



CLUB NEWS

Highlight of the Year



9 -11 July Le Mans Classic : A few of our members booked ferry crossings and campsites for this great event. With four Lotus cars a TVR, VX220 and a Porsche in our little convoy we set off for LEMANS. The ferry crossing went really slick, after sardine packing the cars below deck to the extreme worry of Mark (aka Steve) and his beloved immaculate Porsche. Arriving in Le France saw the weather to be a tad warm, 35DegC+!. With an Auto route and toll free route planned across country we set off on what was to be a 4 Hour drive.

2 hours in and all stop. Mel had broken down! All eager to don our pre packed European road side safety attire, we made the hard shoulder look like a first day on the job council road side working party. The breakdown was thought to have been caused by an intermittent fuel pump problem which Mel had known about for some time. No worries Mel could phone his breakdown, What no breakdown cover? what do mean it was to expensive?

After a short debate it was decided to abandon the car at a local supermarket car park with a sign in the window, *'Broken down back in two days'*, and decide what to do later. So Leaving the car and most of Mel's clothes, food, drink in his car 'and his camera on the seat' we set off again. Lucky to have a spare seat in Kirks VX220 **'Club Lotus will never leave a Member behind'**.

Now already several hours behind we continued on until we came across several miles of newly laid tarmac 'but topped with loose grit' roads. With Mark leading the way at a snail pace, I'm not kidding, 10 MPH yes 10 MPH, we became the annoyance of many a French truck driver, French car drivers and French tractor drivers. As a result every body behind decided to overtake us, So Mark's careful approach turned into his nightmare as many a vehicle, artic's and all came thundering past in clouds of dust and stone.

Putting the gravel tracks behind us we stopped at the first car wash so Steve could bath and soothe his poor Porsche. With no damage done we pushed on and finally made it to the camp site which was very well suited, it had a lot of space, nice showers and toilet facilities and even its own beached swimming lake. Unfortunately the people running it couldn't speak a word of English, Doh.

With tents pitched, Mel was looking somewhat bemused by his newly erected accommodation, whether he didn't read the box properly when he purchased it or thought that the display model was of one quarter size it certainly didn't measure up in any sense. Mel just had to make the decision to which half of his body to leave outside at night.

In unfamiliar surroundings we headed out to get food. After an entertaining TVR showed us how to and maybe 'how you shouldn't really but its fun' drive around a deserted underground car park we gave in after several failed attempts at finding any food places and went to McDonald's. As Mel was a virgin to the culinary delights that Mickey Ds has to offer, its worth sharing with you his quote of his fist time experience Mel - *" We are in one of the best countries in the world renowned for their food and restaurants and we are in here eating this s***, what is this?, I'm never eating in one of these places ever again, in fact I'm not eating this s*** right now, don't tell my wife I came here"*.



Good night-time atmosphere at the circuit

Andy and Samantha had no problem with luggage storage for the trip. Thanks to QMECH for sourcing and fitting this great rack and box.



Day Two, Lemans, we were there at the track, in the pits on the grandstands. The immense noise from the cars, the oil smoke smell, tires screeching on every corner, cars on the limit. With no real restriction from the action, it was there to absorb. It really reflected the by gone days of racing, raw and dangerous.

Selecting a nice spot we settled down on our folding chairs with a cold bottle of beer to watch the racing pass through day to dusk then into the night.

