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IFMAR World Championship 1:5 Touring Cars at the track of Lostallo, Switzerland

I was send like at the IFMAR event in Burbank/USA from EFRA to be the IFMAR delegate in case of troubles and discussions in the international jury. But there was peace near all the time and I was allowed to make some pictures for the Organizer, the EFRA page for the gallery there, the Rev-Up magazine, who was the official Press and Internet Service for this event and for the local Swiss press.

The travel to the track was without any problems, We all here in Europe know this big track from several events. I came with my Motor-Home, like the big number of the Europeans, because the Hotel situation close is more or less not the best, the track is situated in a alpine valley, south of the San Bernardino pass. The village of Lostallo count 600 souls, there is some more space for the river, the highway and the track, but no more.

The track is huge, like mentioned above, with grass in the infield and all around, a three floor driver stand with a own elevator for handicapped people. All built in wood. The technical inspection in the first floor, the second floor is for the race director and the time keeping, the public speaker and computers. At the third floor the radio impound and the drivers area. At the side a separated area for the referees.



I arrived at Friday evening, bright sunshine all around. I was told, that in all the gone days there was the best hot summer weather. A lot of drivers arrived earlier, but the track was closed for all practice and this gave discussions, like it was before, as practice was allowed. At Saturday the free practice began and the weather show up with rain. In the night it got real stormy and some of the tents show independence feelings. If the weekend is coming, the bad weather show up, this seems to be a rule all over the world. This time it was more than bad only, it was a catastrophe for the whole north of the Alps, luckily we are at the south side, so nobody was drunk in floods or died under a mud avalanche. But it was real close, some of the drivers could not understand the situation and argued about the bad weather. But on Monday every day it got better and the sun came back.

The race director Miguel Vives, well known from several events in the past, was supported by our Croatian friend Ante Dujic, time keeping was done by Jacqueline Aebi, who also own a specialised company and wrote the program. The technical inspection was done by Mr. Wolfgang Petermann, supported by his loving wife. The fuel this time come from a close fuel station, so there were no problems. The IFMAR Referee Franky Noens from Belgium, the EFRA Referee was Carlos Gomez from Spain and the local Swiss Referee Stephan Perazzi did a good job, sometimes it was not that easy by having more than 10 cars at the track in the practice and the heats. The time schedule was shortened up by the International Jury do to the rain at the beginning weekend.

The restaurant tent at the track served a complete meal every day. This area was prepared for this event, also the opening party and the price giving ceremony was celebrated there, there the whole tent seems to small to get everyone inside.



OOOOPs ! These special curbs at the track are sophisticated catapults. Above the French driver Cedric Prevot, left hand Clark Wohlert from Germany at his flight lesson. One second later and he would be out from the photo lens area.....

In the heats we had dry conditions after the weekend of practice with some rain. PMT and Ellegi (GRP) as the main tire producers world-wide are both present and served their clients with the round black gold. There is a real small tire war like in real.

The opening ceremony was between the practice and the heats.



The opening including the presentation of the best body work last so long that the rain could come back, so after the opening the day was done, nobody want to drive in the rain without a must. The best replica painted body was from an Australian driver, the best styled body was from a Czech. This result was published directly at the opening, sorry for the other Australian driver who presented a beautiful show car, but the rule now said, that the body had to be in used at the race, this was the reason he did not win again. The opening ceremony all in all was a normal thing, the Nations marched in, a children group show some dancing , than the results of the beauty contest were announced.



After the heats, the fastest was the young Czech driver Martin Bayer, in front of Lamberto Collari (Italy), Bernard Alain Arnaldi (France) and Markus Feldmann (Germany), In this case three FG and one Harm. 142 drivers are mentioned in the result sheet, so the participation was good, the event was booked out.

The finals began at Friday and finished in the evening with the 1/8 finals. All in the dry, so there was a real hope that the event could have weather luck. But in the night from Friday to Saturday the water came back, so it was decided to go on with the race on Saturday and finish it. So the 1/4 B started at first, Ian Oddie from GB won it easy and Oddiefied with his Harm car, he was a number to big for everyone at this day. The 1/4 A won the British driver Geoff Symonds.



And the half final B also won by Ian Oddie, the half final A Briere Mathieu with his Crojet. The track was real slippery after all the driving in the dry before, left hand the Czech pole man Martin Bayer as he want to help his younger brother Ales.

The main final, a wet race like said above, was started with the normal 10 minutes delay for preparing someone's car in the last second. In the first big left hand corner, the French driver Arnaldi came broadside, this was the chance for Ian Oddie to come close and overtook two corners later. Then in the infield he overtook Feldmann and Collari, after the first starting lap he came as 2nd back and one lap later he overtook the Czech driver Martin Bayer to get the lead. Martin need some time to find the right driving style under this conditions and finished 4th at least. In this final refuelling was allowed and Ian came very late, no problems over all and won with a gap of 4 laps to the second place car of Cedric Prevot (France) who started from place 10 in this final. The rain situation mixed everything, Ian Oddie found the best set up and had the luck on his side, Geoff Symonds had problems to restart his engine after his refuelling stop, Collari had a broken starting rope, all these problems you never have and only get in the moment you don't need them. (Murphy's law)



Then at Saturday evening, the official prize giving ceremony was held in the restaurant tent, which was real overfilled. The organizer offered some dance groups at the one end, the hungry drivers at the other end argued, because it get later and later, so the first round of the meal got a chaotic touch. But last not least the ceremony was done, everyone got a medal and the first 38 a trophy too. There were also trophies for the fastest lap, the top qualifier, the best Youngster and some more. All glass cubes, different sizes, laser engraved, even with the competitors name.

After all these days of concentration to the race, we had to go home. The closest airport to Lostallo is Milan in Italy, so the people who came with the plane from there had no problems. More problems for all these, who had to take the plane from Zurich in the north, because one week after the big rain chaos still a lot of roads are closed. I by myself went at the south of the Alps on small roads looking for a possibility to cross over, so I lost a lot of time, but last not least it was possible and I reached my home late, but I did it.



Ian, drinking something other than clear rain water ! It is an ECU (European Clear Unbeatable) Champagne !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

The full results are already published on the news page August 29th.