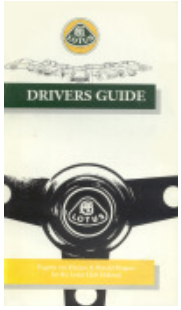
Lotus Drivers Guide
Newsletter

your Lotus information source



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Year 05, issue 62 August 2012

The first words

Hectic times at Lotus: Dany Bahar was recently fired, some other management members seem to have disappeared as well, the 5 year production plan from 2010 was terminated, DRB-Hicom is working on a new production plan, and the company is busy getting their finances straight. Rumour says that Volkswagen was interested in taking over Group Lotus, after just becoming full owner of Porsche. My guess is that any sane car manufacturer is interested in Lotus, with all the technical knowledge that is cumulated there.

I hope you will find the following news items interesting, please enjoy this issue!

Ronald Ringma

(image: © KJM)

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Previous issues of this newsletter are available as free downloads from my website.

Digital media

Next to the website, there is also a Lotus Drivers Guide page on Facebook, a page on Google+ and I am sometimes using Twitter now. Just search for Lotus Drivers Guide on Facebook (and give it a "like") or Google+. I'm using Twitter under my own name, so if you like to follow what I'm doing there you will have

to look for Ronald Ringma.

News from Group Lotus

Read all about the news items in the press releases section of the website, please follow this link: http://www.lotusdriversguide.com/Press/index.php
In this section of the website you will find the latest news by Lotus, normally unedited.

New on the website

You will find all recent changes and news headlines on the 'news' page of the website. On the opening page of the website you will also see the most recent items.

If you like to know if there is an update on this page, I suggest you become a friend on Facebook, as the updates will be mentioned there. Or you can also get Google+, where I am also giving notice of updates on the website.

News in short

On the 26th of July the first new **Exige S** was rolling of the assembly line.

It is said that **Volkswagen** is talking to Proton about taking over Proton inclusive Group Lotus.

The FIA have homologated the **Exige R-GT** ready for competition.

The **5-year plan** that was presented in Paris in 2010 has now been terminated. Lotus Chief Operating Officer, Aslam Farikullah: "We will keep announcements about our planned products to a minimum. New models will only be launched when the product and timing is right. Once we do launch a new product, we will ensure that we can deliver to customers anywhere in the world as scheduled."

New in the downloads section of the website: **Evora GX specification sheet**

Dany Bahar wants a compensation

Former Lotus CEO Dany Bahar has filed a claim for GBP 6.7 million against his ex-employer. He wants compensation for (in his opinion) unlawful early termination of his employment. Bahar joined Lotus in 2009, after working for Ferrari where he was was a senior vice president. While he was CEO, the very ambitious five-year plan was developed and a number of new managers have been appointed.

In a first reaction DRB stated that they believe to have acted properly at all times and that they and Lotus would "vigorously" oppose and defend the claim. No doubt DRB and Lotus will file counter-claims against Bahar, so we can expect a courtroom battle.

Financial news: DRB-Hicom rejects £1 offer for Lotus

Recently I did read an article by Paul Tan, revealing the fact that DRB-Hicom received an offer from a foreign company to take over Group Lotus for £1. The offer was rejected.

DRB-Hicom group managing director Datuk Seri Mohd Khamil Jamil said:
"The easy way out was to accept the offer. As a businessman, that was what I could have done to cut the loss, move on. But looking at the intrinsic value of Lotus, the knowledge, the iconic brand with global presence and positioning, coupled with unsurpassed engineering expertise and a talented workforce, its ability to cross function with Proton.

We believe we have a business plan that will work for Lotus. If I sell without trying, at the end of the day, I will fail my shareholders."

Failing to get Lotus back into black numbers is not an option. "The loan to Lotus is guaranteed by Proton. If Lotus is in trouble, the lenders will go to Proton. Looking at Proton, it is in no position to absorb the amount. Then, they will go to the grandfather, the ultimate holding company, which is DRB-Hicom. We have 53,000 staff with us and we cannot allow Lotus to take us down," Mohd Khamil added.

In the June Newsletter I did already write about the fact that Lotus was looking for money. The loan that was frozen last year is a £270 million syndicated loan extended by Maybank, CIMB, Oversea-Chinese Banking Corp Ltd, ExportImport Bank of Malaysia Bhd, Affin Bank Bhd and EON Bank Bhd at the end of 2010. Lotus had drawn some £207 million of that amount before the banks froze the remainder by July last year. The issue has now been resolved.

