

Model Cars reports from Britain's most successful Rallycross Euros

Hot on the heels of the 1988 World Championships the 1988 European Championships were held at Hillerod in Denmark on the 19/21 August. All the top European drivers were present

including of course the new World Champion, Monesi from Italy, anxious to prove their mettle on this very different track to the one the World Championships were raced on in Mantova, Italy. The European Championship track

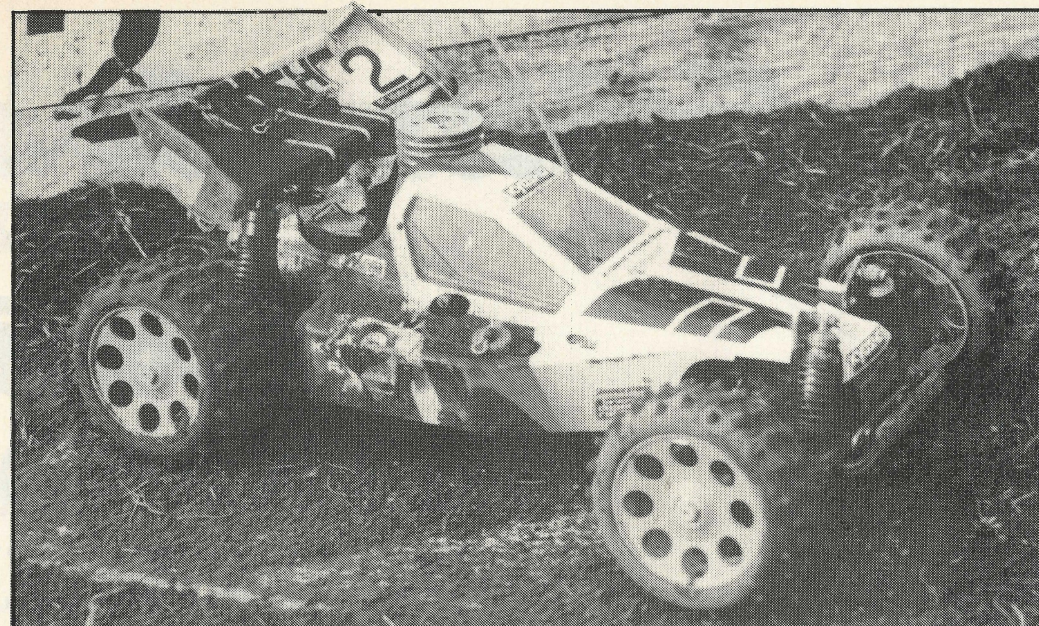
Rallycross Euros



at Hillerod is a permanent grass circuit built as part of a permanent racing complex also featuring a 1/8th tarmac circuit and model shop with all the facilities provided in a pretty farm location, ideal for those families who made the trip. And at only 34km from Copenhagen, there was plenty of good night time entertainment available for those who had the energy!

The large rallycross track with its undulating grass surface was not unlike that that we race on in England, although it is longer than we would normally expect to see. From the large, high drivers' rostrum, the track was easy to see and provided a large and fast circuit to drive and enjoy. Certainly, the British contingent were soon feeling at home on a track surface that was familiar ground for them and during early practice were feeling confident of achieving some good results in the actual event, although the way in which the track surface was wearing during these early sessions indicated that the first qualifying runs were to provide the fastest times and this assumption was later to be proved absolutely correct.

Left 1, 2 and 3 on the podium, Boeri taking his first major title. Top 'Team Kyosho 88' and the triumphant Boeri.



Stewart Wilcox's Burns on the start grid of the final - note revised rear wing position. Bottom Boeri's car being tested after the final.

