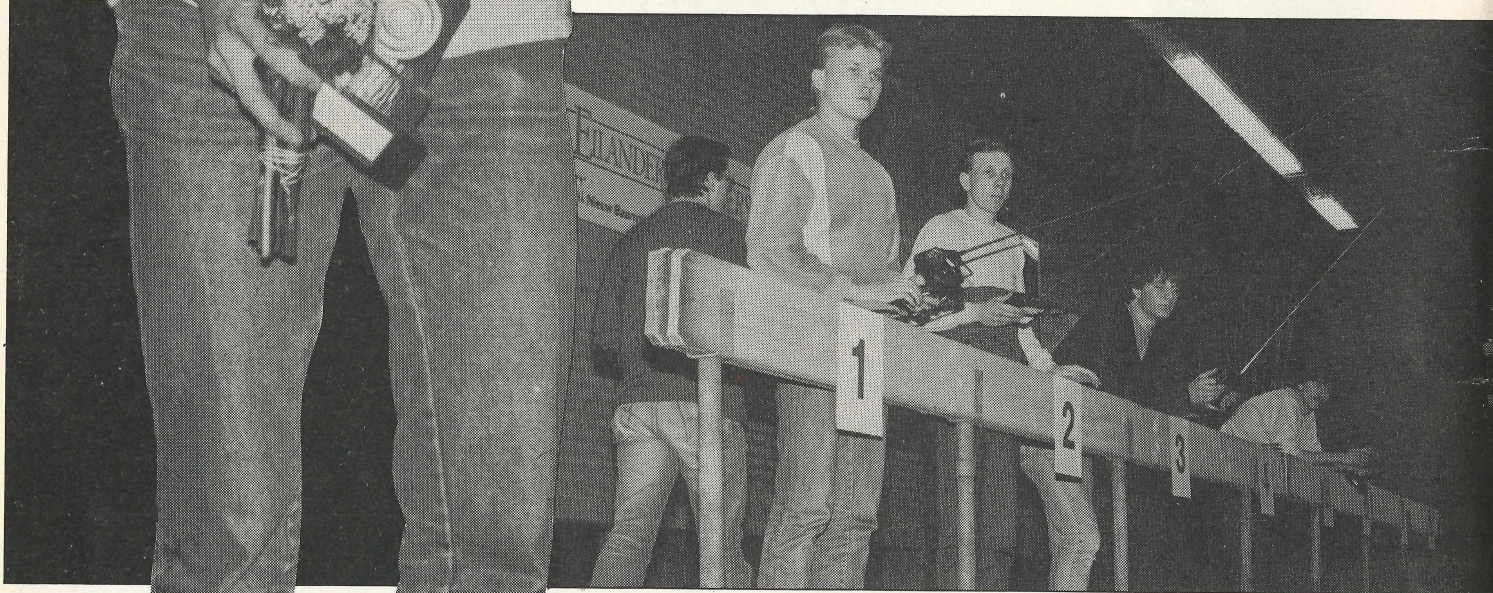
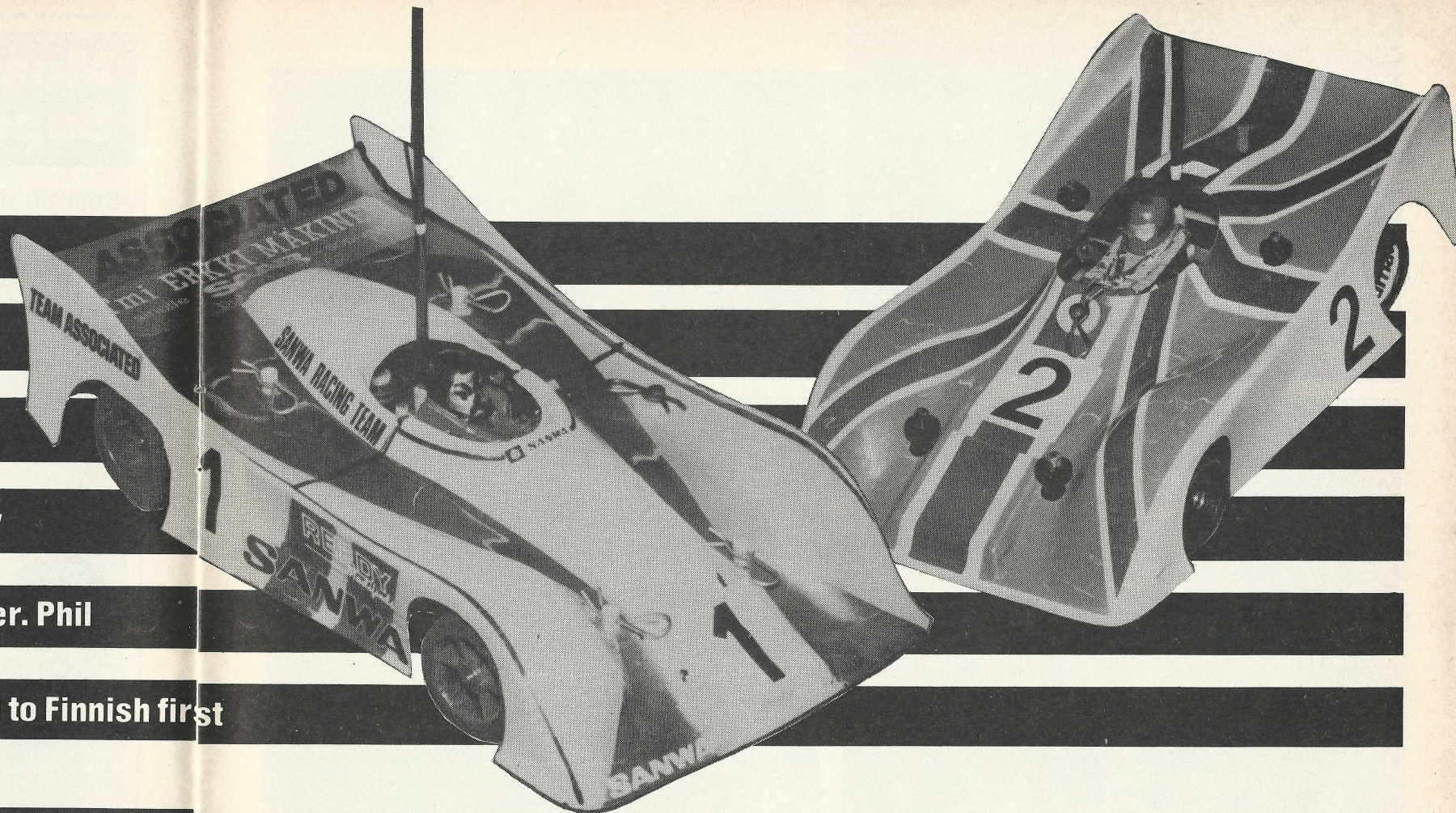




