

# RALLYCROSS

## Euro Champs

TONY MARSDEN REPORTS

ON THE GENEVA

RALLYCROSS EUROS

Left: Stewart Wilcox's Burns Turbo. Poldi works on his Magica. Didier Boumier took FTD for Micro-Racing. Centre 1/24th Scale racer on Micro-Racing stand.

**W**HILE we have been racing abroad in the past, this was the first time I have made use of the considerable saving on

Sealink Ferries which have been made available to any BRCA member going abroad to represent his country. The booking was all organised via Alternative Promotion of Milton Keynes and they even managed to cope with a last minute date change which was my fault.

After the long drive down to Geneva the actual track took some time to find as it was at the back of a large sports complex and without the usual posters etc. in the town.

The track itself was disappointing as it consisted of piles of soil placed on an American Football pitch and although the basic track and pits were all there, considerable work by the organisers was still to be done. Needless to say no practice was allowed on Thursday morning and when practice was allowed during the afternoon it was chaos as there was no organisation at all which meant queuing for ages to get a five minute run, all in all a very disappointing day. I felt we would have been better arriving a day later.

When we arrived trackside on Friday it was a different world, whether it

was the arrival of Bill Burkinshaw, EFRA Chairman that made all the difference I'm not sure but the track had been manicured and it all looked a great deal more like a Europ Champs event.

Unfortunately both Gary and I had developed some dreaded allergy which made concentration impossible for the first timed practice and it was late afternoon before Gary and I watched a car go round at all. I must admit my original doubts were laid to rest and I felt a good weekend's racing was in prospect. Saturday I was feeling considerably more like a human being, I had a stroll around the pits before the heats actually started.

### Around the pits

The first car that caught my eye was the Yankee of Frederick Vesseyre, an ex World Champ, he had made a completely new chassis, which hinged at the back just in front of the rear gearbox. To control this a spring/damper unit was mounted on top of the rear gearbox to a mounting on the front part of the chassis.

It would appear that the idea was to try and stop the rear end 'kicking up' at high speeds. To be honest when I watched it in the early heats it didn't seem very special at all. The Italians were there in force as usual but with many changes. Moneci who for years has driven either Garbo or Mantua to great effect having won both European and World Championships was in fact driving a Burns with an OPS engine.

Phillip Boeri, previous Europe Champ and for many years a works Yankee driver had also switched to the Burns OPS combination. Olivier Daniere was also running a Burns but with Rex power this time having been a works Siccom driver for some years.

Last year's Europ Champ

Andreas Palla was still driving a Yankee albeit highly modified as indeed was his last year's car and he was using the new Bergonzoni engine. I understand that they were pre-production models and when they are released will be available in side or rear exhaust form. This engine was also being used by some of the TAG works drivers whose cars also had some nice modifications, different wishbone with adjustable ends to allow various amount of rear toe-in, toe-out, different wing mounts with a rather nice moulded ABS wing which looked very strong and would out last several lexan ones.

