The Chapman Report

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STORIES FROM THE WCLM

June Meeting

Directions to Joel's place

2004 West Coast Lotus Meet

Jon Rosner

On Thursday May 20th, under powder blue skies, participants ranging from Steve Brightman in his white M100 Elan leaving from Texas, and Gordonie in his fire-breathing mellow yellow Esprit out of Los Angeles and 150 others traversed the lands to converge on Lake Tahoe.

A variety of twisting roads guarded by skyscraper pines that blanketed the snow capped 8,000 foot mountain passes left one's breathe aside as the hearty growl of revving Lotus' echoed off canyon walls. The narrow ribbon of road that passed over a splendid series of peaks called Route 89. There were shear drops of several thousand feet on either side of one section leading down broken rubble to matchbox sized houses and lakeshore. And that was the road in !

Thursday night's WCLM reception started with registration. Participants put on their badges and their very cool event jackets while oogling the pre-production lipstick red 2005 Lotus Elise from the balcony of the waterfront reception hall and grazing on tasty bits of finger food. Ed Oblad of Lotus Museum fame from Salt Lake City came for his first event, while Walt Okon who towed his Von Dutch pinstriped 50 year old Lotus 6 joined him to mingle with a spicy and spirited assortment of the usual suspects representing Washington, Oregon, Northern and Southern California, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona and Texas.

Friday morning arrived with clear blue skies and the racers long gone to the newly expanded Reno-Fernley track. Except for a minor rain squall nothing untoward happened and reports came back that all had a marvelous time donating rubber to the great state of Nevada. The Lake Tour

WCLM - Rosner Continued

too got hit with a light rain, but that was better than the light hail reported a by a few for Thursdays ride in. The Tour wafted through mountain passes through very low speed switchbacks and up and over spiraling goat roads past aptly named Emerald Bay, all sorts of ancient land upheavals, gleaming redwood peg-beam estates and decrepit deserted farm houses. Lunch was held at a Nevada State Park with wonderful black and tan sand beach, wide cut tree stumps for picnicking and bikini clad lingering bathers drifting off the beach to see the cars while we munched on well-stuffed box lunches. A dozen or so got the chance to enjoy a ten minute blast in the 2005 Elise through the coves that punctuated Lake Tahoe. Drives which elicited many a wide grin from viewers and participants.

Those that participated in the WCLM Track Day were delighted with the newly expanded now 2.3 mile long Reno-Fernley Raceway. The new layout featured a one of the longest straights on the west-coast, plus some very demanding esses. Brent Smith in his Exige was the fastest, passing others at will. Lew Gaskell brought his tuned X180R and was delighted with the front straight. The mid-day break featured a BBQ with ribs and burgers for all. The fun ended mid-afternoon for the trek back to South Lake Tahoe and an evening on the lake.

Friday night was the Sunset Dinner Cruise on board the Tahoe Queen and what a lovely sunset it was over gorgeous Lake Tahoe. The light simply shimmered across the water as the wind picked up and the tem-

GGLC Calender

June 5 to 7	Wine Country Classic	Infineon Raceway
June 20th	Hayward Field Meet with British parts swap meet, bring Lotus stuff!	Cal State, Hayward
June 27	Palo Alto Concours	Palo Alto
July 20	GGLC Track Day	Thunderhill
August 13 to 15	Monterey Historics	Laguna Seca
August 22nd	NASA Super 7 Race	Infineon Raceway
September 14	GGLC Track Day	Thunderhill

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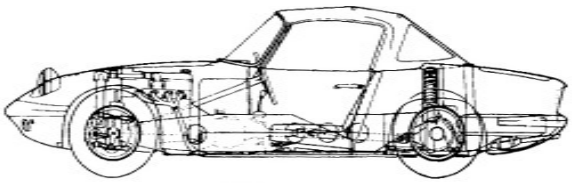

WCLM - Rosner Continued

perature dropped as we passed large structures that seemingly erupted out of the ground through the blanket of tall green Pine and Sequoia.

Saturday was the Autocross with a great layout that was well-marked and quite challenging. Cars ran staggered two at a time and while Sevens, Elans and Esprit V-8s and Turbos performed well, the surprise of the day was Clyde Shepard, Sales Operation Manager for LCU out on an autocross the very first time AND in the 2005 Elise, AND hitting numbers near the top challenging and besting some who have been with SCCA for years! There were a few antic moments with drivers getting a little off course…but that's another story.

