



KIT LOTUS

Volume 2 Issue 4—September 2009

In this issue

- *Editorial*
- *Studio 27 Lotus 87B*
- *Featured Website*
- *Indy Winner comes home*
- *Big Scale Lotus*
- *Essential websites*
- *The name's Bond*
- *Bits and Pieces*

Editorial

Slowly but surely, manufacturers are responding to our pleas for someone to make a big scale Lotus Elan +2 kit or ready built. Those responses are though, somewhat flat and there will be a need for some creative thinking on someone's part if we are to persuade the industry that this model is a definite winner.

I sent the plea in writing to the big and the small, the highly technical and the cottage industry. Not surprisingly, the bigger manufacturers have virtually all responded with a polite letter telling me that my request has been passed to those very nice people in the Product Development Department or similar. Minichamp, Bizzare, Spark and Tamiya have all replied in the same vein.

Predictably, the small artisan companies whom we rely on were the most descriptive as to why they have no plans to make the Elan +2, unless that is, someone comes up with the development cash. SMTS quoted me a figure of £5000 tooling charges that would get the model from a photograph to a size for size brass master then to the moulds. This would start the process for a 1:24 scale model in white metal or resin with metal components. So, if 50 of us chipped in £100 quid apiece we could be in business, not literally of course but the model could be done.

I contacted SMTS because of their affinity for Lotus models, they have quite a large range of 1:43 and 1:24 historic Lotus in their range but typically, they haven't sold many of the 1:43 scale Elan +2 for some time and so have discontinued it from the current range. They also told me of the difficulties of obtaining a licence to make the models from Lotus Cars. Up until recently they enjoyed the rights to make Lotus models but this was withdrawn as Lotus concentrated on the more modern vehicles and lamentably, the people at Lotus



responsible for product licencing seem indifferent to the older Lotus types.

K & R Replicas were kind enough to reply and theirs was a similar tale, it is OK several people promising to buy a model, when the money has been laid out and the kits are available, people become loath to part with their brass and so K & R have no plans to create this masterpiece either.

South Eastern Finecast also sent a nice letter but the subject was just the same. They reported the current slump in sales of 1:24 scale kits and they have no current plans the make any just now. It is 10 years since they last produced a 1:24 scale car—they are renowned for being more involved with model railway replicas—and they too say that the cost involved would far exceed the possibility of getting a reasonable return on the investment. They go on to say that they will be lucky if they ever see a profitable return on the last new kits they produced all that time ago.

Visit:

www.duns.bordernet.co.uk

Next issue: More news and features about the collecting, and building of miniature Lotus models.

Editorial continued.....

Another real factor with the advent on computers is the problem of finding skilled pattern makers who could undertake the type of work required and produce patterns acceptable to their needs.

I am grateful for the time taken by particularly the smaller artisan companies to get back to me about the Elan + 2 and it is a matter of concern the state of the market they report. But, far from being dead in the water, I intend to press more manufacturers to consider the Elan +2, after all, some of the regular model offerings coming out of the industry in these recessionary times are so obscure but someone has decided that a market exists for them. Let's also not forget that the Elan +2 had a limited option lifespan with few if any competition versions to hang a liveried version upon and this will always be a factor.

There are opportunities to see the model makers art and to inspire yourself by visiting the Jim Clark room in the village of Duns. Models by SMTS are quite prolific amongst the many trophies on display in the wall to wall cabinets.



At last the Russians have come up with the goods and my Lotus Cliff Alison race Transporter kit from St Petersburg Tram Collection finally arrived courtesy of Rae Dobbins at Merrymeet Models.

First look in the box reveals a mostly resin kit, quite delicate in places and a feat of casting for a bodyshell this size and with this detail, there is no distortion and even in the box, the body and chassis fit snugly. The interior even has a Baby Belling inside! Which for those unused to the term is a small electric cooker. The only metal parts are the loading ramps and a couple of chassis components all the rest are from the dreaded resin

No written instructions, just a set of black and white photographs so some careful research into the colour scheme will be essential and I look forward to building it.

Not cheap for a resin kit but the subject is rare and one of those must have in my collection items. The long wait was worth it, Rae has been very patient with the Russians having had several delivery promises changed or altered.

