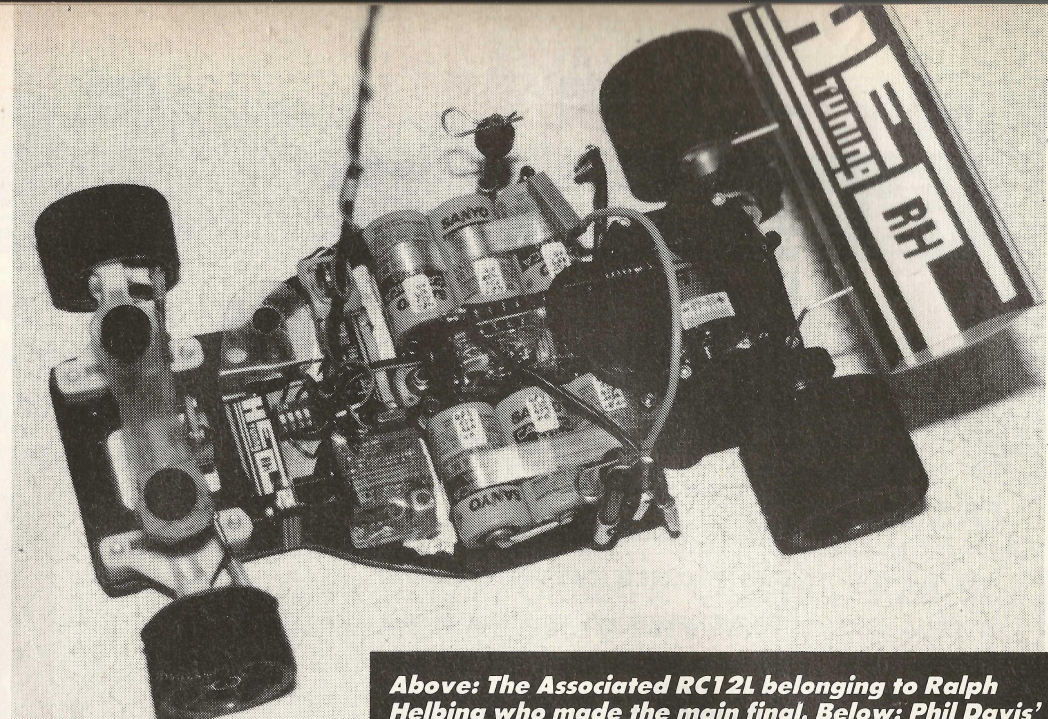


Dave Gale reports on a new 1/12th European champion for 1990

# 1/12TH EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

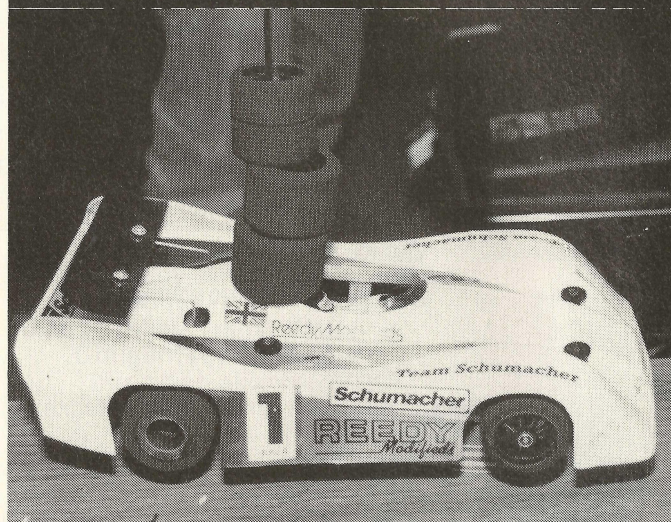


Above: The Associated RC12L belonging to Ralph Helbing who made the main final. Below: Phil Davis' car complete with a few aerodynamic aids.

W hitley Bay played host to the 1990 1/12th scale European championships, only the second time the event has been staged in England since the inaugural meeting in Switzerland 9 years ago.

The turn out was remarkably good, with most of the top drivers from Europe present, along with a large contingent of Brits, anxious to prove their abilities on home soil. With Britain providing the first 5 European champions, results over the couple of years have shown a decline in the dominance of the early eighties, highlighted by the failure of anyone to qualify at last year's event held in Austria. With this in mind, the chance to prove that last year's result was a 'fluke' was high on everyone's list of priorities. Firm favourites prior to the event included past European Champions, Phil Davies, Christian Keill and Mike Leppalati, along with notables such as Oscar Jansen, Anders Nilson, and Jurgen Lautenbach. Other possibles included Constant Paul, Bert Vd Der Vecht, Rob Roy, David Spasshett, Ralph Hebling, Ralph Krause, Piet (Mr. Nice) Goemans, Kent Menander and Dave Gale.

