

The Chapman Report



Published by the Golden Gate Lotus Club www.gglotus.org May/June 2012



Photos from the April 20 fundraiser at Dietsch Werks for San Jose State's Formula SAE team. From the top:

1. Some of the team with one of their previous race car projects.
2. Sebastian Dietsch helps introduce the team's new racer, the SR-4.
3. Close up of SR-4's carbon fiber body and sophisticated suspension.

May/June Meetings

Friday, May 18, 2012 – 7:30 PM

Hosts: Brandon and Susan Burke

SATURDAY, June 9, 2012 – 1:00 PM

Annual GGLC BBQ in Danville

Hosts: Mel and Darlene Boss

Another Busy Season Begins!

editor

Yes, we made it through a pretty mild, mostly dry winter, and we were fortunate enough to put on several successful club events along the way. But now that the Spring/Summer season is here things promise to get very busy for our active members. Track days, Autocrosses, fun drives/tours/shows, and, of course, a great BBQ are all happening over the next few months. A few write-ups describing the special events happening soon are given below, but don't forget to also keep an eye on the club website for the latest news about the fun events that are planned.

N. Bay Drive With a Twist

May 19, 2012

by Greg Tatarian

We are trying something a little different this year for our 4th annual N. Bay drive. My wife, Trish, and I have organized a springtime drive through parts of Sonoma County, over the hill into Napa County through gorgeous scenery and over sports car-worthy roads. Our destination will be the Saintsbury winery in the Carneros region where we will gather for a special tasting, winery tour and picnic lunch.

Logistics make it difficult for us to arrange for food at the winery, so participants will need to

either bring lunch, or purchase it before we depart from our starting point—the Kohl's Department Store parking lot in Petaluma. This parking lot is located at 1363 N. McDowell Road, just off the Old Redwood Highway exit of 101. Food-to-go is available nearby at the Steel Bear Deli, Franz's Swiss Deli, Starbucks, and a Subway sandwich shop. Gas is available at Valero, or, if you are heading north to the starting point, you can exit early at East Washington and find other choices.



Our route will take us north through remnant farmlands in west Petaluma, along the edge of the sleepy town of Cotati, and into the hills of Bennett Valley. From there we head east along some easy, windy stretches, to a short stretch of Highway 12, where we will connect up to Trinity Road. Those of you familiar with Trinity Road know it is not a fast road, but is one of Sonoma County's tightest, curviest, and most fun. We will continue to Dry Creek Road, then head south through more open vineyard lands, into west Napa, through some rural residential and foothill lands, into the Carneros where we will gather at

Saintsbury winery for our special wine tasting and tour.

Drive time should be about 1.75 hours, including a couple of stops along the way to allow stragglers to catch up. A map is available on the GGLC website, <http://gglotus.org/ggcalend/ggcalend.htm> and a .gpx file is available upon request to Greg at winetour2012@gglotus.org.

Saintsbury is renowned for their world-class Pinot Noir and Chardonnay varietals. They specialize in creating wines from grapes grown by small, local vineyards that produce unique, distinct flavors. This is not a typical Napa Valley tourist's winery, rather they are a boutique producer in a beautiful setting (you can even buy locally produced honey at a farmhouse just down the street). Dave

Graves and Dick Ward, owners of Saintsbury, are long-time clients and friends of mine (I conducted several years of raptor habitat enhancement in the vineyards, as well as bat roosting and foraging research at the site).

You can check out their website www.saintsbury.com for more details on the winery. There will be a \$15 per taster fee for wine tasting, which is refundable with wine purchases. However, we anticipate that the GGLC will help defray the tasting fees (isn't this a great organization?).

Please don't wait until the last minute to sign up for this event. If you have questions, email me

at: winetour2012@gglotus.org, and if you want to sign up use the same address and provide the first and last name of the driver, guest(s), number of people who will be wine tasting, and car info.

We will depart the Petaluma Kohl's parking lot at 10 AM sharp, so please get there by at least 9:30 to sign waiver forms (and order your lunch if you haven't pre-ordered) and attend the brief drivers' meeting before we leave.

