

CATS GET THE CREAM

Way back last year when Cecil Schumacher first introduced the 'CAT' onto the unsuspecting racing scene the question arose as to how on earth the Northamptonshire based company could possibly get either of their two star team drivers into the British team for the 1987 World Championships.

At the time someone jokingly suspected that either of the two, Andy Dobson or Phil Davies, should become European Buggy Champion just to bolster their hopes of selection for the events planned in August.

Well 'Dobbo' effectively ruled himself out of the equation by going to work for *Parma* in the States but 'Dangerous' Davies obviously took the advice to heart as his brilliant win at this year's event has shown.

After last year's defeat at the hands of continental opposition British forces were fully mobilised to once again assert our supremacy in European competition. However gone are the days when the A-final list read like a 'who's who' of UK talent. These days the French, Italians and German drivers are every bit as good using some of the most advanced equipment available. This makes for tense, exciting and extremely close racing which, if you think about it, is how it should be.

This year's event was hosted by the EMAC Club — Vienna, Australia at what has to be one of the most picturesque locations yet encountered for a

George Land reports on the 1/10th

Buggy Euros

Hosted by EMAC in Vienna

radio control car race. The town of Portsach was the actual location with the circuit situated overlooking the River Worthersee.

Portsach itself is a notable tourist resort with a strong emphasis on water sports. The event organiser, Paul Srna, assured himself of a full entry for these championships by the brilliant masterstroke of including a tourist brochure in the information package. Pictures of topless sunbathers obviously enjoying themselves immensely is one way to ensure a full entry and perhaps explains the strong British presence in Portsach!



advantage as the organising club altered the circuit design during the two events to avoid the worst of the damage caused by the international race.

The grass surface gradually became eroded under the passage of high-powered four wheel drive cars and quickly regressed to dust, particularly on the corners. This however did not detract from the enjoyment of a fast, open circuit which absolutely begged for horsepower. Open did not necessarily mean simple however and some sections proved a problem for many. The side closest to the river for instance sloped away to provide a marked adverse camber to the corners. The main straight had been positioned at the farthest point away from the drivers' rostrum which again caused problems for overtaking due to the foreshortening effect. This was only overcome when the organisers decided to widen the straight. Track markings were also a welcome change with no heavy, chassis-bending barriers to worry about. Plastic drainpipes formed the majority of the markings with corrugated pipe sections on the corners. The drivers' rostrum, specially built by the local tourist organisation, was plenty big enough and gave an excellent elevated view of the circuit.

Good race organisation is never remembered because everyone is concentrating on the racing and not on the facilities. So it was here with two AMB automatic lap

counting systems (what was life like before AMB?) to avoid any lap-counting disputes plus pit facilities that included everything the EFRA rulebook demands.

Another thing that only gets a comment when it is bad is the weather, when it is dry and warm nobody says a word! However just to make the Brits feel at home the heavens did manage to provide one afternoon of rain — how kind!

International 1/10th scale Grand Prix

Up to this point the 'fastest driver in Europe' tag just had to belong to our very own Glyn Pegler following two decisive wins in both the British and French Grand Prix. Making it three out of three is a tall order but in Austria Glyn displayed all the qualities necessary to do just that. Confidence, coolness and the ability to withstand pressure all ensured that the

man behind *Lazer* products would win and in the process post a track record that would not even be repeated all week. Glyn's 17 laps in the fourth round of qualifying put him psychologically ahead of the rest of the field team led by team *Parma* driver, Pete Stevens.

The main battle of qualifying developed between the British and Germans with four and six drivers in the A-final respectively. Two of those four British drivers sported names unfamiliar to readers of BRCA National race reports. Both Alan Woolidge (I think he drives for *Aeronautical Models*) and young Carl Buckingham from *Radioactive Models* in Chelmsford proved that nobody should be shy of entering top class competitions.

In the final however it was Glyn all the way, winning all three and in the process posting a second, 17 lap time to put him over a whole lap faster overall than second place.

If ever there was a tonic for the forthcoming major attraction then this had to be it for Glyn, although the fact that the field would be substantially strengthened for the European Championship proper couldn't have been far from his mind.

Top left: action from the main final. Bottom left: start line up in front of the rostrum. Above and right: Phil Davies with his winning car and trophy.

