

# ESCAPE FROM ULM CATRAZI!!

In the opinion of this reporter, my Editor and all the British Team, the 1993 1/10 Off Road European Championships, in terms of organisation and weather, were the worst ever! Firstly, no one I spoke to could remember having experienced four consecutive days of thunder storms before! This incessant torrential rain coupled with a poor all round showing from "mien hosts" spoiled the occasion for all of the competitors and left everyone wondering why we bother racing in Europe at all. I don't want to knock the organisation entirely - had the weather been reasonable probably very few complaints would have ensued - but the fact was that no contingency plans were put into

force and as it turned out we were let down by poor management and intransigence. Even the 2WD event, which was the only one that held any sort of credence, was marred with silly decisions. Craig Drescher once again came out on top in both classes and was duly crowned the 1993 2 & 4WD European Champion. I'm sure, he would have liked to have proved he was the best in ideal conditions and not by circumstances as was the case here. I was ultra critical of last years Euros in Denmark but these now seem like a picnic by comparison!



# Craig triumphs in the mud

The 1993 Euro Champs were dominated by the British and in particular Craig Drescher.

### Problems, problems

The problems, which started as soon as our coach pulled up on the roadside 100+ metres from the marquee, seemed endless. Parking in relative close proximity to the track was impossible. The organisers told me the EFRA rules had been followed. Well, all I can say why should we put up with having to carry boxes of tackle, cars, tyres and everything else we need to race 100+ metres every day. Its just not on.....Those that camped too suffered because of the weather. John Adrian and family were virtual prisoners on the campsite, adjacent to the track, because his car was stuck in the mud for four days!

### The pits

Pitting was also inadequate. The marquee was excellent but no control by the organisers allowed a lot of the early arrivals to hog most of the pitting tables and benches. The remainder were arranged poorly inside resulting in little space for the rest of us. This situation created friction amongst the drivers which did not do a lot for international co-operation. At every other International meeting I have attended, mains power has been laid on within easy reach to all parts of the pitting area. Here, at Ulm, the Brits had to set up their own supply using their own extension cables from the mains power switch box.

Mud was everywhere and we were ankle deep in our pits from the Friday onwards and living worse than pigs. The conditions deteriorated every day until on Sunday we were wallowing in 3 inches of water and mud and some of us even looked like hippos. All race equipment was caked in the stuff with live power cables running along the ground in a dangerous manner through the mud! A situation quite oblivious to the host club and Race Director, who seemed to spend his time barking instructions through the PA system. Clothing and trainers became heavily caked in mud and were ceremoniously thrown away on the final day. Although pit passes were issued to competitors and

mechanics no control of access was carried out by the organising club as is usual at these events.

### Track Matters

The race circuit was built on a flat grass surface. Track layout contained a long main straight with an hairpin at each end! The cars in both classes ran anticlockwise down the straight, around the hairpin and through a chicane to a sweeping bend. Next followed a small jump and another sweeper onto a large jump, 2 ft high, which was criticised by several of the continental drivers who thought it was too high and was too close to the left-hander which followed it. A dogleg and then a



series of three hairpins led back to the main straight.

Heavy rain the week prior to the meeting left the area saturated and this stopped drainage from the track. Practice on Wednesday turned out to be the best day we had weatherwise. The track was good and a promise of a great race meeting was there despite everything else.

