

1988 RALLY EURO CHAMPS

After 12 years of European Championships held abroad, the U.K. finally took the bull by the horns and hosted the 13th event. The venue was Pendle and District Model Car Club's superb venue, and one thing's for sure; they weren't superstitious! The Pendle Club possess the best track and facilities in the U.K., so having agreed in 1992 to organise this year's event, have worked hard since on continually improving the track and the actual organisation of the event. Racers tend to forget the nightmare of arranging Porta-Cabins for race control, commentary points, toilet facilities, referees, the rostrum, grandstands, canteen facilities and shops, and last but not least, a marquee big enough to hold up to 140 competitors!

Race control was possibly the worst obstacle to overcome. E.F.R.A., the governing body for the European Championships, state that two computer systems must be run in tandem, linked to two A.M.B. systems and two loops. Obviously such an event requires a back up system, a 3rd identical A.M.B. system being required, so the B.R.C.A. would like to thank the Basingstoke Model Car Club for the loan of their equipment.

Finally the time came for the event to start during the first week of July. Sunday 3rd saw the officials start to arrive and by Tuesday virtually all of them were there, but there was still a lot of work to be done before opening day: Wednesday,

but by late evening, the event was ready to roll. Wednesday morning arrived all too early for those who'd been working so hard all week! Would everything work? Would the competitors arrive? My God! What if they didn't come? Of course they would!

By mid-morning, reception was hectic, with drivers and mechanics booking in to receive their laminated identity badges to hang around their necks. Technical inspection was open, with every car being checked for eligibility, including wheelbase/width, wing size, exhaust homologation and fuel tank capacity. The chassis and tank would then be engraved.

Race Control was very well run by Ken and James Weedon with Paul Hill.



Drivers from 14 countries had entered:

AUSTRIA	8
CROATIA/GREEK REP.	3
FINLAND	3
FRANCE	10
GERMANY	16
HOLLAND	3
ITALY	20
PORTUGAL	10
SLOVAK REPUBLIC	2
SPAIN	17
SWEDEN	6
SWITZERLAND	3
UNITED KINGDOM	20
TOTAL:	120



The scrutineering bay was busy, making nearly 350 checks over the duration of the meeting!

THE SUPERB PENDLE TRACK.



Andrea Gennari won a very successful event, whilst the British Team scored their best ever result...

The packed Grandstand during the Final.



Wednesday saw the beginning of free practice, but then of course it rained, and for some reason no one wanted to practice! Granada T.V. arrived with Fred their infamous weather man, wanting to film some action, so Mike Cradock and Mark Chaplin from the British Kyosho Team were persuaded to perform. All went well until they asked for the cars to jump out of the 'bomb hole' at high speed. Well, Mark got slightly out of line and executed a perfect direct hit on the £3000 camera (!), the cameraman merely uttering 'ouch' as the car ricocheted off the camera into his leg. What self control!!!

Wednesday night saw torrential rain falling, leaving everyone praying for better weather....

Thursday was set aside for practice, for which each driver had to sign in at the base of the referees podium, overseen by Kevin Blears. Needless to say no one argued, not even the Italians! Entry to the rostrum was allowed on production of the drivers' badge, which was duly punched with a ticket punch. A maximum of 4 practice runs, each of 10 minutes, were allowed.

Friday arrived complete with sunshine, and the drivers were introduced to the dynamic duo of Wolfgang Petermann and Stephen Veaux, our referees. Friday morning saw the timed practice Heats, and by midday the U.K. were leading the field after local driver, 17 year old David Crompton, had put in the fastest time. The current Champion, Roberto Ghedini, was a lowly 95th, but remember this was only timed practice!

French lady driver Brigitte Putanier drove a Works Laro.

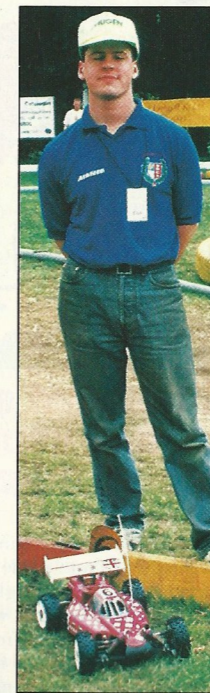


Philippe Lachat took a superb TQ with his Works Laro, only to retire from his Semi Final with a broken shocker.



Qualifying

The afternoon saw the first round of qualifying for which



Stewart Wilcox was the highest placed British driver in 4th overall.

The British Team, looking smart in their BRCA shirts, had their best ever result with Stewart Wilcox finishing 4th overall after Jamie Booth initially led the Final.

the track, although having been subjected to some hard practising, was in perfect condition. After Round1, Spanish driver Daniel Vega's Mugen powered by a Mugen Uno engine, held F.T.D. by 8/10 of a second from Philippe Lachat's Laro. Roberto Ghedini was 34th. The meeting had attracted two lady drivers this year; France's No 1 driver Brigitte Putanier was driving a Laro as was Nati Torra from Spain. Brigitte was 31st and the younger Nati was 83rd. The British Team had 15 of their drivers in the top 40. Not bad eh?

