

# LOTUS REMARQUE

The Official Publication of Lotus, Ltd.



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June 2004

Volume 32, No. 4

## Lotus Owner's Gathering LOG 24 September 10 - 13, 2004, in Birmingham, AL.

By David Schmid



Lotus Ltd. and the LOG 24 Committees wish to thank all the sponsors and advertisers for becoming part of North America's largest Lotus event. They help make LOG an extraordinary experience, so please thank them.

LOG 24 is only a few months away and we are already getting a great response to registration and the special events. Keep in mind that there are limited spaces available for the Lotus LOG 24 Autocross and Lotus LOG 24 Track Day, so early registrants will have first choice; this is due to the space available and keeping safety as a top priority.

The LOG 24 registration form was sent with the May ReMARQUE newsletter and is also available on our web site at [www.lotusclub.org](http://www.lotusclub.org). Additional forms and information are also there for your review and application.

Please make your hotel reservations at the Wynfrey. We have a block of rooms for our LOG 24 attendees; they will be offered to you for a reduced cost of only \$99 per night, plus taxes, the regular cost will be \$199 if not reserved by August 10th, 2004. To reserve a room(s), contact the Wynfrey Hotel at (205) 987-1600, or toll-free 1-800-WYNFREY (1-800-996-3739).

Refer to "Lotus LOG 24" when making your reservation.

For new LOG attendees and our past LOGers, we have a LOG Survival Guide on the Lotus Limited website at [www.lotusclub.org](http://www.lotusclub.org). This is a great way to prepare for LOG 24 before you make the trip to Birmingham, AL.

## DOOR PRIZES

We have been able to obtain door prizes from the generous sponsors and advertisers. They

will be awarded based on drawing a "chip" with a number corresponding to your LOG 24 registration number on your name tag.

The drawings will take place throughout the weekend during the "High Profile" moments, such as the Friday Night Reception, Concours, and Saturday Banquet. You must have your registration badge to confirm your registration number and claim your prize. You will not need to be present to win up until the Saturday Banquet. The list of all winning numbers will be posted in the registration room when open or at the Banquet to claim your door prizes before the Banquet. NO prizes will remain after the Banquet. All door prizes that have been donated or purchased for LOG 24 will be distributed by the end of the Saturday Banquet, numbers will be drawn until the last unclaimed door prize is given away. You will need to be present at this time to win the remaining door prizes. If we run out of numbers, all numbers will be placed back in the pool and drawings will continue until all prizes are awarded. All registration numbers will be eligible and have an equal chance to win, including LOG 24 committee and LL club officers. All complimentary guests of the event are excluded.

## LOG 24 CONTESTS

In keeping with our LOG tradition, there will be opportunities for awards and contests to show off your Lotus interests. Voting for all contests closes at 10:00 AM on Saturday morning. The ballots for all Contests and the Concours are located in your registration packet. The Contests ballot and Essays submission boxes will be located in the LOG 24 display area in the Avon room.

## PHOTO CONTESTS

We will have LOG 24 PHOTO contests that will be displayed in the Avon room. Photos are grouped into TWO categories, up to 5" x 7" and larger than 5" x 7". Please judge the photos on their merit and not their presentation (frame / matting). If possible, please put your name on the back of your photos for identification and do not forget to pick them up before the Saturday Banquet.

## MODEL AND CRAFT CONTESTS

The LOG 24 MODEL and CRAFT contests will also be displayed in the Avon room. All Lotus related crafts and models are welcome. There will be two categories for Models. Smaller than 1/24th scale and 1/24th scale and larger. If possible, please put your name on your models or crafts for identification and do not forget to pick them up before the Saturday Banquet.

## LIARS ESSAY CONTEST

Anyone attending LOG 24 without their Lotus car will be able to write an essay (true or not) explaining why they are at LOG 24 without their Lotus.

LOG 24 Update (Continued on page 5)

## Lotus Cars USA New President/CEO, John English, Discusses the Future of Lotus in the US with ReMARQUE

By Andrew R. Barron

On May 11th, Lotus Holdings, Inc., officially announced the appointment of John A. English as the new President/CEO of Lotus Cars USA (LCU). John was kind enough to sit down and discuss his history and hopes for the future of Lotus in the US in an exclusive interview with Lotus ReMARQUE. The official press release is available at [www.lotusclub.org](http://www.lotusclub.org).

John was born in Norwalk, Connecticut, where he grew up. Although John points out that he has "lived in the sun-belt for so long, I am used to the heat and humidity." After graduating from high school John recalls that he "went to work for my dad" which gave him a new found financial freedom.

This allowed John to purchase his first car, a '66 Corvette. "I was flush with money and loved the Corvette", but John was not satisfied with the '66 and soon replaced that with the '67 and then a '68! "Each year they changed the body or improved it, such as adding a hard top, I bought the new model." With a sigh, John recalls that the Corvette had to go during his two years in the military (US Army Special Forces) and was replaced by a series of cars which "provided basic transportation" during his time in College. More recently he has been used to company cars and has therefore not owned his own car in many years. He recently purchased his first new car since in 27 years. "I have a BMW 530," he said, somewhat sheepishly, "which I hope still runs because I have not driven it in some time." During his stint as a Corvette owner, John earned extra money working in a gas station, which allowed him to work on his cars "I never did anything major, but changed oil, filter, brakes etc."

