

1996 EFRA 1/10 IC EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Sintra track - amazing facility- amazing size.



ten TENTHS

Niklas Edlund - Concoours winner - notice the Sintra Wing.

The Venue

This year's EC was definitely one that I was looking forward to, how could anyone resist sunshine and racing? The host for this year's EC was Portugal, the track being located just north of Lisbon at Sintra.

The track and the facilities were superb. I have never seen a track this big, the track was at least half as big again as the biggest track that we have here in the UK. It had it's own

snack bar that did meals and served drinks. Underneath the rostrum, which itself was big enough for 20 drivers, was 2 rails with 12v available - no need to carry that heavy battery to the track. The pits were covered too and each of the line of tables had mains electricity to it. I must admit, I was impressed.

The Hopefuls And Their Equipment

This year there were drivers from Portugal, Spain, Holland, France, England, Belgium,

The top three show off their silverware.

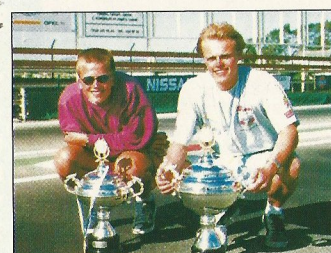


Sweden and Austria. The Serpent Impact 2 was the most popular car but there was quite a variety of other cars including Picco, Mugen, BMT, Colt and PB. In the engine department the choice was from Mega, Nova Rossi, Picco, RB, and OS.

The thing that fascinates me at international meetings is the variety of equipment. There are always lots of different types of fuel, tyre truers, etc. it's like going to a different world!

There was a Concours d'Elegance trophy for the taking, and as is now becoming a tradition Niklas Edlund from Sweden took it. Some of Nik's handiwork also featured on most of the fastest cars around. Nik produced a wing back at home in Sweden and he brought lots of them here to Sintra. It wasn't long before everyone discovered that the new 'Sintra Wing' (as I christened it!) gave more downforce with less drag, very important on that long straight. I'm sure that it will not be long before these wings appear in the UK.

The 'Unbeatable Janmaats.'



Practice

Officially, the EC was scheduled to run from the Thursday to the Sunday, but most drivers got down to the track early and started running engines in (or running them out), and did some practising.

Early on in the practising most drivers concentrated on that awesome straight.

The exit from the bend before the straight was important to for getting good speed down the straight. Drivers who lifted at that point usually lost several yards to the braver driver. Most drivers used the tallest gears that they could find, for the Serpent drivers that was probably 15/18 43/47. The speeds on the straight were equally impressive with lots of cars recording over 100 km/h.

Of course, as is usual, the thing that pre-occupies drivers the most (i.e. the straight) is not

the thing that makes the greatest difference to the lap-times. Eventually drivers started measuring their lap-times and it soon became obvious that it was easy to lose more than a second a lap by not taking the infield properly. The infield was going to be the area that separated the fast drivers from the slower ones.

To enable the cars to get through the infield quickly soft tyres were needed on the front of the car. The initial good set-up was 35s on the front and 30s on the rear, with the rears changing to 35s as the grip came up.

Qualifying

Friday eventually came and all drivers had to pass their cars in for a technical inspection. Murray Collins from England and a team of

Some of the amazing bodies that were racing.



those days of building up to qualifying it all seemed

to be upon us

too soon! The EFRA 1/10 IC EC qualifying system is the "5 fastest laps" system. It's one of those systems that you either love or hate.

By the end of Friday the first round of qualifying was over and every driver knew how much they had to do. Only the first four drivers would qualify straight into the main final, all others would have to battle through quarter and semi-finals.

Portuguese inspectors checked that all the cars were adhering to the rules.

