

Report by Es West  
& Alan Harman



# Vive la Off Road!

The 1996 European 1:10 Off Road Championships held in Croisilles - a village just off the Lille/Paris motorway south of Arras in France, could be described as being very successful in terms of some tremendous results for several UK drivers

It was a return to top form for Craig Drescher. He won the 2WD event, with his Associated RC10B2, regaining the European title lost to Jukka Steenari in Finland in 1995. The Brits dominated the 2WD Championships with 8 UK drivers making the 'A' final in 2WD and 4WD, it was a similar story but this time Finland's Jukka Steenari had the upper hand and he took the title with his Schumacher Cat EC 2000. For several UK drivers, attending the Euros for the 1st time, these championships were very rewarding - Ryan Coxall, Danny Marson and Nicky Duncan all made the top final in 2WD and Graham Alsop was delighted to be in the 4WD - so from a British prospective the outcome was very favourable.

In general terms, the Championships, were not such a

success. The high hopes of the organisers were dashed by a combination of changeable weather conditions, inadequate lap-counting software and insufficient refereeing.

## Le organisers...

The French Organisers, Lille Auto RC, were fully committed to making the event a showpiece. This they did superbly with a parade on the opening day of the competition and plenty of publicity with TV and Press coverage. Unfortunately as far as the drivers were concerned each day was a lengthy affair which went on frustratingly forever. I'm not sure that the racing was of as much importance to the organisers as to the rest of us. We were there to race but an inadequate lap counting

program and the controversy surrounding an active steering control device spoiled what promised to be a 1st class meeting. Most of the racers I talked too were unhappy about the quality of the refereeing, and certainly the EFRA 1/10th Off Road Chairman, Mike Drescher, was scathing in his opinions on the same subject.

But that's only part of the story...

## Who put the 4 in XX4?

In the 4WD Championships almost as much interest was shown in the Losi 4WD prototype, seen in Europe for the 1st time, as in the competition! Pop Losi and Gil Jnr were at the event to test the car on grass and, as they did not wish any rivals to copy some very innovative

engineering in the project, no one - apart from the scrutineers - was allowed to see the car with the body shell off! The Losi XX4 in the hands of Kevin Moore finished at the top of the qualifying list (and was 2nd overall in the finals) prompting the final decision to go ahead and manufacture the car. Pop Losi and Gil Losi Jnr were delighted with the performance of the prototype car and everyone who saw the car on the track could not fail to be impressed.

## Associated support

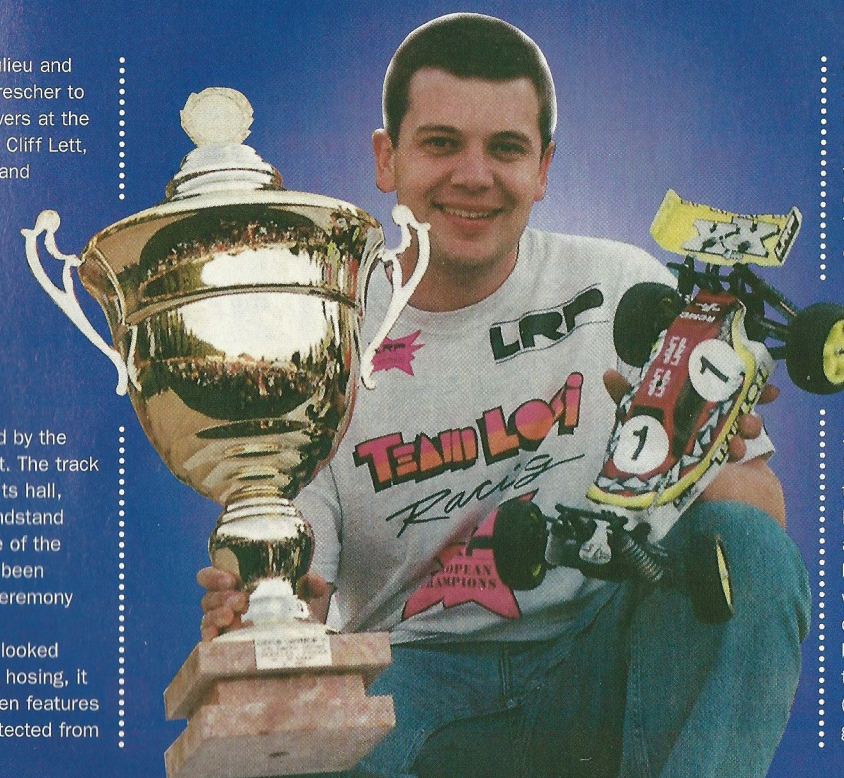
Another American visitor to these Championships was the current 2WD World Champion, Mark Pavidis. Mark had been racing at the 1/8 Rallycross

Championships at Beaulieu and was induced by Mike Drescher to help the Associated drivers at the Euros. Mark, along with Cliff Lett, is part of the research and development team at Associated and Craig Drescher certainly profited from his expertise.

## Trackside...

The facilities provided by the host club were excellent. The track was built next to a sports hall, used as the pits. A grandstand was in place at the side of the circuit and a stage had been erected for the trophy ceremony beyond the track area.

The flat grass circuit looked good. Marked out using hosing, it contained several wooden features and each bend was protected from



excessive wear by using Astroturf. A large wooden jump was situated near the end of the customary long straight. It seemed that many of the drivers participating in the competition, and most of the UK Team, did not like the positioning of the big jump. It was easy to misjudge the approach speed at this feature and crash out on landing. I thought it was fine! The Associated and Losi cars made it look easy most of the time but the Schumacher Team, driving the new 'Fireblade' were very weary of it! At the end of the straight a sweeping left hand bend brought the cars to a chicane followed by an hairpin bend. On this hairpin another jump was situated - two bunny hops, close together on the apex of the bend, fanned out across the track - this double bunny hop hairpin (DBHH), as I called it, was hard to get right every lap. The approach



ad to be right or disaster followed and it was on this section that the marshals were kept the busiest! Next came a dogleg bend bringing the cars to a raised rippled section of track followed by another hairpin.

A series of three small straights and hairpins - which ran transversely across the track directly in front of the super rostrum - came before a sharp left hand bend leading to two speed humps. In the 4WD competition it was possible to jump over both humps and the referees were concerned about the possibility of cars landing on others on this section! Fortunately nearly all drivers realised, in practice, that this manoeuvre was too risky! A right hand bend and another hairpin then brought the cars back on to the main straight to complete 1 lap.

