

Lowflying

August 2014

for Caterham and Lotus Seven enthusiasts



THIS MONTH: DEREK BELL EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW • TECHNICAL: DAMPERS • THE LAST R500 KIT BUILD? • ALL IN THE NAME OF ART • CHOLMONDELEY REPORT • BROOKLANDS DOUBLE 12 • MEMBERS' HINTS AND TIPS • MEET THE NEIGHBOURS: JAPAN



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Lowflying

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introduction...



Photo by Marcus Adams

I do hope that you have been able to get out and enjoy the unseasonably good weather that this summer has brought so far (in the UK at least). However, aside the driving experience, Seven ownership for many includes a mechanical aspect, be that building, maintaining or upgrading the cars. This month's Low Flying is therefore taking a look at some of the more "hands-on" aspects of Sevening. We hear from sportscar great Derek Bell about how his racing career kicked off some fifty years ago with a win at Goodwood in a Lotus 7 which was still being put together on the eve of the race. We hear from Daniel French who recently built himself a Seven that wasn't supposed to be available in kit form – the R500. We learn about dampers, one of the most important components governing a car's handling, yet one which is often poorly

understood. And two Club members pass on some simple hints and tips which they think will be useful to others...

While we are talking about being hands-on, the Club is on the look-out for volunteers to join the Management Team. See page 5 for more details, but in summary, the Club is both looking for people interested in filling specific vacancies, and for others to join the team in a more general capacity. So, if you fancy putting something back into this great club, we'd love to hear from you.

In the meantime, do make the most of the sunshine and "happy blatting". I look forward to reading about what you've been up to later in the year...

Be seeing you!

Michael Calvert Editor

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We support research into Leukaemia

Sandra Harrison-Moore Memorial Blat

16th August 2014: From Goodwood Motor Circuit to Redhill Aerodrome Raising money for the Surrey Air Ambulance

As previewed last month, all are invited to join Surrey Se7ens for this run in memory of Club member Sandra Harrison-Moore. As well as a great day out on some fantastic roads, the event will help raise money for the Surrey Air Ambulance.

The run will kick off from the beautiful Goodwood Motor Circuit in West Sussex and will take in some of southern England's finest roads and lanes. The destination will be Redhill Aerodrome (the home of the Surrey Air Ambulance).

Arriving at Redhill Aerodrome you will have plenty of hard stand car parking where you can enjoy kicking a few tyres and some friendly banter which can all be washed down with hot refreshments all available from the "Chef on the Road"

Programme

- Meet at Goodwood Motor Circuit. Gates open from 07:00
- Drivers' Briefing at 08:15
- Departure between 08:45 and 09:15
- Approximate Route (detailed instructions will be available prior to departure): Goodwood, Trundle, Singleton, Chilgrove, South Harting, Elstead, Midhurst, Petworth, Billinghamurst, Redhill Aerodrome.

We are delighted that various companies and organisations have agreed to support this event by donating some fantastic prizes which will be raffled off on the day. Prizes on offer will include:

- An Ultimate Drift Experience - Donated by Goodwood Motor Circuit
- Two Brighton Speed Trial tickets (6th Sept) - Donated by Goodwood Motor Circuit
- ukeyewear glasses - Donated by ukeyewear
- Gift Voucher - Donated by Soft Bits for Sevens
- Two Goodwood Revival tickets for either Fri, Sat or Sun - Donated by Goodwood Motor Circuit



- Revival book and DVD - Donated by Goodwood Motor Circuit
The cost for attendance will be £15 per person, with all proceeds going straight to that most deserving cause which is the Surrey Air Ambulance. We are really hoping for a big turn out for this special event. Please confirm your

interest by either registering on the Blatchat forum thread or by emailing surrey@lotus7club.com

Many thanks for your support.

Regards,

**Gordon Cross Assistant AR Surrey Se7ens
Rob Rennie Event Organiser Surrey Se7ens**

Please complete the form (a photocopy of it, or the information supplied clearly on a separate sheet is acceptable) and send it, together with a cheque payable to "Surrey Sevens" to:
Mr G Cross, 11 Blackthorn Drive, Lightwater, Surrey, GU18 5YW.

Name:

Membership number:

Car registration:

Telephone number:

Email address:

No of tickets (£15 per head):

The Carrotland Big Blat 2014

The start will be at Stonham Barns www.stonhambarnscomplex.co.uk/ as last year. You are invited to arrive from 08:45 for "signing on"; the café will be open very shortly after that for hot/cold drinks and a range of goodies including bacon "butties".

Cars will start at intervals from 09:30, having received full route instructions, and the route will include some of the fantastic se7ening roads

that have been enjoyed on previous Big Blats and some new ones from the great selection that we have in Suffolk and Norfolk.

There will be a drink/loo stop "en route" and the finish will be at Highfield Lodge in Thetford Forest www.forestry.gov.uk/highlodge We shall have a dedicated parking area and a good selection of food and drink will be available in their café.

There is no charge for participating in the event, which is only open to club members in their Caterham 7's, but there will be a modest parking charge at the finish. Full details are on the Club web site.

Please let me know by email at: geofdebenham@gmail.com if you hope to come.

Geof Carlton-Smith

The Management Team Needs YOU

The Lotus Seven Club is run by members, for the benefit of its members. We have been very lucky to have a band of able and enthusiastic volunteers over the years step forward to help run various aspects of the Club, both at the area level and as members of the wider Management Team.

At the Management Team level, we do inevitably have a turnover of volunteers over time, and we currently have a number of vacancies which we would like to fill. If you would like to help put something back into this Club, please do consider putting yourself forward – you would be made very welcome. Volunteering needn't be particularly onerous – the team typically meets on a quarterly basis at a central location in the country, and dealings in between are completed over the phone and email. Although we do have a number of specific vacancies which we are looking to fill, we are also very interested in taking on volunteers "without portfolio", who would be able to help in the general running of the Club but without any specific area of focus. It may be that such a Management Team member may become particularly involved in a particular area and choose to take on a more formal role in future, or they may decide to continue without a formalised position - either way is fine.

The following is the list of defined positions where we currently have vacancies. The role descriptions are intentionally vague – we want to allow as much opportunity for the incoming volunteer to help shape the position to best match their own skills and interests for the benefit of the Club and its members.

Event Coordinator

The aim of this position is to encourage, promote and communicate events which are open for Club members to participate in. We want to maximise opportunities for members to enjoy their cars and get together at events across the UK and further afield. This position aims to ensure that every event opportunity is made the most of, and is open to the widest participation possible.

Advertising Manager

Advertising, whether in Low Flying or on the Club's website is an important source of revenue to the Lotus 7 Club. The advertising manager aims to promote opportunities for companies to advertise their products and services to its members through the various channels which we have available. This may include developing specific packages which span print and electronic media, exploring opportunities for advertorial content and potentially extending beyond the typical "Seven" advertisers which have typically been the mainstay to date.



Trackday Coordinator

The Lotus Seven Club has run a successful calendar of trackday events for many years. The Trackday Coordinator is responsible for helping select the venues for Club events, for promoting these to members via various available channels, and for working with the circuits to ensure that members have the safest and most enjoyable day possible. Trackdays in our calendar typically include both events arranged as pure "Club" days and days run by third-party providers where the Club books specific sessions for members.

Competition Secretary

The Competition Secretary is responsible for organising the Club's Speed Championship. The role would ideally be suited to someone who had experience as a competitor in this, or another similar series. The Competition Secretary's duties include liaising with

venues and the appropriate motor clubs to decide on the series calendar, refining the series regulations to ensure that these are in accordance with MSA guidelines, promoting the series to new and existing members and generally ensuring that the series continues to be a successful and vibrant championship.

If you are interested in finding out more about any of these positions, or in putting yourself forward to get involved with the Management Team in any other capacity, in the first instance do please get in touch with Chairman Martin Bushaway Martin.Bushaway@lotus7club.com or General Secretary Gill Elwell gill.elwell@lotus7club.com. If you would like to find out more and get a feel for any of the roles (without any commitment of any kind) you would be welcome to come along to a quarterly Management Team meeting. We'd love to hear from you.



Stig Time!

On a warm June evening this year, **Alastair Wood** found himself driving his Caterham, on the public highway, dressed as the Stig. A momentary loss of sanity? No, it turns out that he was driving a young friend of the family to his sixth-form Prom because (haven't you heard?) limousines are so "last year". No, this year's discerning prom-goer should arrive in a sportier number...

Alastair takes up the story. "So how did this come about? Well, a young friend was visiting and saw my Caterham parked outside the house. He was immediately interested ... although a little wary. I offered him a ride and he bravely accepted. We passed through a couple of local villages at a stately 29 mph, by which time Jack was asking if it would go any faster! After a spirited zip along some more lanes at 32 mph, he was clearly taken by the car and when he arrived home he asked his mum if it would be possible to go to his forthcoming prom in it.

For those who haven't had teenagers in the past few years, the school prom is a relatively recent arrival to the UK but it has become an increasingly important part of school life in Year 11 and Year 13, usually to celebrate the end of GCSEs and A-Level exams. They are glamorous affairs, with sit-down meals, awards ceremonies, and dancing. But most importantly, everyone wears their glad-rags and arrives in style.

Most prom-goers arrive by stretch limo and, having had a ride in the Caterham, Jack spied an opportunity to get lots of cred from his mates. "Would I be able to drive him to his prom?" he asked.

Having agreed, I did what any considerate owner would do, and turned to the modern-day Oracles (BlatChat and my local Sevens group) for advice. What should I wear? Well there were some off-the-wall suggestions including 'Go naked, at least you will be remembered' - thanks Toby. Then someone came up with the idea of dressing as the Stig. Trying to hire the costume proved impossible (perhaps everyone is dressing as the Stig these days - is this a new trend in driving couture?), so I bought one. The plastic and foam helmet was a pretty good attempt at "Stiginess" and after a bit of fettling looked quite presentable, even if it was a little warm underneath!

Two members of the local group offered to support the event and we set off in convoy to the Palace Hotel in Buxton - a beautiful building with echoes of the glory and opulence of the town's Victorian past. We paused at the front of the hotel for Jack to have his photo taken and then looped around the front of the hotel to cries of: 'It's the Stig!' There was a final round of applause from the assembled crowd and then the convoy set off around the front of the hotel and away.

After all that excitement, we treated ourselves to a short Derbyshire blat in the late evening sunshine and a meal in a local pub - brilliant!

Many thanks to ARs Antony and Liz for their support for all things Seven and for suggesting a convoy and to local members Rog and Anne for their part in making Jack's day very special.

PS The Stig outfit is still for sale with proceeds to Nuke the Leuk.

The Goodwood Breakfast Club

Colin Cooper recommends that you make a visit, whether needing to recuperate or not...

While a good chunk of the L7C was enjoying the hospitality of Worcestershire at Throckmorton, one of the more clumsy amongst us (me!) was recovering from cracked ribs and bruising due to "pilot error" while riding a bicycle. It was doubly annoying as I had a hotel booked, and had arranged tickets for the annual meeting well in advance.

All was not lost however when a friend offered to take me to "Soft Top Sunday" at the Goodwood Breakfast Club. He is an MG buff with an MGA and ZIV8, but this time we sallied forth in his softer MGTF to save my ribs. Not having booked to get into the circuit proper, we parked as directed just up from the Rolls Royce factory - probably as close as I will ever come! Just the walk into the venue is eye popping with almost as many "wish list" cars as in Goodwood itself. Being a fine warm day there was the usual tremendous turn out of everything from Maserati's to Morgans to Morris Minors - and that's just the M's (though quite how a Piaggio qualifies as a soft top I didn't bother to ask)!

Trade stands for wheels, garage flooring, etc, have been a feature in the paddock area now for a little while, but I noticed that Caterham had both the 620R and 160 on show with representatives in Caterham shirts ready with answers to any questions. Not a stand mind you, just the two cars among Honda 800's, Healeys, Jags, et al. And just around the corner, Ariel had the same set up - in one wag's opinion, the only car there that you needed to wear bicycle clips when driving, and not only to stop wasps from going up your trouser leg...

It was nice to see a very smart 21, and singles and groups of 7's, along with an immaculate British Racing Green Lotus 6. I think this is the only painted Lotus 6 I have seen; they are generally just polished aluminium.

As entrance to the venue is free, it was obligatory to sample the bacon sarnies, and coffee (if only to wash down the Ibuprofen) before setting off home. If you live within easy reach of Goodwood, I strongly recommend keeping in eye out on the Goodwood Breakfast Club website for their next planned events.



Club track day at Hethel

Do not miss your chance to drive the famous Hethel Lotus test track

The Club has secured an exclusive track day at Lotus' famous Hethel test track on Sunday 28th September. Not only is this a rare opportunity to drive this fantastic circuit, but it is also fairly unusual to have a track day on a weekend and so not need to book the day off work. What is more, our track day will be using the full 2.2 mile circuit which recently had a £2.5m upgrade lavished upon it to bring it up to the highest possible test track standard.

