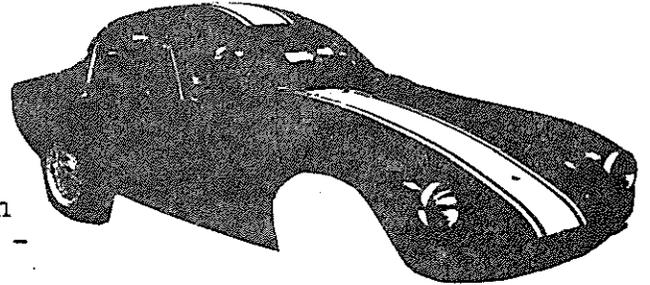


# CLUB ELITE

POST OFFICE BOX 351, CLARKSVILLE, TENNESSEE - 37040  
OFFICE PHONE - 615-648-1119 - HOME PHONE - 615-375-3355

OCTOBER, 1974 *VOLUME 4, No. 7*

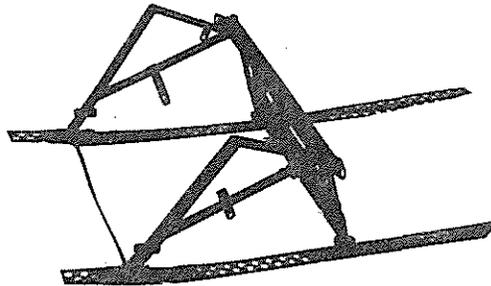


## INTRODUCTION

Well, the Elites been running like a train lately so I decided to pull the front sub-frame for lack of anything else to do.

Yeah sure, but I did stumble across one in my wanderings and thought it would make an interesting cover for the 'letter. We've all seen the cutaways and the artists renderings but somehow it looks a little different in the flesh, er, steel.

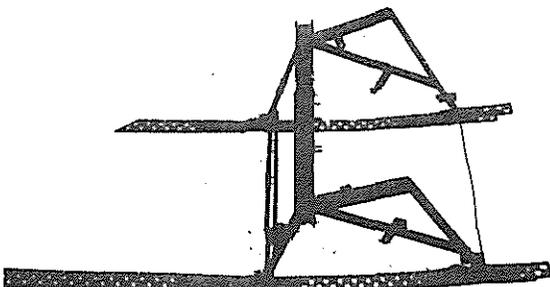
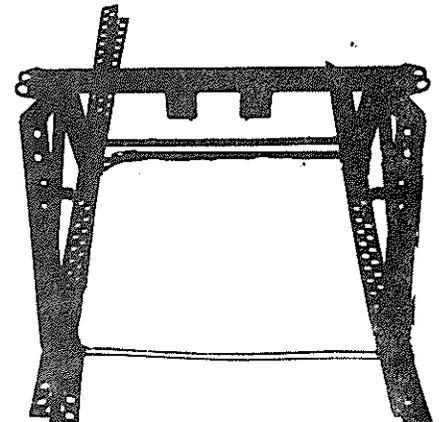
Didn't know about the thin rod connecting the skis at the front for example or that the left side ski is shorter than the right. (Stops short of the exhaust pipe opening.) Has a few more cross braces too.



You know, in retrospect, it isn't all that exciting. Maybe I should have opened with the famous nude Diane Webber reclining on Elite. And then followed with the Elite ads she appeared in, in various stages of disrobe. Some good trivia here and a story as always - which I'll save for next time.

Speaking of trivia, how many 1st. generation Elite owners/enthusiasts remember Roger Smith driving an Elite through a long forgotten back lot in the old television series "77 Sunset Strip"?

Ah but enough, on to the 'letter....



GOOD TO KNOW

Got a call from a new owner the other day. Seems he bought Bob McKernon's orange high miler and promptly got busted for running no bumpers. This is a bum bust in California and you can beat it in court or better, carry a copy of the vehicle code in your car to read to our finest. Here's what they'll cite you for:

Passenger Vehicle Bumper Requirements

Sec. 28071. Every passenger vehicle registered in this state shall be equipped with a front bumper and with a rear bumper.....

