

Mendip, England

1994 EFRA 1/10 IC EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

A Great Circuit,

The very first 1/10 IC circuit EFRA European Championships were held at the beautiful Mendip circuit near Weston-Super-Mare on the 11-14th of August.

This meeting had been keenly awaited by every driver that I have spoken to during the year, and was a chance to race 1/10 IC cars for four days or perhaps even a week, as the circuit was open for practice from the previous Monday. Who could pass up that prospect? Some poor souls had to stay at work, but there were a good number of racers at the track all week! Initially the track didn't present much grip, but a few laps soon knocked off the dust, and the grip started to come up.

The majority of entrants arrived on Wednesday or Thursday, but as it rained all day Wednesday and on Thursday morning, most drivers opted to hone their skills by practising on 'Ridge Racer' in

the amusement arcades of nearby Weston! Thursday afternoon saw a dry track, then the grip came up very quickly, which was hardly surprising considering how many cars were beating around the track. The surface at Mendip soon became very grippy in the baking hot sun, with the tyre wear rate becoming minimal.

The rest of Thursday was spent experimenting with tyre and suspension set-ups, with the whole session designated an untimed practice session. The racing line gradually began to



The massive British Team in front of Mendip's immaculate rostrum.

"Every picture tells a story"! The smile says it all, as Ben Kelsall relaxes after the 45 minute Final.



Great Weather...



Swede Kenth Jansson's Parma Mercedes bodied DIY BMT car certainly caught our attention with his sponsor's stickers!

Report by Paul Kelsall



Derek McLarney won himself a subscription to RRC for his brilliant climb up through the Finals!

darken, and drivers soon found that the grip was outstanding. Most of the drivers discovered that no sooner had they found a nice balanced set up to the car, than they had to stiffen things up a little more to cope with the extra grip. Eventually virtually everyone opted to run the stiffest springs, damper oil, and some of the hardest tyres that they had in their pit boxes.

Once the sun had come out on Thursday afternoon, the whole track had a 'Continental' feel to it. The flags of the competing nations were

fluttering in the breeze, the sun was hot, and in the pits there were lots of different languages being spoken (or shouted in the cases of the more excitable ones!). There were competitors present from Belgium, Britain, France, Holland, Italy, Portugal and Sweden. John Dyett of Hayley Green Models was elected the British Team Manager, and he did an excellent job of organising the drivers and liaising with the officials. John was also at the meeting to support his BMT Team drivers, so our thanks must go to him for devoting so much time to the needs of the Brits,

regardless of the make of car they were driving. Thanks John!

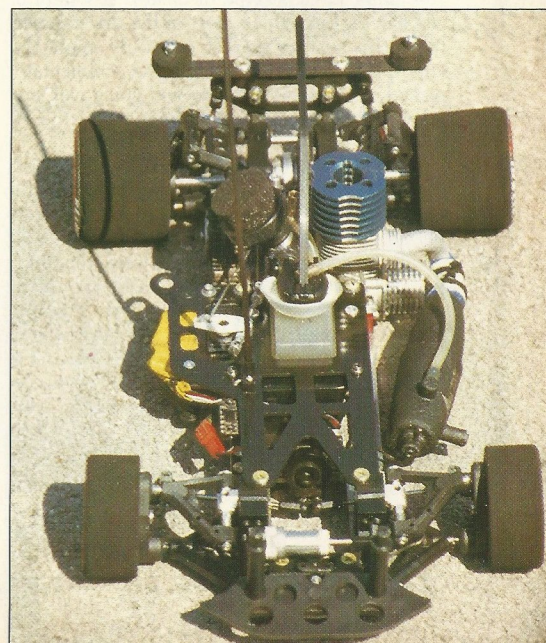
Friday morning brought with it the first official scrutineering session, and with it the news that most of the Nova Rossi derived engines wouldn't be eligible to race in this European Championship meeting unless the piston and liner were changed due to a manufacturing error that infringed the rules. New pistons and liners had been sent over by Nova Rossi to be exchanged (free) with those found to be illegal; so most drivers spent their free practice time on Friday morning running their engines in.

