

Michael Salven took TQ yet again, but suffered more bad luck in the Final, Italy's Alessandro Aspesi going on to take the win!

This year, nine Brits managed to make the journey to Germany, and thanks must go to them for keeping the numbers up. Just two or three years ago would have seen Britain with the highest number of drivers, but this year we were down to seventh in terms of numbers of team members, which means for sure that our allocation for entries will go down for the next few years. A shame, but it seems to be the way at present. The Continentals would

Alessandro Aspesi's Blitz, European Champion



You can't miss at this range!

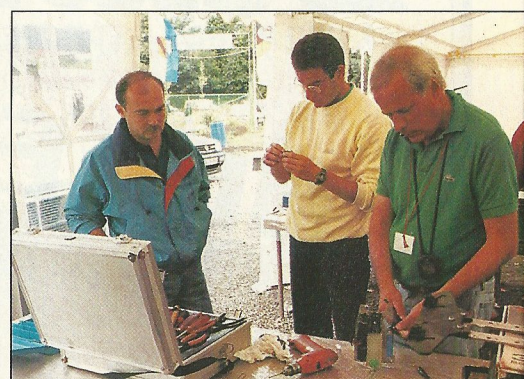


The beautiful (and very fast!) Ettlingen circuit.



The British Team.

The 1/8 circuit European Championships, Ettlingen, Germany.



Mario Rossi, Alessandro Aspesi and his father Angelo confer in the pits.

surprisingly Germany had the highest number of entrants with 20, then it was: Italy 17, Switzerland 16, Holland 13, Belgium 11, Sweden 10, Great Britain 9, France 6, Austria 5, Croatia 3, Luxembourg 3, Slovakia 2, and Denmark 1. The total came to 123 drivers. Serpent had the most cars present with 58, then came Blitz with 42, Picco with 13, PB with 5 (4 from England), Parsec 4 (2 from France and 2 from Germany) and a lone DRT car, scratch built, from the Czech Republic.

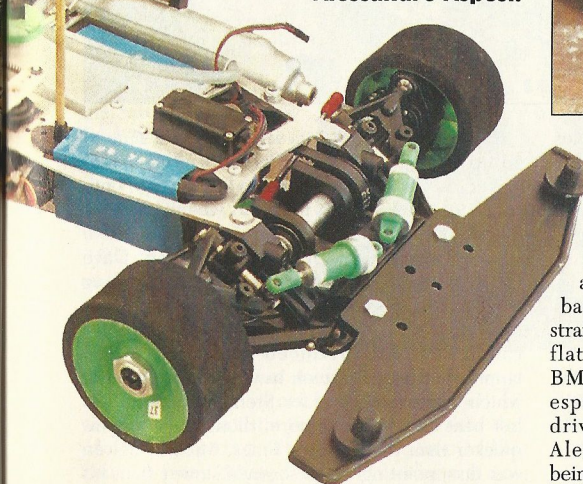
Somewhat surprisingly, more drivers were using Futaba radio than anything else, with 42 in total, then came KO and Multiplex with 23 each. Servo wise, KO seemed to have the monopoly

Claus Engel's Serpent with little rubber left on the wheels after the Final!

with 50 drivers with the rest mainly using Futaba 9302 or Multiplex: types On the tyre front, Ellegi was certainly the most popular brand, with the remainder mainly using Arrows, GP or UFRA. Finally, the engines. Here Nova Rossi had a clear following with over 70! Next came Serpent Mega with 18, Picco with 15, OPS with 9 and the RB with 7. The latter motor being the Rody Roem developed engine, also being manufactured by Nova Rossi.