The track was well planned and challenging. It held up brilliantly and was in good condition even after 6 days of racing.

Tuesday

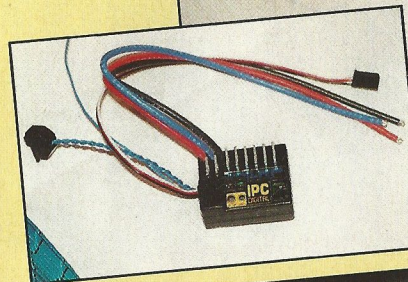
The 1st day of free practice and registration in the 2WD event was very hot and sultry and we were grateful that there was air conditioning in the sports hall.

The day was concluded with a parade through the village and then a lavish opening ceremony. A marching band and majorettes led the parade with each country taking part.

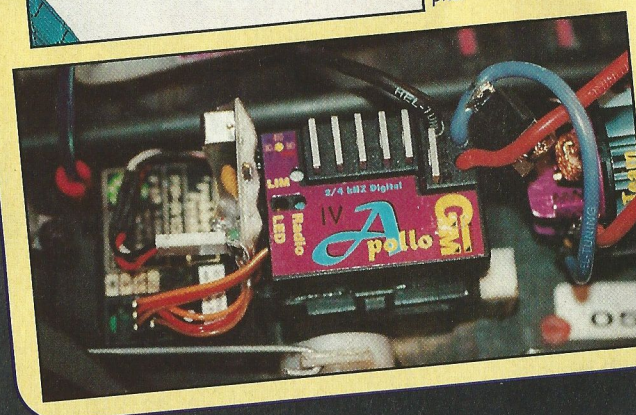
Virtually every driver I spoke too, after the free practice, seemed pleased with the way that practice had gone. The Schumacher drivers with the car new car seemed satisfied and Jukka Stenari, especially, looked good with his. He had spent time at Schumacher on development work and a new chassis had been produced to make the car more competitive. One driver not so happy was Jamie Booth. He had struggled all day to bring his new Schumacher 'Fireblade' up to the same spec as the rest of the team changing chassis and rear wishbones. These had to be modified to fit and every time I looked over to where Jamie was pitting he had a file in his hand! This restricted Jamie's practices to the minimum and didn't do much for his enthusiasm either!

The track was flat but now showing signs of wear on the racing line and Pop Losi commented that it would be much more interesting,

Right; New Novak Cyclone was on show and was tiny!



Left; LRP new IPC - champion first time out. Below: GM Apollo caused a stir in the pits.



## Losi XX4

**P**op Losi tells me the concept behind producing a 4WD car in the USA is to get drivers with perhaps not as much skill in 2WD to be able to compete at 4! When truck racing became popular in America this gave the model car industry a fillip and Losi are hoping that the XX4 will have the same effect. The plan is to produce a 4WD car which will be low maintenance and which will handle like a 2WD car and will be capable of winning 'out of the box', unlike most of the major 4WD contenders which need lots of tune up mods to make them competitive. Take the Yokomo for example the full spec YZ10 which Craig Drescher drives will cost something like £600.00 retail. Losi is aiming to produce a fully competitive car for around £350.00.

The new car will be in the shops hopefully early spring 1997.

I had a sneak preview under the body shell and can say that the motor is at the front end. The car has a pan chassis and enclosed drive train and the Prototype used at the Euros was approx. 2.5 ounces heavier than the intended production version. Pictures will be in next month's issue.

when it roughed up, to see which car handled the bumps best!

Wednesday: The International Jury - made up of the Team Managers from each country participating - had decided on Round by Round qualifying in the 2WD event and had also allowed an increase in the number of sets of tyres allowed in qualifying from two - as in EFRA rulebook - to three sets.

Heavy rain during Tuesday night had made the track surface wet for controlled practice but the sun shone through the 1st qualifying round and for the remainder of the day giving ideal conditions for racing. Most drivers used Schumacher Blue minispikes and Green 2-row studs or Slim minis on the cars during the early rounds but then a change to Blue compound at the front came later.

There was already dissatisfaction and several complaints because it was difficult to know from the PA announcements what was going on....The British Team Manager, Christine Kenningley, had made references to the Race Director, on behalf of the UK Team, regarding driving standards. The lads were unhappy about the blatant bad driving taking place on the track and the lack of penalties from the referees. Another criticism, the publishing of the results was slow - on one occasion an hour elapsed between the running of the heat and the results being posted!

Jukka Stenari dominated the 2WD qualifying with his Schumacher 'Fireblade'. Round by Round Qualifying takes a driver best score from any one round to calculate his final qualifying position. Drivers with the best times in each round get 1 point and Jukka was fastest in R1 with a time of 15 laps in 316.60 seconds so we knew one 'A' Finalist. A great run from Ryan Coxall with his Losi XX gave him a time of 15/317.93 and secured him 2 points for 2nd overall and put him into the 'A' too. This was a tremendous result from this Essex lad. (I reckon he'd been nipping over to France to practice!) Craig Drescher and Jon Leonard scored 3 & 4 points with the next best times. Now that Jukka and Ryan were assured of 'A' final places with 1 & 2 points respectively, the other leading qualifiers would have to sweat it out and try to improve. Other UK drivers in contention were Jon Tucker,

Steven Lawson and Kevin Moore. As for Jamie Booth, I think he was still building his 'Fireblade'!

In the 2nd of the 3 rounds to be run on Wednesday, Jukka again was quickest some 6 seconds in front of Kevin Moore's time of 15/316.45 who was now certain to make the 'A'. Another Finnish driver, Teemo Leino, driving a 'Fireblade', was also performing well. In this round he put up the 3rd best time to follow on from his 7th place from R1. UK drivers Craig Drescher, Jon Leonard and Jon Tucker again each achieved one of the top 6 fastest times of the round and Swedish driver, Frederick Mathiesen, son of Referee Dallas Mathiesen, was also on the pace with a time of 15/321.36. Germany's Patrick Feschtschenko was equal 8th with Ireland's Richard Cree. Another 'Fireblade' driven by Karl Marsden was in the top ten going into the final round of the day.

