

Grand Prix Seven

1962 Springbok Series

Formula One motor racing was very strong in South Africa in the early 1960's. There was a colossal entry for the two races prior to the South African Grand Prix of 1962. The races were the Rand Grand Prix at Kyalami Circuit on December 15th. and the Natal Grand Prix at Westmead on December 22nd. So popular were they that there was not enough room for everyone who entered and so the organisers ruled that there would be a qualifying time. At Kyalami it was 1min 45secs.

THE RAND GRAND PRIX: (15th December, 1962)

The entrants for the Rand Grand Prix included the usual Lotus and BRM teams as well as others from England. There were also Coopers and other older Lotuses, a Lola and specials of South African build like the LDS, the Assegai and the Netuar. However by far the most unusual entrant was the much modified 1958 Lotus Seven Series One of Cape Towner, Brausch Niemann. Brausch as well as being a very useful driver, worked as a mechanic for Willie Meissner, a well known South African engine tuner.

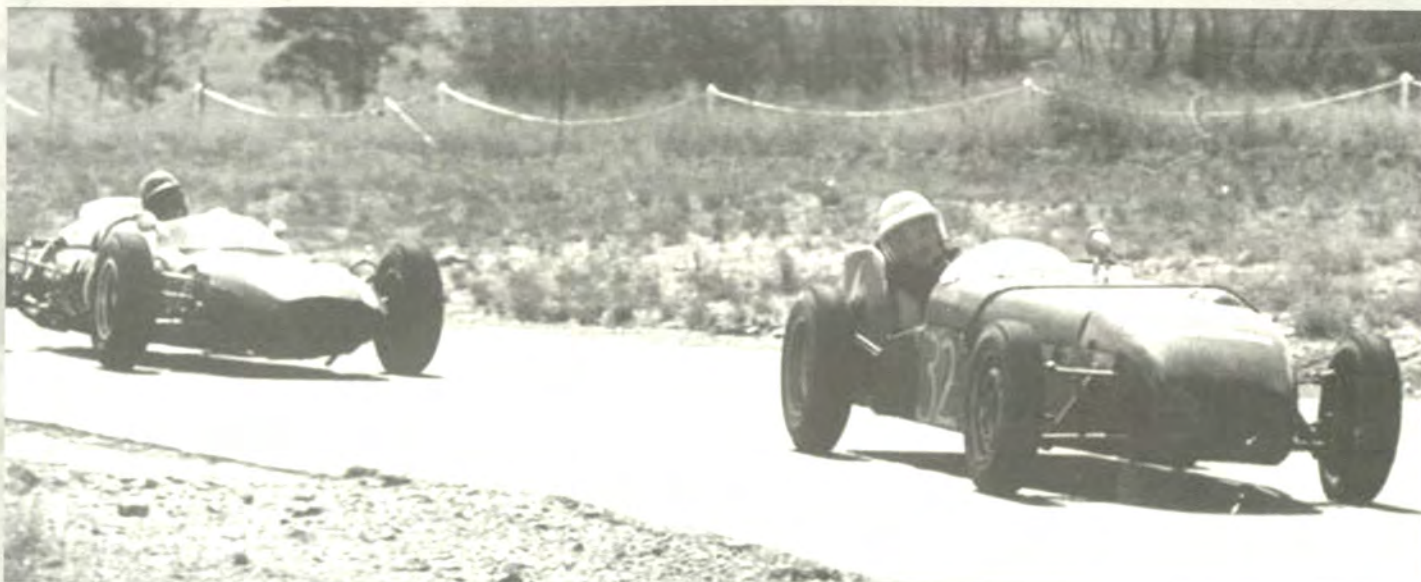
Niemann's car had a Ford 109E all steel engine bored out to 1475cc with four Amal

carburettors, special camshaft and head. The chassis was halved lengthwise and reduced by two inches to comply with Formula One regulations. The front brakes were 1958 Mercedes 180 with finned drums. The rear axle was changed to Austin due to the wide choice of ratios and free-floating hubs were incorporated as a safety feature. There was no limited-slip differential so a fiddle handbrake was used on the driver's side to stop wheelspin in the corners. The car was painted red, had steel wheels and the cycle wings were removed.

To everyone's astonishment the Seven easily qualified for a place on the start line. Non-starters included eight Coopers, a BRM, the Assegai, the Netuar, one LDS, four Lotus 18's and two Lotus 20's.