At University of New Haven he studied Marketing and when he received his BS in 1971 he "started to look quickly for something to do." Chrysler was looking for trainees and so he joined their graduate training program. "You could not get through the program without learning about marketing, sales, advertising" many of the skills he would continue to use to this day. In talking with John it becomes clear that the lessons he learnt at College and Chrysler still mold his thinking about marketing and sales.

His first job with Chrysler was District  
John English (Continued on page 5)

# LOTUS REMARQUE

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The username and password for the "Members Area" section of

Username: june  
Password: carwash

the website ([www.lotusltd.org](http://www.lotusltd.org)) this month are:

Note that the username and password are case-sensitive.

Direct web-related **LOTUS INFO LOCAL GROUPS** at [lotusclub.org](mailto:lotusclub.org).  
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## ReMARQUE ReMISS

Unfortunately, there was a mistake in last month's ReMARQUE. The two photographs attributed to Andrew Barron were actually taken by Karl-Franz Marquez. With the last minute rush to re-write and re-edit to include the sad news about Zack, the photo credits were not correctly passed on to Mike Gulley for the layout.

To see more of Karl-Franz's photos go to <http://karlfranz.com/>

## Board News

Bob Veltz has resigned as a Director At-Large for personal reasons and Andrew Barron has been asked by the board and agreed to step in to this vacated position for the remainder of Bob's term. Andrew Barron held this position for many years previously. Thank you to Bob Veltz for his time devoted to the club as a Board member and congratulations to Andrew Barron in his return in this position.



photograph by Gordon Morris

Gordon's Elan

## ACROSS THE POND

By Gordon Morris

The geographical location of the UK – at the western edge of a warm land mass abutting a vast, relatively cold ocean, warmed up a bit by the Gulf Stream, ensures that we normally have a humid westerly/south westerly air stream over the country. Whilst this ensures that we are spared the extremes of temperature experienced on your side of that pond, it means that we tend to receive more than our share of precipitation as that humid air reaches our shores. Thankfully, Ireland is in the way to take the brunt of this. If you've ever wondered why Ireland is so green, consider the amount of rain that falls there every year.

End of meteorological treatise. March, April and May are usually wet months here and this year they've been wetter than usual – requiring intrepid, optimistic open air Lotus drivers to brush up on their wet weather driving techniques. I recall encountering a touch of precipitation your side of the pond too – particularly a soaking

I experienced in a leaky Elan on my way to LOG 22 round Chicago – so I thought I'd share my experiences with you.

Given the choice, I much prefer to drive my Elan with the top (hood) down; with the Seven, there is no choice as there is no top. An Elan top can be made to fit properly and keep the rain out. The trick – as usual with most things Lotus – is careful assembly, with lots of trial fittings, to make sure everything lines up the way it should. Time and care taken at this stage pays dividends later. The Elan with its side windows up and the Seven with sidescreens fitted, will keep you dry (ish) in light rain if you keep your speed above about 40mph. A small towel in the cockpit will absorb the odd raindrop and keep the inside of the screen clear. I always use Clear X on the screen and side windows; even in heavy rain, this marvellous stuff causes the drops to disperse and run off. It works equally well on racing and motorcycle visors.

In light rain, it pays to keep an eye on the  
*Across The Pond (Continued on page 4)*



## Magazine Watch

By Foster Cooperstein

### From the UK

The May issue of *Thoroughbred & Classic Cars* contains a 6 page article comparing a 1998 Elise, 1997 Caterham 21 and a 1995 MGF. While the author thought any sports car enthusiast would be happy driving any of these cars, it was the Elise that came out on top. The author thought that piloting it to be a "seminal driving experience".

See the May issue of *EVO* for a review of the latest Lotus, the Exige S2, as well as a comparison with the original. The article, and the author's opinion of the car, is handily summed up as he writes: "Bottom line: sports cars come no more enticing nor more entertaining than the new Exige."

As to the comparison with the original, well it is no contest. Finding only a marginal engine improvement, the author was impressed with the six speed gearbox and the brakes. He wrote: "...it all adds up to the irresistible conclusion that Lotus improved upon one of the best cars it has ever built."

An Elise 111R is among a group of 5 sports cars in the 0-100-0 test in the 27 April issue of *Autocar* ([www.autocar.co.uk](http://www.autocar.co.uk)). The Elise was 4th of the 5 cars at 16.80 seconds. The Boxter was almost a second slower, while the TVR 1350T blew away the competition at 14.00 - 1.75 seconds quicker than the Elise's cousin, Vauxhall VX220 Sprint. Overall a Caterham R500 Evolution blew away all competitors at 10.73 seconds. Second was a motorcycle, the Suzuki GSX-R 1000, followed by a Ferrari Enzo.

### In the US

LCU seems to have found itself a very effective PR person as the Elise has shown up in some very large market venues - *Time* magazine and *The Wall Street Journal*.

The 22 March issue of *Time* contains a ¼ page blurb about the Elise (including a picture ("... sleek, sexy ... and affordable"). The *WSJ* article (9 April) is entitled "A Ferrari Feel - At Toyota Prices." The author feels that the Elise, with a little luck and a good driver, has a chance to beat other more expensive minimalist racers such as the \$200,000 Ferrari Stradale.

The Elise is pictured on the cover of *Automobile* (June issue) leading a Viper and Ferrari as part of an article - Best Track Cars. Inside, in a 9 page article, the comparison, which includes a Caterham Superlight R, the author is very enthusiastic about the car, even complimenting it on its street manners. Compared to the Elise, "the BMW M3, Porsche Boxter, and even the Honda S2000 seem positively bargelike in comparison."