Again Jukka posted the fastest time in Round 3 and another Brit, Craig Drescher, finished 2nd. Craig took the 2 points and was now assured of a top ten place. Ellis Stafford was 3rd, and Jon Tucker, 4th and with 3 or 4 points respectively, both had a good chance of making the 'A' without any further improvements! One driver who would not make it was Patrick Feschtschenko. He had a time of 15/316.95 which was 5th fastest in this round. Ironically this time would have given him 7th place on the 'A' final starting grid had we been using FTD qualifying. As it was he would eventually

finish 11th overall and pole in the 'B'! Tucker's time of 15/316.85 just 0.10 seconds faster than Patrick's would ultimately give him an 'A' final place!

Kevin Moore and Darren Foy also put up good times in Round 3 which finished with the threat of rain as storm clouds gathered in the distance bringing concerns about a possible wet track for the final two rounds run the next day.

Thursday: Thursday morning came and heavy overnight rain had soaked the track. The forecast was not helpful, an unsettled outlook was predicted. The round of practice, in heat formation, took place partially drying the track surface and conditions gradually began to improve but it was not until the latter stages of Round 4 that times were significant. The 4th round of qualifying saw Ellis Stafford make the 'A'! His time of 15/317.54 was the best of the round and the only 15 lap run

obtained. The damp conditions restricted drivers in the early heats as they suffered with a lack of grip on the drying track and produced lap times as much as 1 second per lap slower. This gave those in the later heats a real chance of making the grade and Danny Marson and Nicky Duncan scored 14/301.47 and 14/301.57 respectively to take 2nd and 3rd places in Round 4! Both these young drivers had made their 1st European 'A' final. Danny knew before his heat that a good clean run would give him a real chance of making the grade, and that's exactly what he achieved - with a couple of frights on the way! As the political animals put it, a window of opportunity opened and Danny and Nicky D went through into the 'A' Final!

Because of the extra round of practice, the scheduling for the finals was changed and then changed again and we knew that a late finish to the day was inevitable.

In the final and 5th Round of qualifying 14 drivers produced 15 lap runs and the fastest times seen during the qualifying competition. The best of these came from Jukka Stenari with 15/309.32 who was now clear favourite to take the 2WD title. Kevin Moore was the only other driver to come close to Jukka's time being less than half a second slower but nearly 7 seconds faster than Craig Drescher who had the 3rd best time of the round. Teemo Leino with 15.317.33 scored 4 points for being 4th quickest this ensuring him of a ten top finish. The unlucky driver would again be Patrick Feschtschenko because his 5th place would not improve his overall position. The best times of R5 were achieved by drivers already certain of 'A' Final places so had little effect on the 'A' Final line-up!

### 22 in the top fifty!!

The qualifying had been a long winded affair and we had to wait it seemed an age for the finals to be

### 1996 EFRA 2WD European Championships Round by Round Top Ten

Name	Country	Best Time	Best Points	Points for each Round				
				R1	R2	R3	R4	R5
1. Jukka Stenari	Finland	15/309.32	1	1	1	1	59	1
2. Ellis Stafford	GB	15/317.54	1	17	35	3	1	6
3. Craig Drescher	GB	15/311.78	2	2	4	2	6	3
4. Kevin Moore	GB	15/309.65	2	10	2	6	5	2
5. Ryan Coxall	GB	15/317.93	2	2	15	30	19	15
6. Danny Marson	GB	14/301.47	2	40	19	31	2	35
7. Teemo Leino	Finland	15/316.73	3	5	3	49	16	4
8. Nicky Duncan	GB	14/301.57	3	25	16	22	3	17
9. Jon Leonard	GB	15/318.31	4	4	5	24	4	23
10. Jon Tucker	GB	15/316.85	4	7	6	4	43	7





sorted (I think, by hand!). On publication it was seen that the UK team took 22 out of the top 50 places on the qualifying list and several young British drivers had out-performed the best Europe has to offer!

Pop Losi also commented that 70% of the top twenty cars were Losi XXs!

## The 2WD 'A' Finals

Leg 1: The finals grid was on a lane next to the straight and the cars had to funnel to the left, at the start, to move on to the track. This gave the inside line of cars a distinct advantage over the others because Car No 2 had to travel further to the 1st bend than did Car No 3! It was a stupid state of affairs which made a mockery of the grid start system and illustrated how inept the organisers were at proper race practice!

Predictably it was Craig Drescher's RC10B2 which tucked in behind Jukka's 'Fireblade' leaving the Losi cars of Ellis Stafford and Kevin Moore, on the far side of the grid, in 3rd and 4th places. Craig made an error at the double bunny hop hairpin and dropped to last as Ellis' and Kevin's cars moved up. The Associated car of Danny Marson was now in 4th place but on the next lap an error on the DBHH by Kevin placed Danny 3rd. On lap 3 Kevin's Losi overtook Danny's RC10B2 on the rippled section and was now back in 3rd place some 3 seconds behind the leading 2 cars. Ellis' Losi XX by this stage was struggling to keep in touch with the 'Fireblade' of Jukka Steenari and the gap between the front 2 cars gradually increased to nearly 2 seconds by the 8th lap. By this time there were 2 separate races taking place at the front of the field because Danny's car was hanging on to Kevin's Losi and looking capable of passing. The race order had not changed since the 3rd lap and in the later stages Ellis resorted to taking risks in an attempt to catch Jukka's car - he did not succeed and Jukka won comfortably in the end as Ellis had tried in vain to catch the Schumacher car. The race finished with Kevin in 3rd place and Danny 4th.

Leg 2: With the sun shining the cars started on the 2nd leg and this time Craig Drescher, who moved into 2nd place behind Jukka's 'Fireblade', did not make an early error. In fact he began pressurising the leader from the 1st bend with Ellis' Losi just behind and Kevin Moore's car again 4th. A clever piece of opportunism saw Craig Drescher take the lead by passing Jukka's



Top: Jukka Steenari's TQ Fireblade and below: His winning CAT 2000 EC. Left: Jukka with his mechanic and girlfriend Michael who has helped him to both of his Euro wins.



car on the jump. The leading 2 cars now began to extend their lead on the remainder of the field and it was during this time that Kevin made an error off the big jump to drop back. Ellis Stafford too was losing contact with the leading 2 cars, but on lap 4, a mistake when Jukka's car was stuck on the hosing let Ellis move into 2nd then further mistakes from the Schumacher driver, this time on the straight jump and double bunny hop hairpin, allowed Kevin Moore to move into 3rd. Ellis meanwhile was trying to get on terms with the leader. Craig looked to be in command although there was only a meter splitting the two cars on some parts of the track. Jukka recovered to 4th and he was trying to catch Kevin's Losi when another error dropped him to 6th and out of it in this leg. During the latter stages of the race Ellis was bailed by back markers and this helped Craig increase his lead. He won an important leg with Ellis Stafford finishing 2nd and Kevin Moore 3rd.

