



The first words

After writing newsletters for a longer time now, I am still amazed how much news there is to share with you in just 4 weeks. A lot of words and less images this time, sorry for that.

I hope you will find the following news items interesting, please enjoy this issue!

Ronald Ringma



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Previous issues of this newsletter are available as free downloads from my website.

News from Group Lotus

Read all about the news items in the press releases section of the website, please follow this link:
<http://www.lotusdriversguide.com/Press/index.php>

New on the website

You will find all recent changes and news headlines on the 'news' page of the website. On the opening page of the website you will also see the most recent items.

Production stop for Elise and Exige?

As the supply of Toyota 2ZZ-GE engines has finally run out, it looks like there will be a production stop in July...

The word is that there will be an extremely limited number of Final Editions. For the USA 30 examples of the Exige and 15 of the Elise are planned. If you like to obtain one of these Final Editions I suggest that you visit your dealer now.

There are two trim levels planned for the Exige S260 Final Edition for North America, with Track Pack, Tour Pack and LSD as standard. If that's not special enough for you, Lotus is offering 25 customers the chance to have their S260 painted matte black.



American and Canadian fans of the Elise have fewer options, with only 15 examples of the 2011 Lotus Elise SC Final Edition planned. Lotus says the car will get the buyer's choice of four colour schemes based on the Europe-only Elise Club Racer. The Elise SC Final Edition will come loaded with options:

2011 Lotus Exige S 260 "Final Edition

- 257 horsepower supercharged and intercooled 1.8 Liter, mid-mounted 4-cylinder engine
- Multi-point fuel injection system with electronic ignition and throttle control
- Synchromesh 6-speed transaxle with lockout reverse gear

- Variable slip traction control

- Launch Control

- Touring Package with sport seats trimmed in your choice of black, red, magnolia or biscuit leather.

- Track Package with double adjustable Ohlins dampers.

- Torsen (Torque-sensing) Limited Slip Differential.

- Black Y type 5 spoke forged wheels with A048 tires.

- Metallic paint range at no additional charge.

Options

- Choice of full range of current colors

- StarShield

Production Details

- Limited to 30 units for North America

- May/June production

2011 Lotus Elise SC—Final Edition

- 220 horsepower supercharged 1.8 Liter, mid-mounted 4-cylinder engine
- Multi-point fuel injection system with electronic ignition and throttle control
- Synchromesh 6-speed transaxle with lockout reverse gear Standard Fitment
- Touring Package with sport seats trimmed in black Alcantara
- Bilstein sport pack dampers with Eibach springs
- Torsen (Torque-sensing) Limited Slip Differential
- Black 5 Y- spoke forged wheels with A048 tires
- Black rear diffuser
- Matte Black painted hard top, roll bar cover, transom panel and door mirrors
- Special numbered plaque

Options

- 4 no charge color options: Ardent Red, Aspen White, Chrome Orange and Carbon Grey

- StarShield

Production Details

- Limited to 15 units for North America

- May/June production

And after this? Do we have to wait for the next generation as was presented in Paris last year? I will let you know as soon as I have the answer!

Happy April Fools' day

Lotus Renault GP produced this press release on the first of April:

Lotus Renault GP's cars will have a makeover next week with the creation of special edition gold leaf bodywork in time for the Malaysia Grand Prix.

The gold leaf elements will be made from 22 carat yellow gold and will appear on the front wing, sidepods and engine cover of the R31. Only two sets will be available for Nick and Vitaly, and will be used for qualifying and the race.

Production of the bodywork took place in a secret location at Enstone with special security measures being put in place. The golden parts will be shipped to Malaysia this weekend by a specialist security firm to ensure their safe arrival.

Eric Boullier: "I believe the R31 is already the best looking car on the grid, but we wanted to make it even more special for the Malaysian race. Asking the team to incorporate genuine gold in the livery was not without its challenges, but the guys have done an incredible job to get everything manufactured in time for next weekend."

James Allison: "Adding a precious metal to the car also brings weight – several hundred grams of pure gold per car to be precise, but it will act as ballast and the bodywork has been designed especially with this in mind. The only elements of the livery that will not be gold are those on the rear wing so that we don't impact on the efficiency of the DRS. Equally, we've taken special precautions to protect the bodywork around our novel exhaust system to make sure the gold elements don't melt around them."