THE GRID:

NO:	DRIVER	CAR	YEAR	ENGINE	TIME
1	Jim Clark	Lotus 25	1962	Climax V8	1-35.0
2	Trevor Taylor	Lotus 25	1962	Climax V8	1-35.2
3	Graham Hill	BRM 57	1961	BRM V8	1-35.4
4	Ritchie Ginther	BRM 57	1961	BRM V8	1-36.4
5	Innes Ireland	Lotus 24	1962	Climax V8	1-36.9
6	Gary Hocking	Lotus 24	1962	Climax V8	1-39.3
7	Ernest Pieterse	Lotus 21	1961	Climax 4	1-40.0
8	John Surtees	Lola 4	1962	Climax V8	1-36.3
9	Neville Lederle	Lotus 21	1961	Climax 4	1-38.8
10	Sam Tingle	LDS	1960	Alfa Romeo 4	1-43.0
11	Doug Serrier	LDS	1962	Alfa Romeo 4	1-39.1
12	Piet de Klerk	Alfa	1962	Alfa Romeo 4	1-40.6
14	Syd v.der Vyver	Lotus 24	1962	Climax V8	1-38.1
15	Tony Maggs	Cooper 55	1961	Climax 4	1-39.2
16	Mike Harris	Cooper 53	1960	Alfa Romeo 4	1-44.3
17	B. Podmore	Lotus 20	1961	Climax 4	1-42.9
18	Fanie Viljoen	LDS	1960	Climax 4	1-42.1
21	Bob v.Niekerk	Lotus 22	1962	Climax 4	1-41.6
24	Adrian Phieffer	Cooper 52	1959	Alfa Romeo 4	1-42.8
25	Gene Bosman	LDS	1962	Alfa Romeo 4	1-43.3
32	B. NIEMANN	LOTUS 7	1958	FORD 4	1-44.5





Clark led all the way and won the race itself, followed closely by Taylor, Surtees and Hocking with the Seven finishing in a respectable 10th. place having beaten three of the Climax powered Lotuses. Through the speed trap Niemann was timed at an astonishing 127mph. Infact so fast was the car that Chapman was heard to remark that it must be the quickest Lotus Seven in the world when he saw it howling down the Kyalami straight 'stuck' to the rear of Jim Clark's Lotus 25!

RESULTS:

1 Clark	Lotus-Climax	1:20-47.4	95.70mph
2 Taylor	Lotus-Climax	1:20-47.7	
3 Surtees	Lola-Climax	1:21-11.1	
4 Hocking	Lotus-Climax	49 laps	
5 Lederle	Lotus-Climax	49 laps	
6 Serrurier	LDS-Alfa Romeo	48 laps	
7 de Klerk	Alfa Special	47 laps	
8 Tingle	LDS-Alfa Romeo	47 laps	
9 Viljoen	LDS-Climax	46 laps	
10 NIEMANN	LOTUS-FORD	46 LAPS	
11 Pieterse	Lotus-Climax	46 laps	
12 Podmore	Lotus-Climax	44 laps	
13 Bosman	LDS-Alfa Romeo	43 laps	
14 v.Niekerk	Lotus Climax	40 laps	
15 Ginther	BRM	36 laps	

FASTEST LAP:

Clark - Lotus-Climax - 1 min 35.3 secs - 96.90mph.

THE NATAL GRAND PRIX: (22nd December, 1962)

The following week-end saw Brausch qualify at Westmead in 21st. position for the Natal Grand Prix. The entrants were virtually identical to those in the previous race, however because of numbers there were two 22 lap heats and a 33 lap final. This meant that the Seven started 12th. on the grid in Heat One. Non-starters included three Coopers, two Lotuses, the Assegai and a Heron. Tragically Gary Hocking was killed in the last practice session when the Lotus 24 he was driving went straight on at a fast bend and somersaulted into a ditch. He died of head injuries on his way to hospital.