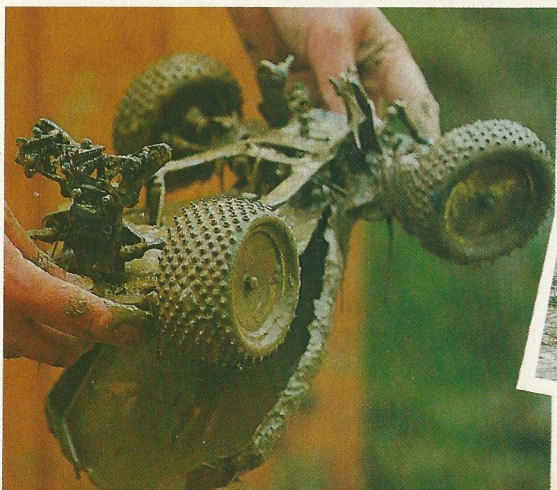
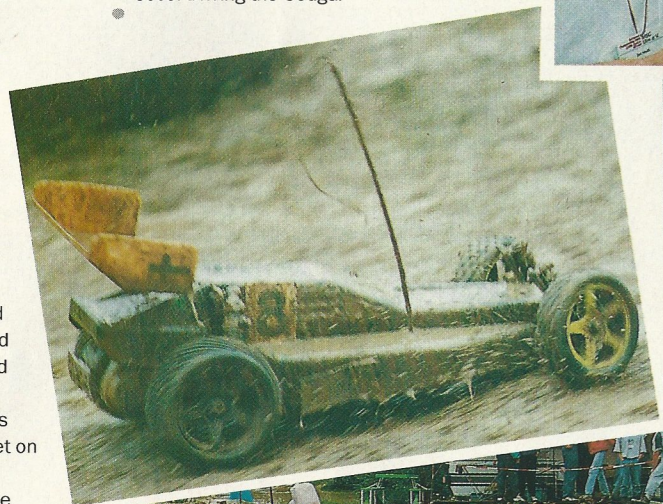
### International Track Rescue (S.O.T. – Save Our Tracks)

On Thursday morning, which was when the serious racing was due to begin, the weather was foul – it was raining and heavy overnight rain had waterlogged the track and surrounding areas. Around 10:30am the rain stopped and the Brits came to the rescue with the organisers seemingly struggling to get on top of the situation. Our International Track Rescue Team, led by Supervisor Dave Booth and consisting of John Styles, Matt Needham (YTS Boy) and Brian Mitcham along with Dallas from Sweden and my mate from Belgium, Willy Echemans, set about the task of retrieving a disastrous situation. Large quantities of sawdust were used to mop up the surplus water and this was then brushed off the racing surface. Members of the host club meanwhile were removing water from sumps which had been dug to collect the surplus water using a vax machine coupled to a portable generator. This contraption was comically transported around the track in a wheelbarrow! All this activity became an all-too-common-sight over the next few days.

Round 1 of the 2WD European Championships finally began with track conditions in a reasonable state.

### 2WD Qualifying

80% of the drivers put up their best times in Round 1 and nearly all the rest were achieved in round 4. These rounds being the only ones with relatively dry conditions, effectively reducing the championship to two qualifying rounds. Kevin Moore was the FTD holder after the completed round 1 with a time of 14 laps in 5 mins 21.6 secs. Driving the Cougar



Scenes from Ulm including underwater track conditions, Jamie Booth's answer to waterproofing and Craig Drescher in the mud care of his teammates.

RADIO CONTROL MODEL CARS

2000, Kevin was a second in front of German Patrick Feschtschenko's Losi and Craig Drescher's RC10. Next came Rory Cull's RC10 with Ben Sturham's Cougar 2000 and Alan Harman's Tamiya Dyna Storm also in the leading 10. The 2nd round began mid afternoon with the threat of rain imminent and it was not long before heavy showers reduced the track to a mud bath slowing down every car and the continued battle with mud recommenced. Only four drivers out of 147 competitors improved in Round 2. Yokomo TR 32S or Green Minis were the most common tyres in use although several competitors favored Jammin' Steppin.

By round 3 the conditions trackwise and in the pits were atrocious – cars were dumping and coming off with duff electric's. Complete rebuilds were needed for each round by this time and it was not surprising that a lot of drivers chose not to race looking for improvements in conditions. Round 4 saw the track beginning to dry out and qualifying times improving. Jamie Booth racing the Modified Kyosho Triumph, he raced all last year, instead of the new Pro X (which speaks volumes for the new car's potential) improved to 19th overall with 13 laps 5 mins. 5.2 secs. Other Brits such as Andy Shaw and Jon Tucker put up their best times in this round to move into the top 30 too late for them to seriously effect the leading positions. An incident which also got up the noses of the British competitors was the way that Jurgen Lautenbach orchestrated a rerun for his heat in round 4. The race started 40 seconds earlier than scheduled and although everyone was ready the first time round, including Herr Lautenbach, the International Jury decided to allow a rerun and Jurgen's time is this rerun moved him to 10th overall much to the disgust of the UK contingent.

