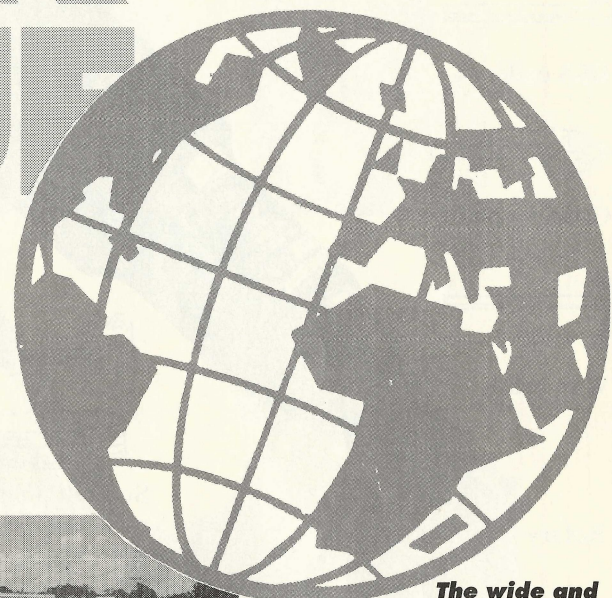
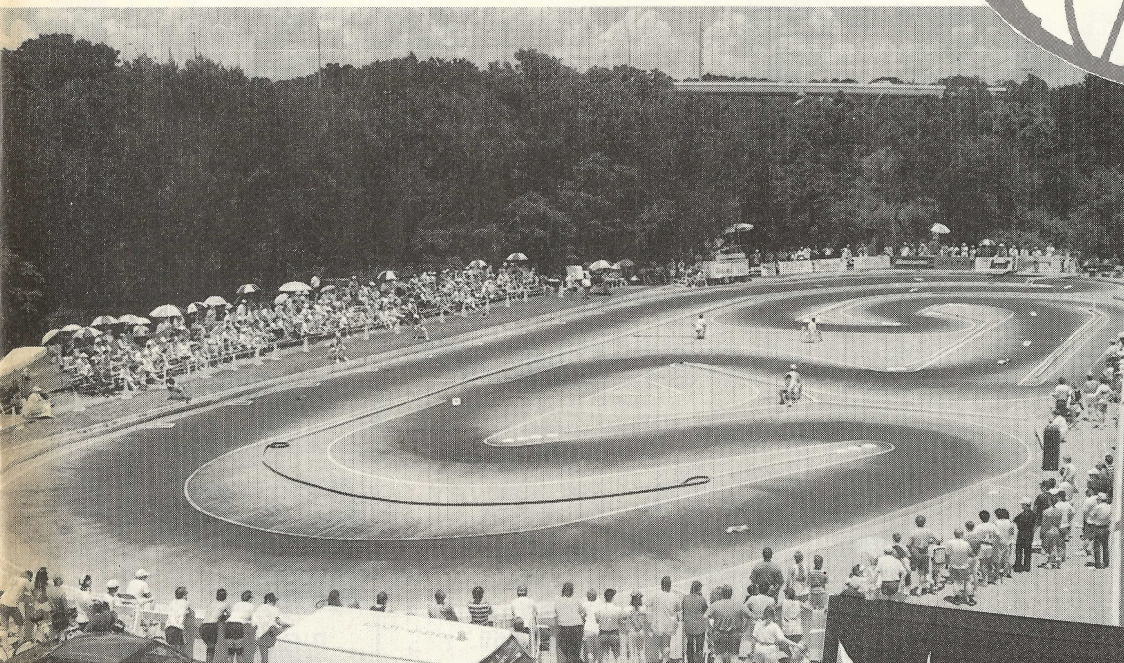


TRACK TORQUE

World Championships Special



The wide and sweeping track that held the championships in Texas. Below; Drivers rostrum for the 1991 champs.



With the high traction making possible liberal use of the throttle some of the faster drivers were having to make two pit stops during the ten minutes of each heat, whilst others seemed to be able to manage with just one. The Americans Paris motors in particular seemed to be very thirsty.

The marshalling during these first two days was of the lowest standard I have ever seen and was far below the expected standards of a World Championship event. This was mainly due to young children,

I arrived in Austin Texas late on the Saturday and was soon settled into my room at the official IFMAR hotel, the Austin Marriott on the Town. By this time most of the teams had already been involved in some serious practice for four or five days!