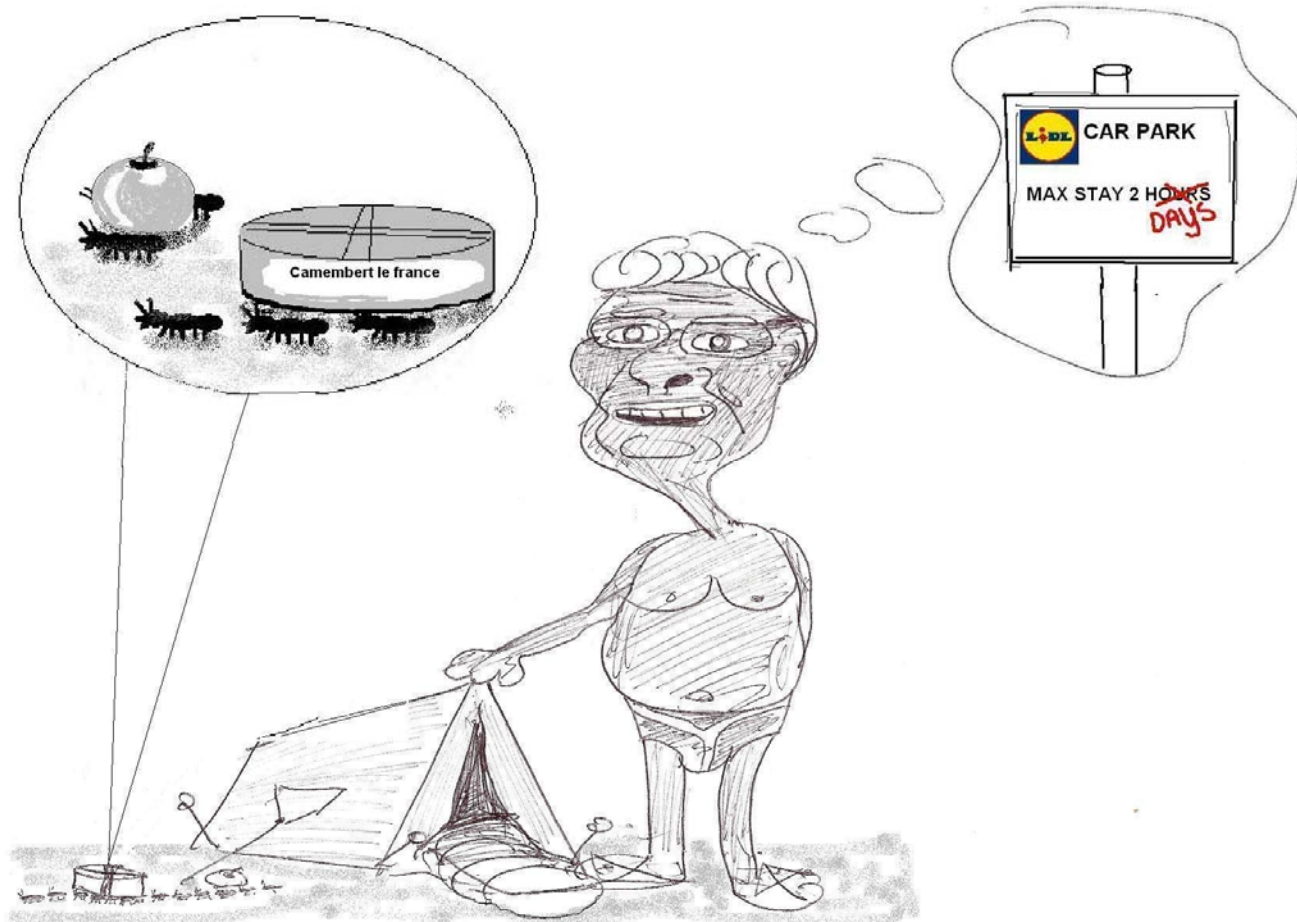
Day Three, too hot to go anywhere, the tents were like ovens. Time for a swim in the Lake. Mel's now limited wardrobe had left him with little choice of swimming costumes so after stripping down to his pants he boldly walked to the lake for a dip, it's a good job it wasn't a family place, oh no wait, it was!

We revisited the track later that day after having a couple of pizzas from a mobile pizza van complete with a proper pizza oven, great.

The whole Lemans experience was fantastic, everywhere and not just at the track was buzzing with that whole car / petrol head passion. For me the Lemans classic was a really nice experience, the whole event was laid back and the people on our trip were all great and very supportive.

Kirk and Mel left early on the last day to pick up Mel's car. Although he had now taken out breakdown cover to use 'naughty naughty' his car actually started and got him back to the ferry. The fault with the fuel pump was worsened by high temperature or prolonged use. Although he broke down in Newport on the way back and had to wait 30 mins for it to cool down.

Thanks to Andy for booking the camp site in advance via a French speaking person. Thanks to Matt and Debs for the Route, thanks to Kirk for rescuing Mel from a long walk and thanks to the rest of you who came along making it a great time.



Other events of the Year.

Our first run last year was the Chilly Willy run over Brecon, in the snow! an amazing day with no vehicle casualties at all, a hard day for Stef in his BM though, thanks boys for the pushing. A couple more runs over the Beacon took place throughout the year, thanks to Mel. Sad to say though the 100 MPH Inn at Bleddfa had closed down this year, this was a lovely Ferrari themed pub.

Several of our members attended the Auto Tests run by Bridgend Motor Club, these take place at Llandow and Margam Park are really good fun and very cheap. Just £10 for all afternoon. Although after Andy S let Sam N take his Caterham around one of the circuits, he has now sold his Elise to make way for a Seven.

Some variation for the runs took us down to the Black mountains, this was a welcome change to our regular runs, a much longer route but worth it. Thanks to Rob E. Another run out took us to Pendine Museum of Speed where we saw BABS the Parry Thomas land speed record car and we learnt what an FRP was after meeting with a prospective new Lotus member Dave B, who now I am happy to say is the proud owner of an S! Elise. What's an FRP? Find out in our next news letter. The chip shop run to Lampeter was another success.

The Lotus Trackday at Castle Combe was as always a great day out but unfortunately also a complete wash out, the rain didn't stop.. It made for some entertaining track sessions though. Thanks to the very brave and then very wet people who supported Club Lotus and the Teenage Cancer Research charity by buying hot lap rides in Andy S Caterham seven.

The Lotus Show and Festival at Malvern was really good with a huge turnout, however the later in the year planned Lotus parts fair had to be cancelled due to a poor amount of registered stalls.

Another event cancellation was the summer BBQ, as well, what summer. Poor weather put this on permanent hold in 2010. Please let it be fine in 2011.

The Christmas Quiz night at the Tynant was well attended, with a nice pile of gifts up for grabs who wouldn't attend. Hopefully we will be selling the Christmas raffle squares earlier this year to make it much bigger. For those who couldn't attend but won prizes, your gifts will be donated to charity. Only kidding we will try to get them to you, how hard I don't know, but we'll try.

Two of our Member spent the quiz night in the beer garden. →



February 2011 events:

Thursday 10th February AGM at 19.30, followed by talk on Building and Racing a Caterham Roadsport. (Part 1) by Andy Stanford.



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