

1987 EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

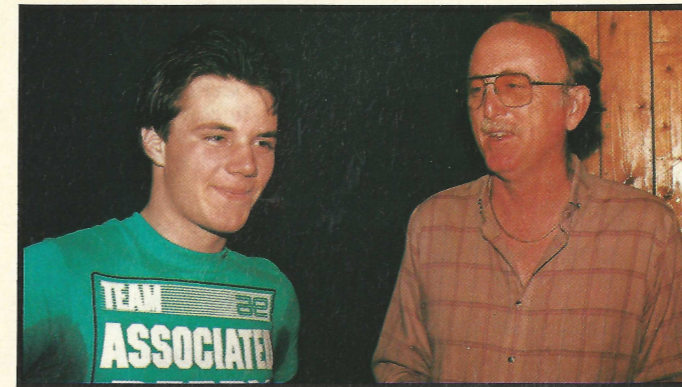
This years event was hosted by the Model Racing Car Club of Creteil, the venue being the Gymnase du Palais at the University, situated to the south-east of Paris. With some countries unable to fill their allocations Britain was able to send 21 drivers (or pilotes) as they say in France and after three days racing on a circuit marked out with angle iron and bot dots, a Pilots Licence might have been more of an advantage than EFRA one. The British team which also included George Land of Parma and Mick Langridge who was the Team Manager was infact the second largest team after the French, with drivers also present from Germany, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, Finland, Holland, Italy, Sweden and Switzerland.

Our party consisted of myself, Jim Spencer, Greg Cutler, Ian Spashett, Keith Helmke, Rob Roy, Mark Barford, Pete Riley, Mark Jewitt, John and Matthew Ford, Frank and Tim Dakin all travelled over to France on the Thursday morning from Newhaven to Dieppe, for once the crossing being extremely smooth. Once in France the fun really started with our car being held back at customs and eventually being completely searched. After a delay of a good hour our little convoy headed for Paris and the 'much talked about' Boulevard Peripheric; Paris's eight lane ring road. After a few detours around the suburbs we finally found it and promptly joined in with the evening rush hour, that was until Frank Dakin's Firenza decided to take a rest on the hard shoulder. After a brief rest the Firenza thought we'd try again and finally we found our way to the

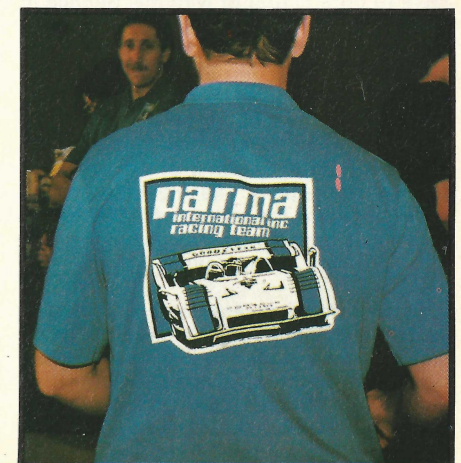


The trophies were on display during the racing.

hall. The circuit that greeted us was made up of four double width layers of carpet, two rolls of light blue and two rolls of dark blue giving a circuit approximately 15m by 35m. As said before it was marked out with angle iron and bot dots which although a completely different method of marking to that used in Holland the year before, was once again going to provide an extremely



Above, the concours entries. Left, the winning combination, Christian Keil left, and Mike Reedy. Below left to right, Phil Davies, Matt Ford and who is this in the Team Parma shirt? Is it Pete "Cakie" Winton, or could it be Juan Hu Noze?



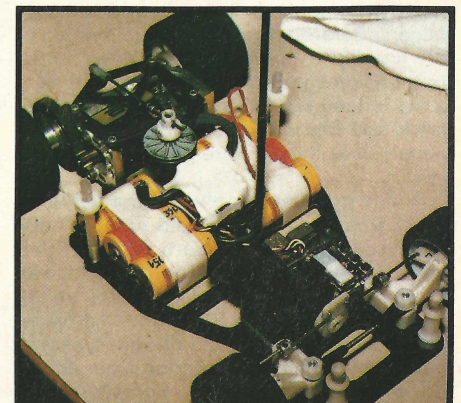
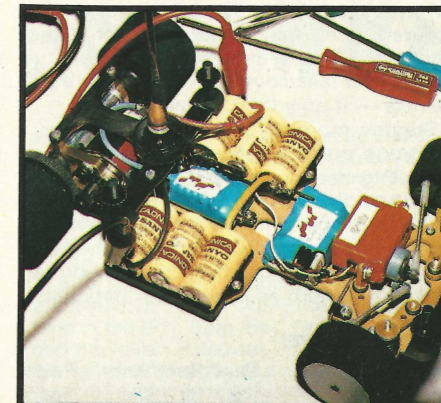
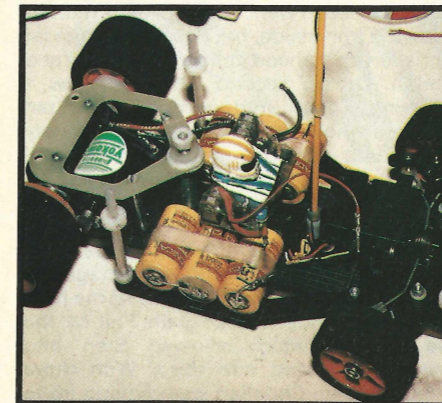
difficult track to drive fast all the way, as one touch of the angle iron or bot dots was enough to send you flying into another part of the circuit. For the premier event in Europe a better method of track marking could have been used to prevent the launching of the cars as it was quite easy to jump the track and take out another car on the other side.

