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October-November 2005

Volume 33, No. 8

"Who We Are"

By Mark V. Pfeffer

With the substantial growth Lotus Ltd. has enjoyed the past several years, ReMarque Editor Mike Gulley, Contributions Coordinator Dom Giangrosso and I put our heads together to come up with a new column "Who We Are". As we are spread far and wide, it's not always easy to meet that person on the other end of the phone line or e-mail. We hope with our new column, we can put more faces with names so when you come to LOG, a Lotus Ltd. track day or local affiliate meeting you avoid that sometimes-awkward introduction. We hope you enjoy the column and will participate by forwarding your bio, a photo or two of yourself and your Lotus to my attention at Feffman@Yahoo.com.

Our inaugural introduction is a new Lotus owner and new Lotus Ltd. member. Mick Opalak is one of many who've come to the Lotus family via the Elise. Although Mick is a native of The Motor City, Detroit, he and his wife Carol live in Atlanta with their three dogs and two cats. His adjustment to southern living

started with high school and college in South Carolina. He regularly meets with other Lotus owners around Atlanta as a member of affiliate Lotus Ltd. Southeast. Mick's first LOG was in Birmingham, AL.

Like many of us, Mick has to work to support his Lotus habit, enjoying a career in the software industry since graduating from the University of South Carolina fourteen years ago. Mick's motto "Life's a journey, enjoy the ride" fits well with his love of Lotus having owned nothing but small, light 4 cylinder automobiles. His first car was a Honda Civic with all of 55HP, but like a Lotus, was light at well under a ton. Mick's total belief of "add lightness" is also reflected in ownership of three Miatas. He and Carol have opted to keep one Miata, partnering their British Racing Green Elise as the rainy day car.

Should the occasion arise, Mick notes "If I could do anything right now". Touring Europe in his Elise, starting from Hethel (of course) with stops in Monte Carlo, The Ring, through the Swiss Alps, on to Maranello, Amsterdam and finally Paris. A drive any of us would enjoy, but remember Mick, pack light!

ACROSS THE POND

By Gordon Morris

Much of the content of this month's column took place on your side of the Pond and was directly concerned with LOG 25. This was the fifteenth LOG in succession that I have attended since I chanced upon LOG 11 in Waterbury in 1991. Continental deposited me at Cleveland on the Tuesday afternoon; after shaking off jetlag, Gary David and I set out on the 700 mile slog to St Louis early on the Wednesday morning. Gary drove his race support Chevy truck towing his S2 Europa – my mount for LOG 19 in Corning – whilst I drove his 1966 Mk 1 Lotus Cortina. On the way, by arrangement, we met up with Martin Dodenhoff in his S4 Elan which was my mount for LOG 22 in Lake Geneva.

This little convoy made good progress down I-71 to Columbus and then along I-70 through Indianapolis. The Cortina's small tank and fuel thirst meant that I had to refuel every 150 miles; no real problem as this was about the limit of the endurance of the human posterior in a 40 year old unreclining seat. The weather was bright and sunny and all three vehicles were purring along nicely. This was, of course, too good to be true. Half way between Indy and the Illinois state line, Gary went missing and we discovered that the Chevy's transmission had broken.

As luck would have it, we limped to the next exit and found a small garage whose owner took the attitude that the answer was yes, whatever the question. Plan B swiftly came into operation: the Chevy was left for repair, to be collected on the way home, while Gary drove the Europa off the trailer and we continued our westward journey with barely a pause. Conversation with the owner of the garage revealed that he had recently been an Air Force engineer and we had some aircraft types in common. The moral to this story is that, when in trouble on I-70, try to arrange to break down near Don's Garage at Cloverdale, Indiana.

Across The Pond (Continued on page 9)



Photograph Courtesy of Mick and Carol Opalak

Mick and Carol Opalak along with their Elise atop the Blue Ridge Parkway

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Pole Position

David Nagler

President, Lotus Ltd.

Whoa, did I miss something? One day I'm just a mild mannered Lotus Ltd. member and the next day President? Well I've rarely been accused of being mild mannered, and yes, I am YOUR president! My friends Nigel Harrison and Keith Spaulding felt it best to vacate their board positions and concentrate on LOG 26 and LOST activities. They're great guys with their hearts in the right place and I'm looking forward to being in their company again at LOG 26 if not sooner.

Their departure, however, did leave a couple of Texas sized holes to fill. I'm from New York, a member of LEO, so I won't even try. As way of introduction to those who don't know me, I was approached by the board to take over as President (Article V, sec 6 of the club by-laws gives the board of directors the ability to fill vacant positions) based on my past board and LOG experience, as well as stint as Lotus reMARQUE editor. Oh, and I have this

funny itch for these little cars with the yellow and green badges!

It is my firm belief, however, that Lotus is only our common interest. It is the people that make this club. If you've attended a LOG then you know just how special are this club and the people in it. That is why I accepted the position. Nigel and I have similar opinions on the importance of local groups to the enhancement of YOUR club experience. The rest of the board and I will work to strengthen our local groups as well as continue the business that makes us national, like providing the best insurance coverage possible, arranging club member discounts and delivering your Lotus and club news via the website and Lotus reMARQUE.

This is YOUR club. Don't be passive. Get involved at the cyber level on the Lotus Ltd. discussion boards, the local level with a Lotus Ltd. local group, or at the national level by attending LOG or volunteering your time with the newsletter. Let me know what you're thinking, how you might want to get involved, or just say "hi" and well talk "Lotus." E-mail me at President@LotusCarClub.org.