The British team

For the very first time in the history of the championship, Britain was fielding drivers who had the experience, driving skills and equipment to challenge the best of the rest. The team was as follows:

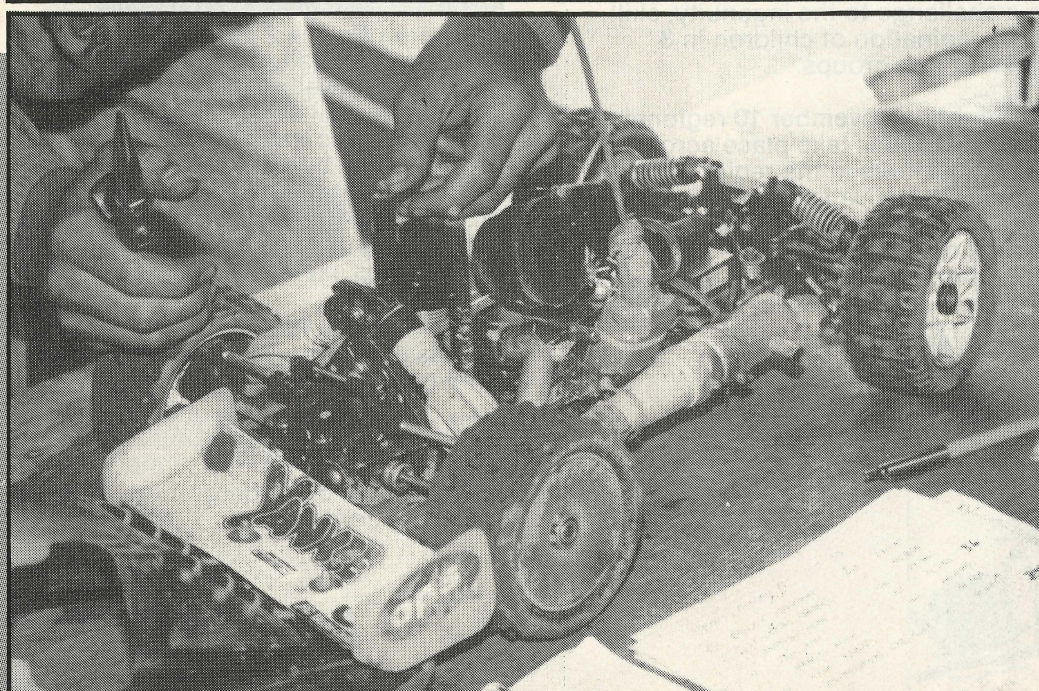
The team's choice of cars

was fairly evenly split with four Kyosho "Burns", three Sicom "Magnum" Forces with four PB "Mustang X3s", three of which were the new three diff, belt drive prototype development cars. OPS certainly provided the popular motor choice with PB drivers naturally preferring the Nova Rossi motors as distributed by P.B.

On the radio front, it is interesting to see the emergence of the new Futaba

"PCM" sets finding favour with the team Kyosho drivers who all recommend them for their failsafe facility in the event of radio interference. Of all the British drivers, James Weedon was looking to stamp his authority on the European scene as he has in England, and of course Stewart Wilcox and Alan Harman with their semi-final positions in the recent World Championships were expected to produce real

Driver	Car	Engine	Radio
Ralph Allum	Sicom Magnum Force	OPS 21 SE Buggy Pro	JR
Alan Harman	Kyosho Burns	OPS 21 RE Buggy Pro	Futaba PCM
Keith Plested	PB Mustang X3 Beltdrive	Nova Rossi 21 Re	Futaba
Stewart Wilcox	Kyosho Burns	OPS 21 RE Buggy Pro	Futaba PCM Steerwheel
David Chung	PB Mustang	OPS 21 RE Buggy Pro	KO Steerwheel
Tommy Chung	PB Mustang X3 Beltdrive	OPS 21 RE Buggy Pro	KO Steerwheel
Mick Harney	Kyosho Burns	OPS 21 RE Buggy Pro	Futaba
Mark Stitson	Sicom Magnum Force	OPS 21 RE Buggy Pro	JR
John Chamberlain	Kyosho Burns	OPS 21 RE Buggy Pro	Futaba PCM
Richard Stitson	Sicom Magnum Force	OPS 21 RE Buggy Pro	JR
James Weedon	PB Mustang X3 Beltdrive	Nova Rossi 21 Re	Futaba



winning form in Denmark. How true it was to turn out to be.