Sunday and Monday

Sunday and Monday were controlled practice days with most teams attempting to find the most suitable settings for this high traction track. With up to 15 cars on the track at any one time, and numerous others running in the pits it proved almost impossible to set a gearbox and only those with temperature gauges had any success in setting their motors in the very hot and humid conditions. That being the case most teams quickly made sure that they had access to a suitable temperature gauge.

These two days set the scene for the whole week of the championships. The weather was unbelievably hot and humid, with the surface temperature of the track reaching up to 150

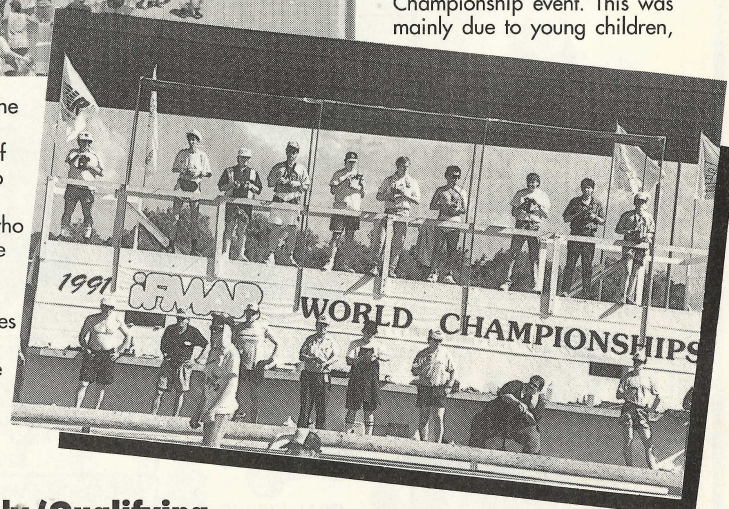
deg f. The grip on the racing line came up very quickly. A lot of loose rubber built up off the racing line, catching out those who ventured off line. The racing was fast and furious. Surprisingly many of the favourites were very obviously struggling to find the right setup for their cars.

Tuesday 2 July (Qualifying Day 1)

Tuesday saw rounds one and two of the qualifying heats take place. Each round consisted of a series of three minute warmups and ten minute timed heats with each car running on its own clock, rather like our own BRCA series heats.

some younger than ten years old, being used as marshals. Many had never been involved in any form of racing, let alone 1/8th scale gas racing.

A few of the competitors were left shaking their heads in disbelief (that's putting it politely!!) as their cars were being placed back facing the wrong way, being put back



on the wrong section of track, but worst of all having run away cars being either replaced on the track, left upside down, or carried across the circuit with the motors screaming away at two million plus r.p.m.!!!

As the sun set on this unique day the qualifying positions were as follows:

1ST	ALBERTO PICCO	36 LAPS (10.03)
2ND	MASSIMO FANTINI	36 LAPS (10.04)
3RD	MICHAEL SALVEN	36 LAPS (10.06)
4TH	BUTCH KLOEBER	36 LAPS (10.10)
31ST	JOHN HAYDON	34 LAPS (10.07)
120TH	GARY CULVER	23 LAPS (10.01)

Gary Culver was not at all happy with the handling of his Dave Preston special Serpent and did not finish in either of his two heats.

Wednesday 3rd July (Qualifying Day 2)

Wednesday saw rounds three and four of the qualifying heats take place. With the pressure building for the top qualifying positions a few of the leading drivers were beginning to stamp their authority on the leader board. Gary Culver was struggling to get his car to turn in the high traction conditions and was visibly slow through the tight infield section of the circuit. Most of the Serpent drivers had discarded their push-rod front suspension and reverted to standard shock mountings on their short wheelbase narrow front end cars. This was a configuration they were to stick to for the remainder of the week. Interestingly they had found that the fastest set up was to use the pushrod system but with a Group C body. Unfortunately they were unable to run this due to overheating problems with their motors.

The Picco and BMT cars looked exceptionally stable through all the corners. In fact they might well have been on rails!! John Haydon was going better with each successive heat and almost had a permanent smile on his face.