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Magazine Watch

By Foster Cooperstein

(UK)

See the September issue of Top Gear for a 1 page driver's review of the Exige 240R – Lotus' limited production (50 cars) supercharged high performance car. The author says this car challenges the Elan Sprint as the best Lotus of all time.

Classic and Sports Car devotes a couple of pages to the driving of an Eleven from London to Le Mans to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Lotus' 1st Le Mans appearance (a IX). Unfortunately the gearbox broke during the track parade laps!

The Elise is among Thoroughbred & Classic's "new age classics", as found in the October issue. Now a \$15,000+ car, this particular version is the Sport 135. The article contains a few buying tips, pricing and driving impressions. The Elise is top of the class.

The September issue of Motor Sport contains a 4 page article about The Chequered Flag, a race team from the 60's. It was an offshoot of Graham Warner's dealership and was well known for its victorious Elites and Elans, among other cars. There were many classic battles between Warner's Elite LOV 1 and DAD10.

The development of the body of the one-off Sport Exige is profiled in a 4 page article in the September issue of Racecar Engineering. It is made of lightweight ZPREG carbon fiber that was cured at room temperature. The project, done with the assistance of Racing Technology Norfolk, the team responsible for the LeMans winning Bentley, was done in 6 months.

The new Caterham Superlight is the subject of a 1 page profile in the 20 September Autocar. This is a more affordable track day car powered by a 1.8 liter K-series engine. It is quick – 7.7 seconds to 62 mph and fast – 130 mph top speed. The reviewer, rating the car at 4 stars (out of 5), says it strikes a good balance between road and track. The cost – approximately \$35,000 built (in the UK).

The feature article in the 27 September issue of Autocar is a 19 car test to select "Britain's Best Driver's Car 2005". In an individual showdown, the Exige 240R was compared with the Noble M400. The considerably more expensive and more powerful Noble was the tester's choice. He said "the biggest problem I have with the Exige is that the wheelbase feels too short, which makes it hard to commit to a fast corner. You're never sure if you're going to get under- or oversteer, as if the front springs aren't loading up equally. It doesn't stand out as that powerful, either." In the overall test, the Exige placed 9th, rated a better car for the track than the street.

There's a 5 page Elan (old) buyer's guide in the November issue of Practical Classics. The guide. It covers all years of Elan production as well as the +2. There are blurbs about various areas of the car. The moral of the story is if you buy a good one you'll get lots of enjoyment from it; buy a bad one and you'll keep paying and paying and paying.

The new Caterham CSR 260 is put through its paces for an Autocar road test in the 11 October issue (4 pages). This Caterham has a heavily revised chassis, new engine (Cosworth modified 2.3 litre Ford Duratec) and new suspension. The verdict – 4 stars (out of 5). Despite being called "an intoxicating, extreme car, with racecar-like performance, fabulous grip levels and exceptional steering and handling. Few road cars will keep up with it in a straight line, fewer still down a twisting road or on a race track But it isn't perfect – the car's packaging is showing its age and Caterham is demanding a serious amount of cash (about \$58,000) for a car that is so compromised – and so Spartan."

The November issue of Thoroughbred & Classic Cars compares the Elan to 19 other classic sports cars. The Elan falls into the "prestige classic" group of cars presently selling between \$17,000 to more than \$100,000. It is described as offering "huge sophistication in a tiny package." The pick of this group was the Aston Martin DB6.

The Elan is also part of Classic & Sports Car's Best Brit Sports Car comparison. In a 5 car comparison in the November issue the Elan ran away from the competition, with the exception of the MGB. The tester loved the Elan "for its obvious eagerness and chuckability coupled with that cheeky exhaust note.

Also in this issue is a 4 page article about Chapman's personal Lotus IX, the car that ran at Le Mans and that is owned by a club member. For the car's 50th birthday it reunited with the Chapman family as both Clive and Hazel took turns at the wheel. Another reason to buy this issue is a pick of the top 10 color (OK, it's a UK mag – colour) schemes. The first pick is the JPS Europa and the Lotus Cortina rounds out the 10. How could they not include the Essex Esprit or the Elan Sprint? Guess there must have been a quota! But the Elise Type 49 was a mention.

The November issue of CAR has a page and a half article about the new Europa and Lotus' plans. The Europa is a GT coupe based on a stretched Elise chassis with a turbocharged 2 liter engine. It will be an all new design with no body panels from the Elise. Planned debut is June 2006. It will be a limited production car – only 450 will be sold in the UK. Projected price – about \$50,000. And it will be faster than the Elise, despite its nicer (and thus heavier) appointments.

There's a Lotus 18 F1 on the cover of the November issue of Motor Sport. Inside there is a comparison of a Coventry Climax FPF 2.5 liter engine 18 with a Cooper T53 powered by the same engine. The 8 page article covers the racing history and recounts the 1960 F1 season when the steady Cooper beat the fragile Lotus, despite the 18 being the faster car. According to John Surtees, you "couldn't drive it (the 18) like a Cooper. It was like racing on tiptoes – you had to be so precise and correct."

There are a few Lotus/Lotus related items in the 25 October issue of Autocar. In the "coming soon" article, there is a blurb about the new Europa and a picture of a "disguised" test car. Using an adapted Elise chassis, it will be longer and wider than the Elise, allowing for a + layout. It is expected to have a 200 bhp supercharged 4 cylinder engine initially, to be followed by a 6 cylinder one. May 2006 is the target debut date and it will set you back \$52,000+. Then there is the circuit car with a July sales date. Further down the road will be the new Esprit – the rumors are that it will be a mid-engined V8 available in late 2007 or early 2008 and costing upwards of \$115,000. Also in this issue is a 4 page article about the De Lorean and VW's "diesel Elise" concept car.