Trains, Boats, Plane and Automobiles update

Reader Ian Townell sent me this information about a railway preservation society who have a restored locomotive in Team Lotus colours! thereby completing the set. Whether or not they realise such is either pure conjecture or wishful thinking. The locomotive is in the livery of the Southern Railway. Built in 1946, 'Blackmore Vale'. This Southern Railway West Country Class 4-6-2 Loco lives at the Bluebell Railway in East Sussex and the rather nice picture is by Jon Bowers and features on the Bullieid Society page on the Bluebell site. The photograph shows Blackmore Vale hauling the Golden Arrow express.



www.bluebell-railway.co.uk

MINICHAMPS.....

Latest look at the minichamp website shows further delays on the release dates for the Lotus 81s of Andretti and De Angelis plus the Lotus 88 of Nigel Mansell. Both these cars in 1:43 scale. But, also predictable in these market shrinking times, the long awaited 1:18 scale Lotus 79s of Andretti, Peterson and Jarier are also put back.

All are now listed for a December 09 release date,

Make good use of the website

All previous issues are available for download.

There is a Guest Book where comments can be left which may be viewed by other Lotus enthusiasts

www.kitlotus.com

New Build - Studio 27 Lotus 87B

Despite having many Studio 27 upgrade and detailing kits waiting to be assembled on to various other make Lotus models, to date I have only one full kit by this manufacturer in my collection. The LOTUS 87B in JPS livery from 1982.



Out the box the resin body is an excellent example of resin casting with very little flash to remove

Off the shelf, anything out of Studio 27 is going to be in the 'premium price' range so patience on the internet auction sites is an essential ingredient if you are to make the most of your Lotus kit purchasing budget. Enticing though they may be, the many offerings of late are just well beyond the average pocket these days. So, feeling very fortunate to obtain this particular model for a bargain cost, I expectantly opened the box to examine the contents and I was not disappointed.

Studio 27 offer various variations of several of their kits, for example the Lotus 79 is available as a very detailed model with lift off body and highly detailed monocoque or, it is available as a kerbside model with fewer features. The 87B is such an offering with good detail in the components which are visible but without any removable panels the main theme of the kit is the one piece polyester resin body.

The quality of the casting is excellent and on my example you would be hard pushed even with a decent magnifying glass to find any porosity so very little finishing is required except the usual rub down with 1200 wet and dry or finer and a good wash in soapy water. Unless you intend to paint the body shell straight away, I would advise against cleaning it at this stage, the possibility of contamination later means you would need to do it again and if you neglected this, the possibility of paint bubbles is quite likely.

www.kitlotus.com

The essential read for Lotus model car enthusiasts

Once cleaned and well dried, it is off to the paint turntable. For the amount of times I use spray paint, setting your work up in a well ventilated area is the best advice to give. The spray paints these days are acrylic based and non toxic but you still don't want to be breathing it all in so a mask is also a good idea.

To paint the 87B I used a HALFORDS grey acrylic primer with lots of light coats and then when dry, put it away to harden off for a couple of days before applying the top coat. The top coat of choice is TAMIYA plastic model spray black gloss and using the same techniques of lots of light coats a super shine is the result. Again, let the paint harden off for a few days, give it a light polish with a soft cloth and put the body away until final assembly. I should add that prior to arriving at this point, it is also a good idea to dry run all of the component pick up points and fitting detail, open up any drillings required using a pin chuck and appropriately sized



drill bit.

The usual features of this type of kit include a sheet of highly detailed photo etch components including dzus fasteners, seat belt straps and a very nicely half etched Lotus badge to replace the usual decal. Fine mesh grilles for the radiator and oil cooler, along with side skirts and rear wing end plates complete the set. There is a set of machined aluminium wheels with this kit but not quite the same detail as the set of Lotus 78 rims I paid an arm and a leg for. The rims on the 87B rely on photo etching for the centres and the split rim fixings.

Decals look well printed but the proof will be in the application, that comes later. They aren't labelled as Cartograf but the Japanese model makers offer just as good, as you would expect.'

It remains to be seen how long this one will take me to build but hopefully as the long hot summer? draws to a close there will be much more model building time available.

Featured Website

Don't you just hate extremely talented people who make the incredibly difficult look so easy? Thought so, but we have to sometimes stand back and admire in awe when that talent shows itself in a subject dear to our hearts. If you are impressed by such skill, log on to www.freelancetechnicalillustration.com.