At the end of the fourth round the positions were as follows:

1ST	RALPH BURCH	37 LAPS (10.15)
2ND	ALBERTO PICCO	36 LAPS (10.03)
3RD	MASSIMO FANTINI	36 LAPS (10.04)
4TH	BUTCH KLOEBER	36 LAPS (10.05)
5TH	BEN SCHAEER	36 LAPS (10.05)
6TH	MICHELE BARUZZI	36 LAPS (10.05)
7TH	RODY ROEM	36 LAPS (10.06)
8TH	MICHEAL SALVEN	36 LAPS (10.06)
23RD	JOHN HAYDON	35 LAPS (10.02)
43RD	GARY CULVER	34 LAPS (10.00)

Thursday 4th July (Qualifying Day 3)

Thursday saw rounds five and six take place with added pressure for those who had not performed to their usual standards. For those capable of a fast qualifying run the battle for the top four positions was intense, as the top four would go straight through into the final on the Saturday, and hence improve their chances of winning and becoming World Champion. Those who failed to make the top four knew they would have to go through one or more qualifying finals before they could take part in the main final.

The highlight of the day was when the current Word Champion, Lamberto Collarri, burst through the ranks of other qualifiers with a spectacular run to set the fastest qualifying time by over five seconds. So smooth was his driving that his car almost looked to be going slow. No doubt his time was helped by the fact that he only needed



to make one fuel stop during the ten minute heat.

At the end of qualifying the positions were as follows:

1ST	LAMBERTO COLLARRI	37 LAPS (10.10)
2ND	RALPH BURCH	37 LAPS (10.15)
3RD	MICHAEL SALVEN	36 LAPS (10.01)
4TH	ALBERTO PICCO	36 LAPS (10.03)
5TH	MASSIMO FANTINI	36 LAPS (10.04)
6TH	BUTCH KLOEBER	36 LAPS (10.05)
22ND	JOHN HAYDON	36 LAPS (10.15)
38TH	GARY CULVER	35 LAPS (10.11)

Friday 5TH July (Move up Finals)

Friday saw the move up finals, as the Americans call them, take place. Each final was twenty minutes long, and the first three drivers from each moved up into the next round. Few drivers managed to move up more than one round.

Saturday 6TH July (The Big Day)

The final Saturday was the day on which the quarter, semi and main finals all took place.

Gary Culver managed to finish in the first three in his 1/8th final on the previous day by managing to keep his car going, when many of the faster cars wilted in the heat before the twenty minutes was over. This put him into the same quarter final as John Haydon. John was very determined to make a semi final at least and the stage was set for a great race.

In the event John got off to a terrible start when he collided with a spinning car on the

Top; Pits under cover. Massimo Fantini came in second. Left; Third place for Michael Salven and Serpent.

first lap. Unfortunately for him it resulted in his body becoming caught on the front damper centre support. A quick pit stop was needed to put matters to rights. John pressed on in determined fashion and managed to claw his way from tenth to a very creditable fourth at the finish. Unfortunately not quite good enough to make the next round. Gary Culver drove his usual smooth and well controlled race but it was obvious that he had still not managed to sort out his handling problems and he finished fifth. Thus ended the British challenge.

During the quarter and semi finals a few computer gremlins had reared their ugly heads. The main final was delayed by over two hours whilst replacement equipment was found, delivered and tested.

The Main Final 0-10 Minutes

The early part of the race was a constant duel between Lamberto Collarri and Ralph Burch with Lamberto in the lead for most of the time. Significantly Lamberto was refuelling every five minutes whilst Ralph was having to take on fuel at less than four minute intervals. At the ten minute mark Ralphs engine cut. Now the running order became Lamberto Collarri, Butch Kloeber, Michael Salven and Mike Swager.

10-20 Minutes

During the second ten minute period of the race Alberto Picco put on a magnificent charge, but unfortunately ran out of fuel. Young Oliver Mack lost second gear on his Serpent but carried on regardless only slowing during the last third of the straight. It was an impressive effort but at this level of competition the handicap of having no second gear was too great.

At the twenty minute mark Ralph Burch retired leaving the running order: Lamberto Collari, Massimo Fantini, Butch Kloeber, with Michael Salven laying fourth one lap behind the leading trio.

20-50 Minutes

The race had now settled down, but the lap times were as fast as ever, with Michael Salven moving up to third position and Lamberto Collari pulling a full lap clear of the rest of the field. Lamberto was driving extremely smoothly and was most defiantly dominating the race from the front. Butch Kloebers race came to an unfortunate end when a broken rear suspension, sustained as a result of hitting one of the barriers, forced him to retire.