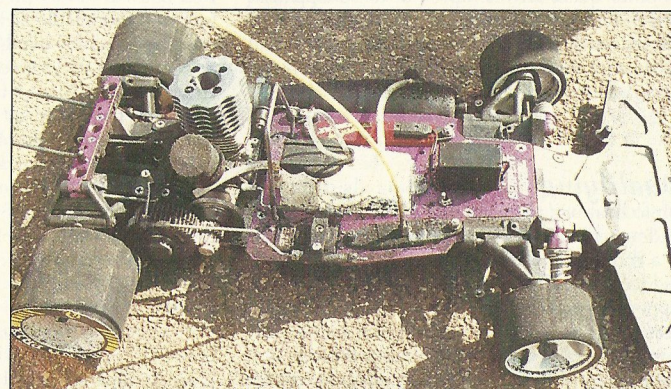
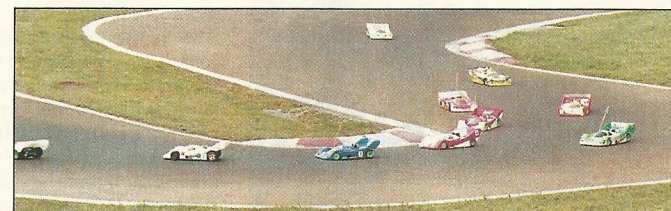
The facts regarding engines are quite interesting really. The logic being that if you ran a Picco car for instance, then you probably ran a Picco engine. Fine so far. The interesting thing is with Serpent and the Serpent Mega engine. 58 Serpents, but only 18 Mega engines! Of the Italian team, 5 were using Serpents, but no one the Mega engine. Even within the strong German team where there were 9 Serpents, only Michael Salven and Karl Heinz Meister were using the Mega engine! True though that both of

The winning Blitz of Alessandro Aspesi.

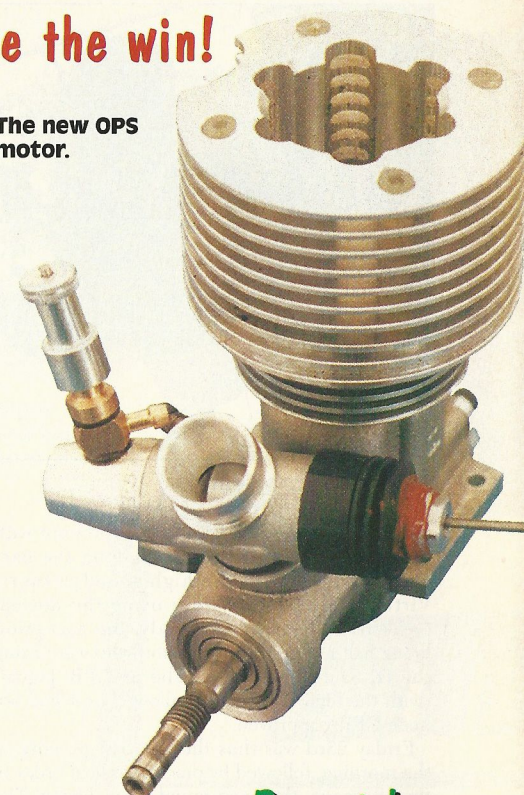


these were very quick, but why so few?

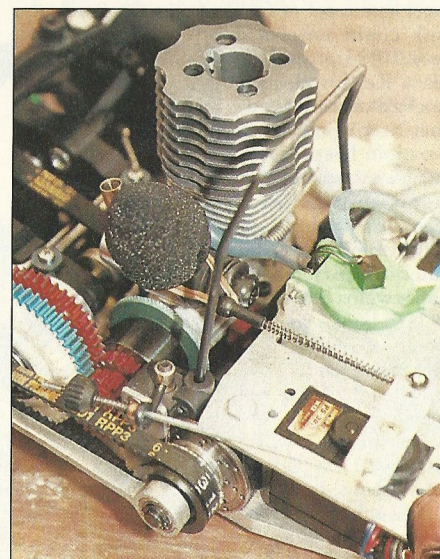
Anyway, enough of statistics, what was practice showing? Well, not surprisingly, Michael Salven



The new OPS motor.



Report by Bob Errington



Alessandro Aspesi's BMT with X drilled metal disc.

was constantly the quickest out there on the circuit. His car looked perfect and was taking the banking at the end of the straight at what looked like flat out speeds. Of the BMT cars, none looked especially fast, but one driver did look good. Alessandro Aspesi was being very precise through the technical bits, almost inch perfect, and the car looked easy to drive, which was probably why it didn't look fast.