### Ulm Comforts

Friday morning found the circuit in a worst condition than before with more drying out needed to continue racing. By this time sawdust supplies were dwindling and there was a need to conserve supplies for emergencies later on. (Why this should be a problem when the track was situated next to a wood yard owned by the events sponsors, Peri?) By noon the racing was in progress again and although the track was slower it was nice to see both Ellis Stafford and William Mitcham



Conditions in the pits were terrible. Above; Craig Drescher works on his Yokomo.



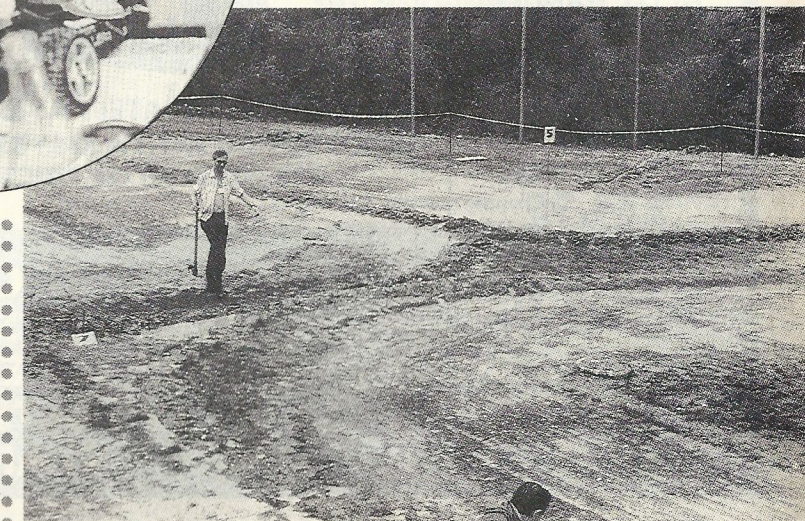
Rory Cull came close to winning 2WD but kept up his record of making all Euro finals that he has entered.

followed by Craig Drescher and a tremendous race ensued with Craig pressurising the German. During this race Craig's RC10 got out of shape in a frantic effort to catch the leader and he strayed onto the track markings and was promptly penalised 10 seconds for corner cutting. This, in my opinion, was an harsh decision by a referee who has eyes in the back of his head because whenever I looked towards race control he was facing away from the track!! Undaunted Craig

eventually took the lead and steadily pulled away from the field with Rory Cull, who had by now moved into second place chasing Craig to the finish. Craig won leg 1 completing the only 14 lap run of the race with Rory missing out by 1.8 secs. The penalty was annulled by

Craig's superb drive. I had his RC10 10.35 seconds in front of Rory's at the close on my stopwatch. Germany's Michael Gaul completed the RC10 rout coming home in third place as he did in the second leg. Leg 2 was led from start to finish by Craig's RC10 and it was Ben Sturham's Cougar 2000 who came through the field to take second place to be the only Schumacher car finishing in the top three in all 3 legs. A Losi driven by Patrick Feschtschenko was runner up in the 3rd leg with Craig out in front once more and Sasha Falter's RC10 taking the 3rd spot.