THE GRID:

NO:	DRIVER	CAR	YEAR	ENGINE	TIME	HEAT
	1:22.1	One				
2	Trevor Taylor	Lotus 25	1962	Climax V8	1:22.8	Two
3	Graham Hill	BRM 57	1961	BRM V8	1:22.7	Two
4	R. Ginther	BRM 57	1961	BRM V8	1:24.1	One
5	B. Scheepers	Lotus 18	1960	Alfa 4	1:37.2	Two
7	E. Pieterse	Lotus 21	1961	Climax 4	1:28.0	Two
9	N. Lederle	Lotus 21	1961	Climax 4	1:26.2	Two
10	Sam Tingle	LDS	1960	Alfa 4	1:30.2	One
11	Doug Serrier	LDS	1962	Climax 4	1:28.9	One
12	Piet de Klerk	Alfa	1962	Alfa 4	1:27.9	Two
14	Syd v. d.Vyver	Lotus 24	1962	Climax V8	1:26.6	One
15	John Love	Cooper 55	1961	Climax 4	1:27.3	One
16	Mike Harris	Cooper 53	1960	Alfa 4	1:31.4	Two
17	B. Podmore	Lotus 20	1961	Climax 4	1:29.3	One
18	Fanie Viljoen	LDS	1960	Climax 4	1:30.2	One
19	T.Blokdike	Cooper 59	1962	Alfa 4	1:33.8	Two
20	Ray Crisp	Cooper 59	1962	Alfa 4	1:37.9	Two
21	B. v. Niekerk	Lotus 22	1962	Climax 4	1:30.3	Two
24	Tony Neave	Cooper 52	1959	Alfa 4	1:45.8	Two
25	Gene Bosman	LDS	1962	Alfa R 4	1:31.4	Tw
26	B. Johnstone	BRM48/57	1961	BRM V8	1:26.0	One
27	Bill Dunlop	Cooper 45	1958	Alfa R 4	1:37.1	One
29	G. Henderson	Scorpion	1962	Alfa R 4	1:34.3	Two
30	V. McWilliams	Lotus 18	1960	B'ward 4	1:36.4	One
31	P. v. Niekerk	Lotus 18	1960	Ford 4	1:32.6	One
32 NIEMANN	LOTUS 7	1958	FORD 4	1:33.6	ONE	
33	E. Hammon	LDS	1960	Ford 4	1:36.6	Two
35	Clive Trundell	Cooper 51	1959	Maser' 4	1:33.5	One
36	Dave Charlton	Lotus 20	1961	Ford 4	1:36.8	Two
37	Dave Riley	Cooper 59	1962	BMC 4	1:35.0	Two
38	Eric Glasby	Cooper 44	1957	Alfa 4	1:40.3	One
39	Jack Holme	Lotus 18	1960	Climax 4	1:36.5	One

Niemann retired in Heat 1 which was won by Ginther in a BRM. Clark also retired with a misfire, having had a good dice with Ginther for much of the race. Heat 2 was closely contested between Taylor and Hill with Taylor pulling away towards the end.

The 33 lap final was very exciting. Clark, because of his retirement in Heat 1, had to start at the back of the grid. Taylor, on pole, went off like a scolded cat closely followed by Johnstone but Hill and Ginther were second and third respectively by the end of the first lap. Clark, meanwhile, was already placed 7th. and was 4th. by the end of lap 2. Lap 4 had him overtake Johnstone, who was later to retire with an oil leak. By lap 12 it was Lotuses one and two and Taylor then slowed to allow Clark to catch up, but by the end the latter's car was smoking badly and there was still quite a gap between the two of them.

RESULTS:

1 Taylor	Lotus-Climax4	8-08.7	92.47mph
2 Clark	Lotus-Climax4	8-14.8	
3 Ginther	BRM4	8-30.8	
4 Lederle	Lotus-Climax	32 laps	
5 Pieterse	Lotus-Climax	32 laps	
6 Love	Cooper-Climax	32 laps	
7 de Klerk	Alfa Special	32 laps	
8 Tingle	LDS-Climax	31 laps	
9 Bosman	LDS-Climax		
10 Serrier	LDS-Climax		
11 B. van Niekerk	Lotus-Climax		
12 Viljoen	LDS-Climax		
13 Trundell	Cooper-Maserati		
14 Holme	Lotus-Climax		
15 Hill	BRM		
16 Cresp	Cooper-Alfa Romeo		

FASTEST LAP:

Taylor - Lotus-Climax - 01-24.2 - 96.79mph

This article would not have been possible without the generous help of Jannie van Aswegen and Howard Robinson, both of South Africa. Another invaluable source of reference was Bernard Cowdrey's book, "The Half Ton Formula - Grand Prix & Formula One Motor Racing 1961 to 1965" which details the specifications of all the cars concerned. **JWW**