Mohd Khamil explained: "We met the six bankers last month. I have made personal presentation on the revised plan that I have in the interim for Lotus. The bankers have taken them positively. They have decided to waive the condition subsequently and forgive Lotus and Proton. We are looking forward to a scheme with the bankers whereby we can draw down the balance of the loan. It will help part-finance financial requirements of Lotus."

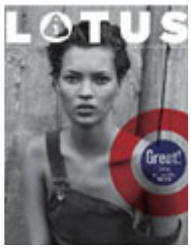
On of the first actions that was visible to the public was the fact that former CEO Dany Bahar was fired. DRB-Hicom has put Aslam Farikullah in charge of Lotus. Aslam, 51, worked as an engineer in the UK for 18 years before joining DRB in 2007. His most recent post was the division head of manufacturing and engineering at the conglomerate.

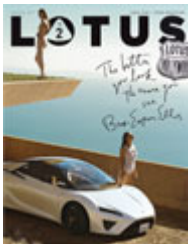
Let us hope that the DRB-Hicom plans will work out good.

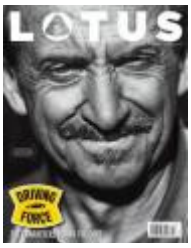
Lotus Magazine; Goodbye!

The glossy Lotus Magazine that was introduced under previous CEO Dany Bahar has now been suspended. No doubt this is part of the cost cutting exercise that the company is going through.

Many Lotus enthusiasts had mixed feelings about this expensive magazine, with images that seemed to be meant for the adult public sometimes, but the stories that I have read in the 5 existing issues where written by high quality writers. There will not be an issue 6….







Exige R-GT in action

The new Lotus Exige R-GT, the first car in this category of tarmac-racing rally sports cars to be homologated by the FIA, made its competition debut at the Rali Vinho da Madeire, Portugal. Works driver Bernardo Sousa was at the wheel.

For the team, first priority was to test the reliability of the car. In the first special stage of the rally the team was seventh overall. In the second special stage an electrical problem occurred that affected all systems and the team finished tenth. Unfortunately, in the third special stage electronic failure caused the gearbox to fail and the wheels to lock and Sousa and co-driver Corrado Mancini hit the wall at slow speed.

The race pace is there and the team is now working on the reliability of the car.

Next events:
31 August 2012 ,Czech Republic, Barum Czech Rally Zlin

13 September 2012, Spain, 49 Rally Principe de Asturias

28 September 2012, Poland, 69. Rally Poland

12 October 2012, France, Rallye Antibes Côte d'Azur

25 October 2012, Switzerland, Rallye International du Valais

First Production Exige S comes off the Assembly Line

The first production Exige S came off the assembly line on the 26th of July and very soon the first customers will experience this new Lotus.

Lotus Chief Operating Officer, Aslam Farikullah stood proudly by the production line and talks about the significance of this event and he explained:

"We are very proud of the Exige S. It marks the first step towards consolidating and then growing the company. I know that customers have been eagerly waiting for this car, and I assure them that it will be worth the wait. We wanted to be sure that we had a product that was absolutely ready before launching it. We are confident that the right time for the Exige S is now."

The new Exige V6 Cup

The Exige gets even racier!

Having already got the motoring press hot under the collar with production of the road-going Exige S, Lotus was turning up the temperature at the Lotus Festival at Brands Hatch with the official launch of a new track-focused model: The Exige V6 Cup.

There are two variants: a Track Day version priced at £62,995* and a full-on Competition-spec car starting at £74,995*.

Performance hits 274km/h, 0-100 in 3.8 seconds, and 346hp kicked out from the 3.5 litre supercharged V6 behind the drivers' seat. The Exige V6 Cup weighs in at 1080kg, and comes with Lotus Dynamic Performance Management, so you can switch the engine and traction settings between Touring, Sport and Race; Pirelli P-Zero Trofeo tyres; aerodynamically optimized front splitter, rear diffuser and wing; multi-adjustable suspension; and race-ready kit such as a heavy-duty roll cage, 4 or 6-point harnesses, isolator switches, FIA-approved fire extinguisher, tow eyes, removable steering wheel and HANS-compliant race seats.

The first cars will roll off the production line in Hethel in December, with an allocation of 20 cars through to

March 2013. In addition to hitting circuits the world over in various track days events, the Exige V6 Cup is intended for new and current Lotus Cup series including Lotus Cup UK, Lotus Cup Europe, Lotus Cup Eastern Europe, Lotus Cup Italy, Lotus Cup Japan, and the Lotus Ladies Cup (Hungary).

