



Lotus Lines

September/October 1992

8th Year of the Club.. 42nd Year of the Marque

ELCC Events for September and October

There are two autocrosses in September and two more in October. Two of them are being held at the Bremerton Airport in Bremerton (BSCC) on September 6th-7th and again on October 10th-11th. The other two are at the Boeing Aerospace parking lot in Kent on September 26th-27th, (the 26th is an autocross school with competition on the 27th), and again on October the 18th.

Portland ABFM, Sept 4th, 5th, 6th -

For those that want to caravan down I-5, we'll be meeting at the Denney's in Fife at 7:00am for breakfast and leaving by 8:00am to get to PIR before 11:00am. For those that don't and the ones that go down on Friday, we'll see you there. The highlight of going to Portland, besides the ABFM of course, is to go drive at the Malibu Grand Prix and get a serious dose of closed circuit driving! We don't get as wild as at Long Beach Go-karts, but its exciting non-the-less. And let's not forget dinner at Sylvia's Saturday night and the rallye, swap meet and slalom on Sunday.

Monthly Meeting, Sept 19th -

The meeting will be held at Bob and Shari Crichton's home in Snohomish. We'll be discussing our participation in the Snohomish Vintage Car Display which is being held the following weekend.

1992 Snohomish Vintage Car Display, Sept 27th -

We haven't participated in this event in the past, but Bob hopes to drum-up some interest (ie. twist a few arms) at the September meeting.

Fall Race/VRCBC at SIR, Sept 26th -

Terry has a few interesting things to put the Lotus spotlight on the last Vintage race of the year (in our area) later on in a separate article.

Monthly Meeting, Oct 17th -

This will be held at a new location for us. We will meet at Checkered Flag Motoring Accessories in Kirkland at 11:00am. We can wander around the store for awhile and then break for lunch at a nearby restaurant. Afterwards we'll form a Lotus Line and drive out to the Cider Mill for some good roads and some good apple cider.

With a little luck you will get this in time to go to

the All British Field meet in Portland. You are all invited to meet at the Denney's in Fife at 7:00 a.m. sharp for breakfast and talk. We will then high-tale it to Portland to get there before 11:00 when the gates close for all entry's. So I'm looking forward to seeing you there.

This paragraph is directed at the organizers of the Portland All British Field Meet. We, The Evergreen Lotus Club, are wondering why Jaguar is the honored mark at the event. Our records show that Jaguar had been so honored twice since Lotus was last honored. So I suppose this could be considered a written complaint to the organizers from a small but vocal group of Lotus owners.

Any response from the organizers will be printed in this newsletter in its entirety.

Now to the business at hand, many thanks to Terry and Lezlee Elmore for putting on a fine picnic. We still had more Lotus's present at this event than any so far this summer. Terry and Lezlee just bring the cars out!

Chairman Bob Writes

I and the other officers would also like to thank the Club members for the card and the gifts we received. I know Jim Taylor works hard to put out our *Lotus Lines* and I'm proud to say I help a little.

At the picnic we had a rally put together by Maury and John Montag with everyone that participated making it to Terry's so I would say it was a success.

More business, I received a letter from Dennis Howell, the Chairman of the Western Washington British Field Meet. Because of new responsibilities he has chosen to resign as chairman of the organization. To a large extent, this organization will remain in place. But it will take work from all of us to keep it going. So if you are interested in helping in any way contact Dennis Howell at 2515 Minor Avenue East, Seattle, WA 98102 or call 325-1207. I would like to thank Dennis personally for putting together a great show and hope his predecessors can measure up to the standards he has set.

Hope to see you all at the Denney's in Fife.