OK, here's how you'll beat it:

Passenger Vehicle Defined

Sec. 34710. As used in this division, passenger vehicle means any motor vehicle defined in Sec. 465, except (!) any of the following motor vehicles:

(g) Makes of motor vehicles of a model year manufactured or sold in California in quantities of less than 2,000 units for each such model year.

If the coppers won't buy it on the street take your Elite chassis listings into court to prove limited production status. Usually it won't go that far if you can quote from The Book when you get pulled over.

Incidentally, for you Californians my source is State of Calif. Vehicle Code 1972 edition. Many states have similar legislation exempting our kind of car so check out a copy of the code book from your local Dept. of Motor Vehicles.

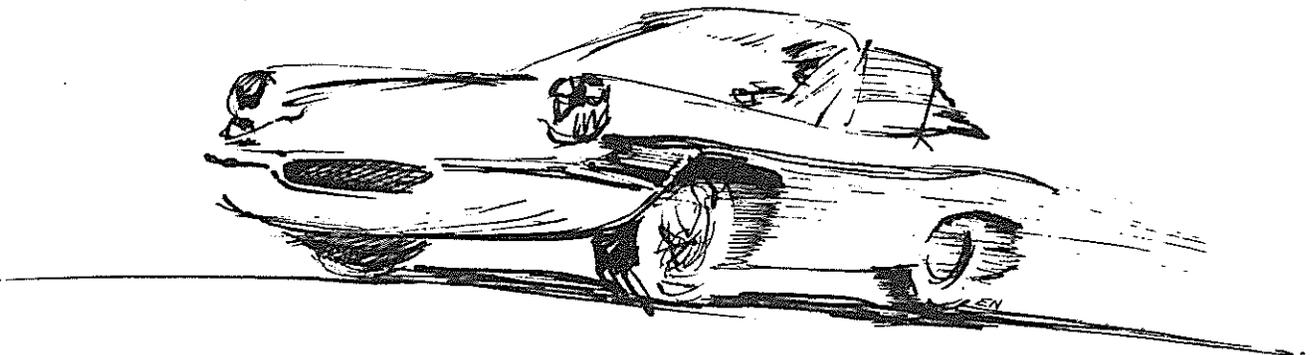
Let's see, oh yes. Have gotten several inquiries lately on replacing windshield molding. A local firm stocks a duplicate. Only difference being the key is rubber and not plastic. Otherwise, a near perfect match. One catch though - you'll have to go in with several other owners as the molding is sold in minimum lengths of 100'.

Rubbercraft Corp. of California

1800 West 220 th Street

Torrance, California 90507

Their part no. for the molding is 3067 (lock extrusion); for the key 463 (key extrusion). Order a copy of their catalog while you're at it. You'll go blind before reviewing all the rubber products they list.



# LOTUS



## LOTUS CARS LTD

Registered Office :  
NORWICH NOR 92W Wymondham 3411  
Telegrams Lotus, Norwich Telex 97401  
Registered in England No. 895081

D. Ortenburger Esq.,  
5207 San Feliciano Drive,  
Woodland Hills,  
California 91364,  
U.S.A.

1st March, 1974

Dear Mr. Ortenburger,

Thank you for your letter of the 25th February concerning your interest in obtaining any information written on the Lotus Elite.

Unfortunately, as this car ceased production in 1961 I think you will understand when I tell you that we are unable to supply any brochures or drawings. However, we have pleasure in enclosing two very rare photographs of the Elite, one being a side view and the other a three-quarter view of the front.

I trust that this is satisfactory and I am sorry we can be of no further help.

Yours sincerely,

LESTER EVES  
Personal Export Representative

Enc

### A THOUGHT ON THE ABOVE

L.J.K. Setright, in the Exordium to his book, The Grand Prix Car 1954/1966, stated, "... but it seemed to me more serious and surprising that Lotus should have been unable to promise anything, that they should have no records of their years of distinguished work, nor any evidence from which to construct such records."  
My letter from Lotus substantiates Leonards comments and worse. "... this car ceased production in 1961.." INDEED!

