





CLUB ELITE

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Volume 5 - Issue 3

June 1975.

Dear Members;

Our first priority in this newsletter is to support the ANNUAL MEET being held on JULY 5th and 6th at EL VERANO HOTEL, SUNOMA, CALIFORNIA. This is our reminder to you West Coasters to get those cars polished up and on the road to enjoy a week-end of comparison, exchanging stories, hints and grumbles, and having a good time swapping parts. You shouldn't miss it, for John Adrain tells us he plans to bring along a whole truck load of parts, including an extra body, engine block, heads, manifolds, wind wings, sub-frame and valve covers. Other Saturday activities include the Concours, awarding the Bob Green designed trophies, barbeque, film shows - all of which is followed on Sunday by a day of racing at Sears Point Raceway. We are not positive if Club Members will be racing, but believe J. Street will be out with his Formula Ford and perhaps Felix Brunot will participate with his Lotus XI. We cannot think of a better way to celebrate the July 4th Holiday, and as an added attraction you can gaze on some Ferraris and make comparisons, as the Ferrari Club is holding its Meet at the El Verano also during that week-end.

Bob Green is the Organizer. Contact him for further information at 13, Cranham Court, Pacifica, Calif. (415)355-1822. The official photographer will be Barry Swackhamer, Carter Alexander will be handling registration, and the rest of us will be able to read about it in the August newsletter, which is going to be a team effort with Tim McCoy doing the writing and getting help from Greg Nolten and Jack Fitzpatrick. An enormous amount of pleasure is derived from meeting fellow Elite owners, so if you want to have a good time, plan to be at El Verano on 5th and 6th July (even minus the car if need be) and give support to Bob and his friends.

As a matter of fact our theme for this newsletter is developed from an idea presented to us by Bob Green. He is trying to have Elites accepted for racing in a California Vintage Race Car Club, which accepts only cars originally conceived for racing (which leaves out such famous cars at the Mercedes Benz 300 SL, even though it has an impressive list of wins to its credit, but it was conceived as a road car). Was the Elite bred to be a race car usable on the streets, or a street car usable on a race course? Some articles reinforce the feeling that the former is the more correct. To add support to this contention, we are using articles from Adrian Schagen's collection. The first is written by Ian Walker, the first ever owner of an Elite in which he recalls his first impressions of the car, and how he put it to good use. The other article is the first of a two part article written by David Buxton who entered and prepared the Team Elite cars. Our Club Member, Bill Allen, is featured here and the accident at Spa. We will conclude this article in September when we hope to have

LOTUS ELITE - LE MANS CLASS WINNER - 1959 - 1960 - 1961 - 1962 - 1963 - 1964

a further photograph and the story about it from Mr. Allen. In further consideration of the design for racing theory, we present as our front cover the only photo of the Series III - recognized by its radical exhaust system - the car prepared for Indy which failed to convince the USAC officials of its seriousness! (This comes from a slide taken by a friend of Adrian Schagen who used to work at Lotus.)

Turning now to other Club matters, we feel that last month's newsletter was by far and away the most professional issue Club Elite has ever produced. What will Dennis do for an encore in October when he picks up his pen again? Dennis has much praise for his helpers, and we certainly wish to add our sincere thanks to Joe Dykzeul, Michael Lupo and Gene Nollman.

Well, Club Elite may be a small Club by numbers, but in talent and enthusiasm we are pretty large. The talent can be judged from past issues, and the enthusiasm from those many members who actively support our Club and they increase each year, for we were astonished at the willingness of so many members to undertake a newsletter. We have enough volunteers to carry us through to May of 1976. We are immensely grateful to those people, but also believe the entire membership will benefit from the sharing of their view point, experiences and information. There is one point that comes up, however, which is - in order to keep the information and references as correct as possible and especially to avoid duplication, we think it should be standard procedure to send us a draft prior to publication, so that we can check it before it goes to press.

With a schedule set up for members to put out the newsletter, it means that it will not be necessary to produce it at a last minute rush and therefore it can now be posted by third class mail. This should not make any difference to the date on which you receive your copy, as they will all be mailed out earlier.

Tom Sargent is coming through for us again with his undertaking of printing our stationery, through his company. Our thanks to Tom for giving us a good job at a great price.

We have three S.O.S.'s to go out to you -

First, earlier this year, I sold someone a set of Stellite exhaust valves for their FWE, which are normally used in Coventry Climax marine engines. They can be recognized by having a flat face as opposed to concave. I recently discovered they require a different valve setting and I wish to talk to the person who made the purchase, but just cannot remember who it was! The Club member will recall that at the time of purchase we discussed the difference between these two valves, so would the Club Member concerned please contact me.

Next - we have just noted that in Section 'O' of the Shop Manual, a sub-section, Pages 14-20, entitled "Complete Assembly Instruction" is not always found in all shop manuals. If your manual has this section missing (and it will if you purchased one of our xeroxed manuals) drop us a card and we will send copies free.

Finally - One of our members is in need of legal advice. We don't know if there are any attorneys in our Club, but if there are, we wonder if you could offer a suggestion to our member who purchased

his Elite through correspondence with the seller and had it delivered to him, whereupon he discovered the car had been misrepresented. Our member paid a high price for this car and we would like to help him. If a lawyer member would contact us, we would appreciate his suggestions and will pass on further details.