According to the 1 November issue of Autocar the new Esprit and Europa will be built in the UK, abandoning plans to build cars in Malaysia (Lotus owner Proton's home). According to the article the Europa will debut in Geneva in March or at the new London show in July. There's also a blurb about the limited edition Elise sports racer. Beside the retro blue or red with white stripe paint job, the car will also have traction control, an electronic throttle and retuned brakes, among other features.

(US)

There's a ½ page blurb about the US Exige in Automobile magazine (September) – "Just when we thought the Elise was the last word to define a driver's perfect car, Lotus introduces the fantastic Exige." In the same issue, Jamie Kitman writes about his purchase of purchase of a new Elise and "mid-life crisis" – the need to buy new vs. used.

Another ½ page blurb about the Exige – this time in the November issue of Sports Car International. "... a car that's even more hardcore than the Elise."

The 3 October issue of AutoWeek reports that the Exige 300RR will be racing in the FIA GT Championship race in Zhuhai, China under the Malaysian Amperex Motorsport team. There are also brief blurbs about the Elise and Exige. As to the Elise, they say that all autocrossers should have one. And the Exige handles even better than the Elise. ■

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Classic Team Lotus 2nd Quarter 2005

By Clive Chapman

Eastern Promise

Eastern Promise; not because we come from Norfolk but because we have run three Japanese customers in the opening rounds of the TGP Championship. (We will save 'Big in Japan' for a later date).

Q2 2005 kicked off with a Spa test for Dan Collins in 91/10 and new Patron of 91/8, John Bosch. John keeps an unrivalled collection of Ferraris at home in Holland and he races his 312 in TGP. Understandably he was keen to have a reserve car and, of course, 91/8 is a natural choice.

We took three F1 cars to Hockenheim with Keiichi Murakami ready for his first race as the new Patron of 72/5, fresh from a successful shakedown at Hethel and a first test at Donington. Bob Dance joined us on the race team as he was invited by the organisers to attend the rededication of the relocated Jim Clark Memorial. We were delighted that Jim's sisters Bettie, Isobel and Martha had accepted the invitation also. It was a very special occasion. On track Dan was competitive from the start, so much so that, having qualified 5th, his first podium finish looked on the cards. Sadly, when the race was red flagged, we were caught out by fuel vapourisation. Murakami san acquitted himself very well, lining up 24th on the impressive 30 car grid. Disappointingly a wheel problem forced him to retire from the race. As consolation 'Dr K' enjoyed a trouble free weekend in the Classic Team Lotus type 18 Formula Junior, under the care of trainee mechanic Lee Nicol.

We were pleased to accommodate a reunion of 1960s Team Lotus mechanics arranged by Johannes Willenpart, the new owner of 49C/R6 and the original Gold Leaf Team Lotus Transporter. Some time ago we had introduced Johannes to Eddie Dennis and Bob Dance. Somehow he persuaded them to get involved with the restoration of the transporter that proved to be a massive undertaking. The Chapman family enjoyed very much welcoming 'the lads' to Ketteringham Hall for a photoshoot that made most of the comics.



Katsuaki Kubota getting ready for his first historic motor race at Monza with Lee Nicol, Steve Tate and Chris Dinnage in attendance.

Photo courtesy of Clive Chapman

The next race at Monza attracted a fantastic entry. (There was even a Ferrari as a reserve). After a great effort by Steve Tate 78/4 was ready in time and we were pleased to meet driver Katsuaki Kubota at

Eastern Promise (Continued on page 7)



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EASTERN PROMISE *(Cont. from page 6)*

Monza. Evidently Kubota san is a fast and competitive driver who is keen to be a TGP front runner. It was nice to see Junro for the first time since Motegi. He turned everyone's heads with an impressive performance in qualifying, lining up 9th behind Dan Collins. 78/4s engine proved to be a weak link and Kubota parked it on the green flag lap. The 30 car grid proved difficult to get away in the stifling heat and this caused Junro's brakes to overheat, eventually forcing retirement after a great performance. Dan put in a stonking drive to wind up a solid 4th, beaten only by Glasel, Dayton and Folch.

On the same weekend Malcolm Ricketts raced the 32B at Oulton Park, looked after by Bob Dance with help from our 'new boy' Allen Bridge enjoying his first motor race. Not bad company for Allen. Malcolm raced well into 7th place, with a new engine and L section tyres in place of Ms.

Zandvoort was a welcome return to the TGP calendar. A happy hunting ground for Team Lotus. We took 91/10 for Dan and 91/8 for John Bosch who had a significant involvement with the event and his Ferraris. Thanks to Dutch Lotus dealer Willem van der Kooi for making available a type 99T Elise for Dan to use in the circuit familiarisation session. Dan ran strongly to start with before suffering a damper failure that held him back in qualifying. The race was spoiled

by a cloudburst at the start. Trouble on the grid saw Dan take the second restart from the back of the grid and he did well to fight up to fifth before a late spin dropped him back to sixth.