## OBSERVATIONS ON REAR SHOCKS

With the Club Elite Koni shock order perhaps some personal experiance observations are in order. The following will be specific to the Series II Elite but should hold for S I cars as well.

Armstrong vs Koni. Most of you will have read that little sentence in the rear suspension section of the shop manual that states that the rear hub carriers must be returned to the factory for shock renewal. This referred to replacement of the Armstrong units because the entire shock is replaced - including the steel tube that disappears into the cast al. hub carrier. The procedure for removal is super heating the hub carrier and driving the shock out. I've seen it done and while effective it's dangerous. More on that later. How it was done was by application of heat from a torch on the hub carrier whilst a tool with semi-circular collar - to fit where the lower shock tube narrows - was hammered with a knock off hammer. Now emagine - you're charring the hell out of the hub carrier - grease is boiling and splattering all around you and a helper is bashing the bejesus out of the old shock. At the instant the old shock comes out a third helper runs into the house - takes the new unit from the refridgerator - runs out and in one smooth move slams it into the cherry red hub carrier.

Dangerous? Besides the obvious assault on tender flesh if the whole thing isn't done within some mysterious tolerance the hub carrier can (and they have) crack after everything cools down. A good thing to keep in mind when your'e looking to buy another Elite.

Koni. Ah - beautiful simplicity. The Koni makes use of the outer Armstrong tube so all you need do is unscrew the Armstrong top plug - remove the guts (shock fluid, shaft, o-rings, valves, etc.) and slip the Koni in and screw it on tight. Well, there are some hints to make it almost as easy as that. Begin by removing the rear suspension as per manual (from the diff out). One bolt/nyloc on the half-shaft flange is particularly pesky but be patient, it will come out. Now, before you do anything else replace the bolts with some grade 8 stuff and match with top quality nylocs. If you reuse the stock nylocs your'e inviting loosening and that's how rear discs crack at the bolt holes! Ideal time to replace worn u-joints too.

Removing the spring. I've used the compressor as shown in the newsletter several months ago and it's the safest and most secure way going.

Removing the top plug. Care here as the tube is mild steel and you'll want to preserve the threads as the Konis will use them. Check the top edge of the tube. At the factory they usually knocked in a point with a punch to lock in place. Bend out carefully and only enough. The plug has two holes to accept the "English Armstrong Shock Plug Removal Wrench". My Sears tool kit didn't have one so I scrounged the local surplus stores and found a "crows foot" wrench (that's really the name) that fits. It had two more pegs than required (hacksaw) and the pegs are square(file) but it will twist that plug out as sweet as you please.

The shaft, o-rings, etc. will pull right out but find a container to pour the shock fluid into as it smells like stink out of... Clean and dry the shock tube, insert the Koni and screw it in tight. The koni has an over size collar so you use what the pros use - a pipe wrench!

Now, as you know, the Koni is adjustable but according to a Koni rep that spoke at a recent Lotus/West meeting the adjusters are designed to take up wear and not to stiffen the action which of course adjusting will precisely do. On a car as light as the Elite, even if you intend on some form of competition I'd advise going no more than one notch passed the out of box setting.

I can't emphasize enough how important good shocks are in the rear of the Elite. The woes of running with worn out units were given in previous issues of the 'letter so if you're running with worn out units you're courting some giant headaches besides not getting the most out of one of the best handling cars in the world.

### SOME GREEN MACHINE

by Dennis Ortenburger  
artwork by Gene Nollman

It's one of those stifling nights when the air is dead and you can feel the humidity between your fingers. The forced air is out and the man won't be here 'til tomorrow to fix it. What a night - think I'll go for a drive.

Walked out into the courtyard; the cobblestones glistened in the moon's shine - hit the lift button and the five stable doors slid up in unison. Let's see, which one? The Miura SV's just been tuned, I'll take it. H'mm, the mechanic must have waxed her as well, I thought to myself as the house lights danced on her black body as we burbled down the drive. Two blocks and onto Mulhulland, "God I wish I had power steering", I mused as I cranked the great black brute through the first switchback.