ELCC Annual Picnic -

This year's Annual picnic was a hit (as usual) with lots of Lotus's showing up and about 5 or 6 participating in the driver/car swap. The actual meeting was delayed because of a small disagreement between Shari Crichton and one of their horses. She wanted to go one way, but the horse went the other. I think a car was

involved too. Anyway, injuries were minor and she attended the Picnic and kept her foot elevated. Lots of food and drink. Susan had the jackets that were ordered and some additional shirts that several members bought. Ken and Susan didn't get their Europa race car ready to be shown at the Picnic. Dave Larson didn't materialize with his model collection, I hope that he didn't get mugged along the way and lose all those great looking models. The rallye was a really enjoyable way to get to the Picnic. I hope more of our members can take some time and organize an occasional rallye, I'm sure Maury or John would give you a few tips.
by Terry Elmore

There's been some discussion recently among some Club members about preparing their Lotus for vintage racing starting next year. The cars represented would include two Elites, several Elans and one (or more) Europas. All of these cars represented would be classed together in Group 1 against such cars as Alfa Romeo, TR4s, MGAs, etc. Races through SOVREN are run at SIR and PIR with four races a year plus some additional grids held in conjunction with SCCA races. Vintage racing provides a relatively inexpensive way to drive your Lotus at speeds and conditions unattainable on the street. The minimal amount of modifications that you are permitted to make to your car means it can remain readily driveable on the street.

The final vintage race of the season is the upcoming Fall Sprints at SIR to be held September 26th. I encourage all who have any interest at all in vintage racing to attend. You can see the standard of presentation yourself (and check out your potential competition!). Should you have questions as to what

Recap of Past Events

modifications are permitted for a specific Lotus model, the officials will be there to answer your questions.
by Terry Elmore

As an excellent tie-in to the above, this series of evening classes at Renton Technical College is being offered again, running from September 29th through December 6th. These three hour classes, taught by a SOVREN member with over 30 years of experience with competition car preparation, will cover everything you would possibly need to know to make your Lotus both reliable and at it's peak of competitiveness. Cost is \$125.00 - contact Renton Technical College for registration forms.
by Susan Hagaman

This is a reminder that hats, shirts and jackets can be purchased with our Club logo on them by contacting Susan Hagaman at (206) 827-3223.

The hats are one size fits all and sell for \$7.50 each. They are dark green with a small (2.5") yellow and white ELCC logo on front.

The Polo shirts come in small, medium, large, X-large, XX-large and are \$26.00 each. Their color is pale yellow with a small (3") green ELCC logo on the front.

There are two styles of jacket. The first is a baseball style jacket in sizes small, medium, large, X-large, XX-large for \$70.00. It's dark green with yellow

Team Evergreen Lotus?

and green accents and has yellow and white ELCC logos on it. A large (9") one on back and a small (3") one on front. Your name is also be embroidered on front. The XX-large jacket is \$5.00 more.

The other jacket is made of denim and comes in small, medium, large, X-large and it's a little more expensive at \$99.00 each. It's kind of a stone-washed look with yellow sleeves and a green torso. There's a light lining inside and is very comfortable. Bob bought one as well as did John and Nikki Daniels. The embroidery is the same as on the baseball style jacket. If you don't want your name on front, subtract \$3.00 from the price.

All orders must be paid in advance. Prices include applicable taxes. If you have any additional questions please don't hesitate to call Susan.
by Ji m Taylor

First, a quick correction to the previous *Lotus Lines*. We erroneously reported the owner of one of the Elan M100's at the Western Washington ABFM as belonging to the Bradburn's when it really was Bill and Paula McCoy's Elan M100 in attendance. Bruce and Marge Bradburn do own an M100 but they weren't at the ABFM. We got confused due to three Elan M100's joining the Club in a single month. Bob's and my apologies to the McCoy's.

Next, its that time of year when the nights are cooler and the days are shorter, so that means a little less work for your *Lotus Lines* editor (me) since you will be getting newsletters every two months until March of 1993. This issue covers September and October. Most of the events are past, but if something exciting comes up we'll make a quick flyer to get the word out to you in between issues.