### Elsewhere

The English version of the German magazine *Auto Motor-Sport*, entitled *Auto Focus*, includes an inset photo of the Elise on the cover of its March/April issue. Inside are 6 pages about the 111R. The author describes the car as one "... evidently built by good drivers for others who have never lost sight of what good driving calls for."

## News on Your ReMARQUE

As we are sure you have noticed, the ReMARQUE has been humming along on all cylinders with regular delivery thanks to the hard work of its staff. That does not mean you all can just sit back and enjoy each month quite yet. Your Club needs your assistance once again.

Unfortunately, due to personal commitments Don Butler has informed us of his need to step down as Editor-in-Chief of ReMARQUE. Now I know you would all like to see your monthly newsletter continue to run smoothly and it can with the volunteer help of one of you as Don's replacement. The rest of the team is still intact. Breaking down duties into smaller more manageable areas of responsibility, as we have done among staff members, has been a success. It has made a big impact on the regular delivery of ReMARQUE to you each month. It also means that the balance of the experienced staff will support the new person while they are learning their new duties. As I am sure you know, ReMARQUE is an important benefit of Lotus Ltd. membership. It keeps you informed of all the world's Lotus news as well as club events such as LOG. Join the team and be part of the fun of providing this vital resource for your fellow members. As ReMARQUE Editor-in-Chief you will have the inside scoop on breaking news and have regular contact with other club members that are regular contributors. If you are interested in this vital position within your club contact Roy Collins at 440-365-3351 or [rcclotus@alltel.net](mailto:rcclotus@alltel.net) for additional details.

The ReMARQUE is your monthly newsletter. It is for you. It is also BY YOU. This means we need your help with feature articles and tech articles of interest for all of us to read each and every month. No they do not fall out of the trees on to the pages by themselves. Someone has to write them and that someone is you the MEMBERSHIP. I know everyone of you has at least one good Lotus story and probably more if you think about it. Anyone who has gone to a LOG knows when the stories start to be told and the lies start to flow, there is no end until we all part company to return home. Many of you are very capable Lotus technicians due to the fact you drive a Lotus and I know you have found some useful tips on repairs, maintenance, and upgrades to keep your treasured cars running reliably. It seems every car has a story that traces its history or your acquisition of it. Some of the stories are humorous and some not so humorous. Any of these could be the seed of a very interesting story your fellow club members would enjoy reading in a future issue of ReMARQUE.

Now, if each of you would get busy and write down at least one of the wonderful stories you have been keeping to yourself and share them with the rest of us, we can move forward with our plans for an expanded ReMARQUE. Yes, that is correct! We are poised to move forward with a turbocharged **12 pages** monthly IF you will supply us with the content to fill it. We cannot do this without you the members helping out with an article or two. So just sit down and write what you like to read and I am sure others will enjoy it as well. We look forward to reading all of your submissions. You may not think of yourselves as capable writers, but don't worry; our editing will make your old English teacher proud of you. Submit your articles, in plain text or minimum format Word document, via E-mail to [editor@lotuscarclub.org](mailto:editor@lotuscarclub.org) or by mail to **Lotus Ltd., Box L, College Park, MD 20741**. Thank you in advance from the ReMARQUE Staff and Fellow Members of Your Club, Lotus Ltd., for your ReMARQUE contributions.

As an added incentive, we are going to present three awards annually starting at LOG 24. The new categories will be: Most Valuable Contributor - this award will be determined by who is the most prolific writer submitting multiple usable interesting articles including feature and tech; Best Article - the story no one will forget, the must read of the year; and Best Photo - could be a photo accompanying a feature or tech article. It could be a photo only submitted with humorous caption, something new for ReMARQUE. Now you have three more reasons to get busy writing those articles and snapping those photos you have been keeping to yourself all this time. Lotus Ltd.'s own version of a coveted Pulitzer Prize, something we are sure you all would treasure winning. Now get those keyboards clicking!

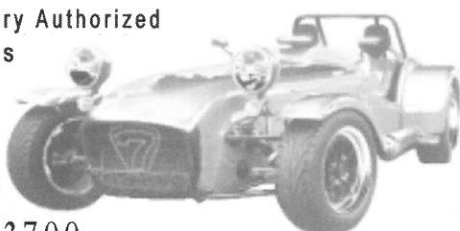
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## ACROSS THE POND (Cont. from page 2)

weather ahead. Dark gloomy clouds over the intended direction of travel are bad news, while brightness indicates a likely clearance ahead, so it's probably worth pressing on. When all else fails, the rain is coming down straight down and bouncing a foot or two off the road, and it looks the same for miles ahead, it's time for sense and sanity to prevail. A stop under a bridge, or at a fuel station, will allow erection of the top without adding to the misery – or perhaps allow you to take stock and decide whether it might be better to wait for a clearance before proceeding. I have to say that I've only done this once and that was in the Seven when the rain was running down the inside of the screen and I could barely see. As luck would have it, I was able to stop under cover at a garage and have a cup of tea until matters improved.

All that said, our cars usually go very well in the wet, once we remember that they're light and relatively high powered. When we were racing Kermit the Elan, we would – metaphorically at least – pray for rain, because then we would be able to beat the Cobras and Corvettes and the other heavy metal who couldn't put their power down anything like as well as Kermit did. Remember, though, that the laws of physics still apply, so braking

distances need to be revised and it is well to bear in mind that lesser cars can't stop or corner as well as you can.