Qualifying

The racing began in earnest on Friday, 19th August with the first round of qualifying. The track surface was soft and high in traction after an overnight storm had lashed the area, and this was the round to put in that fast time. Alan Harman demonstrated this in heat 2, when he drove a well-controlled heat to put in a top five time with his Kyosho "Burns". Heat four saw the "Heat of the Week" when Stewart Wilcox drove which was to be the best heat of the championship, gaining Stewart FTD with his OPS powered Kyosho "Burns" in a brilliant display of driving control, never really putting a wheel wrong. In fact Stewart drove in superb style during the whole of the championship and certainly would appear to be a future champion in the making.

Also making the top ten in the first round was Mick Harney who despite a couple of accidents, drove like the experienced chap he is to record a good time. As qualifying progressed, the track became more difficult, with severe ruts and holes appearing all around the circuit. James Weedon breathed a sigh of relief, when after innumerable problems with the development PB, he held it all together to put in a quarter final time with a run that looked much more promising.

At the end of the third round, the unforgivable happened. The crashing of thunder and flash of lightning heralded a violent downpour that totally flooded the track and the running of the fourth round looked in doubt. At around 5pm, a team managers' meeting was held, and the outcome was to run the fourth round at 5.30. With the tack still waterlogged in places, no faster times were posted, although those drivers that chose to race received cheers and applause from the assembled crowd of spectators who marvelled at their enthusiasm for running in the appalling conditions!

At the end of qualifying, an elated Stewart Wilcox had retained FTD and finally proved to the rest of Europe that England now had the drivers and equipment to take on and beat them in a sport that they had dominated for so long. Two other British Kyosho drivers had also qualified straight into the semi final, Alan Harman and Mick Harney were both delighted at the results and anticipated a good result and hopefully final placing. John Chamberlain was second fastest qualifier for the quarter finals, followed by James Weedon and Tommy

Continued on page 48

Continued from page 45

Chung, Ralph Allum was unable to match the semi final time he put in in the 1987 European Championships and had to be content with a 1/16th final place, but was confident in moving up into the higher finals. Also languishing in the lower sub finals were Richard and Mark Stitson who just hadn't been able to put in the necessary clean qualifying run, but were able and capable of coming up through the finals with a good run.

Semi Finals

The weather looked like staying dry for the semi finals, much to the relief of all concerned, and the damp but drying track looked to provide some high traction, if bumpy racing.

Semi Final A

Featured Alan Harman, James Weedon, Stewart Wilcox and Mick Harney from Britain, and the ex-world champion Frederic Veysere driving his *Yankee* among others. The race was won in excellent style by Stewart Wilcox, with Philip Boeri chasing hard for second place. Alan Harman was in third position and James Weedon took the last British spot in fifth place. Unfortunately, Mick Harney had an unhappy semi and finished in sixth position, to just miss the final. Dramatically, Veysere was disqualified for repeatedly driving up the pit lane the wrong way, whilst trying to battle with a sick *Yankee*.

Semi Final B

Only Tommy Chung represented Great Britain in this heat, but World Champion Monesi from Italy was expected to produce a good result with his *Garbo* "Devil". Pascal Gueye for France and *Siccom*, and Baruchello from Italy with his *Yankee* were also expected to produce the results. A lone *Kyosho* "Burns" from France, driven by Cyril Mougin was also producing good form in the earlier 1/4 final.