Mick Hill is the man responsible for some incredible artwork and judging by his site, he is an expert technical illustrator but it appears he takes time out from technical art produced for the Ford Motor Company with his images of Ford's Transit Connect Panel Van and day to day motors, like the Focus and the Fiesta, to indulge a passion for motorsport as this ghosted sketch of Ayrton Senna's Lotus 97T testifies.

Mick does produce other motorsport art which is where we shared contact as Mick was looking for some cockpit detail for his next project, the Lotus 79 and I managed to find a couple.

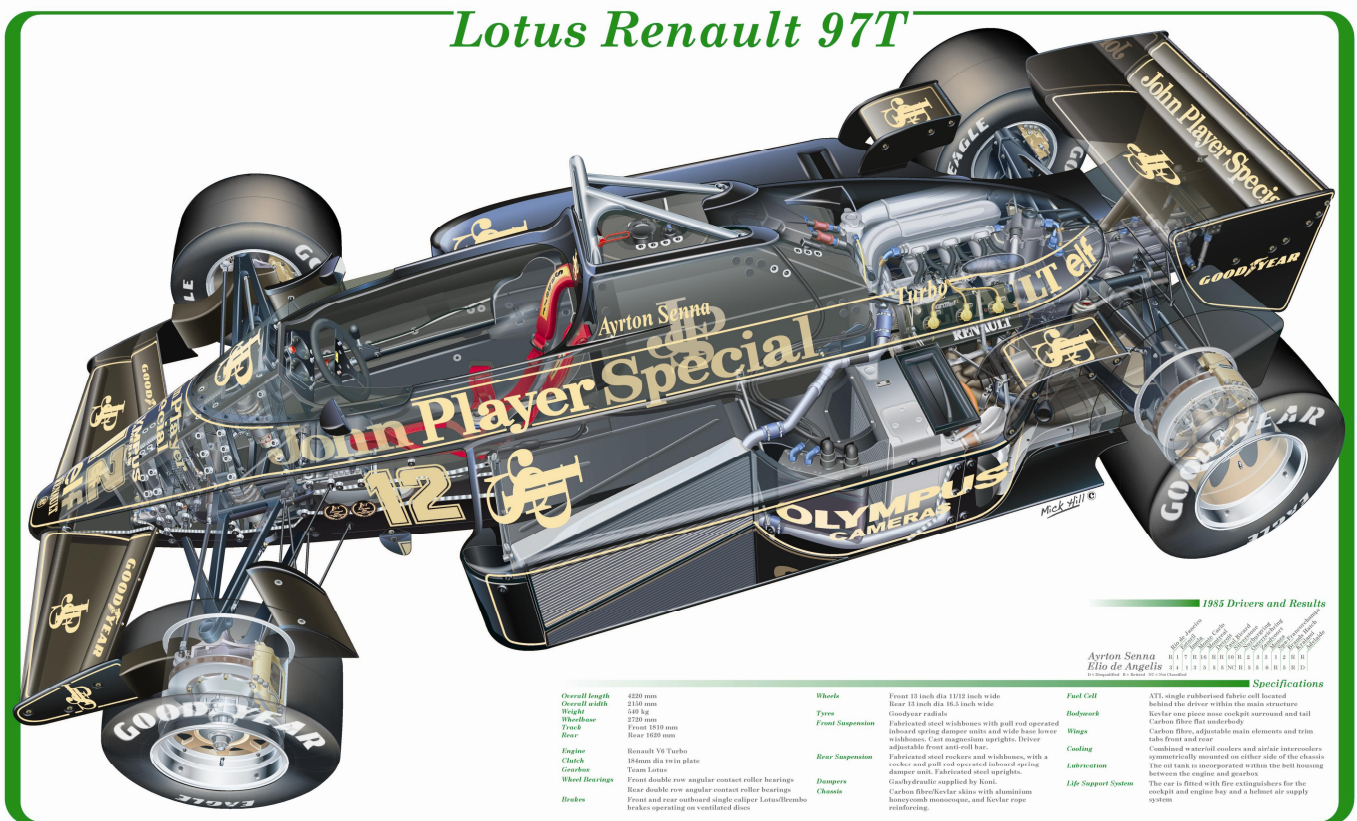
Painstaking research is the only way such detail can be captured, especially as Mick produces both solid and ghost images that can be switched when viewing his website, well worth a look if you have a few moments to spare.

Mick is about to launch a series of posters featuring his subjects which will sell around £29 each, later he has plans to release a Classic Calendar. Expect to see the posters hit the shelves in October, later for the calendar but he will have to get his skates on for this year's Christmas market.