Leg 3: And so into the final leg with the outcome uncertain, any one of 3 drivers could become champion? The start would be important and Ellis missed out! As in the previous legs Ellis' Losi, from 2nd on the grid, came onto the track at the start behind the 'Fireblade' of Jukka Steenari and the RC10B2 of Craig Drescher. Then an error on the double bunny hop hairpin, meant his chances had gone. Kevin too was in trouble, now in 3rd place behind the

leading 2 cars several errors lost him time and places. Craig Drescher, meanwhile, was putting Jukka under pressure and looked much tidier at the end of the straight and over the jump. He was trying to get close enough to repeat his overtaking manoeuvre of Leg 2 but Jukka made sure this did not happen. Then the pressure paid dividends as Jukka's Schumacher car got caught momentarily on the track hosing and Craig seized the chance to nip by and take the lead with 3 minutes gone. From this point onwards the race was won because Jukka could not get close enough to threaten the leader and Craig Drescher's RC10B2 crossed the finishing line to win the race and with 2 wins from 3 legs Craig Drescher became the 1996 EFRA 2WD European Champion. Kevin Moore, a long way behind the 1st 2 had moved back into 3rd place where he finished the race. It was a tremendous win for Craig Drescher who showed how good a racer he is on a track which was fair to everyone. Jukka Steenari finished runner up in the championship with Ellis, who was certainly unlucky with the start position, ending up 3rd overall.

## 4WD championship

Friday: The track had not deteriorated as expected in the 2WD competition with many of the best times achieved in the final round so it was decided, after yet further consultations between the Race Organisers and the International Jury, to run the 4WD event to FTQ qualifying rules. The same procedure for free practice and registration was adhered to with qualifying beginning after controlled practice early Saturday morning. The weather forecast was for showers and the clouds looked menacing during Friday's practice sessions.

Saturday: By early Saturday the Race Organisers seemed to be 'stressed out'? Their software used for lap counting was inadequate for such an important event and this gave rise to delays because manual checks of crystals etc. had to be carried out. It was rumoured that a computer programmer was up until 4am Wednesday morning modifying the lap counting program because it was incapable of running qualifying to Round by Round rules in the 2WD event! I feel that legislation is required within the rules to standardise Lap Counting at EFRA events. Maurice Schehr, the Race Director, seemed to be the only official who could communicate fluently in English so all the responsibility was on his shoulders. This responsibility looked to be weighing heavily and was another factor causing delays.

Rain mid-way through the 1st round proper spoiled some UK drivers chances but there was still much British interest at the top of the qualifying list after this 1st of 3 rounds of qualifying which would take place Saturday. Kevin Moore had achieved the fastest time of the round with the new Losi XX4. His 15 laps in 309.34 was only just faster than that achieved by Craig Drescher, with his Yokomo YZ10. Craig's car looked really competitive.

Next came Ellis Stafford, driving a Schumacher Cat EC 2000 just 1.5 seconds slower than Craig. German, Sascha Falter was 4th fastest in R1. Karl Marsden, Rob Gammon and Jamie Booth were all in contention and in the leading group after R1 - these 3 drivers

were using the new M'Troniks Pro-Digi speed controller in their cars.

## M'Troniks Pro-Digi and others...

This latest development from M'Troniks is the 1st prototype in a new range of speedos which will be on the market early next year. The new digital speedo was praised by everyone who tried it and looks to be a serious threat to LRP - especially in terms of price and performance. LRP also had the latest version of their digital speedo - IPC in most of their sponsored driver's cars and GM Racing also had new products in use...

In Round 2 Kevin Moore improved on his R1 time by over 2 seconds with the fastest time so far of 15/307.14 seconds. Sascha Falter moved to 3rd overall with 15/309.98 and William Mitcham, driving the Tenth Technology Predator, scored 15/310.60 to move into 4th place. Schumacher drivers, Alan Harman and Jamie Booth, both moved into the top 10 with 15/314.56 and 15/315.32 respectively to give the UK six drivers in the provisional 'A' Final line-up!

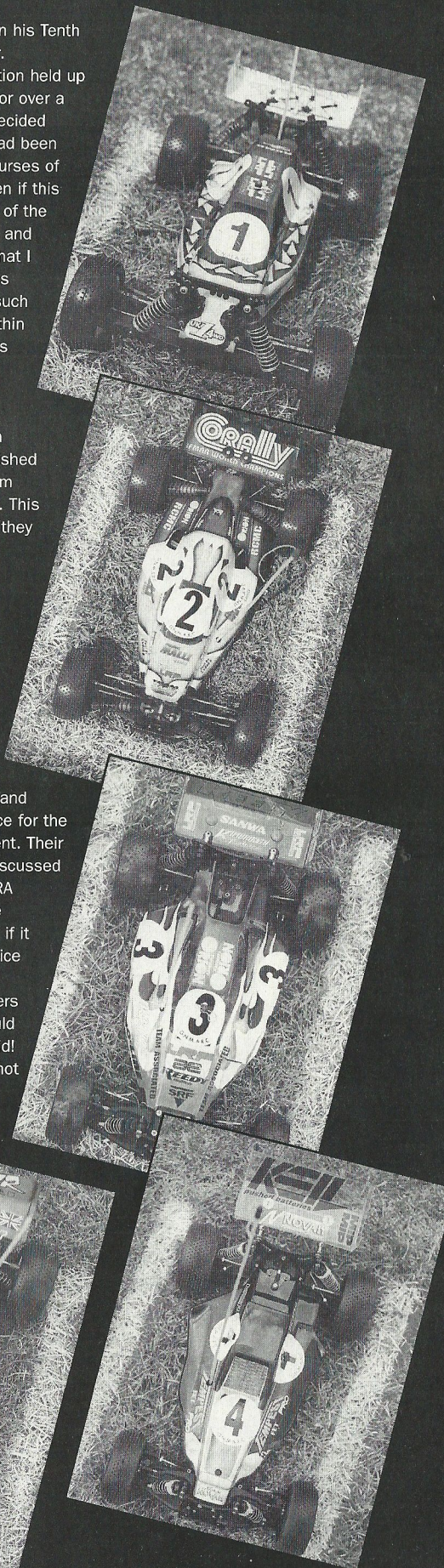
## Tricky decisions...