There will be a version for the USA which will be on display at Brands Hatch this weekend. The cars can be purchased through Lotus Cars' dealer network and direct from Lotus Racing.

The technical specifications can be found in the downloads section of the Lotus Drivers Guide website

* Prices include VAT @ 20%

Lotus Chief Operating Officer, Aslam Farikullah, shares his ideas

When the first Exige S came of the assembly line, Lotus Chief operating Officer Aslam Farikullah had more to share with us, bearing in mind that the 5-year plan has been cancelled:

"Our new philosophy is simple: We will keep announcements about our planned products to a minimum. New models will only be launched when the product and timing is right. Once we do launch a new product, we will ensure that we can deliver to customers anywhere in the world as scheduled."

Under his leadership there will be some changes at Lotus, as Aslam Farikullah explained: "Our emphasis now is on the finer details of what we do. I believe that the ability of our engineers and workforce makes them among the best in the world. We will leverage on this key strength as we revitalise and strengthen the Lotus brand."

"We can all look forward to exciting times ahead as we bring the company to the next level. But I am not a fan of the limelight; I will let our cars do the talking."

His vision for Lotus' future: "I want the Lotus name to become a by-word in the automotive industry for integrity, which means delivering quality products on the dates we say we will deliver them. As a start, we will refocus our human resources in order to further strengthen our Quality Department by 20%, clearly demonstrating our future intent."

"I would also like to reiterate that DRB-HICOM is committed to the future of Lotus. When I arrived I found a company full of talent, ambition and pride in the Lotus name. It's my job now to re-galvanise the company and we will be doing that by investing in our existing talent."

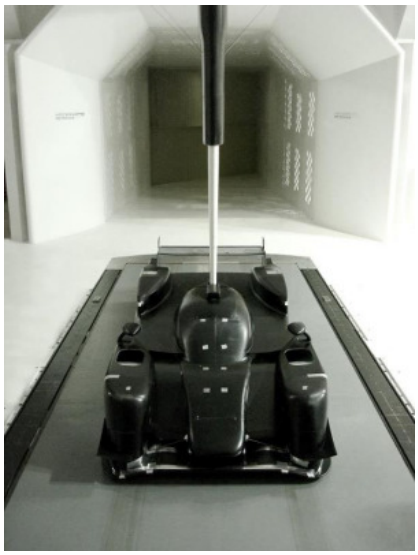
Next year's Le Mans car ???

Lotus LMP2 is working with full determination on the development of its own LMP2 car that already has taken advanced shape.

Tests in the wind tunnel already took place and more will follow in the next weeks in order to complete first test runs just after the season final of the FIA World Endurance Championship.

A study of the new Lotus LMP2 sports car has been shown in June and now there is a first picture showing

the new Lotus T128 during wind tunnel tests and giving a first impression of the look of the new racing car.



The sports car prototype has been developed in accordance with the new regulations set by the Automobile Club de l'Ouest (ACO) and will be a state of the art car in terms of aerodynamics and monocoque design. The Lotus T128 can be run by customer teams in many sports car race series all over the world, for example in FIA World Endurance Championship or the Le Mans Series in Europe, America and Asia.

The image shows a scale model during aero testing in the Mercedes Grand Prix windtunnel in Brackley, England.

©Lotus LMP2

Silverstone report on LMP1 and LMP2 activities

LMP1:

2012 FIA World Endurance Championship 6 Hours Of Silverstone

After a good start from 5th position on the grid, Neel Jani took the lead of the LMP1 privateer field from the first corner, driving his Lola-Toyota #12 to fourth position overall. After a trouble free triple stint, the Swiss driver handed over the wheel to Nicolas Prost who extended their lead on the other competitors. Unfortunately, just after the end of his first stint, the car spun after a contact with the GT #57 which had previously been involved in a contact with the Audi #1 during the third hour of the race.

The #12 Lola-Toyota was forced to pit to change tyres and later for a second time after a decision from the stewards for a stop & go penalty. The stop & go was made one lap before the scheduled driver change but the #12 car lost again precious time replacing damaged bodywork at the rear-end a consequence of the earlier contact.

Neel Jani took again the wheel from seventh position. Pushing hard to recover, Neel over took the #22 HPD-Honda. The #12 Lola-Toyota of Neel Jani and Nicolas Prost ended the race sixth overall and third in the LMP1 Privateer field. The Lola-Toyota #13 started the race with Andrea Belicchi at the wheel from sixth position. After a strong double stint, Andrea Belicchi gave the wheel to Harold Primat. Fifteen minutes later, the Swiss driver of the #13 overtook the #21 HPD-Honda of Nick Leventis, taking fith position overall. Benefiting from the bad luck of the sister #12 car, the two drivers of #13 Lola-Toyota produced fast stints in defence of their fourth position.