Some of his completed works include, besides the Lotus 97T, the F1 Spyker, Thrust SSC Land Speed Record Car and a Ferrari world champions poster. Mick's work for technical manuals is immaculate and it is no surprise to learn that he had many years of experience including traditional air brush work to the latest computer generated artworks. Don't forget, you have to know exactly what you are doing to produce anything half this good and each image needs more than just a quick glance to appreciate the effort that goes into them.

There are cutaways and there are cutaways, these ghost views especially are in a league of their own.

[Freelancetechnicalillustration.com](http://www.freelancetechnicalillustration.com)



Lotus Renault 97T

1985 Drivers and Results

Ayrton Senna 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100 101 102 103 104 105 106 107 108 109 110 111 112 113 114 115 116 117 118 119 120 121 122 123 124 125 126 127 128 129 130 131 132 133 134 135 136 137 138 139 140 141 142 143 144 145 146 147 148 149 150 151 152 153 154 155 156 157 158 159 160 161 162 163 164 165 166 167 168 169 170 171 172 173 174 175 176 177 178 179 180 181 182 183 184 185 186 187 188 189 190 191 192 193 194 195 196 197 198 199 200 201 202 203 204 205 206 207 208 209 210 211 212 213 214 215 216 217 218 219 220 221 222 223 224 225 226 227 228 229 230 231 232 233 234 235 236 237 238 239 240 241 242 243 244 245 246 247 248 249 250 251 252 253 254 255 256 257 258 259 260 261 262 263 264 265 266 267 268 269 270 271 272 273 274 275 276 277 278 279 280 281 282 283 284 285 286 287 288 289 290 291 292 293 294 295 296 297 298 299 300 301 302 303 304 305 306 307 308 309 310 311 312 313 314 315 316 317 318 319 320 321 322 323 324 325 326 327 328 329 330 331 332 333 334 335 336 337 338 339 340 341 342 343 344 345 346 347 348 349 350 351 352 353 354 355 356 357 358 359 360 361 362 363 364 365 366 367 368 369 370 371 372 373 374 375 376 377 378 379 380 381 382 383 384 385 386 387 388 389 390 391 392 393 394 395 396 397 398 399 400 401 402 403 404 405 406 407 408 409 410 411 412 413 414 415 416 417 418 419 420 421 422 423 424 425 426 427 428 429 430 431 432 433 434 435 436 437 438 439 440 441 442 443 444 445 446 447 448 449 450 451 452 453 454 455 456 457 458 459 460 461 462 463 464 465 466 467 468 469 470 471 472 473 474 475 476 477 478 479 480 481 482 483 484 485 486 487 488 489 490 491 492 493 494 495 496 497 498 499 500 501 502 503 504 505 506 507 508 509 510 511 512 513 514 515 516 517 518 519 520 521 522 523 524 525 526 527 528 529 530 531 532 533 534 535 536 537 538 539 540 541 542 543 544 545 546 547 548 549 550 551 552 553 554 555 556 557 558 559 560 561 562 563 564 565 566 567 568 569 570 571 572 573 574 575 576 577 578 579 580 581 582 583 584 585 586 587 588 589 590 591 592 593 594 595 596 597 598 599 600 601 602 603 604 605 606 607 608 609 610 611 612 613 614 615 616 617 618 619 620 621 622 623 624 625 626 627 628 629 630 631 632 633 634 635 636 637 638 639 640 641 642 643 644 645 646 647 648 649 650 651 652 653 654 655 656 657 658 659 660 661 662 663 664 665 666 667 668 669 670 671 672 673 674 675 676 677 678 679 680 681 682 683 684 685 686 687 688 689 690 691 692 693 694 695 696 697 698 699 700 701 702 703 704 705 706 707 708 709 710 711 712 713 714 715 716 717 718 719 720 721 722 723 724 725 726 727 728 729 730 731 732 733 734 735 736 737 738 739 740 741 742 743 744 745 746 747 748 749 750 751 752 753 754 755 756 757 758 759 760 761 762 763 764 765 766 767 768 769 770 771 772 773 774 775 776 777 778 779 780 781 782 783 784 785 786 787 788 789 790 791 792 793 794 795 796 797 798 799 800 801 802 803 804 805 806 807 808 809 810 811 812 813 814 815 816 817 818 819 820 821 822 823 824 825 826 827 828 829 830 831 832 833 834 835 836 837 838 839 840 841 842 843 844 845 846 847 848 849 850 851 852 853 854 855 856 857 858 859 860 861 862 863 864 865 866 867 868 869 870 871 872 873 874 875 876 877 878 879 880 881 882 883 884 885 886 887 888 889 890 891 892 893 894 895 896 897 898 899 900 901 902 903 904 905 906 907 908 909 910 911 912 913 914 915 916 917 918 919 920 921 922 923 924 925 926 927 928 929 930 931 932 933 934 935 936 937 938 939 940 941 942 943 944 945 946 947 948 949 950 951 952 953 954 955 956 957 958 959 960 961 962 963 964 965 966 967 968 969 970 971 972 973 974 975 976 977 978 979 980 981 982 983 984 985 986 987 988 989 990 991 992 993 994 995 996 997 998 999 1000