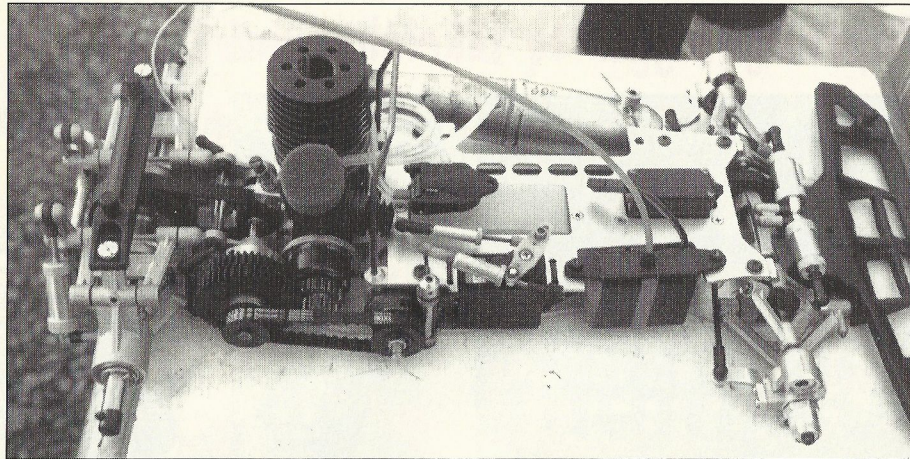
The Schouten brothers won the Concours Trophy.

Car wise, both BMT and Serpent had a new thicker chassis on test, the BMT one being 6mm thick with a lot of bits milled out, and tapering towards the front. The rear end was milled so that the back axle assembly was at the same height as normal, but it left the engine effectively 2mm higher than before. This was in direct contrast to the PB Diamond of Nigel Sayles, who had a minute flywheel on the engine with the engine blocks not much thicker than washers! All of the Continental drivers present were on solid axles, although one or two Brits were still trying diffs. Word from the Continent seems to suggest that diffs are no longer used in any make of car, or in any track conditions.

Most of the BMT and Picco cars

Michael Salven took a fine TQ with his Serpent.



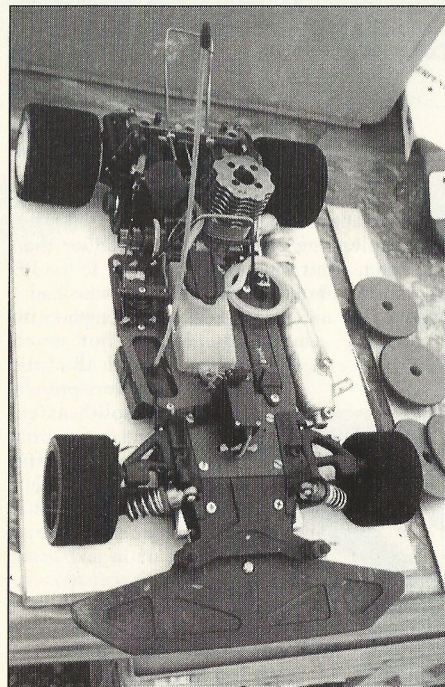


Alberto Picco's Genesis.

were using fairly thick damping at the front with medium to light at the rear, giving the cars greater stability in the high speed corners. Virtually all the cars were using the normal Sarik/BMT Porsche 962 body, the exception being half a dozen from Holland who were using the JE Sauber Mercedes. The new PB 'Jaguar' (with the high tail) was not allowed as it had not been EFRA approved.

Friday 23rd was thus the last free practise in the morning, followed by practise in heat order in the afternoon, then one round of qualifying. The heat order practise was not important for anything except to ensure radio compatibility, though some people still wanted to have a full five minute heat type run. Paul Cook got a 22 lapper and down to 13.5 secs a lap in heat one to set a healthy pace, whilst Roman Stopka from Austria was a little quicker and also managed a 13.5 lap in heat five. Heat eleven had Oliver Mack and though the little guy didn't finish his run, he still managed some quick laps, two of them down to 13.2 secs. Heat fourteen also had a whole host of quick cars with Stefano Colombini being the only one to clock twenty three laps and getting down to 13.3 as well. Claus Engel from Germany had the quickest lap at 13.1 secs, though his norm was more like 13.5.

Not surprisingly, the last heat featured Michael Salven, Lamberto Collari and Alberto Picco, plus



six other quick drivers. Seven of these lapped at 13.4 or lower. Jurgen Bahr at 13.3, Collari at 13.2 and Salven at 13.1. So the stage was set for a real battle, the time was now half past three — let battle commence!