I find that my inevitable motoring flat cap, together with a light waterproof jacket, keeps me as dry as is likely; I dare say that a baseball cap might also suffice, but my readers will know that I'm unlikely to be seen so equipped. The Scandinavians wear motor cycle full face helmets in their open cars; I have to say that this offers probably the best protection – provided that the visor doesn't steam up – but I can't yet bring myself to wear mine as the neighbours (and Jan) think I'm strange enough already. Perhaps on one dark cold wet night... ..

A week or so ago, I put all of this accumulated experience into practice when I, ill advisedly and against domestic advice, took the Elan to a combined Aero/Auto show about 25 miles from home. The forecast was poor, but the day dawned bright and dry. This hopeless optimist set off in the open air for ten miles and just as he approached a garage supplying 97 octane super unleaded, the heavens opened and the sky was as dark as night ahead. I dived in under cover, topped up the tank and put the hood up. At this stage, common sense dictated that I should abandon the trip and go home, but I'd agreed to meet friends there and it might clear up a bit later.

It didn't so the only friend who did turn up and I sat in his leaky early Esprit admiring the strange fabrics and even odder tartan used on the interior of his very nice car until we decided that we'd better head off home.

The only snag was that we had to negotiate a muddy quagmire in order to reach the exit. By the time I reached the main road, my car was covered in sticky mud. However, the road home was more like a river bed, with inches of standing water. This soon washed off the mud and as I passed my garage refuge on the outward journey the sun came out and the final few miles home were on dry roads in bright warm sunshine. The Elan, thanks to its impromptu and natural car wash, was bright and clean and Jan wondered how her bedraggled husband had got so wet and muddy.

But it doesn't rain here all the time. Summer approaches and with it our second trip to join the Scandinavian Seven people in Denmark. Before that, there's a Spring Autojumble at Beaulieu in the New Forest – something of a practice for the main event in September. I'll miss that this year as it clashes with LOG 24 and I couldn't possibly miss that. Next month's column will contain a report on our Danish trip and hopefully something about the joys of al fresco motoring in warm sunshine.



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Lotus Ltd. would like to thank each participating organization for their support. Remember to mention the Lotus Ltd. discount at time of registration and bring your current ReMARQUE to the event as proof of membership. Discounts may not be combined with other offers. Discounts are subject to change without notice, and participants should confirm their availability before signing up. Club contact: Tony Vaccaro (716) 689-8644, e-mail tvacc@lotusowners.com.

### LOG 24 UPDATE (Cont. from page 1)

The winning essay will be published in the LOG issue of ReMARQUE.

#### HARD LUCK AWARD

This award is given to the person experiencing a Lotus misfortune en route to LOG 24. Entries will be judged using a purely unscientific manner with prejudice toward the worst mechanical misfortune. Essays can be dropped into the appropriate box or received through the pass it on mill, but must be written by you or by proxy for submission. The winning essay will also be published in the LOG issue of ReMARQUE. This is the award we hope no one wins each year. Good luck to us ALL.

#### LONG DISTANCE AWARDS

To recognize those who have traveled long distances in their Lotus to get to LOG 24, we will have 3 awards presented to those so daring. One, to the person driving their pre-1983 Lotus the longest distance, second to the person driving their 1983 or later Lotus the longest distance and third to the person who trailers their Lotus the longest distance. Contenders, please place your entries in the associated box with the miles driven and starting point.



Manager in New York City where his job was to call on dealers. After nearly four years at Chrysler he spent 15 years at Volvo, with positions as Regional Manager, Market representation and District Manager positions. In the early 1990's he moved to Mazda as Director of Dealer Development. "The last position I held there was Vice-President Sales". When Ford took control of Mazda he decided to move to Jacksonville, Florida and become Regional General Manager.

Despite his background with three large automakers, it is clear from our discussions that John has been bitten by the Lotus bug. In talking about the Elise and Lotus, his voice takes on a different tone - one of excitement.

John has already visited the Lotus factory at Hethel. "I was impressed by the Elise production line. The car is virtually hand built. Although they use modern techniques that make volume production possible, the car is essentially still hand built." The people there also made quite an impression. "What stood out to me was the dedication of the staff. The high average number of years most have worked there and the lack of turn over" all of this was very different from other auto companies. He summed up the spirit on the production line with one word, "pride".

During his visit he was offered a live track test ride in a car fresh off the production line, "they just taped it up to make sure that it would not get scratched with stone chips, and away we went." His impression? "It was unbelievable! It is just like a go-cart on rails, so controlled." Asked if he was shown the 'white knuckle express' around the track by one of Lotus Cars own test drivers, he laughed and said yes. But he was quick to point out that he was not scared "because of two reasons. First, I knew that this driver had done thousands of laps and was certified, and secondly, I had just seen the manufacture of the car and knew the quality of construction and the dependability of the car."

Some have predicted a sharp price rise for the Elise in the second year, but John indicated that barring any unforeseen changes with the dollar/pound valuation, "we will do our best to hold prices as long as possible." It is clear that John's marketing background comes through when this subject of pricing comes up. "We have to be realistic about the marketing approach. While we have sold the production for the first year of the Elise, the real goal is to maintain profitability in and through the second year. We must not be greedy." It is the long-term success of the Lotus name that John is interested in, "We must build value in the franchise." John admitted that unlike the majority of manufacturers, Lotus is not driven by "market share." This has caused him to "have a transition in thinking."