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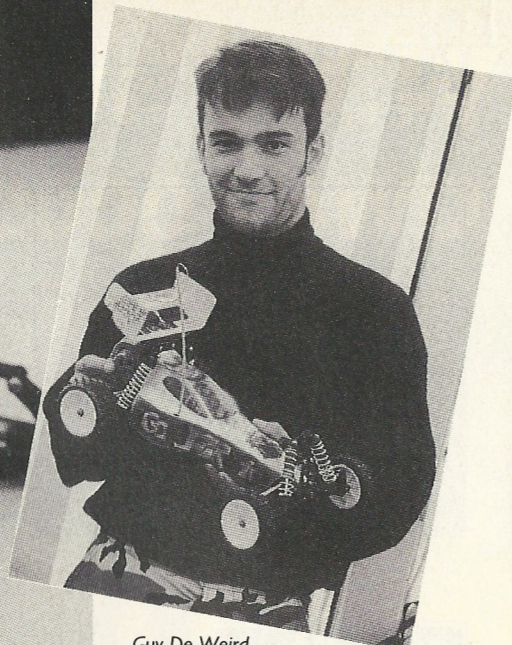
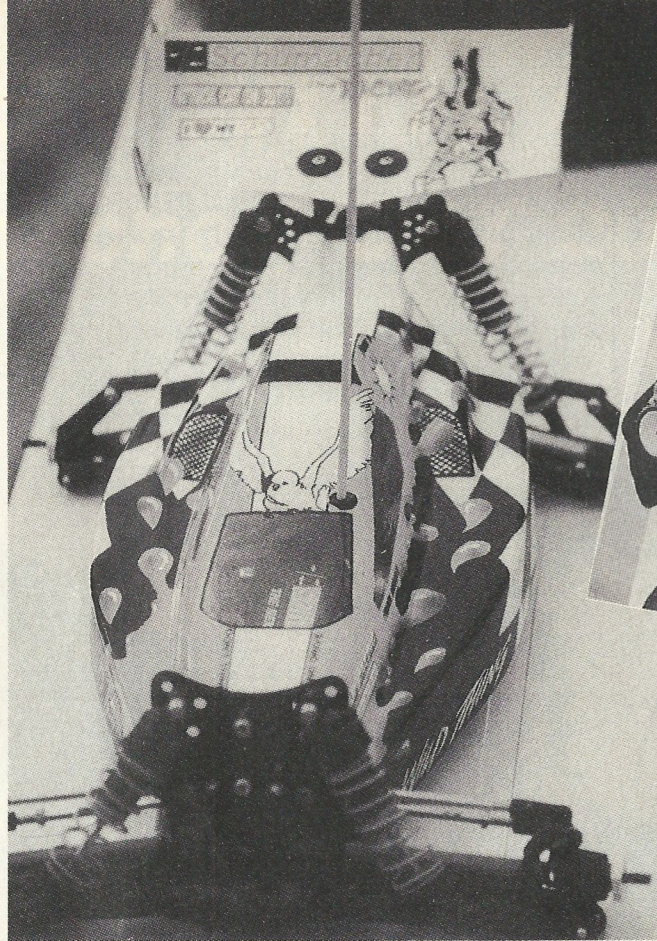
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Craig Drescher had comprehensively won the finals being the only driver to score 14 laps runs in all three legs and was duly crowned the 1993 2WD European Champion for the third year running with Germans, Michael Gaul and Patrick Feschtschenko taking up the minor placings. Well done Craig.

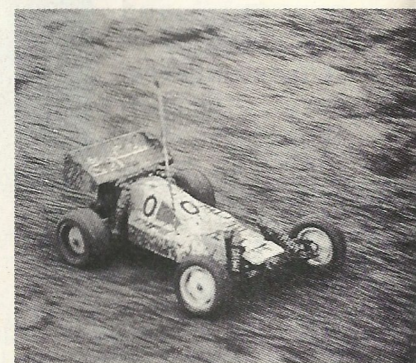
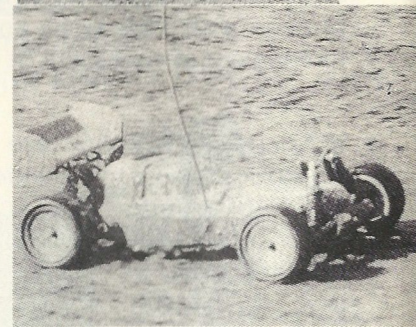
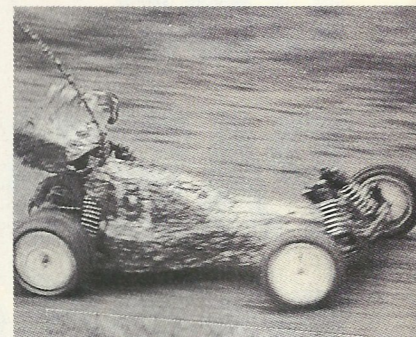
During these finals we had an heavy storm which delayed the completion of the 2WD event and cancelled 4WD practice which was scheduled for Friday evening. Two hours repair to the track was required before the finals could be completed.

### Mud bath...

At the trophy ceremony Craig was given the mud bath treatment by a few of his "so-called" mates but marshalling during the finals was not much of a joke - slip on the wet surface and you were covered head to toe in mud!!!



