

Lowflying

May 2015

for Caterham and Lotus Seven enthusiasts



Lotus Seven Club



THIS MONTH: GRAHAM MACDONALD EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW • CATERHAM OPEN DAY • WISH YOU WERE HERE • COURSE CAMARADE
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Sam Pearce – sam.pearce@lotus7club.com
t: +44 (0)1873 777303

Lotus Seven Club, PO Box 7, Abergavenny NP7 5WQ.

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By email to: lowflying@lotus7club.com
Advertising: see Club administration, above

Editor: Michael Calvert – editor@lotus7club.com

Editorial support

John Aston – john.aston@lotus7club.com
Andy Couchman – andy.couchman@lotus7club.com

Designer: Paul Sander

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t: 01204 523773 www.shanleys.co.uk

Contacts

Chairman

Martin Bushaway – t: 07802 262876
martin.bushaway@lotus7club.com

General Secretary

Gill Elwell – gill.elwell@lotus7club.com

Membership Secretary

Sam Pearce – see above

AR Coordinator

Ian Bruce – t: 07973 291144 arc@lotus7club.com

Competition Secretary

Paul Forster – paul.forster@lotus7club.com

Event Support Vehicle Manager

Paul Richards – paul.richards@lotus7club.com

Health and Safety

Gill Elwell – gill.elwell@lotus7club.com

IT Support

Barry Sweeney – sitemanager@lotus7club.com
Shaun Elwell – shaun.elwell@lotus7club.com

Members' Benefits Coordinator

Geoff Brown – t: 01793 876655
geoff.brown@lotus7club.com

NtL Coordinator

Caroline Grubb
2 Grafton Close, Gosport, Hampshire P012 4GD
nuketheleuk@lotus7club.com

Regalia Manager

Dave Ardley – dave.ardley@lotus7club.com

Track day Coordinator

Andy Wendler – andy.wendler@lotus7club.com

Management Team Members

Robert Jacobs – robert.jacobs@lotus7club.com
Martin Phipps – martin.phipps@lotus7club.com

Lotus Seven Historian

John Watson – f: 01923 836637
historian@lotus7register.co.uk

Valuations of Sevens for insurance purposes only

Guy Munday – t: 07718 385168 (work hours)

Our former Chairmen

David Mirylees (founder), Lol Pilfold, Nick Richens,
Roger Swift, Keith Jecks, Andrew Walker,
Steve Winterberg, Mark Durrant.

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introduction...



Photo by Dave Smith/Strat

It's been an interesting Sevening month for me in a number of ways. It started with having the opportunity to drive a full race-prepared Seven, with its Duratec engine and Quaife sequential gearbox, on the Brands Hatch Indy circuit. You can read all about my day in this edition, but needless to say, it was an experience which has left its mark on me (as well as some impure ideas about car upgrades that it's going to take some time to banish...)

Next came Caterham Cars' official showroom opening. All those who attended could not have failed to be impressed by their new facilities, and by the welcome offered. Let's hope that this heralds a new period of stability and growth for the company after the recent turmoil.

On that score, we had a very frank interview with CEO Graham Macdonald who has had the

unenviable task of untangling Caterham Cars from a range of other Caterham Group ventures including Caterham F1, the Renault joint venture and the CTI (Caterham Technology and Innovation) business. It seems like only yesterday that the Club arranged for members to visit the F1 base and CTI, and yet now they are gone. It's a shame in many ways certainly, but I am sure that what we are all most passionate about is the continued future of the Seven. On that front, it seems that Caterham is returning to its roots, and is purely focussing on delivering its thrilling Seven range to a growing customer base in the UK and overseas. For that, we can all be thankful.

Be seeing you!

Michael Calvert Editor

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New kids on the block, PT Sports Cars, host Easter Sunday open day

Photos by Chris Dicken

Chaterham Cars wasn't the only company to host an open day over the Easter weekend. The arrival of the sunny days of Spring was also perfectly timed for an open day at Maidenhead based PT Sports Cars. Although not specifically a Club event (the meeting was coordinated by Club member Christian Palmer via his Facebook group), most attendees were Lotus Seven Club members, and the final count for the day was around sixty cars with some eighty five attendees.

A wide variety of cars were present, representing a wide age range from early Lotus Sevens right up to the super-fast green 620R development car, built by Mick Attree and now owned by Club member Duncan Morrison. Andrew Walker's fabulous 1964 Series II was looking as immaculate as ever following its complete restoration (see *Low Flying Feb 2015 for details*), and was sat alongside a splendid R400D which had been built and finished only around 2 months prior.

Prizes were awarded for the most modified car, as well as for the driver who had travelled the furthest to attend (well done to Andy Woodward for making the drive up from Devon!) and the 2 Lotus 7s present were recognised with special Easter eggs too.

Ian Payne, joint owner of PT Sports Cars commented: "Though we've been around for

just over a year, many people are unaware of our existence. I'd been talking to Christian over the last few months and we agreed to host a meeting to help put faces to names, which would coincide with many cars coming out of their winter hibernation. To say we are pleased with the turnout and the buzz of the day would be an understatement".

The first guest, in a black R300K, arrived a little after 08:00 and many people

stayed until late afternoon, soaking up the atmosphere, drinking tea, eating Easter eggs and talking cars. The glamorous PT Sports Cars helpers did a great job of looking after everyone and many suggested another meet at the end of the summer.

And don't worry Mike Fitzgibbon, we won't mention how you broke down as you arrived at PT HQ. Saying that, there are worse places you could have chosen!"



Throckmorton Handling Day – (at Throckmorton Airfield, between Stratford upon Avon and Worcester.) Saturday 30th May 2015

Following last year's successful Club International meeting at Throckmorton, the Worcestershire area has arranged for us to take over this great facility once again. This former RAF site has a runway layout which provides a gigantic area of tarmac that will become a playground for the day where participants will be able to test their cars' performance and handling to the limits, in a safe environment.

The plan is to make best use of the expanse of tarmac in a variety of ways, including setting up:

Slalom course: explore the buzz of whistling around the course with just a few strategically placed cones for company

Drift area: it may look easy to "hold the back out" when you see the pros do it, but now it's your turn to find out...

Standing 1/4km: Who needs launch control? Practice the perfect getaway as you blast down the track.

Catering will be available on the day so there will be no need to leave the venue other than to occasionally top up the Sevens' fuel tanks

Event Pricing

Entry to the event, including full access to the driving activities is priced at £25 for a car and one driver. Additional drivers can share a car for £10. Passengers and other spectators are welcome to attend for £5, and under 16s are free.

Please Note: To keep event costs as low as possible, we will be asking that all attendees be willing to also participate in at least 1hr of marshalling to help ensure that the event runs smoothly and that everyone



gets a chance to enjoy the activities. It's actually a fun part of the day, and a great opportunity to gain a different perspective on the driving events (and to pick up useful hints so you can do even better when your time to drive comes around again!)

Also note that the minimum age for passengers on the driving events is 14. Helmets are not required.

Lotus Seven Club Throckmorton Airfield Day

Name Membership No.

Email Tel No.

Car and one driver £25. Number of tickets:

Additional drivers £10. Number of tickets:

Passengers and other spectators £5

..... Total remitted:

Event Date 30/05/15

- 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 'Seven Club Ltd' to: Sam Pearce, Lotus Seven Club, PO BOX 7, Abergavenny NP7 5WQ
- You'll receive an email or telephone call confirming your booking.
- Final instructions will be sent approx. two weeks before the event.
- Payment by cheque is preferred please; but you can call Sam on 01873 777303 to arrange payment by credit/debit card.

Back on track

The Club's Speed Championship is now back in full swing - by the time this magazine lands, the first two events at Goodwood and Hethel will have been completed.

The next event, on May 17th, sees the drivers competing the first of this year's two rounds at our spiritual home, Curborough Sprint Course (near Lichfield in Staffordshire). This Low Flying edition includes a report by Antony Hawkins on driving this challenging little circuit but if you have never had a chance to visit, it also makes for a great spectator experience too. Entry is free, catering is available on site and spectators can enjoy a great view of all of this technical, fast and exciting circuit. The format of the day is that the drivers will have two timed practice runs in the morning, followed by two or possibly more competition runs – the day wraps up with a prizegiving ceremony in late afternoon.



It will be particularly interesting to see how many of the novices get on this year. We have 9 newcomers to the championship this year, many of whom have registered to compete at Curborough. One to watch closely will be Jonathan Caine who is bringing along his Seven 620R which will be the first of this type to take part in a Lotus Seven Club speed event – a definite baptism of fire!

Curborough Sprint Circuit is off Wood End lane, Lichfield, WS13 8NF. Hope to see you there?



Tornado Time! Carrotland's Big Blat 2015

Saturday 5 September. *Photos by J R Wensleydale*

Geoff Carlton-Smith is very pleased to announce that the Club has been invited to finish this year's Big Blat at RAF Marham in Norfolk. Marham is home to the frontline squadrons of the RAF's Tornado GR4 Force, which is currently focused on operations in the Middle East alongside holding a "high readiness" state for contingency operations across the globe.

The date is September 5th 2015, and all Club members are welcome in their Caterham/Lotus Sevens **although please note below the need to register your details if you want to gain access to RAF Marham at the end of the blat.**

As per previous years, the event will kick off from Stonham Barns (Pettaugh Road, Stonham Aspal, Suffolk, IP14 6AT) www.stonhambarnscomplex.co.uk/ which has always made us very welcome. You are invited to arrive from 08:45 for "signing on"; the café will be open very shortly after that for hot and cold drinks and a range of goodies including bacon "butties".

The route, currently being finalised, but expected to be around 120 miles in total, will include a few of the fantastic se7ening roads that have been enjoyed on previous Big Blats, as well as some new ones from the great selection on offer in Suffolk and Norfolk. There will be a mid-blat stop, with light refreshment, at Ditchingham (just north of Bungay) and a "north-bound" crossing of the Norfolk Broads at Reedham before we head for RAF Marham.

Arriving at Marham, we shall be eating in the Officers' Mess (for a modest charge), have a tour of non-restricted areas which will include their historic military aircraft (Tornado GR1 as the

Gate Guardian, Victor K2 and Canberra PR9) and finally set up a group photo in front of a current Tornado. It is anticipated that the event will end around 16:30.

As you would expect, security at all military bases is tight so you will be required to bring along photo identity (photo card driving licence/passport) for you and your passenger on the day. You will not get into the base without it. You will also be required to advise us, in advance, of your intention to participate, along with your Lotus 7 Club membership number, so that we can give

the guardhouse a list of those coming. Again this is important as otherwise it will not be possible to get into the base.

There is no charge for participating in the event, which is only open to Club members in their Caterham/Lotus 7s.

We hope you will be able to join us - if you are planning to come and join in, please let us know by email at - bigblat@virginmedia.com. Please ensure that you include your full name, the full name of your passenger should you have one, your 7 Club area and, importantly, your 7 Club membership number.



Motorsport at the Palace 2015 Will you be there?



The 6th annual sprint meeting at Crystal Palace in London will be taking place over the Bank Holiday weekend of Sunday and Monday 24th/25th May. The Club will have a small stand at the event, and a number of our members will be taking part (although the event does not form part of our Speed Championship). Above all though, it's a fantastic day out for the whole family, so, why not make a date in your diary?

Many people forget that Crystal Palace is actually one of the oldest motor sport venues in the world and, since it staged its first motor race in 1899, it has played host to some fantastic battles involving many of the sport's greatest names. From its early days as an improvised venue for enthusiasts, right up until the circuit closed in 1972, Crystal Palace really was 'London's Own Circuit'. The heyday was probably the 1950s and '60s when this fast, challenging racetrack really came into its own, and Jim Clark, James Hunt, Stirling Moss, Jochen Rindt, Jackie Stewart, John Surtees and many more came to do battle in the leafy confines of the park. Sprint racing returned to the park in 1997, and celebrates the history of this fantastic track.

This year, there will once again be a great array of vehicles competing, and with the paddock open to spectators, you are able to get up close to the cars and chat to the drivers. Action away from the track includes a show area with single marque, classic car, and motorcycle club stands, in addition to the usual retail and catering facilities. Families are fully catered for with fairground rides and inflatables, too, so why not pack a picnic and enjoy a great day out?

The Lotus 7 Club will have a stand in the show area, although we are limited to 5 cars each day. At the time of writing, there are still a few stand spaces available. Those displaying will receive free entry for themselves and a passenger, although they will need to have their cars in place by 8:30am and remain on site for the day. If you wish to display your car on the stand, please email South London AR Adil Patel at southlondon@lotus7club.com ASAP, so that we can meet the organisers' deadline.



In fond memory of Steve Parker



It is with great sadness that I announce the passing of Steve Parker. Steve was well known by all, having been a major player in Seven circles for many years. He passed away on the afternoon of 31st March after an unexpectedly short illness. His cancer had spread and he was given two months to live. The end came much sooner than that but we understand from Pat that it was a blessing.

Twelve Sevens attended his funeral on Friday 17th April. The lead Seven was modified to carry his coffin. He would have appreciated that. We could picture him smiling away on his last journey in a Seven.

After first qualifying as an engineer, Steve used his skills as an AA patrol man and then set up as a motor mechanic. He later set up his business with two others to support the Caterham Cars factory team in their race series, and privateers too.

He formed Steve Parker Racing, focussing on Lotus and Caterham Sevens at Bishop's Stortford. In recent years he moved house and business to Bradenham in the heart of Norfolk. Many of his long time customers remained faithful and continued to bring their cars some distance to him for attention.