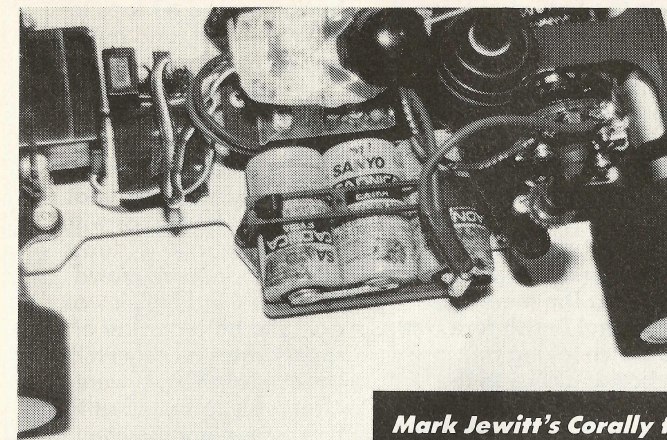
On the manufacturers' front there were more top drivers using the Corally SP12, as this has been the dominant car so far this



season - would the new car be good enough to provide Corally with their first European Championships. Results over the past few months have certainly proved that the work put in over five years are starting to reap the benefits of their labours. Other popular cars included the Schumacher SPC car and Associated RC12L which, although they are both very good cars, are starting to show signs of their age, with Associated rumoured to be preparing their new car in readiness for the forthcoming world champs in Singapore. Sadly Cecil does not have the time or effort available to improve on the SPC car, so it looks like this will be the last major outing for the car before retirement. Mention must also be made of the other two major manufacturers present,

Kawada and Parma who performed as well as to be expected in the hands of the team drivers, but the absence of a 'top line' driver in each case made it difficult to assess their true potential.

Mark Jewitt provided most of the driving force behind the organisation, ably assisted by the most unruly mob of ruffians this side of Gretna Green - the Riverside Racers. (Friends of Keith Helmke these - Buggy drivers!). With Potty Paul and his helpers, the organisation was excellent and well above the standard required for a meeting of this importance. Mick Langridge and Fer Van Helden were present as Referees to watch each race for poor driving standards deliberate or otherwise. (Presumably Mick was chosen because of his



Mark Jewitt's Corally fitted with Schumacher Pro-Cat Battery clamps.

experience in these matters!). Pete (Mad) Winton and John Robson provided race commentaries and race control on the day, with Sheila Goodyear as chief timekeeper. The only hiccup was in the siting of the two AMB timing loops, which were too close to the start line. This meant that occasionally one or both of the timing computers missed the first lap, failing to start the competitors' race timer. In such an event, Sheila had to re-calculate manually the score from the individual lap times.

As usual for a European Championship meeting it was held over three days, with the Friday and Saturday being used for qualifying and finals on Sunday. In all there were eight qualifying heats, three timed practice heats and three finals for everyone, making a total of 14 eight-minute races. With such a large number of heats there was some concern about the number of packs of cells required, but most people soon came to grips with this little problem.

The first two rounds of practice proved troublesome for most drivers as in the first, the grip was unbelievably low, courtesy of the vacuum cleaner, and by the second round it was high enough that many cars were rolling over. Most of the British drivers left their cars alone, and waited for the grip to stabilise and become more consistent, but many of the continental drivers preferred to change everything in an effort to overcome these problems. Early pacesetters

At the end of the first day's qualifying Phil Davies held provisional pole, with 39 laps, closely followed by your's truly in second place, (A fluke!). Oscar Jansen, David Spasshett and Ralph Helbing made up the top five.