Like a great many UK circuits, the site was first established in the Second World War, in this case as a base for US Air Force bomber squadrons. After the end of the war and the departure of the Americans, it was assigned to RAF Fighter Command, but with the downsizing of the RAF, the field was closed. For many years the base was inactive and abandoned until it was finally sold by the Air Ministry in 1964. Group Lotus moved its headquarters to Hethel in 1966 and has been there ever since. Colin Chapman found the runways particularly useful so that he could be whisked away in his private plane to far flung Grand Prix directly from the factory, but quite soon, portions of the runways and taxiways were developed into a circuit that could be used for the testing of cars. As the Hethel track developed, it became used by the likes of Clark, Rindt, Fittipaldi and Senna to fine-tune their Formula One cars. The names of these great drivers live on in the corners and straights of this now legendary track.

From its original airbase beginnings, the track has been upgraded into a finely honed test track, and following the recent complete

refurbishment is now a state-of-the-art facility which meets the FIA's specifications as a purpose-built test circuit. It is primarily used for testing cars, from road going through to Formula One and it is only rarely open to the public for track days and sprint events. The current Hethel layout has been designed to combine a variety of technical aspects, its series of bends, hairpins, corners and straights have been conceived to put high performance cars and their drivers through their paces. As track day venues go, few other tracks are as well suited to a Seven as here...

A (virtual) lap of Hethel

As few people will have had the chance to try out the current Hethel layout, here is a brief guide to the circuit.

Upon leaving the pits, the first corner that you encounter is Graham Hill bend. This off-camber corner has been designed to test a car's stability and should be perfectly suited to a lightweight car like a Seven. Next it's into Andretti, a tight hairpin, again slightly off camber, which has been designed to give a good indication of a car's mechanical grip; getting a good exit here requires excellent traction as you power out towards the Senna Curves. This fast and flowing section requires

total commitment as the curves are taken flat out. The reward for getting this right is the speed at which you arrive at the fast right hand complex which is made up of the Chapman and Windsock Corners which blend into one very fast bend. Again, good exit speed here is the target, as Windsock Corner leads onto the long Mansell straight, which provides a chance to really stretch the car's legs. Then, it's heavy on the brakes to get the speed down for the chicane which is taken at around 30mph. There's no time to take a breather though as a short acceleration zone leads into the Rindt Hairpin, a 180° right-hand constant radius curve, which leads onto the back straight known as Fittipaldi. At the end of this comes the Clark complex which leads back past the pits and into another lap.

Interested? The entry fee for a car with one driver is £199. Full details are available on the booking form which was included in last month's Low Flying, and can be downloaded from the Club's homepage (under What's On / Booking Entry Forms). If you have any questions, particularly if this may be your first track day, do feel free to post on the Club Track Days section of BlatChat where plenty of advice will no doubt be forthcoming.



A Racing Great

Think of world sportscar racing and one name immediately comes to mind as being head and shoulders above pretty much any other driver - Derek Bell. Club Member **Andy Couchman** recently had the honour of interviewing his hero for this Low Flying exclusive

Photos courtesy of www.derekbell.com, Porsche AG (Porsche 956) and public domain. We would like to thank Derek Bell and Patrick Crew for their help with this article.

Derek Bell has won Le Mans five times, the Daytona 24 hours three times and the World Sportscar Championship twice. He has also won no fewer than 40 races in one of the most iconic race cars of all time, the Porsche 956/962. He drove for Ferrari, Porsche and Alfa Romeo amongst many others, and was consultant to Bentley for its historic 2003 Le Mans victory. Awarded the MBE for services to motorsport in 1986, he remains a great ambassador for the sport and is one of the most approachable, friendly and eloquent stars across any sport.

Yet his career started in much humbler machinery, in a shared Lotus 7 back in March 1964. Though it was his first ever race and the weather conditions were appalling, he ended up winning the five lap handicap race at his local circuit, Goodwood.

I caught up with Derek at his Sussex home at the end of May in a week that had seen him

fly in from his US home for a Donington Park test of the Porsche 962 that he was to drive in the Group C support race at Le Mans a couple of weeks later. He was also juggling his diary to fit us in amongst doing a live TV interview for Sky and arranging to fix a roof leak at his Sussex home... At the age of 72, he clearly remains as active as ever, splitting his time between the UK and Florida where he runs a successful Bentley dealership.

I first asked him what he remembered of that original Lotus 7 and that first race.

DB: "I remember just about everything about that race. We'd built the car up over six months - John Penfold and myself. We had bought an ex hillclimb car from a gentleman called John Barnes and installed a Cortina 1500 engine into it. We knew exactly what we needed to do to make it competitive and George Brown of UDT [a Formula 1 team of the '60s Ed] who lived locally built the engine - I recall it had a special cylinder head, I think from Cosworth.



We built the car on the farm at Pagham; it took about six months to complete, but we were still bolting the car together the night before the race, which was held on 13 March 1964 at Goodwood.

I had planned to do a couple of hundred miles to run it in before taking to the track, but on the day before the race it was cold and wet and I set off on the car's first run with no mudguards (we hadn't had time to put them on yet), or heater. I got absolutely soaked to the skin. Once I got to Midhurst, about 20 miles away, I called it a day, so we never really ran the car in properly before the race.

On the 13th, I drove up with John's father [who ran an agricultural business - Penfolds of Arundel, one of whose customers was Derek's stepfather at Church Farm, Pagham, in West Sussex: Ed]. It was a handicap race and we were put in the middle of



Some fifty years ago, Derek Bell's racing career started in this shared Lotus 7, fitted with a tuned Cortina 1500 engine.

the grid, with cars going off every five or ten seconds. On pole, right at the back, was Hugh Dibley in a Brabham BT8 [a pukka sports racing car with a 2 litre Climax engine and entered by the Stirling Moss Auto Racing Team – SMART. The car, with Hugh driving, went on to win the GP support race at Brands Hatch in July 1964 – so the equivalent would be to find yourself in the same race as a modern Le Mans racer. Ed]. Hugh kept spinning off - it was almost impossible to drive the circuit that day - and so did nearly everybody else.

It was only a five lap race and I don't actually recall overtaking anyone – I don't even remember seeing other cars on the track - but on the last lap they put out a pit board and it said P1.

We loaded up the car, put the Jerry cans in the footwell and set off home. I'd won the race at an average speed of 66.48mph – it's the only race I can recall the average speed I won at – and they presented me with an alarm clock, which I've still got upstairs. It was inscribed by the BARC 'Winner Derek Bell, Lotus Ford, 66.48mph.'

Derek and John Penfold shared the car that year, driving in alternate races – yet despite that they enjoyed some great successes. One event was a double header at Silverstone and Derek won both races, but it was an event that was to cost him later.

DB: "We thought we were on track to win the Lotus 7 Championship and at the end of the season there were two races – at Rufforth in Yorkshire and Cadwell Park in Lincolnshire - but we decided not to do them as they were just too far away. At the end of the season, someone at Lotus pointed out that in the small print it said you couldn't count wins at two events on the same day, so one of my Silverstone victories was excluded and I ended up coming second in the championship."

The championship winner, Mike Crabtree, (whose son Mark is a Lotus Seven Club member) was an experienced racer whose car ran a Coventry Climax engine, so coming second was a real "against the odds" result, not for the last time in Derek's career. That was still an amazing success, especially as Derek had only driven half the races and John had managed to write the car off at Mallory Park. DB: "The chassis was bent in half but John Upton – who funnily enough also lived locally – rebuilt it with help from Arch Motors. Even so, by the end of the season we were aware we didn't have the fastest car; we still had the Cortina engine and a live rear axle, whereas some of the others were running fully independent suspension."

John Upton would go on to be a mainstay of Derek's subsequent Formula 3 campaign but the Lotus 7 was sold at the end of that first season and was bought by Chris Rosegold, who went on to have some success with it later.

Derek switched to Formula 3 in 1965, winning his first F3 race, and then started a long international career. By mid 1968 he had accepted an offer to go to Ferrari to race in Formula 2 and Formula 1 before going on to really make his name in sportscars.

That was not the end of Derek Bell's association with the Seven however. Search for "Caterham JPE Derek Bell" on YouTube and you'll find the film of him doing acceleration runs in the fluorescent yellow works Caterham JPE, which took the 0-100-0 world record and 0-60mph records for road cars back in the 90s.

Nor indeed was it the end of the Bell family association with Sevens. Derek has a famous painting in his home by artist Alan Fearnley of a Caterham 7 at speed on

On the last lap they put out a pit board and it said P1.

Derek Bell: The Facts

1964 Lotus 7 vs. 1983 Porsche 956

	Lotus 7	Porsche 956
Length	3327mm	4770mm
Width	1461mm	1990mm
Height	1130mm	1015mm
Track - f	1207mm	1648mm
Track - r	1232mm	1548mm
Wheelbase	2235mm	2650mm
Weight	460kg	840kg
Engine size	1498cc	2650cc**
Power	95bhp	620PS
Top speed	102.2mph	230mph (1985)

**962C's were initially 2869cc before being increased to 3164cc and power went up from 680PS to 720PS

Figures taken from 29 March 1963 Autosport road test of Lotus 7 Cosworth Series II and 1983 Porsche 956 in Porsche 956/962 book by John Allen. As a race car, Derek Bell's 7 would have been lighter, lower, more powerful and faster than the figures shown. Top speed for the Porsche was recorded by a 956 in practice for the 1985 Le Mans race on the approach to the corner at Mulsanne.

Derek Bell racing highlights include:

- Le Mans 24 hours winner 1975, 1981, 1982, 1986, 1987
- Daytona 24 hours winner 1986, 1987, 1989
- World Sports Car Champion 1985 and 1986

Cars raced internationally include:

- Alfa Romeo T33TT12 (sports), T33/12 (sports), Alfetta GTV (coupe), 156 (saloon)
- Alpine-Renault A442 (sports), A442B (sports)
- Aston Martin V8 (coupe)
- BMW 3.0CSL (coupe), 530i (saloon), 320i turbo (saloon), M1 (sports)
- Brabham BT21 (F3), BT23C (F2), BT26A (F1), BT30 (F2), BT38 (F2)
- Chevrolet Camaro (saloon), Corvette (coupe)
- Ferrari 166 (F2), 312 (F1), 246 (Tasman), 512M (sports), 365GTB (sports), 333SP (sports)
- Gulf GR7 (sports)
- Gunnar 966 (sports)
- Jaguar XJC (coupe)
- Kremer K8 (sports)
- Lola T290 (sports)
- Lotus 31 (F3), 41 (F3)
- March 701 (F1) 712M (F2), 842 BMW (F2)
- McLaren M9A (F1), M8E (sports), M10B (F5000), M8FP (CanAm sports), F1-GTR (sports)
- Mirage M6 (sports), M6 300 (sports), GR8 (sports)
- Nissan NPT-90 (sports)
- Osella Abarth SE021 (sports), PA2 (sports)
- Penske PC3 (F1)
- Porsche 917 (sports), 908/3 (sports), 934 (sports), 935 (sports), 924 Carrera GT (sports), 936 (sports), 956 (sports), 962 (sports), 962C (sports), 911 turbo (sports), 911 GT2 (sports), 996 GT3 (sports)
- Riley & Scott Mk3 (sports)
- Spice SE89P (sports), SE90 (sports)
- Surtees TS7 (F1), TS9 (F1), TS15X-BMW (F2), TS16 (F1)
- Tecno PA123 (F1)



Derek Bell, partnered by Jacky Ickx won the Le Mans 24 hours in 1982 in the legendary Porsche 956.

winding country roads. Commissioned by rock star and historic race car driver Chris Rea, look carefully and you'll see the driver in question looks remarkably like Derek's son Justin, himself a Le Mans class winner (who also won the GT2 World Championship in 1997 and who famously finished on the podium with his father and fellow Le Mans winner Andy Wallace in a McLaren F1 GTR in 1995 - a race they would have won but for gearbox problems).

I asked Derek which of his many race wins was most memorable.

DB: "It has to be Le Mans. I won it five times and every one was special. But I suppose that first win, in a Mirage Ford in 1975 with John Wyer [legendary team leader. Ed] was particularly special. The car had a Cosworth Formula 1 engine - an engine that wasn't supposed to be able to race for 24 hours. But we just got on with it and made it last 24 hours. That was special."

And a favourite race car?

"It has to be the Porsche 962. I won over 40 races in that car including three Le Mans, two world championships and Daytona three times. In fact I drove one again just a couple of days ago [29 May. Ed] at Donington. It was very wet and I'd been warned that the track would be tricky in those conditions but, once you're in the car, you just put those things at the back of your brain and get on with it. You're so absorbed with controlling the car that I never really thought about it. I last raced a 962 just a couple of years ago and, whilst this particular car hasn't got a great track pedigree - although it was raced by Danny Sullivan - it just works."



The 962 is actually a sister car to one Derek raced in period for Porsche at Le Mans in 1992. Sadly for Derek this year, an engine water leak led to the car having to be withdrawn after qualifying a fantastic third for the Group C supporting race at Le Mans.

One of Derek's other claims to fame is that he was a key part of the Le Mans film, made by legendary Hollywood actor Steve McQueen in 1970. What were Derek's memories of that time?