Then controversy and the intervention of rain wrecked the day's racing before the 3rd round could begin!

It was discovered that some drivers were using an active steering controller in their cars and the question was did this contravene the rules? This electronic device plugs into the speed controller and uses a solid state gyrometer - within its electronic wizardry - to process signals from the steering servo to electronically correct the steering of the car. It has been developed and produced by Ralf Helbing of GM Racing. We had one British driver with the device in his car! William Mitcham is now sponsored by GM Racing and he was using the Active

Steering controller in his Tenth Technology Predator.

The legality question held up the race timetable for over a hour whilst it was decided whether the rules had been broken and what courses of action could be taken if this was the case! Most of the parties from the UK and the rest of Europe that I talked too during this period agreed that such a device was not within the spirit of the rules and should be banned. After another Team Managers meeting a statement was published on behalf of the Team Managers and EFRA. This statement said that they considered the GM device was not according to the interpretation of the EFRA rules, they felt the new device was not a control but a governing device to aid drivers skill. They would allow the results so far obtained to stand but banned the device for the remainder of the event. Their decision would be discussed at a forthcoming EFRA Executive Committee Meeting in Paris and if it was felt that the device was illegal then the results of those drivers using the device would be made null and void! This decision did not satisfy the drivers,





many of whom wanted to know who had used the steering device in the 2WD event? The greater majority of competitors wanted the device banned, and the results discarded, but Mike Drescher told me he was concerned about the legalistic aspects which might arise from disqualification's.

I think that GM Racing and the drivers who ran this device were a little naive. No one is suggesting they were trying to cheat but surely there was no way that they could keep things under wraps for the whole event. Indeed had the scrutineers been more observant the problem would have been sorted before any racing had taken place! The sensible strategy would have been to ask if the device was legal at the onset of the championships. GM are well aware that the rule which attempts to stop the use of such devices has been challenged before. (I

remember discussing a similar device produced by Kyosho, and also a traction control system, 3 years ago, at the Euros in Ulm, as a member of the International Jury). No device which lowers the skill level is excepted and the present and any future rule will, in essence, try to convey this. Just because the wording may be a little awry these manufacturers know the kernel of the argument.

I felt sorry for Richard Weatherley because events would prove later that the decision put Billy Mitcham's chances of success in tatters. Billy's car was as competitive as the other leading contenders in the first 2 rounds of qualifying but after removing the active steering control device, his car looked a different proposition. Richard told me they had to start from scratch on set-ups from this point onwards because the handling characteristics of the car changed. Perhaps there was a

drivers now that a distinct line of dirt could be seen on the racing line.

Qualifying on the final day of the Championships began on a wet track, thereby slowing lap times dramatically. The 4th round which took place late morning saw no changes to the top 20 places on the qualifying list. The decisive times had come in Round 1 & 2 and the following 2 rounds had been wasted because of the rain. This was not the case in the final round where a marked improvement to lap times

#### 1996 EFRA 4WD European Championship Top Ten Qualifiers

Name	Country	Laps/Time
1. Kevin Moore	GB	15/307.14
2. Jukka Steenari	Finland	15/307.86
3. Craig Drescher	GB	15/309.56
4. Sascha Falter	Germany	15/309.98
5. Jon Leonard	GB	15/310.51
6. William Mitcham	GB	15/310.60
7. Ellis Stafford	GB	15/311.05
8. Jamie Booth	GB	15/312.70
9. Graham Alsop	GB	15/314.30
10. Alan Harman	GB	15/314.56

lesson to be learned here?

A thunderstorm was raging during these deliberations which soaked the track and held up the qualifying still further.

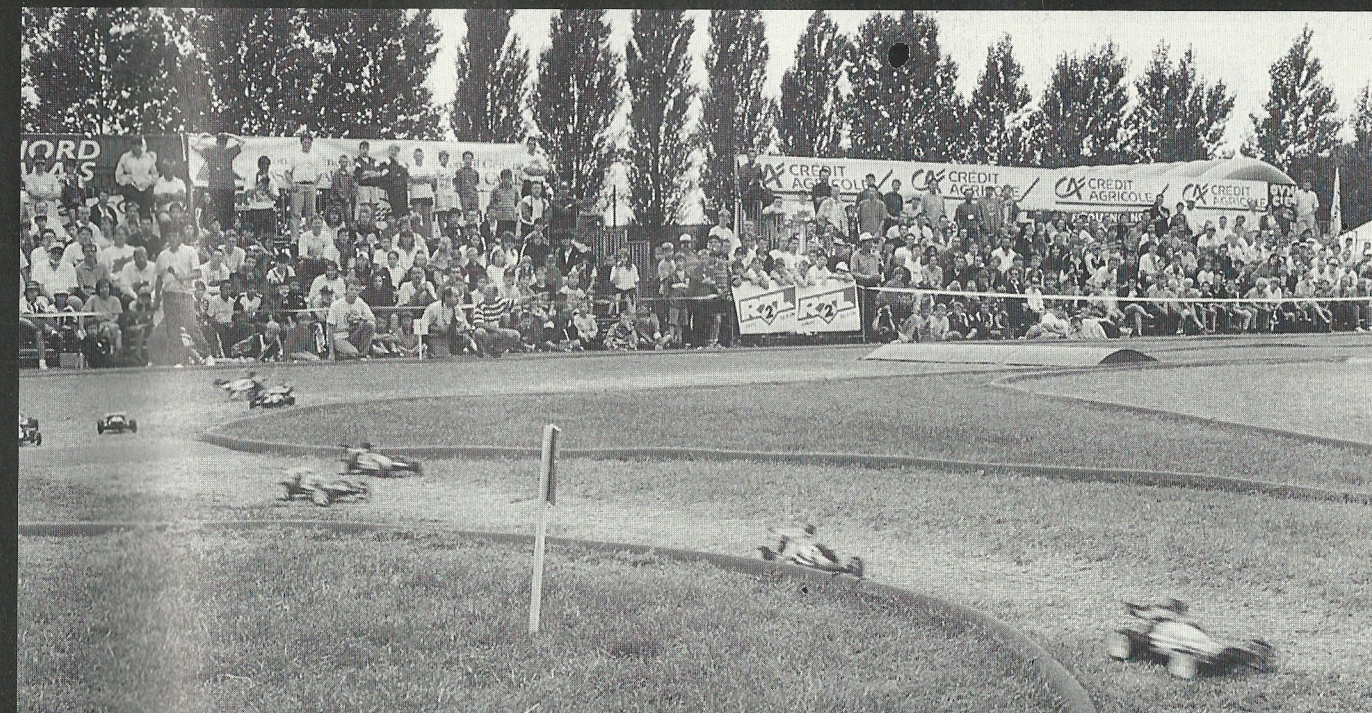
It was 5pm on Saturday evening when the third round began. What a shambles these Euros had become! Several drivers did not bother to run after the downpour, now that conditions were so bad that it would be impossible to get a decent time.