We won't wait around, so if you get there late, please rely on the route map, and if you have a Garmin GPS unit, the .gpx file. As in previous N. Bay runs, this event is open to all vintage and contemporary Lotus cars—don't miss it!

Fun Run and BBQ at Mel and Darlene's in Danville

June 9, 2012

editor

We all know how difficult it is to get to the East Bay for a club meeting on our traditional Friday night, so for June the club meeting will be *Saturday, June 9*, in Danville with the added attractions of Mel's fabulous BBQ and an optional fun run to Danville from Dietsch Werks at Club Auto Sport in San Jose. (Note that this annual event has been moved up a week this year from the third Saturday in June to the second to avoid conflicts with Father's Day.)

We will gather at Club Auto Sport (521 Charcot Ave., San Jose) starting at about 9:30 AM



Photo op at winery stop on last year's drive to Danville

for coffee, snacks and car talk; then the fun run to Danville will start about 10:45. The run will

(continued on p.4)

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(cont'd from p. 3)

feature a winery stop in Livermore along the route to re-group and refresh before continuing on to Danville.



Fun and good talk at last year's club BBQ

The BBQ should get started about 1 PM—and a club meeting might happen a little later. A contribution of a salad or dessert for the BBQ would be nice, but is not required. Please RSVP to Mel for the BBQ (darmel-at-sbcglobal.net) by June 6.

Driving options include going directly to Mel and Darlene's in Danville for the BBQ (see directions on page 1), or meeting the group at the winery at about 11:30 AM to finish out the run from Livermore to Danville. Contact me (chapmanreport-at-gglotus.org) for more details.

Deadline Approaching for Laguna Corral Passes June 25, 2012

by Kiyoshi Hamai

The GGLC is once again arranging for a Lotus Corral at the 2012 Monterey Motorsports Reunion at Laguna Seca Raceway on August 17-19, 2012. Purchase your Monterey Motorsports Reunion ticket and Lotus Corral pass from the GGLC and get a discount. The GGLC must sell at least 25 tickets and get 25 Lotus cars in the corral. Please order early and reserve your spot in the corral. GGLC membership is NOT required, but you must drive your Lotus to the event to park in the GGLC Lotus Corral. The deadline for ordering tickets is June 25, so go to: <http://www.gglotus.org/ggshop/ggcorral.htm> and order yours now.



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Lotus Cup USA Returns to Iconic N. CA Track Venues

editor

As part of their Western Regional Series, the factory-backed Lotus Cup USA racing series heads to Infineon Raceway for its first stop in Northern California this year on May 11-12, 2012 (Friday and Saturday). The series then returns to our area June 30-July 1, 2012, (Saturday and Sunday) for an outing at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca. Spectators are welcome at both events.

Lotus driving enthusiasts are invited to experience true competition in the only Lotus championship in North America. This is your chance to drive on closed circuit race courses in track ses-

sions that are restricted to Lotus cars. Participants have the option of driving in either the Time Attack competition (single timed laps) or in exciting wheel-to-wheel races.

Championship points are awarded in a variety of classes in both competition series, and final awards based on earned points are given out at the end of the season.

Calendar

<u>Date</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Location</u>
May 11/12	Lotus Cup USA	Infineon
May 12	AutoX	Marina
May 18	Social/Club Meeting	Los Altos
May 19	N. Bay Drive Winery Tour	Petaluma
June 9	Fun Drive to GGLC BBQ	San Jose Danville
June 10	AutoX	Marina
June 25	Ticket Deadline Laguna Corral	
June 30/ July 1	Lotus Cup USA	Laguna Seca

See www.gglotus.org for additional information about upcoming events.

Register early to save \$100. Please visit their website: <http://www.lotuscupusa.us/index.php/home/> to see the full competition calendar and car preparation rules. The site also provides registration information for series events.



Image provided by Jennifer Dietsch

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The Road to Elite Enlightenment

by guest contributor Steve Warwick, B-Team Racing
Photos by B-team Racing and Vanhap Photography

On December 4, 2011, a 1974 Lotus Elite with a Chevy V8 engine competed in a 15-hour LeMons endurance event at Buttonwillow, CA.

It didn't do very well.