Classic Team Lotus was pleased to be invited to the Goodwood Festival of Speed once again, especially when we heard that Emerson was coming. Happily Jim Bennett secured an entry for the type 76. Dan Collins was up for doing the honours in the type 49 and acting as understudy for Emerson as necessary. Also we were pleased to make available 99T/4 to be part of the Honda sculpture outside the front of Goodwood House. Perhaps we are biased but we think this year's sculpture was the best ever and it was great to see a Lotus as part of it, centre stage. Along with Emerson as a major attraction in the type 72 we reckon we did our bit for Lotus Cars promotion. The cars ran without any major problems and a good time was had by all. Once again thanks

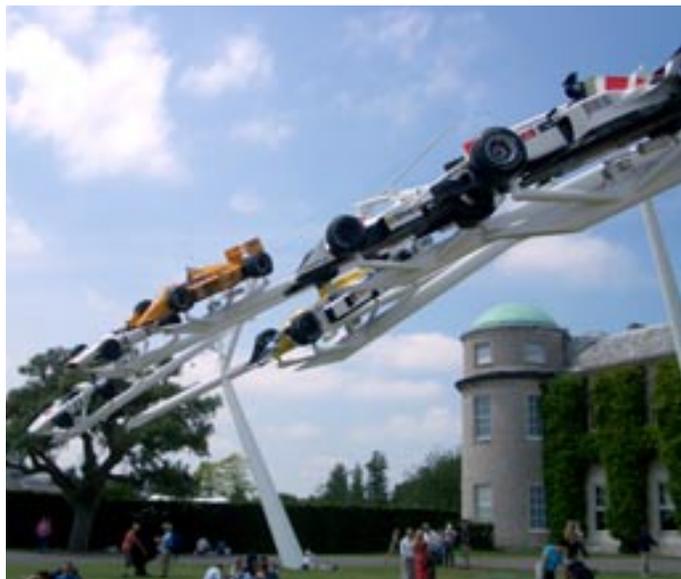


Photo courtesy of Clive Chapman

The sculpture outside Goodwood House was breathtakingly beautiful and technically impressive. The Lotus marque was privileged to have included within it the type 99T/4 (sans engine) in which Ayrton won at Monaco and Detroit in 1987.

to Lord March.

As the quarter drew to a close we enjoyed a nice occasion on the test track when Hazel Chapman was reunited with XPE 6, the Mark IX that she raced with such aplomb in the Fifties. The American owner, Charles Levy, had brought the car over for Le Mans and he was kind enough to arrange the reunion. After a little gentle persuasion Hazel Chapman took the wheel for a couple of laps. Afterwards she could not believe she ever drove a Mark IX before, let alone raced one.

In the workshop we are continuing to make good progress with the 102B that is intended to be demonstrated at the Lotus Owners' Gathering in St Louis at the end of August. The Arrows project continues to be a challenge. We will get there in the end! Happily Junro's type 30 has an invitation for the Goodwood Revival (along with the 32B) so we need to finish off the fairly extensive 'winter' programme on that car. Also we anticipate looking after a type 27 for an American competitor. Should be fun.

Other events include the Silverstone Classic, a four car demo around the streets of Rotterdam (with Neshino Piquet in his father's type 101) and a display run for the 97T at the Renault World Series event at Donington in September.

Editors Note:

The 102B was, in fact, completed as scheduled. The car arrived in time to be displayed at the LOG 25 casual concours, and was seen running at the track day on Monday. Thanks to all involved! ■



Photo courtesy of Clive Chapman

Always we are delighted to run Emerson. He did most of his runs in the 72 but he could not resist a go in 49B/R10, the chassis that he raced (and finished) in his first three Grand Prix.

The handling was not to his liking. We got the distinct impression he would enjoy some serious circuit testing...

Work and Play in a Lotus: More Stories from Across the Pond

By Andrew R. Barron

Having purchased a Talbolt Sunbeam-Lotus at the end of last year (see Lotus ReMarque Volume 33, No. 1, March, 2005) and immediately driven to Paris for a long weekend with my girlfriend, Merrie. The intention was to use the car whenever I was back in UK, but I never dreamed that it would get such a mileage in the first year. So far it has covered almost 4000 miles in four trips.

In January I was back in UK and used the Sunbeam for a series of business trips around the South of England and Wales. Subsequently Merrie and I decided to take a motoring holiday in France and Italy. As those of you will recall from a previous installment Merrie and I had got totally lost in France last Christmas, so prior to us going to France and Italy with the Sunbeam in June, Merrie bought me a GPS system with both US and Europe. I think this was so I would not blame her for any misdirection! Irrespective of motive it worked great we drove from the South of England to Reime and then through Geneva to Megève in the Alps and onto Venice and Florence before taking the train (with the car on board) back to England. A great holiday and gave the chance to really stretch the Sunbeam's legs. However, it did highlight that the radiator needed a re-core, the suspension bushings needed replacing and the brake calipers needed a rebuild.

I arranged for the car to go back to Sunbeam specialists Skip Brown (44-(0)1829-720492)



Photograph by Andrew Barron

Outside the Cholmondeley Arms Inn – great food, real beer and a nice location.

where Del and her nephew Paul removed the radiator and shipped it to me in Houston, along with the exhaust headers. Why ship it to the US? While the brake caliper re-build was much cheaper in UK, the radiator re-core was about 1/2 the price in Houston. Once it arrived I took it to long time racer Carl Harris who owns Four Seasons Radiator in Houston (www.fourseasonsradiator.com). Carl's guys are the best in the business and have previously re-cored my race car radiators with great success. In addition to the radiator work I had High Performance Coatings (www.hpcoatings.com) ceramic coat the exhaust headers. This significantly lowers the under bonnet temperature and ensures that the hot exhaust gases do not heat soak into the pipes.

So mid-October I flew into UK and after talks with the Motorsports Industry Association (www.the-mia.co.uk) took the train to Crewe and then taxi to the Cholmondeley Arms Inn (www.cholmondeleyarms.co.uk) that is 2 miles down the road from Skip Brown. The map location is Bickley Moss (the next village) as Cholmondeley is too small! (For those who aren't familiar with English this is pronounced "chumley") This is a wonderful place with excellent food that has resulted in its being awarded a number of prizes for "Best Pub in Britain". The buildings were an old village school, where the schoolhouse is now the pub and restaurant, while the school master's house is the accommodation. Arriving late at night I settled down to a quiet pint of beer, a great dinner and a very quiet nights sleep. The only problem with the restaurant is that you find yourself having 3 courses each night just to sample the great menu.