1/12th scale International Grand Prix

Mid-week racing activity centred on a covered tennis court for the 1/12th scale International Grand Prix. The usual carpet surface was defined using wood markers and plastic bot-dots.

The entry for this race was a lowish 32 but if quality was the major factor then you didn't have to look any further than the recently crowned European Champion, Christian Keil of Germany. Christian didn't get it all his own way however as his second place in qualifying clearly indicates. Marti Fließbach put one over the new Euro-champ by taking FTD.

Pete Stevens would have made it into the 'A' had it not been for a disastrous last qualifying run which totalled his car after a high speed collision with the German referee's foot! Alan Woolidge (not quite sure

— but I'm reasonably sure he drives for *Aeronautical Models*) once again found himself well up with the top British drivers whilst veteran 1/12th driver Bill Jones resurrected his *Associated* '12i' chassis' for himself and wife Carol to run. They loved it!

In the end Christian Keil's pedigree shone through and he beat the rest of the German-dominated A-final field to take first place overall.

Back to the main event

Apart from the 1/12th GP the Thursday also heralded the arrival of the main contingent of British drivers on the 24 hour long overland coach trip. This now swelled the numbers to 25 UK drivers complete with friends, parents, mechanics, girlfriends, boyfriends(!?) and son on.

By the this time a great number of the continental entry had also arrived from all over Europe to set up camp in Portsach. The list of nationalities in attendance read as follows:

Britain	France
Italy	Germany
Austria	Finland
Sweden	Belgium
Switzerland	

The first four on the above list were by far the strongest teams with no other country making it into the top twenty.

Cars

These European Championships were a triumph for Cecil Schumacher with by far the largest number of cars in use. The actual breakdown of driver choice went something like this.

- 35 Schumacher 'CATs'
- 24 Kyosho 'Optima' (seven belt drive, 17 chain)
- 22 PB 'Mini-Mustang'
- 9 TAG 'Coyote'
- 10 Tamiya
- 3 Associated 'RC10' (2WD)
- 3 Yankee 'Electra'
- 1 Kyosho 'Ultima' (2WD)

1 MRC (4WD prototype)
1 scratchbuilt

1 RC10 with 'CAT' transmission This shows graphically how much Cecil's much-maligned car has now become accepted by a vast majority of top drivers as the only way to compete at this level. Having said that however *Kyosho* 'Optimas' are still a favourite choice particularly in the light of recent developments from the factory.

Back with the 'CAT' however and the bulk of drivers seemed to opt for the long-wheelbase (geriatric) version using the standard UK set-up of wider front-end and anti-squat rear suspension. The advantage of the 'CAT' is that is tremendously quick in a straight line thanks to its highly efficient transmission. Just to get that little bit more 64DP gears were to be found on a great number of cars. Handling wise the long-wheelbase CAT is much better than the original short configuration. With handling and a super efficient transmission the 'CAT' is a hard act to beat particularly with the calibre of driver currently using the car. The likes of Glyn Pegler, Pete Stevens, Phil Davies and Jamie Booth are proof of this. Interestingly Jamie was the only A-final driver to use the short chassis although in an unguarded moment he reflected that 'going long' might have been a better bet after all.

The choice of shock absorbers for 'CAT' drivers was strictly limited to kit types, *Brimrod*, *Option House* and *Associated*. Ball differentials at the front or one-way drive shafts (or both) were as much a personal choice. 'CAT' tyres were almost universal wear.

Kyosho 'Optima'

The 'Optima' is still considered by many to be the best handling car currently available and second place in the popularity polls proves the point.

