

# ON THE

**Bob  
Errington**

# PIDC



## 1990 European Championships — Mendip, England

⚡ **The main final is  
flagged away.**

The European Championships had returned to England. The last occasion was at the Lilford circuit back in 1978, and how things have changed since then, but that's a different story.

The Mendip club had been working hard in preparation for this venue for the previous twelve months, so now everything was in 'tip top' shape. The already covered pits had work benches installed as we had seen earlier in the year, and now there was a covered extension area so that each of the one hundred odd drivers had adequate room. Hospitality had been arranged for Sarik Vacform, Elite Models and Ripmax as well as some large Portacabins for a new temporary race control with the referees enclosure stacked above. The normal race control had now been set up as the 'Technical Inspection' area and



⚡ **The champagne begins to flow!**

the old kitchen as transponder control. All in all the place looked very impressive and quite different.

Cars had been practicing since the Monday morning so by mid week the track was really black with rubber. The weather too was hot, but would this cause a problem with engines?

One of the early arrivals had been the new "Parsec" car from



⚡ **Baruzzi's  
car complete  
with 'Top' engine.**

**The winning Blitz.**



## On The Pipe

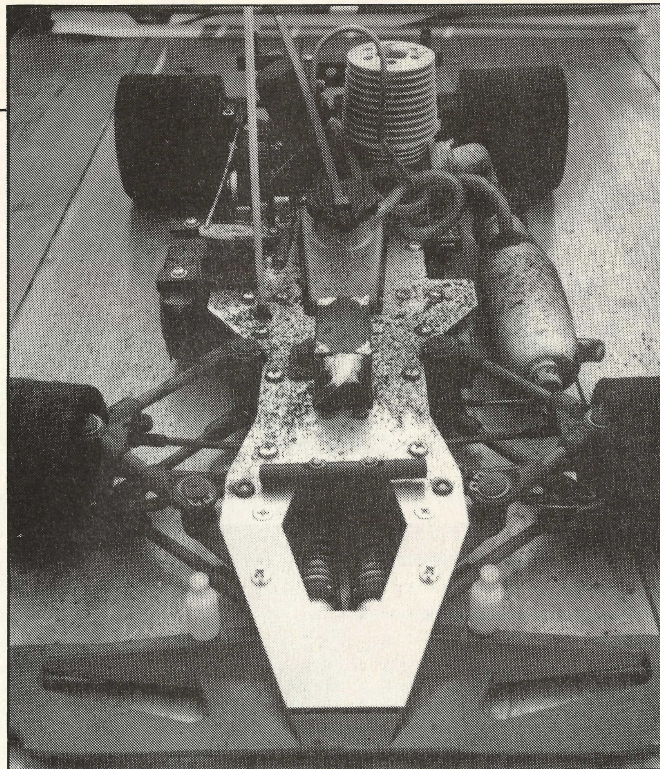
France, to be driven by Herv Valliet and one Rody Roem. The car was not handling too well to start with but a lot of concentrated effort was being put in by the cars designer and the team. The production version was being run for almost the first time so they were very near the bottom of the learning curve. The car itself had been described as revolutionary, not the words I would use, more a case of a different interpretation.

The wishbones were very long and spindly, and pivoted on both joints and moulded "top hats", as used years ago by the SG Space and the PB Alpha. The radio plate was quite narrow and the battery pack looked like an afterthought, but the car did look impressive. One nice touch was the front shock absorbers which were operated by a cam/lever arrangement giving them increased stroke. Time would see how it would perform.

As usual at this type of event, there were, in the early practice sessions, some extremely fast stop watches. Lap times were filtering around the pits that were never repeatable by anyone else with a watch. However, one thing was certain, several cars were very quick indeed. Two names kept cropping up, Michael Salven with his 'S' powered Serpent and Stephano Colombini with his Rex powered Blitz. The Salven/Serpent combination was well known to most whereas this was Colombini's first visit to England, and also his first year with Blitz having driven Associated cars for several previous years.

That high amount of black rubber and traction was significantly altering the way that the Mendip circuit was handling. Several of the English drivers who would be arriving later in the week because they thought they knew the right set up, would be in for a bit of a shock! Several cars were rolling over on the corners, some even with small tyres, and it was interesting to see how the different cars handled, and also the varying set ups for the same cars.