So what changes are going to happen at LCU as we move towards the future?

"In the next two weeks we are going to hire two experienced regional sales managers." It will be their job to cover their respective territories interacting with the dealers and owners. In addition, "any time there is a major show, they will be there to man the stand."

"We will grow the dealer network for Lotus, but not yet. We do not want to reduce the size of the pieces of the pie for our existing dealer body." John points out that, while at Volvo,

they did not increase the number of dealers significantly, the overall quality of the dealers did improve. It is in this area that he admits Lotus needs some improvement. But with regard to future expansion, he indicated that LCU "will look at markets where they have opportunities. Any potential dealers will get a letter of intent," that indicates they will become full dealers "when deemed appropriate." The key to this is the availability of more cars. "In many cases this may not be until sometime in 2005." He hoped that eventually the present 41 dealers could be enlarged to about 50, since "we are missing in some markets."

John points out that, the fact that the majority of the first year of sales for the Elise is to present Lotus owners or return customers has both good and bad points. "One of our challenges is correct the belief that since all the first year is sold, we do not need to spend a lot on marketing." However, John points out that "we do need to be active to ensure that the second and third years are a success." In particular there are customers who do not know the lore of Lotus. Because LCU does not have a large advertising budget John believes that Lotus needs to "take advantage of special niche." Although you can expect to see some adverts in magazines and newspapers, "it is nonsense to expect us to run an extensive TV campaign." Instead "we are very seriously looking at a mobile marketing concept." This will travel around providing static displays as well as driving experience type events. Some of this approach is clearly related to John's former life at Mazda, where the Mazda 'Rev-it-up' program is designed to promote the Mazda 6 and worked extremely effectively.

Where does John see the competition of the Elise. "Obviously you have the Porsche Boxster, but also cars like the Mitsubishi Spider and 350Z. The Corvette is a possibility, although that has a higher degree of creature comfort." He could also see a Miata owner moving up as well. He admits that the Elise is pretty much "bare to the bone" and "not a car for everyone", but that people who know Lotus "will be happy with the product." However, it is new potential buyers who must be introduced to Lotus.

John's own introduction to Lotus was the 1977 "Spy Who Loved Me" Bond Esprit, and the Esprit has given him his latest taste of Lotus ownership. "I have driven an Esprit recently at which time we had a cold snap in Atlanta, I turned on the heater, adjusted the knobs, and - nothing." Welcome to the club, John!

On the subject of present Lotus owners, John says, "Lotus has such a revered name and a fervent owner group. There is to a degree of uniqueness, and the owners are as dedicated as other famous marques." With regard to Lotus Ltd., John is impressed with the commitment and efforts of the club. "Lotus owners are

lucky to have such an active club for such a low volume marque." He pointed out that the Mazda Miata is made in much larger volumes than Lotus, and it also has an owners club, "but in terms of activity it is just not the same as Lotus Ltd." John expressed his desire to continue LCU's interactions with LL.

With regard to where Lotus moves after the Elise, John pointed out that at present the US is an unknown quantity with regard high (for Lotus) volumes of sales. "We must first do the necessary things." John indicated that there is a method to his approach. His intent is to "first, profitably absorb the second year production and second, build the dealer profitability, in order to have a meaningful productive discussion with the UK. Nothing sells your point of view better than success in sales and profits," he continues, "if we are able to succeed then we will have a greater input to what is to be the specs for the new Esprit." In other words, promote the "needs for this market" with regard to various specifications. He notes that he has the benefit of experiencing the mentality of European (Volvo) and Japanese (Mazda) manufacturers. "There are battles that will have to be fought" for the US market, since the "way that marketing is done elsewhere in the world tends to be somewhat different in the US."

In closing I asked him what message he had for Lotus Ltd. members. "The Elise is a fabulous product, it portends well for the future" and he "hope that we can do the right things to grow Lotus in the US."

During the discussion, I found John open and enthusiastic about Lotus, the Elise and in particular the challenges he has in front of him. John indicated that he is very much looking forward to coming to LOG, and that will be your chance to talk with him further about the growth of Lotus in the US.

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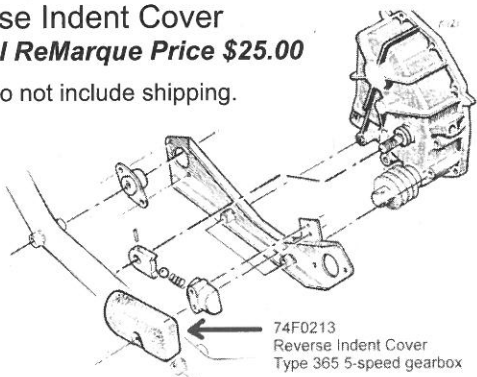


Fig. 62. - Type 365 Gearbox Mounting.

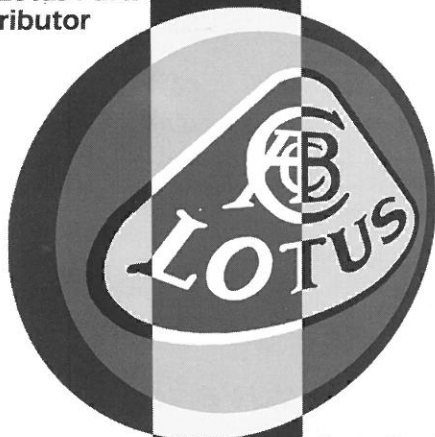
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## **Lotus Twin Cam Valve Shim Exchange**

By Mike Peitsch (Keeper of the Shims)

Don Butler, the ReMARQUE Editor, asked me to write an article on the valve shim exchange that I started many years ago. Basically it is a service that offers to exchange valve shims you currently have in your engine for the shims you need to adjust your valve clearances to meet factory specs, either as part of regular maintenance or when you have had valve work done.