This month we are concluding the mysterious Ghia XI Saga with a letter from its owner who has conducted a great deal of investigation and come up with more of its history.

We have been in touch with Mr. Spencer Bates, the President of Club Lotus Australia. They produce an interesting newsletter - a very amusing one too, we might add. We are using one or two of their flashes this month. Mr. Bates informs us that our Member Adrian Schagen won this year's Sports/Racing Section of the Rothman Concours, with his Lotus XI. Mr. Schagen has not mentioned this to us, but we have seen some photos of his car, which indicate that it is sheer perfection.

Next month's newsletter comes to you from New Mexico, via Jim Davis, then back to California in August for a report on the Meet. We will be back in September, but advertisements can always be sent in to us, and we will see they are published each month.

Best Wishes,

Barbara and Bill Hutton.

THEREARETHREETHOUSANDMILLIONPEOPLEINTHEWORLDANDONLYONETHOUSANDANDTEN LOTUSELITES (courtesy CL,Australia).

MIDNIGHT BLOW UP MYSTERY

Dennis Ortenburger wrote to us recently telling us of an engine problem that developed one night. We relate his story as he told it to us: " I was running at a pretty good rate when Bang! - An Explosion - then the tinkle of debris hitting the street. Engine died immediately. I got it home. Turned the engine by hand and then the starter - spun freely. No noise, holes, leaks. Getting spark. Getting gas to carbs. Wouldn't fire - not even a sputter. Pulled the Plugs to see piston tops. Couldn't see any damage, and the plugs were bone dry. OK, I pulled head with carbs and manifold attached - no damage, everything in order. Ditto timing gear and distributor. What had happened?"

Members, can you figure it out - Yes? No, Well never mind - We have the answer for you on the back page.

JUNE '75

ADVERTISEMENTS

FOR SALE

#1179 ELITE 1179 - L.H.D. Series I, Stage I, One S.U., MG gearbox. Silver with red interior. Second body - original body sustained front damage and is available from previous owner in Florida. 30,000 miles showing. Sound car, except needs rear shocks and rear glass, which is cracked. \$2500.00. Spare left door, bonnet and boot lid without hardware included. Mark Meyer, 600 East Coast Highway, Lantona, Florida, 33462. Tel (800) 327-8531 - toll free and ask for Meyer in Photo Dept. If not available, call collect to Parents Home before 10.00 p.m. E.S.T. (302) 653-9301. Also for sale 1972 Elan + 2 with 30,000 miles and new paint.

#1386 ELITE EB 1386 - L.H.D. 1962 Series II, new throughout, Stage II with two S.U. carbs. - Koni shocks - everything has been replaced, including paint. Near as possible original - blue - \$4,000.00. For more information contact Dick Shannon, 977 Tantau Avenue, San Jose, Calif. 98129 (408)255-1963

#1391 ELITE - 1962 - Stage III with dual Webers, ZF gear box, L.H.D. Monza gas filler, Green with tan interior. NACA Duct in hood, Chassis No. 1391. Call Collect T. Norris Haynes (919) 454-1682 - Route 7, Box 1028B, Greensboro, North Carolina 27407.

WANTED

URGENTLY - Two FWE Climax wrist pins used. James A. Hassberger, 2520 West Clearwater, Kennewick, Washington, 99336. (509) 783-8400.

REAR DIFFERENTIAL STUB AXLES - David Mathison, Edgewater Baptist Church, 5501 Chicago Avenue, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 55417.

ELITE SIDE WINDOWS OR CHROME FRAMES for the plexiglass. John Alexander, 2966 Clarendon Avenue, Huntington Park, Apt. J., Calif. 90255. (213) 581-0305.

CENTER STEERING WHEEL EMBLEM and Center Stainless Steel Nose section for front of Elite - Dr. Carl A. Shollenberger, 333 First Street, Seal Beach Calif. 90740. Tel: (213) 431-8344.

LOTUS 7, 11, 23 or Sports Racer any condition. Will buy or trade '67 Sunbeam Tiger II. Robert C. Hudson, Route 4, Sharon Road, Loganville, Georgia, 30249. Tel (404) 466-8460.

CLUB ELITE SPECIAL

As a result of the many requests we have received for rear brake discs, we have been making enquiries in England regarding their manufacture, and have discovered it is possible to have them made up to special order. They are expensive, and therefore we will not hold any in stock but will place orders if members definitely need them. They are priced at \$125.00 each. If this interests you, please do not send any money now, but drop us a line giving us a firm order. We would imagine it will be a couple of months before they are here in Clarksville.

STOP PRESS

Joe Dykzeul to have manufactured to order 22 gauge stainless steel windage tray (plate between oil sump and block) to replace stamped steel tray so prone to cracking. Larger oil pump hole machined for easier accessibility to pump with tray installed. \$22.00 plus shipping. Send no money, just firm order within 15 days to Joe at Dependable Arts, 1524 West 12th Street, Los Angeles, Calif. 90015. (213) 386-8060.