The top forty places from R2 were unchallenged during the 3rd round.

Sunday: Schumacher blue minispire tyres had been used, almost exclusively, during the 3 qualifying rounds which had already taken place but the trend, in the last 2 rounds, was towards Losi Silver tyres. Most drivers chose either Silver minipins or studs for the remaining rounds which helped to improve the grip and balance of the cars. Proline M2 flat fuzzies were also used by several Yokomo

produced 9 changes to the top ten list. It was the Brits who prospered best! Some of these changes were positional and by the close of qualifying we had 8 drivers in the 'A' Final!

It was Finland's Jukka Steenari who recorded the best time of the round with 15 laps in 307.86 seconds, this time was just 0.70 seconds slower than Kevin Moore's R2 FTQ effort and showed how well the track had held up. Jon Leonard demonstrated his potential by jumping 20 places from 25th to 5th with a time of 15/310.50. This gave Jon his 2nd 'A' Final placing in the championships and relegated Ellis Stafford to 7th place! Schumacher Team mates, Jamie Booth and Graham Alsop, also had improvements to secure 8th & 9th place respectively. This was great news for both these drivers who had looked to be on the pace all through the qualifying sessions. Graham's car particularly was really stable over the jump which he could take at maximum speed and I know Jamie, fresh from his 3rd place at the 1/8th Rallycross World Championships, was so confident with the EC 2000 that he



expected to win!

To illustrate the quality of the track, prior to the final round 26 drivers had achieved 15 laps and by the end of qualifying this number had increased to 38!

We did not realise that the lap counting program in use would not sort crystals automatically until this point of the meeting and the delays this caused again prolonged the day.

#### The 'A' Finals

By this stage of the event the racing line around the circuit was totally devoid of grass. Then we had a ludicrous situation in the finals - cars were on the line and drivers in position on the rostrum whilst the Race Director held up the start by doing a 3 minute countdown! The finals were started from the same part of the track as in the 2WD event but this time the starts were much fairer. The start grid had been placed further away from the 1st bend and some of the hosing had been removed to allow easier access onto the straight.

Leg 1: The track was wet, at the start of the 1st leg, so a decision which tyres to choose for the final became the issue, Kevin Moore, as the announcer kept calling him, decided on Losi Silver minipins whereas Craig Drescher selected Proline 8088 M2. Most other



drivers had settled for Silver Studs.

There was a controversial start to the 1st leg. Kevin's Losi XX4 moved during the start countdown and he shouted 'interference' as his car impeded Car No 3 - the Yokomo of Craig Drescher - which was directly behind. Craig's luck ran out in these finals, he had been at the right side of the grid in 2WD and had benefited from that situation but now being behind Kevin's Losi would create problems in each leg of the finals. In this 1st leg his YZ10 went into the barrier as cars 1,2 and 4 moved to the front of the field. The race was led by the Losi XX4, next came by

Jukka Steenari's Cat EC 2000 and then Sascha Falter's YZ10. As the race evolved Jon Leonard's Cat moved into 3rd place but then an error on the DBHH dropped his car out of contention. Sascha, meanwhile had passed Jukka's car by out jumping the Cat on the main jump and he moved into 2nd place. On the next lap the gap between the German's car and the leading Losi narrowed to within a metre as Kevin made an error landing awkwardly off the main jump. Sascha's YZ10 then came into contact with the leader's car on the rippled section and he was given a Stop/Go penalty, at the end of the

lap, which lasted at least 2 seconds! The lead had changed during the incident with Jukka Steenari's Cat EC 2000 profiting from Sascha's take-out. Jukka led the race with the cars of Kevin Moore now 2nd, Ellis Stafford 3rd and Jon Leonard 4th. Kevin dropped to 5th after a big mistake on the DBHH and, as the rain fell, Ellis took the lead and then landed poorly off big jump only to lose it again! Jukka gained a considerable advantage whilst Ellis was being marshalled and drove the remainder of the race without looking in any danger of losing. He crossed the line winning the 1st leg with Jon





Leonard taking second place - a coming together between Sascha Falter's car and Ellis' Cat on the wet track had allowed Jon Leonard to move into 2nd place and Kevin Moore into third.

The Referees were not the most popular persons at the trackside after this race when it was felt that Sascha Falter should have been penalised more severely - he took out 3 cars in the race and only received a short stop/go penalty!

A protest regarding Kevin's 'jump start' in the 1st leg was lodged by the British Team because many drivers felt he should have been given a 1.0 second penalty. The decision not to penalise was upheld by the referees (whose decision is final, right Dave?) on a technical point - all protests have to be lodged within 10 minutes of the publication of results....and the Brits did not do this!

Leg 2: The rain was intermittent as Leg 2 started and again Kevin Moore's car seemed to be affected by interference at the off! The interference problems in the Losi XX4 seem to stem from the magnesium chassis used in the prototype! They had interference glitches at the ROAR nationals in the USA with 2 of the prototypes. When in production, the car will have a plastic chassis similar the