I too would like to thank the members of the ELCC for the card and gifts presented to Bob, Terry and I at

More on Introduction to Competition Cars

the Picnic. I'd like to specially thank the Montag's for finding such a great card and picking out the perfect gifts for the Lotus owner. The gift was a set of tire air valve covers, they're aluminum and have a small green and yellow Lotus logo on the top. I'm saving mine for the Europa, they're wonderful! Thanks again.

I have a little bit of bad news for you also. In the August *Lotus Lines* I write up about being invited to a track day at SIR in September. Unfortunately, the track day has been cancelled. Business commitments and schedules didn't work out for Brian and the track day was called off. But don't despair, there is always next spring and Maury Montag is trying to organize some of his fellow doctors (with sports cars) to go together on renting SIR for a day and Maury says he'll probably invite Evergreen Lotus members to attend (what a

The ELCC Store

guy!).

Finally, by now you've probably noticed the ELCC Membership Roster included with the *Lotus Lines*. I think its been a long time since a list of ELCC members was distributed to the entire Club. I hope that you like the format. For those of you that got one at the Picnic, this booklet has been updated since then so throw away your old lists and keep this new one. The roster has only been sent to active, paid-up members and should not be used in any mailing lists to solicit business.

As always, if you have any suggestions or comments about the Membership roster or the Newsletter, please give me a call at (206) 232-2237. by Kenny Richins & Susan Hagaman

The little Lotus that thinks it can!

Back in the March issue of *Lotus Lines*, we wrote an article about the sport of autocrossing for Club members. In it we had mentioned that we would be debuting our Europa autocross car sometime in late March. Well, it is now September and all we can say is "better late than never!" We finally got good ole "96" (that's the competition number we chose for it) running on Sunday, August 16th and drove it in competition the following weekend at the SCCA Solo II National Tour, a two day event held at the parking lot at the Boeing Space Center in Kent. We wanted to bring it to the picnic on the 15th of August to show fellow club members that we really do own a Lotus and

it does run! If only the picnic had been a day later...

Anyway, Susan got to be the first one (not by choice) to drive the car in it's maiden outing in the first run group in the morning. Considering she had never driven this car before, this type of car before or even on race tires, she did very well. Ken drove later in the day and did well, too. A few problems cropped up during the day but nothing serious that couldn't be fixed. The biggest was some nagging carburetion gremlins. The car made it to the start line all six times and finished all six times, much to the amazement of some!

Oh, what a blast to drive! The feeling of almost

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sitting on the ground, the speed at which you could take the turns, the noise! Real racer! The one thing that will be hard getting used to is the vibration and noise produced by the motor and the carburetor as it is located right behind your head on the other side of the firewall. When that motor gets wound up to seven grand it just screams! We couldn't wait for the next day to drive it again. At the conclusion of the day, our friend Bill, the fabricator, showed up with the newly made adjustable front swaybar that Kenny designed for the Europa which he had only just given the drawings to Bill the day before. So we stayed in the pits until 9:30 pm changing out the front swaybar and working on the carburetor for the next day's competition. So much for the party that they were having at the event headquarters.

The little Lotus drove even better and was faster on Sunday with the new front swaybar, so our run times improved compared to the competition. We both ended up winning our respective classes, though we must be honest in mentioning that we were the only ones in our classes (but we are getting pretty used to that). Optimally, our run times should of been about a second faster or so to put us where we should be but considering this was the first time we had driven this car we were both very pleased with the results.