In the morning I walked to Skip Brown along some very narrow and busy roads. As I got within 1/2 mile of Skip Brown's location I noticed a familiar site of a black and silver Sunbeam roaring in the opposite direction. The face behind the wheel turned to look but rapidly disappeared down the road. Paul was taking my car for a quick test before collection. After turning round he stopped to pick me up and we returned to the shop. Over a much needed cup of tea we chatted about the car and business in general. I then went off to Demon Tweeks (www.demon-tweeks.co.uk) to get one of the rear tires re-mounted – the valve stem was leaking slowly. Now for those



Photograph by Andrew Barron

The Sunbeam outside Skip Brown Cars after its service and MOT.

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WORK AND PLAY (Cont. from page 6)

not in the know, Demon Tweeks is the UK's premier auto parts and performance supplier – think Racers Wholesale but on the England/Wales border. Waiting there is like being a kid in a candy store. I resisted temptation until I noticed they had the vintage style wing mirrors that I have on my Type 61 Formula Ford. Mine have started to get rather ropy and Demon Tweeks have them in chrome, satin or black. That was it... the black ones match my World Wide Racing paint scheme of gold and black. I had to get some.

The addition of new bushings and rebuilt calipers meant the handling was much improved – although I still have to get the drive shaft balanced. But, the whole idea of this car was a rolling restoration/improvement and in this regard it has served perfectly.



Elans in the paddock at Silverstone races

After a day of doing odd jobs with the car to improve its appearance, I had a day off at Silverstone. But first it was more great food with real beer while reading a good book.

Saturday was the finale for the Historic Sports Car Club (www.hsc.org.uk) 2005 season. The HSCC is the premier Club for historic car racing in the UK and could be considered to be an equivalent of HSR or SVRA. However, what club race allows you to drive at the home of the British F1 Grand Prix? Unlike the majority of club events in the US this one had a large crowd of spectators who were not associated with a particular driver. Families and couples appeared to make a day of the event bringing chairs and picnics. Two commentators provided an interesting introduction to the cars and drivers including some very unusual history. As the

winners came in the pits a third commentator was ready to interview them.

The paddock was free access to all spectators and all the drivers and crews were willing to chat about their cars. I even ended up helping Seven racer Martyn Halliday with a small mechanical issue he was having – a loose steering rack. Martyn has another Lotus connection. He is the owner of the only example of the Lotus Mark IV, the first ever Lotus race car to be made for a customer. (Look out for a future article on this car). In addition to a three Sevens there were three nicely prepared Elans, a couple of Cortinas and a Europa in the close-wheel class and a range of Formula Fords, Formula Juniors and vintage Formula 1 cars. Unlike the US there were no pit passes required. During each race you could go and stand on the pit

°F), listening to cars race around a historic race track and even made some new friends. Arriving back to the Cholmondeley Arms, yes, you can guess it... food, beer and a good read. Life is good.

Monday I was due at the University of Surrey and had arranged to stay in Windsor at a small hotel. On the journey down I decided to let the GPS choose the route (that is “root” not “rowt” since in the UK it has English not American pronunciation) using the least number of motorways. A 2 hour and 40 minute journey was turned into a 6 hour journey. But what great back roads and countryside. I even had time for a detour to the Heritage Motor Centre, Gaydon (www.heritage-motor-centre.co.uk). The Heritage Motor Centre is home to the world's largest collection of historic British cars. Visitors can follow the evolution of the British motor car from 1896 through the decades to the present day.

As I arrived I noticed a large number of MGs (they share the same engine/gear box with the S1 Elise). It turned out to be more than just a few. After parking the car I walked down to the museum and wow! There were about 700 MG-Fs parked outside. This was their LOG. Cars from all over Europe were there. In addition to the last MG sports car produced, there were also about 30 MGAs, MGBs and some older models. Just imagine if LOG would look like that in a few years with all the Elise cars being sold in the US.

The museum is mainly for the models from the old British Leyland Group, including, Rover, Triumph, Jaguar, Land Rover, etc. However, there were others represented, including several Sevens and an electric Elise! Most of the exhibits you can touch and staff are on hand to open doors, bonnets, and boots for a closer look. The museum is nicely laid out and is free (although donations are requested).

I spent Monday in meetings at University of Surrey, but left at 3 pm in order to get to Norwich for dinner with Mark James of Lotus Engineering. My visit to Lotus Engineering was in my academic capacity – sorry I cannot tell you about what was discussed but I did get to look around the Elise/Exige production lines and got a first look at the Espionage Exige and the new Sport Racer Edition. The Espionage is a one-off special Exige in blue with pin-stripping race stripe and silk interior made from the type of material used for special suits. This car was a collaboration between Lotus and the bespoke suit maker Gieves & Hawkes for a “Truly British”

wall alongside the crews giving pit signals to the drivers. There is a real feeling of history watching these great old cars coming around Woodcote turn onto the pit straight and off to Copse. Much more evocative than saying they came “out of turn 7 down the straight and into turn 1”.

In addition to the cars on the track, there was a wide selection of street mashines, including three Esprits parked side by side, several Elise and an Exige, as well as a few Excels alongside an Elan +2. So the Sunbeam didn't feel out of place. In fact a young kid with serious ear, nose and tongue rings and studs came and asked if he could take photos. “My dad is just mad about these,” he said, making me feel my age!