Round 2 started on Saturday morning, but only after we'd had a fantastic time on Friday night, organised by Stan Crompton for the drivers and guests. A 3 course meal was served at the Silverman Hall in the heart of Nelson, with the entertainment supplied by a group called 'Magic' who sang all of 'Queen's' hits, which went down a storm with absolutely everyone! Over 260 people attended what must be the best ever bash a Euros has ever seen. Brilliant Stan!

Well, back to Saturday and Round 2. The track was faster now, Jamie Booth's Inferno setting FTD, just ahead of Philippe Lachat, whilst Ghedini still wasn't showing. Roberto had dropped

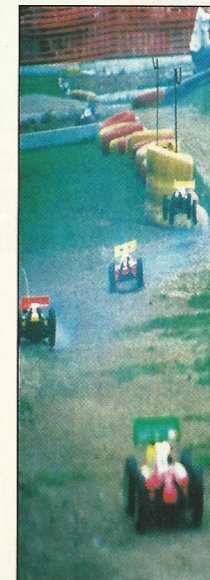
the Crono in favour of the new Bergonzoni 'Flash' car, and he obviously hadn't had enough track time with it, as he had dropped to 51st, whilst Ian Oddie's Pirate shot up from 73rd to 14th. The night's entertainment had obviously worked wonders! Not so for Mark Chaplin though, who I imagine would need a chiropractor after his exploits on the dance floor!



Stewart Wilcox 's car in the pits for fuel.

Round 3 saw Philippe Lachat assert his authority by putting in an absolute flyer, five seconds (!) clear of Jamie Booth, with Lawrence Harris now in 3rd. David Crompton had looked set to take the top spot, but running out of fuel on the last lap ruined his chance. Mike Cradock moved up to 33rd from 45th, but the biggest climber was John Zottl, up from 47th to 25th.

The last qualifying Round saw the track holding up extremely well, for although the top six places didn't change, David Crompton moved from 12th into 7th with a brilliant run, and Frederic Veyseyre stormed up from 20th to 9th with his Yankee



British Team Positions

Name	Round 1	2	3	4
Gary Marsden	5	9	10	10
Lawrence Harris	6	10	3	3
Jamie Booth	7	1	2	2
Danny Conway	11	7		12
David Crompton	12	11	12	7
John Skidmore	19	28	34	45
Justin Mackey	21	35	39	48
Stewart Wilcox	22	13	17	25
Tommy Chung	24	29	35	46
Mike Cradock	27	45	33	44
Mark Stitson	28	46	40	42
Mark Chaplin	32	42	51	52
John Zottl	35	47	25	22
Derek McLarney	37	49	41	27
James Weedon	38	32	44	36
Nick Simmerson	53	52	54	35
Harry Box	59	54	55	61
Tony Miller	63	30	36	40
Paul Entwistle	69	41	50	55
Ian Oddie	73	14	11	18

Roberto Ghedini put in his best run in the last round, only for his mechanic to fail to present the car for scrutineering, taking the car straight to the marquee. When called for over the P.A. system, he shot out of the marquee at Warp 9 to the scrutineering point, but the rules had already been broken, as it was clearly stated that each car must be immediately inspected. There then followed a heated argument and an official protest from the Italian Team, resulting in a Team Manager's meeting at the end of the day where a vote was taken, the result being that Ghedini's time was allowed, placing him 19th.

The 'Christmas Tree' Finals

Saturday night saw much 'burning of the late night oil', preparing the cars for the gruelling 'Christmas Tree' Finals. Sunday dawned complete with sunshine yet again, with the first Brit out to race none other than Mr Harry Box. Harry had suffered a serious case of 'lower leg tremble' in qualifying which left him in the 1/32, but now he was a new man, looking fresh, relaxed, and confident of rising up through the Finals. He was right, winning his first race after the leader ran out of fuel on the last lap! In his next race Harry met Paul Entwistle and Chalky Skidmore, although the field was led away by what must be the best looking RallyCross racer in the business (she can pit next to me any time!): Brigitte Putanier driving her Laro! Chalky had engine trouble and retired, but Harry and Paul's Pirates went through. These two ungentlemanly characters didn't allow Brigitte to win, but she did make it through by finishing 3rd. The other 1/16 Final was where we met for the first time Mike Cradock, Tommy Chung, Justin Mackey and

The top 14 places making up the two Semi's were:

SEMI A

Laro/Phillipe Lachat
Turbo Inferno/Lawrence Harris
Mugen Athlete/Daniel Vega
Mugen Athlete/David Crompton
Yankee/Frederic Veysseyre
Turbo Inferno/Maurizio Monesi
Laro/Alexandre Privat

SEMI B

Turbo Inferno/Jamie Booth
Mugen Athlete/Daniel Reckward
Turbo Inferno/Andrea Gennari
Turbo Inferno/Erwin Weimann
Super Tempo/Gary Marsden
Turbo Inferno/Danny Conway
Turbo Inferno/Magnus Amilon



Andrea Gennari inherited the lead shortly before the end of the race, and kept his Turbo Inferno on its wheels to take the win.