Qualifying

Into heat one then and Britain's Paul Cook was leading, not as quick as in practise, but still going at a good pace. The trouble was he didn't finish, and it looked like he ran out of fuel. So a twenty lapper was posted. Steve Scott had a solid run in heat seven to post a nineteen lapper but already there were six twenty two lappers posted. Bob Errington put in a quick twenty one, and whilst Gareth Bell in heat nine was running at a similar pace, he ran out of fuel at 4 mins 30. Surely the tank could not have been filled properly? PB's Keith Plested clocked a nineteen, then Neil Woodhead a twenty in heat eleven, though the star in this heat was young Oliver Mack who had a near perfect run to record a quick twenty three lapper with a best lap of 13.0 to boot! Another twenty three came in heat twelve, and a good one for Marcel Schouter from Holland in heat thirteen, which also saw Dave Dixon get a twenty two lapper, but such was the competition that he finished up slowest in the heat! Heat fourteen had PB's Nigel Sayles who drove superbly and consistently to clock a twenty two, but again was eclipsed by the twenty three lappers of Claus Engel from Germany and the superb engine in Stefano Colombini's Serpent, Nigel suffering from a basic lack of 'grunt'!

The last heat, as usual, drew a lot of attention, and at 5.30 was the last race of the day. Michael Salven spelled out his intentions clearly when on his first lap he clocked a 12.9 sec time! He went on to clock the fastest time with twenty three laps in 5 mins 4.7 secs. Jurgen Bahr, also from Germany, got down to 13.0 secs and then clocked a twenty three in 6.4 secs to surprise quite a few people. Collari was disappointing but still clocked a twenty two dead, Alberto Picco was smooth and

Stefano Colombini's Serpent.

got his twenty three but the surprise was Alessandro Aspesi who again didn't look quick but clocked a twenty three in 9.9 and was down to a 13.2 sec lap as well.

So at the end of the first day and the first round, it was Salven, Mack, Bahr and Engel in the top four (all from Germany) then Aspesi then another four twenty three lappers. Nigel Sayles was the top Brit in 36th, Dave Dixon 40th, Bob Errington 48th, and Paul Cook 70th with the other Brits out of the top 80.

Saturday 24th was the main qualifying day and started with heat one of round two at nine o'clock. This time Paul Cook finished his heat to clock twenty two in 9.5 secs. Bob Errington was also on for what looked like an identical time, but the zimmer frame gave out on the last but one lap and a trip on the grass cost him over nine seconds, the result a quick twenty one. Gareth Bell had cured any problems re running out of fuel, and though the lack of a result in round one was playing on his mind, an excellent run secured a twenty two in 11.6 secs. Heat twelve saw the first twenty three of the day when Fabio Domanin from Italy got his, but this would be of just five for the whole round. Dave Dixon shaved off a couple of seconds in his heat and Nigel Sayles a tenth of a second to move nowhere. The last heat saw Michael Salven one second slower than before, but now he had the two fastest times! Just to rub it in. Again Collari clocked a twenty two dead, but then again Aspesi had another twenty three.

No change in the top eight then, Paul Cook was now 37th, Dave Dixon 38th, Nigel Sayles 43rd, Gareth Bell 45th (all separated by just two seconds), and Bob Errington now 58th — straight into round three.



Gareth Bell picked up a second in heat nine to go up a couple of places, whilst Keith Plested gained over a lap in the following heat to go onto a twenty. Heat eleven followed which is where Neil Woodhead clocked a quick twenty, even though he had been off for nearly a lap. Dave Dixon also improved in his heat by keeping smooth and consistent to shave nearly three seconds from his previous best. So far the third round had only produced one twenty three lapper, but heat fourteen saw two more, one of which was a fresh one for Stefano Solaroli. The last heat also saw two more, though neither was quicker than the previous times. Michael Salven was disappointingly two seconds slower than his best, so now he had the first, second and fourth fastest times. Is that consistent or what! So, no change in the top thirty places except for the arrival of Stefano Solaroli in at number eleven.

The fact that the top thirty hadn't changed is really quite strange. Bearing in mind that everyone was becoming more familiar with the track, times were just not improving! Dave Dixon had moved up to 33rd, Gareth Bell was now 46th and Nigel Sayles 47th.

The fourth and final round started at 2.00 pm and once again there were few improvements, this time only two twenty three lappers were recorded!