After five years of British
dominion the European
Championship crown for
1/12th circuit racing finally
passed to a continental driver. Phil

Olson saw how Britain failed to Finnish first



Having missed out on the Dutch International in February I did not know quite what to expect, but on arrival (at 11pm) at the leisure centre I felt quite at home with Dobbo and co. around the bar sampling the local brew.

Not being a heavy drinker we booked in quickly, got directions for the Youth Hostel and set out in search of it. I don't think I took the shortest route as everyone else had already arrived, and already turned to their beds, so I was shown into a dormitory whose occupants had obviously had a good time judging by the large quantity of beer bottles spread around the room.

At 7am next morning we were treated to several alarms going off plus Holland's answer to Capital Radio just to make sure we were awake. Breakfast was unusual but OK

unless you tried one of Mark Barford's jam, cheese, chocolate chip and marzipan sandwiches.

By 8.30 we were down at the leisure centre to find that several improvements had been made to the track since the Dutch International earlier in the year. Large triangles of carpet had been added to smooth out some of the 'square corners' and the main straight had been made a lot wider. This had the effect of making the track a lot faster and easier to drive, but at the same time even more difficult for overtaking.

This year there was no uncontrolled practice sessions, instead 9am saw the start of the controlled practice heat by heat. Most drivers started quite cautiously and although the overall heat times were slow (30-31 laps) it was obvious that

some very fast times were going to be set in the afternoon qualifying session. Christian Keil (Germany) in particular looking as fast as ever. With Mike Reedy from *Associated* attending (thanks again for the motors Mike) it was obvious that all the *Associated* cars would be going very quickly.