Guy De Weird still driving for Schumacher.



round was completed with very little regard for the conditions. We had to ask them to lay duck boarding on the approach to the rostrum at one stage because the drivers and mechanics were having to walk in 2 inches of mud! It must have been a nightmare for the two wheelchair competitors just getting to the rostrum steps was difficult never mind climbing them! By round 3 the track had dried out somewhat on the racing line leaving a strip, 1/2 metre wide, to run on. Track conditions by now were diabolical - stray off the racing line and you were into mud! Subsequently the cars required complete rebuilds every round and it was a battle against time to get them ready for the next run.

### Weather too Abandon!

Further rain Saturday night put us almost back to square one and the remaining sawdust was used to dry out the track surface once more. The track was now rutty on the bends and bumpy elsewhere and the sawdust helped smooth out these ruts, certainly in the early heats. Craig Drescher went out in Round 4 and duly took FTD with 14 laps 5/21.0. He was the only driver in the 4WD event to score 14 laps. Ben Sturnam's, racing the Bosscat along with Schumacher Team-mate William Mitcham just missed out on 14 laps and both these were in the top five. Kevin Moore, racing the new Cat 2000, was up there too in a top ten that contained eight Brits in total. The others being Rory Cull, James Pearson and Jamie Booth. Only one driver in the top sixty did not have his best run the 4WD championships in Round 4. It was in Round 5 that the controversy began. Several drivers including Kevin Moore put up 14 lap times in this round and would have changed the complexion of the leader board but for the subsequent cancellation of the round. Unlucky Jon Tucker, also using the Cat 2000, was on for a 14 lapper until the last lap when the car stopped with an electrical failure. By heat 11 the storms began once again and another deluge of rain fell, water logging the track again.

This time it was decided to continue the round after the clean up in order to complete the 4 rounds of qualifying necessary within the rules. The Brits objected to this - we had cancelled Round 1 earlier and this time the organisers had done a U-turn and wanted to carry on... A letter of protest was submitted to the International Jury

2WD QUALIFYING POSITIONS Meeting: 1993 2WD European Championship Venue: ULM, Germany

	NAME	Country	Car	Motor	Cells	ESC	Radio	Servo	Front Tyres	Rear Tyres	Gear Ratio
1	Kevin Moore	UK	Schumacher Cougar 2000	LRP Bee D	LRP SCRC	LRP 25 AMS Mk 2	KO Esprit 2	KO 1001	Yokomo Cut TR 32S	Schumacher Green Minis	20/95
2	Patrick Feschtschenko	Germany	Losi Pro SE	Evolution 12 Double	ME6A NSCRC-SP	GM 2000	MPX EX-1	KO PS 87	Yokomo TF 370	Jammin' Step Pin	11.8:1
3	Craig Drescher	UK	Associated RC10	Reedy Mr S	Keil SCRC	Novak 410HPC	KO Esprit 2	Airtro nics	Yokomo TF 320	Schumacher Green Minis	
4	Rory Cull	UK	Associated RC10	Reedy Mr S	Keil SCRC	Nosram Dominator	KO Esprit 2	Airtro nics	Yokomo TF 320	Schumacher Green Minis	
5	Michael Gaul	Germany	Associated RC10	Reedy Mr S	Keil SCRC	Novak 410 HPC	MPX EX-1	KO 1001	Yokomo TF 330	Yokomo TR 33S	11.8:1
6	Sascha Falter	Germany	Associated RC10	Reedy Mr S	Keil SCRC	Novak 410 HPC	MPX EX-1	KO 1001	Yokomo TF 330	Yokomo TR 33S	11.8:1
7	Ben Sturnham	UK	Schumacher Cougar 2000	Tanaplan 11 Double	Schumacher SCRC	Nosram Dominator	MPX EX-1	KO 1001	Schumacher Green Minis	Schumacher Green Minis	17/95
8	Ralf Helbing	Germany	Associated RC10	Evolution 12 Triple	RH H/Speed Panasonic	RH Digital 3000	MPX EX-10	KO 1001	Yokomo TF 310	Yokomo TR 32S	11.8:1
9	Heikki Naulapaa	Finland	Losi Pro SE	LRP Bee D	LRP SCRC	LRP 25 AMS Mk 2	Sanwa	KO 1001	Yokomo Cut TR 32S	Jammin' Step Pin	10.3:1
10	Jurgen Lautenbach	Germany	Schumacher Cougar 2000	LRP Bee D	LRP SCRC	LRP 25 AMS Mk 2	MPX EX-1	MPX PS 87	Yokomo Cut TR 32S	TR 32S	20/95