Irrespective of feeling old, I had a nice day in the sun (the temperature was a pleasant 66

Photograph by Andrew Barron

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WORK AND PLAY (Cont. from page 9)

exhibition at Harrods department store. The Sport Racer Elises have distinctive “skunk” stripe or twin racing stripes down the whole car with matching red or blue (depending on the car’s color) stitching set against black leather trim. Both of these special edition cars hark back to the classic racing days of the 1950’s and 60’s where cars such as the Elite, Type 23 and Elan could be seen sporting such stylish designs. In fact the Elite (Type 14) racing at Silverstone was in a similar scheme to the blue Sport Racer paint scheme. Now I liked the Sport Racer but the Espionage was a little much! In addition to work I did get some time to play with a new Exige enabling Lotus ReMarque to once again scoop the popular press with a real road test (see article - in this issue).

Upon finishing my day at Lotus Engineering the CEO of Group Lotus Kim Ogaard-Nielsen (who many of you met at LOG) came out to look at the Sunbeam and a piece of Lotus history. He also repeated his thanks to the members of Lotus Ltd for their kindness at LOG.

After a full day at Lotus I had the pleasure of dinner with Richard Parramint (what does he do?), Alistair McQueen, and Dave Minter. Richard many will know from his talks and



Photograph by Andrew Barron

Inside the “engine bay” of the electric Elise at Gaydon Museum - a great idea at \$8 per gallon!

visits to LOG as well as his organization of the Lotus Tours. Alistair and Dave are the driving talent behind the McQueen Driving Experience that is running at selected locations in the US as part of Lotus Cars promotional efforts. Alistair and Dave are also the two responsible for the development of the ride and handling of almost all the Lotus cars prior to the Federal Elise. This was

an evening of gossip and stories of cars – what else is there to talk about? Alistair had seen my Sunbeam sitting at Hethel and started telling some alarming stories about its development.

They recalled how despite putting more power into the car they could not top the 120 mph top speed due to the brick-like aerodynamics and the gas consumption went up exponentially above 60 mph. The Sunbeam Lotus has a pathetically small gas tank that meant that the car could not make Alistair and Dave’s weekly trips to test the car at MIRA test center without a refill. Of course having seen the way they drive, I am not shocked by this. It

also appeared that since the Sunbeams did not come with a limited slip (this was added as an after-market upgrade) the two of them wrecked all the test cars and in doing so lost Lotus their insurance!

Before leaving for Texas and home, I had one more drive across country with the Sunbeam to drop it off for storage. So what is the next round of work on the car? Well, I have to get the drive shaft balanced and work on the castor, but I am also going to have to make some brackets for the speakers. All these long journeys mean that a radio for news and traffic would be a great help.

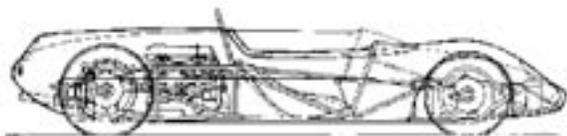
The Sunbeam is tucked away in storage again waiting for the next time. ■



Photograph by Andrew Barron

Martyn Halliday’s Seven on the pit straight at Silverstone.

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ACROSS THE POND (Cont. from page 1)

The rest of the trip was pretty straightforward, with Martin peeling off to keep a business appointment east of St. Louis and with Gary following me to the hotel. By this time it was dark and I discovered that the Cortina's headlights were barely up to the job. The plan was to take I-271 to the north of St. Louis and to follow the ring road south to the hotel. The reality was that I missed the I-271 turn, fazed by the direction to Kansas City, and proceeded west on I-70, giving Gary an impromptu view of the Gateway Arch and a high speed tour of downtown St. Louis. I knew that 70 West intersected with 271 near the airport, so we continued west until 271 duly appeared, turned left and arrived at the hotel, to Gary's well concealed surprise and relief. I was never lost, honest – just putting Plan C into operation of the hoof. That trip, incidentally, was the longest I've ever driven a Lotus – or any car for that matter – in one day.

Then on with the business of the LOG. When I first started out, LOGs began on the Friday evening and finished on the Sunday afternoon. Now they really start on the Thursday afternoon and finish on the Monday afternoon – and I believe they're the better for that. I'm often asked – on both sides of the Pond – why I keep turning up at LOGs every year, wherever they might be. The answer, to me at least, is very simple and LOG 25 proved the point yet again. I come to meet the LOG people and to see the cars. Everything else follows on from that. A welcome spin off from writing this column each month is that I (figuratively) meet dozens of new people each year who, kindly, come and say hello – some of them discussing a point I made (and had forgotten) some months before.

So it was this year. For some time now, I've joined Cora and Debbie's Registration team – partly to help out good friends but also to meet people as they arrive. This allowed me to meet many of Mark Pfeffer's home team and to hear of their plans. Saturday dawned dry and sunny after heavy Friday rain. Despite earnest intentions, the journey from the hotel to Forest Park turned into the inevitable road race with the Esprits and Elises leaving me in my comparatively slow Cortina far behind. Thankfully, there were plenty of Lotuses behind me to take the lead and guide me – and other lost souls – to the Munny.

The rest of Saturday was a wonderfully enjoyable blur – with event following on event resulting in a scramble to get kitted out for the Banquet. Sunday brought relative calm, with everyone off to the Autocross or sightseeing. I needed to refuel the Cortina and

have some lunch before deciding what to do that afternoon; a chance encounter in the hotel elevator took me to Creve Coeur Air Museum where, after filling up the car, I enjoyed a blissful barbecue in the sunshine with the local vintage aviation people, followed by a tour of the museum.