At last year's European Championships British drivers

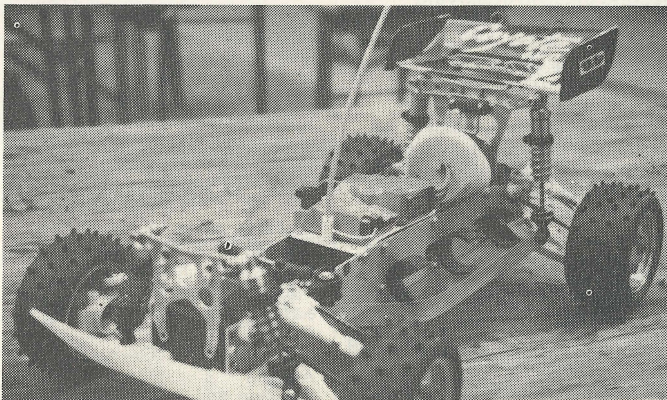
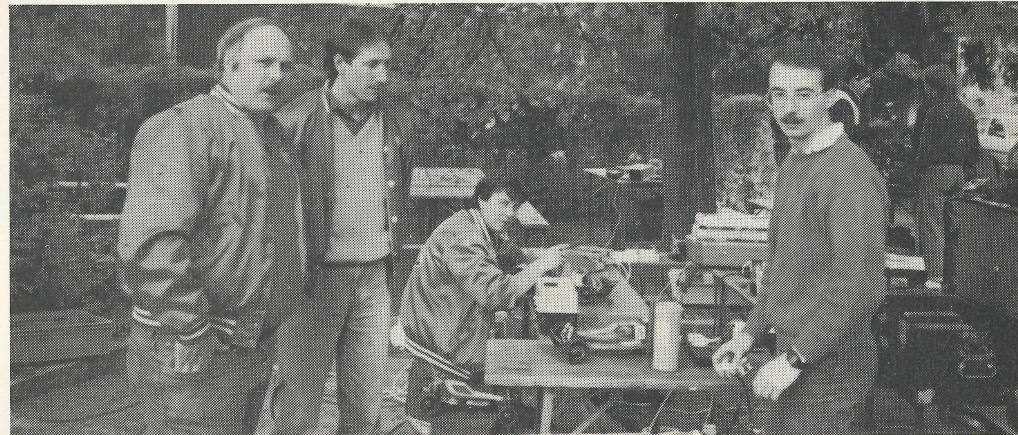


were disconcerted to find cars belonging to the French 'Drastic Racing' team sporting a variety of hitherto unseen *Option House* tune-up parts. This time the French along with the Germans (Drastic and MIH respectively) did it again with belt drive conversions sent direct from *Kyosho* in Japan. To say that the noses of several well known UK drivers were put slightly out of joint is something of an understatement.

The 'Drastic' drivers definitely had the head start with the cars of defending Euro-champ Jose Rosas, Denis Blandin and Jean Michel Fraisse all built and ready to go. Their suspension set-up stayed with the *Parma* system of upright shocks although using the *Option House* type. Their cars were undoubtedly the best handling of the field and this improved with the introduction of anti-squat by raising the leading edge of the rear wishbones.

Speed-wise the cars were noticeably quicker than the standard chain driven variety which has to be good news for 'Optima' owners particularly as the whole thing will come as a conversion kit. The conversion will also contain ball differentials. Also new from *Option House* was an interesting undertray complete with a moulded in wing section said to give some semblance of ground effect! Most drivers will find it more useful for keeping the dirt out of the chassis.

No doubt UK drivers will be asking some very interesting questions of the British *Kyosho* importers like "where the hell is it?" Fortunately the depth of friendship between some of our drivers (the *Parma* team in particular) and the French 'Drastic' racers that some spares for the conversion returned to Britain for concentrated testing before the World Champs.



PB 'Mini-Mustang'

For followers of the 'Mustang's' progress at these championships the news is no news. Very little change has taken place with the car although the driver line-up is, to say the least, quite different!

Stephen Haynes found himself at the top of the 'Mustang' pecking order finally ending up twelfth overall and just missing the A-final. Behind him team drivers from Sapienta (Austria), Eicker (Germany) and Leader (France) made up the middle order.

TAG 'Coyote'

The majority of you will recognise this car as the SG 'Coyote' imported into the UK by Phil Greeno Models. TAG are the actual manufacturers however and in the meantime between last year's event and this have come up with some useful changes to a car which was quite frankly well wide of the mark.

To boost their chances TAG had recruited two drivers for this event. Italy's Umberto Pernice held FTD in 1986 this time he surprised all the pundits

by taking second fastest time with the 'Coyote.' Along with team mate Marco de Marchi and some welcome horsepower from *Mustard* motors (Italian again) their performance was noted with increasing interest.

Option House shocks, new shock locations, revised wishbones and stronger gears have all contributed to produce a car worthy of mention.

Tamiya

It was a problem recognising some of these cars underneath the modifications. Although there certainly were some *Tamiya* bits in there somewhere!

Yankee

With only three cars in attendance the *Yankee* team were up against it. Their main chance lay in the hands (or thumbs) of Frederic Veysere the reigning one eighth scale rallycross World Champion.