## results

4WD QUALIFYING POSITIONS Meeting: 1993 4WD European Championship Venue: ULM, Germany

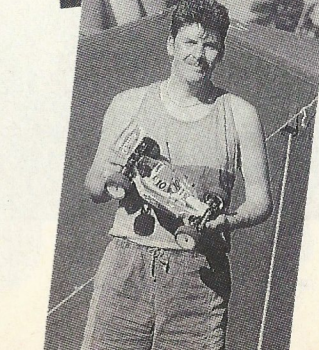
	NAME	Country	Car	Motor	Cells	ESC	Radio	Servo	Front Tyres	Rear Tyres
1	Craig Drescher	UK	Yokomo Works 93	Reedy Mr S	Keil SCRC	Novak 410 HPC	KO Esprit 2	KO 1001	Yokomo TF 32 S	Yokomo TR 32 S
2	Sascha Falter	Germany	Yokomo Works 93	Reedy Mr S	Keil Pushed SCRC	Novak 410 HPC	MPX	KO 1001	Yokomo TF 330 S	Yokomo TP 32 S
3	Ben Sturnham	UK	Schumacher Bosscat	Tanaplan 11 Double	Schumacher SCRC	Nosram Dominator	JR Apex	KO 1001	Schumacher Green Minis	Schumacher Green Minis
4	William Mitcham	UK	Schumacher Bosscat	Corally 13 Triple	Gale Force SCRC	Nosram Dominator	KO Esprit 2	KO 1001	Schumacher Green Minis	Schumacher Green Minis
5	Kevin Moore	UK	Schumacher Cat 2000	LRP Bee D	LRP SCRC	LRP 25 AMS Mk 2	KO Esprit 2	KO 1001	Yokomo TF 310 S	Yokomo TR 32 M
6	Heikki Naulapaa	Finland	Yokomo Works 93	LRP Bee D	LRP SCRC	LRP 25 AMS Mk 2	Sanwa	KO 1001	Losi X Pattern	Yokomo TR 32 S
7	Rory Cull	UK	Yokomo Works 93	Reedy Mr S	Yokomo/Reedy SCRC	Nosram Dominator	KO Esprit 2	KO 1001	Yokomo TF 32 S	Yokomo TR 32 M
8	James Pearson	UK	Yokomo Works 93	Tanaplan 11 Triple	Parma Final Match SCRC	Nosram Dominator	JR Apex	KO 1001	Yokomo TF 32 S	Yokomo TR 32 S
9	Jamie Booth	UK	Kyosho Lazer ZX-R	Corally 13 Triple	Orion SCRC	Novak 410 HPC	Futaba FF3	KO 1003	Schumacher Blue Minis	Schumacher Green Minis
10	Ralf Skatulla	Germany	Schumacher Cat 2000	Twister Scorpion 12 Triple	CS Boost SCRC	CS Rocket	Kuhnlein EX-1	KO 1001	Schumacher Green Minis	Schumacher Green Minis

who would not change their minds. So we had a complete U-turn to add another chapter to the catalogue of disasters were had seen since arrival.

### The rain intervened

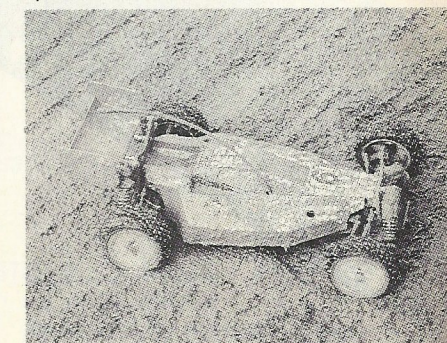
Further storms over the next couple of hours forced the EFRA Secretary, Jon Smith, to make a difficult decision. Jon decided to abandoned the remainder of the event and to use the three completed qualifying rounds to determine the winner. I felt that Jon had to make the decision to call a halt to the meeting, but question whether we had to find a winner. Wouldn't it have been fairer to the other 140+ competitors to have abandoned the meeting without a result?