Qualifying

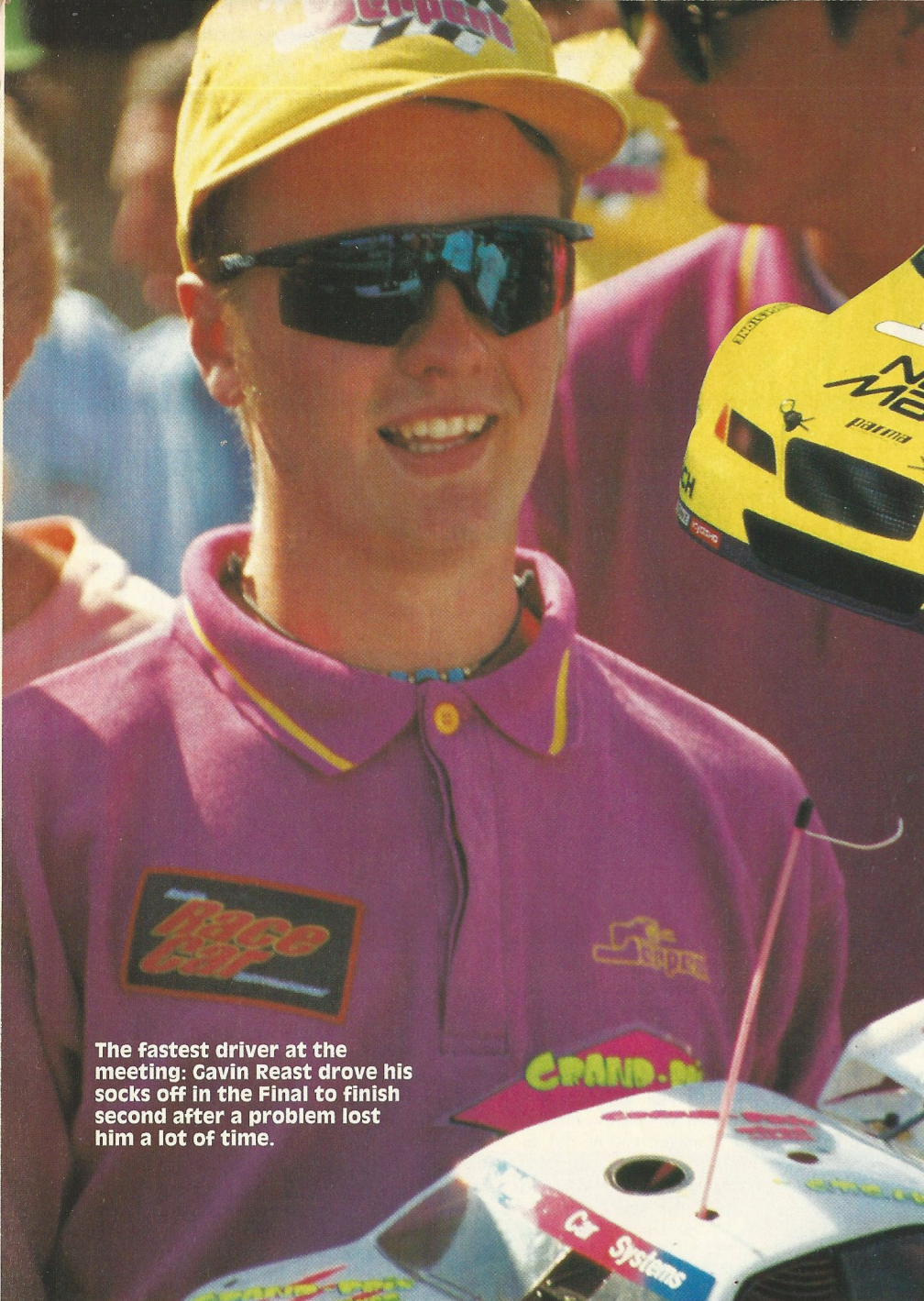
Friday afternoon finally brought the first of the timed qualifying sessions. The format of the qualifying was to be the 'five flying laps' system, where the drivers are given ten minutes (per



This car really was a thing of beauty!



...And A Great Win For Ben Kelsall!



The fastest driver at the meeting: Gavin Reast drove his socks off in the Final to finish second after a problem lost him a lot of time.



Daniel Pero's Serpent Impact used yet another Parma Mercedes.

drivers were now running diffs that were set so tight, they were almost like solid rear axles. A little too tight though and the power-on oversteer coming round the bottom sweeper onto the straight was too much to cope with. I reckon that if I had taken a box of Aspirins with me, I could have made a small fortune curing headaches! It was also very frustrating to better your time and expect to move up the order, only to find that several other drivers have done even better, so to your amazement you have run faster only to drop down in the ratings!

After Round 2, Gavin Reast had done well to pull up close to Bas Janmaat by putting in a 18.722 average, but Bas was still improving, and at this point looked uncatchable with his storming time of 18.588!

Round 3 saw no improvement forthcoming from Bas Janmaat, but his younger brother Pim moved up into eighth spot, Steve Tilley eased up a position, and Steve Hart moved into the top ten with his PB Apollo.

The last qualifying Round was electric!! Bas Janmaat put in another great run to set his fastest time of 18.552, but Gavin Reast put in an absolute beauty of a run to snatch the pole position with 18.372! Steve Tilley and 20 year old KLM pilot Julius Kolff both drove steaming runs, Julius having set a new pole on 18.524 prior to Gavin hitting the tarmac, with the consequence that poor Bas, after holding pole for so long, was demoted to fourth spot!