We immediately welcomed Steve into the Norfolk and Suffolk (Carrotland) fold, and he not only looked after our cars but also became a good friend to us. Highly thought of by everybody who used his services, Steve was fair, never greedy and always did a good job. He was always ready for a chat, gave advice freely, and would never let you down.

We all miss you Steve, Rest In Peace. *Steve Wright - Norfolk AR*





So – what was there to see? Many members had probably already visited Caterham's Crawley showroom, which after all, the company has been in since last August. However, extensive work has been going on there until really quite recently to make this a home that they can be proud of. Yes, as a showroom base, Crawley may lack some of the magic and history of the marque's old home in Caterham Town, but this launch aimed to demonstrate that a modern, purpose designed facility will always make for a far more appropriate base long term. When Caterham first took possession of the building, it could rightly have been described as somewhat cold and lifeless, but the significant work on graphics and artwork throughout the building has cured all that. Even without the hundreds of Sevens parked outside and buzzing about on the roads, there can be no doubt that you're in the right place now... The green and yellow Caterham theme is carried throughout the building, and a particularly nice touch is a huge "Seven time-line" wall

Opening Time

Owners turned out in force on Easter Monday to attend the official opening of Caterham Cars' Crawley showroom. Whether it was the offer of a free breakfast, the unseasonably good weather or just the excuse to escape from the family for a while, Caterham's staff were thoroughly delighted by the constant stream of cars which filled their extensive car park, as well as those of several other adjacent companies. It wasn't just local visitors either – owners had travelled from as far as the Netherlands and France to mark the occasion.

which recounts the history of the car from its inception to the present day.

Caterham Group CEO Graham Macdonald formally kicked the day off with a welcome speech where he thanked everyone for having turned out in such numbers and on a bank holiday weekend. "We are still a small British manufacturer, but we've invested heavily in the future of the business" he said. "Regrettably, we

had to move away from Caterham Town, but when I look around at what we have here and at the people who have come to wish us well, I think that ultimately, we've made the right decision." In a showroom brimming with both new and used cars, a key attraction for many people was the first chance to have a close look at the new Caterham Cars range which had been announced to the press just



a few weeks earlier. Beneath a festive set of "2015" balloons, the new range from the Seven 160 right up to the 620R was lined up, and prospective owners could compare the recently introduced "S" (Sport) and "R" (Race) finishes for themselves. Graham Macdonald was clearly proud of this relaunch *"For the first time in many years, Caterham is able to offer a complete range from the entry level 80bhp 160 right the way through to the 310bhp 620R, and every step in between."*

The microphone was next handed over to the keynote speaker for the event, Formula One designer Mike Gascoyne. Mike gave a fascinating insight into his career in Formula One, from his first days at McLaren to the challenges of trying to compete with the established teams at Team Lotus/Caterham F1. We all now know that this was a project which would ultimately prove unsuccessful,

but Mike laid the blame for this primarily on the failure of the Formula One authorities to cap team spending as has been promised at the point they entered the sport. Two Formula One cars were on display – one, a Team Lotus car, was the personal property of Mike Gascoyne, and was apparently complete with the exception of a Cosworth V8 engine (which we were told is easily available from Cosworth today as long as you have sufficient budget). The other car was a Caterham F1 chassis, which we were told had been acquired by Caterham Cars from the administrators. With the increased level of technology integration in the most recent F1 cars, there is no way that this is ever likely to see a Renault Power Unit installed in it again, so it will be interesting to see if Caterham's engineers can ever get this back to some form of running. 620R engine in an F1 chassis anyone?

With the presentations completed, the crowds drifted in different directions to take in the various activities on offer around the site. Some turned to retail – Caterham was having a clearance sale of a range of parts, and components such as aeroscreens, seats, wheels and more were being snapped up by eager buyers. Others' thoughts turned to their stomachs – throughout the day, long queues formed around the BBQ which had been laid on by a local butchers, and which dispensed a seemingly inexhaustible supply of food and drinks to the hungry masses.

In the workshops, Caterham were keen to show off the significant investment which they have made in equipping their facilities. Their five workbays were kept busy with a stream of customer cars which had booked in for a free Spring check. Each car received around 45 minutes of attention so that a list of any

Owners had travelled from as far as the Netherlands and France to mark the occasion.



suggested remedial works could be brought to the attention of their owners. A wide variety of machinery passed through the workshops from early Crossflows to R500s. The consensus from those taking advantage of this service was that these new workshop facilities were a major step forward for Caterham and a worthy upgrade in their new home.

Back in the main showroom, LEGO designer Carl Greatrix (who we interviewed in March's Low Flying) was getting a lot of interest in his Caterham models. He had brought along five different versions which he has been working on, from his first concept, to the latest evolution which he says is now built to a standard which fully complies with LEGO's apparently very demanding kit regulations. Almost without exception, the reaction from those admiring the kits was of disbelief that

Owners' cars, which ranged from early Lotus 7s to 620Rs (and pretty much every model in between!) provided a most artistic display.

they could have been designed using just generally available LEGO parts. Some 4 months into the 12 month period allowed, Carl has amassed around 8,500 of the 10,000 votes of support which he needs for the project to proceed to the next review stage. "The response and support has been fantastic," he said "and the level of interest huge. I decided to get in touch with Caterham officially regarding the project and their response has been truly magnificent too. It's been really good to get feedback from Caterham owners today and I really hope that we'll be able to take this all the way through so that Caterham LEGO models

become available on toyshop shelves around the world. If anyone hasn't voted yet, please go to the 'Lego Ideas' site and pledge your support as this will help push things forward".

The far end of the car park had been set up to represent the motorsport side of Caterham Cars. Alongside a line-up of racers representing popular Caterham motorsport series, an SP300.R had been mounted on stands for a pitstop challenge, where participants had to change all four wheels against the clock. As you would expect from a bunch of car enthusiasts, rivalries between friends and





family members were soon being established to see who could record the fastest times.

The range of cars on display was, as one might well expect, extensive. Within Caterham's premises, as well as the new car range, an extensive line-up of second hand Sevens was on display, including an ultra-rare R500 Evolution (remember those – 250bhp from a naturally aspirated K series, its capacity stretched to 2L?) Outside, owners' cars, which ranged from early Lotus 7s to 620Rs (and pretty much every model in between!) provided a most artistic display.

Talking of art, a rather unusual portrait of a Seven was being created in real time down at one end of the workshop. British artist Ian Cook has become famous for his artwork which is painted solely using radio-controlled cars, car tyres and toy car wheels. The idea for

the process apparently came rather by accident – already an avid car enthusiast and a trained artist, Ian was bought a radio controlled car for a Christmas present and was told “not to take it down your studio, and not to get paint on it”. Like any bloke would, he listened to only one bit of that conversation and from there came his ‘lightbulb moment’.

One aspect which Caterham Cars recognises it has somewhat lost through its move away from Caterham Town is the relationship which it had forged with the local community there. It may no longer share the name of the town in which it is based, but the company was clearly keen to use the opportunity of this open day to introduce itself formally to the Crawley community. Judging by the number of visitors who were attending in “non-Sevens” (which were discretely directed to a separate car park

nearby) this would have appear to have been a success. A local school had been invited to participate in an art project, the children being tasked with designing their own livery for a Caterham Seven. Judging by some of the ideas which they had produced and which adorned much of one of the showroom walls, bright colours were definitely the order of the day. The children were also well looked after with a slightly surreal Easter egg hunt which took place around the premises, which prompted many to wonder who within Caterham's staff had drawn the short straw to spend the afternoon dressed up as the Easter bunny...

It all proved to be a most successful and memorable day. Let's all hope that Caterham's new home will herald a new period of stability and growth for the company for many years to come. *LF*



Wish you were here

Michael Calvert enjoys a VIP trackday experience and reports that hiring a track car can make a lot of sense.

Trackdays are fantastic – that’s something that pretty much every petrolhead will agree with. There can be a range of issues to consider however; not everyone is lucky enough to have a car properly prepared for track use, and many owners don’t want to put their cherished vehicles through the rigours of lapping a circuit. It can also be something of a solitary pastime – friends and family may be able to come along to watch or even to enjoy a passenger ride, but wouldn’t it be great to be able to share the track driving experience with colleagues and work acquaintances? Wouldn’t it also be fantastic to be able to choose between a range of different vehicles and to be able to drive a genuine race car?

BOSS Racing certainly seems to think so, and have expended their business to include a track day car hire and hospitality service. This new venture, launched earlier this year, builds on their experience of supporting drivers at race events, only here tailored towards the trackday market.

I was invited to join them at an event on the Brands Hatch Indy circuit, and from the moment that my booking instructions arrived, my excitement levels began to rise. My drives for the day were to be one of BOSS Racing’s Caterham C400 race cars, and a Radical SR3 – both quite significant departures from the Crossflow Seven which I normally get to enjoy.

Pulling into the paddock, I wasn’t entirely sure what to expect. I had been told to make my way to garage 30, which was down at the end of the pitlane, but in the typical *mêlée* of cars getting ready for a trackday, I wondered if I would have any problems finding my hosts. I needn’t have worried; BOSS Racing’s huge race transporter, out of which the two race cars had already been unloaded, made locating our pit garage for the day rather easy. The cars, in their matching white and dayglow orange race liveries, sat waiting in the sunshine, the team having already prepped them ready for my arrival. I was beginning to feel like a pampered racing driver already...

Michelle Watson, BOSS’ Client Engagement Manager offered me a most welcome cup of coffee and a hot cross bun as I got to meet other members of the BOSS team who had turned out for the occasion. Company owner Rob Singleton introduced me to Colin Watson who is working to develop the trackday hire business, along with Ben Bonello who is responsible for marketing. Business pleasantries aside, it was immediately clear that all were keen car enthusiasts and racers

who wanted to make sure that the day went smoothly and that I had a great time.

I was shown around the Caterham which would be mine for the day - “93”. This C400 race car is powered by a 220bhp Duratec engine and competes regularly (and very successfully) in the Classic Sports Car Club Mag 7 Series. As you might expect from a race car, it is fitted with a moulded bag seat and a full cage. Unlike some race cars you see however, it is beautifully presented and looked fantastic in the early morning sunshine. One aspect of driving which I had not considered prior to arriving however was that it was equipped with a sequential six speed Quaife gearbox. Never having tried a sequential gearbox before, this was going to be quite an introduction.

My thoughts were interrupted by a call over the tannoy to remind all participants that cars needed to be noise tested before being allowed on track. It was here that I began to appreciate that today was going to be somewhat different to the normal trackday where you are on your own. “Don’t worry, we’ll look after that for you” came the immediate response from ‘my team’.

Having been shown the best way to enter the car through the roll cage, I settled into the driver’s seat for a quick briefing. The car felt in many ways familiar – definitely a Caterham like the one at home in my garage, yet this one was clearly a highly developed racer. The sparse dash was dominated by the Stack cluster, whose LCD display indicated a large N for neutral. “You’ve never driven a sequential gearbox before? Don’t worry, it’s easy. The only problem is that once you have tried one, you’ll never want to go back to an H pattern box again.” I was informed that although this car wasn’t fitted with flat shift, I would be able to change up through the gears using the merest lift of the throttle. Already somewhat overwhelmed at being entrusted with someone else’s race car, my response was that I thought I was hard-wired to fully depressing the clutch when changing gear, and that I couldn’t see myself getting out of that habit too quickly.

In-car briefing complete, it was time for the circuit briefing from the chief marshal. The typical (yet vital) rules about flags, driving etiquette and overtaking having been dispensed, a murmur of concern rippled around the room at the announcement that because Brands was playing host to Touring Car racing at the weekend, today’s format would be different to normal, and the track would be run anti-clockwise. Yes, the Brands staff had quite correctly anticipated that many of the somewhat bleary-eyed participants



would take a few seconds to twig that today’s date was indeed April 1st...

By the time I returned from the briefing, the car had successfully passed the static noise test, although the team did express some concerns that the rigid drive-by trackday noise limits in force that day might be somewhat restrictive for this full-on race car. There was only one way to find out however.

With the pitlane open, it was time to start thinking about venturing out on track. I’ve been lucky to have been entrusted with a few other Caterhams over the years, but I still feel a sense of trepidation at driving someone else’s car, particularly one as highly developed as this. Sitting stationary, I tried pulling and pushing the sequential gearlever to select different cogs, but with little success. “Don’t worry, as soon as you get moving, the gears will slot in easily” I was told. With no desire to make a fool of myself by doing something silly like stalling as I pulled away, I had to trust them. First gear engaged with a “clunk” and I gingerly rode the clutch and headed towards the pitlane exit. Visor down and off we go. Pull back for second,



Never having tried a sequential gearbox before, this was going to be quite an introduction.

short-shift into third and down Paddock Hill we go.... Fourth, fifth – the tight right-hander of Druids is approaching fast, so it's two stabs forwards on the gearstick to drop to third. "Hmm, this is fun".

The Duratec engine pulls beautifully, and (as predicted), I'm getting used to the gearbox already, I'm nowhere near up to speed yet though; I do feel somewhat conspicuous in a fully-liveried racecar which is circulating well off the pace, but it's still a great place to be. As the tyres come up to temperature and I begin to fall into a rhythm, my speed begins to pick up. On the first couple of laps, I was being careful not to hold anyone up, and had been gladly waving other cars by. Now I am keeping up with them, and soon, as I begin to get the feel for this fantastic race machine, I become the one who is being waved by lap after lap. The gearbox is indeed a revelation and, without even realising it, I soon find myself swapping

up through the cogs along the straight with barely a lift, before being heavy on the brakes at Paddock Hill and swapping down through the box with a quick flick of the wrist. "Hmm, today's drive could indeed lead to some expensive upgrades once I'm back home..."