Specifications

Overall length	4220 mm	Wheels	Front 13 inch dia 1812 inch wide Rear 13 inch dia 16.3 inch wide	Fuel Cell	ATI single rubberized fabric-cell located behind the driver within the main structure
Overall width	2150 mm	Tires	Goodyear radials	Infotank	Rear two-piece nose cockpit surround and tail
Weight	640 kg	Front Suspension	Fabricated steel wishbones with pull rod operated inboard spring damper units and wide base lower wishbones. Cast magnesium uprights. Driver adjustable front anti-roll bar.	Wings	Carbon fibre, adjustable main elements and trim tabs front and rear
Wheelbase	2720 mm	Rear Suspension	Fabricated steel rockers and wishbones, with a rocker and pull rod operated inboard spring damper unit. Fabricated steel uprights.	Cooling	Combined material coolers and air/air intercoolers symmetrically mounted on either side of the chassis
Track	Front 1810 mm Rear 1620 mm	Dampers	Gas/dielectric supplied by Lotus.	Lubrication	The roll-over is incorporated within the bell housing between the engine and gearbox
Engine	Renault V6 Turbo	Chassis	Carbon fibre/kevlar skins with aluminium honeycomb monocoque, and kevlar rope reinforcing.	Life Support System	The car is fitted with fire extinguishers for the cockpit and engine bay and a helmet air supply system
Clutch	16mm dia twin plate				
Gearbox	Team Lotus				
Wheel Bearings	Front double row angular contact roller bearings Rear double row angular contact roller bearings				
Brakes	Front and rear outboard single calliper Lotus/Tremco brakes operating on ventilated discs				

www.kitlotus.com The essential read

Indy Winner back home for the Hethel treatment

If like me you like to see any historic Lotus especially in its original form then this is a must lookout.

Reliable sources at the Goodwood Festival of Speed reported that the 1965 Indianapolis winning Lotus 38 was on the Classic Team Lotus display en route for the Hethel restoration treatment. This in itself is super news. Anyone reading the excellent Andrew Ferguson book Team Lotus the Indianapolis Years, can't help but be dismayed at the last reported sorry state that Jim Clarks winning mount was pictured in.

After the race the car went immediately into the ownership of the Ford Motor Company and began life on the show circuit until 1977 when it was consigned to the Ford Museum where, quotes Ferguson , it fell into disrepair "through lack of understanding and respect" The car is shown with its outer screen moulding gone, suspension links battered and bent and the glassfibre moulded nose cone, engine cover and gearbox cowl delaminated, split and creased. Depressing though this is, it is also a blessing in disguise ensuring that what is one of the most iconic race cars of all time is in fact in the most original condition of any race car of the sixties era. That so, restoration will mean original means original and the result will be an essential must see for any Lotus fan.

Classic Team Lotus confirmed this story for me and are happy for me to report as such to Kit Lotus readers, hopefully this jewel will be in the race shop on the day of the Kit Lotus works tour of Hethel.



Kit Lotus Connections

This story also prompted Kit Lotus connections to assist one reader obtain a 1:18 Carousel replica of the Lotus 38 from another Kit Lotus reader. When I told a dear friend of mine about the story, he mused about his collection not having the model and resigned himself to being ' a dollar short of a day too late' as the model becomes as rare as hens

teeth. My friend also confesses that it is my fault he has green blood running through his veins so to make sure I lived up to the accusation a look at Kit Lotus reader Jim Cowen's website Diecasm (see featured website) revealed he had a 38 for sale. Nuff said, put the two together and the growing Lotus collection in America's Pacific North West just got bigger, after all it is the evergreen state!