The Grip Just Got Better and Better...

Saturday was the main qualifying day, with three complete Rounds offering each driver 30 minutes of track time in which to go for a fast 5 lap average. On the face of it, you might conclude that everyone would be going faster because they would now be getting better at setting the car up, but as usual, life is never that simple. The extra oil and rubber that was being ingrained onto the track, combined with the scorchingly hot sun, changed the track's conditions gradually for every Round. The immense grip resulted in some cars starting to 'grip roll'. Add to this the fact that the Mendip circuit has a combination of 'power-off'

Christmas Tree Finals

Well, if the top ten drivers thought that their troubles were over, they were mistaken! Only the top four drivers actually qualified straight into the main Final, whilst the rest of the field would have to compete throughout the 1/16th, 1/8th, 1/4 and Semi Finals, dependent upon their qualifying position. A driver from a low Final could actually make it all the way to the main Final if he ran



DRIVER	SPONSORS	CAR	ENGINE	FUEL	TYRES (F)	TYRES (R)	RADIO	SERVOS	GEARING	BODY	QUAL	FINAL
Ben Kelsall (GB)	Mum & Dad	Serpent Impact	Serpent SX15	Elite Pink Power	Grand Prix 39	Grand Prix 33	JR X-756	KO 301 Futaba 132H	13/17 49/44	Serpent Opel Vectra	6	1
Gavin Reast (GB)	Elite Models P. Broadhurst	Serpent Impact	Serpent SX15	Elite Pink Power	Grand Prix 40	Grand Prix 35	KO Esprit II	KO 301 KO 901	13/17 49/44	Serpent Opel Vectra	1	2
Derek McLarney (GB)	Bury Model Shop	Serpent Impact	Serpent SX15	Model Technics	Ennetti 40	Arrows 35	Sanwa Exerd	Futaba 9302 S148	14/17 48/44	Frewer BMW	9	3
Julius Kolff (NL)	Serpent	Serpent Impact	Serpent SX15	Tomado	Grand Prix 39	Grand Prix 36	KO Esprit II	KO 901	13/17 47/43	Serpent Opel Vectra	3	4
Ian Oddie (GB)	OPS Hayley Green	BMT 931	OPS .15	Model Technics	Ellegi 40	Ellegi 35	Futaba FF3	KO 1006 9601	16/21 R/W	Racecraft Cavalier	10	5
Bas Janmaat (NL)	Serpent	Serpent Impact	Serpent SX15	Tomado	Grand Prix 39	Grand Prix 36	Airtronics Callber	KO 901	13/17 47/43	Serpent Opel Vectra	4	6
Alan Bryant (GB)	British Knights R.H. Models	Serpent Impact	Serpent SX15	Elite Pink Power	Arrows 40	Arrows 35	JR Apex	KO 301 9302	13/17 49/44	Serpent Opel Vectra	8	7
Steve Tilley (GB)	Mum & Dad	Serpent Impact	Serpent SX15	Elite Pink Power	Grand Prix 40	Grand Prix 35	KO Esprit II	KO 301	13/17 49/44	Serpent Opel Vectra	2	8
Mark Boothman (GB)	PB, EMC Nova Rossi	PB Apollo	Nova Rossi CX15	PB SOS	PB 40	PB 35	JR X-756	JR 2315	20/26 60/56	PB BMW	7	9
Steve Hart (GB)	PB	PB Apollo	Nova Rossi CX15	PB SOS	PB Jap 40	PB Jap Med	JR Apex	JR 517	20/26	PB BMW	5	10

well in each race, so some people were in for a long day, but eventually those that made it into the main Final were:

- 1 Gavin Reast (GB)
- 2 Steve Tilley (GB)
- 3 Julius Kolff (NL)
- 4 Bas Janmaat (NL)
- 5 Steve Hart (GB)
- 6 Ben Kelsall (GB)
- 7 Mark Boothman (GB)
- 8 Alan Bryant (GB)
- 9 Derek McLarney (GB)
- 10 Ian Oddie (GB)

Forty Five Minutes Of Action!

Any Final obviously needs a reliable car, but reliability was even more important now as the Final was to last for 45 minutes!

After the usual ceremonies and presentation of the drivers to the crowd, the race got underway to a blistering pace right from the start. Steve Tilley got away well to be just in front of Gavin Reast after the first lap, with Bas Janmaat a close third and Ben Kelsall in fourth. At the start of the second lap there was a coming together which caused the start of Steve Hart's troubles, as not long afterwards he lost a drive shaft, which lost him a lot of time. Meanwhile, the first four drivers pulled away from the rest of the field slightly.