*Letter
7/28/75*

*2nd letter
10/27/75*

The following is extracted from a letter we received from the owner of the Ghia XI. We thought it would interest you as a follow up to our previous articles on the car.

" To begin at the beginning - In 1955 Colin Chapman presented a Mark 9 Lotus chassis (have not yet been able to learn chassis number) to the public on Stand #61 at the 1955 Earls Court Motor Show. Photo of the chassis is in Mr. Ian Smith's book "The Story of Lotus" This book was published in 1961 and precluded the "Story of Lotus" book which Mr. Smith wrote with Mr. Robert Bentley. At any rate, after the 1955 Earls Court Motor Show, the chassis resided in the Picadilly Showrooms of Coventry Climax. This info. is taken from Mr. Smith's book "The Story of Lotus 1947-1960 Birth of a Legend" page 67 relates "small, gleaming exhibit of a Mark 9 minus its body panels!" "After the show the masterpiece adorned the Picadilly Showrooms of Coventry Climax Ltd. for a long time." A recent letter from Coventry Climax confirmed its visit as well as the photo in the previous book the Smith initially wrote. The articles "A Chassis to Ghia" from an early edition of Sports Car and Lotus Owner" revealed ---"Nobby Clark and the boys in the Production Dept. were collecting the chassis from the Coventry Climax Showroom."

"From this same article, it rather well relates to the updating and delivery of the chassis by Mr. John Crosthwaite to the Ghia Factory at Lugano, Switzerland, in February 1957. This delivery date is important. The article mentions the shortage of time to construct the show car as well, as is mentioned in Smith's book on page #98. "At the latter, Ghia were exhibiting a special sports body on the Mark 9 chassis shown at Earls Court in 1955. The original intention had been a closed coupe, but the shortage of time (between February delivery and the March Show) had dictated the open version."

"So Ghia lacked time to construct a coupe on the chassis but was able to present a spider Ghia Aigle at the 1957 Geneva Auto Show designed by Michelotti. Having more time to refabricate the automobile, Ghia presented the originally intended coupe at the 1958 Geneva Auto Show. Automobile Year 1958 illustrates a color photograph of the automobile but I have to locate a copy of the book."

"The automobile was reputed to have run the Forclaz Hillclimb, and I have recently received a photo, documenting this strange item."

"The automobile in itself has had a varied background and perhaps is three vehicles in one. I really would be interested in learning its original chassis number as the Mark 9 Earls Court Display by the Lotus Factory. It was rechassied #237 when released to Ghia, as you may have already learned from factory owner lists."

At the request of the owner of the Ghia, we are refraining from publishing his name and address. Bill Hutton.

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RK 50110
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 EK 50275
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 EK 50541
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R. J. Stevenson
 J. Ellis
 C. W. Hunt
 J. Bolton
 R. F. H. Darrell Smith
 J. Baxter
 C. A. Currie
 R. McBride
 R. McLaughlin Mrs. Ince
 J. Ferguson
 J. P. Stanley
 H. B. R. Hill
 Nycton Brandon
 J. J. Napier
 R. W. Langley
 Airtopport Wolfgang Peinzel
 T. A. Chapman
 T. Dickson
 TR Fetherstonhaugh
 W. B. Staxell
 J. C. Chalk
 A. R. Cross
 H. Radcliffe
 F. L. A. SALTER
 A. P. Sampson
 R. C. Burnard
 J. G. Socher
 S. C. Bentley
 P. Francis
 L. Galtan
 Eastern Sals Co.
 D. G. Ranson
 R. W. Goodwin
 Col. C. D. Hughes
 J. D. Knight
 J. C. Hill
 P. E. Hill

08

1921	10746	ELC 1167	10.1.63	Ernie Shreeve
1922	10658 10615	ELC 1105 RK 50582	30/7/62	Ernie Shreeve
1923	10737	EK 50565	19-7-62	R.E. Bowman
1924	FWE 10737	RK 50582 RK 50584 RK 50587	24-7-62	D.C. Duncan
1925	10617	EK 50552	23-7-62	R. Corliss
1926	10766	ELC 1133	18/7/62	Ernie Shreeve
1927	10623	ELC 1093 1137	18/7/62	G.D. Mosley
1928	10651	ELC 1133 RK 5117	12/7/62	Ernie Shreeve
1929	10738	EK 50633	24.1.63	H.M. Linnworth
1930	10786	RK 50972	28/8/62	K. Painter
1931	10780	RK 50975 EK 50583	20/8/62	F.P. Sague
1932	10752	ELC 1129	12/9/62	D.E. Jolly (Impo 5)
1933	10753	RK 50987 EK 50590	23/8/62	J. Canev
1934	10622	ELC 1106	30/7/62	Ernie Shreeve
1935	10642	RK 50918 EK 50562	27/7/62	D.M. Miller
1936				
1937	10613	RK 50945 EK 50573	8/8/62	W. Forbes
1938	10782	RK 51004 EK 50598	30/8/62	J. Saxby
1939				
1940	10657	RK 51080 EK 50620	29.11.62	C.T. Uppohi
1941	10773	ELC 1128	7/9/62	D.E. Jolly
1942	10779	RK 51019 EK 50603	6/9/62	A.W. Brooks
1943		RK 50959 EK 50579	15/8/62	C.E. Smith
1944	10754	RK 50948 EK 50574 EK 50909	8/8/62	B. Good
1945		EK 50561	25.7.62	W.S. Tingle
1946				
1947				
1948	10774	RK 51001 EK 50596	29/8/62	D.J. Davis
1949				
1950	10818	RK 51016 EK 50602	6/9/62	T.H. Turnbull
1951	10826	ELC 1131	20/3/63	Rugs Trading
1952	10811	ELC 1179	6.3.63.	Ernie Shreeve
1953	10733	RK 5112 EK 50630	27/12/62	M.J. Wood
1954				
1955	10734	RK 50968 EK 50580	10/8/62	G.N. Smith
1956				
1957	10842	ELC 1206	13.6.63	Span Inc.
1958	10843	RK 51084 EK 50621	10/2/63	A.J. Mucklow
1959	10720	ELC 1172	5.7.63	Dutchess Auto
1960	10744	RK 51037 EK 50623	7/2/62	J. Hart
1961A	10828	ELC 1191	22.4.63	Dutchess Auto