That was followed by the WCLM Concours at the Lake Tahoe Golf Course. A picture perfect green tucked into a valley surrounded by steep stone faces and waving pines. 58 cars in all, the star of the show being the 2005 Elise in its glowing red coat. The barbeque was enjoyable and soon it was out free evening. Some went out and gambled more than a roll of quarters, a few gathered in casino tower restaurants for an evening meal, some traveled towards the Bonanza Ranch and a few went back over the mountains to small highly favored and secluded redwood post and beam restaurants.

And then it was Sunday, time having passed far too quickly. Time for the WCLM Awards and Farewell Brunch. Marvelous prizes had been donated by LCU, Dave Bean Engineering, British Motor Cars, Sports Car World, , Kampena/Golden Gate Sevens, JAE Parts, Silicon Valley Lotus, Smith Lotus, Sector 111 and Birkin N.A.

The 2004 WCLM was chaired by Kiyoshi Hamai, and aa hard-working committee that included, Mel Boss (Sponsor Relations), Robert Greene (Hotel and Catering), Pete Richen (Lake Tour), John Zender (WCLM Track Day), Tom Carney (Cruise), Barry Spencer (AutoCross) and Faisal Khan (Concours and BBQ). Awardsfor Best Of, along with a whole bunch of donated goodies were handed out. And after the last awards were given a special thanks went out to Arnie Johnson, former CEO for Lotus Cars USA. Without Arnie there would be no Federal 2005 Lotus Elise. By mid-afternoon it was over, participants had been taking off in all directions since late Saturday. Caravans were negotiated, directions plotted and the lot emptied, one of the most highly acclaimed Lotus Meets ever held. A truly great event, and a marvelous time for all.

WCLM Reception - Introduction of the new Lotus Elise overlooking Lake Tahoe

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Elise is on it's Way!

On-line sources

A bit behind schedule, but the first Elises were loaded into containers and packed aboard a ship bound for the US! Dealers and customers with early orders are waiting for the arrival, now expected in the 2nd half of June. This is the dawn of a new day for Lotus in the US.

Interview with John English of LCU

Chris Smith

Mark O'Shaughnessy of LCU kindly arranged an interview with the new CEO. The last time I saw facility it was still very much under construction, now completed, it's much larger and better appointed than the previous headquarters. The first thing you see on entering the reception area is a gorgeous Saffron Yellow Elise.

John greeted me and with introductions completed we moved to his office. He seemed like a very down to earth guy and was glad to sit down and discuss the impending arrival of the car. At the onset he told me how important honesty was to him and he'd answer questions to the best of his ability.

I'm not a professional journalist so the questions and answers are paraphrased and not literal.

CS – When will the first cars arrive?

JE – The first cars are expected to arrive in mid-June. This first shipment will be relatively small, subsequent shipments will be larger. Cars will ship out, three to a container on a weekly basis. Two ports for shipment, E. coast – Charleston from there the containers are transported to Brunswick distribution center, W. coast – LA with containers to San Diego for distribution. The company contract has thirty years experience in transporting Volvos. (This means no 250 pound smoking, sweaty longshoremen will be driving our cars)

CS – Any plans for a price increase?

JE – No plans for a price increase for the foreseeable future (barring incidents beyond Lotus control)

CS – Is the Exige coming?

JE – This has yet to be determined, probably will examine this issue in six-nine months after Elise deliveries well underway.

CS – US designed clothing/accessory line?

JE – Got a "sales pitch and display" May 27th with a large US specialty apparel manufacturer, plan is to have US designed/style apparel from shirts, jackets, windbreakers, etc. Emphasis on high, quality moderate price.

CS – Warranty?

JE – Cars will come with 3 year 36,000 mile warranty, roadside assistance with an extended warranty available.

CS – Dealer/Servicing issues?

JE – LCU will NOT be developing non-dealer service centers, they presently have 41 dealers and plan to expand the dealer network slightly to areas not presently served.

CS – Plans to improve communications with the Elise buyers? Wait list people on not being kept well informed of the process have voiced a lot of concern.