Veysere's drive took him to eleventh place overall after picking up some *Parma* Horsepower at the beginning of the quarter final. The *Electra* looked much better than

previous outings. Rumour has it that a belt drive versions is scheduled for release.

Prototypes

Model Motor Sports' interesting and highly effective 'RC10/CAT' hybrid debuted in international competition in the hands of Steve West.

MRC of France also had a prototype belt-drive four wheel drive car running although this took the form of a transmission system married to 'Optima' suspension for pure test purposes. MRC's intention is to test the car in top competition to see how it holds up, so far things have been going pretty well and we may see cars before the end of the year.

Horsepower, horsepower - my kingdom for some horsepower

At this sort of event everyone is on the lookout for any motor that satisfies the three basic criteria. Awesome speed, plenty of duration and above all Kudos. There is nothing to beat the acquisition of a 'team' motor no matter how indifferent. If it has got a label on it then it's OK to use - just make sure everyone sees it.

The main labels in use belonged to *Parma*, *Reedy* and *MIH* with several other names thrown in for good measure. The aforementioned *Mustard*, plus *SRM Twister*, *MG* and the occasional *Kyosho* all added to the fun of guessing who was using what. Of course for some drivers you didn't need to choose simply because they didn't have a choice.

The *Drastic* team however used anything that worked whilst the Germans favoured the *MIH* 'Masterblaster.' This *Yokomo* based motor produced

some impressively smooth power to fuel the rumours that they contained cobalt magnets. As a fact this was quite obviously rubbish.

Parma motors were in much use with some of the German and Austrian drivers in particular liking the 'Super Sprint' and 'Oval Winds.'

Reedy once again produced the winning motor - so what's new?

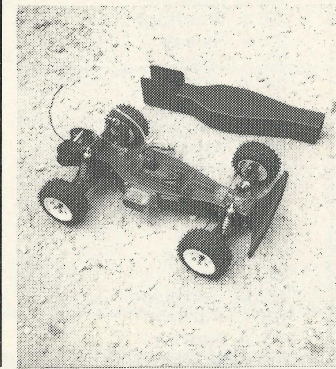
Praise be to Sanyo

Does anyone use anything except *Sanyo Ni-Cads*? Well maybe not but there is an interesting argument as to the relative merits of 'SC's' or 'SC's.'

Whatever the pro's and con's of each the situation at these championships was a fairly even spread between the two. What is obvious is that care and attention in the preparation and maintenance of your cells at this level, or any level come to that, is essential.

Also there are plenty of good cells about but unfortunately

Top left: Team Parma at work, with Phil 'Dangerous' Davis on the prowl. Far left: the TAG 'Coyote' cars seen in Austria. Below: one piece carbon chassis for the 'Optima.' Below: another TAG 'Coyote' with many improvements on the old car.



their owners may not realise it!

Glyn Pegler's *Lazer* matching service is fast becoming the leading force in cell technology for model car racing applications. This obviously begs the question - "is he keeping the best for himself?" The answer is a qualified maybe! There is no doubt that Glyn has good cells but equally so there is no doubt that Glyn is driving extremely well at the moment. The key difference is that when Glyn puts a particular pack of cells in his car, he KNOWS exactly what they are going to do. Others should try to emulate that knowledge.

So what's new?

How about an alloy 'CAT' chassis set for a mere £50?

PK Racing Products are the manufacturers of the item in question which looked very nice, stiffened up the chassis no end but begged the question - "is it worth it?" Bill Jones used it and Bill Jones did very well - is there a connection?

The ultimate in designer radio systems was on show in the *Drastic* pit area. The *Sanwa* 'EXERD' twin-stick system in question belonged to Jose Rosas who must have spent more time letting other people use it than he did himself. The system in true designer fashion was completely black including the aerial and incorporated enough features even the most ardent gadget freak happy. Notable functions indeed a built-in stopwatch which begins its programmed countdown at the first press of the throttle and then beeps when the time is up. Also some novel electronic pushbutton servo trim controls which allows easy fine tuning during the race.

Frequencies ranged from 25 to 75MHz. At one stage during practice there were at least 32 cars on the circuit.

Qualifying

As mentioned previously the organisers elected to change the circuit subtly in order to avoid the worst of the track erosion caused by the Grand Prix (see diagram). With a great deal of the grass worn away the circuit was now slower in terms of lap times compared to the beginning of the week.