This is the story of our path. You can follow it if you like. Probably best if you don't, though.

Step 1. Buy a Lotus Elite.

Possibly the hardest part of the operation, as there are likely fewer than 100 of these fantastic machines in working order in the U.S. We found our car by advertising a second hand fridge on Craigslist, then asking the guys who showed up if they have a Lotus Elite they'd like to swap for the fridge. We asked him to throw in a couple of hundred bucks.



Step 2. Bring the Elite home.

We found out that Colin, being his usual efficient self, used the drive shafts as the upper suspension elements. With the diff in the standard place for the Elite (the trunk), towing quickly resulted in two flat tires as they impinged on the incredibly sharp shock tower brackets.

Step 3. Look for the rear brakes.

We found them in the trunk, with the diff. On the diff, actually, along with their drums.

Step 4. Remove the Interior.

Everyone knows that to be competitive in a race you should make your car as light as possible by removing the creature comforts such as passenger seats and the air conditioning. The Elite was originally a luxury 2+2 as it rolled off the production line all those years ago, but Colin was alive at the time, and "simplify and add lightness" was still the rule in Hethel. Removing all the interior saved us about 10 pounds, but vastly reduced the amount of tan corduroy we see on a daily basis.

Step 5. Build a cage.

In fact, we didn't build a cage. It's far too difficult for a Joe Shmoe like you and me. We took it to an expert cage builder who scratched his head at the challenge of finding enough metal in the car to weld to. In the end, he built a complete under floor chassis to hold the seat to the cage. In the event of a really big hit the fiberglass body may part company with the cage, but at least we'll still be in the cage.

Step 6. Install the diff.

We set aside about 3 days for this task, not because the diff is hard to install, but because, with



the drums on the diff, you have to connect brake lines to the diff when the diff is in place. We could have saved about 2.5 of those days if had cut large holes in the fiberglass by the transmission tunnel to access the brake lines from the back seat. We did this after spending the 3 days installing the diff.

Step 7. Get the Chevy V8 running.

This is ridiculously easy provided you don't have the distributor set 180 degrees out. You'll know if you've done this because 8-foot flames out of the carburetor are not normal. Neither is blowing the breather out of the valve cover into your overhead fluorescent lights.

Step 8. Go to the practice day on the Friday before the race.

A novice would think that the practice day is to tune up the performance of the car on track. It turns out that normal procedure is to hammer on the radiator fan shroud to try to reduce interference. Take the radiator out to have the hole you just made in it repaired. Bleed the brakes 9 times. Go out on track for a quarter of a lap and get towed in with an apparent fuel problem. Wonder what's causing the blue smoke to come out of the exhaust but not have time to investigate it. Fail tech by putting the battery in the trunk, so that with a big rear end hit we have a heavy object to puncture the gas tank, and a spark source

to ignite it. Move the battery to the rear seat, and collapse in a heap from a 14-hour day working on the car.

Step 9. Line up for the start on Saturday.

Again a novice would think that this is to take part in the race. Instead this is so that we could get towed off after another quarter of a lap with the fuel problem that we had the day before but didn't solve. We installed an electric pump instead



of the mechanical one and wondered why we still had a fuel problem. We replaced the inline

fuel filter and wondered why we still had a fuel problem. We examined the interior of the carburetor and wondered why we still had a fuel problem. We found a kink in the fuel line right under the gas tank and knew why we had a fuel problem.

At last we got to run two laps of the track before getting black flagged for leaving blue smoke swath so bad we understood why James Bond liked Lotuses. Back to the pits, we started taking the engine apart and wondered if we did anything bad to the internals when we spat flames out of the



carburetor. Nah. That couldn't be it.

Actually...

Backfires (frontfires?) could have blown the intake gasket, letting oil into some of the cylinders. Good job it's easy to take the intake manifold off a V8 and replace it. While we're in the pits we drained the half gallon of gasoline in the trunk and tried and figure out where it was coming from. We connected tubes to the breathers that vented into the trunk.

Finally! The car was fixed and we could get back out on track. Shame that racing for the day had stopped 6 hours ago.

Step 10. Go racing!