### The ten 'A' finalists.



The Parsec car.

By volume, Serpent was the most popular car having 63 present. Blitz were now much closer with 28 cars. Only seven PB cars were present which was a bit of a surprise, and with three of these from the U.K. it left one each from Germany, France, Norway and Sweden.

There were two Delta cars from Spain, two Parsec cars from France and a lone Picco car from Italy.

On the engine front it was no surprise to see Rex as the top engine with 50 by the time that qualifying started. There had been some changes from Rex to 'S' Power for some of the Serpent team drivers after 'S' Power engines were "issued" out, and there would be some changes back to Rex later on! 21 'S' Powers are thus credited and an incredible 12 Picco's showing that this motor has gained much from others problems, be they of reliability,

performance or availability. Only ten OPS engines present confirmed the U.K.'s knowledge of poor availability earlier in the year. Six Nova Rossi's, with three of these from the English PB team (PB being the Nova Rossi distributor) showed how the very similar Rex must now dominate their sales. The remaining line up consisted of one Mondial, one OS and one Drastic, from France.

The Serpent cars were working much better with the high traction than at the BRCA round earlier in the year. They were able to use the Sarik Porsche body to good effect with some soft front rubber and a very lightly set differential. Several drivers tried the solid rear axle but were advised to take it out. The exception to this was Gary Culvers car which remained on solid axle throughout, but then the cars geometry is quite different to the standard car. Gary's car

was really quite awful in practice until he ran the Sarik Porsche shell on the morning of qualifying, whereupon it started to look much better.

The Blitz cars were divided on set up in that all the Italian cars had solid axles fitted whilst the remainder were split between solid and a diff. Those with solid axles had lots of camber on the cars and some were using varying amounts of rear toe-in. What has become quite apparent is that a solid axled car handles well on high speed open corners, but just doesn't like turning into tight ones!

In the last stages of free practice, there were so many drivers queueing to go up the rostrum that free practice was halted and an organised scheme quickly implemented on safety grounds. Perhaps this should spur thought for future events where a scheme could be employed as at the World Champs last year where sessions of drivers (number of, to vary as per the capacity of the track/rostrum), would be queued up on a board in terms of availability in ten minute slots according to frequency. That system certainly worked well there.

## Qualifying

Friday morning had been wet leaving only organised heat practice for those that had arrived late. Scrutineering had been mostly done by this stage and it was good to see that the chief scrutineer, Ron Major, was using common sense on rule interpretation. Weight was once again an issue and would cause problems later in the event.

Saturday then saw all the qualifying heats scheduled take

place and racing began at about 10.00 a.m.

At the end of round one, qualifying looked like this:

1	Michael Salven	Germany	19	314.82
2	Gary Culver	GB	18	300.04
3	Steve White	GB	18	302.61
4	Massimo Fantini	Italy	18	304.39
5	Roger Sahli	Switzerland	18	304.65
6	T. Schaer	Switzerland	18	306.70
7	Rody Roem	Holland	18	306.80
8	R. Schaer	Switzerland	18	308.73
9	Dave Dixon	GB	18	309.54
10	Chris White	GB	18	310.72
11	K. Meister	Germany	18	310.77
12	T. Guillemier	France	18	311.14
13	S. Solaroli	Italy	18	311.31
14	B. Panesar	GB	18	311.37
15	M. Fransson	Sweden	18	312.14
16	S. Colombini	Italy	18	312.77
17	S. Nieri	Italy	18	313.39
18	R. Kulper	Holland	18	313.51

That made up the semi-finals and there were already 27 eighteen lap scores. Other British positions were:

33	(1/8 Finals)	Nigel Sayles	17	302.99
34	(1/8 Finals)	Paul Cook	17	303.50
38	(1/8 Finals)	Dave Preston	17	306.10
39	(1/8 Finals)	Wayne Draycott	17	306.13
44	(1/8 Finals)	Paul Pagdin	17	308.31
50	(1/16 Finals)	Paul Rouse	17	310.35
53	(1/16 Finals)	Shaun Leake	17	311.15
54	(1/16 Finals)	Ian Anderson	17	313.46
55	(1/16 Finals)	Steve Leake	17	313.65
56	(1/16 Finals)	Gareth Bell	17	314.01
65	(1/32 Finals)	Colin Straus	16	302.27
68	(1/32 Finals)	Steve Tilley	16	305.36
69	(1/32 Finals)	Murray Collins	16	306.15
74	(1/32 Finals)	James Wilkinson	15	317.56
75	(1/32 Finals)	James Haydon	14	—
81	—	Neil Woodhead	10	—
88	—	Bob Errington	6	—
97	—	Nick Coates	2	—

Straight into round two, and the temperature was starting to rise. Would this slow the cars down!

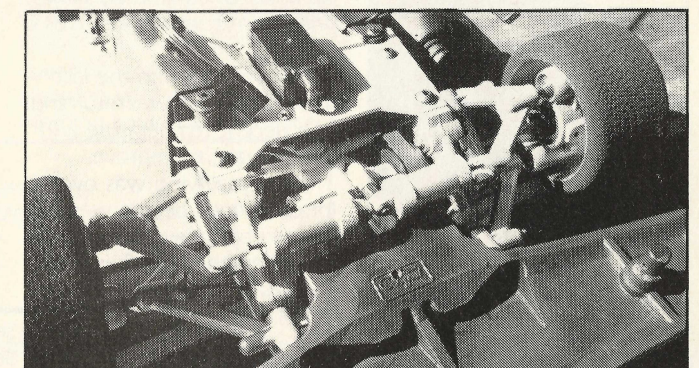
It certainly didn't, because at the lunch break and the halfway mark qualifying looked like this:

### Michael Salven — a new lap record and F.T.D. of 19 laps.

1	Michael Salven	Ger	19	314.82
2	Gary Culver	GB	19	315.52
3	Roger Sahli	Swi	18	301.48
4	Steve White	GB	18	302.61

The semi-finalists were:

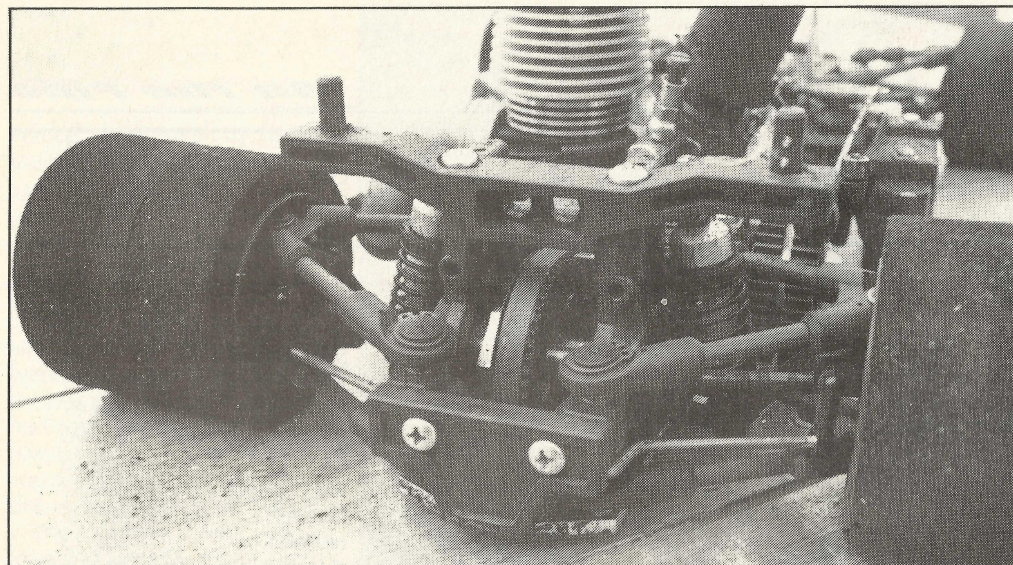
5	M. Baruzzi	Italy	18	303.04
6	A. Grob	Switzerland	18	303.82
7	T. Schaer	Switzerland	18	304.35
8	M. Fantini	Italy	18	304.39
9	Rody Roem	Holland	18	304.47
10	Chris White	GB	18	304.90
11	Alberto Picco	Italy	18	305.26
12	Bob Errington	GB	18	305.85
13	K. Menander	Sweden	18	305.98
14	J. Ermen	Holland	18	307.73
15	K. Meister	Germany	18	307.96
16	A. Hachler	Switzerland	18	308.05
17	J. Bahr	Germany	18	308.39
18	F. Cozzoli	Italy	18	308.44