Ian Walker in his Elite, registration number EL 5, at Mallory Park.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

— of the Lotus Elite

by Ian Walker

THE Lotus Elite is already a familiar car to most followers of motoring matters. The sporting press has already given it a great deal of publicity and even prior to its preview at Earls Court in 1957, it was common knowledge that Colin Chapman had something pretty exciting up his sleeve. When the car appeared at the Show everyone was very enthusiastic and "rave" notices appeared in motoring magazines the world over.

When one considers the technical specification of the Elite it is not surprising that even the most phlegmatic enthusiast finds himself getting excited at the prospect of owning one. Items of particular interest include a kerb weight of 10 cwt (this is variable according to competition requirements), wishbone front suspension, Chapman strut type rear suspension, disc brakes to all four wheels, a 1220 cc Coventry Climax engine capable of developing 75 hp and a glass fibre chassis/body structure of incredible rigidity, generally considered the most aesthetically pleasing body form yet seen on a motor car. Colin Chapman, Frank and Mike Costin, Peter Kirwan-Taylor, John Frayling and everyone else associated with the vehicle deserve hearty congratulations.

Simply to say that I am delighted at being the first owner of a Lotus Elite would be the understatement of the year. It is the most exciting

car I have ever driven, let alone owned, and I must confess I even find myself looking into shop windows to see the reflection as I pass by!

In case some readers have actually seen my car I would like to point out that at this time it is not completely finished, in so far as the interior trim and the paint job have not yet been completed. But in order to race the car I had to accept the fact that for at least a few meetings it would be in this incompleated state.

The car was finally made roadworthy at 3.30 am on the 10th May, 1958, and at 10 a.m. on the same day it was being driven round the Silverstone Circuit. It seemed to enjoy its first public outing, and showed its appreciation by winning the up to 1,600 cc class in an Autosport Series Production Sports Car Championship Event. The following day, the 11th, it was at Mallory Park, and proceeded to do exactly the same thing as at Silverstone. On this occasion Colin Chapman, the creator of the Elite, was there to watch his brain child romp away with the race in a manner which has been described as "with insolent ease."

It is, I suppose, very rare for a new design to be completely "bug" free. However, there are no bugs in the Lotus Elite and as far as I can see there are not likely to be any. The clever part about this design is the fact that, apart from

SPORTS CAR & LOTUS OWNER

the completely novel structure—i.e., the glass fibre body shell this car incorporates only previously tried components, all of which have been race proved in other Lotus models.

"Gee its so low, it could crawl under the belly of a Cockroach—what'll she do anyway?" said an American enthusiast at Silverstone. My honest answer was, and still is, "I really don't know, but whatever it is, it does it really quickly."

Up to this point I have restricted the revs to 6500, which represents a speed of 108 mph with the rear axle ratio fitted (4.55 to 1). Assuming one used 7000 rpm and a "touring" axle of 3.9 to 1 the theoretical top speed would be 136 mph. From the way the car pulls and accelerates right through the speed range I would imagine that this theoretical top speed would be quite possible. Unfortunately I haven't yet had the opportunity really to test the car on the road and prepare acceleration times and speeds in the gears, but I am sure that when these figures are produced they will add up to one word "FANTASTIC!" It may be a rumour but I have heard that Lotus are thinking of fitting a Machcounter instead of a Speedometer!

HILLS DON'T EXIST

To date I have driven the car from London to Silverstone, to Mallory Park and to Brands Hatch. Admittedly there are not many hills between any of these points but such as they are they might just as well be dead flat. The Elite simply refuses to acknowledge that hills slow motor cars down.

It is only when coming up behind other vehicles, and overtaking them, that one has an impression of speed. On these occasions, however, one is left in no doubt but that the car is travelling very fast indeed, so that it is easy to achieve average speeds which one's friends will never believe.