Pretty soon it was time for all those miles of testing to be put to use. It's funny but after all

QUALIFYING POS AFTER RD 1

	Name	Nat.	Car	Engine	Lap Time
1	Julius Kolff	NL	Serpent Impact-2	Mega Sx-15	20.33
2	Ben Kelsall	GB	Serpent Impact-2	Mega Sx-15	20.38
3	Bas Janmaat	NL	Serpent Impact-2	Mega Sx-15	20.49
4	Francois Sanchez	F	Serpent Impact-2	Mega Sx-15	20.57
5	Pim Janmaat	NL	Serpent Impact-2	Mega Sx-15	20.60
6	Paul Turley	GB	Serpent Impact-2	Mega Sx-15	20.75
7	Thierry Favier	F	Serpent Impact-2	Mega Sx-15	20.81
8	Mark Ambler	GB	Serpent Impact-2	Mega Sx-15	20.83
9	Laurence Lyaudet	F	Mugen	Nova Rossi	20.86
10	Jurgen Langerak	NL	Serpent Impact-2	Mega Sx-15	21.12



TOP TEN POS AT END OF QUALIFYING

	Name	Nat.	Car	Engine	Body	Lap Time
1	Julius Kolff	NL	Serpent Impact-2	Mega Sx-15	Opel Vectra	20.14
2	Bas Janmaat	NL	Serpent Impact-2	Mega Sx-15	Opel Vectra	20.21
3	Pim Janmaat	NL	Serpent Impact-2	Mega Sx-15	Opel Vectra	20.25
4	Ben Kelsall	GB	Serpent Impact-2	Mega Sx-15	Opel Vectra	20.38
5	Francois Sanchez	F	Serpent Impact-2	Mega Sx-15	Opel Vectra	20.57
6	Paul Turley	GB	Serpent Impact-2	Mega Sx-15	Opel Vectra	20.75
7	Thierry Favier	F	Serpent Impact-2	RB	BMW M3	20.81
8	C. Peracho-Heras	E	Serpent Impact-2	Mega Sx-15	Opel Vectra	20.82
9	Mark Ambler	GB	Serpent Impact-2	Mega Sx-15	Opel Vectra	20.83
10	Peter Plug	NL	Serpent Impact-2	Mega Sx-15	Opel Vectra	20.86

THE FINAL RESULTS

(1)	Bas Janmaat	(NL)	Serpent Impact
(2)	Pim Janmaat	(NL)	Serpent Impact 2
(3)	Mark Ambler	(GB)	Serpent Impact 2
(4)	Niklas Edlund	(S)	Serpent Impact 2
(5)	Francois Sanchez	(F)	Serpent Impact 2
(6)	Rui Matias	(Por)	Mugen
(7)	Ian Littley	(GB)	Serpent Impact
(8)	Julius Kolff	(NL)	Serpent Impact 2
(9)	Ben Kelsall	(GB)	Serpent Impact 2
(10)	Nascimento	(POR)	Serpent Impact 2



The Brits brought mascots.

Qualifying positions after round 1

Although there were four rounds of qualifying available to all it was not always a case of waiting to the next round to have another crack at the times. The sun played a significant role in the times. When the track became hot (and it did - very hot!) the grip levels declined and the times became slower. Saturday morning seemed to be the best time to put your 'banzai' run, but as you might guess all the Brits had mechanical problems during that round and missed their chance for the glory spot.

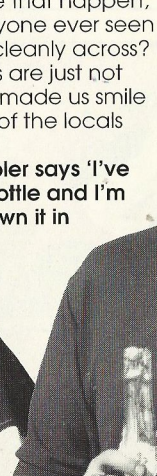
Ian Littley is still smiling (this was taken 4 weeks after the event!)



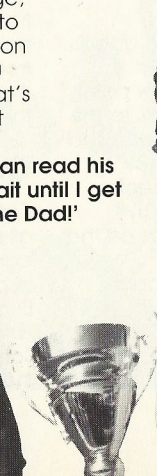
Mark Ambler says 'I've won this bottle and I'm going to down it in one!'

Ben Kelsall qualified straight through into the final so that left Paul Turley, Mark Ambler and Ian Littley to battle through semi-finals for a right to a place in the finals. In each of the semi-finals the first two places get through to the final and then the two fastest losers from either of the Semis also go through.