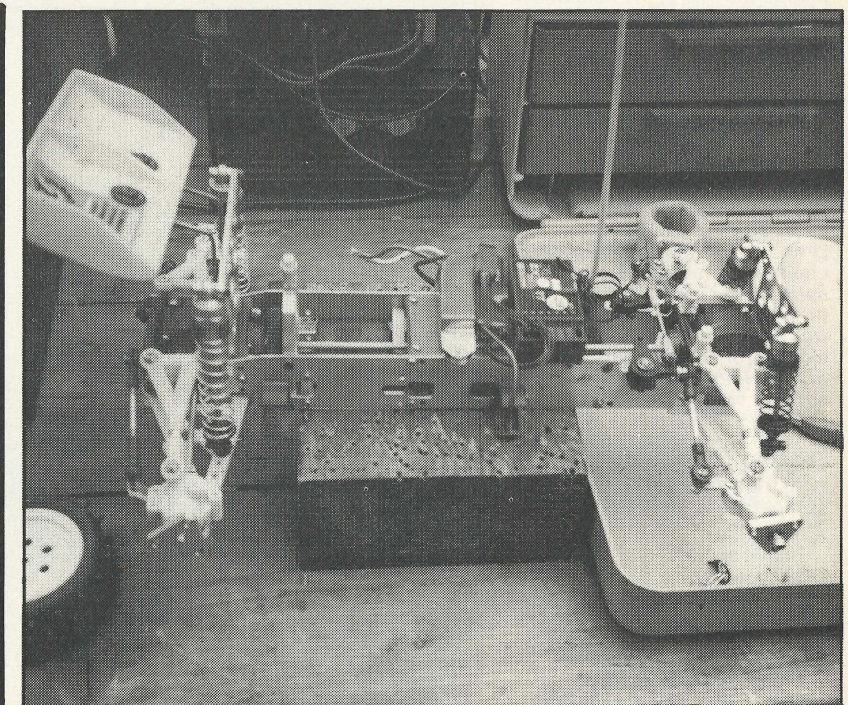
Practice began in heat formation with the grading of driver ability calculated from 1986. Five rounds of heats would determine the drivers' positions in the ensuing knockout series of finals. For the top four drivers in qualifying the situation would be slightly more relaxed as they would automatically progress straight into the final.

Qualifying was an interesting pattern of driver movement up and down the order. At the top end things became quite quickly established with drivers battling for high positions in the finals. The track began to cut up early on and this should have made the early heats most important. In actual fact this was not the case as Phil Davies proved by setting an FTD of 16 laps 5: 17.2 in the third round of heats. Jamie Booth also set 16 lappers in all of his last three runs.

Semi-final places found some white knuckle drives from a few big names most notable being Jose Rosas with a slow 16 in the last round. Only 12 drivers out of 110 scored the magic 16 laps whilst the rest of the field made do with fast 15's or worse.

Only 82 drivers qualified through to the finals and from there on it would be a case of being one of the top three drivers in each to continue up the scale. For Semi-finalists the agony of having to go to a sudden death qualifier must have been awful. So near and yet so far.