I am beginning to think a more appropriate name for this car would have been "THE LEECH," because that describes the way it holds the road, and I can say in all honesty that I have never driven a car which gives me so much confidence

when cornering. I have a G. T. Lancia Aurelia, which is accepted by most people as being a wonderful car from all points of view, with particular emphasis on its road holding. When I say, therefore, that the Elite is even better than the G. T. Lancia, I hope some impression of the road-holding of the Elite may be gained. When I first took over the Elite, Mike Costin told me that, owing to the strut type rear suspension, it might prove a little bit of a handful on slow corners, but that the trick is to use power all the way through the bend. The first time I raced the car, at Silverstone, I did have a little trouble on a corner, and immediately put my foot hard down (as instructed); the car reacted as if it had "jumped back" on the rails, and went round under perfect control. The steering is wonderfully responsive, and it is very easy, with the power available, to adjust the angle of slide or drift. The disc brakes, of course, are very impressive, and arrest the car in a most remarkable way, in a straight line, and without any sign of fade.

The driving position is an extremely comfortable one, and although the seats are not of the arm-chair variety, they have been designed to prevent driver and passenger from sliding about. Everything in the cockpit comes readily to hand, and all the controls are, to my mind, in exactly the right places. The instrument grouping is very nicely carried out and the spokes of the steering wheel are so arranged as to give a clear view of the instruments when travelling in a straight line. A motor car of this type is, of course, an individual sort of thing and no doubt some owners will want to vary certain things to suit their own tastes. I must be neutral or insensitive, because at this point the only thing I have had recourse to alter is the accelerator pedal, which to my mind was not long enough.

I hope that in this short article I have been able to convey some impression of the car, and I expect that a lot of appetites may have been whetted. No doubt those people who have Elites on order are by now 'champing at the bit.' Be patient, it is well worth waiting for.

Ian Walker, in natty cap and check shirt stands beside the gleaming Elite in the Paddock at Brands Hatch. On this occasion he failed to win—a plug lead came off but the Elite went "indecently fast" on three cylinders.





Bill Allen and the author with the Le Mans car at Derby before the 24 hours race.

Team Elite 1960 BY DAVID BUXTON

During last season the official works Elite cars were entered and prepared by David Buxton Ltd, (Racing Division), of Spondon, Derby. Here, in his first instalment, David Buxton tells the exciting story of the team's varying fortunes up to the time before Le Mans.

THE BEGINNING

'Well, get cracking', said Colin Chapman. I looked at the calendar, although my watch would have been better, as time was already very short. Colin and I had just agreed that I should run a full team of racing Elites to represent the works in races on the National and International calendars. I had, in fact, made the basis of Team Elite before this time in collecting the cars and the driving assistance of Bill Allen and John Wagstaff for what I had intended to be a wholly private venture, but this new arrangement made a total revision of plans necessary.

The three Elites were in an advanced state of preparation, developed from my successful 1959 car, and one car was built around a lightweight chassis body unit. The basis of the state of tune was stage III engines with our own special modifications, close ratio gearboxes, and alloy brakes, with a multitude of small but very important suspension and like modifications. Our three-car Bedford transporter was equipped with long-range fuel tanks and extra lockers which would be needed to carry all the extra equipment. Stan Chapman and Bill Allen arranged to take care of the necessary entries and paper work, and staff was allotted from our Racing Division to transport and maintain the cars. After much testing at Silverstone and workshop

increased the understeering property of the car by a tremendous amount, and John, alteration, the end of March, 1961, saw Team Elite in a satisfactory state of preparation for the coming season.

After a warming up outing at Snetterton on March 27, the first important meeting was the BARC Oulton Park spring meeting on April 2. All three cars were entered, and the transporter even arrived on time, to find

the paddock a sea of mud. This had, however, been anticipated and three sets of complete wheels and tyres were taken for running about, the intention being to drive the cars out to the pits and there change the wheels before going out. The cars were filled with Mr. Esso's best and off we went. The practice session finished with John and Bill third and fourth fastest behind Chris Summers and Tom Dickson by a small margin. My lightweight car was smothered in mechanics and bad language, as the engine refused to rev over 5,000 rpm, for some reason which was not detected till long after the race was over. In the race John led for half distance but Dickson slipped past on lap 7 and Summers in the following lap when John ran a little wide at Lodge. Third place, not bad, but not ever so good.

FURTHER TWEAKING

The cars were returned to Derby and tweaked ever further and re-tested at Silverstone, when Colin Chapman put in a lap on the GP circuit in the lightweight car at 1 min 57 secs, which was a clear four seconds faster than the current class lap record.

As John was keen to go to Rufforth for the BRSCC April 16 meeting, he drove one car up on the road, won the race by a very large margin and returned on the road without changing the plugs. I was now sure that the cars were in really good order, and the full team of three cars was entered for the April 30 BARC 'Aintree 200 International' meeting. Drivers were John Wagstaff and Bill Allen, with Alan Stacey standing in for me, as I was due on an Elite holiday road test in the South of France on that date.

Just for an exercise, however, John and I took the lightweight car and one other to Paris for the Coupe de Vitesse meeting on April 23. Here the opposition was composed of three continental Elites and the usual host of Alfas. The circuit on this occasion was the Monthéry track, using one banking with the short road circuit. We made the fastest laps in practice but as, with the 4.5/1 axle fitted, my lightweight car was pulling over 7,700 rpm round the banking we fitted 5.25 rear tyres on my car for the race.