JE – This is a big issue and is aware of the scarcity of information about the cars, build status, etc filtering down to the customer. LCU is still a tiny company with only a handful of employees trying to go from a 125 cars a year to 2200+, certainly a lot of work ahead but fully intend to improve the process. (BTW – John mentioned that he's been a visitor to the elisetalk.com and he's got a very positive impression of the average Elise buyer/enthusiast, as he said "we're not talking about Chevy Luminas here")

CS – Website revision?

JE – Various web designers have been presenting proposals, this is a high priority.

CS – LCU relations with Clubs/ enthusiasts?

JE – Very interested in maintaining strong links with the enthusiast community, realizing this is some of the best advertising for the marque.

CS – What of long time Lotus CEO Arnie Johnson leaving Lotus after 30 years?

JE – Though he never actually met Arnie, he would've liked to see him stay on in the position offered him as he felt he was a great asset to Lotus. Also acknowledged that Arnie was a major driving force in getting the Elise over here.

CS – Where do you see Lotus in 3-5 years in the US?

JE – In 5 years hopes to have two-three different models at different price and performance levels.

CS – What's his top priority for the next six months?

JE – Getting the cars here, refining and smoothing out the process and making lots of happy people.

John's very enthusiastic about the impending arrival of the first cars and both he and the LCU staff are committed to the success of the Elise here in the US. It has been a learning experience transitioning from a large car manufacturer to Lotus.

While there, talked with Clyde who was still thrilled with his autocross experience in the Elise at WCLM. While he's been on the track in the Elise, he said the one day of autocrossing taught him so much more about the capabilities of this car. He thinks every Elise owner would be well served by autocrossing. Ran in to Dave Simkin who's been conducting Elise service tech courses for dealer mechanics. Andy Plante has relocated from Lotus UK and has been at LCU for a month or two.

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2004 West Coast Lotus Meet & the Fed Elise

By Kiyoshi

What looked like a fool-proof plan in October 2003 became a nail-biter as the days rolled closer and closer to the West Coast Lotus Meet (WCLM).

Originally Lotus Cars USA thought they would be able to get 2 cars to the WCLM and the 3 sponsoring dealers were excited to be able to bring their cars. That would have made a total of 5 new Elises at the WCLM for rides and drives. That looked like a solid plan in January, but then in late March it started to become clear that the dealer cars might be late. Mid-April and the dealer cars were yet to be built and so now the WCLM would only have the 2 cars from LCU. By early May the press cars were in high demand because the dealer and additional press cars hadn't been built and LCU was struggling to get a single new Elise to the WCLM.

So, it was a week before the WCLM when a single Ardent Red Elise was loaded onto a truck in Duluth, Georgia bound for the west coast and Lake Tahoe. We'd make due with the one car; afterall it was better than no car. Plus we would have Clyde Shepherd, Sales Operations Manager, attending, I was pleased to have Clyde coming as he has a wonderful way with customers. He would be perfect interfacing with the WCLMers.

Day 1 – Thursday, May 20th

Clyde's schedule had him arriving mid-afternoon of Thursday May 20th. Laura and I joined Pete and Noni Richin on Wednesday, May 19th and Tom and Cherie Carney arrived late in the evening of the 19th. So, when the Elise arrived in South Lake Tahoe late in the morning of the 20th Tom and I were tasked with going to meet the driver and drive the Elise back to the Lakeland Village (I know it's a tough and ugly job, but someone had to do it!). There I was with a brand new red Elise driving down South Lake Tahoe Blvd!

I stashed the Elise in the underground parking area of the Resort and covered it. No one would know it was there.

The WCLM reception began a bit early and Clyde had arrived at the Resort after a long day of travel from Atlanta. Around 6:45 Clyde and I walked over to the underground garage and recovered the Elise and then drove over to the Reception. Clyde parked the Ardent Red Elise on the patio next to the beach and dock as the sun was setting over the mountains to the west. A spectacular view, the Elise, Lake Tahoe, snow capped mountains and a colorful sky.

Day 2 – Friday, May 21st

I had breakfast with Clyde as we conspired on the day's events. Many had left for the WCLM Track Day, but with only a single Elise we opted to go on the Lake Tour chaired by Pete Richen. Pete had laid out a route that would take the group over Luther Pass and down into the Hope Valley on Hwy 89, then into Nevada and back into the Tahoe basin via Kingbury Grade. Then up Hwy 50 to the lunch stop at Sand Harbor on the east shore.