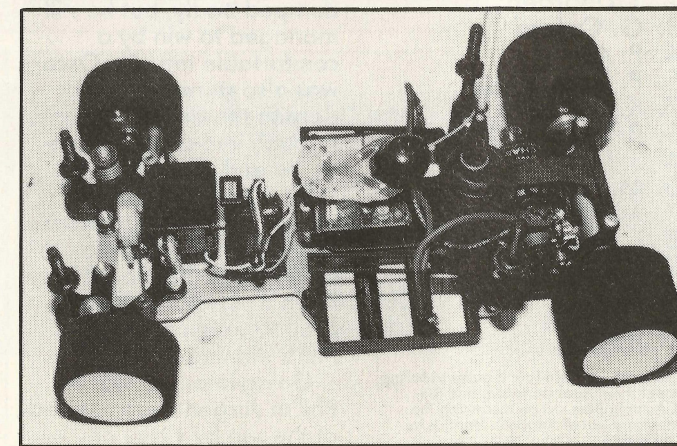
At this point most of the Continental Corally drivers were very despondent, as the high level of grip was causing them much concern

were Rob Roy and David Gale, who are obviously used to racing under these conditions. One interested spectator on Friday was none other than 'Mr. Tamiya', Jamie Booth who was well impressed with the advances made since he last had a go at 1/12th scale racing. Jamie was particularly taken with the simplicity of the new Corally SP12, and judging by his comments it is likely we will soon see Jamie demonstrating his talents this winter.

The heats had been very roughly graded, so that, in general, the top 5 drivers were in the top 5 heats, and then evenly mixed throughout. Heats 8 and 10 were the ones to watch, with 4 drivers from each heat eventually making the A Final. Being one of the faster drivers in heat 8 it was noticeable how much effort the slower drivers were making to allow the faster cars to pass. (Thanks, Richard!)

on the handling front. This was soon sorted as they decided to copy the setup from some of the top English drivers. In this way, David Spasshett, Mark Jewitt, Rob Roy and myself were soon besieged by people wanting to know tyre combination, ride heights, tyre size, etc. Considering our pathetic efforts at translation it is remarkable that they gained any useful information, but the results to come proved that was not the case. For some reason José Rosas, always a possible A Finalist was having more than his fair share of problems, seeming to lack speed and duration. On the motor front most drivers seemed to be getting along with 18 to 20 turn motors, with the hotter motors being saved for Saturday and Sunday's racing. Tyres were almost certainly Yokomo's or PK silvers, although as the grip improved many drivers in the know changed to Chris

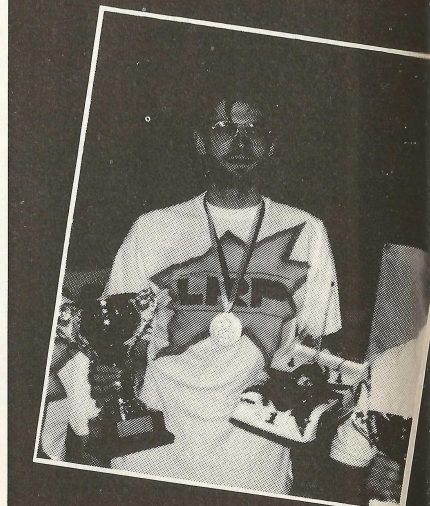
Again Mark's car using the simple Pro-Cat clamps and wheel discs.



Dave Spasshett came home 7th in the final.



Above: Anders Nilson qualified 10th and came home 9th. Below: 1/10th Off-road and now 1/12th champ Jurgen Lautenbach.



Evans's Grand Prix C Tyres.

On Saturday there were five rounds of qualifying, and right from the start it was clear that the advice received the previous night was helping, as in the first round Oscar Jansen improved to take FTD by 4 seconds. Mika Leppalati, the Finish Eurochamp also moved ahead of Phil Davies who was unable to improve. The next round saw Oscar knocked down to third, as Christian Keill and Jurgen Lautenbach posted faster 39 lappers. Moving up the leader board young David Spasshett gaining fourth place, with Piet (Mr. Nice) Goemans from Belgium in fifth place. In the next round, Jurgen Lautenbach blasted round to record the first 40 lap score of the meeting, which was to remain FTD at the end of the day. Phil Davies put in a 17 double, and instantly turned a 40 lapper, along with Oscar who was using a 16 double to the same effect.

In Round 7 the top positions remained fairly static, but Rob Roy and David Gale improved to 6th and 7th respectively to earn their places in the A Final. In the last round there were many last ditch attempts to improve, and as usual the net effect was mayhem, with very few people improving. David Spasshett looked most in control of the situation, and drove a faultless run to take 4th position overall. The fact that the computer decided to tell 'porkies' and give David a 41 lapper had Ian in raptures, but in reality a fast 39 lapper was recorded. Mark Jewitt borrowed an LRP motor from Jurgen, and was turning some really good lap times, until his batteries cried 'enough!', and he ground to a halt as expected.