DB: "I'd just started sports car racing and had my first ever race at Spa in a Ferrari 512 with Jacques Swaters [the Belgian Ecurie Francorchamps team owner. Ed]. We were asked to stay on and ended up taking part in the film. You weren't driving

flat out, but you were still driving pretty hard. I got on really well with Steve - we shared a house together, his family and mine. He was a superb driver and after filming we would just head back to the house and chill out in the garden with our families. Funnily enough in all the time we spent there I never took any photos of us together so I don't have any."

And finally, what was Derek's favourite road car? He has driven so many but eventually settled on:

DB: "It would have to be my Ferrari 275GTB. That was a great car and we even used it on the movie set. It's in one of the scenes in the film if you look carefully." LF



The barn in which my Roadsport 150SV was born in 2010 was recently transformed into a temporary art gallery, and became a venue for Bucks Open Studios. This annual festival sees around two hundred or so galleries and studios opening for two weeks across Buckinghamshire, in what is billed as one of the largest visual arts events in the country. The idea is that the public can get a totally free of charge glimpse into the range of arts and crafts activities which more normally take place behind the closed door of a studio.

So, apart from the fact that my car had to be evicted outside, what has this got to do with Sevens I hear you ask? Well, this year we hosted three excellent local artists, Jan Ruddock,

All in the name of art

Peter Cooper reports from a rather unique event where “Just like the Sevens, she was clad in paint”

Tony Ashton and Sally Ibbott, who displayed their paintings in the gallery. Also invited were a range of visiting artists who specialised in blacksmithing, wood carving, lace making and body painting. The body painter, Penny Layton, was inspired by the classic curves of my 7 Roadsport and decided that Caterham should be the subject for her work.

Model Liz was recruited to be the “blank canvas” and Penny set to work with brush and

airbrush to clad Liz in her “emperor’s new clothes” The result? The Caterham pit girl that would be an asset to any race meeting.

This unusual demonstration managed to attract a passing 620R, which belongs to David Livesey. He was kind enough to allow it to be used in the ensuing photo-shoot. Thanks David, I hope you were able to polish out the bystanders’ drool from your lovely green paintwork. *LF*

Fundraising total for NtL has broken through the £400,000 milestone!

We’ve had a flurry of donations this month, thank you to everybody for their generosity. The great news is that the proceeds from the Dunsfold Handling Day pushed us through the £400,000 mark. Over the last 11 years £22,500 has been raised through these brilliant and fun filled days at the home of Top Gear. Many thanks to Steve Mell and everybody involved for making these events so successful.

People often ask how they can make their donations, there are two ways to do this. You can donate online at <http://leukaemialymphomaresearch.org.uk> (please email a copy of the receipt to nuketheleuk@lotus7club.com so I can make sure it is included in the Club’s total) or you can send a cheque made payable to ‘Leukaemia and Lymphoma Research’ to Caroline Grubb. In both cases you can also use Gift Aid if it applies.

NtL contact details:

e: nuketheleuk@lotus7club.com

Caroline Grubb, 2 Grafton Close, Gosport, Hampshire PO12 4GD



• Monthly Standing Order from a shy, team sparring partner of old . . .	£25.00
• Monthly give as you earn donation from another shy club member.	£25.00
• Andrew and Janice Willoughby made a donation in celebration of the wedding of Grahame and Heather Wardall, their sprint and hillclimb friends	£50.00
• Geoffrey Morgan says thanks to Dikko Dixon for the Donington Historic event tickets	£20.00
• Jonathon Kay lost a bet on Blatchat and has paid up accordingly!	£10.00
• Chris Rome wishes to thank ChrisD for the Silverstone photos	£10.00
• Thank you to Chris Mintoft for his donation	£10.00
• Larry Andreotti says thank you to Guy Munday for the valuation	£25.00
• John March made a donation to thank Steve Hough for the stanchions	£40.00
• Steve Mell sent in the proceeds from the Dunsfold Handling Day, many thanks to all of you who made this such a success!	£1,600.00
This month's total:	£1,815.00
2014 to date:	£3,975.40
Fundraising History 1991 to 2013:	£396,557.13
Grand Total:	£400,532.53



The Caterham team enjoyed the hospitality (and a brew) on the Club stand. Standing between various Club members are Scott Mansell who was racing the 620R and James and Alex of his support team.

Cholmondeley Pageant of Power

David Smith, organiser of the Club's presence at Cholmondeley reports from the stand. We also get the inside line from Scott Mansell who was driving Caterham's 620R at the event.

We had a good increase in attendance from Club members this year, no doubt assisted by the combination of an extended discount on ticket sales and wall-to-wall sunshine (well almost). We had members on site all three days from Friday's set-up/practice and throughout the weekend. This really is an event which I would recommend that you put in your diaries, particularly if they repeat their access policy next year whereby entry to club stands only could be obtained via a free of charge Club pass, with a paid entry ticket only required if you wanted to get access to the main showground. This meant that you could enjoy a day on the stand, right by the circuit for no charge.

It was great this year to meet a couple of relatively new local members who are likely to come along to a LADS meeting now. There were also two prospective new members who were supplied with application forms - one was a 21 owner who was appreciative of advice given on his cooling system. He has only owned the car for three years and we hope to see him at a local meet soon so that he can continue to pick our brains about various issues he was having.

Anyway, this will be my final year as L7C Cholmondeley Pageant of Power organiser. Colin Davies (colindavies56 on BlatChat) will be taking over as organiser for 2015/16. I hope the

weather holds out for him as it has for me since I took over the role, and I wish him every success.

Dominic Chan managed to bag this shot of the Low-flying 620R. This was taken after the car had needed some mechanical attention after Scott Mansell had done some enthusiastic 'burn outs' (brakes full-on plus full beans) and the driveshafts had cried "enough is enough"



Professional racing driver Scott Mansell, who heads up the Caterham's Drive Experience team, spoke to us in last month's Low Flying from Throckmorton where he had been giving demonstration rides in the 620R. He told us of his forthcoming role driving that same car at



the Cholmondeley Pageant of Power, where he would be pitting the car against a raft of other manufacturers' vehicles in the annual sprint around the Cholmondeley circuit. Time to find out how he got on...

You're becoming a bit of a veteran of the Cholmondeley Pageant of Power
Yes, this was my third time driving for Caterham at this event. I won the class in 2012 (driving a Caterham SP/300.R) but we got pipped into second place last year by Robbie Kerr driving a Radical RXC. This year, we decided to come back, but driving a fully road legal and "standard" 620R, entered in the "Supercar and Trackday" class.

Cholmondeley is a growing event which attracts a great turnout of spectators. Unlike events like the Goodwood Festival of Speed where most cars going up the hill are just on demonstration runs for the crowds, it looks like this is genuine competitive motorsport?

Oh yes, this is really a sprint, just like I know that the Lotus Seven Club runs in its championship. Although there are a few journalists taking part, this is proper competition, run under the organisation of the BRSCC (British Racing and Sports Car Club). And there is no doubt that at the sharp end, the drivers are competing to win, not just take part. *So, how do you prepare for a competitive event like this which is going to attract so much attention?*
Based on our previous visits, we decided from the outset to set the car up a bit differently



Jump by Dominic Chan

this time. I do have quite a lot of experience in race engineering as this was what my father specialised in, so I have always been involved in setting cars up and do understand that side of things. The most important consideration at Cholmondeley is to maximise traction; you need to get the power down off the start line, to optimise your speed down the long first straight where we get up to something like 135mph. Then there is a double 90° left and again, you need to get good traction out of there - that's where a lot of time can be gained or lost. In 2013, when we were about 0.5 sec off the win, I lost several tenths of a second through this sector and its two tractions zones... So this time, we focussed on adjusting the rake of the car (the car's front-to-rear weight balance ed.) so that we would get as much traction as possible. We also knocked all of the camber off both the rear and the front to make sure that there was a much tyre in contact with the road as possible which helps in both traction and braking - there are no long corners at Cholmondeley, so running lots of camber is unnecessary. We also took the roll bar off to help the car follow the bumps and again, help with traction.

And do you get any chance to test in advance?

No, it's just the two runs on the Friday, three on Sat and three on Sunday.

How important are events like this for manufacturers to really see how their cars perform against the opposition?

It's actually quite a rare opportunity for

different manufacturers to pitch their cars head-to-head. However, I have to say that this year, it wasn't really a level playing field. Caterham Cars wanted to run the car as a genuine road car and so had decided on ordinary road tyres, whereas most of the other teams were running specific hillclimb rubber. That's worth an awful lot of time on a track like this, and I suspect that had we done the same, the results would have been quite different. We ended up coming third in the Supercar and Trackday class, behind the Ariel Atom 3.5R and the BAC Mono. The Supercar and Trackday class was the quickest class apart from the one for out and out racers which featured a Radical on full hillclimb tyres which was of course extremely rapid...

Do I take it that you know quite a few of the drivers who are racing for the other manufacturers?

Yes, inevitably many of them are friends. I certainly know Niki Faulkner (who won this year) quite well as well as many of the others from various racing competitions and circuits where we have competed over the years.

The jump over the bridge towards the end of the run is probably the most spectacular view for the spectators. What's it like from the driving seat?

It's actually not that bad. You just make sure that the car is pointing the right way, and you keep your foot planted. The real difficulty of the whole event, certainly compared to

normal circuit driving, is that you have to be flat out straight away, and there is pretty much no run-off if you make a mistake. On a normal circuit race, you can take a few corners to work out how "green" the track is, but at Cholmondeley, you just can't afford to do that. You reach the end of the first sector at around 135mph and have to brake to around 30mph for the hairpin. At that point, you have to be pretty brave getting onto the brakes because you don't really know how much grip there is going to be. But you can't afford to give anything away - when you have the three top drivers within six tenths of each other, you have got to go for it. For me, that's why I enjoy this sort of event so much - it's such a challenge.

So, the top three places were very close, but the victory got away from you this year. Apart from tyre choice, are there any other lessons that you would you take away to help gain those extra fractions next year?

You may have seen the video of my final run which Caterham released on YouTube. I have watched it several times and I have to say that it was a pretty clean run. I've had quite a lot of practice in reviewing driving videos through my race tuition experience, so I can generally recognise where time is being gained or lost. There might be a tenth or two to find through turn 5 and through the right hander but that run wasn't far off the best that we could deliver. We were running as light as we could



Lotus 7 Club stand by Alan Cox

and the handling was extremely well balanced for that particular course so I don't think that there is much more to find, at least not on the road tyres we were using.

Giving up your weekend for this sort of event – what's it honestly like for you? Just another day in the office, or something rather special?

No, I absolutely love it here. The atmosphere is fantastic – it's really chilled out, and everyone is free to get really close to the cars. Competing is a real challenge for any driver and I enjoy it more than I do any circuit race. You have to be absolutely committed and brave even though you know that there is a real element of danger involved because there is pretty much no run-off available, just trees

and straw bales. It's so very different to driving at, say, Silverstone, where you can make a mistake without any great consequence, but you just have to ignore it and get on with the job. Events like this bring back some of the buzz of motorsport as I think it may have been some thirty or so years ago, a period which I clearly missed! No, for me, Cholmondeley is probably my favourite event of the year. From what I understand from the organisers, next year they are going to be pushing the boat out even more, to make it an even bigger event with more manufacturers present; I can't wait.

When you go into an event like this, Caterham Cars clearly expects you to extract the maximum performance and set the best time possible.

There is always the risk of an accident however. Have you had the discussion with them about what happens if you bend their car?

<laughs> No, it's not something that we've discussed. Touch wood, it's never happened, and they know that I am consistent enough that they should be able to trust me to being their car back in one piece. I'm sure it wouldn't be a popular move if I were to bring them back a 620R with three corners knocked off, both because of the financial impact, and because it would make such a public spectacle. So no, we've never discussed the possibility, but even if we had, I'd have forgotten about it anyway as soon as I put my helmet on! **LF**

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meet the neighbours

Seven Owner's Club of Japan



One day in April 1981, nearly 30 Seven owners gathered at the Tsukuba circuit in Tochigi prefecture in Japan, where they enjoyed driving on the racetrack. From this event, the Seven Owner's Club of Japan (SOCJ) was established. At that time, import cars like Lotus Super Sevens were very rare in Japan, so of course there were no special garages to cater for them. Owners helped each other to maintain their cars, and this strengthened the bond between members. Now, 120 owners have been registered as SOCJ members. Our club is very open minded, and our policy is that "all who come are welcome, but anyone is free to leave".

Our annual schedule is as follows:

New Year Party

We have a New Year Party in early January. We recognise members who have achieved good results in our activities and we enjoy drinking, chatting, and we hold a raffle.

"Seven Day" Meeting

This is the most important annual event of SOCJ. The meeting place is generally held in the central region in Japan, and it's a kind of reunion. Members come from all over Japan, but some members who live in the countryside have difficulty in reaching the meeting. However, sometimes even a few members who live in Hokkaido (the second largest and northernmost of Japan's four main islands ed.) do manage to make the rather epic trip to the venue. At the meeting, we organize a party, some driving games, a gymkhana and a parade on a racetrack.

