

Mansell closes in on EuroBoss title

TAMWORTH teenage race-ace Scott Mansell is just two points away from securing a major European championship title.

The 18-year-old could clinch the EuroBoss 2004 Championship at Le Man in France on October 10.

It would be a remarkable achievement for the former *Herald Sports Award* winner who has produced some superb performances in his Zig-Zag Mansell Motorsport 1997 Benetton Formula One car, formerly driven by Jean Alesi.

He took another step closer to the title last Sunday at Brands Hatch when he finished second, just 0.49 seconds behind title rival Klaas Zwart.

by **Rob Tanner**
Sports Editor

The crowd was treated to another race long battle between the talented Mansell and the very experienced Dutchman.

Mansell, the current outright lap record holder at Brands Hatch which he set earlier in the season, qualified on pole position with his main championship rival just behind him on the grid.

Mansell and Zwart proved they where in a class of their own and both quickly pulled away from the rest of the field.

Mansell needed one more win and the championship would be his, so he set about putting in some storming laps to try and

break away from Zwart.

With such a packed field of pre-1998 F1 cars, Indycars and F3000 cars, back markers were always going to be an issue and the gap between the pair was to fluctuate between 0.6secs and 2.9secs as they sliced through the busy field.

The 24 lap race proved to be a thrilling spectacle as Mansell pushed on with Zwart chasing hard and, with two laps to go, the championship looked to be Mansell's.

However, going around the tricky McLaren corner, a problematic downshift put the young Mansell into a half spin.

Zwart took the lead only to immediately spin through 360 degrees himself but, luckily, he collected the car and carried on having lost less time than the still recovering Mansell.

Crossing the line with two laps to go, Mansell was 1.85secs behind Zwart and



■ **Scott Mansell.** (sl)

the youngster was now really fired up.

With one lap to go, the gap was down to 1.1secs. Mansell was flying again and the crowd roared as Mansell starting the final lap, trying hard to close the gap.

However, there was not enough time left and Zwart took the chequered flag to keep the title race alive.