Looking at the above times, shows how close the racing has become, with in practice only 10 seconds between first qualifier and last place. Even more remarkable was the fact that 7th to 16th place was covered by no less than 2 seconds. Phil's overnight pole position would have

only been good enough for 17th place overall, which is interesting as many people felt at the time that it was good enough for an A Final place.

Apart from the four British drivers in the A Final others fared less well. However, remarkable performances were staged by Jim (Thrash-it) Spencer, who looked good enough to make the A Final; Mark (Dump-it) Jewitt, who was fast enough for a 6 minute A Final; Richard (Buggy-it) Isherwood, who could have made the A Final if all other drivers were blindfolded; Richard (Kawada-it) Pickering, who outdrove many Formula 1 class drivers, and would have dominated a Formula two A Final; and finally Rob (Grand Prix 'C'-it) Hopkins who was just enjoying himself. Dave Hall also drove well above his usual standard, but was not included in the above list because I couldn't think of anything facetious to say about him.

#### British Standings after qualifying

2. P. Davies
4. D. Spasshett
8. R. Roy
9. D. Gale
13. J. Spencer
21. M. Barford
24. P. Riley
25. M. Jewitt
28. R. Isherwood
30. R. Pickering
31. M. Farrell
34. K. Helmke
36. D. Hall
39. C. Hardisty\*
41. R. Hopkins
42. T. Biggsy
45. P. Cusworth
48. N. Piltz\*
50. I. Whitbread
52. J. Dearden\*
53. G. Oxford
54. P. Ash
55. P. Hodgeheg\*
57. K. Creaser
63. P. Goodyear
64. S. Rowley
66. M. Tomlinson
67. M. Haswell\*
68. I. Spasshett
69. B. Boldison
73. R. Aitkin
74. S. Evans
81. L. Omen

\* These drivers were found guilty of failing to meet their usual standard, and the BRCA committee will be discussing the compulsory use of Anabolic Steroids in future events.

On the Saturday night, it was time for the traditional banquet, which was enlightened by the impressive antics of the Whitely Bay Octogenarian Formation Waiting Team. As one pundit remarked, there was more life in Joe Bugner's brain than the entire workforce put together. The meal was traditional British fare, with the Dutch taking a particular dislike to the Yorkshire Puddings. In days gone past, I am certain that this would have led to international incident of Agincourt proportions, but somehow the normal food fight was missed off the agenda.

#### Finals

In the first A Final Jurgen got the Holeshoot and was never headed during the race. Phil and Oscar battled for second, and were joined by Rob at around the 5 minute mark. With a 10 second penalty for moving during the 10 second interval before the start Rob was in reality out of contention, but making the most of a bad thing. Phil oscar and Rob all dumped, but the final positions remained unchanged on the track.

In the second leg, there was drama as Oscar's car failed to start because it wasn't switched on. Somehow the 7 cars on the grid behind Oscar managed to avoid the stricken car, and by the time the problem had been rectified, Oscar was half a lap down. Phil got the start, and was initially so fast that I think he had almost lapped the field within two minutes. Unfortunately Phil dumped badly, but he still managed to win by a comfortable margin. Oscar was also storming, and despite the bad start came through into second place at the end of the race. Ultimately I feel that this mistake put paid to Oscar's chances of winning the meeting, as this would have been a very fast time, probably well ahead of Phil's winning time.

Going into the final leg, Phil or Jurgen were assured of the win by virtue of

having scored 41 laps to win their final, and having fast 40 lap times to back them up. On paper Phil could beat Jurgen if he achieved a 41 lapper, and Jurgen failed to make 41 laps, or if Phil could beat Jurgen by 4 seconds with both of them on 41 laps. With the partisan crowd totally behind Phil, it was going to be a cracker of a race. Unfortunately Phil's chances of the win were effectively removed at the first corner when a coming together with Jurgen saw his body knocked out of shape, affecting the handling. Phil was obviously distraught at the time, thinking Jurgen had done it deliberately, but a chance to see the incident replayed on video proved that it was 50/50, and afterwards Phil was happy. This time Mika moved up a gear and took the lead he was never to lose, with Anders taking up the chase. I got bored and decided to savage a marshal's leg losing 7 seconds, trying to give him third degree friction burns, but once going I was happy to be able to keep with Mika. Anders held second place until 7 minutes, when he started to dump, allowing Oscar and Christian to finish second and third.

