

North Kent Lotus Group



Dear Enthusiast

As we hurtle towards Christmas with some days feeling almost Summer-like (I did say *some* days) things are beginning to wind down for us Lotus owners. The November meeting was back on track with much more mingling even though many of us managed to sample some of Franks delightful fare. So I did get to chat and Vaughn asked if I'd like part two of "By The Way....." Silly question! He said that he couldn't find a picture of Clarks car and neither could I - so I've added a model! The conversation turned to production of the Newsletter and he suggested that perhaps it could be reduced to a quarterly issue to reduce some of the workload but a later conversation revealed that Roger D has decided to take over the reins as from January. Roger has said that he'd like to alter the format to a regular "Editor's Column" with the rest being provided via members contributions and snippets. This sounds like a good plan and I'd be happy to supply the occasional article for consideration and I'd encourage everybody to do the same. From my experience of doing the letter - "all contributions are gratefully received!!" So that's good news that the letter will continue to be produced monthly.

I had a long chat with Richard C and his enthusiasm for all things Lotus never diminishes (mind you, that goes for quite a few regulars) He was talking about his recent visit to the factory and Clas-

sic Team Lotus - I feel a "A Day Out - Part Two" is needed.

And speaking of enthusiasm, Howard E was chatting about his new Exige S and I could see that glint in his eye! He was somewhat dismissive of the Evora but I think it's that purist thing - Lotus should be small and light. He spoke of the the Exige being a fine car for touring - interesting. I think you could easily describe the current Exige as progressive especially if you compare it with the S1. But that said, it obviously retains it's original concept from a drivers point of view.

I had an email from Graham Capel outlining details of a new book that he's produced, It's "The History of the Lotus VI" and if you want to treat yourself for Christmas please see the separate article. With lots of early history it's got to be the perfect Christmas read.

The Christmas meal is rapidly approaching and you'll need to get in touch with John U to book your seat. We won't be able to make it but here's to a good one. I'd be grateful of any photos and/or a write up for the December letter

The December club night is on the 9th - just after the meal. So I'll see you there.

JOHN



By the Way – The Continuation.

In my last month's contribution to the NKLG newsletter, I indicated that Lotus had raced at the Reims- Gueux circuit but was unable to give any details at the time. Searching various Internet sources has now unearthed the following information: -

The 1963 F1 race entry included seven Lotus F1 cars but with a variety of different engines e.g. Coventry Climax and BRM. These were driven by many of the well-known drivers of the day as you may see later.

Jim Clark driving one of the official Lotus team entered Lotus 25's fitted with a 1.5 liter V8 Coventry Climax engine won the race on the 30th June 1963. This race formed part of the 1963 F1 Championship season which consisted of ten races, unlike later championships in the 1980's which consisted of 16.

This win helped him win his first World championship with seven Grand Prix wins to two by Graham Hill (BRM) and one by John Surtees in a Ferrari.

The Internet states that Jim Clark (number 18) started from pole position and lead from the start from Richie Ginther (BRM). All Graham Hill's hard work in qualifying second on the grid in another BRM, despite mechanical problems in practice came to nothing when his engine died on the grid and his car had to be push started with a subsequent one minute penalty which dropped him well back. Clark led dominantly, his lead being extended when a stone pierced Ginther's (BRM) water radiator, forcing him into the pits on lap 4. Jack Brabham (BrabhamBT7 - Climax) then took second place after a strong fight with Trevor Taylor (Lotus – Climax), who also suffered ignition problems which caused his retirement on lap 42.

Brabham then began to gain significantly on Clark as Clark's Climax engine started to splutter, however this proved to be a sporadic fault and he had enough of a lead to maintain the position. It was Brabham himself who dropped back finishing in 4th when an electrical lead came adrift, handing second place to Tony Maggs (Cooper Climax- T66,) and third place on the road went to Graham Hill's BRM. Clark was over a minute ahead of them all after a start-to-finish victory.

Jo Siffert also driving a Lotus – BRM finished in 6th, 1 lap down, Maurice Trintignant – Lotus - Climax was 8th, and Jim Hall in another Lotus – BRM finished eight laps behind the winner with John Surtees (Ferrari) retiring with fuel pump failure on lap 12.

According to the Internet, although Graham Hill finished third on the road he was not awarded any championship cont.

points. Why that was is difficult to understand although even by adding the one-minute penalty to his time would still have given him fourth place.

Other winning Lotus cars racing on this circuit were all in Formula Junior races but there appears to be no race reports that I can find:-

Mike McKee, Lotus 18 – Cosworth (FJ) July 1960
Trevor Taylor, Lotus 20 - Cosworth (FJ) July 1961
Mike Spence, Lotus 22 – Cosworth (FJ) July 1962

Hopefully the contribution to NKLG above may be useful if you ever do a Pub Quiz!!!!

Cheers

Vaughn

PS. Thanks to all the various contributors to the Internet.

John

You might be interested in the following for the next Newsletter.

Graham Capel has at last finished his book on the History of the Lotus VI. It is far more than just the history of the Lotus VI. It includes the early years at Lotus when Colin Chapman and the Allen Brothers were building and racing Lotus Seven Specials with amazing results. Their achievements tell you the reason why Colin Chapman became so successful in business with his dedication and drive that few could keep up with. Three races in one bank holiday weekend at 3 different circuits, and one of these was in Germany! Graham describes what it was like in the cramped stables in Hornsey where the first Lotus VIs were built. The 'band of helpers' who were dedicated to Colin Chapman's ambitions who worked most evenings and weekends. Mike Costin who joined Colin for

some part time extra income and look where that led him - a lifetime in Motor Racing and the foundation of Grand Prix winning Cosworth racing engines. Although the Lotus VI was 'in production' for 3 years, Lotus also produced the aerodynamic Lotus VIII sports racing car which Frank Costin tested whilst strapped to the bonnet at 100mph to examine the airflow! The Lotus Mark IX was also built in this same period and took Colin Chapman to Le Mans and Sebring international races only 3 years after Lotus Engineering Co Ltd was started. Then there was the 6 cylinder Bristol engined Lotus which was not really designed by Lotus but was numbered the Lotus Mark X as an afterthought.

It is good entertaining reading about Lotus in their formative years as well as listing the cars produced in detail to hopefully make this book the definitive history of these cars for posterity.

It is in hardback with 220 pages and lots of period black and white pictures. The cost is £35 and postage is £4 = £39 from Historic Lotus Books at P.O.Box 7, Horley, Surrey RH6 7AA or by PayPal to graham@lotushistory.co.uk

This could solve some difficult Christmas presents if you were short of ideas!

Graham

Lotus History
1951-1955

THE HISTORY OF THE LOTUS VI
INCLUDING

MARK III MARK VIII MARK IX MARK X

Graham Capel
Lotus History & Research