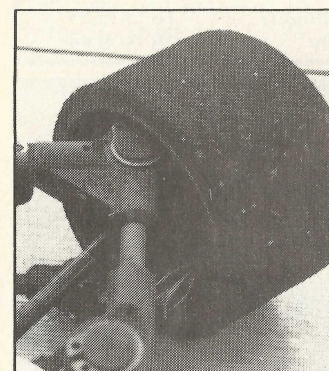
The Picco car.

(Left to Right) Roger Sahli 3rd, Michael Baruzzi 1st, Gary Culver 2nd.





⓪ The Parsec car.



Now there were 44 eighteen lap scores and you now needed a seventeen to make the top 80 which would be those that would go forward to the Sunday. Dave Dixon, Bhajan Panesar and Paul Cook were now in the 1/4 finals; James Haydon, Nigel Sayles, Dave Ashton and Mick Kruschell in the 1/8 finals; Paul Pagdin and Steve Tilley in the 1/16 finals with no less than Dave Preston, Wayne Draycott, Shaun Leake, Ian Anderson, Steve Leake, Gareth Bell and James Wilkinson all in the 1/32 finals, leaving Colin Straus, Murray Collins and Nick Coates out of the top 80.

The third round got underway after lunch and by this time it really was quite hot, so with the knowledge gained earlier in the week, it was expected that no-one would be able to go any quicker, and in the main this was exactly what happened.

The top four were the same. Rennie Schaer had moved up to sixth, Jackie Erman up to 11th, Oliver Mack was in at 16th and Dave Dixon was back up to 17th. Hachler, Bahr and Cozzoli had been dropped back to the 1/4 finals and Paul Cook went

down into the 1/8's, whilst Neil Woodhead and Colin Straus had both moved into those vital 1/32 finals. Unfortunately James Wilkinson dropped back to 81st place.

Halfway through the last round the circuit was returning to a decent temperature and times began to improve.

After qualifying was over a lot of anxious people were waiting by race control to see just where they had finished up. The final list looked like this.

1	M. Salven	Ger	Serpent/S Power	19	314.64
2	G. Culver	GB	Serpent/Rex	19	315.46
3	R. Sahli	Swi	Serpent/OPS	19	315.80
4	R. Schaer	Swi	Serpent/S Power	19	315.91
5	M. Fantini	Ita	Blitz/Rex	18	301.80
6	S. White	GB	Serpent/S Power	18	302.36
7	M. Baruzzi	Ita	Blitz/Rex	18	303.04
8	A. Grob	Swi	Serpent/Rex	18	303.82
9	T. Schaer	Swi	Serpent/S Power	18	304.35
10	R. Roem	Hol	Parsec/Picco	18	304.47
11	J. Ermen	Hol	Serpent/Rex	18	304.77
12	A. Picco	Ita	Picco/Picco	18	304.79
13	J. Bahr	Ger	Blitz/OPS	18	304.86
14	C. White	GB	PB/Nova Rossi	18	304.90
15	R. Errington	GB	Blitz/Rex	18	305.85
16	K. Menander	Swe	Blitz/Rex	18	305.98
17	O. Mack	Ger	Serpent/Rex	18	306.88
18	D. Dixon	GB	Serpent/Rex	18	307.25

Other British placings were:

26 (1/4 Finals)	Paul Cook	18	309.17	84 —	Colin Straus	17	313.54
33 (1/8 Finals)	Bhajan Panesar	18	311.37	85 —	James Wilkinson	17	313.98
34 (1/8 Finals)	Wayne Draycott	18	311.76	96 —	Murray Collins	16	306.15
40 (1/8 Finals)	Mick Kruschell	18	312.98	99 —	Nick Coates	16	309.13
47 (1/16 Finals)	James Haydon	18	315.84				
49 (1/16 Finals)	Nigel Sayles	18	316.25				
55 (1/16 Finals)	Dave Ashton	18	317.30				
58 (1/16 Finals)	Paul Pagdin	17	300.00				
65 (1/32 Finals)	Steve Tilley	17	302.63				
70 (1/32 Finals)	Gareth Bell	17	305.81				
72 (1/32 Finals)	Dave Preston	17	306.10				
73 (1/32 Finals)	Neil Woodhead	17	306.50				
77 (1/32 Finals)	Paul Rouse	17	308.64				
81 —	Steve Leake	17	310.64				
82 —	Shaun Leake	17	311.15				
83 —	Ian Anderon	17	313.46				

how much of a moustache Madonna had!

## Sunday — Finals Day

Oh dear! It was raining first thing on Sunday morning. A real dampener.

First final off was the 1/32nd B and in this, lap times were down ten seconds a lap to about 27 seconds. Two Britains were in this final, Gareth Bell and Dave Preston. Dave had been running a solid rear axle in qualifying and elected to leave it in for this final. Strangely enough it was working very well and Dave finished up second to the normal Serpent of M. Kristofferson from Sweden with the Belgian K. Moons coming in third. In this 20 minute race, lap scores had been 46, 45 and 45 respectively.

The A 1/32nd finished up a slightly quicker race with C. Bataillard winning with his Serpent on 50 laps, D. Munsters from Belgium was second on 47 and Paul Rouse brought his Blitz in in third place on 44 laps. Steve Tilley finished up seventh on 43 and Neil Woodhead ninth on 36.

The first of the 1/16th finals saw Dave Preston picking up where he had left off and, by circulating consistently under 25 seconds, came home the winner on 48 laps ahead of K. Moons again on 47 and C. Aygon from France on 46. Paul Pagdin scored 40 laps to finish up seventh in this race.

The second 1/16th final was a very close thing but Nigel Sayles was in control and eventually came home an easy winner on 48 laps ahead of

Jacob Buehler from Switzerland in second on 47, as C. Bataillard pinched third place from James Haydon on the last but one lap! James finished up fourth, Dave Ashton fifth also on 46 and Paul Rouse tenth on 36 laps after an early spell off the circuit.

Conditions were starting to improve for the first of the 1/8th finals and in fact times speeded up by about five seconds a lap during the actual race! In these conditions, Dave Preston's run came to an end and he finished up fifth on 47 laps. Mick Kruschell retired early and so finished up tenth on 21 laps with Wayne Draycott ninth on 39. C. Aygon from France was the winner on 53 laps with K. Moons (from Belgium) second on 52 (now having got through three finals on the trot!), and R. Roovers (from Holland) was third on 51 laps. Lap times continued to improve during the second 1/8th final and once again Nigel Sayles had an excellent run to come out the winner on 65 laps with Stephano Colombini coming in in second place on 64 laps, just half a second ahead of B. Schneider in third.

For the first of the quarter finals the circuit was basically dry but still about 3/4 of a second slower. For the B race it was Aspesi from Italy who took his Blitz around to score 68 laps ahead of Anders Lundgquist (from Sweden) second on 68 and Paul Cook third on 67. The A race was a bit quicker again and this time victory went to Meister from Germany who drove his Serpent around 70 times, one more than Frances Guillemier and Italy's Colombini. Nigel Sayles had to be content with 66 and sixth position.

In the interval before the semi finals started, any racing journalists present were invited to race in a celebrity race driving electric powered Lotus Seven cars, very kindly prepared for the event.

## Semi Finals

The stage was set for the B semi final with an impressive line up. Steve White from England, Albert Grob from Switzerland, Rody Roem from Holland, Alberto Picco from Italy, Chris White from England, K.

Menander from Sweden, Dave Dixon from England, Aspesi from Italy, Anders Lundgquist from Sweden and Paul Cook also from England.