Settled down into fifth and she lugged badly as I decided to take Old Topanga and run down to the sea. Changed down into second - blast the balky shifter - and stirred up a breeze and suddenly became aware of another car up the canyon back of me. Its fierce headlights were carving up the night like searchlights - man he must be moving!

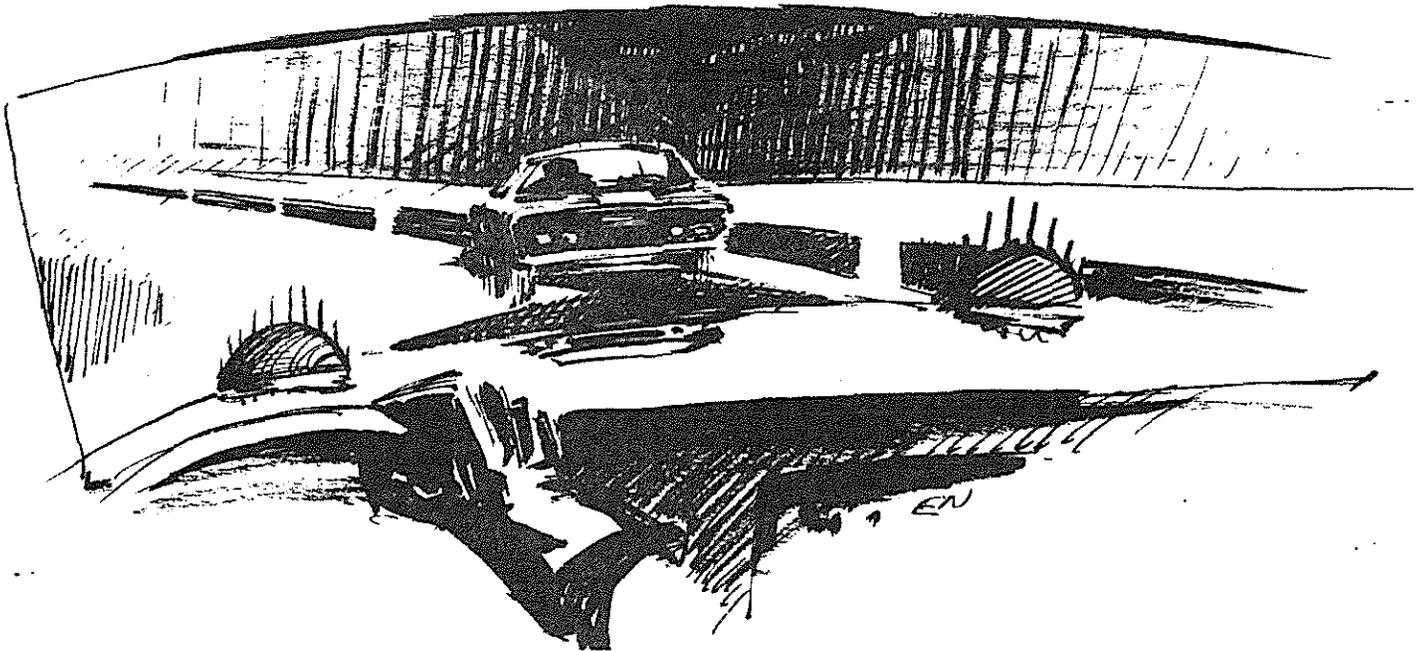
He's really closing fast - some potent machine - maybe we can have some fun - better quicken m' pace.

Wonder what he's got? I'm using most of the road and he's still closing and above the clatter of the Lambo I can hear him! What the hell kind of Ferrari makes a rasp like tha... it's daylight! He's on my tail!

Really on it now and the Lambo under steers to the outside lane and he tucks in - got his nose up beside me but I shut the door and led him into the next kink. Got a glimpse of flashing lock nuts - what - ever it is it's got wire wheels.