Really! The car was ready and fun to drive! For two laps. Then we needed to change out the rear tires for smaller ones to

stop them impinging on the sub-frame (see Step 2) we went back out but the car just got slower and slower... The throttle cable was

stretching due to a bad pull angle from the accelerator pedal. Another stop and an adjustment on the throttle made the car faster again, but alas it was a temporary fix as the cable started to fray in the sheath, making it stick again.

In the end, the Chotus completed 60 laps over 2 days but it did come back from the Buttonwillow LeMons race in better condition than it went.

Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca Second Track Day of the Season April 4, 2012

by David Anderson

Amazingly, we enjoyed yet another 2012 spring track day in April at Mazda Laguna Seca with beautiful, clear and slightly cool weather. Turnout for the event was good, and there were just a few open places in the grids for each group.

The day was organized pretty much like the February Laguna Seca track day, with an Open group (nearly unrestricted passing) and a Restricted group (passing on the straights without a point-by from the start-straight up to the corkscrew).

My count of Lotuses on track included: 1 Evora, 5 Elise, 2 Exige, 2 Europa, and 2 Seven.

The Europas had pretty good days overall, although they both encountered some problems late in the day. My car suffered a water-pump failure so suddenly during one of the last sessions that water was spewing out the

rear deck vents. This was in spite of the fact that I am using a supposedly highly reliable electric pump instead of the standard mechanical one. Fortunately, the failure occurred right at turn 4, so I was able to get to the little gate at turn 5 to get off the track without slowing the session down at all.

John Zender had an unusual noise develop in the engine of his Europa flamer that he did not understand, plus he lost coolant at one point, which was also puzzling. So he also was not able run the last session or two.

A fabulously fast Seven (with lots of horsepower and very, very sticky Hoosier slicks) managed to lose a front fender cover at turn 9 (the screws holding it to the car pulled right through the

fender) but corner workers collected it for him.

As always, we thank drivers of other marques (BMW, Porsche, Corvette, etc) as the GGLC could not afford to rent the track without their participation.

The next GGLC track day is July 11, at Thunderhill so you should prepare your Lotus for a fine, and likely hot, day near Willows.

Also, don't forget the Lotus Cup USA time trials and races near Sonoma at Infineon May 11 and 12. Even if you are not participating, you should plan on visiting Infineon one or both days to watch the practice and race action. Note that the organizers typically charge a nominal fee at the paddock entrance.



Marty Brill makes sure his potent Seven is ready for the next track session.



It gets a little busy in the corkscrew! (Photo Credit: Dito Milian, gotbluemilk.com)

Lotus PR News From the Chapman Report Online

Seen at Geneva

More raw than a Japanese tasting menu, the Lotus Exige S Roadster combines its coupé twin's mesmerizing grunt and handling with an open-air experience that makes the driver feel all the more at one with the road. It's the first time an Exige model has been offered with a factory-fitted soft top roof, one which is typically lightweight and easy to put up and take down. In true Lotus fashion, the finely tuned suspension delivers a responsive ride and sublimely agile handling, whilst the supercharged 3.5 V6 engine with race derived technologies delivers stunning performance. Reaching 100 kph from standing in a neck-snapping 4 seconds (0 – 60 mph in 3.8 seconds) and 0 – 160 kph (0 – 100 mph) in 8.5 seconds this little roadster packs a punch both on and off the track. The Roadster comes with a six-speed

manual gearbox, but will also be available with Lotus' Serial Precision Shift (SPS), a paddle-operated automated manual transmission, which makes life more relaxed in the city and more F1-like when it's let off the leash.

Our favorite Finn, Kimi Raikkonen, was also seen at Geneva as he introduced a very special version of an already limited edition – the Lotus F1 Team Evora GTE, which is about as exclusive as a sports car can get.

Kimi returns to Formula One with Lotus in 2012, and what better way to celebrate the return of the former world champion than by creating a special F1 edition? Unique F1 and Kimi inspired touches include: an unpainted, high-gloss carbon-fiber body; a carbon interior with copper inlays; gold-piped black



leather bucket seats; and Lotus F1 Team Limited Edition badging. The GTE, expected to be homologated for EU markets by May 2012, is also the most powerful Lotus road car ever—444 horsepower from a 3.5 litre V6. In addition, with over 100 kg sheered from the standard Evora it boasts a better power-to-weight ratio than most machines this side of Kimi's office. What's not to love?