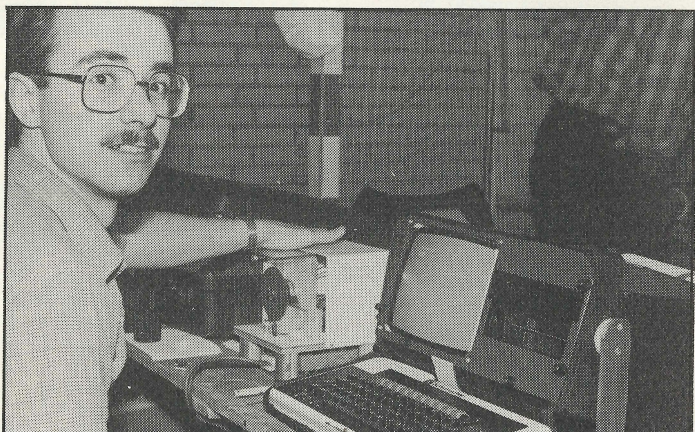
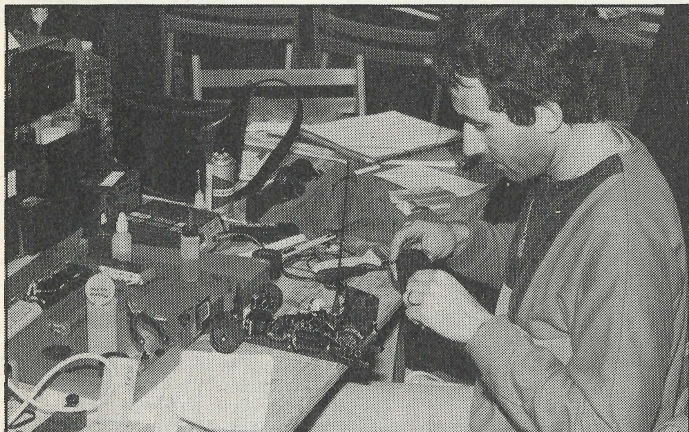
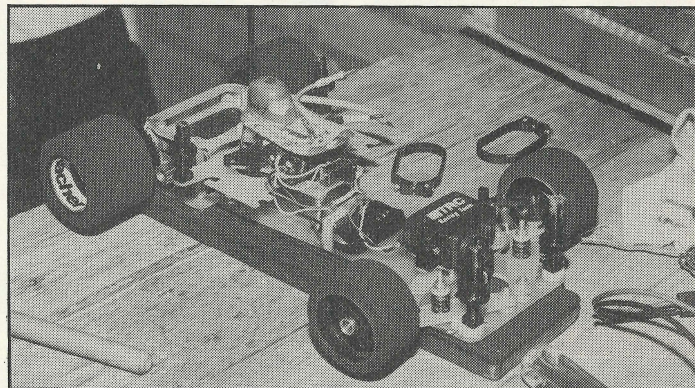
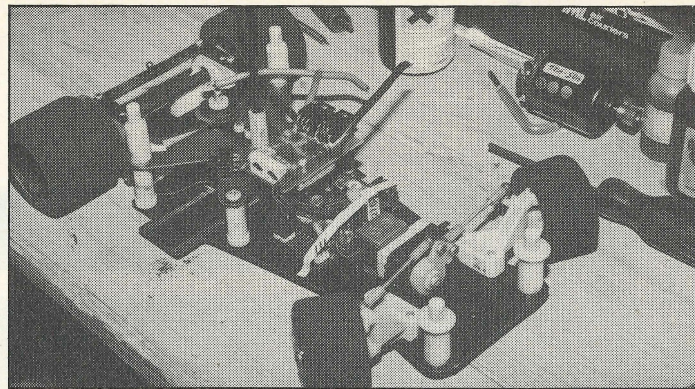
Qualifying

Heat 1 was a boost for British morale as Jim Spencer whizzed round to win setting FTD in the process. This lasted only until heat 3 however when Christian stormed round, making quite a few errors, to set a new FTD at 34.08. This time remained unbeaten until heat 11 when our very own Andy Dobson just managed to post a 35 lapper.