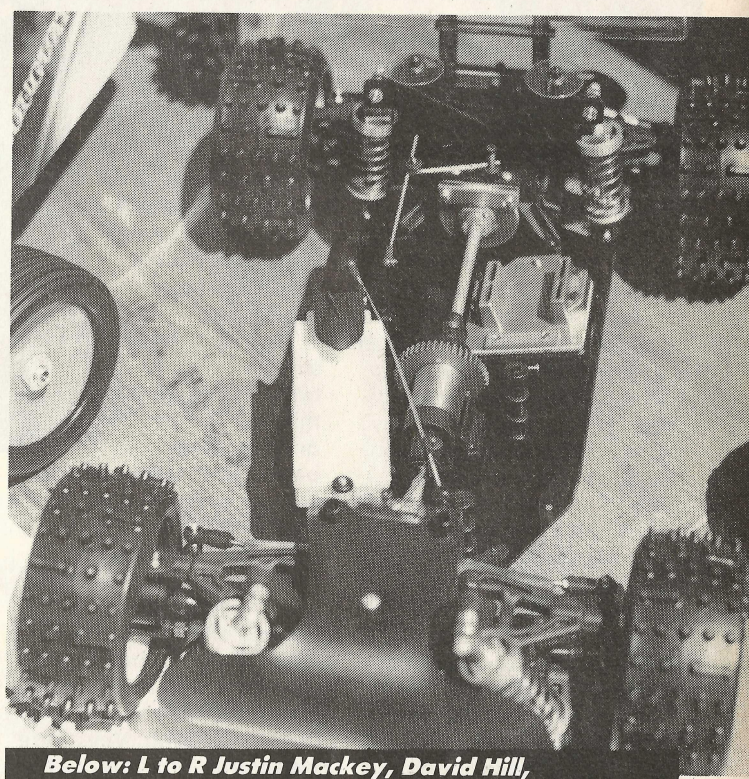
### Micro Challenge

It was to be expected that the Swiss manufacturer, Micro Racing would make a strong showing and that was the case with the owner's Larant Verne on top of the EFRA listing, which is a combination of National Championship points and EFRA Grand Prix points I understand, he was obviously in good form

Wilcox, Tony Miller and Mike Cradock with their cars exactly as used in England except for a new body which allowed the air filter to be fitted at the rear using a rather long rubber pipe. As time progressed they all

Bergonzoni had not got what it takes and then set about fitting an OPS trackside which wasn't the easiest job to do.

It was interesting that a few of the foreign drivers were taking an interest in



Below: L to R Justin Mackey, David Hill, Tommy Chung and Gary Marsden. Top: Latest spec Micro Racer.



Paul's and also Tommy Chung's Mugs as both cars are to a high spec, with plenty of 'Boss' parts, dampers, ventilated brake discs, UJ centre shafts which must be hard for them to get hold of.

Ralph Allum had his as usual immaculately prepared Mugen with side exhaust OPS. He managed to break a rear wing mount so set about to carve a new one even stronger out of fibre glass, he did it and felt sure it will last forever. It looked as if it had been made on a Miller not with a file and a junior hacksaw.

### New engines

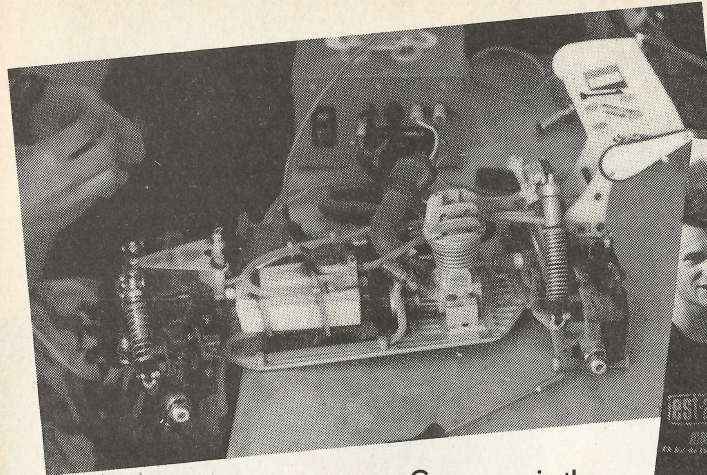
James Weedon was not too happy, not with his Burns but with Nova Rossi engines. Ken finished up buying an OPS trackside (a bargain at £100) and fitting that. James went out with it in his first heat and the air filter came off, so Ken then had to go and buy another. Richard and Mark Stitson were both using the new SG

along with one time Yankee top driver Didier Boulmier who seems to have sorted out what was quite an uncompetitive car at one time.

On the British side of things, we had the Kyosho team drivers of Stewart

reverted back to a more orthodox system. David and Paul Hill were using the same 'Burns' as usual but David had a couple of new OPS engines, a three and a five port. Paul Dudley was using a Mugen but after practice decided his





Magika with Mantua T4 engines, under the watchful eye of Maestro Franco Poldi. Franco now owns Mantua, Garbo and SG, he is always interesting to listen to with many original ideas on such things as damping and air filters, after all they race in these conditions all the time i.e., hard, dusty, large jumps, so they know what to do in conditions that we don't encounter between Euro Championships.