Dramatically during the 20-minute race, Monesi pulled out with problems leaving the current World Champion out of the final, and Franco Poldi without one of his *Garbo* cars in with a chance. Tommy Chung also had problems that would prevent a top five place and final position. The outcome was that Pascal Gueye positively flew the race and set the fastest time for the semi finals, and earned him pole position on the grid, and a happy *Siccom* team. Also, Ron Ton from *Serpent* drove well to qualify with the only *Serpent* "Spirit" into the final, along with *Yankees* of Claude Lechat, from France and Baruchello of Italy.

The Final

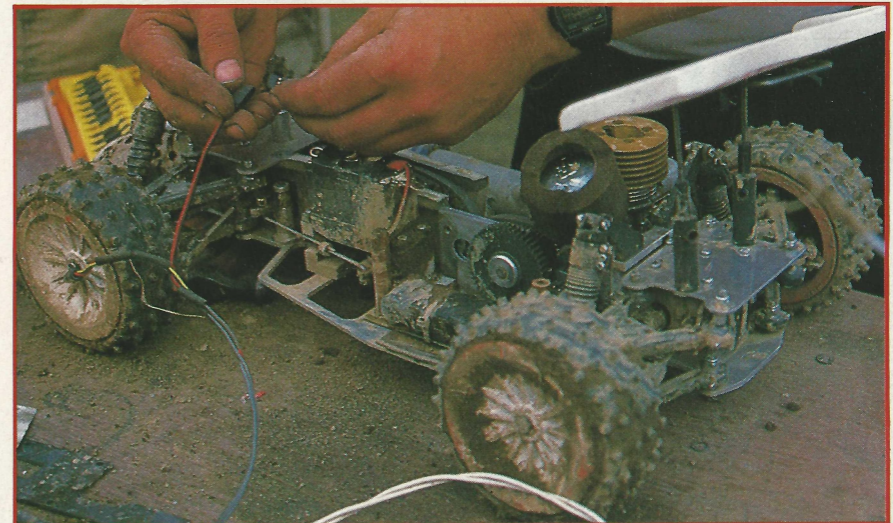
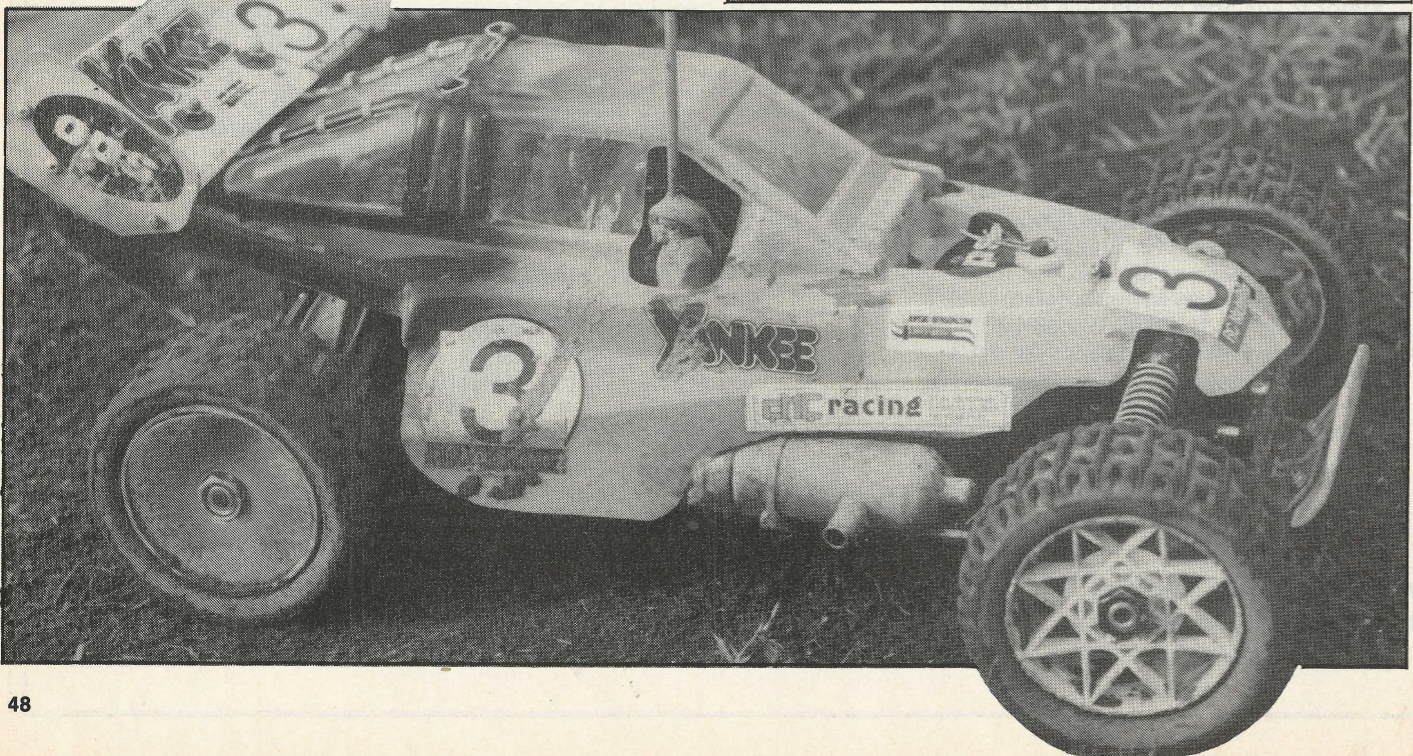
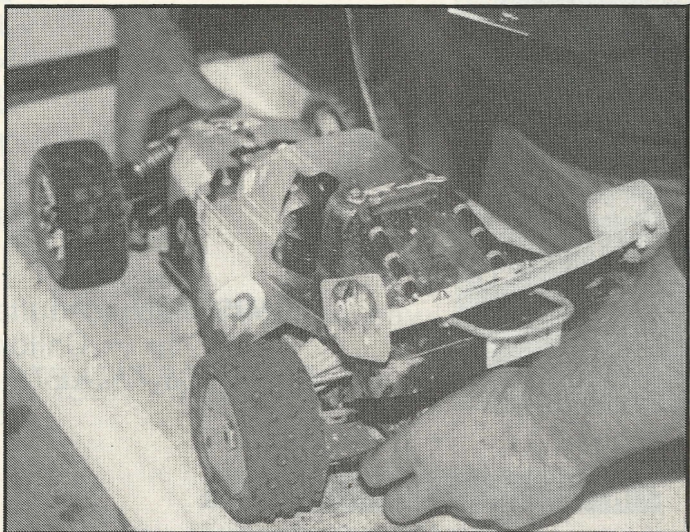
Three British drivers in the European championship final! A better result we could hardly had hoped for, especially as we