Paul Cook clocked another twenty two in heat one, though not as quick as before. Bob Errington managed a steady run to gain his twenty two lapper, whilst Gareth Bell in the next heat clipped two seconds off his time. This two seconds was enough to move him up ten places! Heat fourteen saw Claus Engel with his fourth twenty three whilst our Nige (!) drove his socks off but just couldn't get under 14.0 secs, the transmission on his car sapping so much power coming out of bends. Heat fifteen also saw the fourth twenty three for Michael Salven, any one of these would have put him in the top four! Well done Michael.

So the top ten was:

- 1 Michael Salven Germany Serpent Mega
- 2 Oliver Mack Germany Serpent Rex
- 3 Jurgen Bahr Germany Parsec Nova Rossi
- 4 Claus Engel Germany Serpent Rex
- 5 Alessandro Aspesi Italy BMT Nova Rossi
- 6 Marcel Schouter Holland BMT Top
- 7 Stefano Colombini Italy Serpent Nova Rossi
- 8 Alberto Picco Italy Picco Picco
- 9 Fabio Domanin Italy BMT Top
- 10 Stefano Solaroli Italy BMT Nova Rossi

British placings were:

- 34 Dave Dixon 22 laps 5 mins 7.3 secs
- 37 Gareth Bell 22 laps 5 mins 8.3 secs
- 44 Paul Cook 22 laps 5 mins 9.5 secs
- 48 Nigel Sayles 22 laps 5 mins 11.1 secs
- 55 Bob Errington 22 laps 5 mins 13.2 secs
- 105 Neil Woodhead 20 laps 5 mins 5.4 secs
- 110 Keith Plested 20 laps 5 mins 9.4 secs
- 114 Steve Scott 19 laps 5 mins 4.8 secs
- 118 Harry Chapman 18 laps 5 mins 6.8 secs

There were eleven twenty three lappers, forty eight twenty two lappers and forty one twenty one lappers. So it really was close. And who was in that magic 100th spot, well it was Trond Andressen from Norway, that well known personality and devoted fan of Radio Race Car.

Just two events left for the Saturday, the A and B 1/64th finals for positions 75 to 94. No Brits were involved so onto the Sunday, Finals day.

Oh dear, it's raining, and raining hard as well. The first final off at 9.00 am was the 1/32nd B and here first place went to Oyvind Anderson from Norway, with Gaetan Fraioli from France second, both of whom had made it through from the 1/64ths the previous evening. The 1/32nd A saw Milko Tenthof from Holland bow out, so he was not going to do one of his usual charges through the field here.

The 1/16 B featured Nigel Sayles who was able to take an easy victory on 63 laps from Fabrizio

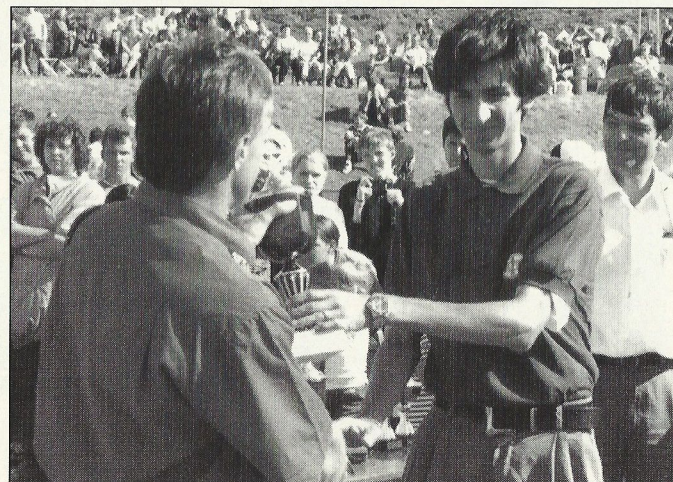
Chitti from Italy and Fraioli up again from the 1/32nds and 1/64ths, both on 60 laps. Bob Errington was in the B 1/16ths, but brake pads that had swelled with the damp cost him a minute in the pits, and a certain progression through. Jakob Buhler, Jurg Nydegger (Swiss) and Llozezo Bali from Italy were those to go through.