We were not the only Lotus out there, in fact there were FIVE Lotus's competing! Besides our Europa there was a Europa built by Gary Milligan of Vancouver, B.C. that just looked like a Europa. Underneath, the chassis was from a Argo Formula Atlantic Racer and the engine was a Buick V-6 connected to a Hewland transmission. On top all of that was a grafted on Europa body. It had very big fat race tires on it and it was very fast! Gary co-drives with his wife Anna and friend Alan Rae and they compete in the E Modified class while Ken and Susan compete in the A Prepared Class. In the D Modified

class was Patrick Ma, also of Vancouver, B.C., driving his beautiful Caterham Seven on race tires that he recently assembled himself. In A Modified was a wicked looking McLaren Mirage kit car that was painted all black, had a neon green roll cage and was powered by a Twincam engine. Across the top of the windscreen in green with yellow letters was the word "McLOTUS"! There was also the well driven Elan roadster of Ron and Karen Babb that is always a perennial winner. Out of the ten drivers competing in the five Lotus's, seven won their class, two finished second to their co-drivers and the other one finished fourth. So, it was a very successful day for the Lotus drivers. You should of been there!

We have two more events left locally, both at Bremerton Raceways, this upcoming Sunday and Monday. Then on Thursday, the 10th of September, we depart for our annual pilgrimage to Salina, Kansas for the SCCA Solo II Nationals, the mother of all autocrosses! This will be our 8th year of attending and competing but the first time for the little Lotus, good ole 96! Wish us luck and we'll let you all know how we did and all the other Loti when we get back!
by Terry Elmore

Classic and Sportscar, July 1992:

Six page article with history and track test of Lotus 40.

Thoroughbred and Classic Cars, July 1992:

Test match - Lotus Eclat compared to other 1970's luxury coupes (BMW 635, Porsche 911, Mercedes 350SL, etc). The Eclat doesn't fare too well against much more expensive competition.

Thoroughbred and Classic Cars, August 1992:

Five page article on vintage race preparation of Lotus Cortina.

Thoroughbred and Classic Cars, September 1992:

Six pages of fascinating photos from the early days at

Good Ole '96

Lotus (1950 to 1959). Everything from a roadside repair of a broken down Mark III, through Marks IX, Elevens, 12, Elite, the first Seven, and on to the 17.

Car and Driver, September 1992:

Four pages on the Jim Clark Edition Esprit with a side bar on Jim Clark - the man.

Racer, August 1992:

This new (to me) title has a very interesting four page article on Team Lotus.
by Tony Dron

reprinted from *Thoroughbred and Classic Cars*, date unknown

Mike Prior's 1974 Lotus Europa Special is no pampered 'concours pet'.

The image of an older Lotus is of a car with superb performance and handling, fantastic roadholding for its age, but those good points are balanced by the widely held notion that the car will give trouble: an interesting theory put forward by Mike Prior, who has owned his Lotus Europa Special for three years, is that for a car to qualify as unreliable the same faults must crop up at least twice each. On that basis his Europa has been excellent. He does 12,000 miles a year and the car has only broken down twice in three years.

The Best Bet

Mind you, the car was largely worn out when Mike bought it in March 1983, with a (probably true) speedo reading of 50,000 miles. He choose a Europa because he wanted to change from a saloon car to a sports car - he also considered AC, TVR and the Elan Sprint - but the Europa seemed the best bet on the strength of its roadholding, handling, comfort over long distances and its performance throughout the speed range. Both the acceleration and the high cruising speeds possible were important factors.

Enthusiasts will know that there is a big difference between early Europas and the later Specials as the model underwent a major redevelopment programme in the early Seventies - current Lotus Chief Executive, Mike Kimberly, was in charge of that project, of course, and everybody knows now what a fine job he did. As one of the later 'Special' models with the optional five-speed gearbox, Mike's car was built in 1974.

Mike Prior feels strongly that the popular image of the Europa is not entirely correct. It is thought to have poor rearward vision, rear wheel bearings that give up all too easily, rotten ventilation and a difficult gear change; furthermore, it is considered difficult to work on. Mike explains that normal rearward vision is excellent (true) and that the rear three-quarter vision is only a problem if you don't think it out properly in advance. Most contemporary road tests criticize the car for this and it was only the late John Bolster in Autosport who asked: "What's all the fuss about?".

As for premature rear wheel bearing failure, this can be caused by a loose fit in the bearing housings: Mike says that when properly fitted (his are now Loctited) there is no problem, and points out that his has done over 20,000 since the last rear wheel bearing replacement.