Most Lotus 7 Club members will be aware that the Japanese are very enthusiastic about their Sevens, but it's rare to hear news of what they get up to with their cars. **Ikuya Suga** tells us a little about Sevening in the Land of the Rising Sun.



Twin Ring Motegi (so called because of its two race tracks) was built in 1997 by Honda, as part of its efforts to bring the IndyCar Series to Japan. It features a 2.5km oval and a 4.8km road course.

3. Gymkhana

Our aim has always been to organise events which drivers of all levels could enjoy safely with their Super Sevens. We settled on gymkhanas, which we have been running since 2012. (A gymkhana is a type of motorsport similar to autocross, where the goal is to achieve the fastest time possible; The driver must manoeuvre through a predetermined "track" performing many different driving techniques. What separates gymkhana from autocross is that gymkhana requires drivers to perform reversals, 180 degree spins, 360 degree spins, parking boxes, figure 8s, and other advanced

skills. Drifting is also encouraged where helpful or necessary, and memorizing the course is a significant part of achieving a fast time – ed.)

4. Mountain Cruising

We sometimes organize full day cruises in the mountains. Here we can enjoy nice winding roads. We especially enjoy the autumn season, when we can drive under the trees as the leaves begin to lose their colour

If you want to see more about what we get up to, please check out our website. Sorry it's all in Japanese, but there are some good photos... <http://www.socj.jp/> LF

Sean McPartlan drove through California from San Jose to Escondido to join other Sevensers on a blat near San Diego. So, in addition to the blat itself, he had the enjoyment of an epic trip just to get to the start... I drove a little over 1,300 miles between 6th and 8th June. At the point this photo was taken, the car is showing about 1,100 miles of California dust and dirt. It was very hot that day, (about 38°C), but that did at least mean that it was a relatively uncrowded Sunday at the park. The coolant temp gauge stayed rock solid at around 80°C as long as I kept moving over 30mph. A tough but fun trip."



Ownership of the Caterham F1 team may have changed hands, but the team name remains unchanged (at least for now). David Paisley took this photo at Silverstone of Marcus Ericsson in his CT05-01 going in to Copse. Sadly, the change in team ownership did not have an immediate impact on the drivers' fortunes. Ericsson ended up with a DNF, reporting that "going into turn six, I hit something in the kerb that smashed my suspension."



In other Caterham Cars news, their latest venture, consisting of a compact and lightweight tractor unit was unveiled at Throckmorton.

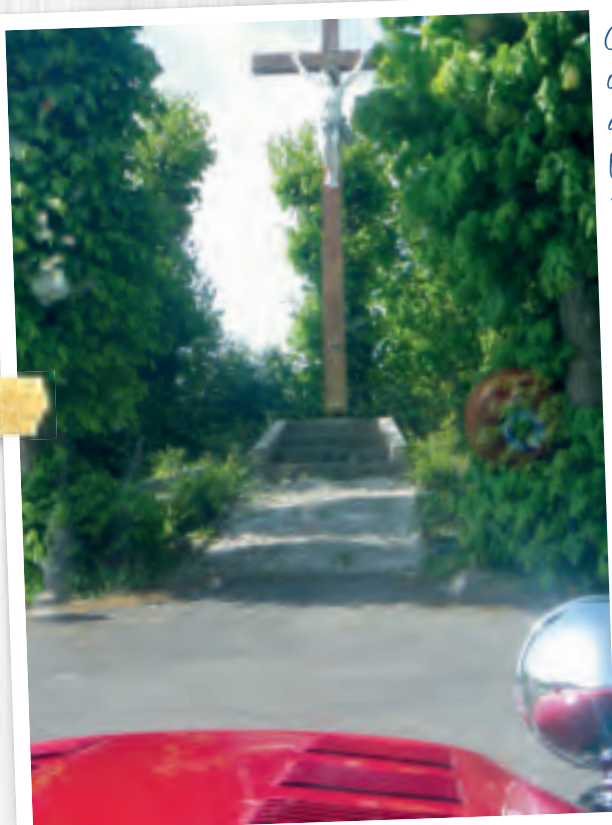


Anthony Hawkins has been contrasting internal combustion with steam power. His Seven is pictured alongside the North Yorkshire Moors Railway, just outside Pickering, as 'Black Five' loco 44871 passed with a train for Whitby.

With the centenary of the beginning of the First World War being recognised this year, many members will inevitably be making their own trips to the battlefields and cemeteries of the northern European mainland.

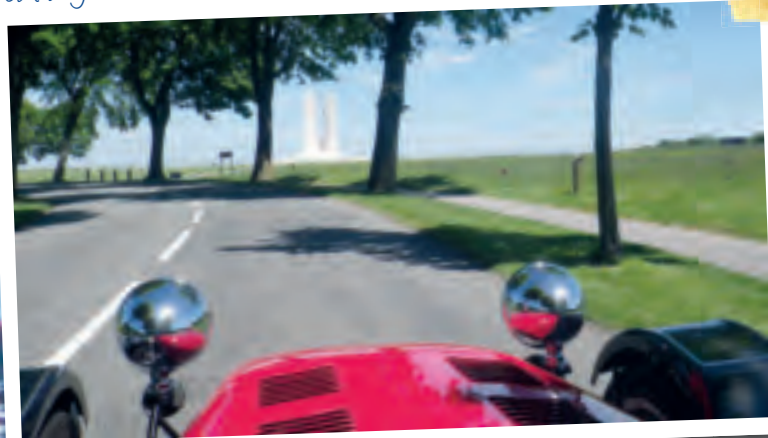


Ian Saunders took these two pictures in The Somme where he spent a couple of days visiting WWI Battlefields, in particular the areas where his Grandfathers and other family members fought. The poppies in the verge echo the paintwork of Ian's Supersport and represent a potent symbol of our remembrance of sacrifices made in past wars. The well-tended cemeteries which can be found throughout the region are an even more personal reminder of the terrible loss of life in the two World Wars.



Callum Skeat visited the Canadian National Vimy Memorial on Vimy Ridge (below). The monument is the centrepiece of a 100-hectare preserved battlefield park that encompasses a portion of the grounds over which the Canadian Corps made their assault during the Battle of Vimy Ridge, a military engagement fought as part of the Battle of Arras. Callum reports that it was a lovely if sad visit.

Meanwhile, he sent in this photo of his Seven alongside a calvary near Arras in the Somme region of France (left).



A Brooklands Weekender

Rob Rennie reports on the Brooklands Double 12 Motorsport Festival, full of wheels, wings, test hills and circuits – what more could you want in a weekend?

Photographs by Mark Lawrence and Jonathan Tennant (www.funky-photo.co.uk)



A lucky 13 Caterhams met early and arrived in convoy at the Brooklands Double 12 (“D12”) event on 14th June and what a privilege it was for the L7C Surrey Sevens to be invited back to this very special event. The marque has been well represented at various events here in the past but this year there was the bonus of the opportunity to drive up the famous Brooklands Test Hill too (at least on the Saturday of this two-day event). In true L7C fashion, the 13 cars indulged the serried ranks of other club marques to a demonstration of “formation parking” on arrival. It really is something special to see the cars lined up, all the same but each very different in its own way compared to the melting pot of shapes and sizes displayed by other clubs.

As in 2013, the weather veered from sunshine to showers, giving attendees frequent practice in the donning and removal of covers and tonneaux. Luckily, we were this year once again comfortably positioned under the fuselage of a VC10 which has been heavily

reworked by a team of enthusiastic volunteers to tell of its history at Brooklands where it was originally built. This year the exhibit was open so some useful and instructive time was spent during a particularly heavy shower speaking with one of the aircraft’s original engineers.

The modern day D12 event seeks to replicate the original formula (from 1929 to 1931) when 24 hour races were run in 2 x 12-hour events over consecutive days – this being necessary to overcome a ban on night racing at Brooklands. The spirit of the modern day event still provides for a sprint course (albeit on the Mercedes Benz World circuit) a short 880 yds track which is twisty and challenging and where small nimble cars (sound familiar?) invariably do well. Then, on the Sunday there are five very varied driving tests set up on courses within the Brooklands Museum site, using parts of the original outer circuit, finishing straight, outer paddock and test hill.

The event itself is a motorsport and aviation enthusiast’s dream, combining cars of all eras and makes, with aircraft. The giant Napier-Railton race car was started up again to great

applause, firing up the 12 cylinders of its Napier Lion XI aero engine with a dramatic roar.

Amongst the Caterham line up was 1st time Brooklands attendee Brian Soper with a 52 year old Lotus 7 Series 2, showing off its resilience after half a century of heavy use. The outing was a chance for Phil Janes’ Caterham to get a run out after a radiator bottom hose leak had caused a bit of light flooding in the car park at a recent Monday night Surrey Sevens Club meeting (my chance for a brief plug – it’s the 1st Monday of the month at The Plough in Effingham, all Club members welcome!). Also in the line up was Rob Smalley’s recently purchased Caterham R300 that is ‘safely’ kept on the street in West London – clearly a sign that the Caterham is a car to be admired and appreciated by onlookers as well as drivers, but not one to be vandalised.

Showing its spirit on both days was Whistling Billy, a 1905 steam powered racing car. Although it successfully demonstrated that petrol isn’t the only fuel, the paint blistering on the bodywork attests





to the high temperatures needed to get this engine moving.

A highlight for the plane enthusiasts was the ground run of the Sopwith Camel bi-plane which brought back the sun and a spirit of times gone by. Although once airworthy, it is now restricted to ground runs, so can no longer replicate the first flight of this type which took place at Brooklands in February 1917. Even on the ground, however, it's still an impressive reminder of its history at the very early stages of aerial warfare.

Back to the Caterhams and a few intrepid souls did brave the test hill. Built in 1909 as a facility to encourage use of the track for development and test work, it is 352 feet long and divided into three sections, starting as a 1-in-8 gradient, then 1-in-5 with the top third at 1-in-4. An additional challenge is the potentially chassis-crunching crest which, in years gone by, saw motorcyclists flying through the air upon reaching the summit. Even more challenging this year was the order in which cars were released; Rob Rennie tackled the steep run up the hill having to contend with a

combination of lots of previously laid-down rubber and some light drizzle overlaid with a topcoat of oil from the heavy-weight 1939 Rolls Royce Phantom II which had just made its attempt. Control was needed to ensure a successful climb without either spinning off the track or grounding at the lip ... well done Rob on your master class!

Also taking on the test hill was Jonathan Tennant in his ex-Academy 7 who benefited from a brief period of sunshine to light the way up this iconic climb. Rob Smalley took a different approach and lit up his rear tyres, grabbing several armfuls of corrective lock as he made the ascent. Terry Darvell smoothly negotiated his way up in style, watched by avid motorsport fans and no doubt a few future Caterham owners given that they were shown such a professional demonstration. For Terry this was the first official outing for his clamshell SuperSprint since it had found itself up to its axles in last winter's flood water. It has since been significantly stripped down and rebuilt, and treated with Waxoil. As ever Terry, had got all the bare aluminium

to a mirror shine and it was good to see it running after its involuntary swim.

Not only was this a great weekend out for the Caterhams, but it also had something for virtually everybody. There were over 200 entrants running in 18 classes and representing a stunning variety of wonderful cars. These were supplemented by a mouth-watering D12 Concours entry, from turn of last century vehicles right through to cars of the 1970s and beyond, brought together through the combined attraction of Brooklands as host and the VSCC which is celebrating its 80th year.

Both days included an entertainment marquee and evening entertainment representing various eras – think 50s and 60s with a bit of boogie and swingtime jazz, as well as Marina Mae as Marilyn Monroe. Add in trade stalls, with anything from Scalextric for those long winter nights to car parts, books, photographs, clothing and tasty food and you have a cracking couple of days entertainment with something for everyone. No doubt Brooklands Museum will be inviting the Club back next year – we hope to see you there. *LF*

Members' Hints and Tips

Project code "Onion"

If you're planning a summer road trip in your Seven and want to be prepared for any "little emergencies", **Antony Hawkins** may just have the answer for you.

If you're anything like me, you probably already carry a few "roadside" tools in your Seven, for those minor issues that sometimes crop up which don't demand professional assistance but do need the right tool. In my case, that included a few spanners, a pair of pliers and a bicycle multi-tool that roamed freely in the boot, surviving day to day by hiding from searching fingers under whatever they could find as shelter - half hoods, hi-viz vests, packs of zip ties, that sort of thing. They would typically only break cover to make irritating clunking noises when no-one was looking (or when I was going round a corner enthusiastically).

It also occurred to me recently that I had no spare bulbs or fuses in the car; plenty in the garage, but they're not much use there when you're out and about. I needed a way to carry these safely, but I didn't want to buy a full light pack just because they come in a proper box.

So - I set about making myself an "emergency toolkit" box. In the house, we had the remains of a roll of closed-cell foam and I managed to "liberate" one of the "lock and lock" food boxes from our kitchen. If you are not familiar with these, they are robust plastic boxes with secure, airtight lids - ideal for keeping things dry in the less-than-weatherproof environment of a Seven's boot.