The rain had stopped now, and the track was drying slowly for the 1/8th B. Three Brits here, Dave Dixon, Paul Cook and Nigel Sayles. Paul and Nigel just couldn't match the grip, but Dave could and came home second on 66 laps behind Mikael Fransson from Sweden and in front of Italy's Matteo Ricci. The other 1/8th saw Gareth Bell go out after just twenty laps, Alois Inninger and Christian Wurst (Germany) and Ronald Schouter from Holland going through.

Up to the quarter finals now, the time 12.30, with the track conditions dry. Rody Roem set the pace in the B with 84 laps, Edwin Busschers from Holland was second on 83 and Christophe Aygon from France third also on 83. Dave Dixon bowed out early. The second quarter and 84 laps again, this time to Danny De Richter from Belgium. The second and third placed drivers are up again from the 1/8ths, Alois Inninger on 84 and Ronald Schouter on 83.

Semi finals now, so the pace for the twenty minutes would be hot. Alberto Picco took the lead at the start but lost it to Stefano Solaroli in the fuel stops. Solaroli took the flag on 85 and Picco second also on 85, Marcel Schouter from Holland was third on 84 and Massimo Fantini from Italy fourth on 83, the latter two having to wait until after the A semi to see who would take the last two places in the final (the rules being, first three go through up to the 1/4 final, then from the semi it is the first two from each semi, then the next fastest two from either semi).

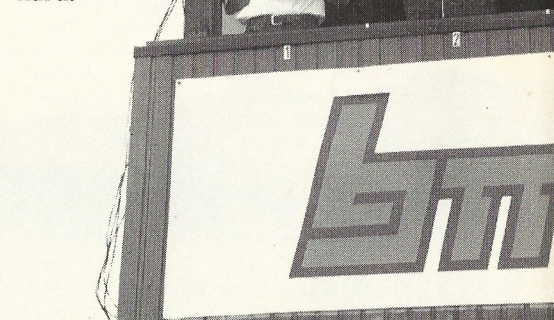
The second semi then and Alessandro Aspesi took charge. He was a little superstitious about being number one, but when it was pointed out that he was really number five overall, he seemed to relax! Stefano Colombini likewise followed through, both of them on 85 laps, this time it was Michael Mielke second on 84 and Ronald Schouter fourth on 83. The last two places would go to Marcel Schouter and Michael Mielke, Ronald Schouter who had come up from the 1/8ths, just missing out. What this story of the



World Champion Lamberto Collari jump started his semi and didn't make the Final!

semi doesn't tell is how the World Champion, Lamberto Collari, managed to jump the start and incur a one lap penalty. He got on with what seemed like a pointless task and worked up to fifth with an 83 dead, without the penalty he

Nigel working hard.



would have made it! Must have been an itchy throttle finger. Point of interest is that Collari drives throttle down on the transmitter!

The 1993 European Championship Final.

The final then, forty five minutes and a lot would happen.

Right from the start Salven took the lead, a slender one, because no one really was slipping away. Bahr and Engel both ran into trouble, then a small problem showed up for Mack and Salven was leading by a lap from Aspesi. Bahr had more serious trouble, then Mack stripped a rear belt on his Serpent. At around half distance the leading cars had all changed tyres, but still Salven held the lead. However, his car started to refuse to change into second gear so was pulling enormous revs on the straight, but it was still almost as quick! Aspesi now unlapped himself and tried to close on Salven.

Into the last five minutes the race was very much alive. But what now? Salven broke a rear drive shaft, the car was now a handful and he lost the lead. Salven once again had luck desert him, is he ever destined to win a big one? Aspesi had only to keep it all together and this he did even though he was still lapping quicker now than anyone else!

Final Result:

- 1 Alessandro Aspesi Italy BMT 188 laps
- 2 Alberto Picco Italy Picco 185 laps
- 3 Claus Engel Germany Serpent 183 laps
- 4 Michael Salven Germany Serpent 181 laps
- 5 Stefano Solaroli Italy BMT 177 laps
- 6 Jurgen Bahr Germany Parsec 166 laps
- 7 Oliver Mack Germany Serpent 163 laps
- 8 Michael Mielke Germany BMT 159 laps
- 9 Marcel Schouter Holland BMT 155 laps
- 10 Stefano Colombini Italy Serpent 92 laps

None of the winners had any tyres left at all! An excellent win, could this be a pointer for the Worlds? Congratulations then to Alessandro Aspesi, 1993 European Champion.