If anything, says Mike, too much air comes thru the ventilation system, but it is important to maintain a good seal under the front lid and, naturally, soft luggage can

block up the holes in the plenum chamber and stop the flow of air. You will only have gearchange problems on the Europa if the linkage is badly worn or you are a poor driver, says Mike.

Engine Work

It is commonly thought that water pump replacement on the Europa Special is an 'engine out' job: not so, says Mike, who has done it with the engine *in situ* though he admits you have to lift the cylinder head about half an inch to do it. He has also found it quite easy to remove the distributor for servicing and reckons it's a waste of time to take off the carburetors in order to work on the distributor with it in place.

Mike is obviously an exceptionally capable owner - he works in the design department of the British Aerospace Army Weapons Division at Stevenage and is 27 years old. Since buying the car for 3,800 pounds, he has effectively carried out a major mechanical restoration of the car while using it as everyday transport; never off the road for long.

First of all, he sorted out the brakes and chassis. This involved fitting a new servo and front discs, and making sure that the rear wheel cylinders were free to slide correctly. He checked the springs and found they were as good as new. but the dampers were finished and he fitted a set of non-standard Konis. He replaced the front trunnions and lower wishbones out of necessity, and cured some steering play and a severe vibration in the steering at 70 mph by replacing the universal joint.

One rear wheel had more negative camber than the other, and Mike had noticed that the handling was not the same on left and right bends. He found the problem here: there are two lengths of lower rear suspension link, one a little longer than the other, for the Europa and they are meant to be fitted in matched pairs according to the driveshaft type. Despite clear colour coding somebody had fitted a non-matching pair to Mike's car at some time in the past.

Mike's first and only breakdown was caused by ignition failure - there was a loud band, probably caused by unburned fuel mixture going down the exhaust, and the car stopped. He couldn't find a fault at first but eventually checked the resistance across the balance resistor - it was seven Ohms. A new unit of two Ohms resistance solved the problem for some months but then the car started to misfire badly. This time he found the resistance had risen to thirty Ohms which meant 'unreliability' by Mike's definition: he switched to a Lucas ignition system and has had no trouble since. The vital factor in Mike's renovation programme has been the engine rebuilding. About 12,000 miles back he stripped the engine and sent most of the parts to Quorn Engine Developments (QED of Leicestershire); full balancing, a +20 thou rebore with graded pistons and a -

10 thou crank regrind were carried out. Then, 10,000 miles back, he invested in a cylinder head rebuild by Edward Winter of Bedford: this involved new valve sets, guides and springs, plus contoured, polished and matched ports - but the camshafts themselves were all right. Mike reassembled the engine himself after all of this work and it no longer leaks oil - he is adamant that these twin cam engines do not leak if they are properly put together.

Gearbox Parts

Next on Mike's list is a precautionary gearbox rebuild: this is a slight worry as some parts are now hard

Lotus "In Print" Update

to find for the Renault 17TS gearbox of the Special. Still, if it comes to it one day, there are other 'boxes that might replace it.

One modification that Mike carried out himself was to add a firm rubber pad to the exhaust mounting to the gearbox; the effect has been a significant reduction in vibration and noise.

For the past year Mike has enjoyed the car in superb condition. The engine is extra smooth and tractable, and the ride and roadholding are excellent, as I found for myself in a brief turn behind the wheel. Mike finds the handling forgiving though he admits you have to be quick to catch the tail when it does swing out, and caution is needed in the wet. There's plenty of feel in the steering however, plus phenomenal adhesion when you get on the power in a corner.

Mike reckons the car is now worth about 5,000 pounds. For myself, these five-speed, big-valve Europas have always been favourites and it is a real pleasure to have found an owner in Mike Prior using one of them in this way as a truly practical Classic car - so much better to my mind than some 'hundred point concours car' that can't be used.

Everyday Classic