Name	Country	Car	Diff 'F'	Diff 'R'	Drive	Tyre F	Tyre R	Speed control	Shocks	Battery	Motor & gear ratio	Radio	Qual. Pos.	Final Pos.	Time
P. Davies	GB	CAT XL	Ball + 1 w drive	Ball	Belt	CAT 3 row H	CAT 4 row H	Schumacher F only	CAT	Schumacher Custom SCR	Reedy Silver	Futaba 2LGX	1st	1st	31 laps 10.25.9
G. Peglar	GB	CAT XL	Ball + 1 w shafts	Ball	Belt	CAT 3 row H	CAT 4 row H	Laser F only	CAT	Laser SCR	Twister 12.60	Futaba 3EGX	6th	2nd	30 laps 10.5.5
J. Booth	GB	CAT Short	Ball + 1 w shaft	Ball	Belt	CAT 3 row H	CAT 4 row H	Demon FXR	Associated	Demon SC	Reedy Gold	Futaba 2LGX	3rd	3rd	30 laps 29.12.0
J. Rosas	F	Optima (belt)	Ball + 1 w hubs	Ball	Belt	CAT 3 row H	Option House	CS Rocket	Option House	Drastic Sanyo SC	Reedy Red Dot	Sanwa Exerd	7th	4th	30 laps 10.22.0
S. Kaske	D	CAT XL	Ball + 1 w drive	Ball	Belt	Dynamite	CAT H 4 row	Domeyer	CAT	Schumacher Custom SCR	Master 15.58	Robbe	10th	5th	30 laps 10.25.2
S. Oberle	D	CAT XL	Ball + 1 w shaft	Ball	Belt	3 row Cat H	CAT 4 row H	CS Rocket	CAT	CS SCR	LRD Blue Spot	Multiplex	8th	6th	30 laps 10.25.3
P. Stevens	GB	CAT XL	Ball + 1 w shaft	Ball	Belt	3 row CAT H	4 row CAT H	Laser F only	CAT	Laser Selected Parma	Parma Spring 14.60	Futaba 3EGX	6th	7th	30 laps 10.35.4
U. Pernice	I	TAG Coyote	Gear 1 w hubs	Gear	Shaft	3 row CAT H	4 row CAT H	CSF X R	Option House	CS SCR	Mustang 11.50	Multiplex	2nd	8th	29 laps 10.32.8
C. Sterr	D	CAT XL	Ball	Ball	Belt	3 row CAT H	4 row CAT H	CS Rocket	CAT	CS SCR 14.50	LRP Blue wheel	Futaba Steering	4th	9th	29 laps 10.34.0
D. Blandin	D	Optima (belt)	Ball	Ball	Belt	Hot Shot	Option House	PK	Option House	Drastic Sanyo SC	Mustang Yoko 24.8.0	Sanwa	9th	10th	28 laps 10.07.2



1/32

U. Dormer
A. Schuhle
M. Bjorkman
P. Debusscher
L. Bogaert
O. Pedersen
A. Schmitzer
P. Garbi
L. Tagiauni
G. Bechler

1/16

P. Smith
G. Bohdanowicz
M. Ferguson
J. P. Glasse
S. Pazolt
Solaroli
S. Bluhl
U. Dorner
L. Tagiavini
P. Garbi

1/8

I. Littley
P. Vercaigne
N. Athanasiou
P. Siller
Cia
V. Salo
A. Falbl
Solaroli
G. Bohdanowicz
P. Smith

1/4

F. Veysseyre
R. Weiss
M. Bridges
J. Metz
K. Wilhelm
A. Woolidge
H. Wendy
Solaroli
I. Littley
N. Athanasiou

Semi

G. Peglar
S. Oberle
I. Oddie
S. Kaske
O. Ganss
C. Drescher
H. Helbing
F. Veysseyre
M. Bridges
A. Woolidge

A final

P. Davis
U. Pernice
J. Booth
C. Sterr
P. Stevens
G. Peglar
J. Rosas
S. Oberle
D. Blandin
S. Kaske

1/32

M. Podiwinisky
N. Edlund
K. Blears
J. Pedersen
P. Corval
H. Bohz
C. Lindner
G. Baumgartner
S. Becker
A. Lutz

1/16

P. De Carro
P. Gerreboo
Spongia
K. Obrecht
F. Avril
Milanesi
M. Selner
K. Blears
M. Podiwinisky
G. Baumgartner

1/8

S. West
M. Langridge
N. Stringfellow
A. Marchi
G. Baumgartner
D. McLarney
S. Fuhrmann
P. De Carro
F. Avril
K. Blears

1/4

T. Peter
M. De Marco
R. Isherwood
R. Mildner
D. Harris
S. Haynes
A. Schmiedeberg
M. Langridge
P. De Carro
S. Fuhrmann

Semi

J. M. Fraise
P. Stevens
S. Kohler
J. Rosas
S. Newey
D. Blandin
B. Jones
S. Haynes
R. Isherwood
M. De Marchi

Great drives from British drivers included Ian Oddie (10th), Steve Newey (13th), Craig Drescher (16th), Alan Woolidge (did someone say he drives for *Aeronautical Models*?) and Bill Jones who seems to relish European competition. Bill qualified 17th just one place inside the semi. Others not so highly placed included Nino Athanasiou (yes he is English) who had to make it from the quarter final), Richard Isherwood, Stevie Haynes and Kevin Blears.

A close look at the finals series shows the movement of drivers up the order. Those highlighted are the movers.