The exchange has been around for many years. I got the idea from the old Lotus West club which I belonged to when I first got my Elan in 1975. The exchange was used quite often by club members in the first 10 to 15 years of existence, but there hasn't been much activity in more recent years, probably because we use our twin-cam equipped Loti more for fun than as daily drivers. But even though our Lotus driving habits have changed, the shim exchange is still here and available.

The valve shims are dime size discs of hardened steel that rest on top of the valve stems underneath the cam followers. They control the valve clearance between the top of the cam follower and the heel of each cam lobe. The factory shop manual has very clear directions on how to measure these clearances, remove and replace the shims, and determine the required shim size, so I will refer you to the shop manual for those details. Once you have determined the shim thickness you need, contact me either by phone (920-733-2118) or e-mail. My work e-mail address is [mpeitsch@piercemfg.com](mailto:mpeitsch@piercemfg.com) and my home address is [lovewisc@hotmail.com](mailto:lovewisc@hotmail.com). Let me know what size shims you need. You will notice that the shop manual gives a .003" range for the valve clearance. Although you may want to set your clearances exactly in the middle of this range, I may not have exactly the right size shim to do that, so please supply me with a range. For example, if a .095" shim would give you an inlet clearance of .006", exactly in the middle of the recommended range, tell me you need a shim between .094" and .096". Remember that you may be able to swap around the shims you already have to get the desired clearances for some of the valves. Once you let me know what you need, I will check the stock and let you know what I can supply. Then send me the shims you want me to exchange. They can be sent by regular mail in a letter size envelope. Taping them between 2 pieces of card stock will give an envelope about the same thickness as a very long letter you may have sent before the days of e-mail. I have never had any problems with just dropping them into the mail box, although it may make you and the Post Office feel better to have it hand canceled. The cost will probably depend on how many shims you are sending. 8 shims may require 2 first class stamps. When you send me the shims, be sure to include a self addressed stamped envelope for me to use when sending you the new shims.

The shims I have range from .067" to .109", so if you need shims outside of that range, you will have to buy them new from one of the Lotus parts suppliers who advertise in reMARQUE. I have also purchased shims from my local Saab dealer. They do not carry as broad a range of shim sizes as a Lotus supplier would and I think the shims are only available in even sizes, i.e. .090, .092, .094, etc. If you have a dealer near you, it is more convenient than ordering or even using the exchange. The shims from any source are very inexpensive.

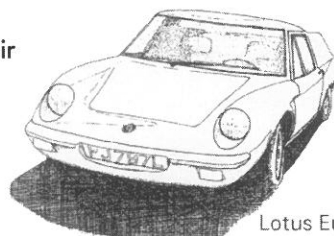
Some of the shims I have purchased new from Lotus parts suppliers have been what are called top hat shims. These shims are cup shaped and the cupped part fits over the valve stem with the flat side resting against the bottom of the cam follower. Although these shims are different from the factory shims, I trust our Lotus parts suppliers to sell me suitable parts, and I have not had any problems with using them.

I hope you will take advantage of this service, and if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me as indicated above.

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photograph courtesy of Russell Datz (Brandware Group)

*Lotus Elise at the Barber Motorsports Complex in Birmingham, AL*

## The Federal Elise: Plans and Projections

By Bob Stockton

Marketing plans and projections for the new Elise were revealed by Mark O'Shaughnessy, Director of Sales and Marketing for Lotus Cars USA, at an April meeting of the Automotive Press Association in Detroit.

"Everything you need and nothing more," a line O'Shaughnessy said came from a driver at an Elise clinic, is a theme he said summed up the new Elise very well.

Lotus specifications and performance figures for the new car include a weight of 1,975 pounds; zero to 60 mph time of 4.9 seconds (4.7 with the stickier tires on the Sports Package); zero to 100 mph in 13 flat; top speed of 150 mph; 26.1 miles per gallon in the city cycle; 37.5 mpg on the highway, and 30.0 overall.

"The new manufacturing facility that opened in 2000 can produce 5,000 cars per year," O'Shaughnessy said. He highlighted quality driven by production of the Opel Speedster, water-based paints, high-tech composite parts making capability, integration with engineering, and prototype build capability.

Each of the 39 current dealers (and O'Shaughnessy hopes to increase that number by a few in the coming year) should have a car by the end of May for the official launch on June 15. He estimates a sales rate of 2,200 to 2,400 cars annually.

"There are nearly 2,000 deposits with dealers for cars right now, so the first year's production is virtually sold via our order backlog," O'Shaughnessy said. "The first 400 orders are two or three years old, and dealers have retained about 90 percent of those orders."

He defined buyer demographics into three distinct groups: Enthusiasts, drivers who like high performance and drive for entertainment; Previous Sports Car Owners, owners of sports cars from as far back as the 50s and 60s, and Young Trend Setters, people

who like aggressive, smart styling.

