

North Kent Lotus Group



Dear Enthusiast

Well, apologies but the April edition didn't materialise. The problem was that there was very little to report on up until Andrew and Debbie's invitation and then I didn't have time to get it finished. It's all go!

The simulator afternoon at Andrew and Debbie's was great! We had a whale of a time. They've put together something really special and you could easily spend all day in either the race car or the light aircraft. Michelle was the star pilot of the day - managing to actually get back to San Francisco Airport and landing safely. I only managed to crash-land Sue and I in a nearby field!

Not as bad as Howard T though, he managed to heavily crash and IGNITE the car on the simulated Donnington circuit! Luckily it was all virtual - no damage done.

I'm not sure if this picture was taken before, during or after impact.



I liked the feel of the Ferrari at Donington and I only took out a few tyre walls! Terry was the star racer. He managed the best time and very few spins. I think he's done it before.

All very addictive once you get used to the complete lack of braking feel. Andrew had turned off the full suspension dynamics, as

he's had quite a few people feeling a bit nauseous - but I wouldn't mind having a go with it all switched on.

So big thanks to Andrew and Debbie for inviting us and supplying tea and cakes and thanks also must go to John and Joan for organising and providing us with a very nice cream tea as well.

Incidentally, Debbie also updated us re their GT40 restoration. It's on target for completion for the fifty year celebrations, next year. If you want to see some pictures take a look at the Autosport forum and do a search.

The following day on the Monday, at very short notice, it was announced that Brands Hatch would be host to Lotus F1 doing some on track action videoing. Several NKLG members were able to make it and went home with some signed hats and t-shirts. It sounded like a good day. Roger R and Vaughn have supplied plenty of photo's and Vaughn's write-up is over the page. Please see the website for more pictures.

I think I'm right in saying that we had our first Evora turn up on a club night. The owner didn't "sign up" on the night and I didn't catch his name but he was saying that after the normal Lotus "glitches" etc the car has now settled down quite nicely.

He's not new to Lotus ownership and has had several Loti previously, but he felt the Evora fitted the bill for him. I must admit I've had a couple pass me on the road and they do have a classy presence as they pass. It's growing on me and prices are coming down now. Let's hope we see the car (and owner!) again on Club Night.



As for Club Night - a pretty good turn despite a few regulars being away. Even Howard got the Geneva out. A black mark for me though - the Elise is still SORN.

As I mentioned earlier, Vaughn has supplied the Brands write up overleaf he also spotted some positive news in the Telegraph regarding Lotus sales. He also recommended grabbing a copy of the June issue of Classic & Sports Cars magazine which carries an interview with Mike Kimberly and also an article on a Graham Capel recreated Eleven "Breadvan." Lots of good stuff and I'd forgotten what a good magazine it is - I'm only an occasional reader of C&SC I think I should sign up for a subscription.

Up and coming events; well, this bank holiday weekend includes the Crystal Palace event and also the Masters at Brands Hatch. We're giving Brands a go this year as we haven't been to this event for a few years now. So as long as the weather is looking right we'll be going on the Sunday. Don't forget that June 7th is Howard's "Coffee in the Courtyard." We went to the

ROLLING EVENTS DIARY

May			
24-25	Motorsport @The Palace	Crystal Palace	John P
June			
7	Coffee in the Courtyard	Howard's, Crockenhill	Howard E
10	Club Night	The Plough	
26	Power Run	Dungeness	Jon & Michelle
July			
11	Leeds Castle Concert		Jon & Michelle
12	Sundridge Car Show		Roger & Chrissie
26	Annual Barbeque	White Rock	Planning Group

Lotus F1 at Brands Hatch

It's not often that you can see F1 cars for free but on Monday 27 April the Lotus F1 team were at Brands Hatch making a video there and several NKLK members turned up just to see what was going on.

Arriving just after the gates opened, another early arrival was Romain Grosjean, by helicopter. A brisk walk to the pits tunnel was greeted by a refusal to be allowed to go into the pits area as I did not have a complementary pass. This was reserved for invited guests and the more privileged/good looking!!

An early run for the current Lotus E23 confirmed my suspicions that the exhaust noise was muted by the turbo (very disappointing) and this opinion was confirmed when the 1973/4 Lotus type 72 (Cosworth V8) came out to play. Now that was a real racing car sound/vision with its huge rear wheels and big wings.

Much of the time the E23 did in and out laps with practice wheel changing taking place. I suspect that as F1 "testing" is banned they had to be careful about what they did.

The lack of information as to who was driving and when the next run was to occur made the day rather drawn out with lots of standing around. When the cars did come out, it was impossible to know for sure who was driving although Pastor Maldonado had a distinctive orange and white crash helmet but at other times the driver wore a plain dark blue similar to that worn by Jacky Ickx in period. It was rumoured that in addition to Romain and Pastor the son of Johnathan Palmer (Jolyon) was also to drive.

The Lotus 72 was in its usual John Player Special colour of black and gold and the name Richard Mille was painted on the side which was confusing until I later discovered that this was the name of the current Swiss Watch sponsor of the F1 team and not the driver. Shame that it was painted where the drivers name would normally have been.

The Mercedes Benz camera car, with its high mounted camera boom, seemed to be having trouble keeping up with both cars who I suspect were in first gear with lots of "popping and banging" from the exhausts.

Unfortunately I departed for home a little too early as BOTH cars later came out and circulated together at the end of the day - pity.

Vaughn



Hi John,

Can you put in the next newsletter about the car badges are still available from John U at a reduced cost of £3.

Also can members please contact me if they have not renewed their membership as May is the last month that they will be receiving it for free, so if they have not renewed for the newsletter they will not be receiving the June edition.

Hope that makes sense.

Regards

Trudi

Cont.

first one which was a very enjoyable and pleasant afternoon, so this one should be just as good.

I should have more info regarding the other coming events in next month's letter but John P reports that the Lotus Festival in August is for two days and we have a stand so get in touch with him if you'd like to display. He also said that the Edenbridge car festival and the Gliding event have been cancelled for this year.

I wasn't able to make the Spring Run this year on May 3rd but I hear that it went down well and Mark and Caroline hosted a barbeque for all participants. Jenny has promised me a write up and that should be included in next month's letter.

Well, once again sorry for the missing April edition. It's been pretty hectic with business pressures etc and just a reminder that I am standing down at the end of this year - so newsletter volunteer(s) will be needed. Roger D sent me an email with the subject of "All Change" - as Terry has also stated that he is standing down as Webmaster. So two jobs up for grabs - or perhaps it could become a single job?? Combine the two?

The next club night is on the 10th June but we'll be in France for our annual Le Mans pilgrimage, so won't be at the Plough. I should have plenty to report on though including a very interesting article from Matt re his Esprit which I've had to hold over. So if I don't see you at one of the events I'll see you at the July meeting.

John

John

Just read the Telegraph Business pages (Wednesday 8th April) and saw a report about Lotus. It started off with the headline:-

"Lotus position improves with 55% rise in sales"

It then stated that Lotus sold 2015 cars in the 2014 financial year, up from 1296 in 2013. Sales to China had a 186% increase (80 cars), France 177% (158 cars), Germany 130% (175 cars) and Japan bought 365 cars, whilst UK bought 346 cars. It also reported that it's dealership was expanded by 36 across its worldwide network. It also reported that a quarter of its 1215 staff were made redundant and they made a loss of £71 m on £81m of revenues" Ouch!

Strange that the number of cars sold (2015) is nearly the same as the year!!!!

Regards

Vaughn