The blistering pace at the front was certain to result in drama, as after all, surely none of them were going to drive for 45 minutes at that pace without an incident? And so it was to be, the spectators gasped as Steve Tilley rolled his car, albeit back onto its wheels, letting Gavin Reast into the lead, with Bas Janmaat in second and Steve Tilley third. Ben Kelsall was tucked in behind the leading group, and round and round they went, seemingly connected by the same length of string.

The next five minutes were incident filled. Julius Kolff collected Gavin Reast as he exited the pits, with the top positions now Bas Janmaat, Steve Tilley and Ben Kelsall, with Gavin Reast chasing in fourth. After refuelling, Steve Tilley was leading with Gavin in second, soon to take first place when Steve had a prolonged pit stop due to his gearbox jamming in second gear.

Gavin's run at the front was cut short when he too had to pit for Walt Bailey to replace a split silicon exhaust joiner, caused either by the incident with Julius or when Gavin got the car sideways coming into the narrow pit lane. Gavin's long pit stop left Bas Janmaat and Ben Kelsall fighting over the lead. The only respite coming

when either of them came into the pits. Nail-biting stuff, I can tell you!

Both Gavin Reast and Steve Hart rejoined the race after their troubles, only for Bas Janmaat to need maintenance as the cone within his tuned pipe had come loose, occasionally blocking the exhaust's vent and cutting the engine. Bas's problems allowed Ben Kelsall to settle down to a comfortable rhythm in the lead. I remember someone saying to me in the pits: "Ben has got it in the bag now if he keeps calm!" I looked at my watch, just 20 minutes had gone. We hadn't even made half distance yet!

Meanwhile Derek McLarney and Alan Bryant were fighting over second place, Alan eventually dropping away from second when he slipped up on the bend at the end of the straight, breaking a steering upright, so second place was all Derek's, but for how long? Gavin Reast was back on the track and going flat out in his effort to get back to the front. All eyes were on Gavin's car, as the rate he was circulating at was that of a pole position qualifying run. Awesome!

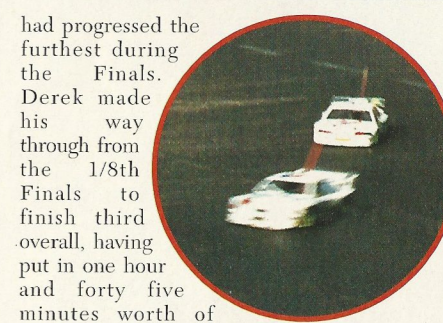
Gavin was really pulling everyone in but would he be able to catch Ben?

Ben was in cruise mode to preserve the car and make sure that he was still there at the end. Gavin passed Derek McLarney, who knew Gavin was much faster so graciously pulled over to let Gavin by, to claim second place and then set his sights on Ben, over whom Gavin was between one and two seconds per lap faster.

In the latter stages of the race Gavin had just about worn out his rear tyres which made his job harder, whilst in contrast Ben finished the 45 minute race having only worn away 3.5mm from his rear tyres. Mind you, Ben did make a couple of errors in the last minute which no doubt caused a few hearts to flutter, especially mine and Ben's!

The 45 minute mark came, then over the line went Ben Kelsall to become the first ever EFRA 1/10 IC European Champion. I can tell you now that the Final was probably the most nerve-racking 45 minutes of my life! Gavin Reast took second place and 1/8 RallyCross enthusiast Derek McLarney an excellent third, with all three of them driving Serpent Impact cars, the first two of the latest 'narrow chassis' spec, with Derek's being a box standard kit. In fact Derek won the prize put up by RRC for the driver who

"Take that! Ben gets his 'Champagne shower' from Gavin. Is Derek busy swallowing the stuff...?"



had progressed the furthest during the Finals. Derek made his way through from the 1/8th Finals to finish third overall, having put in one hour and forty five minutes worth of driving in the one day to do so!! Well done Derek!

All in all, it was a truly remarkable week(end), and of course, one that I and Ben will never forget. It's funny you know, but Ben always reckons that I never mention him in the magazine. He once said "I bet it'll take a good result in the Euro's before you mention me!" Well, let me put that one right — Congratulations Ben Kelsall, European Champion, from your Dad!

1 Ben Kelsall (GB)	Serpent	136 laps	2701.97
2 Gavin Reast (GB)	Serpent	131 laps	2705.32
3 Derek McLarney (GB)	Serpent	129 laps	2719.19
4 Julius Kolff (NL)	Serpent	124 laps	2709.88
5 Ian Oddie (GB)	BMT	120 laps	2711.34
6 Bas Janmaat (NL)	Serpent	117 laps	2708.39
7 Alan Bryant (GB)	Serpent	110 laps	2718.50
8 Steve Tilley (GB)	Serpent	105 laps	2703.58
9 Mark Boothman (GB)	PB	92 laps	2700.00
10 Steve Hart (GB)	PB	63 laps	2700.00