Lotus has created three distinct option packages for those three groups. For the Enthusiasts, there is the Sports Package which consists of firmer suspension and high performance wheels and tires, \$2,480. For Previous Sports Car Owners there is the Touring Package consisting of leather seating surfaces, power windows and upgraded carpeting, insulation and sound system, \$1,350. For the Young Trend Setters, there is special Lifestyle Paint for \$1,200.

The manufacturers suggested retail price of the Elise is \$39,985, which does not include transportation, taxes, title, etc. The base car is available in two colors, Ardent Red or Saffron Yellow, and comes with wind-up windows and minimalist carpeting. There also is an optional hard top for \$1,475.

Reviewing the first 1,000 orders, O'Shaughnessy said that 85 percent will get the Touring Package; 45 percent the Sports Package; 45 percent the hard top; 77 percent metallic paint and eight percent the Lifestyle Paint.

Elise competition has been defined as the Honda S2000, BMW Z4, Audi TT convertible, Boxster S and BMW convertible. Marketing communications include conventional media (print advertising in cooperation with dealers), online presence with an expanded website, and mobile marketing on-site at special events.

"We are looking to expand Lotus markets with the most successful model in Lotus history," O'Shaughnessy said. "We have a very good production capacity, and our quality is at an all-time high."

Compared with the earlier Elise with the Rover engine, the US version, which O'Shaughnessy likened to an Elise Series 2.5, is 10 percent heavier but 50 percent more powerful via the Toyota drivetrain. Lotus has re-mapped the engine management software of the Toyota engine to make it more tractable for the lightweight Elise. O'Shaughnessy said that it pulls very easily in fifth gear from 1,100 rpm.

## Lotus Today

By Bob Stockton

Lotus Cars USA Director of Sales and Marketing Mark O'Shaughnessy described the current organization of Group Lotus as a backgrounder for the Automotive Press Association in Detroit.

Group Lotus is owned by Proton and divided into two principal activities, Lotus Cars and Lotus Engineering. Lotus Engineering has three main locations: founder Anthony Colin Bruce Chapman's home country of Great Britain; owner Proton's home country of Malaysia; and the United States.

Lotus Cars is organized into three groups: manufacturing operations in Hethel; commercial car sales to serve most of the world; and Lotus Cars USA in Atlanta. The two US operations, Lotus Engineering and Lotus Cars USA, operate under Lotus Holdings, Inc., which is headed by CEO Duke Hale. Mr. Hale joined Lotus in January.

John English has recently replaced Arnie Johnson as the new President/CEO of Lotus Cars USA in Duluth, GA (suburban Atlanta), which has grown from eight employees in 2003 to 11 this year. [see cover article - Ed.] Projected employment at the end of the summer is 15 or 16, with the increase mostly in field staff.

Lotus Cars USA has 39 dealers in 29 major US markets. Most of the dealers sell other limited production cars such as Bentley, Rolls Royce, Jaguar, Ferrari, Lamborghini, Porsche and Aston Martin.

Sales of the Elise virtually re-make Lotus Cars USA. The last Esprit V8, a car marketed since 1977, was built this past February. Sales of that car were approximately 135 annually versus the more than 2,000 annually anticipated for the Elise.

Lotus Engineering generates 50 percent of company revenues. It concentrates on powertrain and chassis/suspension systems and serves virtually all major global auto manufacturers. It has created such programs as the Corvette ZR1, the Opel Speedster and the Aston Martin Vanquish V12 composite crash structure.

Lotus Engineering in Michigan includes a 73,000 square feet powertrain laboratory, 27 test cells for engines from 18 cubic centimeters to 30 liters of displacement and 65 employees. Don Graundstadt is President and CEO of Lotus Engineering in Ann Arbor, and Tim Holland is Group Engineering Manager.



(l-r): Tim Holland, Mark O'Shaughnessy, and Don Graundstadt

photograph by Bob Stockton

## Pit Stops

(Submit Local Group Events to Tony Vaccaro, (716) 689-8644, e-mail: tvacc@lotusowners.com)