#### British Team Results

	2WD	4WD
<b>Winner</b>	Craig Drescher	
<b>2nd</b>		Kevin Moore
<b>3rd</b>	Ellis Stafford	Jon Leonard
<b>4th</b>	Kevin Moore	Jamie Booth
<b>5th</b>	Jon Leonard	Ellis Stafford
<b>6th</b>	Danny Marson	Craig Drescher
<b>7th</b>	Jon Tucker	
<b>8th</b>		William Mitcham
<b>9th</b>	Ryan Coxall	Alan Harman
<b>10th</b>	Nicky Duncan	Graham Alsop
<b>15th</b>	Ian Flynn	Karl Marsden
<b>16th</b>	Darren Foy	Ryan Coxall
<b>18th</b>	Steven Lawson	Matthew Needham
<b>19th</b>		Rob Gammon
<b>22th</b>	Craig Coxall	
<b>23rd</b>		Ian Kenningley
<b>25th</b>	Alan Harman	
<b>27th</b>		Matthew Benfield
<b>28th</b>	Karl Marsden	
<b>30th</b>		Craig Coxall
<b>31st</b>	Matthew Needham	Jon Tucker
<b>33rd</b>	James Smith	Richard Taylor
<b>34th</b>		Steven Lawson
<b>35th</b>	Rob Gammon	
<b>39th</b>	Richard Taylor	Stuart Joyce
<b>41st</b>	Ian Kenningley	
<b>42nd</b>	Steve West	Darren Foy
<b>43rd</b>		Hannu Worsley
<b>44th</b>	Jamie Booth	Nicky Duncan
<b>46th</b>	Matthew Benfield	
<b>47th</b>		Eugene Galley
<b>48th</b>		Ian Flynn
<b>50th</b>		James Smith
<b>57th</b>		Danny Marson
<b>64th</b>	Graham Alsop	
<b>71st</b>	Eugene Galley	
<b>73rd</b>	Stuart Joyce	
<b>77th</b>	Hannu Worsley	

2WD car. Whilst Kevin's car stuttered at the start, Jukka Steenari's Cat took the lead and this time Craig Drescher managed to get around the pole car and into 2nd place. Sascha Falter's YZ10 was 3rd and Kevin Moore moved into 4th place following Sascha's car over the DBHH. During the 1st lap Craig outjumped Jukka on the main straight jump to take the lead. By the 3rd lap Kevin's car had passed Sascha's YZ10 but then a coming together on the DBHH hairpin allowed William Mitcham Predator to take

advantage. Kevin had regained 3rd place within 2 laps but was by now a long way behind the leading 2 cars. There was nothing between the front 2 and Craig was lucky not to lose out on the big jump on the penultimate lap but he kept his composure to the finishing line to win the race with Jukka Steenari finishing 2nd and Kevin Moore 3rd.

Leg 3: Jukka Steenari was clear favourite to win the 4WD Championship with a 1st and 2nd place from the 2 legs and Craig Drescher's task would be to win this final leg. If he could do this Craig would become the 1996 4WD European Champion. Unfortunately Kevin's interference problem continued - his car seemed to judder and hesitated yet again as soon as the start

signal sounded and he made an indifferent start. Craig, his Yokomo YZ10 directly behind Kevin's Losi, tried to steer around the 'stuttering' car and was hit by cars from the back of the grid. Jukka took the lead and Kevin's Losi was pushed into 2nd place with the cars of Sascha Falter and Jon Leonard in 3rd and 4th respectively. Errors during the next couple of laps from Kevin and Jon allowed Sascha Falter to move into 2nd place. On lap 5 the leader's car became momentarily caught on the hosing as Jukka misjudged the line, and it was during this lap that Kevin passed Sascha's Yokomo to take over in 2nd place - now only a few meters behind the leader. The race developed between the front two with Kevin closing down the Cat EC 2000 of Jukka Steenari everytime the cars came to the big jump. He could not get close enough in the infield to try a passing manoeuvre and as the race continued it was looking more likely that Jukka would win. Jon Leonard by this stage was out on his own in 3rd place, looking very comfortable and pushing to catch the leaders. Jon made a small error allowing Jamie Booth's Cat, now in 4th place, to close the gap but as the finish buzzer sounded Jon Leonard crossed the line in 3rd place and would take his 1st podium place in Europe. Jukka Steenari won the race to become the 1996 4WD European Champion and Kevin Moore's 2nd place finish and would give him 2nd overall.

There had been some superb racing in all the finals and the event was great in terms of a public spectacle, which is probably exactly how the organisers planned it, but as far as the UK drivers were concerned the 1996 European Championship in Lille will be remembered for poor decisions, massive time waiting, expensive food etc. and ineffectual refereeing. I know from comments made by the Chairman of the 1/10 section, Mike Drescher, was not happy with the outcome. Also it would have been nice if the EFRA President Jean-luc Retornaz, who incidentally is French, had made an appearance sometime during the week's racing. He travelled from the south of France to Beaulieu for the 1/8th World Rallycross

## tech charts

#### FTD Qualifying Positions 1996 EFRA 4WD European Championships

	NAME Age Country	SPONSORS	CAR	MOTOR	CELLS	SPEEDO	RADIO	SERVO	FRONT TYRES Inserts	REAR TYRES Inserts	FRONT Springs/Oil	REAR /Oil	GEAR Ratio
1	Kevin Moore 24 GB	Team Losi LRP NO MP Evdeka Paint	Losi XX4	LRP XTC 11x6	LRP Team Pack	LRP IPC Digital	NO Esprit 2	NO 1002	Losi Silver Pins Minisplikes	Losi Silver Pins Minisplikes	Silver 30 wt	Pink 40 wt	17/84
2	Jukka Steenari 20 Finland	Schumacher LRP Corally Orion Pienes Mail	Cat 2000EC	Corally 11x2	Orion/ Ready V Max	LRP IPC Digital	Sanwa EXZE S	NO 1002	Losi Silver Pins Minisplikes	Losi Silver Pins Minisplikes	Grey 30 wt	Red 30 wt	17/82
3	Craig Drescher 21 GB	Associated Ready Proline Orion LRP Yokomo MP CML Sanwa	T/T YZ10W	Ready Tri-Sonic 11x2	Orion/ Ready V Max	LRP IPC Digital	Sanwa EXZE S	Airtronics 151	Proline Flat 80 M2	Proline Flat 80 M2	Copper 40 wt No. 1	Copper 35 wt No. 1	18/78
4	Sascha Falter 24 Germany	Heil	Yokomo YZ10W 2000	Ready Tri-Sonic 11x2	Heil Pushed SCRC	Novak Tempest	Multi- plex 81	NO 1002	Losi Silver Minisplikes	Losi Silver Minisplikes	Copper 35 wt No. 2	Copper 30 wt No. 1	18/95
5	Jon Leonard 16 GB	Schumacher Trinity LRP MP Colour Inc. RW Lunsford	Cat 2000EC	Trinity Europe Kinward 12x2	Trinity Ex- Tech	Novak Tempest Digital	JR Apex	Airtronics 151	Losi Silver Studs Minisplikes	Losi Silver Studs Minisplikes	Grey 35 wt	Grey 30 wt	17/82
6	William Mitcham 21 GB	Tenth Technology Maxtec LRP GM Racing	Predator Int1	Maxtec 11x6	GM Racing SCRC	GM Active Control/ LRP ICS	NO Esprit 2	NO 1001	Losi Silver Pins	Losi Silver Pins	Green 35 wt	Purple+P 30 wt	18/70
7	Ellis Stafford 22 GB	Schumacher RCMC Helgar Racing Losi Trick Bits Novak Evdeka Paint	Cat 2000EC	Trinity 12x2	Trinity Ex- Tech	Novak Tempest	NO Esprit 2	NO 1002	Losi Silver Pins	Losi Silver Pins	Grey 35 wt	Red 40 wt	17/81
8	Jamie Booth 27 GB	Schumacher Corally Orion M'Troniks	Cat 2000EC	Corally 12x3	Orion Ready V Max	M'Troniks Pro-Digi	JR Apex	NO 1002	Losi Silver Pins	Losi Silver Pins	Blue 40 wt Asscd No. 2	Grey 45 wt Asscd No. 2	18/95
9	Graham Alsop 16 GB	Schumacher MG M'Troniks Impole Electronics	Cat 2000EC	MG 11x2	Orion/ Ready V Max	M'Troniks Pro-Digi	JR Apex	NO 1002	Losi Silver Pins	Losi Silver Pins	Blue 45 wt	Grey 40 wt	17/95
10	Alan Harman 28 GB	Schumacher KO Helgar Racing Losi Trinity Novak RCMC	Cat 2000EC	Trinity 12x2	Trinity Ex- Tech	Novak Tempest	NO Esprit 2	NO 1001	Losi Silver Minisplikes	Losi Silver Minisplikes	Grey 40 wt	Yellow 40 wt	17/82