Clyde was giving demo drives along the route. A pack of cars would go off with the Elise and periodically stop and swap drivers. And once at the picnic stop it was non-stop demo drives. I got the honors of giving poor Clyde a break and played shotgun for the excited drivers. Clyde and I had a "routine", make a left out of the picnic area, head up the road a few miles, make a U-turn and drive back. The route had a nice straight and some twisties with some beautiful lake views. I must have made about 8-10 runs and about half way through there was a group of kids with their bikes that figured out that this gorgeous red sports car was zipping back and forth along this stretch of road. Every time we came by out came the thumbs-up with big smiles. It was a kick.

After lunch, with a new driver behind the wheel, Clyde set out with a new pack for the drive around the lake and eventually back to the Lakeland Village.

Day 3 – Saturday, May 22nd

This was to be a very busy day. I got up early and made my way to

2004 West Coast Lotus Meet & the Fed Elise - Continued

the Tahoe Airport to find Barry Spencer who was the chairman of the WCLM Autocross. Already there were about 10 cars there and as the morning wore on over 40 drivers were ready to tackle the cones. Clyde and I were the designated drivers for the Elise and we would offer rides for who ever had a helmet on their head and was ready to go.

I had the honors of taking the first run in the Elise, Clyde as my passenger. A number of Europas, Elans and Esprits had already run. Best time was around a 47 or 48 second run. I pulled to the line and at the drop of the green did a launch with about 3000 rpm. The engine seemed to bog a bit, there was no wheel spin.

Barry had designed the course to try to suit the variety of cars; the first section was open and fast. From the start box there was a short straight that led into a right-left-right box, then into a 2 cone slalom. That opened to a wide straight section to the far end of the course with a big open right hand 180 sweeper. The exit got narrow and straight allowing a driver to get sorted out. That led into a 5-cone slalom followed immediately by a tight 180 hairpin. Then there was a staggered step run to the left into a 90 right, a burst, and another 90 right. Next was a short straight, a 3-cone slalom and "you-better-slow-down" tight right-left into the finish.

Thus the course was open and fast in parts for the Esprit drivers and had tight corners and slaloms for the Elan and Europa guys. Nice fun course that was easy to follow.

Back to the Elise, foot planted I accelerated out of the start box, did a quick twitch to get through the box, up shifted, then around the first cone of the slalom and then a slight lift before apexing on the 2nd cone. Down the straight the engine came on cam (the Toyota VVT-Li engine lights up at 6200), brakes (not hard) and into the sweeper with a hint of understeer that was quickly balanced to neutral with some throttle – NICE!

Around the sweeper we went, finishing with a late apex, foot flat heading toward the 5-cone slalom. I stayed on the power past the first cone then braking for the 2nd and dashed in-and-out through the slalom. The Elise stayed flat, poised and went EXACTLY where I pointed it. The steering was PERFECT.

Past the 5th cone, braked hard (I never felt the ABS) for the tight 180. On this initial run I stayed in 2nd gear, the engine bogged a bit on exit so on later runs I was dropping to 1st gear and getting power oversteer on corner exit. If you overcooked the entry the Elise would push and you'd have to wait for it to hook up and then back on the power, but with the right entry speed you could get into the corner, get on the power early and get a nice dose of power oversteer.

It was then a hard acceleration, a brake tap for the right hander, back on the throttle, another brake tap, around the right and back on the throttle to the 3-cone slalom. Brake into the 2nd cone, flick the steering wheel and accelerate past the 3rd cone and through the right-left in the finish. This last bit was amazing, I watched the other cars tackle this right-left, everyone was off the throttle or braking into it. But, in the Elise I was able to accelerate with my foot flat into and through it to the finish.

My time for that first run, a low 44, some 3-4 seconds faster than all the cars that had run prior! WOW!!! And, more to the point I felt that I had left 2-3 seconds on course! In subsequent runs I was able to get into the low 42s. The top time of the day went to the Elise S190 with a solo driver, softer tires and track suspension, beating the new Elise by 1/10th of a second! This Elise was the base suspension and makes me wonder how much faster the Sport Suspension Pack would be. 2 seconds? More?

Through the remainder of the Autocross Clyde and I gave more rides and each time the Elise vividly impressed. I had to run off to the Concours and left Clyde still giving rides. Eventually he got to the Concours with a big grin on his face and hungry.