Sunday's dinner – now an integral part of the extended LOG – was highlighted by the two Bobs, Dance and Sparshott, relating tales of what it was like to be a mechanic with Team Lotus in the Sixties and Seventies. The drivers, have always held the limelight but now the mechanics – without whose tremendous effort none of Lotus' success would have been possible – are receiving the credit they deserve.

Monday morning saw me drive both Bobs to Gateway racetrack – very appropriately in Gary's Cortina. Rarely have I seen so many fine Lotus single seaters as were arrayed in the paddock that day: the Colorado contingent produced brilliant examples of the 32, 41 and 69 that we rarely see in Europe. For me, the star of the show was John Lambert's delicate little Ron Harris Team Lotus Formula Two 32 – SCA, looking for all the world as if Jimmy Clark had just stepped out of it forty years ago.

By now it was time to head east again, so I retraced my steps along I-70 across Illinois and Indiana, conscious that Tuesday's weather forecast was awful, with Katrina's low pressure, cloud and heavy rain right across my path. I wanted to get beyond Indianapolis – about half way to Cleveland – before stopping for the night. This I managed, and woke up on Tuesday morning to heavy rain and low cloud. Setting off early, I made it to Macedonia by lunch time. The little Cortina never missed a beat and I was glad to be in a dry tin top that day. The spray on the interstates was blinding and keeping out of the way of the (for me) huge trucks kept my attention. I was surprised that so few cars and trucks used their head and rear lights in such poor visibility – and that the high intensity rear lights common in Europe were

not in evidence at all. That trip vies with a soaking wet crossing of Denmark in May this year as one of my least enjoyable Lotus journeys – at least this time I was warm and dry.

Now I'm back home and something approaching normality has returned to my life, my attention now turns to the Goodwood Revival Meeting at the end of this week. If I could only go to one race meeting each year it would have to be this one. The array of people and cars, to say nothing of the unique setting and the wonderful ambience resulting from the mixture of all three, make this an occasion to savour. After ten days' adventure in the New World, more adventure beckons, this time at the foot of the Sussex Downs in Glorious Goodwood. Your correspondent will be there and will report on what happened from a Lotus perspective. That depends, as it did in 2000, on fuel being available. A gallon of petrol now costs the equivalent of \$8.75 – nearly all of which is tax – and one tax on top of another. Our truckers are not happy with this and plan to demonstrate outside refineries in order to persuade the Government to reduce crippling taxes on petrol. It remains to be seen how successful they will be – but my Elan and Audi TT have full tanks so I should be able to get to Goodwood come what may. ■



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How do they do that? The Exige is even better than the Elise

By Andrew R. Barron

It was clear from my first drive of an Elise (during a visit to Lotus Engineering in 1996) that here was something special. The Series 1 Elise changed the way that the world looked at the handling of a street car. This was the first time since the Seven that a car delivered the control and feel of a race car but was designed for the road. The almost predictive responsiveness was only something that Formula car drivers were used to. After the release of the Elise in UK and Europe, Lotus further developed the breed by the release of the track inspired Exige. With a coupe body and revised aerodynamics the Exige S1 quickly showed that even better was available from the revolutionary bonded aluminum chassis. Fast forward to 2004 when I was privileged to be the first person to drive the Federal Elise on US soil (see ReMarque November 2003). Lotus had indeed improved on perfection.

While the car's weight had increased with the Toyota engine over its Rover predecessor, the added horsepower and improved traction provided a distinct improvement in the overall package. Now with the Elise an increasingly common site of the streets, Lotus have decided to expand their product range by developing a Exige based upon the Federal Elise. Those who were at LOG 25 were treated to the first sight of the Federal Exige. As with the Series 1 analogs, the Exige has a far more aggressive stance than its Elise sister.

Yes, I will admit that the Elise is definitely a girl. In fact it is the type of girl that you could take home to mother and she would say you had "done very well". In contrast, the Exige is the type of boy that fathers the world over purchase shot-guns to protect their daughters from.

The deeper lower front spoiler combines design and function to increase down force; this is matched by a rear wing and diffuser that increases the aerodynamic grip available

at high speeds. The resulting changes mean the Exige (in non supercharged form) is slightly slower in a straight line than the Elise – due to the drag imposed by the aerodynamic package. So much for the looks, but how does it drive.

First things first. Getting in... is no better or worse than the Elise with the roof on. However, my 6'1" frame found that wearing a helmet is possible due to the higher roof. This is a definite advantage if you are going to use this as a track car. The view out the front and sides is standard Elise. The view out the back will make Europa drivers believe they have it good! But as they say in racing, "who needs to look at the people you have just passed". That is what this car is all about - passing the opposition.

Starting the engine results in the realization that the roof (despite the insulation) is now part of the engine bay. Its not loud, its just there.



The Exige debuts at LOG 25 in St. Louis. - Photograph by Don Butler

The gear stick and pedals feel like those on the Elise, and low speed driving is also similar. I would say that when driving over some of the rougher patches of the Hethel test track, I found the ride to be slightly nicer than the Elise. I presume it's a combination of shocks, spring rates and wheels, but this would be no problem on the US streets and highways.

So far you may be thinking "what is the big deal"? It's an Elise without the sun. Ah, but its when you get moving that the difference is apparent. Every auto maker at some time tries to claim that their car corners on rails – they are usually right only in the sense that on rails is the only way their lump of old iron will follow a racing line. The Exige does not corner like its on rails, because it does not need

rails to know where to go. Instead it has the driver and the interaction between the two is the key. Within one lap of the Hethel test track you know this is something special. Lotus has out done themselves. Each lap forces further commitment from the driver who is rewarded by the knowledge that the car will give more.