Mark Chaplin. Tommy and Justin went through, Tommy winning with Justin following in second.

On and up we go now to the 1/8 A Final. Harry

and Paul joined Nick Simmerson, but I'm afraid that none of them made it through. One driver that did qualify though was Extreme driver Alessandro Cantoni, who progressed right through to the main A Final. The 1/8 B saw Justin Mackey blast through from 9th place to win, followed by Tommy Chung, so they were through to the 1/4 Finals. James Weedon, Tony Miller and Mark Stitson failed to move up, Mark finishing an unlucky 4th.

So to the first Quarter Final, complete with Derek McLarney and Stewart Wilcox, plus the defending Euro Champ, Roberto Ghedini. Ghedini leapt into the lead with his new Flash car

NAME	AGE	QUAL POS	FINAL POS	LAP SCORE	SPONSOR CAR	MAKE OF	ENGINE	FUEL SERVO	STEERING FRONT	TYRES REAR	TRANS
Jamie Booth	25	1	9	49 45:36.81 Turbo	Kyosho, Ripmax OS, KO Propo	Kyosho Inferno	OS	Modeltechnics 25% Duraglo	Futaba 9303	Medial Pro Turbo Rats	KO Spirit
Erwin Weimann	36	2	2	53 45:5.49	Kyosho SMI	Kyosho Turbo Inferno	Rex	Power Fuel 10%	KO 1003	Amark	Futaba FF3
David Zoff	17	3	10	48 45:51.80	Nova-Rossi, Ted Longshaw, GW Racing	Mugen Athlete	Nova Rossi 2000	Modeltechnics 25% Duraglo	KO 1003	Mantua Ghosts	Futaba FF3
Maurizio Monesi	27	4	3	53 45:10.10	OPS	Kyosho Turbo Inferno	OPS	OPS	Sariwa EXB	Atlas	Elegi
Lawrence Harris	28	5	8	50 45:25.26	Kyosho, Ripmax OS	Kyosho Turbo Inferno	OS	Modeltechnics Duraglo 25%	Futaba 9303	Medial Pro Turbo Rats	Futaba FF3
Stewart Wilcox	23	6	4	53 45:13.65	Ted Longshaw, Mugen, KO Propo Mondial, GW Racing	Mugen Athlete	Mondial	Modeltechnics Dynaglo 25%	KO 1003	Mantua Ghosts	KO EX10
Daniel Reckward	18	7	6	51 43:26.94	Hobby Tech Mugen SMI	Mugen Athlete	Rex	Self Mixed	Multiplex MC	Mugen Victory	Futaba PCM
Andrea Gennari	17	8	1	54 45:41.39	OPS	Kyosho Turbo Inferno	OPS	OPS	Sariwa EXB	Atlas Elegi	Futaba FF3
Alessandro Cantoni	20	9	5	53 45:27.49	Mantua Maces	SC Extreme	Mantua Forza	Mantua 23%	Sariwa	Mantua Bonif	Sariwa EXB
Magnus Amilon	20	10	7	51 45:11.59	Kyosho, RB	Kyosho Turbo Inferno	RB Concept	Modeltechnics Duraglo 25%	KO 1003	Hong Nor X Pattern	Futaba PCM

(perhaps he was going to wipe the floor with it?!), but no sooner was he in the lead than quick as a flash he'd broken a shocker and retired - a flash in the pan, you might say! Both of our boys were in the hunt; Stewart was running in a strong second with Derek holding 3rd, but then with about six minutes to go he had a cut and was, alas, relegated to 5th place, but Stewart was through!

The other Quarter Final featured John Zottl, Ian Oddie, Justin Mackey and Tommy Chung, so who would move up into the other Semi? John Zottl had a runaway win, leading from lap 2 to the end, with Ian Oddie also looking good only to cruelly run dry with 1 1/2 laps left to run! Justin's bad start made him risk a 10 minute fuel stop but he only managed 9 1/4 minutes whilst Tommy's engine cut for no apparent reason.