#### FTD Qualifying Positions 1996 EFRA 2WD European Championships

NAME Age Country	SPONSORS	CAR	MOTOR	CELLS	SPEEDO	RADIO	SERVO	FRONT TYRES Inserts	REAR TYRES Inserts	FRONT Springs/Oil	REAR /Oil	GEAR Ratio
1 Jukka Steenari 20 Finland	Schumacher Blue Slim Pienes Mail	Fire- blade	Corally 11x3	Orion/ Ready V Max	LRP IPC Digital	Sanwa	NO 1001	Schumacher Blue Slim Minis No insert	Schumacher Blue Minisplikes	Grey 35 wt	Grey 30 wt	17/89
2 Ellis Stafford 22 GB	Schumacher Helgar Racing Trick Bits Novak	Losi XX CR	Trinity 12x2	Trinity Race Tech	Novak Tempest	NO	NO 1002	Schumacher Blue Slim Minis No insert	Schumacher Blue Minisplikes	Blue 35 wt	Pink 30 wt	18/84
3 Craig Drescher 21 GB	Associated Ready Proline Orion LRP Yokomo MP CML Sanwa	RC10 B2	Ready Sonic 2	Orion/ Ready V Max	LRP IPC Digital	Sanwa	Airtronics 151	Schumacher Blue Slim Minis No insert	Schumacher Blue Minisplikes	Green 40 wt No. 1	Green 30 wt No. 1	19/84
4 Kevin Moore 24 GB	Team Losi LRP NO MP Evdeka Paint	Losi XX CR	LRP XTC 11x6	LRP Team Pack	LRP IPC Digital	NO Esprit	NO 1002	Schumacher Blue Slim Minis No insert	Schumacher Blue Minisplikes	Blue 35 wt	Pink 30 wt	19/84
5 Ryan Coxhall 22 GB	Whisperin Models Helgar Racing Trinity/Losi LRP RCMC Trick Bits	Losi XX CR	Trinity 12x2	Trinity Ex- Tech	LRP IPC Digital	Futaba F73	NO 10021	Schumacher Blue Slim Minis No insert	Schumacher Blue Minisplikes	Blue 35 wt	Pink 30 wt	19/84
6 Daniel Marson 17 GB	Associated/CML Ready Novak NTS Novak NTS RW Parma/PSE	RC10 B2	Ready TriSonic 11x3	Ballistic	Novak Tempest	NO	NO 1002	Schumacher Blue Slim Minis No insert	Schumacher Blue Minisplikes	Green 35 wt	Green 30 wt	19/81
7 Teemu Leino 19 Finland	Schumacher LRP East Coast Orion	Fire- blade	East Coast 11x2	Orion/ Ready V Max	LRP IPC Digital	Futaba	Airtronics	Schumacher Blue Slim Minis No insert	Schumacher Blue Minisplikes	Losi Black 27 wt	Asscd Green 30 wt	18/89
8 Nicky Duncan 18 GB	Team Losi Trinity Nicky's Models	Losi XX	Trinity 12x2	Trinity Race Tech	Tekin G-12	NO Esprit	NO 1002	Schumacher Blue Slim Minis No insert	Schumacher Blue Minisplikes	Green 30 wt	Red 30 wt	19/87
9 Jon Leonard 18 GB	Team Losi Trinity LRP RCMC RW MP Lunsford	RC10 B2	Trinity 11x2	Trinity Ex- Tech	LRP IPC Digital	JR Apex	Airtronics 151	Schumacher Blue Slim Minis No insert	Schumacher Blue Minisplikes	Blue 35 wt	Pink 30 wt	19/84
10 Jon Tucker 22 GB	Associated Corally Orion JS Racing Proline LRP CML	RC10 B2	Corally 10x3	Orion/ Ready V Max	LRP IPC Digital	Sanwa	Futaba 9401	Schumacher Blue Slim Minis No insert	Schumacher Blue Minisplikes	Green 40 wt	Green 30 wt	17/83

Championships but not to another very important event in his own country. Perhaps its because electric racing is considered 3rd division by some of the EFRA committee that we felt let down?

Another beef I have with EFRA! Most of the Brits finished in the top fifty in both classes illustrating our excellent racing standards in the UK. Why do we have to forfeit World places to nations who don't

stand a chance of making the top 100? There's a qualifying standard at the Olympic Games why can't we have a similar set up to allow more UK drivers to attend World Championships than the probable 8 which will be allowed out of 150 entrants?

Enough of the politics, racing is what the Euros are about and the racing was first class at this event. Well done to a British Team who

proved convincingly that we reign supreme as model car racers in Europe! Personally, I enjoyed being in Croisilles and would like to thank our French hosts for all the tremendous efforts which had clearly gone into the organising of such an event.

**PS: I still think that from now on all European Championship races should be held in the Midlands!!**