After a little experimentation to figure out how all the required contents would sit around each other, an hour's work with scissors and a craft knife was all it took to cut the various pieces of foam to shape to hold everything snugly and safely.

My final tally of contents (from the bottom of the box upwards, in the vague hope of keeping the most frequently needed bits at the top) was:

- An adjustable wrench
- 4 x spanners (assorted)
- Snipe nose pliers
- Brake light switch (because I found a spare one!)
- 2 x H4 bulbs
- 2 x wedge bulbs (indicator repeater and sidelight)

- 3 x other bulbs (stop/tail, silver/orange indicator, clear fog/reverse)
- 7 x fuses, 2.5A to 30A
- Bicycle multi-tool (useful for Allen keys etc.)
- Tyre pressure / tread depth tool

A final layer of foam keeps everything in place under the lid.

I've probably forgotten something vital of course but the beauty of a homemade system is that I can always make changes myself if necessary.

No project is complete without a name of course, and Mrs Hawkins came up with this one - "The Onion". As any fan of the animated film Shrek will know, Shrek tells Donkey that "Onions have layers"

David Mirylees, founder of the Lotus Seven Club over thirty years ago, passes on a simple tip...

I just thought that the following may be useful to other roofless owners. Although I love the sun, over the years there have been many occasions where I have wished that my Seven had a sun-visor, especially during the autumn/spring months when the sun is low.

I have found that a simple modification to your favourite sun glasses does the job pretty much as well. Just add a small length of insulating tape across the top - I use 12mm wide tape and then trim it carefully with a sharp blade. All that is then necessary is to move your head slightly to keep the sun out of your eyes. It's easily removable, so no damage is done to the glasses and you don't look too much of a prat as it's almost invisible to others!

Thanks David. So, what other simple hints and tips do YOU have to share? Do drop us a line to lowflying@lotus7club.com



Premier Power Lotus 7 Club Speed Championship



Two speed events to catch with on this month – the Epynt Hillclimb and the Aintree sprint

These two events highlight perfectly the diversity of venues which the Club's speed championship visits in a season. The Epynt hillclimb takes place almost literally "in the middle of nowhere", on roads in the centre of a vast expanse of military training ground in the Brecon Beacons. The Aintree sprint, by contrast, takes place on part of the old Aintree Motor Racing Circuit, once the host to Grands Prix, but now more generally used by the TV camera cars which follow the horses to broadcast coverage of the Grand National each year.

The Club's turnout for Epynt was thinner this year than it had been, some competitors had maybe been put off by the poor weather conditions of our two previous visits. This year however, it was wall-to-wall sunshine and a great day's competition was had, in stunning surroundings. Records fell in classes 1 and 5, with Steffan Eldred and Shaun Elwell respectively getting their names into the annals, bagging themselves some additional championship points into the bargain. The only slight disappointment this year was a change in format for how the cars were to return to the start after their runs; at previous events, this had involved a memorable four mile drive through some beautiful empty hillsides, then past the "German Village" which has been built to allow the squaddies to practice their attacks. This year, drivers were instead held in a top paddock and sent in batches back down the hill to the start – more efficient perhaps, but definitely less memorable... In the other categories, Chris Bramall secured the class 2 win, Michael Calvert took class 3 and Simon Rogers (who has decided to transition to slicks and is therefore competing in the "non road legal" class 7) set the new benchmark time.

By contrast, the Club's entry at Aintree was phenomenal, with 32 drivers making the trek to Liverpool to contend. Aintree has traditionally been a very efficiently organised event which has rewarded drivers with far more competitive runs than at any other venue on the calendar – one year, competitors enjoyed their two practice runs, followed by eight timed runs! Before this year's event, discussions had taken place on the forums as to whether a maximum number of runs to count towards our championship should be agreed, six generally being the consensus reached. In the event however, a combination of a strong field of competitors, and conditions which started



Drivers reflect on their runs in the holding paddock against a backdrop of Epynt's "German Village"

wet but improved throughout the day meant that "only" two practice and four timed runs were on offer. After the wet start, it was not a day for record breaking, but another great day of competition was had. Steffan Eldred took class 1 again, while Paul Collins took Class 2 after a tight battle with Andrew Willoughby and Alan Bowler. Richard Price narrowly beat

Matthew Jenkins to win class 3. Classes 4 and 5 were both "battles of the sexes" – Nigel Fox just managed to hold off Lynn Gilbert in 4, while although it was Shaun Elwell who took class 5, the biggest grin of the day was to be found on his wife Gill's face as she stepped up to collect her first ever class trophy as recompense for finishing second.

Championship Standings after the first five rounds of the Premier Power Lotus 7 Club Speed Championship

Class/award	Current Leader	Points
Overall Championship	Shaun Elwell	401.38
Class 1	Paul Boston	395.78
Class 2	Chris Bramall	486.16
Class 3	Oliver Wright	480.34
Class 4	Lynn Gilbert	296.91
Class 5	Shaun Elwell	500.00
Class 6	Simon Rogers	197.51
Class 7	Simon Rogers	100.00
Novice	Philip Matchwick	450.84
Ladies	Becky Boston	366.16
Edward Lewis (for best personal improvement)	Oliver Wright	8.92

Dampers: the unsprung hero of your car?

We all know that dampers have an important role to play, particularly on a lightweight, high performance car like a Seven – just witness the number of posts on BlatChat over the years which concern the relative merits of one make over another. Types (and prices) vary widely, from the Bilsteins supplied as standard on most new Caterhams to one, two and even three-way adjustable versions often favoured by the race teams (at least, where regulations allow). But how many people really understand what a damper does? What are the genuine merits of different types? How easy is it to change your dampers? What maintenance do they need?

In the first of a two part article, **Simon Rogers** of suspension specialists Meteor Motorsport helps to guide us through the maze.

So, back to basics – what exactly does a damper do?

At its most fundamental, a damper is essentially an oil pump, which is mounted between a car's body and its wheels. The upper mount of the damper connects to the chassis (everything from this point up is generally referred to as the "sprung weight"), while the lower damper mount connects to the wishbone or axle near the wheel (this is known as the "unsprung weight").

We all know that cars are fitted with springs which have the job of absorbing the inevitable bumps in a road or track. However, if there wasn't also a damper fitted, when the car wheel encountered that bump, causing the spring to compress, the spring would then quickly extend back at an uncontrolled rate to release the energy which it had absorbed. It would then continue to bounce at its natural frequency until all of the energy put into it had been used up. A suspension built on springs alone would therefore make for an extremely bouncy ride and, depending on the terrain, for an uncontrollable car. This is where the damper comes in – it controls unwanted spring motion by slowing down and reducing the magnitude of the spring's motion by turning the kinetic energy of movement into heat energy which can be dissipated through the hydraulic fluid which it contains.

With the combination of spring and damper in place, now when a car encounters a bump which causes the spring to coil and uncoil, the energy of the spring is transferred to the damper through the upper mount, down through a piston rod and the piston. Here, carefully designed channels allow the fluid



to leak past in a controlled way as the piston moves up and down a pressure tube. Because the orifices are relatively tiny, only a small amount of fluid, under great pressure, can pass through. This slows down the piston, which in turn slows down the spring.

So, what's inside a damper?

To understand how a damper works, we will take a look inside to see its structure and function. However, key to understanding the mechanics going on is recognising that dampers work in two independent cycles -- the compression cycle and the rebound cycle. The compression cycle occurs as the piston moves downward, compressing the hydraulic fluid in the chamber below the piston. The rebound cycle occurs as the piston moves back towards the top of the pressure tube, which compresses the fluid in the chamber above the piston. A typical car will have more resistance during its rebound cycle than its compression cycle. With that in mind, the compression cycle can be thought of as controlling the motion of the vehicle's unsprung weight, while the rebound controls the heavier, sprung weight.

So, what control does a damper have on a car's motion?

All modern dampers are designed to be speed-sensitive – ie the faster the suspension moves, the more resistance the shock absorber provides. This enables dampers to adjust to road conditions and to control all of the unwanted motions that can occur in a moving vehicle, including bounce, sway, brake dive and acceleration squat.

So, let's take a look inside a damper (right) The arrows show the movement of the piston and of the corresponding oil flow inside the

damper when it is under compression. (with thanks to Quantum Racing Shocks for the use of the image).

The inside of the shock absorber can be divided into three chambers:

- The compression chamber (A), the rebound chamber (B) and the gas chamber (C). The compression and rebound chambers contain oil, and are either side of the piston. The gas chamber contains nitrogen, which is kept separate from the oil behind a separate floating piston.
- At rest, the pressure inside all of the chambers is equal. All the time the shock absorber is fully extended, this will be consistent with the recommended gas pressure.
- When the shock absorber is caused to move, the piston moves through the oil. Oil flows through the jet (D) and around the needle (E). It enters the rebound chamber via cross-drillings in the shaft. The restriction of the oil flow will cause a pressure differential either side of the piston. In compression, pressure inside the rebound chamber will decrease. In extension, pressure inside the rebound chamber will increase. At all times the pressure inside the compression chamber will remain consistent with that inside the gas chamber (C)

So, what makes one damper different from another?

Although the fundamental operation of every damper is pretty much the same, different manufacturers use different design details in an effort to optimise the behaviour of the damper to provide the best possible performance. Considerations such as the materials used, the design of key parts, and the diameter of the piston will all have an effect on the damper's

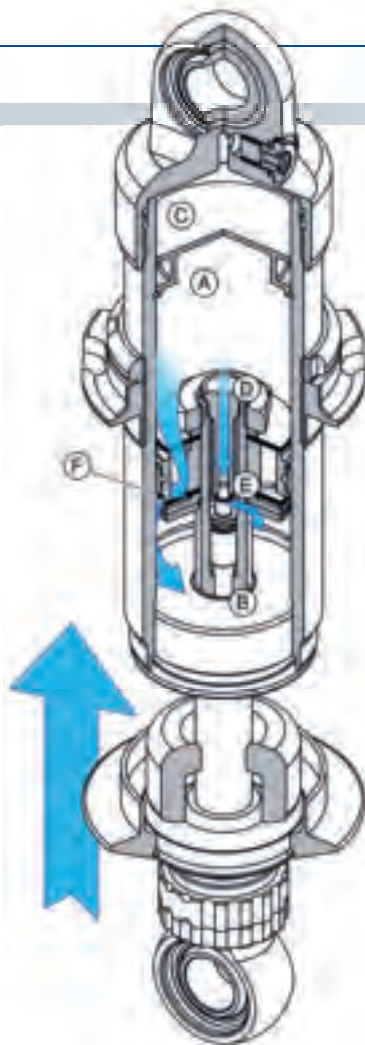
behaviour. Equally, a damper manufacturer has a great degree of flexibility to fine-tune the damping behaviour of the unit through choices made in the orifices through which the oil travels as the piston moves up and down. Typically, the piston will have a jet through which the oil can pass when the damper shaft is moving at low speed. However, once the damper starts to move at a higher speed, the jet can no longer cope with the demand for the fluid to move through, so instead, it will be forced through a stack of shims on the end of the piston (F). It is this transition from oil going through the jet to oil moving through the shims which allows a damper to be "velocity sensitive" and through which it can be tuned for its specific application.

A suspension engineer will typically take many days of testing to select the optimum combination of shims which he believes will best suit a particular car for a particular application. A top race team may be able to do this in between events, but of course for road cars like most Sevens, we have to trust that this work has been successfully carried out by the damper designer and that what we are buying is suitable for purpose. There are many dampers on the market which will fit a Seven, and many look very similar from the outside, but before deciding to spend any money on a damper upgrade, it is vital to ensure that what you are buying has been optimised for the Seven application. In addition, dampers and springs are designed to work together, and the damper configuration and spring rates need to be carefully matched. This is not to say that significant improvements in the handling for you Seven cannot be achieved – they can, but it pays to learn from the experience of others and to ensure that whoever you choose to go to for your parts has the experience to advise you appropriately.

What adjustment is available to the user?

Although the damper manufacturer / designer will have had the greatest amount of input into the behaviour of the unit, another significant consideration in the selection of a particular model is likely to be the degree of adjustability which is available to the end user. The simplest dampers are "non-adjustable" – an example would be the Bilsteins fitted as new to most Caterhams. As the name suggests, these offer no scope for adjustment by the owner, but as long as these have been specified by the manufacturer to match what they believe to be the optimum setup for the car, under most conditions such non-adjustable dampers will be perfectly sufficient for many users.

However, "one way adjustable" dampers are a popular upgrade for many owners. On these types, turning a knob moves a restrictor inside the damper which either increases or decreases the restriction around the jet between the chambers. Going back to our earlier explanation of how a damper works, this effectively changes



the point at which the oil is no longer able to pass through the jet alone, and instead starts to be forced through the shims. Turning the adjustment knob on most "one way adjustable" dampers has the effect of modifying the damper's behaviour in both compression and rebound, although designs where only one of these two aspects is affected are available.

Two way adjustable dampers are also available, although at this point, we are getting more into the realm of professional racers who have the opportunity for detailed testing and experimentation to optimise a car's setup for a particular set of conditions. Two way dampers allow the race engineer to adjust the behaviour of the damper in compression and in rebound separately.