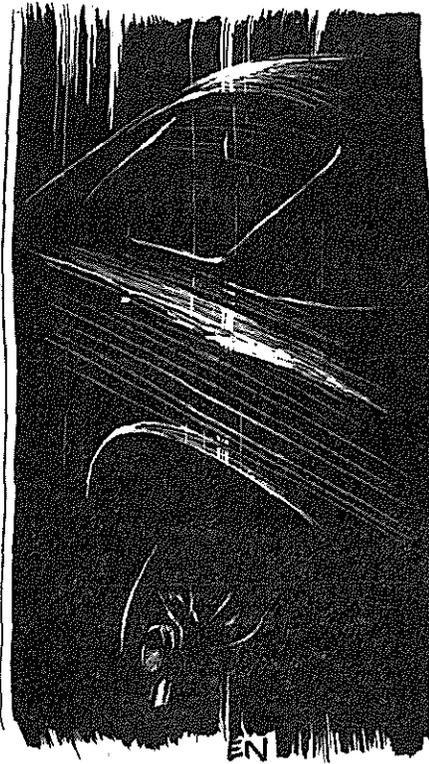
Our lights sliced up the pitch and the canyon took on an eerie feel as the trees loomed and went and the Armco flashed at our sides. Not enough room to really get it on and my arms grow weary from the effort as we swing through the tight bends. Beads of perspiration well up on my brow and I'm dazzled by my rear view and his ever present lights.

Tuck her in tight for the next roundabout and I can hear the gravel spitting back from the right front. Christ it's tight in here and the SV goes sideways as the HVR's claw for traction. He's a wild man! - He's coming up on the outside - can't hold it, got to ease off and he's through in a flash and twin bursts of flame punctuate his exhausts as he shifts up and away. Whatever it is it's green with yellow stripes but now only the pale blur of his tail lights trace his progress.



Suddenly cool and the coast road looms ahead. Nearly out of breath as I fight for first to blast up the short run to Trancas on the beach. Just ahead I spy my tormentor parked on a turnout overlooking the green glow of the Pacific. Pull up slowly, kill the twelve and climb out to examine this some green machine. Driver no where to be seen but his gloves were laid out neatly on the trans tunnel and in the palm of one was a small card that read:

Three blind mice  
 See how they run  
 They all ran after the farmer's wife  
 But she took them in the corners in her Lotus Elite



#### THE ARTIST

All of the artwork in this issue was done by Gene Nollman. Several members had expressed an interest in Gene's background after seeing his work in the last issue I did, so a few words are in order.

Gene, an Elan owner, is a final semester student at Art Center School in Los Angeles majoring in Transportation Design. Besides doing sketches for some of my attempts at writing he is a regular contributor to the Lotus/West monthly, Stress-Cracks. As can be seen, he has a feeling for the Elite and for the Elite's feel; and if he does go to work for Detroit we may see a trend towards his inclination for the organic. He is ... one of us.

## COOLING THE CLIMAX

Well, it all started early this summer with an ominous drip, drip from the water pump casing drain hole. Ol' 1461 has 40+ on it so I surmised it was about due. On tear down I learned some interesting things. The carbon/rubber spring loaded seal had at least 50 thousand miles left but it was so rusted and muddy the spring would no longer extend and thus began to leak. Mind you, my cooling system has been drained and flushed at intervals but I had always used water. More on H2O later.

No matter really because on removing the bearing from the pulley/impellar shaft (read shattering the bearing case) I found only one ball bearing cage intact - the other had disintegrated and the balls were held in place by a substance resembling brown kryptonite. The balls themselves had the appearance of the moon's surface at a distance of 100 miles. Really a mess.

Cause? Sure, water and the effects of an electrolytic reaction. Water in contact with aluminum and steel is all you need but add the catalyst of heat and that current carrying sensor in the radiator itself and you get accelerated corrosion of steel surfaces. (Remember the spring and bearing cages?) Now that all parts have been replaced I'm running 100 per cent ethylene glycol (antifreeze). This stuff will not affect bearing lubrication and equally important will reduce the electrolytic reaction to the extent the seal and bearing should easily last 100,000 miles with no other attention.