Two AMB auto-lap counters were being used simultaneously, the loops being supported on a gantry above the track, but when the qualifying rounds started the loops had been placed under the carpet. An excellent idea especially from a spectator point of view, was the use of an electronic leader board showing the elapsed race time, the first three cars in the race and

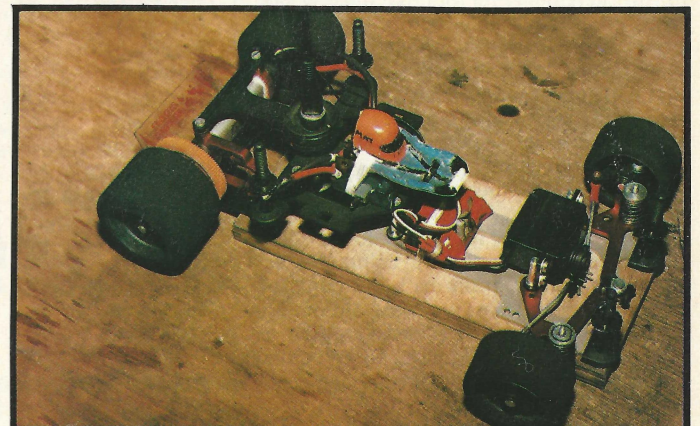
their lap scores during the race. A compressor was also made available to drivers to clean their cars.

By Thursday night all the British Team had arrived and for once, well before the Germans so we reserved the best places to sunbathe, whoops, I mean pit.

The hotels were the 'run of the mill' travel lodges although the prices were



Above, this is the standard of neatness, workmanship and dedication needed to prepare and race 1/12 cars. Below, the winners on the rostrum.



steep considering the service (or lack of it) but they were within easy reach of the track.

When Friday morning dawned it was down to business, everyone getting three practice runs and two qualifying runs. Unfortunately when we did arrive at the hall a brand new motor had been pinched from Tim Dakin's box overnight and also one from Jim Spencer's but the latter was discovered already in Jim's car, (must have been the toothfairy hey Jim) although nothing was seen of Tim's.

One surprise of the meeting was the absence of Mikka Leppalahti, the reigning champion, as apparently in Finland you have to do a period of National Service in the forces and was therefore unable to attend, probably buggy racing on the Arctic circle.

There were fourteen heats in all with eight cars per heat but once again the heats were ungraded, which was a problem for a few of the Brits' as some of the continentals were quite poor. The initial rounds saw a lack of grip on the carpet, which tended to give most cars a touch of understeer but this problem disappeared during the weekend.

For the practice sessions a rolling start system was employed, the cars lined up side by side and started individually when instructed by the race director. Your individual eight minutes starting automatically when passing the lap counter loop for the first time. This method of starting a heat is not in the EFRA rules which the meeting was being run to, so before the qualifying rounds started, a meeting was called by the race director for the team managers to see whether the new system was preferred. Fortunately everybody present wanted to use the new system so the EFRA start system (all starting together) was scrubbed.

During the practice runs, 30 and 31 laps were the norm but it wasn't until the actual qualifying rounds before the serious racing began. Before the start of qualifying the drivers were made aware of the EFRA referees present, who turned out to be very strict indeed when it came to jumping the track and bad driving, giving out one lap penalties as if they were going out of fashion.

Round one saw our own Parma powered Andy Dobson head the field with 32 laps, 16.20 seconds, using a Euro Panther fitted with a wishbone front end. Second was Sten Nordman driving an RC12L, on 32 18.90, Phil Davies on 31 4.0 in third place. Phil's car was using a re-designed shaker plate which can now support your transponder to keep the centre of gravity down, rather than mounting it to the body shell.