Round 2 saw Christian going

incredibly fast on the straight bits, not so good around the corners but nevertheless still managing to go two seconds quicker than Dobson. With Andy unable to improve in his second heat the day ended with Christian ahead of Andy, the only two on 35 laps followed by José Rosas (France) and Mika Leppalahti (Finland) with fast 34's.

Several of the fancied British drivers were experiencing difficulties. Timmy Dakin was struck down by radio interference, but his father Frank had found someone to retune his receiver and hopefully cure the problem. The other top father and son team, Matthew and John Ford were considering renaming their PK 'Corally' car "Car roly" due to its tendency to try and go round every corner on two wheels.



Clockwise from top left: Mika Leppalahti prepares for the A-final. Next: the Finnish champion's super fast Associated 12iS. Next: Phil Davies checks the motor tester for more horsepower. Next: José Rosas gives his PK 'Corally' a retread. Finally: Andy Dobson smiles despite losing TQ.

After qualifying the next test of the British drivers was to find a decent Italian restaurant and to discuss how we could go that little bit faster. Many of the continentals had some incredible horsepower and it seemed that although fellow scribe Pete Winton had not extracted much from Christian Keil about cells, other people had. On close examination and careful deciphering of the PK Models catalogue (which is in Dutch) it appears that MIH 'Pushed' cells are for sale although they are on the wrong side of our own BRCA price limit (a mere 125 guilders or about £35).

Indeed talking to Mike Reedy later on he said that it was the same in the States with more emphasis put on cells rather than motors.

Day Two began even earlier (1st heat 8.30am), breakfast was the same but they had replaced the jam with

hundreds and thousands. (The jam was the only thing I liked).

In the first round of heats there were no great improvements until heat 9 when José Rosas and Mika Leppalahti joined the 35-lap brigade to take FTD and go ahead of Christian and Andy.

Round 4 saw David Gale's best run of the weekend and he put in a fast 34 laps, eventually missing the A-final by 2.1 seconds. Phil Davies who had earlier been complaining about a lack of horses mysteriously managed to get his hands on one of Mike Reedy's really fast motors and squeezed 35 laps out of it assuring himself a place in the A-final from a very fast heat 9 in which Rosas and Stephen Pohl (Germany) also managed 35 laps.

The last two rounds of qualifying really put the pressure on and heat 3 found Christian Keil driving round

very cleanly to set a new FTD of 35/7.1.

Mika Leppalahti also had designs on FTD but missed out by just 0.8 of a second with Walter Herbst also securing an A-final place with 35/14.5 in the same heat. In fact, heat 9 produced an incredible five out of the eight A-final places.

Andy Dobson went flat out for FTD in heat 11 but the motor was obviously too hot, with the car sliding sideways out of the corners. After 6½ minutes Andy's Ni-Cads gave up and he pulled off the circuit much to the amusement of Mike Reedy.

Round 6, the last chance to qualify for the A-final and secure FTD.

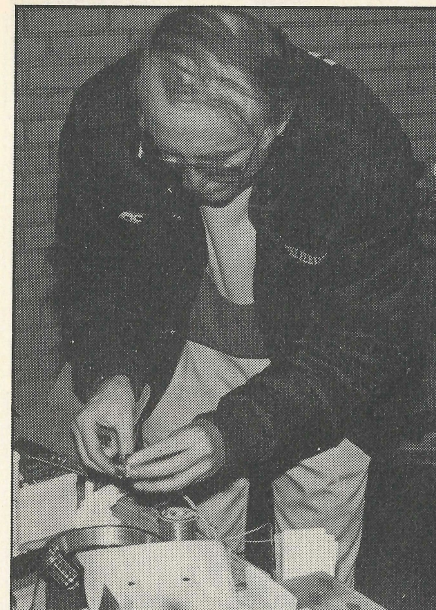
Late runs by Timmy Dakin (sporting a lightweight Toj body on his Parma 'Panther') and Pete Farmer were only seconds outside the A-final. Matthew Ford finally got his car going in his last run and

produced a time good enough for the C-final, although I'm sure that with six good runs he may well have been in the A-final (next year Matthew).