The Semi Finals

The first Semi featured the TQ man; Philippe Lachat, on pole. He led away at a blistering pace, pulling clear of the field led by local boy, David Crompton. Philippe had the race sewn up, but decided to show how he could really go, only to wipe out the front off-side suspension on a track marker in front of the grandstand. To say that he was upset would be an understatement, not to mention now in need of a new transmitter after throwing his down the rostrum steps! This drama handed the lead to David Crompton followed by Monesi, then Lawrence Harris, Stewart Wilcox and Alessandro Cantoni. This put three British drivers in the main Final. How many more would make it?

The second Semi was won convincingly by Jamie Booth, but alas, neither John Zottl, Danny Conway or Gary Marsden managed to make it through.

This meeting gave the best ever result we have had for qualifying, with four British drivers through to the main Final: Two driving Turbo Infernos and two Works Mugen Athletes.

The Main Final

The very start of the Final saw Swedish driver Amilon complaining of interference, finally traced to a transmitter left inadvertently switched on by an Italian driver, and although the aerial was retracted it was still sufficient to interfere with Amilon's radio.

The race was then on, with Jamie Booth moving straight into the lead with Monesi 2nd and David Crompton 3rd, the trio pulling away from the rest of the field. Monesi was running a very soft 'Atlas type' tyre on his car with an expected life of 25 minutes (?), so time would tell.... Monesi dropped to 3rd at the first fuel stop with David Crompton up to second, then he overtook Jamie for the lead. Monesi hit the front after the second

stop, with David pushing hard, only to knock off a ball joint when he hit the track edging exiting the banked curve. This lost him a lap back in the pit lane....

The race was now between Jamie and Monesi, with Jamie able to push Monesi at will, making him scrub out his tyres. The British drivers had a far better idea of which tyres worked best, so, as predicted, at about 20-25 minutes Monesi's tyres were shot. Jamie started to drive off into the distance, with a considerable lead over Daniel Reckward, now in 2nd with his Mugen, with poor David Crompton now last after his brake linkage came apart and jammed the



Jamie Booth's Kyosho Turbo Inferno led the Final until his throttle linkage fell apart.

flywheel, whilst Lawrence Harris's engine kept cutting, traced to the bodysheet catching the tank's cap and occasionally lifting it, causing him to lose pressure. However, Stewart Wilcox was charging in 5th place.

Then suddenly, tragedy struck with seven minutes to go. Jamie's car started to behave quite erratically. Was it servo trouble? Frantic work was seen in the pits by Tony Miller and Mike Cradock, but the throttle linkage had come apart and our hopes for a British Euro Champion

evaporated. Jamie lost about five laps, so now Daniel Reckward held the lead. The race wasn't over yet though! With about four minutes to go his car slowed with a broken drive shaft, but as he was using a Thorsen centre diff, drive was still maintained, in this case to the rear wheels only. Suddenly Andrea Gennari found himself leading with his Inferno! Andrea finished second last year in Portugal, and it certainly looked as though he would win this event with just a few laps to go. Meanwhile, Stewart was up to 4th and chasing Monesi hard, 10 seconds behind him with three laps left. Two laps left saw the gap six seconds, then with one lap to go it was down to four. It was going to be neck and neck across the line for 3rd!

Andrea Gennari gratefully took the win, with Erwin Weimann second, three seconds clear of Monesi, followed by Stewart Wilcox, the top British driver, in 4th with his Mondial-powered Mugen Athlete. What a finish! Another lap would have certainly seen Stewart take 3rd place, as Monesi's front tyres were totally bald!

Thanks All!

So ended an amazing week. Everything had run smoothly with no complaints, and the dinner on Friday night proved a huge success. All of the race officials looked thoroughly exhausted! A few individual 'thank-yous' are due, especially to the two girls in yellow who handed out the transponders all week. Thank you Jan and Judy, you did a great job! Also, congratulations to Ken and son James, and to Paul in Race Control. What a brilliant job, brilliantly executed by a super-cool Team. I believe over 3000 printed sheets were churned out by the end of the meeting. Thanks must also go to the scrutineers: Dave, Kevin and Ian, who had scrutineered in all nearly 350 cars by the time the cars had been checked and rechecked. Finally a big thank you to the marshals for standing there all day, day after day.

Well, that's about it, except for - when are we doing it again Stan? A thoroughly successful European Championships, run like a well oiled machine, so the final thanks must go to 'Race Director Extraordinaire' Stan Crompton and his band of helpers.

STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS

Laro have appointed C.W. Racing of Hemel Hempstead as their new importer! On speaking with Craham Wright, I found he will be importing the car both to retail and for distribution to the shops. The retail price will be £375 for the full works type car like Philippe Lachat set F.T.D. with at the Euro's and which has also just won the French Championship, so for more details of this very quick Rallycross car, I suggest you call C.W. Racing who will be only too pleased to answer any questions, on (0442) 254065. R.R.C. hope to bring you a full review of the car very shortly.