Lotus on Endurance

On the endurance racing front, Lotus is competing in the 2012 World Endurance Championship with a Lotus V8-powered Lola-designed LMP2 prototype racer. The team, which is run by former F1 principal Colin Kolles and his Kodewa squad, had their first outing at Sebring on March 17. This partnership is ideal for Lotus as it climbs the endurance racing ladder, having returned to the GT class last year with the Evora. Though hugely important in themselves, the build-up races of the season are really a prelude for arguably the greatest motor race in the world—the Le Mans 24 Hours—and our LMP2 should be right in the thick of the action.

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Book Review:

Circus Before Dawn

By David Miller

Reviewed by Rahul Nair

I recently ran into David Miller, a longtime GGLC member and the newly published author of *Circus Before Dawn*, a novel set in a fictional version of the 1999 Formula 1 season. The novel features a start-up F1 team based in the Bay Area. As soon as David told me the basic premise of the novel, I knew I had to read it. My review is below, but let me first set the context by reproducing the book's dust-jacket description.

Shortly before the dawn of the new millennium, a video arrives at the postbox of internationally acclaimed motorsport journalist, Trevor Banks. The startling images depict the elite driving talents of an intriguing racecar driver.

Banks is assigned to investigate the story. As he does so, he discovers that the talented performer also has attracted the attention of a psychopathic saboteur. From Northern California's legendary racetracks to multiple European venues, including the dazzling jewel that is the Monaco Grand Prix, the story takes the reader on a wild, unpredictable ride within the dangerous circus that is Formula One racing.

With an engaging style and a journalist's sharp eye for detail, David Miller has crafted a compelling drama that hurtles toward its shocking climax with the purposefulness and hair-raising excitement of a Formula

One racecar as it rockets toward the chequered flag.

As described in this synopsis, *Circus Before Dawn* is basically a thriller set in the world of F1. The entire book is told as a first-person narrative by a fictitious F1 journalist who is suddenly thrust into added intrigue beyond the regular machinations of F1.

The book provides a good description of the F1 circuit for the casual reader along with many little details that an F1 fan will really like. Rather than glossing over the racing, the au-

thor actually explains many of the details about F1 (e.g., the 107% rule, sponsorship, superlicense, etc). The only slight fakery are the margins of some of the lap times, but that is something I can easily understand had to be enlarged for the benefit of a regular audience.

There are excellent references to F1 history at various points in the book. These references really show the author's involvement with F1, and they actually got me to refer to Wikipedia a few times while reading the book.



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The author gets extra points from me for using Lotus as the premier marque in the book as well as for talking about Laguna Seca and Infineon in great detail. Unlike most thrillers I have read, these descriptions meant I could actually visualize many of the action scenes in the book, which made it more fun.

One issue with the explanations is that some of them do go on a bit longer than needed, and I feel the book could have been trimmed by maybe as much as 50 pages.

One of the things I loved about the book was that I actually know several people that are mentioned in the acknowledgments, which was pretty cool. The author also gets extra points for mentioning the GGLC in the climactic scenes of the book. I also really liked the idea of the F1 season ending with an F1 race through the streets of San Francisco. (It's too bad that Bernie will never let that happen.)

All-in-all I have to say that *Circus Before Dawn* is a good book—especially for the F1 fan—and I feel it is an excellent effort for the author's first book. I suggest you pick up a copy and enjoy it yourself while I look forward to reading the sequel and/or seeing the movie.

Up Close and Personal in Shanghai

by Joe Ficarra

OK, for those willing to brave the report from Race Central, Shanghai ... here we go. All you old timers will remember my "reporting" from the Long Beach GP in the 70s, and you know that before the internet, before Facebook, before Twitter, I had "eye" reports and "social" networking galore—yes, like the Bond girl.