Whats Sparking?.....

From the world's most prolific model manufacturer? Well, plenty as usual but not on the Lotus front according to the latest release list , with the exception of Trevor Taylor's 1963 British GP Lotus 25. This is breathing space we need to replenish the pocket book so enjoy it whilst it lasts.

The Spark website confirms that they have dropped 1:24 as a scale for future models.

DIECASM

is a website you should be keeping tabs on as the principal Jim Cowen is a Kit Lotus reader, he deals in well priced diecasts with some of the popular Ixo range coming out at \$25, which I suspect even with postage to UK could be cheaper then what we usually pay for some of our diecasts.

Listing 62 current Lotus offerings, including books, a lot of the stock is on 'pre-order' and interestingly, the 1:18 Minichamp Lotus 79s are already priced at \$129.

Jim's site allows searches by Marque, Driver, Manufacturer and Scale, it also includes links to non profit organisations , prioritising them to a separate page whilst keeping all the club and commercial links elsewhere including of course, links to Kit Lotus eMagazine.

Unlike some sites, DIECASM is easy to use and fans of various marques are catered for quite easily.

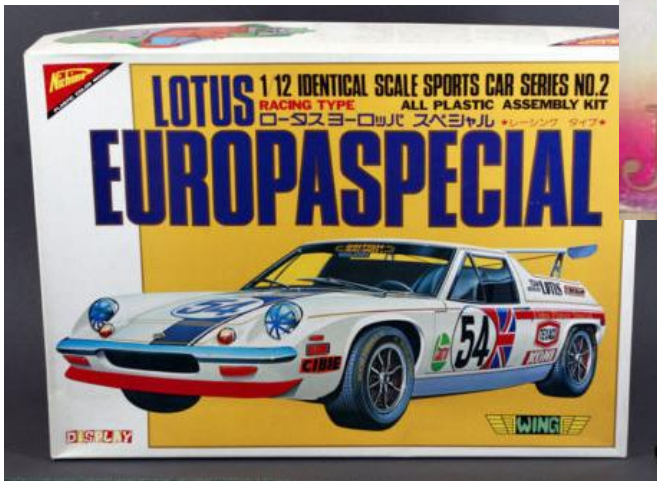
A pre-order page takes the hassle out of waiting for that new release and most model descriptions have a comment from Jim Marsden a contributing Editor to the Marsden on Models column for Lotus Remarque, the official publication of Lotus Ltd.

Diecasm's media page takes you to both news and reviews of many models on the site including Lotus and for diorama exponents there is a link to 'True Scale Miniatures' who are offering 1:43 scale Snap-On tool replicas, essential for any pit garage worth it's salt.

www.diecasm.com

BIG SCALE LOTUS

For those amongst us who struggle with 1:43 scale because of the ravages of time on the eyesight, big scale kits are a godsend. From the fascination of seeing something this good and this big in 1970, I never twigged the advantage that one day size would matter. When we discuss big scale we normally mean Tamiya, not only are we grateful for their skills as model makers but we need to thank them for having the foresight to create nostalgia with many of their 1:12 scale subjects enjoying the renaissance of re-release. Cynically, all this nostalgia translates into profit, strong sales of product made from tooling costed and paid for two decades ago is a windfall and with clever marketing such as adding photo etched details, Tamiya were always going to be quids in. Add to this, the range of accessory figures and de-



cal options and they can't fail especially with hungry kit collectors like us around.

Not all big scale is Tamiya, I remember building the Bandai 1:12 Scale Lotus 33 and at the time thinking how crude the kit was when compared with the Tamiya Lotus 49B. The suspension parts and radius arms in particular were very weak at the jointing eyes and needed lots of patience. Now the same kit is very rare and unbuilt versions are fetching silly money, certainly one to look out for.

Tamiya has always had a soft spot for Lotus culminating with a sponsorship deal for the Lotus Grand Prix Team which saw several kits re-released for the first time. However, all that glitters is not Tamiya and big scale Lotus can still be found from other manufacturers with the same kit appearing in different guises in some cases.

The Lotus 72D was one such icon that attracted many model makers with perhaps the most popular being the Tamiya 1:12 Scale version. A 1:8 scale monster version can also still be obtained but marketed under several brands. Revell, Entex and Eidai have the same 72D under different labels, at this size, building without super detail

would be sacrilege, a straight box build makes not much difference when compared with a 1:12 scale Tamiya box build, only the size would differentiate the two. Building big scale requires closer attention to detail than smaller stuff because any flaws would be seen a mile off.