A fantastic drive in heat 9 from a very calm Mika Leppalahti edged the FTD time still higher, only a collision with a back marker near the end stopped him getting 36 laps, but 35/1.7 was more than good enough.

Two heats later British pride hung on Andy's last chance at securing pole position and as hard as he tried he still missed out by just two seconds. After qualifying the Brits were a bit thin on the ground in the top finals with only Matthew in the C, not quite up to our usual standard. As usual the scores were extremely close with only 1 lap separating last in the A-final to last in the D-final.

This year we decided not to attend the banquet in the evening and instead go in



Above left: Mathew Ford, British PK team driver unfortunately failed to make it past the C-finals with his 'Corally'. Above: the top three drivers in the Youth European Championships. Left to right: Martin Allen (second), Mart Fliessbach (first), Ralf Frause (third).

search of a decent square meal. Armed with some rosey instructions from Pete Farmer (it's easy to find, you turn right at the end of the road and right again at the next junction! Or is it left and left?) we set off and amazingly we found ourselves outside the Peking Garden. If anyone has ever seen a Chinese menu in Dutch you can imagine the problems we had, but fortunately the waiter spoke better English than we did and we went back to the hostel that night well fed.

This year for the first time a European Youth Championship was held. The entry was rather low, but this was probably due to the late notification of the event. Britain placed its hopes in the capable hands (thumbs!) of Adam Ruddle and Parma sponsored Martin Allen who, at the end of qualifying, were placed 3rd and 4th respectively.

Top qualifier was Martin Fliessbach from Germany with a very good time of 34/6.8, only 1.1 seconds outside the senior A-final with Ralf Krause also from Germany only 3.5 seconds further behind.

The Youth A-finals were held in exactly the same way as the senior finals, with three runs and the best two to count. Martin Allen took the honours in the first run, three seconds ahead of Ralf Krause and Martin Fliessbach with Adam Ruddle half a lap down in 5th place.

The second final was a rather slow scrappy affair won by Boris Kuntzler (Germany), which gave the last final an exciting look to it. If Martin Allen won or finished less than three seconds down, Krause or Fliessbach in a good time he would win. Unfortunately this was not to be as Martin Fliessbach shot away from the line to win the heat with a time

of 34/5.4 to become the 1986 European Youth Champion. Ralf Krause came unstuck on the second lap when a head-on collision stopped his car dead. Martin Allen looked rather nervous but still managed 4th place behind Adam Ruddle and Harold Wendy (Austria) which was just good enough to take the runner-up position overall by just 3/10th of a second. Adam's score was unfortunately only good enough for 6th place overall, but it was very close and Adam's combined time was only eight seconds down on Martin's. I think these two lads did very well in their first taste of racing in Europe and I think they both felt a lot of pressure was on them to win the trophy for Britain. The experience will do them both good for the future.

Finals

This year to be different all the finalists from the B downwards were given two runs with the best time to count.

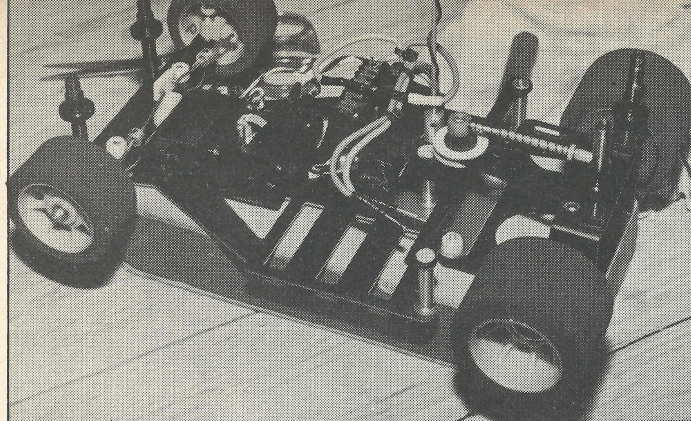
First of the Brits out were Tim Biggs and Paul Hobbs in the I-final and the poor fortune experienced in their heats improved only slightly for the finals as they finished 2nd and 4th respectively. Indeed Tim's car was lucky to finish the second final at all as a marshall retrieved his car and threw it a good 15 feet back onto the circuit!