Both R31s will be presented in their sparkling new bodywork on Thursday morning in the pitlane of the Sepang circuit for an official photocall with the team's drivers and management.

Some people did actually believe it....

Extra finances for Lotus Cars Ltd.

16 April 2011

It looks like Lotus Cars has gathered enough money to meet their five-year business plan. Today an agreement was signed for facilities amounting to £270 million, extended by a syndicate of six financial institutions. The six financial institutions acting as lenders are CIMB Bank, Malayan Banking, Overseas-Chinese Banking Corporation, Export-Import Bank of Malaysia, Affin Bank and EON Bank.

The agreement was signed at the Proton Centre of Excellence Complex in Shah Alam by Group Lotus CEO Dany Bahar on behalf of Lotus Cars Limited, while signing on behalf of their respective banks were Datuk Seri Nazir Tun Razak, group chief executive of CIMB Group; Datuk Seri Abdul Wahid Omar, president and CEO of Maybank; Tuan Syed Abdull Aziz Jailani Syed Kechik, CEO and director of OCBC; Adissadikin Ali, CEO of EXIM Bank; Datuk Zulkiflee Abbas Abdul Hamid, CEO of Affin Bank and Peter TC Chow, head of group business & investment banking and principal officer of EON Bank.

This loan forms an important part of the funding required to execute the five-year business plan as Lotus has now successfully raised the required funding to realise the future plans.

"On behalf of Group Lotus, I would like to express our sincere appreciation to CIMB Group, Malayan Banking Berhad, Overseas Chinese Banking Corporation Limited, Export-Import Bank of Malaysia Berhad, Affin Bank Berhad and EON Bank Berhad for their support and, above all, confidence in our future plans," Bahar said.

"With the help of this external financing, we look forward to introducing our exciting new models to the world, which will complement our current product range. I am confident that the execution of our business plan will mark the return of the iconic Lotus brand into the elite ranks of the world's premium sportscar

manufacturers and generate greater profitability and long-term financial sustainability for the company and its stakeholders," he added.

"I would like to thank our shareholders, Proton, for the unwavering support and confidence in Lotus. I believe Lotus has a lot to offer to Proton moving forward. As the future plans bear fruit, I am confident that Proton will benefit in terms of branding, product development, and sales and marketing," Bahar concluded.

Proton's managing director Syed Zainal Abidin Syed Mohamed Tahir said: "The £270 million will primarily be used for product development," adding "part of the loan will be used to upgrade the Lotus facilities in Norfolk".

Lotus Engineering unveils supercharged range extender

The new production Range Extender that has been designed by Lotus Engineering together with Fagor Ederlan was on display at the 81st International Motor Show in Geneva.

The production Lotus Range Extender is an extremely compact, lightweight, low-cost engine and generator, designed specifically for hybrid electric vehicles. The initial concept engine was fitted to the Jaguar Limo Green research vehicle and this new version has been redesigned by Lotus Engineering and Fagor Ederlan to optimise performance and develop the engine for series production.

The production Lotus Range Extender will be offered in two versions with the top of the range 50 kW supercharged variant on show in the cutaway hybrid Evora 414Evolution exhibit. The 1.3 litre, three cylinder Lotus Range Extender engine offers high efficiency and low mass, which will enable the downsizing of expensive batteries, whilst maintaining vehicle efficiency and range of hybrid electric vehicles.

The Lotus Range Extender is designed to offer a fast route to market for original equipment manufacturers requiring a dedicated range extender for series hybrid vehicles. Designing the engine specifically for hybrid applications has provided a number of opportunities to significantly reduce the mass of the engine. This mass optimisation has resulted in an engine weight of 58 kg for the supercharged version and 51 kg for the naturally aspirated variant.



The supercharged engine uses a belt driven centrifugal supercharger to produce 50 kW peak electrical power at 3500 rpm, with the naturally aspirated version producing a maximum 35 kW. The engine is optimised to generate power at engine speeds between 1500 and 3500 rpm allowing a lightweight simple 2 valve per cylinder engine architecture and eliminating the need for a complex 4 valve per cylinder design.