I pull back into the pits for a break. As I sip a coffee, the car is topped up with fuel, has its tyre pressures adjusted and its wheel nuts checked. Back out on track and things are really starting to flow. I'm particularly enjoying getting the power on early on the way out of Clarke Curve in third and back onto the start/finish straight, when a black flag is waved in my direction. My guilty conscience kicks in immediately – have I done something wrong? I'm pretty sure I've been overtaking courteously and although I think it unlikely, I check my mirrors to confirm that no, there's definitely no one tucked up behind me that I haven't let past either. Back in the pits, a

marshal politely informs me that, just as the team had feared, the car is just tripping one of the drive-by noise meters, (although it's more than his job's worth to tell me which one).

On your typical trackday, this would have been "game over" for the day, but luckily the BOSS team had foreseen this eventuality and had a special backup exhaust system available to fit. It would take them twenty minutes or so to get it ready though, so we agreed that I should continue lapping in the meantime, but changing gears a little earlier to keep the exhaust noise down a bit. I soon found that the wide torque band of the Duratec engine meant that this was no real hardship at all; in fact, I could exit the corners a whole gear higher than I had been doing previously without it having any meaningful effect on my speed.

Come my next break, and it was time for the team to swap exhaust systems for their "quieter" version, with a larger silencer and

the exhaust exit arranged so that it points underneath the back of the car. It's at times like this that having your own mechanic with a lorry full of parts and tools really pays off. When I express my gratitude for the rapid work however, the team seems almost surprised – maybe it's easy for them to forget that this sort of service, which so many racers come to depend on from their teams, is pretty much unknown in trackday circles.

Back out on circuit, I make a point of going back to using full revs for a lap or two and am pleased to confirm that the exhaust swap has indeed done the trick. Although I know that I am still nowhere near to exploiting the full potential of this car, at least I no longer feel a fraud lapping in this full race machine. The car is set up beautifully – it turns in sharply, is wonderfully predictable in its handling and puts the power down cleanly on the corner exit despite the 220bhp being put through its road legal rubber.

Back in the pits later that morning however, the Radical is beaoning; it's an SR3 with a Hayabusa-derived 1300cc engine. Finished in the same white and orange company livery as the Caterham I have been driving, it looks just fantastic and I know that the team can feel my eyes being drawn towards its lines. I can't begin to describe the luxury of having a choice of trackday machines lined up to drive, but suffice it to say that when Ben catches my eye and says *"fancy of go in the Radical next then?"* I can't say no. It's a car I've always had a hankering to try, even if once again, butterflies start returning to my stomach at the prospect. I have read tales of how they can catch out the unwary and really need to be driven hard to create downforce before they begin to perform. Fact or fiction?

My hosts are keen to reassure, however. *"Just take your time to get the tyres up to temperature over four or five laps before you begin to push on"* comes the first advice. *"You'll probably worry at first that the brakes aren't working properly, but once you get some heat into them they'll come into their own. Don't count on changing down gears to give you much engine braking either – it's only got 1,300cc and it won't slow you down much. The front end will also feel really light after driving a Caterham too. The rack's really quick, so it can feel a bit wandery, but don't worry, it's just that there's such little weight over the front wheels. Oh, and one other really important thing – if you spin and go round more than 90°, please make sure you get the clutch pedal down, otherwise you'll shear off the starter motor/reverse gear. It's an expensive repair, and it's not one that we can complete at the track"*. Gulp.

The radical is sitting in the pit garage on a set of slick racing tyres, and I am offered the choice of going out on these, or of swapping them for grooved road tyres. Decisions, decisions... Much as the experience of driving on slicks appeals, I decide to take the "easy" option and ask for the road tyres, figuring that



Feeling like a racer, Michael gets up to speed in one of BOSS' C400 race cars.

they'll be more forgiving and quicker to warm up. Once again, the team swings into "race support mode" – a QuickJack is whipped out of the lorry, the central wheelnuts are loosened and the wheels are swapped over in a matter of minutes. I climb in, and marvel at the view over the bonnet. You realise just how much wider a Radical is than a Seven, and I find it somewhat disconcerting that I can't quite see where the front wheels are, something we just take for granted in a Caterham. I'm well out of my depth when it comes to the controls too - despite the array of switches having logos adjacent to them, I'm going to need a briefing again here. This car runs with a sequential 'box too, although because this one is motorbike-derived, this time you need to push forward for first, then back to work through the six available speeds. The view down the bonnet rather helps fuel my dream that I'm at the wheel of a mini-Le Mans car, and the start-up procedure feels properly racy too – select neutral, then switch on the fan and the fuel pump before thumbing the start button.

I think that the team senses that I'm a little tense behind the wheel. *"Don't worry, just go out and enjoy it"* I am told (and not for the first time today). I for one don't know how they can hand their beloved cars over to a relative stranger so freely. *"You will need to use all the revs in this car though – unlike the Duratec, here you'll find the power at the top end"*.

I start to turn the wheel ready to pull out into the pit lane. Crikey, they weren't wrong

about light steering, even when the car is still stationary. With a touch of the accelerator pedal, the revs flare – and I stall. Not good...

Engine fired up again, and I manage to get the car moving towards the pit lane exit without too much kangarooing. I replay the advice I've been given, trying in particular to focus on getting the tyres warm, on not expecting much from the cold brakes and on not counting on engine braking. *"Gears to go, brakes to slow"*, I repeat to myself over and over again.

Then I'm off; the engine snarls behind my head as I pull out onto the track. As I'd promised myself I would, I start off pathetically slowly, the drivers of quite mundane vehicles doing a double-take as I wave them past me on the straights. After the solidity of a Caterham, the steering is indeed disconcertingly light and at first it feels like the front tyres cannot be gripping the road at all. However, as I begin to pick up the pace, it's clear that in fact there is an immense amount of grip available, it's just that you have to readjust your expectations as to the feedback being provided. As the laps pass, I begin to trouble the shift lights on the dash, and to exploit just some of the potential which is clearly available in this car. It takes a little time, but soon the overtaken became the overtaker as the Radical began to flatter this very average driver's skills. This being a trackday, no timing was allowed, but I suspect that by the end of the day, my



The Radical may have lower torque, but it makes up for it with revs, aerodynamics and downforce

Radical lap times were similar to those I was achieving in the Caterham. Having said that, I felt oh so very aware that I was nowhere near even beginning to scratch the surface of the performance that this car had on offer – aerodynamics and downforce provide a whole new set of variables to play with, an area of which I had no previous experience.

After a fantastic morning, I was glad of the lunch break to take stock of everything that I had seen and done. Driving the Radical had been an amazing experience and one that will live with me for a very long time. It was actually much easier to drive at “reasonable” pace than I had expected it to be, particularly once you had got used to the fact that all the controls needed just the most delicate of touches. The Caterham C400, however, was a gentle beast – a car which felt as comfortable to drive as any Caterham does, and yet which had been set up and developed to perform at the highest level on track. It was, after all, a multiple race winner, so any limiting factor could only be the driver. The good news was that I still had a whole afternoon of track time ahead of me to try to extract as much as I could from the cars at my disposal.

I won't give a blow-by-blow account of the afternoon, during which I continued to enjoy both cars greatly. I spent the first part of the session getting more used to driving the Radical, mindful of the fact that this may very well be the only opportunity that I would have to enjoy such specialised machinery on track. Later in

the day, however, I found myself gravitating back towards the Caterham, to be reminded of just what a capable, enjoyable and dependable track car a Seven is, particularly one as well set up as this. Throughout the afternoon, interested passers-by visited the garage, attracted by the liveried race cars, support vehicles and staff, further increasing my feeling of being a pampered race driver for the day.

As you will no doubt have picked up by now, I had a thoroughly enjoyable day, and based on my experience, the BOSS trackday hire service is one which I would thoroughly recommend. They are able to provide a range of services tailored towards either corporates or individuals and they aim to provide a day that will be remembered for a very long time. The market for corporate events is a crowded one, but the opportunity to drive real race cars, supported by an experienced race team on major circuits in the UK or even overseas is surely a unique proposition. To me at least, as corporate events go, this would be in an entirely different league to the more typical golf awaydays and the like which are the staple favourites for many firms. As an individual employing BOSS' services and driving their cars, I can personally attest to the fact that their involvement takes trackday driving to a whole new level. Yes, the cost per person is inevitably higher than if a car is shared between several drivers on a corporate event, but the prices are far from unreasonable, the cars are perfectly prepared, and anyway, most people kid themselves about the real cost of track

driving their own cars... Above all, there's that little bit in most of us which makes us feel like a frustrated race driver – my trackday experience with BOSS Racing came the closest that I'm ever likely to get to being a genuine racer supported by a team.

The trackday hire business is a new venture for BOSS, but it's one which they are well placed to succeed in based on their extensive race experience. Cars which they currently have available to hire, in ascending range of performance, include a 1.6L K Series Caterham, a pair of C400 racers and the Radical SR3. The higher performance cars would be restricted to drivers who have already demonstrated some track experience, although the BOSS team is able to provide driving tuition and advice to help drivers to progress. Prices start from £295 for an evening's hire of the K Series Caterham, which includes the first tank of fuel, an onsite race mechanic, helmet loan, insurance, video footage of the session and light refreshments. You need to add to this the cost of the trackday itself as well as extra fuel beyond the first tank, and BOSS are keen to help customize the day in any way practicable to meet your needs. Base prices are for events at Brands Hatch (the circuit most local to the team's base in Longfield, Kent) but BOSS are happy to travel to pretty much any circuit in the UK or overseas that may take your fancy. It strikes me that you could easily arrange a corporate event driving a race car around a fantastic track like Spa for less than it would cost to arrange to play golf on a good quality course. I know which one I would prefer if I had the choice... *LF*

Who are BOSS Racing?

BOSS Racing may not be a name which is familiar to all, but the company was founded over 40 years ago by Dave Singleton, and within a short time was producing race engines which won back-to-back championships. In 2008, Dave's son Robert, who had previously worked for Caterham Cars in their engine shop and service department joined forces with his father, and naturally started specialising in engineering services for Caterhams. Since taking the company over, Robert has expanded the business into a range of areas including a full service and maintenance workshop, 4 wheel alignment and flat floor setups, chassis repairs, kit builds and upgrades to race and road cars. BOSS also provides race car set up and support for racers in a number of series, ranging from Caterhams to TVRs, as well as full engine shop facilities. The track day hire business is a new development for this year, which aims to provide trackday experiences for both corporates and individuals, driving BOSS' race cars at circuits in the UK and overseas, with full hospitality and engineering support.



The View from the Top

As the crowds began to drift away from Caterham Cars' showroom opening, we were able to grab some time with Caterham Group CEO **Graham Macdonald**. His time was in great demand, and a significant number of journalists had requested time-slots for discussions with him. However, even with time at a premium he was happy to give his views on the evolution of Caterham's business over recent years, and on his plans for the Seven's development

Good afternoon Graham. This showroom opening has been a long time in the planning, and Caterham has been through some difficult times recently – how are you feeling after today?

"Yes, there is no other way of saying it, but we were rather 'dragged through the hedge backwards' by the events in Formula One last year. However, as you say, the purpose of today with the showroom opening and the recent launch of our new Seven models has been to show both our existing customer base and prospective new customers what the core of our business is, and that we are here for the long term. All the other projects that have been swirling around within the Group in recent years were great and exciting, but the Caterham Cars business and the Seven within it have always been core. We have to recognise that the way that the Formula One project finished, with Kolles taking ownership and rather bringing it into disrepute didn't help, but today has been all about saying to people 'This is us'. Those owners who been part of the Caterham journey for many years can have the confidence that we are very much still there, focussing on the core business, launching new products and investing in new facilities. It's great to see that so many people here taken the opportunity to have a nice drive, to share in a bacon butty and of course to have a look around. In fact, this sort of concept was always in our minds when we selected this location. I have this vision that maybe once a month we could arrange a Sunday breakfast where customers could drive down, park up, enjoy a bacon butty and then head off down the country roads of Sussex, Surrey or Kent. On a day like this, with a Seven to drive, what more could anyone want?"

As you alluded to, last year was clearly a tough period for Caterham. How is morale in the team now?

"After a day like today, morale can only be high! Being totally honest though, at a senior

management level, we have inevitably ended up feeling rather battered and bruised in recent months. Those who were directly involved with the Renault project and with Formula One have clearly had a challenging time. I've also had the difficult job over the last twelve months or so of having to let a lot of staff go from the Group, which is never pleasant.

In the Seven business however, the existing staff have always been extremely positive. In fact, the only real problem that we have on this side of the business has been being able to build cars quickly enough to meet demand. We've been working to ramp up production to fifteen units a week, and we've been finding that our supplier base has been struggling to keep up with the pace. I know that this has then caused some frustrations, particularly in terms of parts availability. What we are actually looking at now is reducing production slightly which will regrettably push out the order book a little, but it's the only way that I can let the supplier base catch up so that we can have access to the spares that we need. We really have been somewhat victims of our own success recently..."

I believe that a large proportion of cars are destined for export these days. Which are the export markets where you see the most growth potential?

