As far as chassis' go it was unrepresentative of current 1/12th racing. As far as driving goes Phil drove a superb race, his attitude to the whole event was singleminded and he tactfully spurned unwanted advice, choosing to do his own thing. This might be the break-through he needs to put him into that exclusive club of U.K. National winners. It was a fairytale come true for Gerry Goldberg who was still grinning a week later! Well done Phil, congrats *Parma* who, compared to the *Associated* machine won the event on a shoe-string.

The last words must go to the last place man. Cyril Boyd who came by air from Ireland, their only representative. He was the only competitor in his hotel and had to pay £45 for a taxi from the airport to the venue on his own. He was the most personable man but having come all that way he finished dead last, still smiling. Nice one Cyril!!



Andy Benson's Demon 'MF83' car complete with homebuilt front suspension. Andy's car is now in the hands of his father, John following a change in choice of car.