As well as an Integrated Exhaust Manifold, the Lotus Range Extender engine has an innovative new Integrated Intake Manifold that gives a significant reduction in weight and package size.

The generator supplied by Fagor Automation, is driven directly off the crankshaft to reduce weight, package size and cost. The engine, generator and power electronics are controlled using a Lotus controller to improve communication and efficient running of the systems. The engine architecture and engine management system are designed to offer flex-fuel capability to allow the engine to run on renewable alcohol fuels.

Lotus Engineering cutaway hybrid Evora 414 Evolution exhibit

The cutaway hybrid Evora 414Evolution exhibit that was the Lotus stand during the 81st International Motor Show in Geneva was there to demonstrate Lotus Engineering's technical expertise in: Lightweight Architectures, Efficient Performance, Driving Dynamics and Electrical and Electronic Integration. The

production Lotus Range Extender forms part of the Lotus Engineering series hybrid drivetrain, which is displayed in the cutaway hybrid Evora 414Evolution exhibit along with the new intelligent HALOsonic system.



Robert Hentschel, Director of Lotus Engineering, said "Lotus Engineering is one of the world's most dynamic automotive engineering consultancies. We are rapidly expanding into new regions and investing heavily in facilities, personnel and our world leading technologies. One example of this investment in technology is the cutaway hybrid Evora 414Evolution exhibit, which showcases the advanced series hybrid drivetrain, with production Lotus Range Extender and intelligent HALOsonic technology. It is anticipated that these technologies will, in conjunction with our technical partners, be in production vehicles in the near future".

Lotus back in business on the track!

Formula One: In Australia and Malaysia we did see how Lotus Renault GP reached the podium! A very happy moment for Lotus and for the fans.

F1 legend and Group Lotus brand ambassador Jean Alesi gives his thoughts on the Australian Grand Prix.

What do you think about Vitaly's performance in Melbourne?

It's a superb result for him and Lotus Renault GP. To be the very first Russian driver on the podium must also feel incredible. What's also great is that his result came from good strong driving, rather than from the mistakes of others, this is a great sign of his potential. The result will give him a good confidence boost too.

After the difficult pre season with Robert Kubica's accident, what do you think a result like this will mean to the team?

An incident such as the one LRGP had with Robert is a disaster for any team however I think what the result in Australia clearly demonstrates is how much progress the team have made with the car. Their hard work has definitely paid off. Watching the race, Robert will have seen how strong the car is and I'm sure he will see this as a very good sign for the team.

How emotional was it for you to see the return of the iconic black and gold livery?

Very emotional. When we unveiled the livery back in January at the Autosport International Show in Birmingham, everyone was really excited just to see the colours again and be reminded of the great drivers such as Ayrton Senna. The colours are fantastic but it's the results that make the real difference and for me, this combination is amazing!

You're the F1 spokesperson for Group Lotus, how exciting is a result like this for Group Lotus?
It's incredibly exciting. To be just a few laps away from the end of the race with one of your drivers heading for the podium is a wonderful feeling. The team and drivers have worked exceptionally hard during testing and we're very happy with the results. Keep up the good work and let's see what we can achieve in Malaysia!

Indycar: In St. Petersburg, Florida, we did see KV Racing Technology – Lotus driver Tony Kanaan finishing third in the 2011 IZOD IndyCar Series season opening Grand Prix of St. Petersburg.

Team mate Takuma Sato finished fifth marking the first time that KVRT - Lotus has placed two drivers in the top-five in an IndyCar Series race. E. J. Viso suffered a rear tire puncture early in the race and placed 19th.

Kanaan made his KVRT - Lotus race debut a huge success by finishing on the podium. No stranger to the challenging 1.8-mile, 14-turn St. Petersburg temporary street circuit, Kanaan, who was making his seventh start here, qualified eighth, but following a first lap accident that took out several other competitors, he moved into third place. From there he challenged runner-up Will Power throughout the race and in the end held off a strong charge from Simona de Silvestro to earn KVRT - Lotus' second IndyCar Series podium finish.

"I didn't expect anything in this race and maybe that was a good thing because it makes today's result that much better. I have to thank KV Racing Technology and Lotus team for giving me this opportunity. I also have to thank my fans, my family and sponsors in Brazil that made this happen a week ago, in fact six days ago. I'm afraid I may have raised the bar a little too high too quickly, but I am happy. We still have work to do, but today was a great result especially considering that the guys have only been together for less than a week."