Yes, we have seen a huge growth in export sales over the past few years, which has been fantastic. We have recently seen Japan overtake France as our largest overseas market, primarily because of the Seven 165 (*the Japanese version of the 160 LF*). There is just a huge demand for it out there – the Japanese have always loved Sevens of course, and the 165 meets the 'Kei car' regulations which make it particularly attractive. Our importer there is just desperate to take as many cars as he can get. We're actually having to limit him – we're building 3 160s a week, and these have to cater for the rest of Europe as well. His message to us is that he will sell as many 165s as we can ship him, and if we were only to send him that one model of

Seven, he'd be perfectly happy. All in all, this model has been a huge success, which has helped sales in Japan to pass the 100 unit mark for the first time last year.

It's not all about Japan however. Formula One really helped to get Caterham's name known around the world, and on the back of this, we have seen a whole raft of new markets open up to us, particularly in terms of being able to set up new race series. In many of these new markets, it's simply not been practicable to get the cars through road use homologation in the way that we have been able to in Europe, Japan and the like; the authorities simply do not know what to do when they are first presented with a Seven - no ABS, open front wheels, no airbag... Instead, we've promoted Caterham's racing heritage in these countries, to great success. For example, we've just set up our first race series in Taiwan, where twenty Sevens lined up on the grid for the first time only a couple of weeks ago. We've got Columbia coming up – they have taken twenty two cars, as did Turkey where racing starts next month. It's been much the same in Malaysia and China too... So, racing gives us a different route into these countries. We're not now so reliant on the state of a small number of markets – we've now got a whole range of them."

On a personal level, does this mean that you're spending a lot of your time travelling the world?

I've got a great team on the export side who are doing the deals, and are working with the distributors and dealer networks that we are setting up, but yes, these export sales do take me out of the country quite a bit. It's always a pleasure to get to meet partners and customers around the world. There's one key country I haven't managed to visit yet though – Japan. After eight years, I still haven't managed to make that trip happen, but I'm hoping that I will get out there soon.

So - is this the end of Caterham's aspirations to become a multi-product company?

The reality is that Tony and Din Kamarudin had aspirations to do a great many things - a bike project, a new car project and so on... Part of

We were rather 'dragged through the hedge backwards' by the events in Formula One last year



my job, (which was sometimes rather difficult), was to try to keep them on a leash. I knew how hard it would be at grass roots to be able to deliver on some of the concepts that they had.

When Caterham came out of the deal with Renault for the new car development, we parted amicably. They have supposedly said that they are still carrying on with the Alpine project, although I have to say that I have still seen nothing more than artists' impressions, and certainly not any pictures of a new car itself. We've retained all the intellectual property that we gained during the development, but we've parked it, and for the time being we've agreed with the shareholders that the goal is to ensure that Caterham Cars can function as a steady, stand-alone and profitable business. Unfortunately, we have to recognise that with all the work that went on with F1 and CTI, it hasn't shown profits for the last year or two, although the underlying business is profitable. So my objective is to bring it back onto the straight and narrow – which is exactly what we have done with the new product range, the homologation of cars across Europe, and the introduction of new race series around the world. After this, we'll see where we go from there. Maybe we'll look at new opportunities, but in a more controlled fashion rather than the somewhat scattergun approach that we maybe followed a while back. The fact that I'm still here with a smile on my face tells you that I still think there's a great future for the Seven - our focus has never been away from that. Other opportunities with, for example Renault could have been great, but they were fraught with danger. They were coming from one angle, we were coming from another and we were trying to meet in the middle. It quickly became apparent that we couldn't meet in the middle because Renault were the 'big boys' who always wanted to impose their ways of doing things. When we split up, it certainly took a lot of headaches away. It was sad, because it

would have been great to bring a true road car to market, but it was a very expensive process in which the shareholders invested a lot of money. Now we have pulled back, we are able to get on with our core business; we'll regroup and see where we go next."

CTI were closely involved with the development of cars like the Seven 160 and the Seven 485. Does the loss of that engineering expertise limit your ability to evolve the range?

"CTI were primarily there to support the Renault project, but as a lot of them were ex-Lotus, there was a lot of experience in niche vehicle manufacture in the team which was great for us at the time. It meant that we had access to that expertise fairly "cheaply", as CTI was being funded by the shareholders, and it probably also helped bring products to market more quickly. However, within Caterham Cars itself we have always maintained a core of engineers who know the Seven inside out, are passionate about its future and have experience of introducing new models, new engines and the like so there's no reason why we can't do this again. For some major developments, it's possible that we might need to add to the team by buying in specialist skills – this does have time and cost implications, but is perfectly feasible.

One of the key things that I have been working on with our executive team is to ensure that we are planning for the future. There was a time, certainly when I was back as Caterham's Finance Director, when we were rather reactive. There were periods where sales were booming and this wasn't too much of a problem - the team could rather sit back and not need to do too much to keep things ticking along. However, when the market began to get a bit tougher, there'd be a mass panic about 'what do we do to boost sales?' To be honest, that was exactly the sort of approach you'd expect for a business run by venture capitalists – you

had to make do with minimal expenditure, but then of course when sales dipped and you weren't showing returns, there was a mad panic to get things done. Now, with our major shareholders Tony and Din, we are able to take a far more long term view. My message to the team now is to plan for one year, two years, three years and beyond. This new model range we have just introduced, for example, has been under development for about two years... and we do have a whole load of other ideas we are working on, so watch this space! Some of these are projects that we are choosing to explore because we want to, others because we have no choice. For example, we know that the Duratec engine has a finite life, so we have a plan in place for its replacement."

There seems to be a renewed interest in Caterham promoting kit builds – is this an intentional shift?

"Yes, in fact you may have noticed that we have set up one corner of the showroom with graphics to depict a typical single garage, to demonstrate that it's a perfectly practicable space to build a Seven in... Kit builds were an area that we had somewhat moved away from promoting heavily, but what we see today is that there is a definite group of people out there with time on their hands and who want to build their own "project", whatever that may be... We want to make sure that the Seven is clearly on their radar."

Caterham is a tiny fraction of Tony Fernandes' business empire. How aware would you say his is of the day-to-day challenges facing Caterham Cars? Can you paint a picture of his involvement in the business?

"Basically Tony (Fernandes) and Din (Kamarudin), our shareholders are no different now than they have ever been. I have pretty much total autonomy to run the business with my team, and we report back to them on a quarterly basis. With Tony, it also tends to be "I'm in the UK, come and see me tomorrow morning at 09:00" – and this whether it be a Saturday, a Sunday or a Bank Holiday! But apart from memorable announcements along the lines of "I'm going to do this deal with Renault, make it work", they have a pretty hands-off approach to the business... It's generally "get on and run the business Graham", but with the odd grenade thrown in for good measure..."

On a personal level, do you get to take a Seven home at weekends very often?

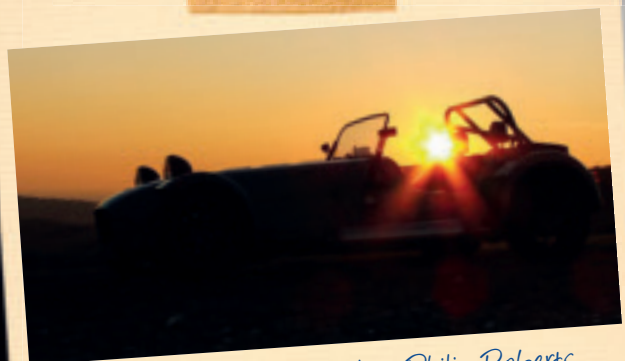
"You bet I do. I miss the R400 I used to own terribly, although I was delighted to see it here today with its new owner. The reason I sold it was that at the height of my involvement with F1, I was so rarely at home, and it just didn't make sense to have it sitting unused in the garage. Now that the business has gone full circle and I'm able to focus my attention fully on the Cars' business, maybe it's time for me to get myself something a bit special. Having owned an R400, my next car would have to be some sort of 620R derivative..." LF



John Fenwick's (Virden on BlatChat) Beastie has been patiently waiting for the first blat of the year. Meanwhile (below left), Antony Hawkins' Seven seems to be desperate to get to the other side of the garage door too...



The expression says it all. Craig Harding took this selfie after he had an "AA moment" on the Lightwater bypass



The sun setting on a great day. Philip Roberts sent us this atmospheric shot from Dorset of an apparently blue 7.

Richard Nichol enjoyed a great blat around his favourite roads of the Brecon Beacons. The only frustration was having to pull up every now and again to let his Porsche-owning friends catch up.



Getting friendly with the neighbours. Steve Lilley sent us this photo from last year's 'Supercar Siege' show at Leeds Castle where the Police camera partnership were set up next to our Club display.



Ready to go! Neil Gilby's Blackbird Caterham shows that with a little ingenuity, packing everything you need for a trip to Le Mans needn't be a problem.



Left: Light restoration required... The Dutch may be famous for growing a variety of crops, but Arno Huberts was surprised to find this Seven Series 2 chassis amongst the tulip fields.

Cours camarade, le vieux monde est derrière toi *

*"Run comrade, the old world is behind you"

John Aston considers how the Seven was regarded in the motoring press of his teenage years.

As a teenager in the late 1960s, my only access to the world of cars and motor sport came from the motoring press. We may have more titles now, but sales are tiny compared to their heyday forty years ago when magazines were very different to the picture heavy and text light stuff we now see in WH Smiths. But the biggest difference was in style - the two rival weeklies, *Autocar* and *Motor*, were pure establishment; often deferential, always humourless and typically woefully out of tune with the zeitgeist. We may have had revolution on the streets (the title of this article is one of the slogans from Paris in May 1968), a Hendrix sound-tracked war in Vietnam and the colourful explosion of Pop Art, but for the motoring hack it was the mind blowing innovation of the new Ford Escort's rack and pinion steering and dog bone grille which kept him awake at night. Nothing illustrated the sheer plodding earnestness of that era than *Autocar's* road test of the Ferrari Daytona. It dutifully recorded the 174mph top speed and titanic acceleration bested by its 4.4 litre quad cam V12, but the test went on to say, in a tone of pursed lip disapproval, that "...we found the handbrake disappointing". That's right - the sodding handbrake, the utilitarian piece of kit which anchors the car when it's parked, the one thing which even a Maranello artisan could not make sexy and yet here was a journalist who had been looking forward to something better and had been so cruelly let down. What had he been expecting? New standards of handbrakery being demanded by Enzo from his design team so that not only would we be able to covet the thump in the back from 352bhp, but savour the iron grip of a world class handbrake too?

But *Car* magazine wasn't like that - back in the '60s it was as cool as *The Face* was to become in the '80s and it employed a dazzling array of writers, including LJK Setright (who once reviewed a car in sonnet form), Doug Blain, Henry Manney and a bonkers cast of art directors who were clearly no strangers to recreational drugs. *Car* was fiercely combative and opinionated, made iconoclasm its house style and shocked the staid weeklies with Peter Blake

inspired artwork and arresting pictures - such as the one featuring a semi-nude girl draped over another Daytona - but this time the Peter Brock designed Cobra Coupe. Headlines were no less subversive - "We start the third world war" was the cover slogan overlaid on a picture of a Rolls Royce Silver Shadow being cornered on its door handles as it failed to keep up with a Mercedes 600. One year it offended every European reader by running a comparison test between the Ferrari 250 GTO and the Pontiac GTO - one of the early muscle cars with far too much power and not nearly enough brakes. And *Car* just loved Sevens; a car which was rarely seen in *Motocar*, as *Car* derisively termed the two weekly magazines. As I am the anorak whose '60s and '70s magazine collection threatens my floorboards, I thought I would share some period text on Sevens and other stuff from the days when Messrs Wilson and Heath were at Number 10.

The first piece comes from 1970, in an issue dedicated to sports cars. But the shock is that the Seven S4 featured wasn't compared to contemporary sports cars (such as the MGB and TR6) but to (yes, really) a Bond Bug and a Manta Ray beach buggy.

Over to *Car* - "After thirteen years of production, the wind in your face enthusiast sports car, the Lotus Seven, had to undergo some change. For just a bit too long now people have been expected to drive what has often been called the little tin can without any home comforts at all. Now, would you believe a comfortable Lotus Seven? Since its inception in 1957, the Seven has never, until this year, undergone any major alteration. Now the chassis has been redesigned as a sort of glassfibre and sheet steel composite using (Ford) Escort and (Lotus) Europa bits, and a crossflow engine is standard. No doubt the dwindling collection of motoring diehards will describe the car as losing its character but for me it now seems to have almost everything for the would-be funseeker.

The Caterham Car Sales demonstrator (*remember, this was in the days when Caterham Cars was pretty much the sole sales outlet for Lotus 7s LF.*) was the first of the 1970 cars so we were ready to excuse a few small faults and whereas in the past the interior of the Lotus looked as

though everything had been thrown together the new one has all the classy finish of its bigger sister the Elan.

Handling-wise the new car, in line with all its predecessors, is a winner. Despite a disconcerting amount of tyre noise when pushing hard it grips the road well and only a real hard blast on the throttle will produce anything resembling oversteer. Acceleration figures must be hard to match anywhere in the fun car world and with a claimed top speed in excess of 110mph the new Seven has a speed range that I sometimes wonder if the body can match ...

At a glance the new Seven tends to look the same as all its ancestors and tends not to get the same attention as the Bug and the Manta Ray; so if fun cars are meant to be cars that are noticed then it doesn't rate but in all other respects for my money it is in pole position."

The choice of rival cars seems utterly bizarre in 2015 but in 1970 it reflected the spirit of the time; the same issue carried a road test of the upwardly mobile Elan Plus 2 which was pitched against the E type 2+2. There were many advertisements for Lotus dealers as well as from Lotus themselves, but not one of these mentioned the Seven - apart from a little advertisement from Caterham Cars, who were also pushing some LHD S3s at the knockdown price of £950...