Three way dampers, (definitely the preserve of the top race teams) allow separate adjustments to be made to slow and high rate compression as well as to rebound.

So, why might I choose to change my dampers?

The starting point will vary depending on what your car is currently fitted with. First of all, it is a fact often overlooked that dampers are not a "fit and forget" item. Dampers have a hard life, even on a car as light as a Seven. Different manufacturers will have different recommended service schedules for their dampers, but most typically recommend that they should be looked at every two to three years. Other than complete mechanical failure

(which is thankfully rare), most dampers will wear slowly, such that an owner is unlikely to notice the steady degradation in handling which is taking place. The good news is that most good quality dampers are designed to be brought back to their full performance via a service rather than needing to be replaced, although some owners may take this as an opportunity to upgrade rather than repair.

Many owners change their dampers because they want additional adjustment opportunities to fine-tune their car's handling to suit their own driving style. As well as a fixed damping setting, many non-adjustable dampers do not have the facility to alter the car's ride height either. This is particularly important for owners who want to set their car's "corner weights" to optimise handling, but it is also often important to drivers who intend to fit wheels or tyres of different ride heights. Any owner looking to resolve a handling problem (such as persistent under or oversteer) is likely to start by looking at the car's geometry setup as well as the damper/spring combination fitted.

And yes, aesthetics often play a part too. The front dampers on a Seven are extremely visible, and it is generally accepted that most buyers, when faced with a choice between two dampers of equal performance will go for the nicely anodised version over the dull metal one...

Two key aspects of a car's geometry are its ride height and its rake (the balance of the car from front to rear). So, does the damper set the ride height?

This is a common misconception. It is actually the length of the spring which controls the ride height (assuming a given spring rate). However, dampers with adjustable spring seats can be used to change a car's ride height by moving the spring. Some people assume that moving a spring seat will also change the spring rate, but this is incorrect – the spring rate is set by its design, and, other than specialised progressive springs, will not change through the spring being more or less compressed. Spring rates are typically measured in lbs/inch - thus a 500 lbs spring will compress by 1/2 inch if a load of 250lbs is placed on it, by 1 inch with a load of 500lbs and so on.

Hopefully the above will help clarify some of the common questions about the role that a damper plays, and some of the considerations which you may want to take into account when selecting a set for your car. Next month, we take a look at how a damper is serviced, and consider some of the things which can go wrong with them. We also look at how a damper is tested to check its performance against its expected characteristics, as well as the practicalities of how to remove and refit the dampers on your Seven. **LF**

"One way adjustable dampers are a popular upgrade for many owners"

area meetings

Enquiries and amendments to the AR Coordinator please: **Ian Bruce at ARC@lotus7club.com**

Please refer to www.lotussevenclub.com/AreaMeetings/AreaMeetingCalendar.aspx for most recent changes. The envelope symbol  signifies that an email mailing list is available, to which those interested in receiving information on the area's activities can subscribe (see sidebar for details)

Bristol and Bath

The Boar's Head, Aust, BS35 4AX
nr. jct of M48 / A403 at S. end of
Severn crossing
3rd Tuesday
Contact: Tony Alcock
07853 168793
tony@customhr.co.uk

Buckinghamshire ('Penn Sevens')

The Squirrel, Penn
Street, Penn, Bucks, HP7 0PX
last Saturday, 12 noon
Contact: Mark Williams
01908 521382(h) or
07798 766696(m)
pennsevens@lotus7club.com
<http://penn.lowflying.co.uk>

Cambridgeshire

The Red Lion, High St,
Grantchester, CB3 9HF
2nd Tuesday
Contact: Rachael Sangha
07974 097771 or 01223 292 400
rachael.sangha@lotus7club.com

Cheshire and Staffordshire, North

The Swan Inn,
Main Rd, Wybunbury,
Cheshire, CW5 7NA
2nd Wednesday
Contact: Nick Chan
01782 621818 or 07590 841674
Or: Richard Price
01782 616493 or 07770 617127
email for both:
cheshire&staffs@lotus7club.com

Cornwall

AR position vacant
Contact: contact arc@lotus7club.com
for details

Devon

Roving venue, please contact
AR for details
Contact: Steve Dace
07843 230957
devon@lotus7club.com
[www.facebook.com/
devonlotusseven.club](http://www.facebook.com/devonlotusseven.club)

Dorset

Weld Arms, East Lulworth,
Wareham, BH20 5QQ
3rd Tuesday
Contact: Tim Small
07979 244270
dorset@lotus7club.com

Essex

The Hare, Roxwell, Chelmsford,
CM1 4LU
3rd Tuesday, 7.30pm
Contact: Mike Burnham
07758 231051
essex@lotus7club.com

Gloucestershire

Colesbourne Inn,
GL53 9NP, on the main
A435 between Cirencester
and Cheltenham
1st Thursday
Contact: Andy Couchman
01451 821982
gloucestershire@lotus7club.com

Hampshire, South ('Solent Se7ens')

Roving venue; please contact AR
for details
Last Friday
Contact: Jo and Martin Crisp
023 9279 1032 or 07506 776604
solent7s@lotus7club.com

Hampshire, West

AR position vacant
Contact: contact arc@lotus7club.com
for details

Hertfordshire

1st Wed The Feathers, Wadesmill,
nr. Wade, Herts, SG12 0TH,
from around 8.30pm
2nd Sun Moon & Stars,
Rushden, SG9 0TA
From 12 noon; coffee, snacks and
1-hour blat
Contact: Dick Dixon 01920 871153
herts.lotus@virgin.net
Or: Paul Kennedy 07778 738428

Isle of Man GBM

The Crosby Hotel,
Isle of Man, IM4 2DQ
1st Tuesday
Contact: Mike Scott 01624 622192
or 07624 486500
IOM@lotus7club.com

Jersey, Channel Islands GBJ

Roving venue, please contact for
details
4th Sunday
Contact: Mark Le Lay
01534 867743 or 07797 728939
jersey@lotus7club.co.uk

Kent, East

The Ringlestone Inn, Nr.
Hollingbourne,
Maidstone, ME17 1NX
2nd Thursday
Contact: Steve Lilley
eastkent@lotus7club.com

Kent, North

The Plough,
Eynsford, Kent DA4 0AE
1st Tuesday
Contact: Richard Brunero
07974 927618
Contact: Ian Bruce 07973 291144
emails for both: NorthKent@
lotus7club.com

Kentish Weald

The Spotted Dog,
Smarts Hill, nr. Penshurst, TN11 8EP
3rd Tuesday
Michael Clark
07771 677276
kentishweald@lotus7club.com

Lancashire and District ('LADS')

The Blundell Arms, Chorley Old Rd,
Horwich, near Bolton, BL6 6PY
1st Wednesday
Contact: Peter Haslam
0161 724 6481 or 07719 541550
Contact: Paul Richards
0161 763 5410 or 07721 564742
Email for both:
LADS@lotus7club.com
www.lads7.co.uk

Leics, Notts, Derbyshire

The King's Arms,
Hathern, LE12 5LD
(nr. Loughborough and M1, J24)
2nd Thursday
Contact: John Minns
01949 876271 (h) 07875 553257 (m)
leicsnottsandderby@lotus7club.com

Lincolnshire

The Three Kings,
Saltersway, Threekingham,
nr. Sleaford, NG34 0AU
1st Thursday
Contact: David Patrick 07966 171947
Or: Liz Lukeman 07881 912827
lincs@lotus7club.com

London, Central

Seema Tandoori
Holborn, 41 Farringdon Street,
London, EC4A 4AN
last Wednesday, 6.30pm
Contact: Fred Gustafsson
07740 944470
centrallondon@lotus7club.com

London, South

All Bar One, 32 Northcote Road,
Clapham Junction, SW11 1NZ
1st Wednesday
Contact: Adil Patel 07763 477673
southlondon@lotus7club.com

London, West and Middlesex

The Ace Café London
Ace Corner, Old North, Circular
Road, Stonebridge, NW10 7UD
2nd Tuesday
AR position vacant
Contact: contact:
londonmiddlesex@lotus7club.com

Merseyside and District Sevens ('MADS')

Thorn Inn,
Grappenhall Lane, Appleton,
Warrington, Cheshire WA4 4QX
Last Wednesday
Contact: Martin Richards
07884 437652
Or: Stuart Forshaw
email for both:
mads@lotus7club.com

Northants, Beds and Bucks

The Old Swan, Astwood,
Newport Pagnell, Bucks MK16 9JS
3rd Wednesday
Contact: Ben Ferrey
07591 594135 or 01280 847417 (h)
northantsbedsbucks@lotus7club.com

North East

The Old Mill County Pub and
Hotel, Thinford Road,
Metal Bridge, County
Durham, DH6 5NX
2nd Wednesday
Contact: Philip Thomas
07949 304200 (preferred)
01325 492578 (home)
northeast@lotus7club.com

Northern Ireland

AR position vacant
Contact: for more information,
please contact
arc@lotus7club.com

Northumbria

Newburn Motor Museum,
Townfield Gardens, Newburn,
Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE15 8PY
2nd Wednesday
Contact: John Sweeney
01661 825623
j.sweeney782@btinternet.com

Oxfordshire

The Railway Inn,
Station Road, Culham,
Abingdon, OX14 3BT
1st Tuesday
Contact: Brian Soper
01235 531632
80oxford@lotus7club.com

Reading, North Hants & Berks ('ReHab')

2nd Wednesday and last Thursday
The Barley Mow, The Hurst,
Winchfield, RG27 8DE
Contact: Andy Webber 07721 722111
rehab@lotus7club.com

3rd Sunday, 1pm
The 'AWESOME' Meet
The Old Hatchet, Hatchet Lane,
Cranbourne,
Windsor SL4 2EE
Contact: Tony Whitley
www.7rehab.co.uk

Scotland, North

Roving venue - please contact for
details
Contact: Nigel Simpson 01561
362153
northscotland@lotus7club.com
www.jock7s.com

Scotland, South

Day and venue currently variable;
please contact for details
Contact: Neville Mackay
01750 32705
neville.mackay@btinternet.com

Shropshire

The Fox and Hounds,
Shawbury SY4 4JG
www.foxandhoundsshawbury.co.uk
last Tuesday, 7.30pm
Contact: Clive Bridges
01743 232466 or 07855 837335
Or: Martyn Edwards
01939 210908 or 07712 117283
email for both:
shropshire@lotus7club.com

Somerset and Wessex

The Worlds End Pub, Bradford on
Tone, Taunton, Somerset, TA4 1ET
(on the A38 between Taunton and
Wellington). 1st Thursday, 8pm
Contact: Roger Ashelford
01823 270373 (h) or 07796 266742
somersetwessex@lotus7club.com

Staffordshire, Mid

The Swan with Two
Necks, Longdon, WS15 4PN
(off the A51, between Rugeley/
Lichfield)
3rd Thursday
Contact: Colin Heseltine
07774 878475
midstaffs@lotus7club.com

Norfolk & Suffolk ("Carrotland")

1st Monday, 7pm
The Scole Inn, Scole,
near Diss, IP21 4DR
Contact: Pierson Broome,
07734 702251
Or: Steve Wright, 01787 882209(h),
07789 907646(m)
Email for both: carrotland@
lotus7club.com
www.carrotland.co.uk

Surrey

1st Monday, from 7pm
The Plough, Orestan Lane,
Effingham, KT24 5SW
3rd Tuesday
The Parrot Inn,
Forest Green, RH5 5RZ (nr Ockley)
Contact: Mark Garnett 07766 162032
Or: Gordon Cross 07990 822631
email for both:
surrey@lotus7club.com

Sussex, East

The Ash Tree Inn,
Brown Bread Street, Ashburnham,
East Sussex TN33 9NX
2nd Tuesday
Contact: Chris Barclay
07816 770697
eastsussex@lotus7club.com

Sussex, Mid

The Gardeners Arms, Ardingly,
RH17 6TJ
last Thursday, 7.30pm
AR position vacant
Contact: contact arc@lotus7club.
com for details

Sussex, West

The George, Eartham, PO18 0LT, nr
Chichester
2nd Wednesday
Contact: Noel Damon, 01243 53675
or 07973 797702
westsussex@lotus7club.com

Thames Valley

The Pelican,
Froxfield (on the A4, 2 miles
W of Hungerford), SN8 3JY
1st Wednesday
Contact: Nick Bassett 07768 051428
Or: Ben Long 07785 100 100 both:
thamesvalley@lotus7club.co.uk

Wales, North

Glasfryn, Rakes Lake, Mold, CH7 6LR
1st Tuesday
Contact: Chris Proudlove
01492 544514
northwales@lotus7club.com

Wales, South ("Taffia")

Piercefield Inn, St Arvans,
nr. Chepstow, NP16 6EJ
(on A466, N of Chepstow Racecourse)
1st Thursday, 7.30pm
Contact: Alan Henderson
01633 413020 or 07779 958937
Or: Martin Lane
07768 096477
email for both: taffia@lotus7club.com

Wales, West ("Nomads")