OK, water pump disassembly is easy. Three nuts and it's off the block. Ditto and the housing separates. Pulley and impellar must be pressed off. A little heat played on them will facilitate removal and be sure you use a 3 pronged puller on the pulley lest you bend it. Bill will sell you the shaft and bearing unit. I tried finding a bearing to use on the old shaft but bearing houses told me can't be done. Manufactured as a unit they say. Believe it. I tried something I'm too embarrassed to write here - suffice it was a mistake.

Radiator. The same nasty accumulation had halved my radiators efficiency so said the man who cleaned, cored and resoldered it. My rad man had an interesting observation - seems my radiator (late type, round corners) was designed with enough space for another row of tubes. I haven't checked other Elites for the same thing but if your top and bottom tank (on either side) has approx.  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch overhang there is sufficient room for this modification. Cost. My man, who's always gotten in my jeans for more than I like, says about \$100. If you live in a very warm climate the addition of another row of tubes might be worth considering.

The racers trick. When Elites were being campaigned in So. Calif. most found the cooling system marginal. What they did was simple and cheap and presumably effective. They drilled holes in the panel back of the horns which exhausted the bottom half of the radiator. 'Course they removed the horns which left an unimpeded path. I've relieved the panel on the G. Machine but retained the horns. I was able to get 11 to 12 holes of approximately  $1\frac{1}{2}$  dia. Now this isn't as hatchet as it sounds and unless you really look for it isn't really noticeable. Effective? Hard to tell on my car as the sum total of cooling system

rebuild has gained what I now consider more than adequate cooling. If any member is really turned on by this particular mod I'd be willing to cover the holes with tape and make some runs for comparative data. But as I said, the racers did it so it must ....

Fans and fan motor. I've located several types of aluminum 5 bladed fans in local surplus stores to replace the 4 blade. They are lighter, of greater pitch, have an extra blade and can be Simichromed to a chrome like luster. I haven't messed with my motor but recognize that it is enemy at best. I have one of the motors J. C. Whitney sells (by the pair) and although the blade is half the size of the stock item one of the little beggars will whip up a gail greater by quantum than the Smiths unit.

Coolant. I've sealed my cooling system by adding a coolant recovery bottle. The advantages of a recovery system are many and include never having to add coolant due to overflow loss, longer lasting hoses and one of the most important - eventual scavenging of all air out of the water passages, pump, rad, et al.

Almost forgot a very important point that hopefully is obvious to most. The carbon seal in the water pump bears against the back of the impellar. When replacing seal make sure you dress the impellar surface flat and to a mirror gloss (use emery cloth) else the thing will leak! (After you've buttoned it all up of course)

OK. What I've covered are some easy and inexpensive ideas to keep in mind when you look to cooling the Climax. There are many others more exotic and expensive (like custom radiators) that may in fact be only overkill if you've neglected the details.

I'll leave this with a teaser. Many years ago I dropped my average temp by 5+ degrees by fitting the NACA duct. You figure it out.