The magazine's feature piece was a long interview with Colin Chapman who made not a single mention of the Seven but did make lots of interesting asides, including the extraordinary revelation that the V4 Ford engine had been the first choice for the (eventually) Renault powered Europa. Yes, that is the same lumpy old engine which throbbed away in the Transit and the unloved Corsair.

Doug Blain, the then editor, was clearly unhappy that Caterham Car Sales had released a barely run-in "Seven Mk 2" (or S4 as we call it) for the magazine to test and had griped to Lotus Sales Director Graham Arnold long enough to get an invitation to Hethel to drive the new Seven around the "bumpy, featureless and rather ill defined Lotus airfield circuit." While the circuit may hardly have been the answer to an embryo racing driver's dream, Jochen Rindt had apparently lapped

As I am the anorak whose '60s and '70s magazine collection threatens my floorboards, I thought I would share some period text on Sevens

car

JUNE 1970 3 shillings

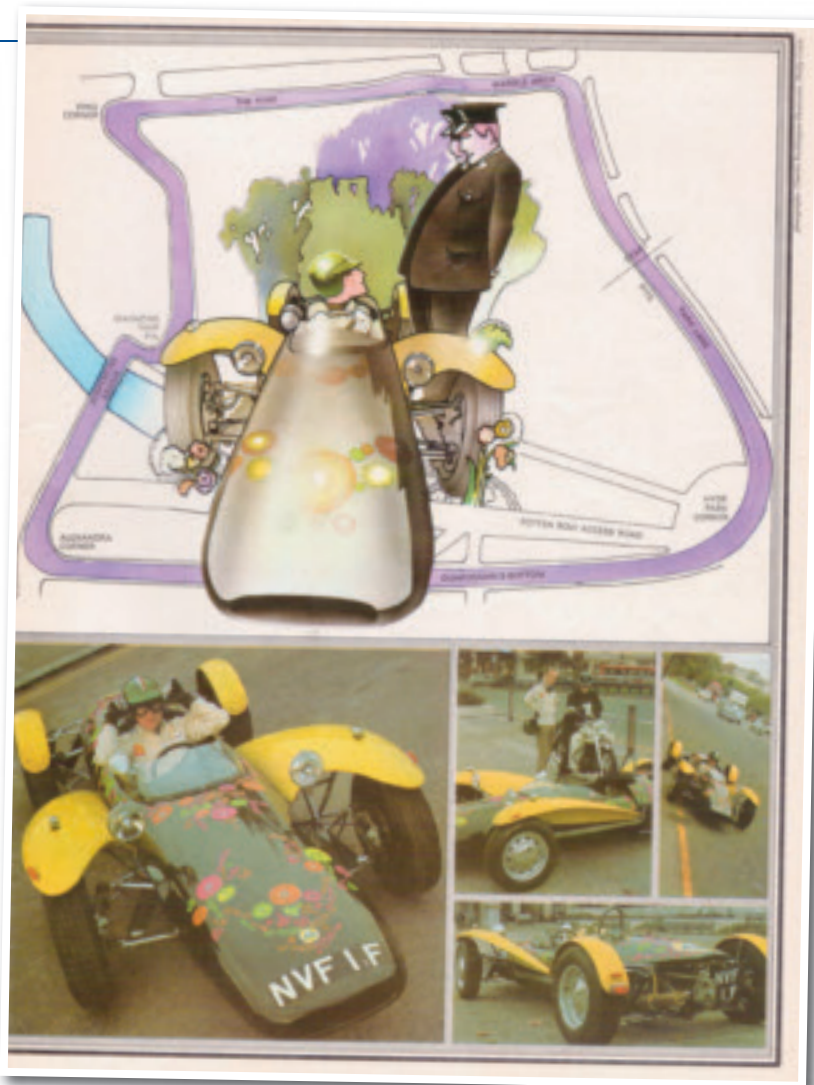
special
summer
sports car
issue

(p49: E-type
meets
Elan+2)

it at well over a 100mph average in a Lotus 72 (the GP car in which Rindt died at Monza a couple of months later-LF). He continued his assessment thus: "I could have found out all I was going to find out about the Seven in a couple of laps but it's a tribute to the car that I did at least twenty laps and enjoyed every hectic second of each one of them, going just a bit faster each time and still not getting near the point at which I might have frightened myself. Not that I'm any wiser about the model's performance against the stopwatch for the car I drove belongs to Mike Warner of Lotus Components and has obviously been built to impress some of his more gullible American clients; it felt completely standard mechanically but the speedometer was showing a regular 130mph at peak revs down the straight. But it's safe to say that the new car should nudge 100mph and do 0-60 in about ten seconds."

I found it almost impossible to get in and out with the hood in place, jamming assorted legs and things between the seat and the low set wheel; I was irritated by the lack of a resting place for my left foot but the seat was vastly more comfortable than the one in the old Seven, or the one in its close relative, my old Lotus XI (which Blain had used as a road car. Respect - LF). The Seven progresses from understeer to complete neutrality so that the car will slide all of a piece but a touch of the throttle at the appropriate moment will kick the tail out and restore all to rights. Steering is of course as sweet as ever and wonder of wonders, the car even rides quite well - not that Seven motoring à la 1970 is anything of a grandma's picnic though, as the wind noise is horrific, the whole structure shakes alarmingly on bad surfaces and whenever the back breaks loose there is a shuddering motion in the seat of one's pants (I think I know what he means - LF). At least the peculiar looking front wings do not flap as expected... But the Seven remains the four wheeled motorbike it always has been."

In 1968, journalist David Phipps recounted how his first experience of a Seven had been of a sidevalve Ford powered S1; he had collected it from the Lotus factory at Hornsey and had waited three hours for Colin Chapman and Mike Costin to finish building it. The car had run out of petrol soon after leaving London - the author having mistakenly assumed that as a press car, the Seven would have had a full tank -no fuel gauge back then. He found the 'little car would do its maximum of 80mph around most corners as well as along the straights' and he recounted an entertaining weekend spent 'alarming the staid Norfolk populace', one of whom predicted Phipps' untimely end due to the Seven's ultra low build. His next Seven was a Cosworth-engined S2 which he thrashed around Brands Hatch before returning to the school in Norfolk where he had once been a teacher. Whilst meeting the headteacher, the schoolboy inmates carried the Seven away and hid it under a hedge - Phipps' next visit was in a Mk IX Jaguar...



The same issue featured the legendary Nick Brittan's piece about the Hyde Park Grand Prix circuit he'd dreamed up. No fakery was involved - he drove round the circuit in a road legal and flower-power livery Lotus 51 Formula Ford racer. Brittan was soon stopped by The Fuzz (this was 1968 remember) and - 'I told them how Lotus had been building these Formula Ford cars and they are not selling as fast as they should and how they'd dollied this one up with wings and flowers and announced it on the eve of the Motor Show in a big bid to raise some publicity. It gets thrown off the forecourt at Earls Court and The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders refuse to give it floor space at the show which is just about what Lotus wants since this makes a better story than having it in there anyway. Then I tell them how Lotus got the 51 registered as an invalid carriage on account of it's easier and cheaper, like it's only got one seat and how with that big 12 volt battery jolting around under your fly buttons you may not be an invalid when you get in but there's a fair chance of being that way when you get out. In racing trim without all the smells and bells and schmaltz a 51 sells for £999 (Equivalent to £16k in 2015 - LF) but one which will actually win a race will cost more like £1,300 by the time some witty engine tuner with a rulebook in one hand has had a go. The real hotshoes get around Brands in about 57 seconds now ; I did a 58 earlier in

the season and with road tyres (then compulsory in Formula Ford -LF) it was like walking barefoot along a cutlass blade.' The police left Brittan to it and he carried on practising the circuit - 'before the madding communter crowd started crabbing my lines and I'm not telling you where, but I got 103mph in top and I spun in the middle of Hyde Park underpass when I was flat in third gear.'

1968 was a year when you believed that just about anything was possible, but the Summer of Love of 1967 had mutated into something much darker. Martin Luther King and Bobby Kennedy were assassinated, the massacre at My Lai rocked the world and the brutal ending of the Prague Spring saw the Cold War freeze to sub-zero. And in my little world, we lost Jim Clark, Mike Spence and Ludovico Scarfiotti on the 7th of successive months; Graham Hill won the championship for Gold Leaf Team Lotus in the DFV powered 49 and the Lotus 56 gas turbine wedge came within a whisker of winning the Indy 500. 'Forever Changes' as Arthur Lee's Love had predicted on its release in November 1967 ; and everything did and everything has. Except, that is, the daft little sports car with the bug eyed headlights. Colin Chapman would have been 87 in May 2015 and I don't know whether The Old Man would have laughed or cried at the Seven's immortality. LF

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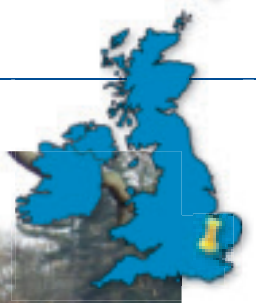


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The Club's Hertfordshire Area has not one, but two meetings a month – a mid-week meeting on the first Wednesday of each month, and a weekend blat (if fine) followed by a meeting on the second Sunday of each month.

The Wednesday meeting takes place at The Feathers, Wadesmill, nr. Ware (postcode SG12 0TH), and we congregate from around 8.30pm. It's a comfortable 17th-century coaching inn with open fire and exposed beams.

Our second Sunday meeting is held at The Jester, Station Road, Odsey, (postcode SG7 5RS) near Baldock on the Hertfordshire / Cambridgeshire border. The meeting kicks off at 12 noon, but those who want to take part in a blat beforehand meet at The Feathers an hour earlier and then join us later, having enjoyed a good drive around some of our best local roads in the meantime.

We normally have quite a few visitors who choose to come along to both meetings, and we have members from a wide variety of backgrounds and with a range of interests. We have sprinters, racers and trackday lovers, but also active show-goers, polishers, first-timers and old-timers. There have been times we have talked about bluebells (don't go there..) but it's mostly about what we do, where we go and how we get there...

In the past we have been honoured to have had the chance to listen to a Formula One driver sharing his secrets, as well as to a range of other interesting types who have come along to talk about pretty much everything from gearboxes to ganglepins. We don't have any speakers lined up at the moment, but we will maybe reinstate this in the future (subject to venue).

We do have some regulars who, in our little world, qualify as mildly famous however. This includes 'Flies-in-the-teeth' Steve Shaw, 'Donut' Steve Williamson, Jeff & Moya Morgan (in any one of 6 Lotii I think now, isn't it Jeff?), Richard

Area Profile: Hertfordshire

Club Stalwart **Dick "Dikko" Dixon** introduces us to just some of the antics of the Hertfordshire Area, where he is AR

& Sylvia 'Titanium' Jones, Paul and Allison Kennedy, Father Christmas & Jaqui (his real name is Chris Wheeler but please don't tell the kids) and occasionally some character called Longy and an equally colourful character with a matching car known as Lambretta Attard... A certain Mr Salmon also leaps in on one of his rare passes and the most delightful Dunnachies may finally forgive us from having moved our meeting venue away from him and, as and when we get back closer to St Albans (and we will) we hope will be able to reconsider his regular attendance with us again.

We have been known to get together with the lads from Yorkshire (fifty four Sevens over Fylingdale was quite a sight), to follow police cars over the Welsh Marches (there were twenty six of us - were they frustrated!) and end up in the sand on the Norfolk Coast. Staying at the odd stately home is not beneath us and the odd gîte will do just fine on occasion as well. Active chaps from the Area regularly attend events such as the Le Mans Classic, the 24hrs and the like – in fact, as Area Representative, it can sometimes be difficult to

keep up with the coming and goings of Herts Seven life... It's not all about cars either. We celebrate the new year with an annual 4 mile amble, followed by brandy coffees, mulled wine and a roast dinner. These photos prove that it's not just a made up event either – we really do put our wellies on and get muddy.

There's plenty of accumulated knowledge which our members are happy to share. Just beware though - anyone looking for advice is likely to get it in bucketfuls, to the point that they may well end up wishing they hadn't asked. Technical stuff is no problem at all either although it may be wise to bring your own counsellor / secretary / solicitor to help grasp all the information offered; either that or just put on a silly knowing grin ... oh and nod lots. Locally, we also have film shows we tend to go to in the winter (Murray Walker likes them too), attend the odd classic car meet with a jazz band in the summer and just generally have a good time.