Acceleration is much better than the Elise, because the cams change over at lower rpm. This means the engine can be maintained at optimum revs in the corners. It is also clear that the improvements in grip allow for the power to be used at will. Lotus are now offering a limited slip differential for the Elise, however, with the type of mechanical grip that the Exige shows, I am not sure a limit slip is necessary.

Ordinarily, there are two results to the controlled loss of mechanical grip. The first is that the car slides hopefully in the classic four-

wheel drift so much loved by the likes of Fangio and Moss. This is the normal feeling that you get and is typical of cars like the Elise and Caterham Seven at high speeds. The second feeling is that the tires lose their traction and the whole car "skips" a fraction of an inch, then regains its full grip before repeating the process. This is often typical of a live axle car such as the classic Lotus Seven. The new Exige falls into this latter category. Enter a high speed turn close to the limit and the mechanical and aerodynamic grip just

hold the car until you feel that the roll of the tires (sideways), traction is about to be lost. When they lose grip momentarily, the car skips an inch (maybe no more) sideways, then the tires start to grip again. While it makes for a slightly unusual feeling the first time, I found myself attacking the corners faster and faster. Brakes? Yes, it has them, but with this sort of cornering ability why bother? No that is a little unfair; they are just as good as the Elise's with no sign of fade.

As is typical with all Lotus cars, the Exige is set up for understeer. The only strange part is that it appears to understeer in both slow and very fast corners! With some useful instruction

Exige (Continued on page 11)

EXIGE (Cont. from page 10)

I found that trail braking or braking into the corner allows the back end to come out in slow corners, while the steering takes care at high speeds. My guess is that the low speed understeer is due to the mechanical set-up, while at high speeds the aerodynamics provides the handling characteristics at high speeds. Irrespective this is a car that will inspire confidence in almost any driver. You don't need to fight it; it just does what you tell it.

While not driving with the flair of Lotus' own test drivers (sideways seems to be their favorite direction) I would say that the Exige provides so much confidence I would take no more than a couple of sessions to be up to full race speed from this first drive. Praise should also be given to the Yokohama tires that are not only perfect for the Elise/Exige, but are fast becoming the hot set up for historic and touring racing in classes where slicks are forbidden.

The weekend prior to driving the Elise I had been teaching Ferrari drivers how to drive their expensive machines. Trying to keep a Ferrari 360 from living up to its name is a challenge despite the serious nature of the engine. An Exige may also be a mid-engined 2 seater but that is where the similarity finishes. The 360 has a chassis just to hold the engine, while the Exige has an engine just to show how good the chassis is. Further up the Ferrari scale, the Enzo was sold on the principal that it had the Ferrari F1 based aerodynamics and chassis. (Not something that they would admit to this year!) The Enzo has incredible grip and a formula car like steering, but it just is not an Exige. Yes its fast and yes it has lots of power, but I would challenge anyone to drive both and actually not prefer the Exige.

In summary, save your pennies, e-bay your grandmother, work a second job, do whatever you need to do, because at a list price of ca. \$50k the Exige is a must have. Now, do I have room in the garage? ■

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Editor's Note:

This issue is dated October-November 2005. However, it only counts as one issue towards membership. Completing the 12-issue schedule for the 2005 Calendar year, there will be a December issue, and a special issue focusing on LOG 25.

This is a volunteer organization that is dedicated to producing the ReMarque, and the club website at www.lotusclub.org. Unfortunately, it sometimes becomes very difficult to maintain a schedule, due to "outside interests" such as work and home life.

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FOR ELITE/ECLAT/ESPRIT. Full Euro-spec 907 eng. w/ 18 Km., \$2,000; 45mm Dellortos w/ manifold, \$550; Elite/Eclat 5-sp., \$450; 4.11 rear, \$300. Jim, (631) 379-7145 (NY).

FOR ELAN/EUROPA/7. 1700 Stage 1A (rally spec) TC eng., built by Eric Hermann (Marcovicci-Wenz Engineering), 25K street mi., recent water pump & cam chain, incl. Webers & all accessories (incl. custom-tuned 4-2-1 headers), 140 bhp, good low & mid torque, pulls hard to 7,000, can demo. Jim, (631) 379-7147 (NY).

FOR ELAN. Stromberg 175CD carbs w/ emission body, adj. B1G needles, 2-carb assy., \$250; Stromberg head, 4.69" height, w/cams, vlv.s., tappets & springs, used, clean, apart, \$400. Plus ship. Jack Brady, jbrady2804@aol.com, (630) 860-5458 (IL).

FOR LOTUS FF. Hewland Mk. 9 gears (9/32, 22/30, 23/28, 25/25), used, \$20 /set; Hewland gear storage case, holds 10 sets, \$20. Plus ship. Jack Brady, jbrady2804@aol.com, (630) 860-5458 (IL).

FOR ELAN/EUROPA. Trunion kit, QH QSK140, \$15; Weber 40DCOE-31, 30 vent, w/ linkage, used, 2-carb. assy., \$375; 40DCOE Weber gasket kit, \$15; Weber jet assortment, 105 thru 160 mains, 145 thru 240 air corr., misc others, used, 48-pc. lot, \$100. Plus ship. Jack Brady, jbrady2804@aol.com, (630) 860-5458 (IL).

LIT. Cortina parts cat., '73-on, \$20; Cortina parts cat., '62-'66, \$20; Cortina shop man., '70-on, intereurope, \$20; Plus 2 shop man. (X050TO327Z), \$40; Elan shop man. (X036TO327Z), \$40; Europa S2 shop man. (46T327 w/TC supplement), \$40; Lucas parts cat., '48-'65, \$20. Plus ship. Jack Brady, jbrady2804@aol.com, (630) 860-5458 (IL).

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