Below and right: Philippe Boeri's Yankee was pretty standard - he used Tekno tyres on the rear and 'paddles' on the front

had FTD man Stewart Wilcox on second position and driving in absolutely superb form with his *Kyosho* "Burns" looking to handle brilliantly on the now rapidly deteriorating track surface. Alan Harman driving the same make of car, was also showing all his skill at handling the difficult track and was mentally attuned to winning form. Finally, James Weedon driving his *PB* "Mustang X3" development car with belt drive, managed to keep it running and drive well to qualify through to the final, a just reward after all his good results in England. Joining the British trio were the following European drivers.

Driver	Nationality	Car
G. Baruchello	Italy	Yankee
Claude Lechat	France	Yankee
Chris Rolland	France	Yankee
Pascal Gueye	France	Siccom Magnum Force
Philippe Boeri	France	Yankee
V. Smouderon	Belgium	Yankee
Ron Ton	Holland	Serpent Spirit
Stewart Wilcox	G. Britain	Kyosho Burns FTD
Alan Harman	G. Britain	Kyosho Burns
James Weedon	G. Britain	PB Mustang (Belt Drive)

Pole car on the grid was Pascal Gueye, from France, due to a faster semi final time than our own Stewart Wilcox, who was in second place on the grid from the drop of the flag. These two immediately shot away, and for the first 20 minutes were continually fighting for the lead, giving an exhilarating display of superb driving on the incredibly rough track surface. Alan Harman was plagued by random engine cuts which hampered his performance no end, and likewise James Weedon missed the start with an engine that would just not start. Imagine then, the embarrassment in the pits when it was discovered



Top: Baruchello - a top 3 placing. Right: Stew Wilcox - a brilliant performance.

after several minutes that Dad, Ken Weedon had forgotten to put any fuel in the tank! Once started and away James drove smoothly and with determination started to claw his way back into the race. Back at the front of the race the exciting tussle between Stewart and Pascal ended in Stewart's favour around the halfway stage when Pascal damaged one of the prototype rear shock absorbers on his *Magnum* "Force", putting him out of the race leaving our man in what looked like a commanding lead for the title of European Champion. Driving faultlessly the *Kyosho* "Burns" was handling the track exceedingly well, and the tactic of fuelling at eight minutes rather than the nine minutes that would have resulted on one less fuel stop over the 45 minute race

appeared to be presenting no problems at this stage, the crucial nature of this extra stop was to present itself only in the closing minutes of the race. The only real challenger to the dominance of the Wilcox/*Kyosho* camp became apparent after Pascal Gueye had pulled out. Always in the shadows of this duo, but hardly notices was Philippe Boeri, driving his *OPS*-powered *Yankee* 4x4. Matching Stewart's driving metre by metre, he hauled in the gap, and the two drivers began fighting for the lead. First one and then the other would be in front, and a warning from referee Bill Burkinshaw was issued to the British camp to ensure Stewart's team mate, Alan Harman was not seen to be obviously blocking any of the other challengers... as if! Baruchello was still in third position but not able to offer any real challenge to the lead cars, barring any accident. However in the closing minutes of the final, the two lead cars were only seconds apart - mere yards on the track. Philippe Boeri was the man in

front, and try as he did, Stewart was unable to close the gap. The tension in the pits was electric (pun!) with the whole British contingent willing Stewart on for a first British European Champion. Also it was not to be, and as the cars crossed the finishing line at 45 minutes, Philippe Boeri became European Champion for 1988 with Stewart Wilcox only six seconds behind - about the time of that one extra fuel stop - and Baruchello in third place. A magnificent race, and a worthy European Champion with yet another major win for *Yankee*. However, a wonderful drive by Stewart Wilcox and another nail in the coffin for the event that has in the past become the province of the European drivers and manufacturers. *Kyosho* have demonstrated they make a car that can compete with the best and Britain has shown that in future Europe had better watch out! Well done, Stewart Wilcox, for a magnificent result, and of course not forgetting Alan Harman and James Weedon in 9th and 6th places respectively for providing the best result we

have ever achieved in any European event in rallycross.

Results of the 1988 European Championships

1 Boeri Philippe	F	Yankee
2 Wilcox Stewart	GB	Kyosho
3 Baruchelli G.	I	Yankee
4 Lachat Claude	F	Yankee
5 Ton Ron	NL	Serpent
6 Weedon James	GB	PB
7 Smouderen V.	B	Yankee
8 Rolland Chris	F	Yankee
9 Harman Alan	GB	Kyosho
10 Hueye Pascal	F	Siccom
11 Mougin Cyril	F	Kyosho
12 Ghedini Roberto	F	Garbo
13 Harney Mick	GB	Kyosho
14 Daniere Olivier	F	Siccom
15 Clerc Thierry	CH	
16 Lion Alain	F	Siccom
17 Arvastsson Larso	SW	
18 Chung Tommy	GB	PB
19 Monesi Maurisio	I	Garbo
20 Veysere F.	F	Yankee