After the group photo at the Concours Clyde started to do demo drives again and got back to the resort about 5pm.

Day 4 – Sunday, May 23rd

There were no rides or drives for the Elise scheduled for Sunday, with only the Awards Brunch to take place. Clyde had to leave early in the morning to get back to Atlanta. I drove the Elise back to the clubhouse and parked it in front. It still attracted a crowd even after 4 days.

After the festivities were done I sadly had to get the car to Horseless Carriage to be transported back to LCU in Atlanta. This was my last drive to the meeting point. Tom Carney was following me as before. We met the truck and watched it get loaded. Goodbye to the red Elise.

Summary

The Elise has amazing steering, it's all Lotus in that regard. It's feel connects your hands with the contact patch. It is the complete opposite of the isolation that the Japanese automakers try to achieve. For Elan, Europa and Seven owners, you'll feel completely at home with the steering on the Elise, it is SOOOOOO right.

Many in the UK have criticized the brake pedal with the boost and ABS. I attribute most of that because they are comparing it to the earlier cars

2004 WCLM & the Fed Elise - Continued

that didn't have the booster and ABS. That pedal is ROCK hard. In fact I commented on the hardness of the brakes when I drove the Elise 2 years ago at the 2002 WCLM. Frankly I didn't like it. It was too stiff compared to the throttle and clutch. The new car is much better, perhaps the throw is a bit long, but it's positive, progressive and makes heel-toe easy. This car flat out stops.

Acceleration is flat out FUN!!! Get up to 6200 rpm and the whole car changes personality. Around town under 4000 rpms it's docile and drives easily, but find an open stretch of road and get your foot into the throttle and push it to the 6200 rpm, the cam timing changes, the intake tract opens up with a authoritative roar, the rear of the car squats and it JETS. The 6-speed box has nice gear spacing, the shifter is easy to use with on-center springs. The throw might be a bit long, but you don't have a doubt what gear you're in.

Bottomline… I can't wait to get my car in the Fall!!!!

2004 WCLM Photos

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WCLM Awards

By Kiyoshi

Here are the results from the WCLM

WCLM Concours

Class	Name	Car
Best Seven/Race Car	Walt Okon	Mark VI
Best Elite (type 14)	1. Frans Nelson	Elite
	2. Jess Marker	Elite
Best Elan (early)	1. Roberta Bean	Elan S1
	2. Ron Landthorn	Elan S1
Best Europa	1. Don Elliot	Europa S2
	2. Pete Richen	Europa TC
Best Esprit	1. Alan Zacharda	Esprit
	2. Johan Hybinette	Esprit V8
Best M100 Elan	Steve Brightman	M100 Elan
Best Elise	Dennis Ortenberger	Elise S2
Modified Lotus	Johan Hybinette	Esprit V8
Unrestored Lotus	Walt Okon	MkVI
Best of Show	Walt Okon	MkVI

WCLM Autocross

Class	Driver	Time
Elan & Europa	1. David Anderson	47.367
	2. Ken Gray	49.202
M100 Elan	1. Mark Alloy	48.078
Esprit	1. Stephan Bunk	46.432
	2. Joe Wheathers	47.712
Elise	1. Bob Allred	43.181
Modified Elan/Europa	1. John Zender	44.833
Go-Kart	1. Chris Spencer	51.021
Non-Lotus	1. Robert Greene	51.021
Top Time of Day	1. Bob Allred	43.181
Top Time of Day Women	1. Becky Zucharda	48.075
Most Dynamic Run	Chris Spencer	

WCLM Chairman's Report

By Kiyoshi

Well, the 2004 WCLM is over. Lots of planning and work went into making it a successful event. Work and time that was appreciated by the nearly 200 entrants that came from all over the west coast. Here's what a few had to say...

"To sum it up in two words: Totally awesome!!!!!!!!!! From the moment we arrived on Thursday afternoon for the opening reception, I saw a bunch of Esprits and knew that it was going to be a most memorable weekend."

"The WCLM itself deserves mention. I did not do all of it due to time constraints, but I regret missing the parts I did miss and based on reports, they were well received. The entire event was very well organized, offered a lot of things to do. I heard from more than one person, that it was the best Lotus event they have ever attended."

"Let me add my name to the many who will send you and the WCLM team congratulations for an excellent meet. You guys put a lot of time and effort into this thing and it showed."