Right from the start Steve White took the lead from Albert Grob and Rody Roem with Dave Dixon moving up to fourth place. By the eight minute mark Alberto Picco had moved up to fourth ahead of Dave Dixon. Grob and Roem had swapped places, but the first three were very close indeed. Two minutes later saw Aspesi move up to fifth place ahead of a slightly slowing Dave Dixon and by the fifteen minute mark Aspesi had moved ahead of Picco into fourth and Paul Cook up to sixth, which is where they all stayed to the end after what had been an extremely close race between those first three. Final result:

1	Steve White	GB	70 laps 1209.1 secs
2	Rody Roem	Holland	70 laps 1209.3 secs
3	Albert Grob	Switzerland	70 laps 1209.9 secs
4	A. Aspesi	Italy	69 laps 1211.5 secs
5	Alberto Picco	Italy	68 laps 1205.5 secs
6	Paul Cook	GB	66 laps 1203.8 secs
7	Dave Dixon	GB	66 laps 1216.3 secs
8	K. Menander	Sweden	65 laps 1206.8 secs
9	Chris White	GB	55 laps 1227.2 secs
10	Anders Lundgquist	Sweden	9 laps —

The second semi also had a fair old line up with Massimo Fantini and Michael Baruzzi from Italy, Traugott Schaer from Switzerland, Jackie Erman from Holland, Jurgen Bahr from Germany, Bob Errington from England, Oliver Mack from Germany, Thierry Guillemier from France, Stephano Colombini and Stephano Solaroli both from Italy. Solaroli, gained the place in the final because Meister, who had won the quarter, was disqualified for being under weight.

The B semi had four Serpents, three Blitz's, one PB, one Picco and a Parsec whilst the A semi had four Serpents and six Blitz's.

Fantini took the lead from the start with Jackie Erman moving into second, Baruzzi third and Oliver Mack fourth. After four minutes Oliver Mack had moved up to second as Jackie Erman dropped back. By twelve minutes Mack had taken the lead with Jurgen Bahr now up to fifth and this is how the front positions remained until near the end when the ever speeding up Baruzzi took the

lead.

1	Michael Baruzzi	Italy	71 laps 1216.7 secs
2	Massimo Fantini	Italy	70 laps 1205.6 secs
3	Oliver Mack	Germany	70 laps 1211.1 secs
4	Thierry Guillemier	France	69 laps 1204.6 secs
5	Jurgen Bahr	Germany	69 laps 1206.6 secs
6	Stephano Colombini	Italy	67 laps 1216.3 secs
7	Bob Errington	GB	64 laps 1213.3 secs
8	Stephano Solaroli	Italy	63 laps 1202.8 secs
9	Jackie Ermen	Holland	51 laps —
10	Traugott Schaer	Switzerland	46 laps —

So the final was set. Three Swiss drivers, two English, two Italian, two German and one Dutch. There were seven Serpents, two Blitz's and a Parsec with five Rex, three 'S' Power, one OPS and one Picco powering the finalists.

Four minutes after the start of the race it was discovered that the two computer lap counting systems were showing very different scores. Nothing could be done except

laps down and Salven three.

Culver passed Sahli and the crowd went wild, an Englishman was leading, but there was still nothing in it.

Fifteen minutes, one third distance, and the order was Culver, Baruzzi, Sahli, Grob, Mack, Fantini (all on the same lap), Roem, Schaer, Salven and White.

Twenty five minutes into the race and the positions were Sahli, Baruzzi, Culver, Grob, Mack, Fantini, Roem, Salven, Schaer and White.

With thirty minutes gone Sahli still had to fuel, but had nearly a lap lead over Baruzzi in second, who had again changed rear tyres at his last fuel stop. Culver was still third and Mack a closer fourth. At the thirty five minute mark Sahli was one lap clear of second placed Baruzzi followed by Culver, Mack, Salven, Roem, White, Fantini, Schaer and Grob.

With five minutes to go the positions; Sahli, Baruzzi, Culver, Mack, Salven, Roem, White, Fantini, Schaer and Grob. Grob had now retired but the other nine are still running. The gap between first and second was now 6.3 seconds. Sahli was lapping between 17.0 and 17.5 seconds a lap with Baruzzi lapping between 16.3 and 16.6 seconds. The gap was then 5.6 seconds, then 5.4, then 4.2.