The race itself was run with the up-to-1,000 cc class over about 70 miles, in which we finished first and second. An interesting point discovered during the race was that the large tyres on the rear of my Elite

The start of it all. David Buxton's successful 1959 Elite.





following up my exhaust pipe had at least one very anxious moment as I found myself right out of road on one of the faster corners. First and second was much better and in doing so we had lapped the entire field. It is also worth noting that the lap times of the Elites for this fast circuit were faster than the Porsches and only 3-4 seconds slower than the 3 litre GT Ferraris in the next race.

The transporter hurried the cars back to Derby in time to have them prepared for the Aintree meeting. On arrival at the circuit we found the main opposition to be Graham Warner, in the Chequered Flag Elite, and Chris Summers, but this did not stop Alan Stacey from putting up fastest practice lap before a faulty camshaft blew the engine up in a big way, putting his car out of the rest of the meeting.

Come race day, however, and John put up a great drive to win, supported by Bill, whose engine unfortunately lost its tune towards the end of the race.

OUT-ENGINED BUT QUITE SUCCESSFUL

Back to Derby again to prepare for the BRDC International Trophy meeting on May 14. We found, however, that the proposed GT race had been cancelled, but we were given the option of running in the up-to-1,500 cc sports car race if we wished. As the opposition consisted of the works Lolas and several twin-cam Lotus 15's we had little or no chance of coming anywhere, but two cars for Bill and John were entered, which surprised the organisers, whose surprise turned to amazement when Bill and John finished fifth and sixth overall. There was even some small rumour about our cars being fitted with 1,500 cc engines, but this was not so; they were just the normal 1,216 cc units.

The next week saw frantic rebuilding of the cars in preparation for the annual Nurburgring 1,000 km race, an event which counted towards the world GT cup and which must be won if possible. Two cars were entered, one for John Wagstaff and Alan Stacey and one for Bill Allen and myself. I had terminated my continental Elite tour in time for practice to allow the car I had been using to be used as a practice car. The opposition for the 1,300 cc GT class consisted of several continental Zagato Alfa Romeos, the Lumsden/Riley Elite, the Parkes/Bailey Elite and several continental Elites, which was quite enough.

Practice went well enough, although it is never policy to go very fast in practice at the Ring, as the nature of the course with its

All neat and tidy, ready for a very busy time at Spa and Nurburgring.

rough surface and 170-odd bends is liable to leave you without cars for race day and no starting money. I am sure that no British driver, with a few notable exceptions, stands much of a chance of really learning the circuit with only one or two visits per season, and the only sensible policy is to practise as much as possible and try to learn a few of the corners which foxed you last time you came. We kept to this policy and arrived at race day with second and third fastest laps to Mr. Parkes, who had been driving in his usual incredible manner, and two raceworthy cars, which was more than some people. John and Bill took the initial drive in the two cars and at 9 a.m. on Sunday, May 22, trotted over to their motors and both made excellent starts. We in the pits stood back to wait out the first ten odd minutes for our cars to come round at the end of the first lap. The first car past was (as usual) S. Moss Esq. in the 'birdcage' 2.8 Maserati, followed after a long pause by a howling pack of Ferraris, etc., followed by Mike Parkes and John Wagstaff in close company, followed by almost everyone else except Bill. After a few more minutes Bill appeared walking and told his tale of woe.

BRUTAL TREATMENT

It was that at the end of a fast uphill section ending in a sharp left hand corner a gentleman, who shall be nameless, but who must have thought he was still in a Messerschmitt, seemingly tried to take his rear-engined device

John Wagstaff as part-time mechanic at Nurburgring.



over our Elite, pushing Bill right off the road from behind, writing off the rear suspension. Bill had managed to get the car back on the road and to Adeneau bridge, but there the car stopped.

Bill and I now became stopwatch operators and general organisers for our only hope, the Stacey/Wagstaff car, which was still going strong but slightly behind the Bailey/Parkes car. The first fuel stop and driver change was uneventful and occupied only 74 seconds, and Alan, shortly after taking over, took the car into a class lead, the positions now being ourselves (Elite), Bailey (Elite) and Lumsden (Elite). Here the position remained until the next change when the Ferrari pit went up in a very large explosion just as our car was due. The usual Nurburgring fog had come back by this time and was getting worse every minute, but we waved Alan on until the pit area had sorted itself out and the smoke from the Ferrari area had cleared. The next pit stop was completed in even faster time but we lost our narrow lead.

After some time I decided to call the car in and fill it to the brim with fuel, and I asked Alan if he would then finish the race as we would be one stop in hand, and after comparing his times with the opposition we should just manage to finish with a narrow lead. This was effected and Alan got in and went like a bomb to take the lead again and pull away from the rest of the class.

DIFFICULT TO DIRECT

Fifty minutes to go, a 45 second lead, no further stops and all seemed to be well, until Alan arrived at the pit very quickly with the whole steering column moving up and down about eight inches as the clamps holding the rack and pinion assembly had worked loose, allowing the assembly to turn, thus losing the location for the steering column which was flexing on its joints and sliding up and down on its bushes. A frantic temporary repair was effected during which time it was discovered that Alan could not, in fact, finish the race owing to drivers time at the wheel regulations, and John, in fact, must do at least one more lap.