The final qualifying round of the day saw Andy and Sten unable to improve on their times but Christian Keil moved up to third place with 31 3.50, his extremely fast RC12L using a rear end that had been completely machined out of alloy.

Saturday was to see the last four rounds of qualifying with everyone giving 100% effort and more. Round three saw Georges Bohdanowicz turn 32 15.10 to take top spot, closely followed by local hero Josas Rosas on 32 15.20, both drivers using the extremely popular Corally car's, although the ones they were using were the old configuration using stick type battery packs as Corally have just brought out a new rolling chassis designated SP for saddle pack batteries, also with a narrower front end and shorter wishbones. In fact of all the

cars present for the senior event there were:-

- 43 Corally's
- 36 Schumacher C Cars
- 24 Associateds
- 2 Parma Panthers
- 1 Scratchbuilt.

Round four saw Georges and Josas unable to improve but Christian flew round to record 32 8.0, followed by Phil on 32 9.5, leaving Andy in fifth spot with 32 16.0 and Matt Ford moving into ninth spot on 31 3.00.

In round five all top six drivers could not find anymore but Matt managed a 32 9.0 to move into third spot just behind Phil.

Round six and it was 'do or die' time for all of us. Christian managed to clip another five seconds off his time to take FTD with 32 3.00 with Phil and Matt hanging onto second and third respectively. The final round saw Stefan Kohler of Germany get a clean run with his Corally and take fourth spot on 32 14.4. Andy held onto seventh place with 32 16.20 and poor Tim Dakin just missed out on eighth place by three hundredths of a second.

Team Qualification

Phil Davies	2nd	32 9.50
Andy Dobson	7th	32 16.20
Matthew Ford	3rd	32 9.90
Pete Farmer	25th	31 12.30
Tim Dakin	9th	31 0.30
Chris Evans	32nd	31 15.80
Glyn Peglar	19th	31 8.30
Pete Winton	41st	30 7.20
Mark Barford	15th	31 5.00
Pete Riley	34th	31 16.90

Saturday night saw most of us down at the Novotel for the banquet which as usually was pretty expensive and pretty rough, as was the wine on the table, although at the end of the night every bottle was empty. The high point of the evening occurred when they were dishing out the trifle; enter Pete Winton who got a helping right in the face courtesy of Keith 'Shiney' Helmke — if only I'd had my camera.

Sunday morning and it was finals day. Everyone got a practice run in their final format to sort out any interference problems and then two finals with their best score to count, with the A finalists having three finals the best two to count. The start system also reverted back to the normal grid start system as used at our nationals.

British Team

Name	Final Best Time	Pos
Tim Dakin	B 32 1.90	1st
Mark Barford	B 31 6.90	7th
Glyn Peglar	C 32 11.90	1st
Andy Smith	D 32 17.40	1st
Martin Allen	D 31 12.80	4th
Greg Cutler	D 31 12.80	5th
Chris Evans	D 31 14.10	6th
John Reid	D 28 3.60	7th
Pete Farmer	D Retired	8th
Pete Riley	E 32 12.20	1st
Pete Stevens	E 30 2.10	5th
Rob Roy	E 29 17.40	8th
Pete Winton	F 31 7.90	1st
Jim Spencer	G 31 9.50	2nd
Keith Helmke	G 31 17.20	4th
Tim Walden	H 28 19.10	7th
Mark Jewitt	J 29 7.80	1st

A Final First Run

Christian blew the start allowing Phil and Matt through with Andy moving up to third

place from seventh on the grid. This order remained for the next three laps but at the one minute mark Stefan had taken Andy and Christian had started to move up through the field. 1.30 down and the order was Phil, Matt, Stefan, Andy and Christian but Stefan blew it and failed to feature from then on.

At the three minute mark Christian manages to take Andy on the straight but Andy tucks inside of Christian on the sweeper to regain his position but an error on the next lap let Christian through. With three and a half minutes to go the order was Phil, Matt, Christian with about five seconds between each car but Christian was really winding Matt in. Into the last minute and Christian passed Matt but Phil still had a comfortable lead although his car had started to slow. With about 30 seconds to go Phil had slowed right up and Christian was still going strong but within the next lap Christian experienced a 'mega-dump' which even surprised the man himself and in the end Matt was unlucky not to retake second.