- June** (Every Sat.) Amalgamated Lotus Owners, (Kansas City area), very informal breakfast with other like-minded folks at Sharp's 63St. Grill from 8:00am to approx 10:00am. Sharp's is at 63rd St. and Brookside Plaza in the Brookside area near the middle of the city. Contact Mark Bracewell (816) 459-7707 or mbracewell@kc.rr.com
- June 6** (Sun.) LOONY (Lotus Owners Of New York), Arrive 10-10:30am, MG and Victor Lions Club Sports Car and Vintage Auto Festival, Finger Lakes Race Track, Routes 96 & 332, Farmington, NY. (southeast of Rochester). E-mail Tony for more info and directions, tvacc@lotusowners.com, 716-689-8644.
- June 12** (Sat.) CALL (Cleveland Area Lotus Limited) 6th Annual Steak Fry at Roy and Debbie Collins' home in Elyria, 3pm. \$15 per person, payable to Roy Collins. Please RSVP by June 6th to (440) 365-3351 or rclotus@alltel.net.
- June 12** (Sat.) LEO Monthly gathering. "A Touch of England" car show, at The Hermitage, Ho-Ho-Kus, NJ. 9am to 4pm. One of the bigger English car shows in the area. Good Lotus turnout, lots of door prizes and awards. Preregistration suggested, 150 car limit. Registration Form: www.NJTriumphs.org. Info: Atwell Haines, carbuff@lotusowners.com or 973-927-3765. CARAVAN from Summit Lotus to the show: RSVP to Joe Saturnia, joseph@saturnia.org or (908) 358-5314.
- June 12** (Sat.) Texas Lotus Club Meet for all Lotus clubs in the state: Texas Lotus Meet Sports Car World, Evant, Texas (0.5 mi. south of junction of Hwy 281S and Hwy 84W). Evant is a very small town.... it's impossible to get lost. Just look east after you go through the intersection. 10am until ?? Barbecue lunch provided, door prizes, RSVP for lunch: (254) 471-5539.
- June 13** (Sun.) LOONY (Lotus Owners Of New York), Arrive 10-10:30am, Euro Car Day sponsored by the British Car Club of WNY, Rose Garden Restaurant and Picnic Grove, 2753 Wehrle Dr., Williamsville, NY 14221, 716-632-987. Just East of Route 78 (East of Buffalo). Info and directions: tvacc@lotusowners.com, 716-689-8644
- June 13** (Sun.) Lotus LA. A day with Claudius. Meet Claudius and his son Jason. He is the premier Lotus fixer, up-grader, and innovator in the country. See how to make your car better and more fun. We will meet at his shop in Cerritos at 10am. Lunch will be served, and "A good time will be had by all" Info at www.lotuspub.com Gordone@earthlink.net or 818-841-3189.
- June 15** (Tues) Texas Lotus Club--Dallas. Regular 3rd-Tuesday-of-the-month pub night at The Londoner, Beltway at Midway, Addison, TX, 7pm. Info: Martha Clinkscale mnclinkscale@compuserve.com.
- June 17-20** (Thur.-Sun.) Lotus Ltd. US Grand Prix Exclusive. Join your Lotus Ltd. friends at the US Grand Prix to enjoy the Lotus Car Corral, Car Cruise, F1 Walkabout and F1 race June 17-20. For more details contact Mark Pfeffer at (314) 889-0572 or e-mail Feffman@yahoo.com
- June 20** (Sun.) LOONY (Lotus Owners Of New York), Arrive 9-9:30am, Breakfast Meeting at the Bergen Diner, Bergen, NY (at the intersection of Route 33 and Route 19, Just off the 490). Info and directions: tvacc@lotusowners.com, 716-689-8644
- June 21** (Mon.) Second annual St. Louis Area Lotus Lovers/Lotus Ltd. track day at Putnam Park Raceway (www.PutnamPark.com) in Mt. Meridian, IN. Questions? Or for a registration form, contact Mark Pfeffer at (314) 889-0572, Feffman@yahoo.com.
- June 27** (Sun.) : LEO go-kart outing: Eight hours of racing on Oakland Valley Race Park's multi-configuration kart track. Karts provided. Instruction, racing, and lunch too! \$295 for the day. Info and Registration: David Nagler, lotushack@lotusowners.com or 845-469-6001.
- June 27** (Sun.) LOONY (Lotus Owners Of New York), Arrive 9-9:30am, Breakfast at 58 Main Restaurant, Brockport, NY, tvacc@lotusowners.com, 716-689-8644. Nice weather? Grab one of the outside tables.
- June 27** (Sun.) Lotus LA Quarterly Meeting: We now have a new home base. It is at the Holiday Inn Select, 21725 Gateway Center Drive, Diamond Bar, 91765. This is our first Quarterly Meeting in a long time. Be there at 10:00AM, Bring \$10 for lunch, plenty of parking. Gordone@earthlink.net or 818-841-3189.

## CARS FOR SALE

**1972 ELAN SPRINT DHC**, full mech. restoration in '96, driven occasionally, int. needs touch-up, e-mail for pix & more info. \$12,500. Robert, robertmcneill@usa.net, (407) 366-1068 (FL).

**1983 DONKervoort SUPER 7**, thorough refresh 97% done, 4K mi. since new, Lotus TC eng. fully rebuilt, new Dellortos, 4-sp. semi-close, cycle & clamshell wings, alloy nose & glass nose, never raced, new Panasports, Yokohamas, bare alum. w/ satin black fenders. \$27,500. Jim, (248) 723-9592 e (MI).

**1991 M100 ELAN**, 1 of 6 black, orig. owner, under 4K mi., hidden F/R. radar detectors, custom-installed audio & security sys., car cover, factory svc. manual, updates installed. \$23,500. Dave Howe, (513) 884-6666 (OH), donho@acupoll.com.

**1983 ESPRIT TURBO**, Special Ed. #33 of 50, looks/runs great, silver/brown, glass top, garaged. \$16,500 firm. Brian, (703) 289-9600 (VA), wrebcr@aol.com.

**1980 ESPRIT S2**, yellow/tan, 25K mi., v. good, many upgrades. Dan, (610) 280-9103 (PA).

**1967 ELAN CONV.**, 1600 w/ Webers, A-1 mech., orig. unrestored, cover, manual, tools, spares, email for pix & specs. \$13,000. Bill, (724) 942-4877 (PA), wonorcutt@earthlink.com.

## CARS WANTED

**\*1985-1987 ESPRIT**, low mileage example, no red. Greg Zabel, (917) 656-2999 (NY).

## PARTS FOR SALE

**FOR 1988-95 4-CYL. ESPRITS**. 3 air filters, Amsoil thick foam, \$50. Lew Gaskell, (303) 526-5919 (CO), lewtus@juno.com.

## PARTS WANTED

**FOR FORD CORTINA**. 3.7 diff. or ring and pinion. Gary David, (330) 467-1074 (OH), gdcomputer@aol.com.

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