When the dust had settled, Jurgen was proclaimed 1990 European Champion, with Phil in second place. Oscar was initially given third, but Mika, by virtue of a 41 lapper in the final leg, was the rightful person, demoting Oscar to fourth. Jurgen thoroughly deserved the win, driving meticulously during qualifying, and then turning some astounding lap times during the early Finals. Phil was happy to finish second, especially after last year's nightmare when he failed to qualify for the A.

At the ceremony the usual champagne fight was enacted, but was suitably enlivened when Jurgen slipped bum over tit on the slippery floor.

My thanks go to everyone who had anything to do with the organisation.

Fin./Driver	Chassis	Motor	Batteries	Speed Control-ler	Tyres Front	Tyres Rear	Radio Servo	MM per rev	Body	Qual.	Sponsor
1. J. Lautenbach D	Corally SP12	LRP	LRP SCE	LRP Pasto-type	PK Silver	PK Silver	KO Stawett KO Fet	30.6	Schumacher TOJ (Small Wing)	1	LRP
2. P. Davies GB	Schumacher SPC	Reedy Red Dot 17 turn	Schumacher SCE	Schumacher Power Mos	Yokomo	Yokomo	JR Apex 132H	29.02	Schumacher TOJ	2	Schumacher Reedy
3. M. Leppalati FIN	Schumacher SPC	LRP	LRP SCE	Corally MMS	Frewer Larsen	PK Silver (Yokomo)	Futaba Sanwa 301	30-ish (2.5 mm)	Associated TOJ	6	Schumacher LRP
4. O. Jansen NL	Corally SP12	Corally 16 DBL	PK SCE	Corally MMS	PK Silver	PK Gold	Futaba 2LGX 132H	29.92	Schumacher TOJ	3	PK/Corally
5. C. Keil D	Associated 12L	Reedy Red Dot 17 Quad	Keil SCE	RH	Yokomo 3662 (Firm)	Yokomo 3620	Futaba Magnum 132H	30.5	Associated TOJ (Wing)	7	Associated Reedy Keil
6. R. Helbing D	Associated 12L	MIH Master Blaster 18 turn	MIH Pushed SCE	RH (Ralf Helbing 6 FET)	Yokomo	Yokomo	Multi-plex 132H	31	TOJ (Wing)	5	MIH (Germar Kyosho Importer)
7. D. Spasshett GB	Corally SP12	LRP	PK/Intronics SCE	Corally MMS	PK Silver	PK Silver	JR Apex 132H	30-31½	Schumacher TOJ	4	PK/Corally Intronics (PAD)
8. R. Roy GB	Corally SP12	Corally 18DBL Q-Reedy RSO-17 Triple	PK SCE	Corally MMS	PK Silver	PK Silver	JR Apex 132H	33.2 6.31.8	Associated TOJ (Small wing)	8	PK/Corally
9. A. Nilson S	Corally SPR	PK/Corally 18 SGL	PK SCE	Corally MMS	Yokomo	Yokomo	KO KO 901BH	30.5	Associated TOJ	10	PK/Corally
10. D. Gale S	Corally SP12	Twister 17 Triple	Gale-force SCE	Corally MMS	PK Silver	PK Silver	JR Apex 132H	33.8	Associated TOJ (Small wing)	9	PK/Corally Gale-force

#### Final Positions after 8 Qualifying Rounds

1. J. Lautenbach	40 laps 489.47
2. P. Davies	40 laps 490.35
3. O. Jansen	40 laps 492.31
4. D. Spasshett	39 laps 480.73
5. R. Helbing	39 laps 481.27
6. M. Leppalati	39 laps 483.40
7. C. Keil	39 laps 485.39
8. R. Roy	39 laps 487.09
9. D. Gale	39 laps 487.10
10. A. Nilson	39 laps 487.30

#### Final results

1. J. Lautenbach	41 488.12	40 484.44	40 490.79
2. P. Davies	40 482.72	41 493.12	40 485.66
3. M. Leppalati	40 492.37	38 482.13	41 491.88
4. O. Jansen	40 482.72	40 481.47	40 482.98
5. C. Keil	40 492.73	40 490.25	40 483.77
6. R. Helbing	39 481.90	39 492.25	40 490.24
7. D. Spasshett	40 494.87	39 486.80	39 486.47
8. R. Roy	40 502.87*	37 480.57	39 482.52
9. A. Nilson	39 490.52	12 142.69	39 483.19
10. D. Gale	34 485.49	38 480.49	39 482.53

\* 10 second penalty for jump start.