The Halfway Inn,
Nantgaredig, Dyfed, SA32 7NL
(on the A40, between Carmarthen
and Llandeilo)
1st Wednesday, 7pm
Contact: Paul Andrew 01550 740640
westwales@lotus7club.com

Warwickshire, North ("Bear 7s")

Blue Lias, Stockton Rd, Stockton,
Southam, CV47 8LD
1st Thursday
Contact: Giles Hudson
07976 769022
Contact: Terri Foulger
01455 272340
warwickshirenorth@lotus7club.com

Warwickshire, South ("Warwickshire7s")

Roving venue (contact or
check website, below, for latest
information)
last Wednesday, 7pm
Contact: Kevin Scott
07714 767371 (evenings)
Contact: Philip Ambrose
warwickshiresouth@lotus7club.com
www.warwickshire7s.co.uk

Wiltshire, North

The Jolly Tar, Queens Road,
Hannington SN6 7RP,
1 mile off B4019
(take junction at the Freke Arms)
2nd Wednesday
Contact: Geoff Brown
01793 876465
wiltshirenorth@lotus7club.com

Wiltshire, South

The Bath Arms,
Clay Street, Crockerton,
nr. Warminster, BA12 8AJ
2nd Monday
Contact: David Smitheram
07718 368173
Or: Paul Manning
07989 600950 or 01380 828655
email for both:
wiltshiresouth@lotus7club.com

Worcestershire

The Nightingale,
Spetchley, WR7 4QS
2nd Wednesday
Contact: Adam Croft
07952 546281
worcestershire@lotus7club.com

Yorkshire, North and East

The Gold Cup Inn,
Low Catton, near Stamford Bridge,
York YO41 1EA
3rd Wednesday
Contact: John Waters
01482 632435
neyorks@lotus7club.com
www.york7.org.uk

Yorkshire, South and Derbyshire, North

last Thursday, 7pm-ish
Ladybower Inn, Bamford,
Hope Valley, Derbyshire S33 0AX,
on A57, at end of Snake Pass
2nd Sunday, 8am, April–October only
'Monthly Morning BST Blat'
departure point & route varies;
contact for details
Contact: Antony and Liz Hawkins
07800 875428
syorks@lotus7club.com

Yorkshire, West and Pennines

The Devonshire Arms,
Cracoe, BD23 6LA
(on B6265, 4 miles N of Skipton)
2nd Wednesday
Contact: Charles Carter
07831 668988
wyorks@lotus7club.com

Meetings outside the UK

Belgium (B)

Venue to be confirmed, but held on...
7th of the month
please contact for more details
Contact: Jean-Marc Bix
+32.(0) 495.249.239
belgium@lotus7club.com
Or: Sven De Loenen
+32 496 065 188

Canada, Alberta and West (CA)

Meeting place and times currently
variable; please contact for details
Contact: Terry Johns
+ 1 403 986 7915 (h)
or + 1 403 872 2153 (m)
canadawest@lotus7club.com

Finland (FIN)

Venue and dates variable, contact AR
for details
Contact: Andrew "Vinnie" Barriskell
+358 405 077217 (m)
Finland@lotus7club.com

France, ('Entre Deux Mers') (F)

Chateau de La Tour, at Cadillac, (on the
Ave. Libération, on the way to Béguey)
last Saturday
Contact: Hugh Dent
+33 (0)55 623 9931
hughkay.dent@wanadoo.fr

Germany (D)

Venue and dates variable, but mostly
last Sunday
please contact for latest details
Contact: Andreas Seydell
+49.171.4205424 (mobile)
germany@lotus7club.com
www.caterhamcarclub.de

New Zealand (NZ)

Meeting place and times currently
variable; please contact for latest details
Contact: Nigel Riches 00 64 3318 1440
nigel.stephanie@xtra.co.nz

Norway (N)

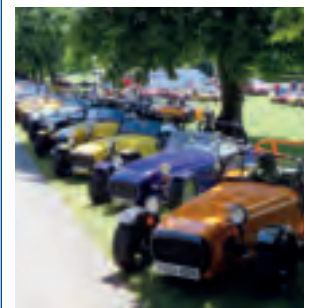
Please contact for latest details
Contact: Christian Brechan Aas
CBAA@statoilhydro.com

Switzerland (CH)

Lotus Seven Owners of Switzerland
meet. Restaurant Breitfeld in
Meierskappel on the 1st Tuesday of
each month.
Contact: Patrick Vogt
+41 79 350 08 80 chairman@lsos.ch
www.LSOS.ch

USA, Michigan (USA)

Meeting place and times currently
variable; please contact for latest details
Contact: John Donohoe
00 1 517-655-5125 (h)
john@simplesevens.org www.
simplesevens.org



In order to facilitate email communications with local members, mailing list facilities have now been set up for the majority of areas. The idea is that Area Representatives and local Event Organisers will be able to send out details of local events, special offers, ad-hoc meetings, blats, etc to any member who has registered to receive updates for those specific areas(s).

As a Club member, you are automatically subscribed to your local area(s); these are allocated by matching the first half of your postcode on the Membership Database against a list of postcodes agreed by each AR as the most relevant to their meeting.

However, if you wish to be kept informed of events and activities in other areas (perhaps adjacent areas to the one closest to your home, or perhaps close to work or to where friends and family are located) then you are free to subscribe to as many other areas' lists as you wish.

To do so go to www.lotussevenclub.com/AreaMeetings/AreaMeetingMailingLists.aspx and if you are logged in to the site you will see your email address held by the Club, and a list of available Mailing Lists to choose from.

You may of course unsubscribe from any/all lists (apart from your "Home" Area(s)) at any time, and your email address will not be revealed to any other parties (apart from the AR or EO sending the messages to the list).

They aren't "discussion lists" but are intended for announcements, and any reply to an email received will only be sent to the originator.

The address to which you will receive the emails will be the one that you have provided to the Club's membership secretary.

If you change your email address, please send updated details to: memsec@lotus7club.com



Northants, Beds and Bucks

AR **Ben Ferrey** would like to invite you along to this active area meeting.

The Northants, Beds and Bucks area meets on the third Wednesday of the month at The Old Swan in Astwood (postcode MK16 9JS). It's a nice village pub in a rural setting, but which is within easy reach of major places like Milton Keynes, Bedford and Northampton and major roads like the M1. We meet from 7:30, and the pub has plenty of space for Sevens. The friendly landlord provides us with a special area to park in, where the cars can be admired while you enjoy a pub dinner and a good natter with other members.

Over the past year, we have seen a fair number of new members join our area and after eating, the usual procedure is to mingle around the cars and discuss the usual questions - how to wear out Avon ZV3s (aka ditch-finders), whether or not to fit an aeroscreen and other such general upgraditus.

Informal blats are organised for weekend mornings starting near Milton Keynes and usually ending up with a stop for a mid-morning breakfast at Jacks Hill Cafe on the A5 near Towcester. However, we're always open to finding new blatting routes. The May Bank Holiday weekend saw us circumnavigate Rutland Water, although very wet weather conditions meant that we could have just as easily done it in a boat.

Every autumn, we do a blat in memory of Paul Marriott, who very sadly passed away in

2010. Paul was a former AR and was well loved within the club. Apart from his enthusiasm, he was known for his "interesting" navigational skills, which meant that a blat could take an unexpected route - which is of course just how a blat should be. Last year's memorial blat was to Stonehenge; after standing and admiring the view, we finished looking at our Sevens in the car park and went to take a quick look at some old stones...

As we are central to the country, it's quite common for members to meet up for organised blats to other parts, such as to Wales for the Taffia blats or to the Millwood BBQ. The Little Chef in Burford has become a

common coffee stop for blatting out west; for those who have not visited it, it is either the world's most downmarket barn conversion or the world's most upmarket Little Chef.

We have a large number of members in our area and the whole spectrum of ownership is represented, from new owners to veterans. We have some who enjoy track days and pushing their car to the limit and others who just enjoy the blatting experience. It's always a nice compliment to see members from other areas make the effort to come to our meetings; they are guaranteed a warm welcome.

Ben Ferrey email: northantsbedsbucks@lotus7club.com LF



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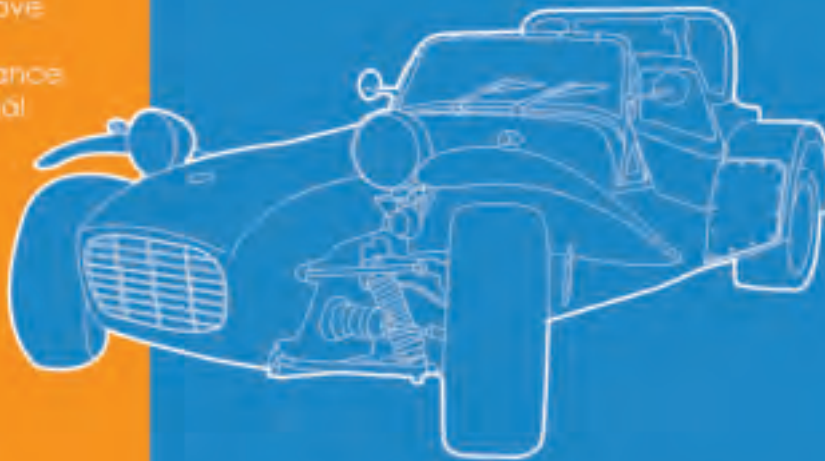
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R500 Duratec number 175 – one of the last of a great breed

Daniel French has certainly jumped into Caterham ownership with both feet. His first Seven not only came in kit form, but is an R500. He tells us a little about how he reached this point, and about the trials and tribulations of his ownership experience so far.

Since a very young age, I had a strong interest in building things, and sitting back and enjoying my creations. At the age of 7 or 8 I remember receiving a Lego technic car - it was black with moving pistons, gearbox, and folding seats - an impressive kit to build and probably my best Christmas present ever. The set was designed for 12-16 year olds, and as I was so much younger, my parents thought it would keep me entertained for days or maybe even weeks, and would give them an easy life whilst I was busy. Needless to say, it didn't take me more than a day or two to complete, so whilst I was ecstatic, my parents weren't quite so 'pleased' with the speed of my progress!

A few years passed and I was still chasing that dream of building something that no-one expected I could. This led me down the path of remote controlled cars. Tamiya's collection looked like perfect Christmas list material, but I was quite quickly advised that although their

cars looked good, they were more plastic than fantastic. So, I pestered my parents to take me to every local model shop over the course of a few weekends, and one distinctly sticks in my memory; I'm pretty sure it was called Raceline, in St. Albans. Chris, the owner, asked me what I was going to do with the car once I had built it. I didn't really know the answer, but he told me - "race it of course Daniel". I was only 10, but this sounded like a great idea. Having spent months doing chores around the house, paper rounds, jumble sales and so on to save enough for my first remote controlled car, I quickly handed Chris my £200 life savings and he in turn presented me with a "Kyosho Optima Mid", with the battery, charger, radio gear and so on required to get me up and running.

It took me a couple of weeks to build the kit - the instructions and parts were all perfect. However, I wasn't so good with an airbrush at that age so I got my dad to spray the body shell for me. When finished, it looked



absolutely awesome and I was naturally chuffed to bits with my achievement. I went racing at my local t/c car club near Stevenage and did quite well, receiving numerous trophies during my four or five year racing career. Along the way, I met many friends, and this was where Lewis Hamilton started his illustrious career. Even at such a young age I was surprised by how pushy and hard his father Anthony was. I'll never forget the way he roasted Lewis for not understanding the racing line at the age of 6... Anyway it certainly paid off for them!



I left the remote control car scene at the age of about fifteen and sold my machine to fund clothes, booze and efforts to impress the opposite sex (I wasn't very good at that, but spent many years trying).

Years passed, and over the last four or five winters I'd been desperately trying to find another interest or hobby to keep me entertained over the long dark nights. I found myself building another radio controlled model - this time an HPI Baja 5b SS, which at 1/5th scale was mighty big. Once completed however, I didn't really have a use for it, so it got sold on eBay.

The idea of building something else, that would bring back my childhood memories but which had some sense of scale was proving difficult to achieve as I'd now built pretty much the largest remote controlled buggy available. Feeling somewhat downbeat, I held a crisis meeting in a pub in Hitchin with Charlotte (my girlfriend), Yvonne (my sister) and her other half Derek (who's rebuilt plenty of motorbikes and was currently on a Vespa project). We'd had a few drinks when the idea of building a Caterham got put on the table. I wasn't convinced as I didn't think I'd have a use for a second car, but I did think that the build would be fun.

So, the "morning after the night before", I logged onto the Caterham website, downloaded the price list and put a call into Caterham South. I spoke to the receptionist, who said that there "wasn't a sales rep available to take my call!" Having heard in the past about a mildly blasé attitude from Caterham, I next put a call into the Midlands branch to see if anyone there wanted my business... It turns out that I ended up

speaking to Doug Parker, who at the time was fairly new in his position as Sales Advisor and commuted to Leicester every day from about a mile from where I live.