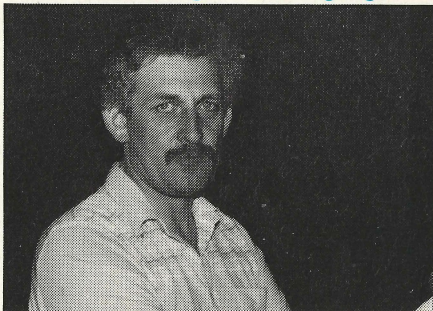
A Final Second Run

Christian shot off the line at the start but a wide line at the sweeper let Phil and Matt through, Phil started to immediately open up a lead. With one minute down Christian was breathing down Matt's neck so Matt sensibly pulled over to let him through. After two minutes the order was the same but Stefan had moved up to challenge Matt. This order remained the same until nearly six minutes when Phil made an error which allowed Christian to take the lead and then another error gave Christian a comfortable cushion. With 30 seconds to go Christian's car was showing no signs of dumping but Phil's was and Matt managed to take second place.

A Final Third Run

Again Christian went wide at the top corner allowing Phil inside, but an error by him let Christian stay ahead, followed by Andy and Stefan. On the second lap Andy blew it allowing Stefan into second with Sten Nordman now challenging. Unfortunately after about a minute another error by Phil put him down to last place, virtually ending his chances. At the two minute mark Christian had a strong lead over now second place Andy, followed by Sten and Stefan. At three minutes Matt managed to get past Stefan for fourth place. At the half-way stage Andy tangled with Phil by the lap counter which allowed Sten into second and Matt into third. With three minutes to go Christian was moving up to lap Matt and a minute later Sten blew it allowing Matt to move into second followed by Stefan. This order remained to the end of the race with Christian a full lap in front of the field.

British team manager Mick Langridge.



A Final Best Results

1	C. Keil	66	16.80
2	P. Davies	66	39.80
3	M. Ford	65	16.30
4	S. Kohler	64	26.30
5	J. Rosas	63	3.50
6	A. Dobson	63	18.40
7	S. Nordman	63	25.90
8	G. Bohdanowicz	62	21.50

At the end of the day, the Concour's D'elegance was judged, Andy Smith was unlucky not to win apparently the judges

had mislaid their white sticks and picked a rather plain two tone body schemed car as the winner.

The trophy presentation followed with all competitors being individually congratulated and provided with a momento of the meeting.

All in all an excellent meeting with extremely efficient organisation and a tribute to the members of the Creteil Club who worked so hard. On reflection after last years championship in Holland where we all seemed down on horsepower, this year

saw a far stronger British Team but there is still work to be done and new ideas to be tried if we are to provide the European Champion next year.

Congratulations must of course go to Christian Keil who drove superbly and once again proved the RC12L's ability, his performance no doubt quenching rumours of understeer some sceptic's have had of the car, and a final congratulation to all of the British Team who did so well and proved that we have the greatest depth of talent.

A Finalists

Final Pos	Name	Car	Nicads	Motor	Speed Controller	Front Tyre	Rear Tyre	Radio	Servo	Gear Ratio mm/rev	Qual Time	Body
1	Christian Keil	Associated RC12L	MIH Pushed Sanyo SC	Reedy	C.S. No Reverse	Asso Green	Asso Green	Robbe	Futaba	35mm per rev	32 3.00	Asso TOJ
2	Phil Davies	C-Car	Schumacher Custom Pack	Reedy Brown Dot	Schumacher No R.	TRC Green	TRC Green	JR	Futaba 132H	34.5	32 9.50	Sch TOJ
3	Matt Ford	Corally Stick Configuration	Laser SCR	Reedy Green Dot	Firefly International No.R.	Parma Green	Parma Green	Futaba 2 LGX	Futaba 132H	32	32 9.90	Alpha TOJ
4	Stefan Kohler	Corally Stick Configuration	MIH Pushed Sanyo SC	Reedy	C.S. No.R.	TRC Green	TRC Green	Multiplex	Futaba	35	32 14.4	Kyosho Phantom
5	Josas Rosas	Corally Stick Configuration	Sanyo SC	Drastic 24x3	C.S. No.R.	UFRA	UFRA	Futaba 3EGX	Futaba	35.9	32 15.20	Kyosho Phantom
6	Andy Dobson	Parma Euro I.S	Parma S.C.	Parma 26x2	Laser No R.	Parma Green	Parma Green	Futaba 2 LGX	Futaba 132H		32 16.20	Osella
7	Sten Nordman	RC 12L	Sanyo Keil Pushed	Reedy	Own	Asso Green	Asso Green	Sanwa	Sanwa	33.3	32 17.3	Asso TOJ
8	Georges Bohdanowicz	Corally Stick Configuration	Sanyo SCR	Drastic 25x3	C.S. No R.	UFRA	UFRA	Space Systems	Futaba	32	32 15.10	Kyosho Phantom