With three and half minutes left to run, about twelve laps, Baruzzi could still catch Sahli.

Disaster!! Sahli's car coasted to a stop, the engine dead, and Baruzzi sailed by into the lead. Culver followed through into second but had Mack right on his tail. Mack was lapping faster than Culver and was soon past into second place with Sahli now back out on the circuit. What had happened to Sahli? Subsequent investigation showed that his OPS engine had blown a plug!

The additional pit area.



## On The Pipe

Baruzzi was now right behind second placed Mack and nearly two laps clear of the field.

With only seconds left all the cars circulated to the finish, and we had a new European Champion, Michael Baruzzi from Italy.

The cars were impounded for scrutineering and it was unfortunately discovered that the second placed car of Oliver Mack was underweight. One of the foreign officials tried to suggest that the weights that had been lost could be explained as "race damage". Quite ridiculous really when you consider that the weights had been stuck to the underside of the fuel tank! And fuel, of course, is known to dissolve the adhesive! The result, Oliver Mack was disqualified and officially placed tenth.

The presentation was made, and just before the champagne bottles were opened, one of the television people present asked

if it could be done again for the benefit of the cameras. Just as they were about to present the third placed trophy Baruzzi's bottle exploded into life, Ooops, too late now! So the rest did the customary shake and spray.

It was a brilliant race and very unfortunate for Roger Sahli who had led for so long, but then Baruzzi had to stop to change damaged tyres twice, and had been the quickest car on the circuit, and the only one to be lapping as low as 16.1 seconds, quicker than anyone could go in qualifying!

Final positions for the rest of the English:

16	Paul Cook
17	Dave Dixon
19	Bob Errington
21	Chris White
29	Nigel Sayles
45	Dave Preston
49	Wayne Draycott
50	Bhajan Panesar
51	Mick Kruschell
54	James Haydon
55	Dave Ashton
62	Paul Pagdin
65	Paul Rouse
72	Steve Tilley
75	Neil Woodhead
79	Gareth Bell

It was a brilliantly run meeting, thanks and congratulations must go to all those who worked so hard and so long to make this event so good. No names mentioned to

## The new Futaba FP-T3UCP.

avoid embarrassment, but you know who they all were, WELL DONE!!

## Bits and Pieces

Seen at the Euros was some new Futaba radio gear that should be out about the time this is published. It is truly an amazing piece of equipment and one we will be reporting on as soon as one is available.

Other news concerns driver changes for next year. Already rumours were circulating at the Euros. Some of them will be proved factual, but all we can say at the moment is that there will be a lot of surprising changes next year.

The other item concerns the engine that won the meeting. This was in fact a "TOP" engine made by Nova Rossi and as such becomes a third string to their bow. Again, more news on this as we get it.

Bye for now. ●

Name	Pos	Car	Motor	Body	Radio	Tyres		Laps	Time
						Front	Rear		
Michael Baruzzi	1	Blitz	Rex/Top	Blitz Porsche	KO	30	Power X	157	45 mins 5.5 secs
Gary Culver	2	Serpent	Paris Rex	Sarik Porsche	JR	30	Purple	155	45 mins 9.8 secs
Roger Sahli	3	Serpent	OPS	Sarik Porsche	Simprop	30	Purple	154	45 mins 13.4secs
Michael Salven	4	Serpent	'S' Power	Sarik Porsche	KO	30	Purple	152	45 mins 8.4 secs
Rody Roem	5	Parsec	Picco	Sarik Porsche	KO	25	Pink	147	45 mins 1.3 secs
Steve White	6	Serpent	'S' Power	Sarik Porsche	KO	30	GP Silver	141	45 mins 3.4 secs
Massimo Fantini	4	Serpent	'S' Power	Sarik Porsche	KO	30	Pink	138	45 mins 13.6 secs
Rennie Schaer	8	Serpent	'S' Power	Sarik Porsche	Simprop	30	Pink	137	45 mins 1.1 secs
Albert Grob	9	Serpent	Rex	Sarik Porsche	Simprop	30	Pink	113	45 mins 0.0 secs
Oliver Mack	10	Serpent	Rex	Sarik Porsche	Futaba	30	Pink	155	45 mins 3.8 secs