British GT Championship: New Lotus Sport UK Team take on the British GT Championship

Lotus Motorsport recently announced a tie up with the new race team Lotus Sport UK to contest the 2011 British GT Championship with two Lotus Evora GT4 race cars.

Finished in the striking colours of Lotus Motorsport Green with a yellow twin stripe bisecting the car from front to rear, the Lotus Evora GT4 run by Lotus Sport UK is powered by a 4 litre 360 hp V6 transverse version of the engine used in the multi-award winning Lotus Evora.

Lotus Sport UK begins the assault on the 2011 British GT Championship at the season opener at Oulton Park, Cheshire, on Monday 25 April 2011 (Easter Monday). The team will also race at select rounds of the European GT4 championships.

Gary Ayles, Team Principal for Lotus Sport UK and former BTCC and Le Mans racer, is also looking forward to the season: "We're delighted to be working with Lotus. The Evora GT4 package is a high performer, and with proven reliability, I'm very optimistic that we will be competitive throughout the season. Coupled with the appointment of Ollie Jackson, who is the current Porsche Carrera Cup Pro Am 1 Cup Champion, I think we have a good chance to take the winners laurels this year. We will announce the rest of the driver line-up closer to the first race."

Claudio Berro, Director of Group Lotus Motorsport, is confident for the season ahead: "Following an extensive period of development and durability testing last year, 2011 is the first full year of competition for the GT4. Despite this, the Lotus Evora GT4 already gained credibility at the Nürburgring round of the GT4 Championships last year, followed by the Brit Car 24hrs and more recently this year at the Dubai 24 hour event, so I am confident that this season will be a good one for us!"

"Our development team is hand picked from some of the finest sports and GT drivers in the world, so this car not only has the stunning looks of a winner but the pedigree to match."

Robert Kubica

Robert Kubica is reported to be recovering well, and has surprised doctors by putting weight on his foot and clasping an object in his hand. Nick Heidfeld has written an open letter to his former BMW Sauber teammate. Here's the letter as it appeared on Heidfeld's official website:

Dear Robert,

Have you seen that? I printed your logo on the front of my helmet, and the Polish flag on the side. I wanted you to see that and to let you know that I'm thinking of you. I wanted to show your fans that you are a part of Formula 1 and of this team. This 3rd place is also yours! During the race I had often been thinking of you. Crossing the finish line, happiness totally flooded my head. I know what you are thinking right now: "Lotus-Renault has built such a wonderful car this year. I want to get back as soon as possible and drive it!" You can do it, I wish you all the best for your rehabilitation. Get well soon!

Yours

Nick

Lotus Driving Academy renewed

The Lotus Driving Academy at the Hethel test track has been restructured to suit the Lotus driver of today and tomorrow. It is possible to develop your own driving skills as you progress through the various levels with the Lotus Elise or discover the brand new Evora S - always under the professional guidance of experienced Lotus instructors.



Or feel like a real Lotus racing driver for a day behind the wheel of the Evora GT4 for the ultimate Lotus ride.

Also available is the option for exclusive 1:1 personal tuition driving Lotus sports car models.