Finals

Final 1

Phil Davies' 16 lapper was the most careful factor of the entire three race series. By being the only driver to score such he placed the rest of the field under immense pressure. Phil made most use of his pole position to stay ahead of the field until things had calmed down somewhat.

Glyn Peglar fought hard to get on terms and came extremely close to a 16 lap time himself.

Other drivers were less successful, particularly Umberto Pernice whose car was clearly in trouble and led to some extremely wild driving on his part. This was no excuse for this but there was even less excuse for certain British drivers who weren't good enough to get into the final anyway to cheer his mistakes. It is a bad attitude and not one welcomed in what had been until then a friendly competition.

A final 2

In this second final Jamie Booth got the drop on Phil and raced off into the distance only to reappear when he came to lap the back markers. Glyn Peglar strengthened his position by coming second and ahead of Phil but the latter's one

lap advantage stood as the target to beat.

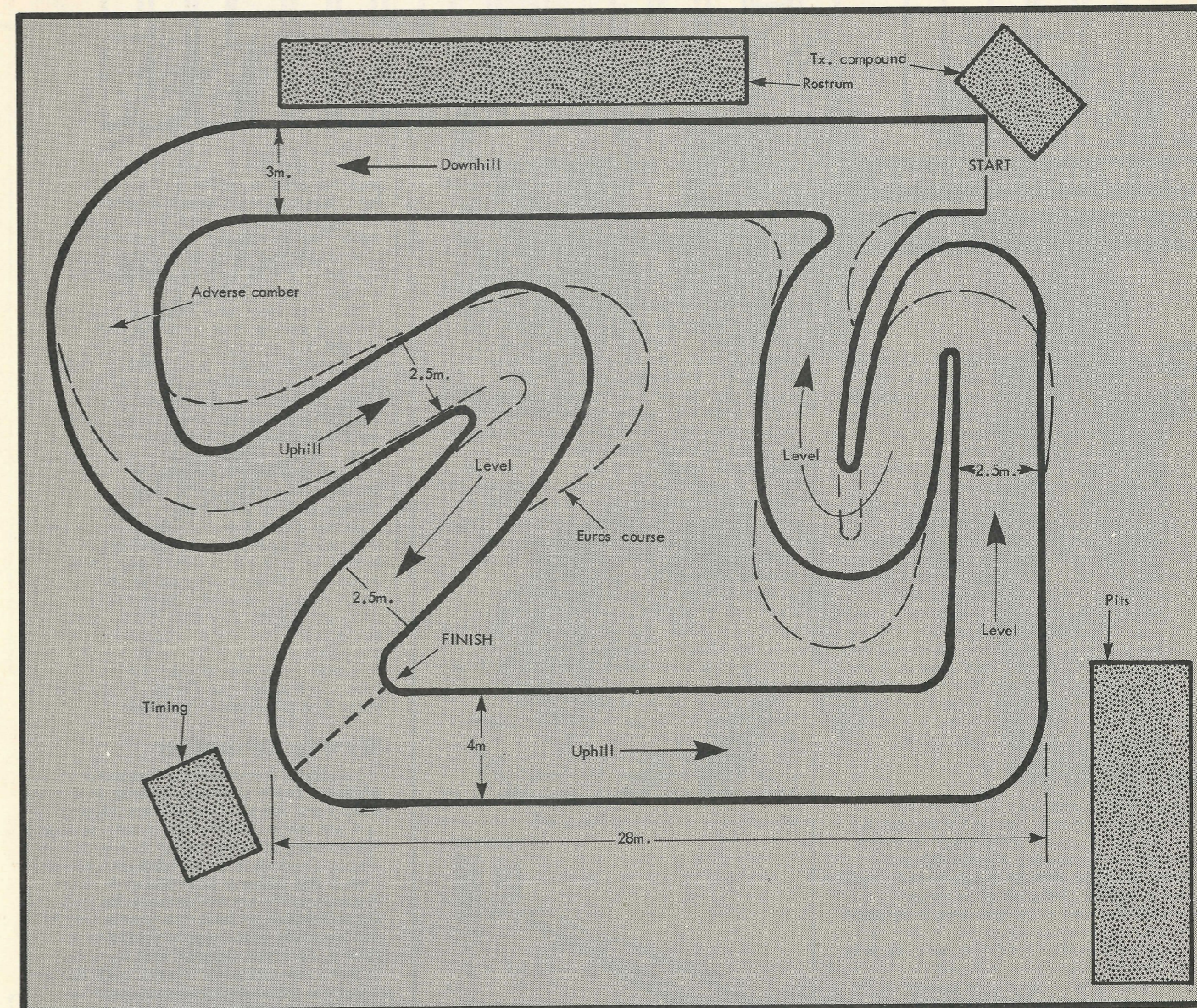
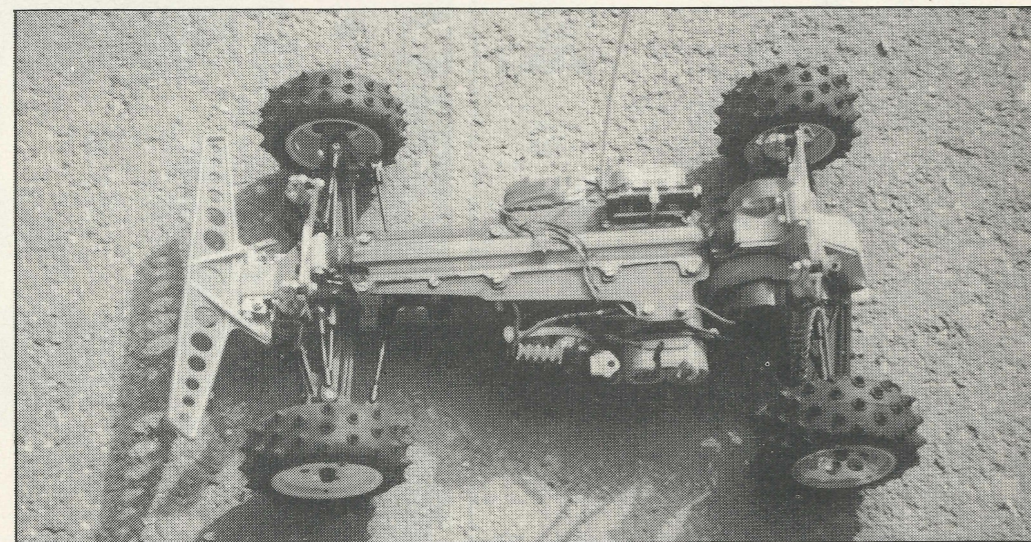
A final 3