We'll still turn up if you don't, but we'd love it if you joined us. Dick Dixon (Dikko). herts.lotus@virgin.net LF



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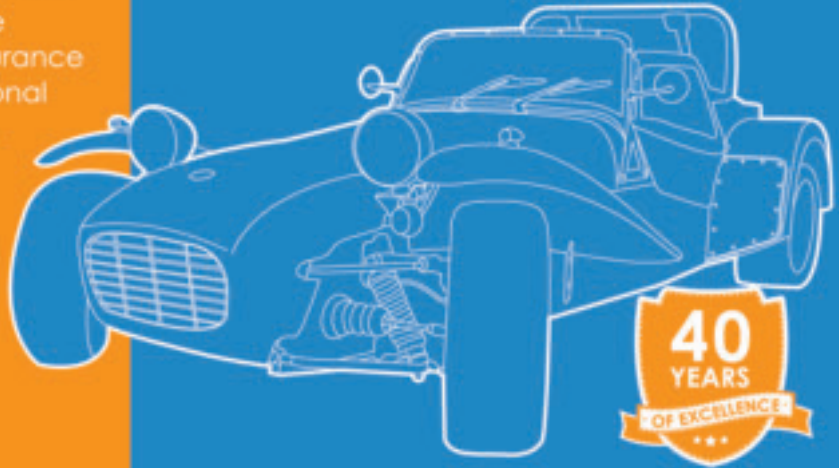
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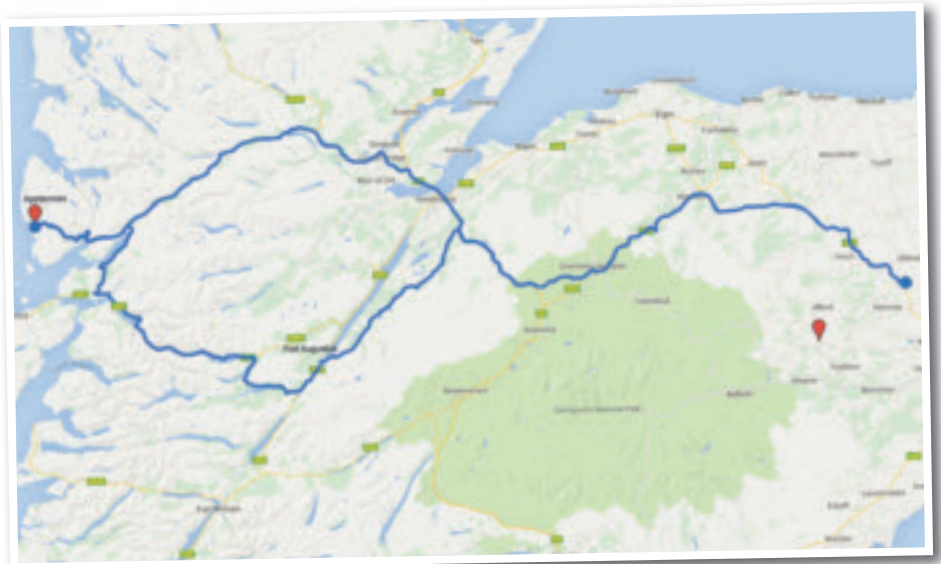


Having finally taken the Seven over the Duke's Pass this summer (a 7 mile stretch of road from Aberfoyle to Kilmahog, regarded as one of Britain's best drives LF), I was looking for my next destination for a day out. I decided that Applecross should be next to knock off my list – it's a beautiful and tranquil peninsula which rests on the rugged coast of Wester Ross in the Scottish Highlands. A group of local Severners were heading there in September and I had been keen to join them, but work all day on the preceding Thursday and Friday, with an all-nighter in between to help count the votes in the Scottish Independence referendum made that sound a rather bad idea (If you don't like the referendum result, please don't blame me, I just helped count the ballots). I therefore decided that I should make the trip alone the week before.

Saturday dawned misty and damp. Very misty in fact, to the point that I began to reconsider venturing out at all, and I certainly had it in mind that I might have to stick to the major roads rather than venturing off the beaten track as hoped. I had another coffee while I waited to see if the mist would lift, before deciding that I might as well just get going in the hope that things would clear. From my home in rural Aberdeenshire, my first target was Huntly. There, I would have to make a decision – would I risk taking the fun roads via Dufftown and Tomintoul to Granton-on-Spey or should I play it safe

The Alps? Corsica maybe?
No, it's somewhere far
closer to home...

Alex Rae is lucky enough to have the beautiful roads of Scotland at his disposal and a Seven to enjoy travelling them with. However, even in this driving nirvana, there are some trips which stand out more than others. Alex reports.



There and back: Alex's 400 mile round trip of motoring nirvana. Map data ©2015 Google



Eilean Donan Castle, one of the most iconic images of Scotland, and a place with special meaning for Alex.

and take the dull schlep along the A96 to Inverness. With my fingers crossed that the skies would clear as the temperature rose, I set off. The conditions weren't looking too promising until a mile before the decision finally had to be made, at which point the skies magically cleared and I was off to Dufftown. My drive to Granton was not only mist-free, but largely traffic free too, a pattern that would hold for most of the day. These were "home" roads that I know well, only today they were taking me towards places that I'd not visited before. The only hold up was behind a couple of very newly registered bikes who pulled out rather late in front of me from the A939. After Tomintoul they treated every corner as a new adventure to be tackled in as many different ways as possible. I felt nervous for them, and to be honest, it was something of a relief when they stopped at a lay-by, perhaps to consult a map in the hope of finding a straighter road?

From Granton, a short drive down the A95 took me to the turn to Carrbride. Then it was on to the ever dull A9 north to Inverness. At least I had Primal Scream for company along that bit, in tribute to Robert Young who'd passed away during the week. Bobbie Gillespie was just audible over the exhaust note as I tried to remember whether the average speed cameras were active yet or not, and if they were, whether the overtake I'd just made risked taking me above the set average? It turns out that they were not, and I doubt that it had... Past Inverness and on to the A835 which was surprisingly busy - this wasn't looking so great for a blat now. I stopped for petrol, fearing

that it might be the last I'd see for a while as I headed out into the wilderness. I now had the fuel I'd need to make it to Applecross, but not enough to get me back again. For anyone thinking of making a similar trip in future, I can now report with some relief that there is fuel at Loch Carron as well as a couple of pumps at Applecross itself, although they do look a bit like "local pumps for local people".

As I went on, the traffic thinned even further, much to my delight, and upon turning onto the A890, I found a strange and unexpected road. Despite the surroundings, this was a road of seemingly endless straights. The rare bend that I did come across required no more than a gentle flick of the wrist to negotiate, so it was a case of 'pick a speed and stick to it'. This remained the case right up until I came upon a tight turn to pass under a bridge, which gave every impression of having being the precise point at which funding for road upgrades had run out. From there on, the road got narrower and twistier, but all the more fun for that. Many roads in these parts are marked on the map as being single track, but for the most part they are actually wide enough for two cars to pass as long as both are careful - it's just that the road is not wide enough for a central line. This changes dramatically when you turn up the Bealach na Bà to Applecross however.

Bealach na Bà is the name of a historic twisting, single-track mountain road through the pass and mountains of the Applecross peninsula. This road is one of few in the Scottish Highlands which is engineered like those which cut through the Alps. It has very tight hairpin bends which switch back

and forth up the hillside, and gradients that approach 20%. In fact, it boasts the greatest ascent of any road climb in the UK, rising from sea level at Applecross to 2,054ft, and is the third highest road in Scotland.

The narrow road climbs and climbs, but there were some open sections where you could see through the bends enough to press on a bit. Driving through a gap that felt barely wider than the car, with a cliff on one side and a barrier on the other was quite something. Cars coming the other way were often kind enough to stop to let me pass however, so I enjoyed a fun drive up and down the pass.

In Applecross itself, lunch ended up being a burger at the Inn, which felt entirely wrong given the wide choice of wonderful looking seafood on offer. However, I just needed something I could eat quickly so that I could get back in the car. The drive home was less fun unfortunately - the roads were busier and there were some frustrating delays behind a driver who clearly felt that passing places were for other people to get out of his way rather than opportunities to let other motorists past. I opted to leave everyone to it and instead stopped to take this photo looking down through the steepest part of the road. I'm guessing it's a popular photographic spot that one...

Back on wider and flatter roads, I set off towards the Kyle of Lochalsh. Never a fan of driving "there and back" on the same route, I was going to make this a circuit. This also meant I could make the almost obligatory stop to photograph Aileen Donnan Castle. Mind you, I have more connections with the castle than many; it's the McRae ancestral home, as well as the spot where I proposed just over seven years ago. Back in the car, even the A87 was remarkably traffic free for the end of the tourist season. Now wanting to get off sweeping A roads and back onto something smaller, I abandoned my plan to head to Spean Bridge and over the A86, instead turning left at Invergarry towards Fort Augustus. A right turn took me to more roads I didn't know before, and very good they were too (it's best to leave the A82 to those tourists looking for a monster...) This route took me back to the A9 for a drive south to Carrbride and home via the A95 and Dufftown once more.

All in all, what a great day's driving. Even the planning the night before was enjoyable - there's something special about pouring over large maps on the dining table when planning for a great day's driving. The blat was a mile or two short of the round 400, with two stops for fuel, two for photos and a lunch break. Those of us who live near these roads are lucky. For those who don't. I really implore you to make the effort to come and find them. I'm now planning where I can explore on my next free and dry Saturday... *LF*

This road is one of few in the Scottish Highlands which is engineered like those which cut through the Alps.

Caterham Motorsport Kicks Off Bovington Tank Museum



Caterham Motorsport's season of racing is underway, with the calendars for all five rungs of the domestic championship 'ladder' now confirmed.

The 2015 season kicked off with the first rounds of the Caterham R300-S, Roadsport, Tracksport and Supersport Championships at Snetterton, Norfolk.

The R300-S series gets two high-profile slots supporting the UK's premier GT series, the Avon Tyres British GT Championship, at Silverstone and Brands Hatch Grand Prix circuits, while champions for all five series will be crowned at the season finale at Silverstone in October.

The full calendar of Caterham racing is as follows:

	Superlight R300-S	Roadsport, Tracksport & Supersport	Caterham Academy
Apr 18/19	Snetterton 300	Snetterton 300	
Apr 25			Aintree sprint
May 9/10	Donington Park	Donington Park	
May 17			Blyton sprint
May 30/31	Silverstone GP		
June 13			Rockingham
June 20/21	Zandvoort	Zandvoort	
July 18/19		Castle Combe	Castle Combe
August 1/2	Brands Hatch GP		
August 22/23		Brands Hatch Indy	Brands Hatch Indy
Sept 19	Oulton Park	Oulton Park	Oulton Park
Oct 17/18	Silverstone Int	Silverstone Int	Silverstone Int

Caterham Motorsport director, Simon Lambert, said: "I love this point of the year because you just don't know what the season has in store. One thing is for sure though, we've got another packed year of racing ahead of us and, with the Caterham Seven legendary for producing close and competitive racing, it's going to be very exciting."

A guided tour of the Tank Museum in Bovington, Dorset has been organised for L7C members on the 22nd August 2015. This date has been set to coincide with the "7's On The Quay" event which takes place in Poole the evening before.

The day will kick off at 10:00 where we will all meet in the dedicated club parking area before moving into the museum to begin one of the excellent guided tours which are arranged by the museum staff. The tour will take us from the inception of the tank during the First World War right up to the modern Armoured Fighting Vehicles used on today's operations, and everything in between.

The guided tour will take us up to lunchtime when we will be able to settle down in the museum restaurant to rest our feet and recharge.

In the afternoon, members will be free to return to the museum to wander at leisure or to blat to one of the nearby coastal towns or other local attractions (organiser Christian Palmer will have some suggestions ready on the day!)

A reduced entrance cost has been negotiated at £12.50 per person, which will include the cost of the guided tour for the group.

If you plan to come along, or have any questions, please let Christian know with a message via BlatChat, by email to chrisp1973@hotmail.co.uk or give him a call on 07833 455782.

Maiden flights: welcome to our new members

Mr Charlie Dawson, London

Mr Wolfram Schreier, Singen, Germany

Mr Colin Watson, Bexley Heath

Mr Phil Hayward, Sawbridgeworth

Mr Rex Davoll, Burton On Trent

Mr Alex Middleton, Frodsham

Mr R & Mrs C Michell, Poole

Mr David Robinson, Stockport

Mr Mark Lester, Leicester

Mr Michael Phillips, Hatfield Heath

Mr Peter Moller, Paddington

Mr Jesus Suarez, Thatcham

Mr Paul Storey, Altnagelvin

Mr Adam Lowenthal, Battersea

Mr Geoffrey Moore, Oxted

Mr Greg McArthur, Hamilton

Mr James Frost, Thornton Heath

Mr Mark Goody, Ipswich

Mr M & Mrs S Welch, Snetterton

Mr Richard Howell, Great Broughton

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Mr James Strathdee, Glasgow

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Mr Nicholas John Chase, Lyndhurst

Mr Neil Raine, Consett

Mr Antony Ward, Ashford

Mr Graham Feely, Llanddulas

Mr Paul Baker, Beccles

Mr Jamie White, Bushey

Mr A & Mrs G Quin, Winslow

Mr Joshua Ross, Deal

Mr David White, Stone Stanton

Mr Martin Lord, Heidelberg, Germany

Mr David Cadwell, Alderley Edge

Mr Paul Mutimer, Ipswich

Mr Tom Adams, Cheltenham

Mr Paul Evans, Moreton In Marsh

Mr Alan Huckle, St Neots

Mr Martin Payne, Windsor

Mr Daren Wilde, Harlow

Mr Chris Gregory, Southam

Mr Harvey Astell, St Albans

Mr Mark Colyer, Tudeley

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t: +44 (0)1873 777303
Lotus Seven Club, PO Box 7,
Abergavenny NP7 5WQ.

area meetings

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

Please refer to www.lotus7.club/area-meetings 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
AR Position Vacant,
please contact
ARC@Lotus7club.com

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

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/
devonlotussevens.club](http://www.facebook.com/devonlotussevens.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: Andrew Fielding
07884 318371
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 Sevens")

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 ("New Forest Sevens")

Venue: Foresters Arms,
Abbots Well Road, Frogham,
Fordingbridge, SP6 2JA.
1st Tuesday
Contact: Nick Westbrook
07711 640105
westhants@lotus7club.com

Hertfordshire

1st Wed The Feathers, Wadesmill,
nr. Wade, Herts, SG12 0TH,
from around 8.30pm
2nd Sun The Woodman,
Nuthampstead near Barkway, SG8 8NB
www.thewoodman-inn.co.uk
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: Garry Hooton.
07778 392239
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](mailto: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
AR position vacant
Contact: arc@lotus7club.com
for details.

