CHAMPIONSHIP

BILL BURKINSHAW TAKES A BROAD BASED LOOK AT TH 1981 WORLD AND EUROPEAN 1/8 SCALE R/C CAR CHAMPIONSHIPS

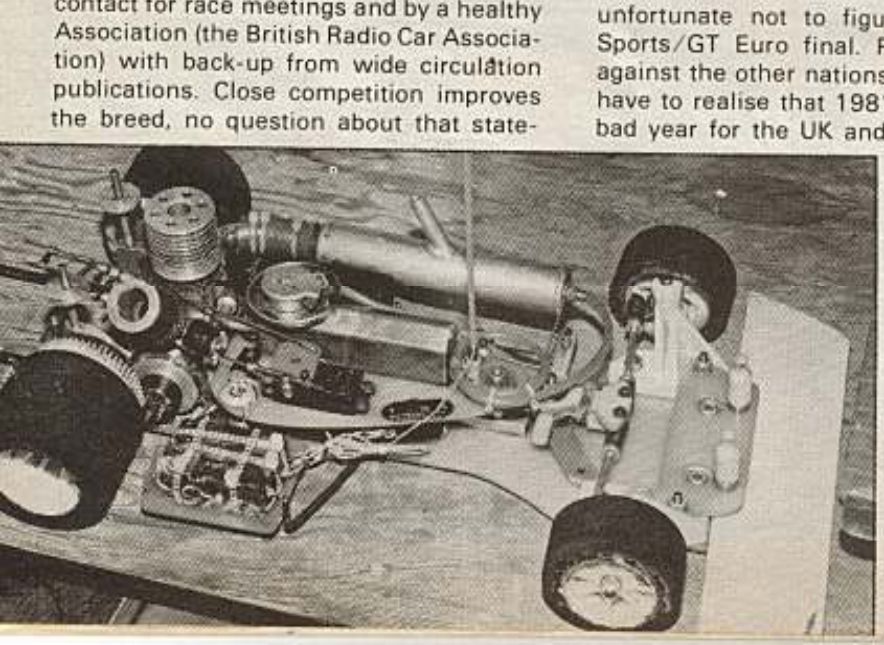
Left: World Champs startline scene, car park circuit contrasts with the p pose built Austrian track used for 19 Euro Champs meeting.

SINCE 1977, alternate years have provided the opportunity for the cream of the world's 1/8 scale IC car drivers to pit their skills against one another for the honour of the title of World Champion, while every year our own European series culminates in a European Championship. Just how do our drivers fare in both a World and European Contest, and how does our own national style of 1/8 racing compare, both from the point of view of technical excellence and out and out speed?

Firstly, remember that out of the whole world of IC racing, the UK's National Association ranks pretty near the top for numbers and using the international organisation's yardsticks, we thus qualify for heavy representation — not that weight of numbers really counts when the flag drops! The UK are most certainly a force to be reckoned with, our drivers consistently figure in the finals at the highest levels, World Championships to Phil Booth in '79, World Cup '78 and Euro Formula '81 Championships to Phil Greeno, Euro Sports/GT to Dave Martin in '78 . . . the list goes on.

Our success is largely a result of good communication, both by frequent close contact for race meetings and by a healthy Association (the British Radio Car Association) with back-up from wide circulation publications. Close competition improves the breed, no question about that statement. Winners, and who doesn't relish the thought of winning, seek constantly to improve the breed and give themselves a little edge, and those improvements have been made on a constant basis by our UK designers and manufacturers. The only real surprise is that given a pretty healthy home market there is no competitive home produced engine.

It is a matter of fact that UK drivers didn't win the World Championship in 1981, nor did we win both classes at the Euro Championships. It is also a matter of fact that two of the finalists at the '81 World Champs were British and both they and the lone French finalist drove British *PB* 'Alpha' IS cars, a *PB* car took the Euro F1 title and was unfortunate not to figure better in the Sports/GT Euro final. Place these facts against the other nations' results and you have to realise that 1981 was not at all a bad year for the UK and it definitely provided a pointer to the racing course of rest of the 1980s.



Left: Ralphie Burch, youngest qualifier for the final at the Indy World Champs. was not even a works driver, his Associated RC300 shown here.