Justin Mackey had replaced the OS which he had been using recently at home with a new Mondial and seemed content with his lot, I on the other hand had replaced an OPS with an OS which although not the most powerful engine I felt its reliability and smoothness made up for it.

David Hill set the British contingent alight with the first 11 lapper which stood as FTD until late in the afternoon. Both Tommy and

Gary were in the top ten for quite a while, while the rest of the team were spread out down the listings.

The track was standing up brilliantly to all this punishment and the times began to fall. Monesi took two seconds off David's time for FTD and the Italians erupted, a Frenchman, Cyril Mousin, was the next to take a second off that to a great cheer. Justin improved his best time with his last run just to make the Top Ten but not for long, Veyseyre was the first to demote him a place with what looked like an absolute flyer, the Yankee was handling a dream and he was using all the power from his 'Paris Rex' something caused him to slow on his last lap so he only made ninth spot but the writing was on the wall. Olivier Daniere was the

**Much modified Yankee with many Bergonzoni parts. Below: Philip Boeri - Eurochamp.**



next to have a go at top spot, he put some new Couron tyres on his Burns and went out to show everybody how to do it, it was incredible, Paris Rex power again and the car absolutely flew round, he must have been in the air for 30ft. after the jump, certainly the longest and landed perfectly every time, the end result was a well deserved FTD by over seven seconds.

At the end of a great day's racing the British team positions were:

#### British Team positions

- |       |             |
|-------|-------------|
| 5th   | T. Chung    |
| 13th  | G. Marsden  |
| 15th  | D. Hill     |
| 19th  | J. Mackey   |
| 29th  | J. Weedon   |
| 30th  | A. Miller   |
| 45th  | S. Wilcox   |
| 56th  | M. Stitson  |
| 65th  | R. Stitson  |
| 75th  | P. Hill     |
| 84th  | M. Craddock |
| 95th  | R. Allum    |
| 101st | P. Dudley   |

Unfortunately Ralph and Paul Dudley hadn't managed a trouble free heat between them and decided not to bother trying the impossible on Sunday.

The top ten were:

1. Daniere
2. Monesi
3. Mousin
4. D. Hill
5. Carriere
6. Chaffardon

7. Boulmier
8. Toni
9. Veyseyre
10. Ghedini

Mixed fortune for the British team in the lower finals as no one managed to finish in the top five until Tony Miller won his 1/16 final in fine style. His one eighth wasn't so straightforward though but managed to hold onto fourth position of a very scrappy race to get through to a quarter.

James also did well in his one eighth and had actually got up to second in his quarter when he had an engine cut. At this level that means you are out of contention. This race had Baruchello and Philippe Boeri in it, Boeri is a past Euro Champ and Baruchello was second last year and must have been in more finals over the years than anybody else. They both moved up.

Quarter B looked like an easier route to the top with three Brits, Tommy, Gary and Tony all together, the only fly in the ointment appeared to be the reigning Euro Champ Pala who was on pole. On the first lap sure enough Pala was out in front, followed by Tommy and Gary with Tony up to fifth. I expected Pala to put the hammer down and be away but not so, Gary nipped on the inside of Tommy after the tabletop and was soon on Pala's rear wing, two laps passed and Gary couldn't find a way past, eventually he made a mistake on the banked bend and dropped from fourth to ninth where he started.

Gary closed up and passed Tommy again and soon put pressure on Pala and passed him on the inside of the first hairpin after the tabletop, Pala tried to respond but clipped the apex of the second hairpin which enabled Tommy through. Pala could do nothing and Gary and Tommy soon opened up a comfortable lead. Meanwhile Tony was on the way up, he was now

seventh and driving very well, at about half distance Tony suffered an engine cut which effectively put paid to any further progress. Up at the front Pala did mount another challenge on Tommy but to no avail and in the closing lap of this race he fell back to finish sixth and we had lost one of the fancied drivers for the final, but both Gary and Tommy were through to the Semi B.