Andrea Belicchi had a one-to-one battle with Dany Watts aboard #21 HPD-Honda. Delivering a good balance between performance and consumption, the #13 Lola-Toyota of Andrea Belicchi and Harold Primat secured the best result possible, fourth overall and first of the LMP1 Privateer field.

LMP2:

Bad luck for Lotus at the 6 Hours of Silverstone.

The Lotus LMP2 car number 32 with start driver James Rossiter had to start from the pit lane and with one lap down into the race. Reason for this penalty was an engine change on Friday after the engine failed. Rossiter made up many positions, but had to bring the car to garage after the exhaust broke. His crew fixed the car again, but just a few laps later, Kevin Weeda had to stop the car after another engine failure.

Car number 31 finished the race in 12th position of the LMP2 class. Due to an unplanned service in the last lap it was not possible to have a better result.

Thomas Holzer, Race driver #31:
"Today, we got a lot of track experience and learnt a lot about the car. We had the race speed and we could do constant lap times. We are improving race by race and this is important for us. I am looking forward to the round in Sao Paulo and I hope that we can make another step into the right direction."

James Rossiter, Race driver #32:
"It is a shame that we couldn't finish the race after we experienced another engine failure. After we had to start from the pit lane, I was able to overtake a lot of cars and make up many positions. Suddenly, the exhaust broke and the engine wiring loom caught fire. There was a lot of smoke in the cockpit and I was not able to see anything. The mechanics could fix the car again and the engine failed again. It is just a weekend to forget."

Kelvin Jones Motorsport buys Xanthos Sports Cars

Kelvin Jones Motorsport recently acquired Xanthos Sports Cars, the manufacturer of Lotus 23 components and cars.

KJM will now produce all the parts necessary to keep these great cars on the race track.

We will also build exact reproduction FIA HTP (Historic Technical
Passports) Continuation certified 23Bs, with Arch Motor & Manufacturing Co. Limited, appointed to do all the manufacturing on behalf of KJM - and as it did originally for Lotus back in the 1960s.

Rare cars for sale

This 1976 Lotus Esprit S1 is number 64 off the production line. A "barn find" needing a complete restoration.

The seller is asking GBP 4.000 and can be reached by calling +44 (0)7984 545661

This 1964 Lotus Elite S2 Super 95 was a subject of a restoration in the USA around the 2004/6 period. The car was then imported back to Great Britain in 2007. The car is offered for sale at £59,000.00 GBP.

If you want to know more, you may contact the owner at richard.woollett@tesco.net. The car is located in Canterbury, Kent, England.

I'm not sure if I may call this a rare Lotus. Maybe it should be called a very strange Lotus. Anyhow, this 1992 Lotus Esprit 2.2i 16V Turbo SE 268hp is for sale in the USA, asking price is USD 49.000. With only 18.000 recorded miles.

Unique appearance: painting sea ground, stylized octopus original head and eyes, exotic fishes, sea stars, windflower, algae and corals. All hand painted over the original paint. Leather interior by ochre and green crocodile leather.

Contact the owner; cell: 00359894366838, NY 11112, 359-894-3668

I wonder how many of you recognise this vehicle…

It's a GS Europa, more information can be found on my website, in the genealogy section, just look for the Europa and select Europa derivatives.

I found this one on Ebay, item number 200805176997. The seller claims only 11 or 12 have been made.

This Lotus Elite is one of the 10 pre-production models (7 remaining). The car has an interesting race history (Brands Hatch 1958 to name one event), full history is known.

The car will on auction on the 26th of September at Brightwells Classic Vehicles

The 2002 Lotus Esprit V8 on the right was restored by Lotus in 2010 for former CEO Dany Bahar.

The work included a rebuilt engine and gearbox, a bespoke leather interior and new pearlescent white respray. Also Final Edition refinements like the very rare OZ Nova wheels, AP Racing 4 pot front callipers with Brembo rears, the Sport350 'High Boost' ECM, the large Final Edition spoiler, round rear lights and centre exit exhaust with cheese grater grill.

Interested? Contact your Lotus dealer.

The car on the left is a 1966 LHD MkI Lotus Cortina, ex David Sutton Motorsport, offered for sale in the UK.

In 1994/5 3 totally original road going Mk1 Lotus Cortina's where imported from California by David Sutton and then prepared for FIA rallying at his workshops and this is one of the 3.