Off went John, with the steering far from safe, to complete a fantastic lap from a standing start at a speed in excess of his usual lap times. In came John after one lap and off went Alan, but the steering had come completely loose again. The lead was again lost to the Parkes/Bailey car but they had one more stop to complete and at the end of the next lap it was apparent that Alan was closing by 17 seconds a lap, faulty steering or not. The Lumsden car had been closing whilst all this drama was enacted and was now a definite danger. At this stage, however, and with less than 25 minutes to go the luck changed at last. The Bailey/Parkes car went off the road for good at the Carrousel and the Lumsden/Riley car was having fuel trouble. The remainder of the class had been left very far behind and Alan was flagged in over the line to win the class with almost no steering on the car at all. I consider that this drive of Alan Stacey's was one of the best of his tragically premature career, and that at the Belgian GP later in the season, England lost not only one of its best drivers, but one of an all too rare breed of real sporting gentlemen. A very fine performance must also be acknowledged to John Wagstaff, and our pit crew who made this victory possible.

ON TO SPA

The cars were immediately loaded up, and after a day's rest we retraced our steps to

SPORTS CAR & LOTUS OWNER

Spa-Francorchamps for the GT race in the Grand Prix de Spa on the following Sunday, May 29.

We entrenched ourselves in the Hotel de la Source, just by the hairpin leading to the pits, and managed to obtain the use of the hotel's garage for the large amount of rebuilding and retuning necessary after Nurburgring. Our entry for this event consisted of John Wagstaff in the class winning car, Bill Allen in the lightweight car, and my road car driven by myself, to make up. During the weeks waiting we had to take John's car to very small pieces as it had received a terrible thrashing at the Ring. The lightweight car had only completed half a lap in the race, but the damage caused in the shunt had to be repaired and the rear suspension rebuilt. By practice on the following Saturday we had sorted the cars out in no mean way as John and Bill were circulating at around the five minute mark, reducing the lap record for the class by no less than 19 seconds, and my road car managed 5 minutes 10 seconds.

The class opposition consisted of a very hot collection of special Alfas and three Elites. The race was to be run with the up-to-2 litre class, which included several Porsche Carreras and one Abarth model with disc brakes. When the final times for practice were announced we had to hide the cars under a very strong lock and key, as out of a total field of some 34 cars of up to 2 litres we had made the three fastest times and occupied the complete front row of the grid!

Race day dawned fine and sunny, and after a saloon car race and the usual parade, the cars were placed on the front of the grid and the rest of the field lined up behind. It was a glorious sight to see our three cars placed in front of a mass of opposition. As we stood on the grid waiting for the three minute warning the clouds which had been gathering, opened and down came the usual Spa rain. The one minute warning was drowned by the hiss of deflating tyres from the front rank! The starter twitched his flag, held out a warning hand, faltered and changed his mind as he saw that Team Elite was off anyway. As my car was fitted with the standard gearbox and was thus much faster off the mark, I shot off down the hill and up the other side with the Abarth Porsche, Bill and John hard behind. They all came past up the hill, however, in a cloud of spray and as I switched on my wipers, my vision went, owing to what was after-

wards found to be oil on the screen wiper blades. Richard Shepard Barron nearly cleaned my car up in the course of my following blind driving and I motored slowly into the pits having lost some four minutes and retired to watch Bill and John.

THE LAST CORNER

I don't really know what had been done to the cars that day, but I am sure that Elite's have never gone faster. At halfway Bill and John, in that order, were at least two minutes in front of anything else, and about 300 yards behind the Abarth Porsche. We were winning the class by a very large margin, but as I thought an outright win was possible the faster signal was given.

Next lap the Elites had shortened the gap, but John was in front of Bill, whose engine was sounding just a little rough now. Next lap and the crowd, who could see the cars before they reached La Source from the grandstand in front of the pits, stood up with a jolt as the gap was down to about 60 yards with John and Bill in very hot pursuit. They rounded the hairpin and shot past the pits in a cloud of spray whilst we waved with all our might. Two laps to go, they should just do it.

The large crowd were all for it, and five minutes of murmuring were swelled to a roar as the cars came into view for the last but one time, with the Elites right behind the rear-engined contrivance, breathing down its large exhaust pipe. John tried to pass the Porsche in front of the pits, with Bill hard behind, but just could not manage it. We sat in suspense for the last lap to be completed, but after less than five minutes, our suspense was relieved by a great roar from the grandstand as they saw a green car show first in the distance with another green car alongside the Porsche. We in the pits could not see the cars until they rounded the hairpin.

The roar faded to a hush, as though by magic, punctuated by one dismal sound from the last bend, just behind the pits. The sound of crunching, bouncing fibreglass. We dropped the lot and ran up the pits, up a small river by the clubhouse (noting as we did so a lone Porsche rounding the hairpin), and up the steep bank to the road.