As luck would have it the four British drivers still left in would all be in the same Semi B so the other Semi A with FTD driver Daniere Micro Racing driver Boulmier, Yankee Super Star Veyseyre didn't have any interest for the Brits who were busy all checking over the car of the survivors. I must admit that the help

Ghedini, Mielke and Monesi all there it wouldn't be easy. The Italian Toni shot off into an early lead followed by David Hill with Monesi third. As the field reached the banked curve for the first time, Justin Mackey's car shot off towards the beer tent with an obvious radio problem it transpired he had a broken aerial wire.

#### Into the groove

As the drivers began to settle down into a rhythm in these opening laps Monesi was the first to make a move and passed David into second and was then off after Toni. Gary was fourth and Tommy fifth so if things stayed as they were we would be OK but it was too early to start counting chickens. David made a

David and Tommy also benefitted from this and in fact were now up to fifth and sixth respectively. Just after the first round of refuelling stops Gary shouted down that he had no brakes, there was nothing I could do without a long pit stop so he just had to adjust his driving to suit, this took a lap or two by which time Ghedini was past. David Hill was the next to have problems with an engine cut. It took a little while to restart which unfortunately dropped him out of the picture. With two minutes left the order was Toni, Ghedini, Gary, Mielke, Tommy and Monesi when suddenly a car went berserk in the centre of the circuit, a marshall caught it and managed to stop the

6. T. Chung
7. Carriere
8. Perolini
9. Mielke
10. Monesi

After the usual radio checks and warm up laps, all cars were called to the start for what was not only to be a race of changing fortunes but it included Tommy Chung, he had driven well all weekend. When the flag dropped it was local hero Didier Boulmier from pole that took the lead much to the delight of the Swiss crowd. Veyseyre's Yankee looked very impressive but he just



couldn't dislodge Boulmier. Tommy had a poor start and was down to eighth place during these opening laps. At about four minutes Veyseyre had had enough of second place and with a little naughty driving flipped Boulmier over and took the lead. Monesi had done very well to work his way up to third spot but then had an engine cut which caused a British cheer as it promoted



**The circuit had enormous bumps.**

and enthusiasm given by these lads was fantastic.

There was a bit upset towards the end of this semi however, when the leading car of Daniere ground to a halt and we lost one of the very favourites for this event, Boulmier had finished first ahead of Veyseyre, Boeri was third, Carriere fourth and in the all important fifth place Perolini.

With four cars in this semi it all looked good for the British team but with three of last year's finalists,

mistake at the first hairpin after the tabletop and rolled it, Gary just managed to avoid it but Tommy didn't, the British supporters went wild as we had two cars caught in the same incident and when they were eventually marshalled they were in seventh and eighth position with a lot to do.

Monesi was the next to have a problem with an engine cut, he was quickly restrained by his mechanics and out again but that promoted Gary to second.

engine, Gary was out which effectly left Tommy the only Brit still running which he did to the end to finish fourth. Gary only just missed with sixth place, David was seventh and Justin who did get his aerial fixed but retired after a short time with an engine problem was tenth.

#### The finalist for the 1990 Euro Champs:

1. Boulmier
2. Veyseyre
3. Toni
4. Boeri
5. Ghedini

**New rear exhaust Bergonzoni motor and air filter.**



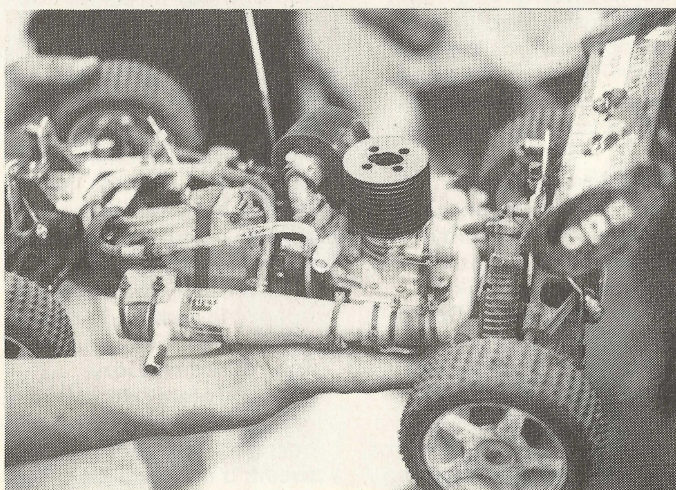
Tommy up to seventh. Veyseyre was the first to fuel giving us a clue that his Paris Rex was going to be thirstier than Boulmier's OPS and during a 45 minute race with two closely matched cars and drivers that might play an important part in the final results. However, Boulmier was the next in so the difference in running time was not that great. At around ten minutes, disaster, Tommy crashed heavily and deranged the steering on his Mugen, the car was returned to the pits for David to repair, it seemed to take an age but in fact he only lost about four laps, when he did return it was again in good shape but he stood little chance of win, but with over half an hour still to go needn't be last.