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:
londonmiddlesex@lotus7club.com

Merseyside and District Sevens ("MADS")

Thorn Inn,
Grappenhall Lane,
Appleton,
Warrington, Cheshire
WA4 4QX
Last Wednesday
Contact: Martin Richards
07884 437652
mads@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](mailto:carrotland@lotus7club.com)
www.carrotland.co.uk

Northants, Beds and Bucks

The Old Swan, Astwood,
Newport Pagnell, Bucks MK16 9JS
3rd Wednesday
Graham Howard,
07784 832356
northantsbedsbucks@lotus7club.com

North East

The Old Mill County Pub and
Hotel, Thinford Road,
Metal Bridge, County
Durham, DH6 5NX
2nd Wednesday
AR position vacant
Contact arc@lotus7club.com
for details.

Northern Ireland

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

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
AR position vacant
For more information, please contact arc@lotus7club.com

Staffordshire, Mid

The Swan with Two Necks, Longdon, WS15 4PN (off the A51, between Rugeley/Lichfield)
3rd Thursday
Contact: Stuart Bates
07795 576993
midstaffs@lotus7club.com

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
eastusssex@lotus7club.com

Sussex, Mid

Roving venue – for the latest details, please see our page on the Club website, subscribe to the area's monthly email, or check on BlatChat or Facebook (search for Mid Sussex Sevens).
Contact: Rod Thonger
midsussex@lotus7club.com

Sussex, West

The George, Eartham, PO18 0LT, nr Chichester
2nd Wednesday
Contact: Noel Damon, 01243 536754 or 07973 797002
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

Roving Venue, please contact AR
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

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: Paul Manning
07989 600950 or 01380 828655
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 (CA)

Meeting place and times currently variable; please contact for details
AR position vacant
Contact: arc@lotus7club.com for details.

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)

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

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)
johnd@simplesevens.org www.simplesevens.org



In order to facilitate email communications with local members, mailing list facilities have 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 <http://ex.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



My Curborough Shakedown

Antony Hawkins reports on his pre-season shakedown at Curborough sprint course.

Photography by Liz Hawkins

When people ask “How fast does it go?”, I often reply “Faster than me”. But - how much faster? And how could I find out in relative safety? Not on the public highway, certainly.

Happily, South Yorkshire sprinter Chris Bramall had organised his own pre-season shakedown at the Curborough sprint course. It was booked as a private test session, limited to ten cars and run like a sprint but with no timing equipment nor any competitive element. You didn't have to have any interest in any form of competition to attend either - it was just a good excuse to enjoy some track driving. There were quite a few sprinters present however, who were using the day as a chance to test those winter upgrades and setup tweaks, while for everyone else, it was a chance to have a bit of fun and to explore some limits in the safety of a traffic-free environment. Not just road-traffic-free either; unlike a track day, you're alone on the circuit here for each of your runs, so there really is no-one else to get in your way. However, with only 10 cars present, there really was plenty of driving time for all.

It was also a good excuse for a day off work and a bit of a blat for those not trailering to the circuit. With that in mind, our day started with a very early departure before meeting

on the A515 to form a 6-car convoy through Ashbourne and south to Curborough.

Arriving around 8:30, we found Chris and his brother Matty already on site, with the Burco boiler already warming up nicely. Bacon butties and a nice cup of tea kicked off proceedings in the most welcome of ways, followed by a track walk (with Chris giving advice as to lines, braking points and general technique) and a safety briefing.

The track walk highlighted various new bits of tarmac that were unfamiliar to many, including the recently introduced crossover at Molehill which now permits a “figure of eight” configuration to be run. It also reveals that in the early damp there isn't a lot of grip underfoot. Chris reminds us we have all day to drive, so there's no need to set off like an idiot straight away - better to ease into the day gradually and build up speed later.



“Go that way” – Chris starts the morning briefing

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On my first run, I try a 2,500 rpm launch. Hmm. Remember that damp tarmac? Yes, quite... Lots of wheelspin, not much forwards motion. Lift off, catch the spinning, re-apply the throttle... and repeat as necessary until the rears hook up and I set off in a meaningful fashion.

I have driven Curborough before (in a friend's Seven a year ago - thanks Nicholas!), and I've pedalled around its top loop at 20mph more times than I care to even think about counting (*Curborough is also used by the cycling fraternity LF*). This helps, but the first run up to Flagpole, with the minimal runoff and an eyeline full of barrier is plenty scary enough to keep my speed down around 40mph in the damp. I make it through Molehill - the traditional place to get it all very wrong - without issue, before a modest slide demands "a dab of oppo" coming out of Fradley Hairpin on the gas. Braking for the right-hander at Flagpole is interesting as the turn-in point is very difficult to spot, and we've put out none of the marker boards that would normally provide a reference. Plus, it's quite slick, did I mention? I brake as late as I dare the first time, which still turns out to be much earlier than necessary, but that's preferable to going gardening. Completing the second loop is fine too, although on this first run, I find myself lifting well before the finish line - the track drops away just afterwards, so it looks like you're about to drive off a cliff!

Not long after, the sun arrives and the track dries pretty quickly, so as the morning progresses we all gain more confidence in our tyres and brakes, with runs getting quicker (according to the video reviewed later) and the grins getting wider. I'd actually have been quite happy for it to have stayed damp a while longer, given the learning opportunities the slippery conditions offered, but sunshine is good too.

As lunchtime approaches, I'm taking that first corner at 55mph (the tyres could take more, but the barrier is still only a few yards away across the grass) and I've just about got my braking points and lines sorted. I'm comfortable with the way the car goes sideways as she comes off the kerbs, the occasional squirm under heavy braking and the minor, predictable slides under power. Even when I out-brake myself into Molehill, catching the car and staying on the black bit is easy enough. Thanks here must go to Dave Gemzoe for the recent suspension and corner weight re-set, resulting in a very predictable and progressive handling car.

Lunch is quality cheese burgers (with plenty of gooey onions), more tea and of course plenty of banter. There's a theory that if you've never spun off on a day like this, you're not trying hard enough, but I'm happy to be one of those without a muddy sump.

Curborough's course secretary had visited during the morning and explained the new layout, so for the afternoon session we switch

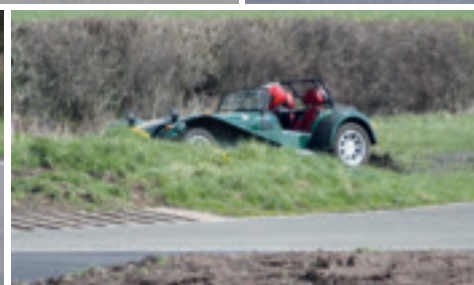
to that. The first half of the lap is the same, but halfway down the main straight you now take a right, then down through Woodside and Flagpole "backwards", then up the first half of the straight before cutting across the middle section again to complete the run as "normal". It takes some getting used to - when you've done a corner so often in one direction, going the other way around it feels very alien, its cambers and bumps are very different and I have no clue where to brake for Flagpole. The big armco barrier just outside the exit is a reminder to ease into this new configuration gently, too.

As the afternoon progresses, we all get quicker, albeit with some people finding new and interesting places to go off. It takes a fair few runs before I get one I'm happy with, but when it all comes together I am very happy indeed.

Funny thing that - six hours ago this was "a fun learning experience" with "no competitive element". While there's no competition between drivers, I realise I am now competing against myself, so rather than pushing it too far in the final half hour of the day, I decide it's time to stop, reset my head to its "public highway" map, and repack the boot for the drive home.

Overall, a fantastic, relaxed, day in great company and a lot learned about the capabilities of a Seven, even one fitted with only moderately sticky road tyres. Most of all, I have learned that the car is still quicker than me, even when I'm pressed hard into the wings of the seat and the tyres are going sideways. Thank you Chris! *LF*

As the afternoon progresses, we all get quicker, albeit with some people finding new and interesting places to go off.





forthcoming events 2015

May

Sun 3rd

National Kit Car Show

Stoneleigh Park, Royal Showground, Warwickshire. CV8 2LZ

This is the world's largest Kit Car Show which offers you a unique opportunity to see more Kit Cars in one place than at any other event on the planet. Here you have the opportunity to meet the manufacturers and see the great displays from all of the industry's major players. Inside Stoneleigh's extensive exhibition hall complex you will find hundreds of stands, selling everything a car builder needs, from nuts and bolts to a complete performance engine. Outside of the halls at Stoneleigh you will find hundreds of club stands with over 4,000 privately owned kit cars on display. If there was a kit made, then there will almost certainly be a Club to support it! Outside, you will find the accessory stands, and also plenty of action for you to enjoy with The Slalom Experience where you can take a passenger seat for the drift of your life or for the rather muddier action, you can go to the Dakar 4-wheel drive circuit, where the whole family can enjoy a great experience.

More info to follow
ESV in attendance

Friday 15th

JCB World HQ organised tour

at the JCB site in Staffordshire. It's very close to Alton Towers and Curborough (Speed Champs that weekend) for anyone wishing to make a weekend of it. Arrival by 9am for Full English Breakfast in their cafe before the tour starts at 10am. Cost is £20 pp to include breakfast. Open to 15 years and over.

More details (including restrictions and address) are: www.jcb.co.uk/About/Factory-Tour.aspx
Contact: Stuart Bates midstaffs@lotus7club.com or 07795 576993

Saturday 16th

Dunsfold Handling Day

Dunsfold Park, near Guildford, Surrey. Check your 0-60 acceleration time, test your skill and your car's agility around our slalom challenge course, 'free-style' donut area - bring that old set of tyres, EXCLUSIVE opportunity to drive the Top Gear track in your own Seven (small extra cost)
Cost £65.00

Contact: Steve Mell Tel: 07831 789 333 Email: steve.mell@lotus7club.co.uk
Booking form in March edition of Lowflying
ESV in attendance

Sunday 17th

Luxury Motor Show

10am - 4pm at Goosedale Conference & Banqueting, Moor Road, Papplewick, Nottingham NG6 8UN.

A collection of the world's rarest modern and classic cars - up to 300 display vehicles, comprising supercars, luxury, classic and high performance vehicles, motorbikes and racing cars. There will also be live entertainment and music and more than 20 supercars offering passenger rides.. Amusement rides and family entertainment, e.g. bouncy castle, zorbing,

simulator rides and more will also be on offer, as well as outdoor retail and trade stands.

Standard ticket prices: £18 per adult, £9 per child, (£12 and £6 respectively when booked online in advance). Children under 5 years enter free. More info can be found at <http://www.luxurymotorshow.com>

We are looking for members to exhibit their cars - numbers will be limited but those who do display their cars get free entry for themselves and a passenger, with breakfast and lunch also provided. Please contact syorks@lotus7club.com to register your interest.

ESV in attendance

Sunday 17th

Show of Shows

Large multi-marque car "show of shows" at Penthurst Place, where the Lotus 7 Club will have its own stand.

This "all marques" event showcases some of the UKs finest automotive exhibitors and traders, in the grounds of an iconic stately home. The organisers promise a 150+ car "Show & Shine" public exhibition area and 400+ cars on display in the car club area covering all makes, types and era. There will also be automotive themed food vendors, live DJs and a range of other exhibitors and traders.

More info from the organisers site: <http://showofshows.co.uk/> and each driver will have to purchase a club pass @ £8 each. Any additional passengers, will be required to buy a standard entry ticket, still at £8 each.

Contact Mike Clark: kentishweald@lotus7club.com

Monday 18th

Cadwell Park Track Day

Located on the A153 near Louth.

For Lotus & Caterham 7 cars only. An open pit lane day with three experience level sessions: Newcomers to track with unmodified cars.

Intermediates for drivers with some circuit experience & modified cars. Advanced for very experienced drivers & competition licence holders. FREE track driving instruction by ARDS instructors on a first come, first served basis.

Please note the following requirements:

Cars must be fitted with an MSA acceptable roll bar or roll cage.

All drivers must hold a full & valid UK or non-UK equivalent Drivers Licence. Licences must be presented on the day.

Minimum age for all participants is 17 years.

An indemnity form must be signed by all participants.

Cars will be noise tested to a limit of 105dB(A).

Cars failing will not be permitted on the circuit. No refunds unless a suitable reserve is found.

All participants must make themselves aware of the current Club Procedures for track days a copy of which will be sent with confirmation if you book.

Entry fee is £175.00 per car & one driver. Booking form in March Lowflying and on the website.

Contact: andy.wendler@lotus7club.com

Saturday 30th

Throckmorton

Following last year's Club International meeting at Throckmorton, the Worcestershire area has arranged for us to take over this great facility once again. This former RAF site provides a gigantic

area of tarmac that will become our playground for the day. Slalom course, Drift area, Standing 1/4km and autojumble are just some of the events planned for this day. £25 per car and one driver £10 for additional drivers, £5 passengers/spectators. Free for 16s and under. Booking form in March edition of Lowflying.

ESV in attendance

Contact: Adam Croft acroft7970@gmail.com

Saturday 30th - 31st

No Limits Tour of Mann

A chance to come and enjoy the stunning roads and scenery that the Isle of Man has to offer, plus the opportunity to explore your limits on the exhilarating TT circuit.