Les Pipe and Mark Brown were in the G-final and Mark fared the better of the two, winning the second final but getting second place overall, missing out by just three seconds. The E-final provided the dynamic Stafford pairing of Chris Evans and Volvo tank driver Jim Spencer. Chris won the second final but again, missed out on first place

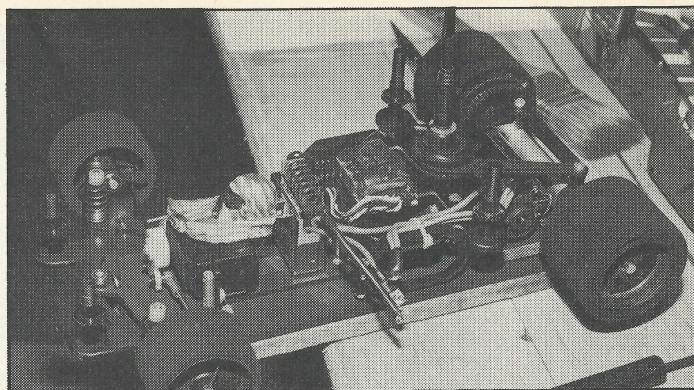


Far left: Mike Reedy from Californian company, Associated, checks out motors for the team drivers. Mike is a familiar visitor to the European championships influencing three wins out of six for Associated cars. Left: Christian Keil from West Germany once again failed to produce the finish expected of him, ending up sixth overall.





Above: Tim Dakin's Parma 'Euro Panther' just missed the A-final by seconds whilst the expensive and beautifully produced PK 'Corally' favoured the French style of driving putting José Rosas and Jean Michel Fraise into the A-final.



A-Final

| Place | Name | Nat. | 1 | 2 | 3 | Best 2 |
|-------|-----------------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1 | Mika Leppalahti | SF | 35/00.8 | 36/10.7 | 36/04.8 | 72/15.5 |
| 2 | Andy Dobson | GB | 34/02.7 | 36/21.7 | 35/01.8 | 71/23.5 |
| 3 | José Rosas | F | 35/08.6 | 35/06.8 | 36/20.2 | 71/27.0 |
| 4 | Phil Davis | GB | 35/06.8 | 30/00.0 | 35/03.0 | 70/09.8 |
| 5 | Walter Herbst | D | 35/07.9 | 35/16.2 | 34/00.2 | 70/24.1 |
| 6 | Christian Keil | D | 34/01.2 | 34/08.0 | 35/01.5 | 69/02.7 |
| 7 | Jean-M Fraise | F | 32/04.9 | 34/06.2 | 30/00.0 | 66/11.1 |
| 8 | Stephen Pohl | D | 33/03.6 | 33/08.4 | 33/16.3 | 66/12.0 |

Youth A-Final

| Place | Name | Nat. | 1 | 2 | 3 | Best 2 |
|-------|-------------------|------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1 | Mart. Fließbach | D | 33/10.1 | 33/17.1 | 34/05.4 | 67/15.5 |
| 2 | Martin Allen | GB | 33/04.1 | 32/15.5 | 33/13.1 | 66/17.2 |
| 3 | Ralf Krause | D | 33/07.0 | 33/10.5 | 02/00.0 | 66/17.5 |
| 4 | Boris Kuntzler | D | 32/00.0 | 33/05.5 | 33/13.3 | 66/18.8 |
| 5 | Harold Wendy | A | 33/13.6 | 32/14.1 | 33/12.2 | 66/25.8 |
| 6 | Adam Ruddle | GB | 33/17.1 | 32/00.7 | 33/09.0 | 66/26.1 |
| 7 | Sor. Christiansen | DK | 29/01.4 | 29/00.0 | 30/00.0 | 59/00.0 |
| 8 | Rob Kuiper | NL | 28/04.5 | 28/12.1 | 02/00.0 | 56/16.6 |