### Well under way

Veyseyre had by now opened up a good lead and it was Boulmier that was struggling to hold on to second, German driver Miele held second for a short time only to retire at 18 minutes, Ghedini then also held second with his Magika for a short time until Boulmier decided to turn the wick up again and try for the lead, he moved back up onto second place but was unable to make any impression on Veyseyre. However, down the field Philip Boeri who had led last year's final until his OPS shed its air filter, was making an impression on the midfield, his Burns was going quite nicely but nothing special, he had however passed Ghedini and Tony and was now in third place. Tommy was driving steady now and was holding seventh place quite easily.

Everything changed at around the half hour mark when Veyseyre who until this moment had never put a wheel off line, approached the double hill wrong, extremely fast, landed badly and cartwheeled 50 or 60ft., careered over the high banked bend, through the fence and nearly made it onto the bar! Needless to

### Boeri's Kyosho Burns and OPS.



say the car was broken, the Swiss went wild as Boulmier took the lead but before they could celebrate Boulmier also had a breakdown, he had broken a rear wishbone which his

pit crew tried to repair with tie wraps when he went out again it fell apart which left no alternative but to fit a new one which took a good six or seven minutes so his chances had disappeared.

Veyseyre on the other hand was soon out again and rejoined in seventh position and commenced to show us all a demonstration of what his car could really do, he was the fastest on the track by miles but had more than a little to make up, Boeri the new leader was some four laps in front. His progress was helped when both Carrieri and Toni in second and third respectively had engine cuts but both were soon out again.

That promoted Ghedini into third place until the last fuel stops, when after Franco Poldi refuelled the Magika and released it, it travelled about ten metres and stopped with the engine still running, it had a stone jammed in the wheels but the marshall didn't know that a little push backwards usually unjams it and by the time it was returned to the pits the engine did cut. Franco started it and Ghedini was out again but he had lost some valuable time.

In the closing stages it was obvious nobody was going to catch Boeri. Veyseyre had worked his way up to the fourth place and so ended a quite uneventful race. Tommy had finished a very creditable fifth place and dad David was over the moon.

Name	Qualified for	Went out in
4th D. Hill	Semi	Semi
12th J. Mackey	Quarter	Semi
18th T. Chung	Quarter	Finished 5th
20th G. Marsden	Quarter	Semi
29th J. Weedon	Eighth	Quarter
31st S. Wilcox	Eighth	Eighth
43rd M. Stitson	Sixteenth	Sixteenth
56th A. Miller	Sixteenth	Quarter
61st P. Hill	32nd	32nd
66th R. Stitson	32nd	32nd
81st M. Craddock	64th	64th

Position/ Driver	Country	Car	Engine	Tyres	Qua.
1. P. Boeri	France	Burns	OPS	Cournott Kyosho	4
2. S. Carrieri	Italy	Burns	Nova Rossi	SLP SLP	7
3. Toni	Italy	Burns	Rex	SLP SLP	3
4. F. Veyseyre	France	Yankee	Paris Rex	SLP SLP	2
5. T. Chung	England	Mugen	OS	SLP SLP	6
6. R. Ghedini	Italy	Magika	Mantua	SLP SLP	5
7. M. Monesi	Italy	Burns	Mondial	Couron Kyosho	10
8. M. Mielke	Germany	Burns	Rex	SLP Kyosho	9
9. D. Boulmier	Swiss	Micro Racing	Mondial	SLP SLP	1
10. S. Perolini	Swiss	Burns	Mondial	SLP Kyosho	8