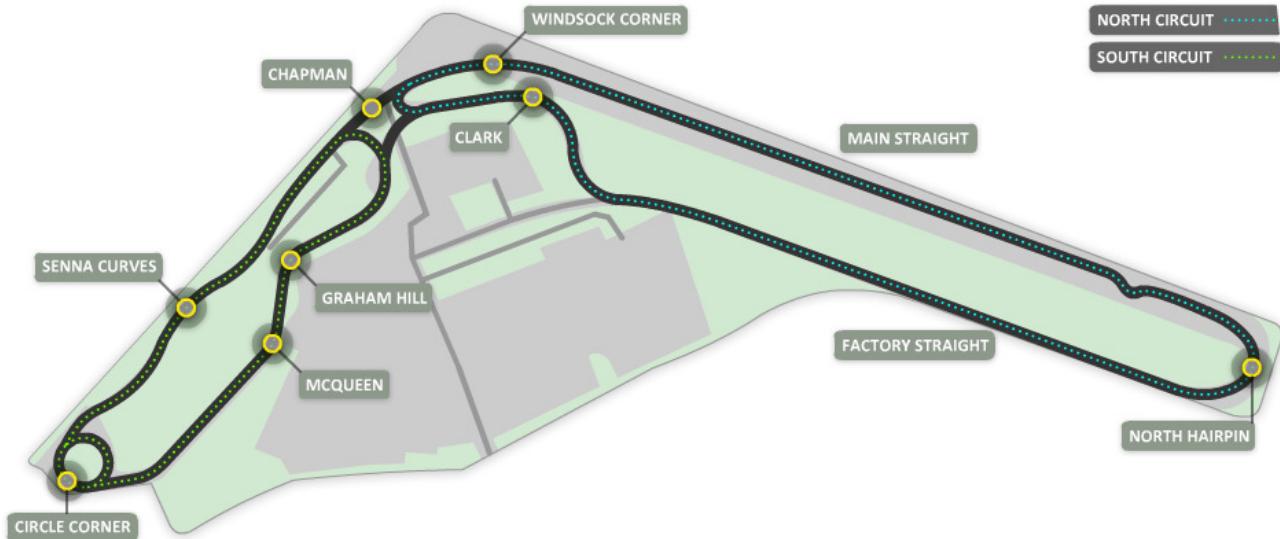
The Lotus Licence is a driver development program designed to give everyone the amazing opportunity to experience the feel of Lotus vehicle dynamics together with the Formula 1 heritage we pride ourselves on. Offered exclusively at the official Lotus test track at Hethel, Norfolk, where Lotus founder Colin Chapman originally relocated the headquarters of Lotus back in 1966, it's truly a unique and exciting driver training series.



This newly introduced program is aimed at providing both practical and theoretical tuition which is now structured in such a way that you can discover the Lotus Experience through three levels of competency. Formerly known as the Bronze, Silver and Gold licence attainments, the Lotus Driving Academy is excited to offer special training days that will allow everyone to progress through the accreditation levels ranging from the more basic introductory package into the consistently more challenging levels that advance to the Lotus racing driver option.

Have a look at the new website: <http://www.lotusdrivingacademy.com>

The Hethel track



Situated beside the Lotus headquarters at Hethel, Norfolk, the official Lotus test track is where the Lotus Driving Academy is located, together with Lotus Motorsport. It was the original site of the Hethel airfield, which was constructed in 1942 by the U.S. Airforce.

The FIA homologated circuit has recently been completely rebuilt, providing a totally new improved test track that also provides the ideal facilities for the Lotus Driving Academy customer experiences, driver development licence packages and successful corporate events. With a length of 3.6 kilometers and width of 12 metres, it can be used additionally for GT racing and F1 testing.

As a purpose-built test circuit, it combines a variety of technical aspects with a series of bends, hairpin, corners, straights and a turning circle to put the Lotus cars through their paces, while making it the perfect place to train and develop your driving skills.

Interestingly, the main straight was the original World War 2 runway and the clubhouse overlooking the track was formerly the control tower, which is a listed Heritage building. The old airplane beside the clubhouse is a contrasting feature that remains a lasting memory of the rich military history brought about by the visiting American squadrons.

Latest Group Lotus expansion plans approved

Members of South Norfolk Council's planning committee unanimously voted in favour of proposals to extend the Lotus production facility. Their decision follows plans for the construction of new motorsport and chassis engineering buildings at the Hethel headquarters, which were also given the green light by the committee last month.

The latest application asked for the part demolition, extension and upgrading of the production building, resulting in a net floor space increase of 6,474 sqm.

Lotus has plans to manufacture the five new Lotus models that have been unveiled in Paris last year, although it is understood that the firm is still awaiting a decision over whether it will be awarded £40m from the government's Regional Growth Fund for the expansion.

It is expected that the new production building will generate 150 new jobs alone.

(Source: The Advertiser, Norwich edition)



The new buildings are outlined in red

Group Lotus misses a GBP 27,5 million loan

Group Lotus has missed out on a £27,5 million loan from the government it would have used to fund an expansion to its Hethel manufacturing facility. Lotus had warned before that failure to secure the funds could have as a result that the manufacturer will move the production line overseas. According to Lotus this money would have been used for expanding and maintaining the production in Hethel, creating 1200 new jobs and safeguarding the existing 1200 jobs.