"Having been a Lotus owner since 1964, this is, astonishingly, the first Lotus meet I've been to in my life. I was surprised at how interesting and entertaining it was. The selection of activities was the best."

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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WCLM Chairman - Continued

"The WCLM was really a great time. Kiyoshi and crew organized a fantastic event. Hanging out with Lotus fanatics is pretty cool. Esprits, Elites, Europas, Elans and Elises - what a bunch of cool cars and a great history. Lake Tahoe is really a beautiful location. Hopefully they'll run it there next year."

"I just wanted to say thanks for the wonderful event last weekend. It was awesome... perfect weather, food, cars, organization, etc.! We had a great time. This was our first ever lotus event, since we've only had the car about 6 weeks. We met a lot of great people. You guys really put on an excellent event. It will be hard to beat next year."

"Many thanks to your outstanding group of volunteers that made the WCLM such an enjoyable event. We had a tremendous time, saw some old friends and made some new ones. The whole weekend was very memorable and getting to drive the Elise was a high point. Before trying it out I had said I wasn't in the market for a new car - but I might have to reconsider that. "

It's GGLC members who make the WCLM happen. The WCLM is major undertaking, with 5-6 major events, events that in normal circumstances would be projects in and of themselves. The GGLC applauds the work of the WCLM committee. These members made the WCLM successful.

Sponsorship Chairman	Mel Boss
Hotel & Catering	Robert Greene
Registration	Jon Rosner
Lake Tour	Pete Richen & Jim McClure
WCLM Track Day	John Zender
Lake Tahoe Dinner Cruise	Tom Carney
WCLM Autocross	Barry Spencer
WCLM BBQ & Concours	Faisal Khan
WCLM Awards	John Zender & Faisal Khan

Some highlights and facts:

- Financially successful – breakeven with a budget of nearly $40,000
- Over 100 cars participated
- Over 64 rooms & townhomes were reserved at Lakeland Village
- Over 40 drivers at the WCLM Autocross
- Nearly 50 drivers at the WCLM Track Day
- Almost 200 people at the Concours BBQ

Again, Congratulations for the team!!! Fantastic job!!!

The Chapman Report is published monthly by the Golden Gate Lotus Club, PO Box 117303, Burlingame, CA 94011. The GGLC is a non-profit incorporated car club and is not affiliated with Group Lotus, Team Lotus or Lotus Cars USA. The GGLC s'annual membership dues are $25.00.

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For Sale: 67 S1 Europa body w/ windshield, and frame. Complete body: all panels, body good condition. Wimbledon white paint. Removable engine bay crossmember. Some fame damage to front box. $1000 obo.
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For sale: 1969 Lotus Elan +2 vintage race project car comes with Spyder chassis, Cosmics, limited slip
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GOLDEN GATE SEVENS

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Authorized Dealer of Caterham Cars

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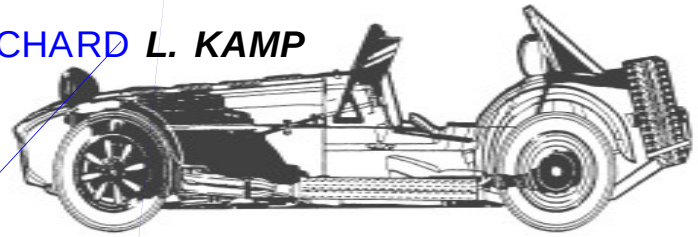

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For Sale: A set of 4 2002 OZ wheels from a Lotus Esprit with tires mounted. These are the stock wheels and have been used for only 1500 miles: Front- 17x8.5, Rear- 18x10 on Dunlop SP9000 Tires (Front- 235/ 40ZR17, Rear- 285/35ZR18). $4000. I'll deliver within 500 mi of Medford, Oregon. Contact Andrew Gilchrist- 541 621-6490 or gilchrist@charter.net (03/ 04)

For Sale: " 150 HP, 200 MPH Hayabusa engine. This type engine (Suzuki GSX 1300R), powered a streamliner to 315 MPH at Bonneville this year, 2000 model, the bike it came from had 800 miles on it before the kid (still alive) lost it. Also factory service manual. Has integral 6 speed gear box. Just waiting to power a great little race car. Call Peter in San Jose at 408/ 266-0116. $3,300 OBO." (12/03)

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