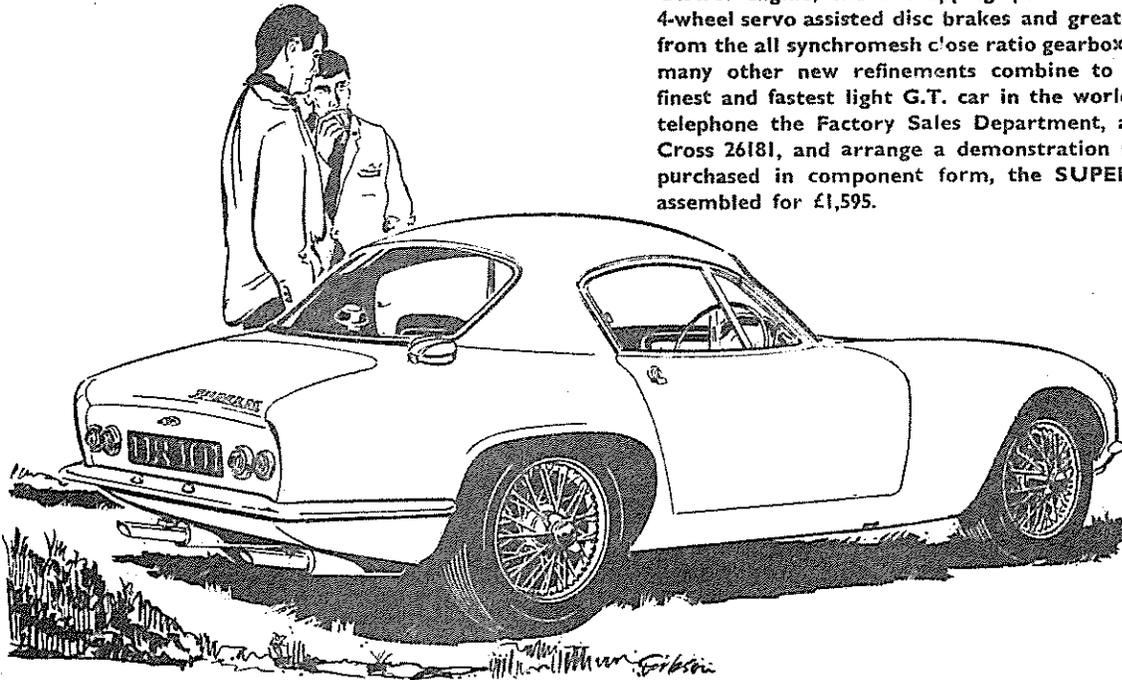
#### CALIFORNIA MEMBERS

There's been some interest expressed in a California meet next summer. Most have indicated a preference for location mid way between Los Angeles and the Bay area. Mar and I recently vacationed in that part of the world and we are thinking Morro Bay, Pismo or San Luis Obispo would be about right. We stayed at the Madonna Inn at San Luis and think it might be a kicky place to gather the Elite.

Here comes the hard part - you're going to have to make a decision. We are going to ask all those who would be interested enough to be willing to attend such an event to let me know now! Planning the days events, arrangements, accomodations, etc. will be handled by myself and several of the Faithful in the Bay area. But, there's no way such an event would prove worth while unless we can expect at least ten members (read cars). Now at this time we are not asking for money, blood, sweat or tears, simply a commitment to try to have the beast together for a fun thing next year. If response (by post card, letter, phone, etc.) has been sufficient in say, a months time we'll begin making the contacts - if not, nothing more will be said about it. Aw c'mon, let's make a little history.

## PERFORMANCE

The latest expression of the Lotus theme, the SUPER 95 is specifically designed for peak road performance. Fantastic acceleration from the 95 b.h.p. Coventry Climax O.H.C. engine, more stopping power from the new 4-wheel servo assisted disc brakes and greater flexibility from the all synchromesh close ratio gearbox. These and many other new refinements combine to present the finest and fastest light G.T. car in the world. Why not telephone the Factory Sales Department, at Waltham Cross 26181, and arrange a demonstration run. When purchased in component form, the SUPER 95 can be assembled for £1,595.



### FOR SALE

As Bill mentioned in a previous newsletter I've contracted the production of Elite side window molding. This is the molding that keeps the plexi side windows in place and is a press fit in the chrome surround. The material I chose is a neoprene formulation to the same elastic specification as the original rubber except of course neoprene having superior ozone resistance.

At this writing I've been assured by the extruder that the product will be in hand by the end of October. I've ordered enough for 15 sets (amounts to about 8 ft. of material per car) and after these are sold I'm getting out of the custom parts business and there won't be no mo.

Price is \$20 per set (ample molding for both windows). Postage and packing add \$2.50 (in the continental U.S.). Overseas rates can be quoted.

Sorry, but I'm not going to hassle personal checks; payment by postal money order please. Dennis Ortenturger, 5207 San Feliciano Drive, Woodland Hills, California, 91364

Hey, hope you enjoyed the 'letter,

see you again in April...