I had decided to go from our island place in Sanya (which is 3 hours away by air) to the Shanghai GP after learning that the Lotus (Renault) team had shown some promise in the prior two races (7th in Australia and 5th in Malaysia). In addition, the ticket prices were more reasonable than last year, and the weather forecast was better than last year's, which featured nasty rain storms.

Pre-race hype centered on 6 former World Champs (Vettel, Button, Hamilton, Raikonen, Alonso and Schumacher)—all of whom were prior winners of the Chinese GP—racing together in the same race for the first time ever. Also, in the background, there was the media blitz about the following week's Bahrain F1 controversy (with Shumi quoted as saying "I feel safe in Bahrain").

Judging by the number of groupies with flags on 10-foot bamboo poles; Ferrari, Schumacher, Germany, and Finland were the clear Chinese fan favorites.

Qualifying in cool, overcast weather was uneventful with Rosberg, Shumi, Hamilton in front and Lotus (Kimi/Grosjean) a promising 4th and 10th. Indeed,

my \$22.00, 90-minute taxi ride to the venue was more exciting—no actual shunt, but plenty of wild stunt driving. After qualifying, Mercedes AMG offered a performance driving exhibition with Nico taking lucky "selectees" on a blast in the parking lot in a souped-up AMG, nasty-sounding E-Coupe. I returned to my Holiday Inn Express Hotel via Metro (which was literally adjacent to the circuit) for \$0.75 (a 30-minute ride) followed by a \$2.00 short (15-minute) taxi ride to the hotel.

Race day was much warmer, brighter, and the Metro was packed to the rafters, with preponderance of Chinese and European fans (mostly seeming to speak German—all hail Vettel and Shumi). Despite the website stating that all tickets were sold out (I was prepared to deal with scalpers), I walked up to the ticket booth and found that I actually had a good choice of grandstand seats. The cost was ~\$180.00 for a seat at the last hairpin before a left dogleg, then the straightaway to the finish line. For comparison, the cheapest "seats" were ~\$60.00 on various grassy knolls throughout the course). Our location saw mucho braking, missed lines, passing, (sometimes with 3 cars wide) and my ears are still bleeding!! These "cars" at 18K rpm sound like F-16 fighter jets. Directly in front of our section was a huge TV screen highlighting all the action taking place on various parts of the course—including

(continued on p. 12)

(cont'd from p. 11)

Weber's wheelie! I sat next to a die-hard German Red Bull fanatic, and we had great times exchanging observations and suggestions above the roar. For a while during the last third of the race, Lotus was running great, 2nd (Kimi) and 5th (Grosjean), but Kimi's tires suddenly went south with just 9 laps to go and he fell way back. It was probably a team miscalculation regarding tire compound. But that was actually not as bad as Shumi's team sending him out on 3 wheels when he was in 2nd place! Grosjean held on to 6th place and 8 points (his first ever GP finish).

Post-race hype was Rosberg becoming part of the third father/son winning drivers after the Hills and Villanueves. Hamilton's third, 3rd place finish made him the points leader in the driver's championship so far.

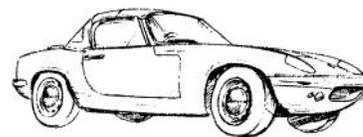
This was a super event overall. Even though first place was never in doubt, there was great racing in the train of cars looking to score points in all of the positions from 2nd to 6th.

Classifieds

(non-commercial ads are free to GGLC members and will run for 2 issues before requiring renewal)

For Sale: Close ratio 4-speed tranny for early Elan, same ratios as 26R. This gearbox was originally used in the European 2L Merkur, and it is stronger than standard Elan trannies. Purchased new 28 years ago and has 20-30 street hours of use. Complete with alloy flywheel, clutch, and driveshaft. Contact – Vladimir: (510) 787-9866

For Sale: Original Elan S2/S3 full-width radiator. Recent professional refurbish. Drilled and tapped for thermostat. Asking \$225, plus shipping (from Northern California). Photos available on request. Contact: Lee Cohee at vancoh@volcano.net or 209-223-1502.



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Contributions to the Chapman Report are accepted and encouraged. Please email them to chapmanreport-at-gglotus.org in MS Word, rtf or ASCII text.

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