Craig Drescher who was currently holding FTD position regained the 4WD European crown



Marc Neale drove well at the Euros but didn't make the top 10.

Steve Haynes drove his first Euros for Kyosho.



### Final Positions of the 2WD Brits

- |      |                 |                        |                 |
|------|-----------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| 1.   | Craig           | Drescher               | Associated RC10 |
| 5.   | Rory Cull       | Associated RC10        |                 |
| 7.   | Ben Sturnam's   | Schumacher Cougar 2000 |                 |
| 8.   | Kevin Moore     | Schumacher Cougar 2000 |                 |
| 11.  | William Mitcham | Schumacher Cougar 2000 |                 |
| 12.  | Alan Harman     | Tamiya Dyna Storm      |                 |
| 13.  | Ellis Stafford  | Tamiya Dyna Storm      |                 |
| 14.  | Marc Neale      | Associated RC10        |                 |
| 19.  | Jamie Booth     | Kyosho Mod. Triumph    |                 |
| 22.  | Andy Shaw       | Schumacher Cougar 2000 |                 |
| 23.  | Jon Tucker      | Schumacher Cougar 2000 |                 |
| 24.  | Matthew Needham | Schumacher Cougar 2000 |                 |
| 29.  | Lee Wright      | Tamiya Dyna Storm      |                 |
| 31.  | James Pearson   | Associated RC10        |                 |
| 36.  | Steve Haynes    | Kyosho Triumph Pro X   |                 |
| 43.  | Neil Mottram    | Associated RC10        |                 |
| 48.  | Darren Styles   | Schumacher Cougar 2000 |                 |
| 49.  | David Adrian    | Schumacher Cougar 2000 |                 |
| 54.  | Jon Leonard     | Associated RC10        |                 |
| 60.  | Steve West      | Kyosho Triumph Pro X   |                 |
| 71.  | Steven Lawson   | Schumacher Cougar 2000 |                 |
| 92.  | Robert Adrian   | Schumacher Cougar 2000 |                 |
| 98.  | Rob             | Gammon Mod. Triumph    |                 |
| 100. | Dave Bailey     | Kyosho Triumph Pro X   |                 |
| 130. | Steven Harris   | Kyosho Triumph Pro X   |                 |

Neatly painted Cat 2000 spotted in Ulm.

thunderstorm made the circuit more befitting a canoe slalom. The International Jury, consisting of all the Team Managers, EFRA Officials and Race Organisers, were then called upon to decide the next course of action and the decision they reached was ludicrous. This was to cancel Round 1 and restart the event after drying out the wet track. Amid loads of protests over this decision, not least from the British Team, a further Jury meeting failed to restore normality and after a delay of a couple of hours the meeting recommenced with Round 1 with Lee unluckily losing out. Abandoning a qualifying round because of the track conditions was way out of order which we expected would create a precedent to cause problems in the future. Round 1 was cancelled because of the deluged track! This decision by the International Jury caused a lot of heated discussion in the pits - perhaps standing in 2 inches of mud and water made us all a little tetchy? At 3 pm Round 2 began with the track still holding surplus water and in heat 1 only 2 cars from 10 finished, the others either dumping or stopping with electrical problems. 60% of cars in Round 2 dumped and many others failed to finish causing this round, in terms of qualifying times, to be another washout. The organisers seemed intent only on making sure the

another heavy thunderstorm, after 11 heats had been completed, put the organisers in a dilemma. I estimated that over 1 cm of rain fell in about 10 minutes and it was Lee Wright who got soaked!! Lee, driving a Tamiya 401X, was holding FTD with the only 14 lap run accomplished thus far when this