World Championships Indianapolis, July 5

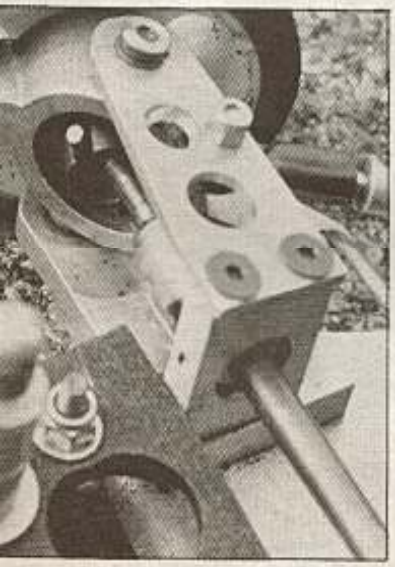
How come the *PB* 'Alpha,' arguably most sophisticated racing machine on track, numerically superior, with heavy works support could do no better fifth, seventh and eighth place at Ind apolis? The simpler somewhat lig *Deltas* of Carbonell and Ishihara, *Kyoshos* and *Associateds* of Kondo Burch and the hybrid *SG* 'Monaco VCS Bartolomesi were joined by a lone 'Alpha,' that of Gary Culver, as stra through qualifiers. During early qualif when grip on the super smooth tarmac low, the *PB* looked very fast. This cir was superfine 'blacktop' laid on top o already smooth car park. As oil and rub started to be deposited on the track qualifying progressed, grip improved. high temperatures and high humi caused the surface to literally ooze st tar, tyre tracks could actually be s behind the cars as they circulated.

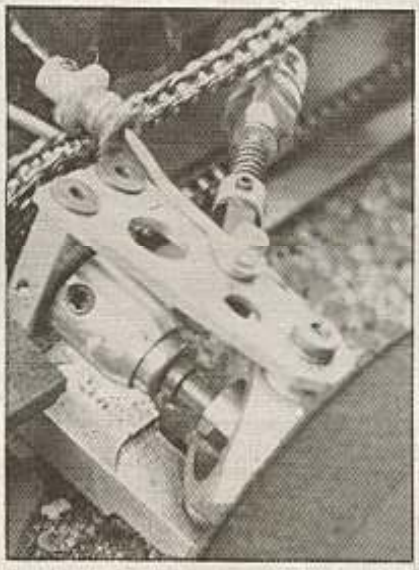
Such conditions are common in the U indeed our regularly rain-washed tra and low temperatures would horrify drivers by their lack of grip. US cars designed for such grip, tyre rubber co pounds suit the grip, drivers *expect* the g What is almost equally certain is tha spite of the experience and suitability of

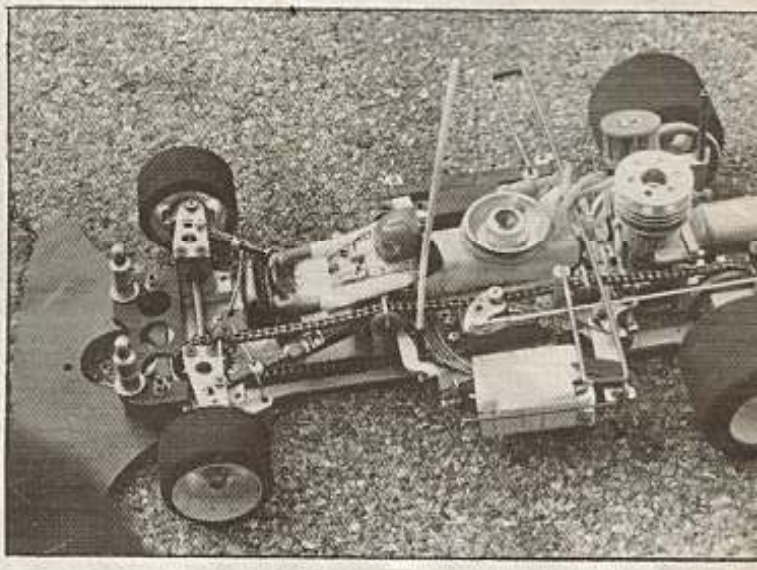
TECHNICALITIES

EFRA EUROPEAN FEDERATION RADIO AUTOS

IFMAR INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION MODEL AUTO RACING