Held at the start of the TT festival fortnight, the Island isn't too busy with bikers yet the roads are set up as the race circuit, one way over the Mountain, and open to the public. Arrive on Friday 29th and stay as long as you wish; details on Chitchat.

Contact : Mike Scott 07624 486500

mikeandmary@manx.net

June

Friday 12th - Sunday 14th

Cholmondeley Pageant of Power

Billed as the Goodwood of the North, Cholmondeley Pageant of Power offers everything from the classic race cars of yesteryear through to the supercars of today. Take a trip to the pits to see the mechanics dealing with engineering at its very best, and enjoy the classic smells and real noise (you just can't replicate it!). Race cars, rally cars, race motorcycles, all will be there. Prices and full details are not available yet, but will be posted on BlatChat and in Lowflying when they are. The event can handle as many members' cars on the stand as we can manage, and the ESV will be in attendance, so book the date in your diary and we should have a great turnout!

Contact: Colin Davies colindavies56@yahoo.co.uk

Saturday 20th

Mid Sussex Sevens - Classic Cars of Kent

Restoration specialists and race preparers, are hosting us on Saturday morning 10th May. As well as restoring and rebuilding cars, they prepare some of the cars for the Goodwood Revival. They are preparing four cars for the Members Meeting in March so we should see them as well as the museum they have there. Special feature - they have a rolling road. They can take 10 cars for £50 each so give a call if you want to come. 10% discount on any recommended adjustments. You can find out more here: <http://www.cckhistoric.com/>. There will be a charge of a tenner to show some appreciation, we'll put the rest in NtL. Send a note to Rod Thonger, midsussex@lotus7club.com if you'd like to come.

Saturday 20th

The Essex Blat

The start of the route is from The Hare public house, Bishops Stortford Road, Roxwell, Chelmsford. CM1 4LU (4 miles west of Chelmsford). The pub can serve breakfast from 10.00am on. Members can turn up from 08:45 departure will be between 09:00-11:00am. The route is approximately 115 miles, mostly on

twisty 'B' roads throughout central Essex. There will be an opportunity for a coffee / refreshment break at about the half way point. Two fuel stations will be listed as these are few and far between. The end of the route finishes close to the main A12 with a fuel station is on site. The A12 can be easily accessed for those who have a long journey home. All Club Members are welcome. 50 places are available with the closing date for bookings being 12th June 2015. Contact: Les Banham 01245 360765 or Banhamles@hotmail.com

July

Friday 3rd – Sunday 5th

The International St. Moritz Seven Meeting

The International St. Moritz Meeting will celebrate his 35th Anniversary next July. The motto is "traditional but new". The traditional part will be our Get Together Party at Fredy's with a fabulous CaterHam Burger, drinks and many Sevens from all places of Europe. On Saturday, we will have our drive through the Alps, guided by a road book. Sleep plenty beforehand, because it will be a long ride (no motorways, some single tracks...) Saturday evening we will enjoy a dinner "closer to the skies", and on Sunday, a surprise is waiting for us... As a clue, have you heard about the "Cresta Run", which was founded in 1887 by English sportsmen? And for people who want to discover Switzerland's mountains in a different way, there is also a prologue planned. Applications: www.int7meeting.ch Contact: Patrick chairman@lsos.ch

Sunday 19th

Millwood's annual BBQ

A great day out at Millwood's Gloucestershire premises, featuring free BBQ and refreshments (we're collecting for Nuke the Leuk though, so do bring along some cash please). Plus, check your car's weight on the flat floor scales, enter the photo competition and much more! Contact: Andy Couchman or andy.couchman@lotus7club.com

Friday 24th – Sunday 26th

Silverstone Classic – Rocking & Racing

Highlights for the family entertainment are expected to include: 1000+ exotic, rare, and valuable race cars competing, more than you'll see anywhere else in the world in one place, Over 20 exciting races over the weekend, Live rock music on a grand scale, Around 9,000 beautiful classic cars on display over the course of the weekend, Lunchtime and evening track parades for major motoring anniversaries, Silverstone Auctions latest Sale of classic cars,

modern sports cars, motorcycles and automobilia items, High class aerobatic displays, Motorfair with manufacturers showcasing brand new models alongside cult classics. Super Shopping Village area with art, antiques, books, models, clothing, accessories, automobilia & more. Vintage funfair rides, a 40m giant wheel and many other interactive activities. Live demonstrations such as streetcar shootouts and passenger experiences on the Off Road Zone. Village green with big screen and outdoor seating & catering. Period buses running infield transfers. Booking is via www.silverstoneclassic.com/buytickets

Get 2 for 1 tickets and infield parking using the club code C1525013 until 31st May 2015. "Early Bird" prices until 31st March 2015 from £39 for 1 day to £99 for the weekend, then £46 to £114 from 1st April until 31st May.

Contact: Graham Howard northantsbedsbucks@lotus7club.com or 07784 832356
ESV in attendance.

Sunday 26th

Ripon Classic Car Gathering

Ripon Race Course, Ripon, North Yorkshire
Once again the Lotus 7 Club has a stand at one of the largest classic car shows in the North of England. Over a thousand cars on display of all types with over twenty motor clubs with stands. Pre-arranged entry fee is £3 or £5 on the day. Overnight camping on the Saturday is free and the event starts at 10am on the Sunday. Good food plus new and old cars plus loads of trade stands selling almost everything. All proceeds to charity and local good causes. See <http://riponclassiccargathering.org/> for more details. Cost - £3.00 in advance, £5.00 on the day. Either way, if you are in a 7 or any other classic car drive into the event, no need to use the public carpark. Unlimited places, the more the merrier. Don't leave the advanced bookings too late, Phill is the event chairman and he gets very busy close to the event. Contact: Phill Greetham on Phill@riponclassiccargathering.org

Sunday 26th

Weigh in Day

To be held at PGM Sussex, Unit 7 Star Road Industrial Estate, Partridge Green, West Sussex, RH13 8RA. 10am – 4pm with tea and cake served all day.

Contact: PGM Sussex on 01403 713 626 or enquiries@pgmsussex.com

Wednesday 29th

Brands Hatch GP Track Day

Located on the A20 in Kent. Exclusive club members track session with Motorsport Vision (Free instruction available). For Lotus and

Caterham 7's only. The track time will be run in sessions. We will have exclusive use of one 20 minute session per hour which means you get 7 sessions on the day. £300.00 per car and one driver, £5 per passenger and £20 per additional driver

Booking form in April edition of Lowflying.
Contact: Andy Wendler
andy.wendler@lotus7club.com

August

Saturday 22nd

A guided tour of the Tank Museum in Bovington, Dorset.

This date has been set to coincide with the "7's On The Quay" event which takes place in Poole the evening before. The day will kick off at 10:00 where we will all meet in the dedicated club parking area before moving into the museum to begin the guided tour. It will take us from the inception of the tank during the First World War right up to the modern Armoured Fighting Vehicles. The tour will take us up to lunchtime when we will be able to settle down in the museum restaurant. In the afternoon, members will be free to return to the museum to wander at leisure or to blat to one of the nearby coastal towns or other local attractions (organiser Christian Palmer will have some suggestions ready on the day!)

A reduced entrance cost has been negotiated at £12.50 per person, which will include the cost of the guided tour for the group.

If you plan to come along, or have any questions, please let Christian know with a message via BlatChat, by email to chrisp1973@hotmail.co.uk or give him a call on 07833 455782.

September

Saturday 5th

Carrotland Big Blat

The start will be at Stonham Barns (Pettaugh Road, Stonham Aspal, Suffolk, IP14 6AT) <http://www.stonhambarnscomplex.co.uk/> which has made us very welcome for some years now. 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". The route will include a few of the fantastic evening roads that have been enjoyed on previous Big Blats and new ones from the great selection that we have in Suffolk and Norfolk. As usual there will be a drink/loo stop "en route" and the finish venue will be announced very soon. There is no charge for participating in the event, which is only open to club members in their Caterham 7's. Entry details will also be announced soon.

Calendar for the Premier Power Lotus 7 Club Speed Championship 2015



Round	Date	Venue	Organising Club	Event
3	17th May	Curborough	Lotus 7 Club	Sprint
4	23/24th May	Gurston Down	BARC	Hillclimb
5	14th June	Epynt	Brecon Motor Club	Hillclimb
6	27 June	Aintree	Liverpool MC	Sprint
7	18th July	Llandow	BARC Wales	Sprint
8	19th July	Llys-y-fran	Swansea MC	Hillclimb
9	2nd August	Harewood	BARC	Hillclimb
10	9th August	Loton Park	Hagley & District LCC	Hillclimb
11	30th August	Curborough (Figure of 8 layout)	Lotus 7 Club Sprint	Sprint
12	13th September	Blyton	MDA Sprint	Sprint
13	3rd October	Anglesey National	Longton & District MC	Sprint
14	4th October	Anglesey International	Longton & District MC	Sprint

Caterham Graduates Racing Club Calendar

Rounds 4 & 5	16 / 17 May	Cadwell Park
Rounds 6 & 7	13 / 14 June	Silverstone GP
Rounds 8 & 9	11 / 12 July	Donington Park
Rounds 10 & 11	1 / 2 August	Zandvoort
Rounds 12 & 13	5 September	Castle Combe
Rounds 14 & 15	3 / 4 October	Thruxton

Why not come along and support one of the rounds of our Club speed championship? Spectators are welcomed at all events, and in many cases, entry is free of charge, why not support them this year?

A number of Club members compete in the Graduates racing series. Why not support them?

Sam's Blog

The view from behind the membership desk

On 21st March I attended the 'Llandow Pre-Season Shakedown' track day organised by Alan Henderson, Area Representative of the South Wales area. It was the first track day of the season and the first Seven related event I have attended this year and I was very excited to dig out my pink crash helmet (with bunny ears attached) and head down to Llandow Circuit (near Bridgend). It was a warm and sunny day and as usual I became mesmerised watching the Sevens wizz around the tight curves of the track. I find it incredible that they cling on to the corners with such ease, although I am sure it takes much skill by the driver!

I was lucky enough to be offered three passenger rides and had a fantastic time being thrown into the corners and feeling the incredible acceleration on the straights. Thank you to all the members who made me feel so welcome, I had a great time.

Back in the office, we are busy taking bookings for five different Club events. I have also recently attended the Management Team meeting in Thame, Oxfordshire. It is a quarterly meeting held by the Club's Management Team (although Area Representatives and members are welcome) to discuss the general running of the Club and any arising issues. There is always a lot to cover with 16 items on this meeting's agenda. I type the minutes as well as contribute and I believe the meetings really are vital to the smooth running of the Club. A lot of effort is put in by the members who volunteer to take on further roles in the Club and I am always pleasantly surprised by the level of commitment that the Seven community goes to, to ensure that members are enjoying their membership and all that goes with it.

small ads

Cars for Sale

1997 1.6 Supersport red, de Dion rear. 35224 miles, full hood & half hood, tonneau and full dust cover. Serviced by Redline and ,latterly, PGM-service records available. Taxed and 12 months MOT. £12,000 ono.

Contact: Mike on 01323 891922 (East Sussex)

Parts & Misc

SoftBits for S3

Half Hood Plus for FIA rollbar (which I don't think they make any more) - a half hood with an additional panel that zips onto the bottom to make a full cover for when the car is parked. Inc Y pieces, cover and bag for Plus. Good condition. £100 + £8 postage

Touring tunnel bag - large pocket on 1 side, mesh pocket on other plus small one on top both with slightly stretched elastic). £30 + £3.50 postage

Re-bag (unlined). Only used a few times. £85 + £8 postage.

Contact: Paul or Gail on 01235 811914 or email paulandgail@mostlyharmless.org.uk

Wanted

Centre caps

4 x Caterham 7 centre road wheel caps in Yellow (to fit 15" alloys). Contact: Keith 07710 364975 or email keith.rogers4@ntlworld.com

Caterham and Lotus 7

Looking for unfinished project, crashed or damaged, anything that needs re

building & or tlc even incomplete cars. Can be ex race cars age does not matter. Contact: 07850 234585 or e mail wizz.robson@lookers.co.uk

Any pre 1976 lotus cars or parts Including engines any condition considered especially lotus 7 models Contact: Neil 07944 413111

Series 2 or 3 Lotus 7 Or Caterham as a restoration project. Basket case, damaged or incomplete car considered.

Contact: : David Marsden dwmarsden1@btinternet.com or 01452 760474

Project 7 Crashed, Damaged, Unloved, anything considered. Also interested in any early Lotus, from parts , engines to complete car Contact: Barry 07990841093

1960's-70's Clubmans Formula Ford. Anything interesting requiring work. Contact: Barry 07990841093

Pre 1987 Caterham Anything considered from xflow car to zetec swap.From damaged to concours Could also be a S2 / S3 Lotus Seven Contact: Nicolas Callewaert nicolas.callewaert@me.com

Caterham CSR 260 Please contact.

Patrick on 07801 450205.

Please! Leave voicemail or text if no reply: thank you. Patrickdavidflynn@hotmail.co.uk



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PGM
Weigh In Day
Sunday 26th July
Starts 10am
Ends 4pm
Tea and cake served free all day
Visit website for more details
www.pgmsussex.com

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e: sales@uksportscars.com f: www.facebook.com/uksc1





THANK YOU

Thank you to all +550 people who attended our official Flagship showroom opening at Caterham South on Easter Monday, and thank you for creating an amazing spectacle with your +150 Sevens proudly on display.

WE ENJOYED HOSTING YOU, AND HOPE TO SEE YOU ALL AGAIN VERY SOON

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