## Final Positions of the 4WD Brits

- |     |                 |                     |
|-----|-----------------|---------------------|
| 1.  | Craig Drescher  | Yokomo Works '93    |
| 3.  | Ben Sturham's   | Schumacher Bosscat  |
| 4.  | William Mitcham | Schumacher Bosscat  |
| 5.  | Kevin Moore     | Schumacher Cat 2000 |
| 6.  | Rory Cull       | Yokomo Works '93    |
| 7.  | James Pearson   | Yokomo Works '93    |
| 8.  | Jamie Booth     | Kyosho Lazer ZX-R   |
| 9.  | David Adrian    | Schumacher Cat 2000 |
| 11. | Lee Wright      | Tamiya              |
| 12. | Marc Neale      | Yokomo Works '93    |
| 24. | Ellis Stafford  | Tamiya              |
| 28. | Stephen Lawson  | Schumacher Cat 2000 |
| 29. | Matthew Needham | Schumacher Cat 2000 |
| 32. | Darren Styles   | Schumacher Cat 2000 |
| 34. | Steve Haynes    | Kyosho Lazer ZX-R   |
| 39. | Jon Tucker      | Schumacher Cat 2000 |
| 41. | Jon Leonard     | Yokomo Works '93    |
| 43. | Steve West      | Kyosho Lazer ZX-R   |
| 48. | Rob Gammon      | Kyosho Lazer ZX-R   |
| 49. | Dave Bailey     | Kyosho Lazer ZX-R   |
| 58. | Neil Mottram    | Schumacher Cat 2000 |
| 68. | Andy Shaw       | Kyosho Lazer ZX-R   |
| 72. | Steven Harris   |                     |

he lost last year to Ellis Stafford without having to race a final.

Although the European Championships were unbelievable, it was nice to see a UK driver bringing home both trophies once again. Well done Craig Drescher.....

### Conclusions...

The organisation left a lot to be desired at Ulm, a money making racket was one prominent Team Managers view of the host club as little attempt was made to improve conditions in the pits, which were truly horrific throughout the event. Brian Mitcham likened our lot to being in the trenches in the first world war and I cant argue with that because he's old enough to remember!

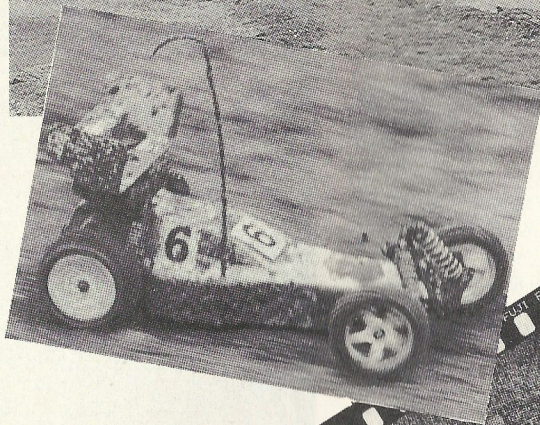
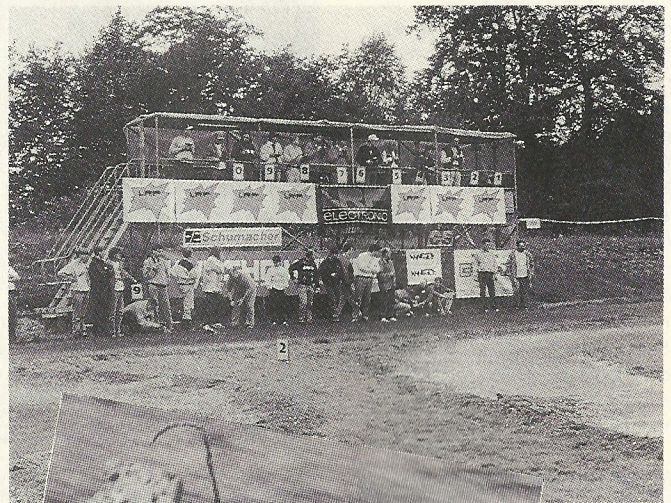
We had to make the best of it ourselves in the mud. Rory Cull

turned up on the last day well-prepared. He was dressed in shorts and a tee-shirt and wearing plastic bags inside his trainers.! Rory's attitude was typical of most of the UK contingent who laughed their way through all of the problems. Must say though, that it was a relief to start the journey home - just like escaping from Ulm-Catraz!!!

On a serious note, there are certain issues which need debating. How is it that EFRA and in particular the 1/10 Off Road Chairman, in whose hands the responsibility lies, can allow three out of the last four European Championship meetings to turn out

as complete jokes? The disasters in Antwerp, Naevstead and now in Ulm plainly show that a lack of control, or conviction, is evident

within the EFRA set up. It will take a lot of convincing on their part before many of us will step outside the UK to race again...



*Ulm will be remembered for terrible weather, bad organisation and continual track maintenance*