The monster, 1:8 scale Lotus 72D looks no different to the Tamiya 1:12 version and to do it justice, super detailing is essential

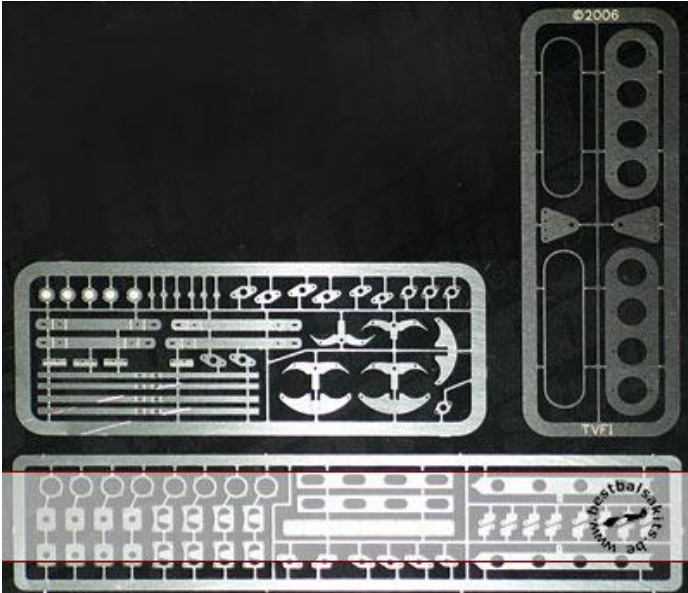
To the rescue, after market detailers are in every scale but add serious wallet extractions to your already expensive big scale kit. Rear wing supports and wing end plates are



Big Scale Lotus

most of the regular after markets offerings have them in some form. They add a sharpness as can be seen on the Lotus 78 rear wing detail .

Bestbalsakits have gone one better and have added a photo etch set devoted completely to the DFV engine.



A popular big scale from the nineties was the Lotus or Caterham 7 in 1:12. Offered as a highly detailed kit with multi media components, the 7 is now very rare and commands good prices for unbuilt versions. The cycle fender special



from Tamiya is shown above.

The Lotus Europa gets the big scale treatment but from Nichmo, another Japanese manufacturer who produced both road and track versions, now out of production but they do crop up regularly on the internet.

Tamiya are without doubt the biggest and enhance their big scale range with a set of 1:12 figures, again, re released,

They resemble typical pit crew of the seventies period so it is no surprise Ferrari, Tyrrell and Porsche re releases are in the current catalogue. To capture even more of our cash, Tamiya have cottoned on to a range of tools specific to phot etch, cutters, diamond files and bending tools are all available .



The high end big scalers include MG Models who market their 1:12 scale models as Model Plus. Costing upwards of four figures, these must be the ultimate kit but the four figure price tag, I wonder? Currently they have four versions of the 1963 Lotus 25 on the go and no doubt there will be no shortage of takers. The earlier Lotus offering, The Lotus 79 is pictured and the detail speaks for itself and puts us firmly in the 'counting rivets' zone such is the detail.



Those of you who wandered through the new Classic Team Lotus Transporter at Donington back in April will have noticed the ultimate big scale. Topping the bill at a cool £3250 was the stunning 1:8 scale replica of Mario Andretti's 1978 World Championship winning Lotus 79. From the Amalgam fine collection. All you need to do is step in and drive it such is the detail, far beyond the average model collectors budget, we can but dream but the £3K price tag is a serious point to say are we going too far?

KIT LOTUS—WEB DIRECTORY *those important websites for Lotus modellers*

www.mmcars.co.uk

www.grandprixmodels.co.uk

www.acustion.com

www.modelfactoryhiro.com

www.indycals.com

www.f1specialities.com

www.studio27.co.jp

www.indianapolismotorspeedway.com

www.modellersite.com

www.modelworks.co.uk

www.classicteamlotus.co.uk

www.johnshintonmodels.co.uk

www.lotusdriversguide.com

www.mikesminiatures.com

www.modelsport.com

www.nottinghamclassic.co.uk

www.modelsport2008.co.uk

www.historiclotusregister.co.uk

www.model-cars.org.uk

www.clublotus.co.uk

www.bestbalsakits.be

www.halfmoonhobbies.com

www.rallybadge.co.uk

www.studio27.com.jp

www.sparkmodel.com

www.smtsmodels.co.uk

www.cheapdiecastmodels.com

www.diecasn.com

www.kitlotus.com

The name's Bond

The recent Nottingham Classic Tour

Proved why 'Q' chose a Lotus Esprit to convert into a submarine for a certain spy named James Bond in the film 'The Spy Who Loved Me'.