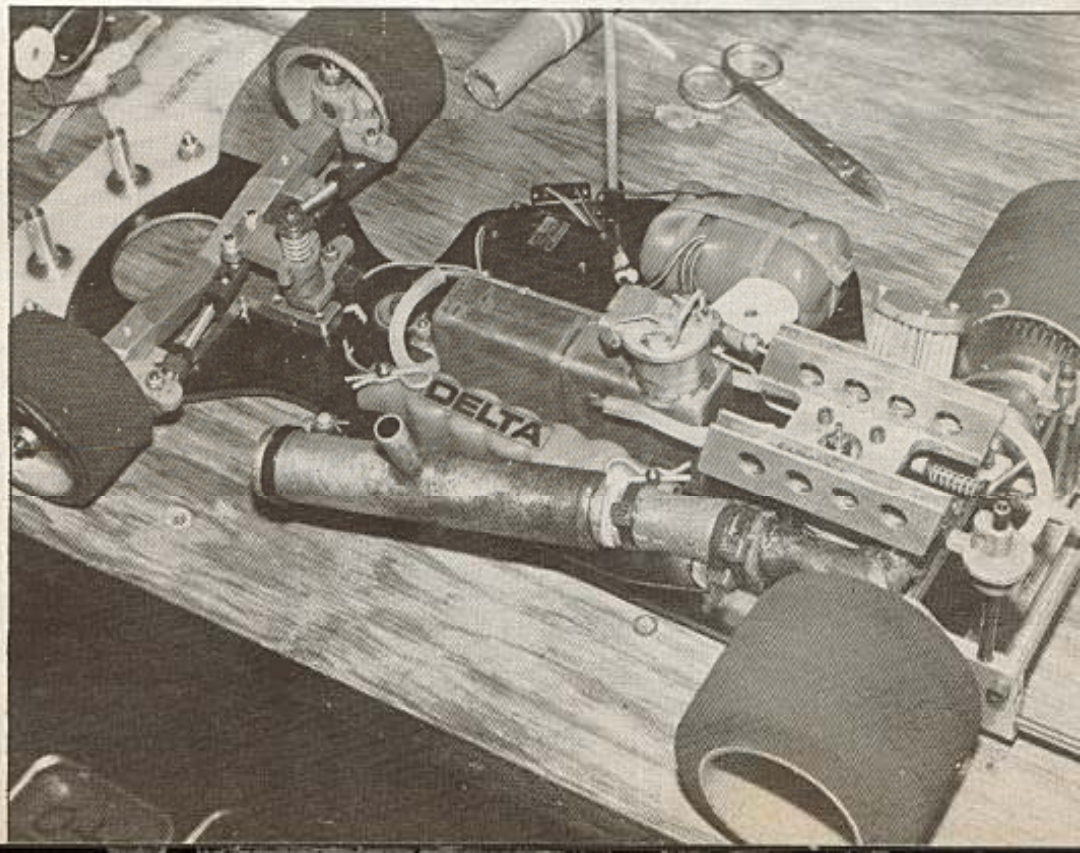




mple flat-bed cars, the 'Alphas,' *Asso-ated* and even the lone *Serpent* suspen-on cars were capable of putting down wer and more power on to that track. ith more power available the undoubted se of driving of the suspension equipped rs would certainly have been a benefit. uspension cars will almost certainly move , whilst the simpler models become out-assed, the almost overwhelming reaction drivers when first experiencing a sus-nsion car is that it is slow — this is not so, variably they are much faster, but so uch smoother, that almost all ex erienced drivers could use more power. Non-Europeans, US drivers in particular, ight have been surprised at how well the t-bed machines went, but US drivers ere not, they were very surprised at how ell our European full suspension and brid types performed against their own *ltas* and *Associateds*. Both Ken ampbell of *Delta* and Gene Hustings of *ssociated* looked pretty glum by the end of e qualification, for although Ken Campbell d the pleasure of seeing two of his cars in e final it was becoming all to obvious to m that suspension could well be the ture for the USA, as well. Gene Hustings ay have been able to take comfort from e showing of Phil Booth with his *Asso-ated* for if the promised rounds had all en held Phil's rapidly improving form uld have placed him higher than 33rd 3th on the basis of the cancelled rained-off fifth round).

The 'Alpha,' *Associated* and 'Rapier' suspension cars are by now familiar to most UK drivers. Other less familiar types such as the *Delta*, are seen in the UK some even receive works support from their overseas manufacturers, it is difficult to see how though that even World No. 1 position would affect sales of the *Delta* in the UK.

Above: prototype Kyosho four wheel drive car. Solid rear axle has small sprocket attached to transmit power via a chain to the front axle. A free wheel device is fitted to the front end but no differential. The system was certainly no disadvantage, but conversely did not show signs of any superiority. Below: a World Championship winner, very high quality engineering is the hallmark of the Delta, many machined light alloy parts are used. This version of the Super J has a full length carbon fibre reinforced epoxy chassis and front mounted mini-pipe.