Art Carbonell was just off the pace of the leaders, but his consistent and smooth style took him up to third position by the forty minute mark. Ten minutes latter his Picco car suddenly dived into a barrier. This seemed to be as a result of a three to four second period of radio interference. The front suspension was broken and Art was forced to retire.

50-60 Minutes

Alberto Picco moved up into fifth place after recovering from several motor stoppages thought to have been caused by running out of fuel.

The final results were as shown below. The was no argument as to who was the World Champion at the end of the race. Lamberto Collari had lead for virtually the entire race despite having touched one or two of the metal corner dots!

POSITION	DRIVER	COUNTRY	CAR	ENGINE	LAPS
1st	Lamberto Collari	Italy	BMT Blitz	Top	212
2nd	Massimo Fantini	Italy	BMT Blitz	Top	209
3rd	Michael Salven	Germany	Serpent	Serpent P5	208
4th	Mike Swanger	America	Associated	Paris Rex	202
5th	Alberto Picco	Italy	Picco	Picco	201
6th	Butch Kloeber	America	Associated	O'Donnel top	196
7th	Oliver Mack	Germany	Serpent	Rex	191
8th	Roger Sahli	Switz	Serpent	OPS	183
9th	Art Carbonell	America	Picco	Picco	169
10th	Ralph Burch	America	Associated	Paris Rex	68

There were 150 places available of which only 142 were taken. The split of equipment being used was roughly as follows:

CARS	ENGINES	
BMT BLITZ 32	SERPENT P5 25	
PB 2	OPS 3	
DELTA 10	OS 3	
ASSOCIATED 10	PICCO 12	
PICCO 8	TOP }	
PARSEC 8	NOVA ROSSI }	99
SERPENT 72	REX }	

General Comments

Warnings were inconsistent, and unless the warning was for bad driving the teams only knew that a warning had been given when it was posted on the notice board the following day!! This resulted in several drivers receiving two of the allowable three warnings before

they even realised any had been given!!

Scrutineering during qualifying was very lax with certain drivers being able to get away with underweight cars!

On most days the racing started up to one hour late!

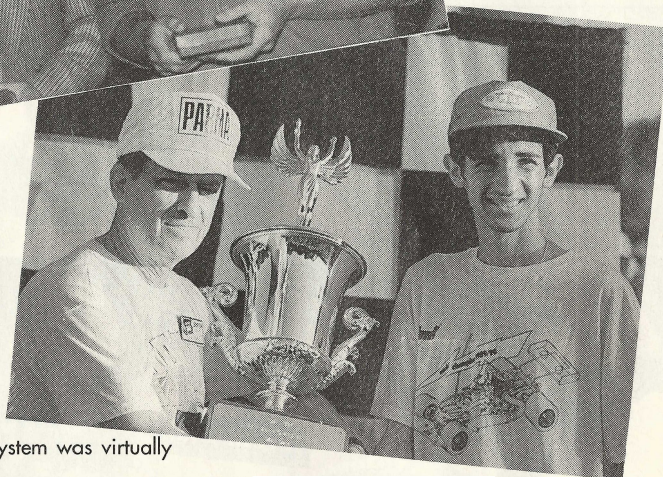
The public address system was virtually inaudible.

Once the heats had started on the Tuesday morning no more practice was allowed at any time. Some drivers had radio/motor problems which proved difficult/impossible to solve during qualifying runs. A period of practice during the evenings or midway through the heats would have been really helpful.

So my thanks once again to Nick for producing an excellent report under difficult circumstances. Obviously having read it you will have noticed that some of the information that would have normally been included is missing. I would like to make it clear that this is entirely due to the lack of information that



Left: The Brits - Gary Culver and James Haydon. Below: Ken MacDowell gives Lamberto Collari his winners trophy.



was made available over there and is no reflection on Nick. I would also like to make it clear that Nicks comments on the lack of organisation at this event were mild compared with those that have been verbally made to me from other sources. Who's John Haydon? Well in the UK we call him James Haydon, but it seems that despite several protests on his part the Americans were determined to go on calling him John all week. Never mind James they got it right in the final print out of the results that I got a week later via Serpent!