Clive and Anji Martin demonstrate the aquatic powers of the Lotus in the Oxton Ford, just a short distance from the finish of this 120 mile touring assembly.

Two Esprits took part in the tour, the other driven by Kit Lotus reader Tim Golden, both made it successfully through the water, no doubt the mid engine configuration assisting. Roger Moore would have approved.



Like all Bond cars, the model makers cash in on the popularity of the film merchandise and it must be a tribute to the concept that companies such as minichamps as well as the UK brand Corgi choose to issue models of them. The Esprit Submarine version has only a limited market yet an inspection of the Minichamps site shows both the sub version and the 'For Your Eyes Only' version are both sold out.

Corgi has a long history of making TV and Film related models with the Bond Aston being the grand daddy of them all, but when the film makers wanted something British but with a modern sophistication they chose Lotus.

The Esprit made it's debut in 'The Spy Who Loved Me' and took the part of a multi role combat vehicle, with cement dispenser on the rear rack and a vertical missile platform to take pot shots at the bad guys aircraft. Underwater the same missiles were available but for both vertical and forward firing. As the Esprit began to 'swim', lots of negative camber saw the wheels invert behind covers and stabiliser fins appear from the rear and stabilisers on every wheel cover. The film makers had two versions of the car and specialist company Perry Submarines in Florida were commissioned to produce a working submarine craft using



the Esprit body. After the film, the Sub version went into private ownership and back in 2003 appeared for sale on ebay from a New York address, it failed to sell at that time so someone somewhere still has it. The road car is in the Bond museum in Keswick. Using the link www.hmss.com/objets/spycar.htm puts you on the page telling the story of the retrieval and restoration of one of the cars used in the film.



The copper coloured Esprit from 'For your eyes only' started the film as a white version but had a sophisticated alarm system which entailed exploding the car if stolen. The copper version was chosen to stand out against the snowy backdrop



Bits and pieces

Always, my tips and advice tell you to make sure your tools are sharp, probably the best modelling advice there is. The next best is make sure you count your fingers when you put the tools away. The basis of a good toolbox is the sharpest modelling knife, I picked these little beauties from the infamous ebay pages and being Swann Morton genuine Sheffield stainless steel they will be giving me years of service, probably see me out in fact but at less than a tenner for the three, they just had to be a bargain but I had to buy them because I lend tools to people and never see them again!



The eagerly awaited trip to the Classic Team Lotus race shop at Hethel on September 9th is almost upon us.

I have one place left, any takers at just £30? email me at mail@kitlotus.com quickly.

Kit Lotus – the essential read for Lotus model car

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Exoto

Still list the diecast 1:18 scale Lotus 78 on the wish list, no news of an issue date so far

Model Factory Hiro.....

Are listing more Lotus 49 variants including early 67 versions, a feature of their website is downloadable instruction sheets, a really good innovation for model builders. They also still list a fully detailed kit of the Lotus 77 but no release date yet. Also, not even a prototype picture , but MHF are listing a 1:20 scale Lotus 56.

Watch out for a full feature in the next issue of Kit Lotus.

Not clear enough to grab a picture but *Grand Prix Legends* are listing a Mini Moke Gold leaf Team Lotus Transporter on their pre order offer by Spark, 1:43 scale coming in at £40 but not listed on Spark's own web pages, watch this space!

You can also buy ready built SMTS 1:43 scale Lotus from around £100 from this popular outlet.

Still the most prolific retailer of specialist model cars is *Grand Prix Models*, at the time of writing, 502 Lotus items are listed on their website. This does include all books and videos but they are few compared to the model offering. Like most, the majority of items are bought to order and the cost is not always the most competitive.

A whole 56 pages of Lotus subjects can't be bad but expect to pay a premium for anything ordered through GPM. It is well worth shopping around. As a regular customer of GPM, I find it worth that extra to make sure you get what you want. Their service is excellent but if the item you need is available elsewhere, it is a no brainer.