After the initial discussion with Doug, I configured myself a nice R300 with a few goodies. However my mate (Andy) who has an R300 suggested that if he ever got another Caterham, he would go for an R400 as the R300 didn't really have the power for long track straights. So I quickly convinced myself to go for an R400 instead, particularly as it already included many of the goodies I was after. It didn't end there though... Once in the R400 'column' of the price list, I added a few more 'extras' and realised that it was now getting quite close to the price of an R500 - for the difference, I really couldn't resist the upgrade.

I then gave Doug a call, as in a previous conversation he had said that the R500 was not available in kit form (there isn't a build manual for the R500, and apparently the last person who built one from a kit had encountered some issues and it had all got a bit messy). Nevertheless, not one to take 'no you can't have that' too easily, I pushed Doug, who spoke to someone back at HQ. He came back and said that it would be OK for me to order an R500 in kit form as long as I signed a disclaimer, recognised that the instruction manual would only be for an R400 and agreed to let Caterham set up the throttle bodies... I was very happy with this, so then it was just a case of deciding what colour to go for (and what to do with myself for the next five months until the kit arrived).

Delivery Day - 3rd February 2014

Delivery was scheduled for the day after my 37th birthday, (a great present to myself).

Ian the delivery driver turned up in the morning, unloaded all the boxes, along with the chassis, wheels, engine and bodywork. I signed off the paperwork and he wished me good luck with the build.

I decided to take stock of what had been delivered and to familiarise myself with the parts. I realised that a few bits were missing or incorrect, including:

- The wheels were not the 8 spoke variety normally associated with the R500
- The stickers were the old dual stripe, not the triple stripe I'd ordered
- The hood and doors were missing
- My seats had arrived, but had the name of Wright on the packaging and the harnesses hadn't been supplied either.
- There wasn't a fuel pump, but that was due in a couple of weeks

... and I didn't have a build manual So it wasn't a good start. I then received a call from the parts department to say that they had sent me pre-production prototype seats which needed immediate collection. This just added salt to the wounds and really cheesed me off; not only had they short supplied me items without telling me, but they now wanted my seats back too - the cheek! Reluctantly, I agreed and the seats were collected within about 6 hours. I still don't believe they were pre-production prototypes, but I'll never know for sure I guess... I do however know that a Mr Wright got his 620R around February...

The Build

With the build manual downloaded from Caterham's website (and laminated at a local printing company), I started at the front of car with the steering, wishbones, suspension and

front hubs. Apart from some small snags, this all went pretty smoothly. Next, it was onto the rear end, with the prop shaft, diff, De Dion tube, Watts link, A frame, and rear hub all going in well. The problem came when I then found a metal part in one of the boxes which turned out to be the prop shaft guard. So it was out with the diff and prop shaft again, so that I could painstakingly drill and rivet the guard to the chassis.

Two weeks into the build, I had a holiday booked. This proved to be good timing - I found myself spending every spare hour in the garage anyway, and the holiday set me the target of having everything ready for the engine to go in when I returned.

Back from holiday, I got straight back to work. With the gearbox and engine hoisted up on my newly ordered crane it was pretty tight fit but what a great feeling once it was in! The downside was that I couldn't start the car as the fuel pump still hadn't come into stock. Still, I had a couple more weeks of work to do to fit the carpets, tonneau cover, lights, wings and all those other finishing-up jobs required before the car was collected for its post-build check and IVA.

The car was picked up by Ian on the 24th March, at which stage it was 99% complete. I was still missing a few parts however, including the hood and doors, seats, the fuel pump and some other odds and ends. It had taken me five weeks of work to get to this stage, and considering that my only previous building experience had been the remote controlled cars and Lego kits, I was pretty happy with my achievement. The instruction manual can be unclear at times, and part identification was sometimes difficult, but with the excellent backup of Caterham's Derek Howlett it had overall been a good and fun experience. Anyway the car now off for a hopefully quick post-build check and IVA.

I'd supplied Caterham with a list of post-build remedial work that I knew was needed and I waited for the phone to ring to tell me when this had been done. However, with no update forthcoming I chased, waited, chased again then blew my top. Caterham had had my car for a couple of weeks, but I was told that no work had started as they were still waiting for the fuel pump to arrive, some twelve weeks after I had first been told that they were out of stock. I wrote to Caterham expressing my dissatisfaction - having spent close to £50k on this experience, I thought that it just wasn't good enough. This is where Dean Francis (Dealer Principal at Caterham Midlands) picked up the case, smoothed things over with me and explained how he was going to rectify the matter. I left things in his capable hands.

Dean had quite a lot to take on, but he didn't let me down, at all. A couple of weeks later the fuel pump arrived, and the car was put through its IVA. It actually failed the first time (on the noise test), but an adjustment was made and the car passed the very next



day. Dean then completed and sent off the paperwork to the DVLA and it was just a case of waiting for them to process the documentation. In the meantime Dean got the Midlands team to complete any outstanding remedial works, and the car was ready. On Friday June 6th, Dean personally delivered the car, and after the way I'd blown my top a few months previously, I'm sure he was happy to have me finally off his case!

The weather was perfect and I took it out for a quick blat - wow, what a great feeling! The handling, power, and braking were just off the scale in terms of fun, even though I was having to take things gently for the first 500 miles of running in.

That evening, I took a moment to reflect on what had happened. I'd built a car which I'd just driven - I really couldn't get my head round it... I guess that was the feeling that I had been looking for, so "job well done" by Dean and his team for turning me round from unhappy to "ecstatic".

Ownership - so far...

Having had the car for just a month at the point where I write this, I can report that the first

500 running-in miles were absolutely brilliant. The sense of occasion when fitting the steering wheel, strapping yourself in and firing up that loud engine is simply unbeatable.

Now I can use the engine's full potential, I can only describe the performance as "absolutely ridiculous". The car has been 100% reliable and simply hasn't missed a beat. It's a real head-turner, and I now find myself checking the weather every day just to try and plan a quick blat when I get in from work. It's fun on a scale so high that it just shouldn't be legal.

The only thing left now is to work out whether mine is the last R500 Duratec or not. Caterham's recent press release stated that number 174 (which was destined for South America) was the last, but I own number 175. However, I have also become aware of a number 177 (also supplied as a CKD kit) which went to a gentleman in Germany. So unless number 176 is in the UK, I believe that makes mine the last UK-based R500 Duratec. If this is the case, I believe that my story is a good send off.

So yes, I've declared myself a bona fide Caterham fan. If you are interested in following more of my story, please visit my blog at www.caterhamr500.co.uk LF



Maiden flights: welcome to our new members



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Mr Ian Haddrill, *Leamington Spa*
Mr D Vennard & Mr G Vennard, *Kent*
Mr C & Mrs M Parker, *Kendal*
Mr Jari Lindroos, *Salo, Finland*
Mr D & Mrs A Evans, *Sudbury*
Mr R & Mrs R Wallace, *Reading*
Mr A & Mrs T Wilkinson, *Gravesend*
Mr N Cook & Ms G Proctor, *Reigate*
Mr R & Mrs M Knox, *Whitstable*
Mr Tom Kenny, *West Chiltington*

Mr Paul Bell, *Middlesbrough*
Mr M Stanbridge & Ms A Brolly, *Burwell*
Mr Howard Elliott, *Doncaster*
Mr Martin Ball, *Wokingham*
Mr Travis Walker, *Bath*

Returning members

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August

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Check out Blatchat for further info.
Organiser: Dave Smith David.Smith@emerson.co.uk

Saturday 2nd – Sunday 3rd

Taffia 2 Day Blat

Starting from the Glan yr Avon Hotel, Usk, departing at 10:00am. Then we will drive all of our favourites in South Wales arriving at the Metropole Hotel, Llandridod Wells late afternoon for a few cheeky beers and a bite to eat. Sunday 3rd August will be a drive around North Wales with a 10:00am departure from the Metropole Hotel (or earlier for those without a hangover) taking in Evo Triangle and a few little extra roads or a visit to Portmeirion if you choose. A full road book will be available as per usual at the start of the event in Usk and at The Metropole on Saturday night / Sunday morning. We have a special deal with the Metropole Hotel, please call the Reservations Department direct (01597 823700) to make their own bookings quoting 'Lotus 7 Car Club'. Please book ASAP as the rooms fill quickly and before 6th June when the rooms will no longer be reserved for us. Limited availability.
Organiser: Alan Henderson taffia@lotus7club.com

Saturday 16th

Sandra Harrison-Moore Memorial Blat

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Goodwood Motor Circuit to Redhill Aerodrome home of the Surrey Air Ambulance
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More details to follow in due course
Organiser Gordon Cross 07990822631 & Rob Rennie surrey@lotus7club.com

Friday 15th

Lotus 7 Night, Poole Quay, Dorset.

6pm-9pm. A gathering of 7s and their owners from all over the country. Planning to organise some other Dorset based activities over the weekend (camping etc), details to follow. FREE to attend and Places Unlimited/No Booking Required
Contact: Jon Lee / 0747 240 5554 / jcelee@hotmail.co.uk

Sunday 24th

Western Canada Lotus 7 Club Meeting

The Western Canada Lotus 7 Club is organizing the 1st all Lotus 7/Caterham gathering in Red Deer, Alberta. This event will start at 10.30am in the parking lot of Great Chief Park, Red Deer, Alberta. Then a Blat out to Abraham Lake, returning to Sylvan Lake for a Luck steak & shrimp BBQ." This event is open to Lotus 7 & Caterhams only. For additional information please contact Western Canada AR Terry Johns at caterham@7cars.ca

Shoreham Air Show 30-31st August 2014

Club members are invited to exhibit their cars on the Club's display. Costs are still to be confirmed, but we're expecting it to be a donation of approximately £15 for two people



and the car. This covers both days (normal public entry is £18 per person, per day). Places are limited, so register your interest on the Club's homepage under the North Kent area of the Area Meetings section. The ESV will be present with the new range of regalia, and providing a meeting point and refreshments. All proceeds go to the Royal Air Forces Association charity www.rafa.org.uk. Apart from being a really good Airshow, there are plenty of other attractions, static displays, re-enactments, car displays, craft marquee, stalls and activities to suit all the family. More info at www.shorehamairshow.co.uk

September

Tuesday 2nd September

Brands Hatch GP Circuit 2.4 miles. Track Day
Exclusive Club session. 20 mins each hour. Free track driving instruction on a first come, first served basis. Limited spaces so be quick.
Noise Limit - 101db static. 92db Drive by.
Entry fee £300.00
Contact: Merrick Linnett.
merrick.linnett@lotus7club.com
Booking Form in June Low Flying

Saturday 6th

Carrotland Big Blat

The start will be at Stonham Barns <http://www.stonhambarnscomplex.co.uk/> as last year. You are invited to arrive from 0845hrs for "signing on"; the café will be open very shortly after that for hot/cold drinks and a range of goodies including bacon "butties". Cars will start at intervals from 0930hrs, having received full route instructions, and the route will include some of the fantastic evening roads that have been enjoyed on previous Big Blats and some new ones from the great selection that we have in Suffolk and Norfolk. There will be a drink/loo stop "en route" and the finish will be at Highfield Lodge in Thetford Forest. <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/highlodge> We shall have a dedicated parking area and a good selection of food and drink will be available in their café. There is no charge for participating in the event, which is only open to club members in their Caterham 7's. Full details are on the club web site & in May LF.
Organiser: Geof Carlton Smith
geofdebenham@gmail.com

Saturday 6th and Sunday 7th

Caterham racing at Croft

Croft racing circuit is hosting Caterham racing with rounds of the Academy, Roadsport, Tracksport, Supersport and R300 championships taking place. The Club will in attendance with the ESV on site throughout Sunday 6th. Qualifying and some racing takes place from 10am on Saturday, with Sunday's racing starting at midday and running until 6pm. Entry to will cost £13 per day on the gate but £10 in advance from Croft Circuit. The Club will have a dedicated area in the paddock to show off our cars. More details from John Aston at john.aston@lotus7club.com and www.croftcircuit.co.uk

Sunday 28th September 2014

The 2.2 mile Lotus Test track is back!!

Exclusive Club trackday running 3 sessions per hour for Novice, Intermediates and Expert drivers. Noise Limit 105db. Entry fee £199.00
Contact Merrick Linnett.
merrick.linnett@lotus7club.com
Booking Form in July Low Flying.

The Lotus Seven Club Speed Championship 2014

August

Sun 24: Curborough 2 sprint

the Sandra Harrison-Moore Memorial Sprint

Sun 31: Loton Park hillclimb

8 miles W of Shrewsbury,
access via A458 & B4393

September

Sat 13: Wiscombe Park hillclimb

6 miles S of Honiton, Devon,
access from the A375

OCTOBER

Sat 4: Anglesey National Circuit sprint

at Ty Croes, Anglesey

Sun 5: Anglesey International Circuit sprint

Enquiries to the Competition Secretary,
Matthew Willoughby
matthew.willoughby@lotus7club.com

See the feature in January's issue for more details of the series and venues. Spectators are welcome at all venues, and viewing at many events is free.



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The Fast and the Furious

Chris Dicken captured these shots of the Caterham Graduates series racing at Silverstone on 7th/8th June 2014