What a scene! The lightweight car (Bill) was lying upside down in the middle of the road with its back broken, pieces of Elite strewn over a fantastic area whilst John's



The team cars undergoing a last-minute inspection at Mallory Park.

car was on its side in the ditch about three hundred yards from the hairpin. Bill was shaking the water out of his overalls having, landed in the ditch with not a scratch.

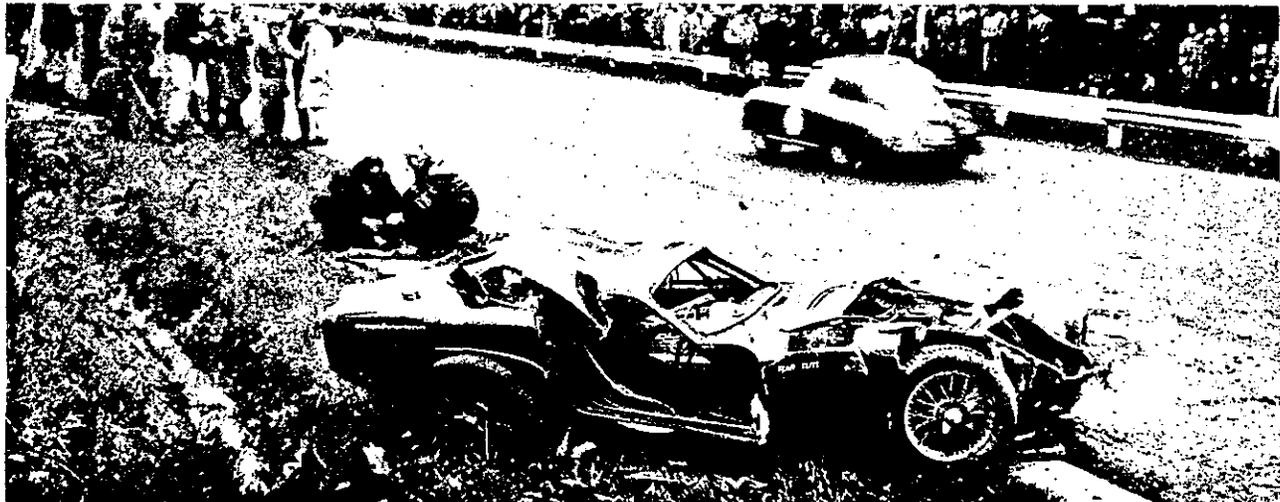
THE INQUEST

The post mortem was carried out then and there. John had passed the Porsche, and as they came to this final corner with Bill poised for a final attempt, John lost it. Another Porsche which was being lapped on this corner, seeing John in a slide, lost his head and stood on his brakes. As Bill was right behind him, trying to take the Abarth Porsche, he had no chance. The road was soaking and gave no chance of departing from his line. What happened after this is not certain but the car hit both banks on each side of the road several times and flipped over at least twice, breaking up as it did so, ejecting Bill through the roof to land some distance from the car unhurt but very wet.

We shovelled the Elites on to the transporter—and I use the word very carefully!—and departed home with one complete write-off and one very badly damaged car, very sad about the whole thing and with Le Mans only just over three weeks away. I still think to lose first and second place overall on the last corner of the last lap was very bad luck indeed.

(To be concluded)

A proper mess! Scene at Spa after the Elites crashed before the last corner. Bill Allen's car has been righted and dragged off the road.



The following comment comes to us from Club Lotus, Australia newsletter. We thought it appropriate to this issue:-

"Reading an old Sports Car and Lotus Owner (thanks to Adrien Schagen), I came across yet another reference - this one by David Buxton, who ran Team Elite for the factory in 1961-62 - to the puzzling practice of rebuilding a race car then stripping it without using it and rebuilding it again, just to get reliability. Can anyone tell me why this needs to be done? Has anyone in this Club tried that approach?"

ADRIENSCHAGENSLOTUSELEVENISEITHERANOPTICALILLUSIONORAONEFORONE
SCALEMODEL. (Courtesy CL, Australia)

Solution - Midnight Blow Up Mystery

"The Mystery - You got it - Something fell off the SU intake manifold - one of the end plugs, The explosion was simply a backfire when the vacuum went - the noise of the debris in the street was the end plug. It was near midnight when it happened.

Anyway, I didn't find it until next day (after head was off). Let me add it was the plug closest to the fire wall, but I should have paid more attention to the clues."

FROMGHOULIESBEASTIESANDTHINGSTHATGOTHUMPATHUMPINTHETRANSMISSION
MAYTHELORDPROTECTUS.

STOP PRESS FROM RUSS HOENIG, PRESIDENT OF THE LOTUS
ELEVEN REGISTER.

" The Lotus Eleven Register will hold an informal meet, Grand Prix week-end at Watkins Glen, New York, this year. Specifically, Saturday, October 4th after the Vintage Sports Car Club of America races, we will have an area near the V.S.C.C.A. tent where we can meet and discuss the finer points of Eleven ownership. This will be very low key and any activities will be developed spontaneously. But stop by, it will prove to be an excellent time to spend a few minutes or an afternoon together with other owner's. Arrangements are not finalized yet, but there is a very good chance a very important guest will stop by for a discussion with us. More particulars coming up in the September issue. "