The first Semi contained Paul Turley, and he was the favourite being the fastest in the race. Paul looked all set to booking a slot in the final when disaster struck. The drive belt on his Serpent Impact broke clean across. It's not every day that you will see that happen, in fact has anyone ever seen one break cleanly across? Some things are just not funny, still it made us smile when one of the locals



Ben Kelsall - I can read his thoughts 'wait until I get you home Dad!'



paul
KELSALL

thought that he had just found a gift from God when Paul slung his car at the fence!

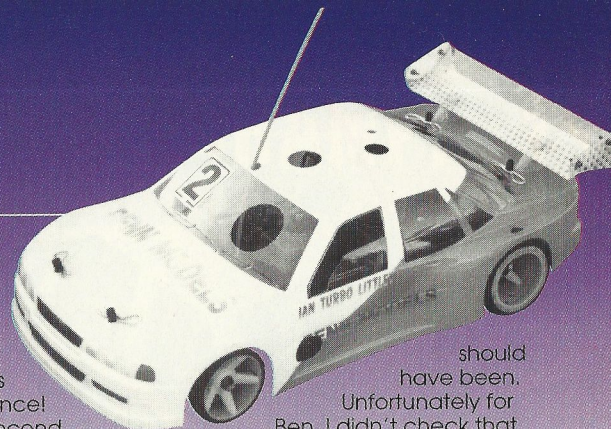
Onto the second semi-final and both Mark Ambler and Ian Littley were chasing for places in the final. This Semi turned out to be the fastest of the two, which is just as well really. Mark and Ian finished 3rd and 4th, which did not guarantee them a place in the final but because the race was a quick one they took the two fastest runner-up places. Phew, that was a close one!

The Final

If anyone had thought that the racing so far was hard, then they were in for a shock for the final. For a start the final is 45 minutes long, but the pace is absolutely electrifying. There would be over 120 laps, pit-stops every 5 minutes and most drivers were planning a tyre change.

From the start, Ben Kelsall had a disaster at the first corner and soon found himself in last position and having to fight his way through the field. Meanwhile, Julius Kolff was leading at the front of the field and Pim and Bas Janmaat were chasing him, Pim actually overtaking him at one pit-stop. Julius fought his way back into the lead only for it to all go wrong: a screw worked loose from the rear suspension and the car became impossible to drive. Although Julius eventually rejoined the race, his contention for the title was over. For a short while, Pim lead the race, but an accident which left Pim's car on its roof let Bas take over the lead and Ben Kelsall slipped through to chase Bas. At the 25 minute mark Ben followed Bas closely into the pits, for fuel

and a tyre change, and a chance to take this battle on for the next 20 minutes, or that's the way that it



should have been.

Unfortunately for Ben, I didn't check that both the rear wheels were locked into place and one of them dropped off on the straight, losing both the wheel and also the quick-release mechanism. So another one bites the dust

With Ben out of the way Pim resumed the chase for his brother and the crowd cheered loudly as local hero Rui Miguel Matias pushed on into 3rd spot. In fact his Mugen looked very good, but eventually even he succumbed when his steering servo worked loose and he dropped back into 6th spot.

While all this was happening, Mark Ambler drove a steady race and moved up to claim the 3rd spot with Niklas Edlund delighted with his 4th place, holding off the French driver Francois Sanchez by 1.5 seconds. Ian Littley came off the rostrum with a maniac's grin on his face that lasted several hours! Who could blame him? He had started the day with an uphill task and had finished up 7th in Europe, quite an achievement!

At the front of the field Bas was in control, and he held off his brother to win by 5 seconds after 45 minutes racing. Who will stop the 'Unbeatable Janmaats'?

Congratulations to the 1996 1/10 IC European Champion, Bas Janmaat, it's a title that is well deserved. The event was very well run and enjoyable so thanks must go to C.R.O and F.E.P.R.A. for organising it. Now I can't wait for the next, be it a Euros or Worlds.