European Champs, Solenau, August 8 and 9

Perhaps a little chastened by their American experience, the UK team duly turned up at Solenau, Austria, to do battle on more familiar terms with fellow EFRA members. Racing was almost certain to be a *PB/SG* battle with perhaps a little sniping from *Serpent's* top drivers Peter Bervoets and Ronnie Ton. Still undecided about suspension or not, the *Serpent* lads ran one car of each type. No such doubts from *SG*, 'Monaco VCS' plus *STX21* RE80 and *Sanwa* radios were pitted against *PB* 'Alpha' IS, *Picco* 21 and *JR*. Other European makes were represented, *Mantua, Graupner, Black Fire, Carlsson* and not to be forgotten, our own UK *Team Associated* suspension cars.

The *SG* cars are a definite interim stage car featuring a swing axle front end. Almost certainly Franco Sabbatini will unveil a full suspension car for 1982 but for this meeting, the 'Monaco VCS' still proved very competitive. This car is quite sophisticated by flat-bed standards. King pin inclination is adjustable, R/C equipment is shaker plate mounted and the steering servo is mounted on its own little shaker plate to prevent bump steering. All the *SG* team cars used the latest version of the RE80 *Super Tigre* with the ST 10mm bore slide carburettor and a new low profile heatsink head. Keith Plested was offered a drive of one of the *SG* team cars and felt that although it handled nicely, it lacked 'get up and go,' surprising as the car is a little lighter than the 'Alpha' and has only a single stage gear reduction, so one would expect better performance. Gear ratios were for many the key to the Solenau circuit. This 375 yard track is very fast with an incredibly long straight. Under gearing cost many drivers a blown engine. Realisation that the pace was likely to be hectic dawned on Phil Booth and Walt Baily of *Associated* too late. Their hastily fabricated 'Solenau Sprocket' didn't stand the pace and constant clutch bearing failure cost them both any chance of a final place.

UK drivers had therefore to be content with Phil Greeno's F1 win and the rain-drenched final saw a victory for wet weather master Peter Bervoets with the *Serpent*.

Above right: SG Monaco VCS of Batotomasi not almost mandatory front, mounted mini pipe silencer. Below: moulded tread on Peter Bervoets Euro champs winning rain tyres. Bottom: Kondo of Japan with his Kyosho car at Indianapolis.

World Championship Results

		Car	Engine	Diff	
1.	A. Carbonell	USA	Delta Super J	Picco	No
2.	E. Tadiello	Italy	SG Monaco VCS	STX21	No
3.	K. Kondo	Japan	Kyosho	OS21	No
4.	N. Ishihara	Japan	Delta Super J	OPS	No
5.	G. Culver	GB	PB Alpha	Picco	Yes
6.	R. Batolomasi	Italy	SG Monaco VCS	STX21	No
7.	S. White	GB	PB Alpha	Picco	Yes
8.	D. Lecat	France	PB Alpha	Picco	Yes
9.	P. Bervoets	Holland	Serpent Proto	Picco	Yes
10.	R. Burch	USA	Associated	K&B	Yes

FTD Kondo and Steve White.

European Championship Results

Formula

Place	*Name*	*Nat.*	*Car*	*Engine*	*Di*
1.	Phil Greeno	GB	PB Alpha	Picco	Ye
2.	Ermeo Tadiello	I	SG VCS	ST	Ye
3.	Roberto Bartolomasi	I	SG VCS	ST	Ye
4.	Franco Sabattini	I	SG VCS	ST	Ye
5.	Steve White	GB	PB Alpha	Picco	Ye
6.	Paul Pagdin	GB	PB Alpha	Picco	Ye
7.	Sergio Veronesi	I	SG VCS	ST	Ye
8.	Bob Errington	GB	PB Alpha	Picco	Ye
9.	Alfred Schön	Gr	PB Alpha	OS	Ye
10.	Masse Mares	I	SG VCS	ST	Ye

Sports GT

Place	*Name*	*Nat.*	*Car*	*Engine*	*Di*
1.	Peter Bervoets	NL	Serpent	OS	Ye
2.	Norbert Mayerhoffer	Gr	SG VCS	ST	Ye
3.	Vittoriano Orazi	I	Mantua	OPS	Ye
4.	Gary Culver	GB	PB Alpha	Picco	Ye
5.	Gianfranco Pezzino	I	Mantua	OPS	Ye
6.	Bob Errington	GB	PB Alpha	Picco	Ye
7.	Roberto Bartolomasi	I	SG VCS	ST	Ye
8.	Franco Sabattini	I	SG VCS	ST	Ye
9.	Phil Greeno	GB	PB Alpha	Picco	Ye
10.	Keith Plested	GB	PB Alpha	Picco	Ye