"Despite the clear synergies between Lotus's growth plans and the fund's objectives to enable private sector organisations to invest in projects that would create jobs and secure long-term growth, the bid team decided that the money was better invested elsewhere," said Lotus.

"Following this decision Group Lotus is currently exploring all available options, including the possibility of submitting an updated bid for round two of the funding, which is set to close on July 1.

"Lotus's original bid application was for a £27.5m loan which would have been put to good use in research and development, crucially allowing Group Lotus to release capital previously allocated to R&D to build the new production plant therefore creating approximately 1200 additional jobs."

Other manufacturers including Nissan, Jaguar Land Rover, Bentley and General Motors were all successful in their applications to the Regional Growth Fund.

Model Cars

The **Opel Lotus Omega** by Ixo, that I mentioned in the last newsletter, is part of a German series. More information can be seen here: <http://www.opel-sammlung.de/>



Minichamps announced that there will be a 1:43 version of the **Lotus Renault GP R31** driven by Nick Heidfeld and there will be a Vitaly Petrov version. Earlier this year I did see the R31 showcars announced, as a Robert Kubica and a Vitaly Petrov version. Will there be four models? Time will tell....

Spark has announced the **Team Lotus T128** in scale 1:43, there will be a Kovalainen and a Trulli version. It is not yet clear when these models will be available.

Tameo will be releasing a high detail 1/43 kit of Graham Hill's 1968 Monaco GP and World Championship winning **Lotus 49B**. Tameo is famous for their white metal kits with very good instructions and decals. Selected models are available as very well finished hand builds in limited numbers. Made in Italy. The release date is not yet known.

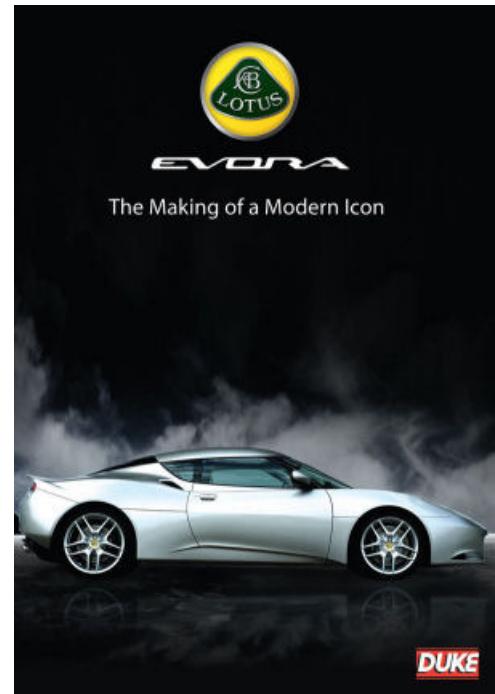
Books and videos

This official Lotus DVD tells the remarkable story of the development of the new Lotus Evora sportscar from a clean sheet idea to the final product.

Lotus Evora - The Making of a Modern Icon lets you join the Lotus team as they test in the freezing Arctic, at the world famous Nürburgring, and as they face the challenges of manufacturing this award-winning sportscar – and it was all done in an unprecedented 27 months! This is not just the story of the Lotus Evora; it is the story of the people behind it, set against the backdrop of huge changes in the motor industry and within Lotus itself.

With exclusive behind-the-scenes filming, this dvd is a pioneering documentary showing the complete development of a car as it happened.

It is a must-see for anyone who wants to see how this latest model from Lotus was developed.



Events

If you like to have your (Club)event listed on our calendar, please let me know! There is no charge. You can find the calendar here: <http://www.lotusdriversguide.com/Events/index.php>.

Downloads

If you have anything that you like to share with other Lotus enthusiasts and that will not get me into copyright problems, please let me know. I am happy to make it available from the website.

Some of the images that are used are copyrighted by Group Lotus PLC and/or one of their companies. This newsletter is send to you because I understood that you like to receive it. If you no longer like to receive this newsletter, please send me an [email](#) and I will take you off the list.