This time it was Glyn's turn to get the start and he raced away knowing that a 16 lap win would be the only sure way of securing the championship. Phil Davies suffered a crippling blow early on when he popped a balljoint. Fortunately he made it to the straight where the British spectators were placed and repairs were quickly administered. This left him with a seemingly impossible task; to get close enough to Glyn and keep his championship hopes alive. His drive through the field to do just that was truly remarkable. Luck came into it but Phil's driving was the overriding factor. He even managed to get past Jamie Booth who was holding down second place which is no mean feat at any time. This brought him within four seconds of Glyn who in turn was only two seconds away from a 16 lapper. That's how it finished with Phil Davies taking the title by the slimmest of margins.

Prize giving followed where the organisers were bemused to

British positions

1. P. Davis
2. G. Peglar
3. J. Booth
7. P. Stevens
12. S. Haynes
16. M. Bridges
17. R. Isherwood
18. C. Drescher
20. A. Woolidge
21. S. Newey
23. I. Oddie
24. W. Jones
26. I. Littley
32. M. Langridge
36. N. Athanasiou
38. D. Harris
39. D. McLarney
40. N. Stringfellow
41. S. West
47. K. Blears
52. P. Smith
65. M. Ferguson
103. C. Formby
105. A. Newton
110. I. McLarney



find Phil being presented astride a Greek donkey (Nino) they were even further amazed when his British team mates showed their respect for the new European Champion by throwing him into the lake. Phil, ever the gentleman, took this in good faith and even threw himself back in for the benefit of those who managed to capture the event on film.

Conclusions

These Euro's were a clear indication that competition amongst the top nations has really hotted up. It now remains to be seen whether or not this translates into a hard challenge for the World Championships scheduled for August. We in Britain now have the equipment and the drivers to make a very good showing at Romsey. It will be interesting particularly as the likes of *Kyosho* are taking a very keen interest.

Unfortunately Phil Davies will only be attending as a spectator there is no guaranteed place for the European Champion and Phil has not qualified for the British team.