| Name | Car | Motor | Speed Control | Cells | Tyres | Radio | Servo | Gear Ratio | Ultimate MM/Rev | Body |
|---------------|----------------|---------------------|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|--------|-------|------------|-----------------|------|
| J. Rosas | Corally | Reedy Arm Mugen Can | CS Forward only | CS Sanyo | PK20 front Ass. kit rims | Sanwa | 132H | 12-50 | 37.7 | Toj |
| J. M. Fraix | Corally | Reedy Arm Yoko can | CS forward only | J.M.F. Sanyo | PK20 front | Sanwa | 132H | 12-50 | 37.7 | Toj |
| A. Dobson | C-Car | Trinity | CS forward only | CS Sanyo | TRC Green | Futaba | 132H | 11-50 | 35.9 | Toj |
| P. Davies | C-Car | Reedy Green dot | Lazer forward only | Lazer Sanyo | TRC Green | JR | 132H | 11-50 | 35.9 | Toj |
| W. Ferbst | C-Car | CS Modified | CS forward only | CS Sanyo | Associated Green | Robbe | 132H | 10-46 | 35.5 | Toj |
| M. Leppalahti | Associated 12i | Reedy | J&J Lazer forward only | Racing Hobby Sanyo | Associated Green | Sanwa | 132H | 24-108 | 36.3 | Toj |
| C. Keil | Associated 12i | Reedy | CS forward only | MIH | Associated Green | Robbe | 132H | 21-96 | 35.0 | Toj |
| S. Pohl | Associated 12i | Reedy | CS forward only | MIH | Associated Green | Robbe | 132H | 11-48 | 36.7 | Toj |

honours by 0.6 seconds ending up placed 3rd. It's a good job the AMB autolap counter was used.

The D-final found ex-Eurochamp, Phil Olson leading the second final all the way until the last lap when an incident with a back-marker lost him the lead; another second place for the Brits. Matthew Ford looked all set to win the C-final with a 35-lap time in the first final, but a late charge by Ralph Wiess in the second run saw the German beat Matthew's time by seven seconds; second again!

The B-final featured David Gale, Pete Farmer and Timmy Dakin, who all suffered a variety of misfortunes with Timmy leading the eventual winner Jurgen Lautenbach (Germany, using a Kyosho 'Plasma') until his Ni-Cads dumped earlier than Jurgen's.

The A-final

It looked as if it could be anybody's race as our favourite Andy Dobson was on the front row and with Christian Keil (Mr. Horsepower) behind Mika Leppalahti it seemed that there could be a few minor incidents on the first few corners, particularly the sharp left-hander at the end of the main straight.

In actual fact the starts were quite clean with pole-man Mika Leppalahti getting clean away each time. If anyone thought that he was a bit fluke at last year's Euro's they were wrong. This year he showed us that he is at the moment far and away the best driver in Europe with his super smooth and deceptively fast *Associated* 12i. He won all three finals, leading all the way by a comfortable margin, and was never seriously troubled at any stage. In the last final, he managed a very fast 36 laps, nearly a whole lap up on his FTD time. If he continues in this way he

should have no problems defending his title in Paris next year.

Andy Dobson pulled out all the stops, changing tyres and motors to try and win, but after a bad first final he also managed 36 laps in the second final, half a lap down on Leppalahti and with 4th place in the third final in a time of 35/1.8 it was just good enough for 2nd place overall.

3rd place went to José Rosas of France and his 'Corally' car, he was always there in the top four in the finals and his consistency paid off.

Phil Davies, after a 2nd place in the first run committed the deadly sin of wiring his motor in backwards and missed the start of the second final. So with it all to do in the last final he just missed 36 laps and had to settle for 4th place (his worst performance so far at the Euro's).

Christian Keil again allowed

his nerves to get the better of him and his 6th place overall was not a true justification of his ability or his cells.

So after many years of British domination of this event the continentals have not only caught us up, but do indeed seem to have overtaken us technically. A lot of effort needs to be put in to give us a chance of winning again next year. Maybe the advent of the new *Associated* car which Mike Reedy kindly let me see (but not photograph) and is due to be launched on 1st July will provide some competition for the *Schumacher* steamroller which seems to be stifling development in England. I hear that Nick Adams will be the new European importer of the car and there is a definite possibility of a full *Associated* team being run.

Congratulations again to Mika Leppalahti, European Champion for 1986.