FIA & MSA paperwork, plenty of rally history.

Contact the seller at +44 (0) 1303 891141

This Evora S 2+2 IPS Mansory Bespoke is offered for sale in Belgium. The car was delivered in April 2012 and has covered 6.000 km so far.

No need to explain that this is a rare Lotus.

The car has lots of accessories , contact the owner/seller at +32 (0)477 320340

Motor Sport

April 1967

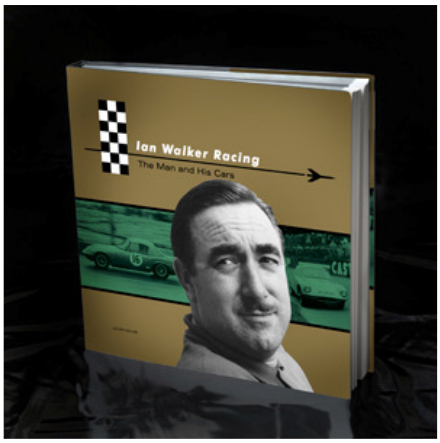
Do you define a sports car as having two seats, a high-powered engine, a racy Italian name and costing at least £2000?

Then here's one that seats five, does 108 mph and costs only £1068. (We even give it a racy Italian name.)

NMV 221E

New Cortina Lotus

Books and video



Ian Walker, The Man and His Cars

This exhaustive book looks chronologically at Ian Walkers life, the cars he built and raced, and the people that were part of his great adventure during the heady period of the 60's, a time that began the transformation of motor racing into the business it has since become. His exceptionally high standards of preparation and presentation saw Ian Walker Racing universally recognised as the Lotus 'B team'.

Hardcover, 208 pages, 400 images, Size 297x297mm, ISBN978-1-902351-47-6

Model Cars

On the left a picture showing the new set made by **True Scale Models**, representing the **Lotus 77, 78 and 79** as driven by Mario Andretti. Scale 1:43.

The set is signed by the driver and limited to 999 sets worldwide.

The same manufacturer has also scheduled an other set of 3. This will Contain Mario Andretti's Lotus 79, Lotus 80 and Lotus 81 from 1978 to 1980. Hand signed by the former Formula World Champion. This gift set comes with Plexiglas cover. Resincast model cars, 1/43rd scale.

Announced by **Premium X**: Lotus (Elan) **M200** 1:43 scale model in yellow. Made from resin.

True Scale Models is also planning to release 1:8 scale miniatures of helmets.

Amongst these will be the **1978 Ronnie Peterson helmet** pictured on the right

And this **1977 Mario Andretti Helmet**. Nice items to put next to the miniature car models!

New from **Minichamps** is this **Lotus Renault 2012 showcar**, celebrating the comeback of Kimi Räikönnen. This 2012 showcar is based on the 2011 R31

Limited edition of 1.000 pieces.

On the right you see the new **Lotus 77** 1:43 model made by **Spark**, this is the Ronnie Peterson version as driven during the Brazilian Grand Prix in 1976.

Ebbro has announced new colours for the 1:43 Lotus **Europa S2** model, due for future release, images courtesy of Grand Prix Models.

The 1:43 **Elan S4 Sprint FHC**, that was announced last year by **Spark**, is now in the shops!

It has been a while since **Spark** announced this **Lotus Type 102B** Team Lotus testcar. By the end of September it should be available. Scale 1:43

The image on the right shows the new 1:43 **Spark** model representing the **Lotus Type 76** as driven by Ronnie Peterson during the 1974 German Grand Prix. He becam 4th, followed by Jacky Ickx in the other Lotus.

Studio 27 has announced a 1/20 scale multimedia kit, representing the **Lotus E20** 2012 Formula One car.

AxelR recently produced an accessory kit for the **SMTS Lotus Type 49C**. With this kit you can create the 1970 Solr-Roig version. Includes decals, air intake and rear wing. Limited to 75 pieces.

And **AxelR** also produced an accessory kit for the **SMTS Lotus Type 49B**. With this kit you can create the 1970 Pete Lovely version, that became 7th in Canada and France, 10th UK or Race of Champions. Includes decals and rear wing. Limited to 75 pieces.

New from **Fartefice**: 1:20 scale decal set for the Ebbro **Lotus 72C** kit

Studio 27 have released a transkit to convert the Tamiya Lotus 102B into the previous year's **101**

Downloads

If you have anything that you like to share with other Lotus enthusiasts and that will not get me into copyright problems, please let me know. I am happy to make it available from the website.

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