

## **1961 Lotus 19**

### **Chassis #957**

**Owners: Tom Carstens, Ole Bardahl**

**Driver: Jerry Grant**

When teams began stuffing American V-8 engines into British sports racers, the motor to beat was the 2.5-liter FPF Coventry-Climax 4-cylinder twin cam, which had been sourced from pre-1961 F/1 cars. With a mild overbore the engines could go to 2.7 liters and produced around 240 HP. They weighed less than 200 lbs., but only 48 were built with the 2.5-litre capacity, making parts a bit hard to get. When the aluminum Olds V-8 engine was introduced in 1961, the possibility of a road racing application was immediately noticed by engineers. The motor weighed in at 350 lbs. and stock engines from the factory got 215hp. With a new head, exhaust, carbs and cams, engine builders could easily get over 300hp out of the "Rockette" as the engine was originally called. Tacoma's Tom Carstens bought a new Lotus 19 in 1961 and set about putting an Olds/Buick V-8 with a Colotti gearbox in it for Jerry Grant to drive with sponsorship from Ole Bardahl of Ballard. Vic Edelbrock built this engine. But the car never raced. It is unclear who owned this car after Carstens who retired from racing, but speculation is that it was Jerry Grant himself. The distinctive pumpkin-orange car was immediately quick right out of the box in 1963 but suffered throughout its life with endless teething problems. The car was conspicuously absent from the 1964 season before returning in a much-modified form in 1965 now a new white color scheme and was called the "Harris Lotus 19 Chevrolet Mk3". The car was being maintained by Trevor Harris, a local fabricator who went on to develop the original Shadow Can-Am car and built the BRE Championship winning Datsun 510 sedans. A 377c.i. TRACO Chevrolet V-8 was mated to a McKee transaxle in the refurbished Lotus and the car was faster than ever with Jerry Grant back as the driver. Alan Green Chevrolet was the new sponsor, and the car also appeared in green paint. The only placings for this car were DNFs at Kent, Riverside, Laguna Seca, and Las Vegas in the Fall series and another DNF in the 1965 Kent USRRC race. Records show that the car may often have been the fastest qualifier

and at some point led all of these events, but invariably failed to finish. In 1966 the car was sold out of the area. A version is currently being campaigned on the West Coast with the original Olds configuration and stock Lotus 19 bodywork.