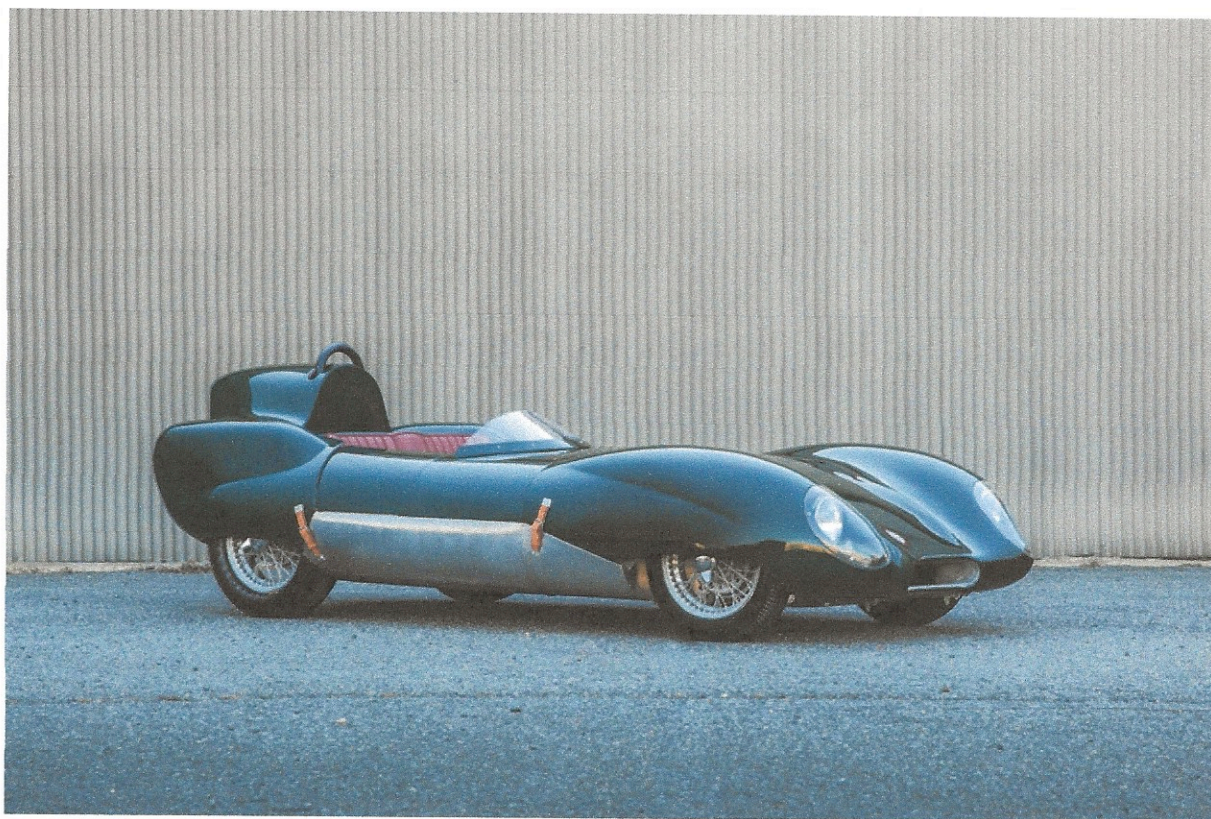


Lotus Eleven Sports

Chassis Number 234, Engine number 107861

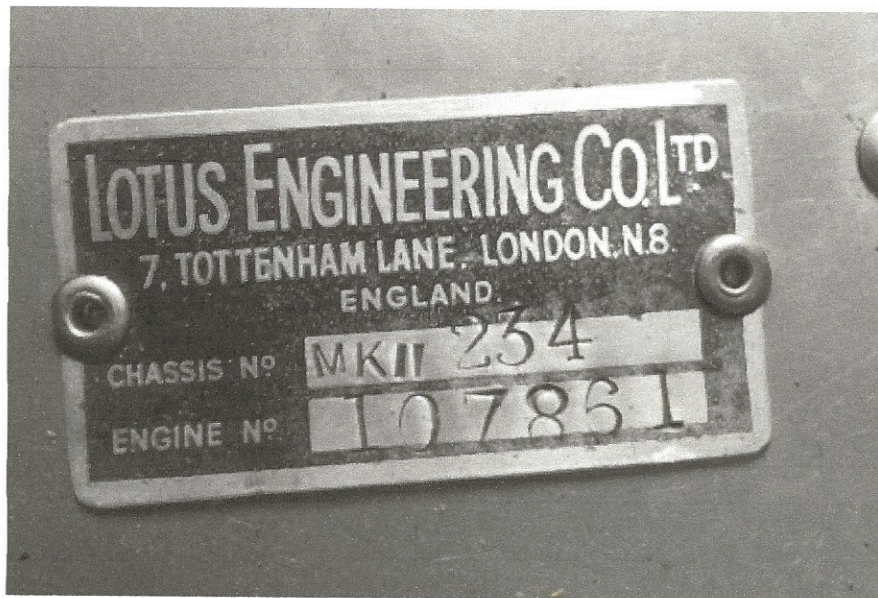


February 9, 2016, I was able to go over this car completely at its current location in Philadelphia, Pa.

My comments:

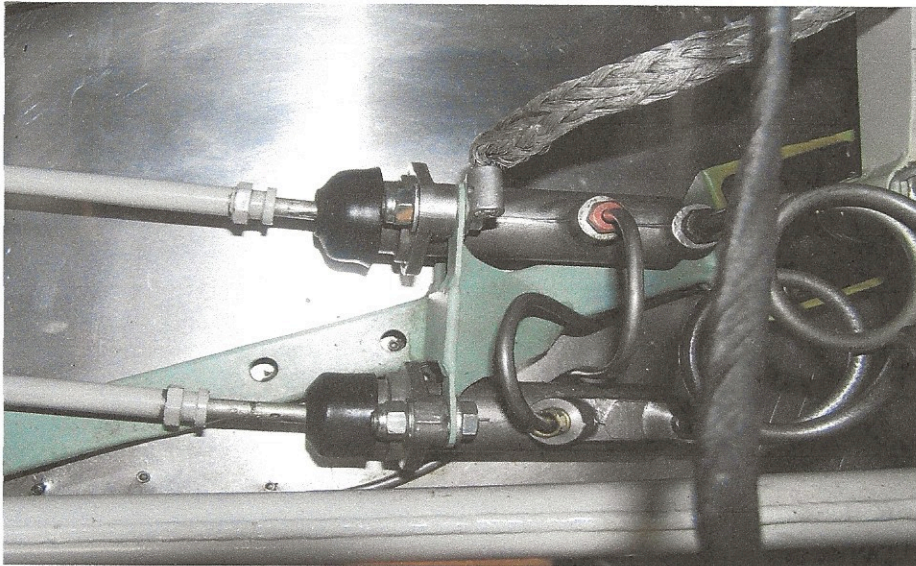
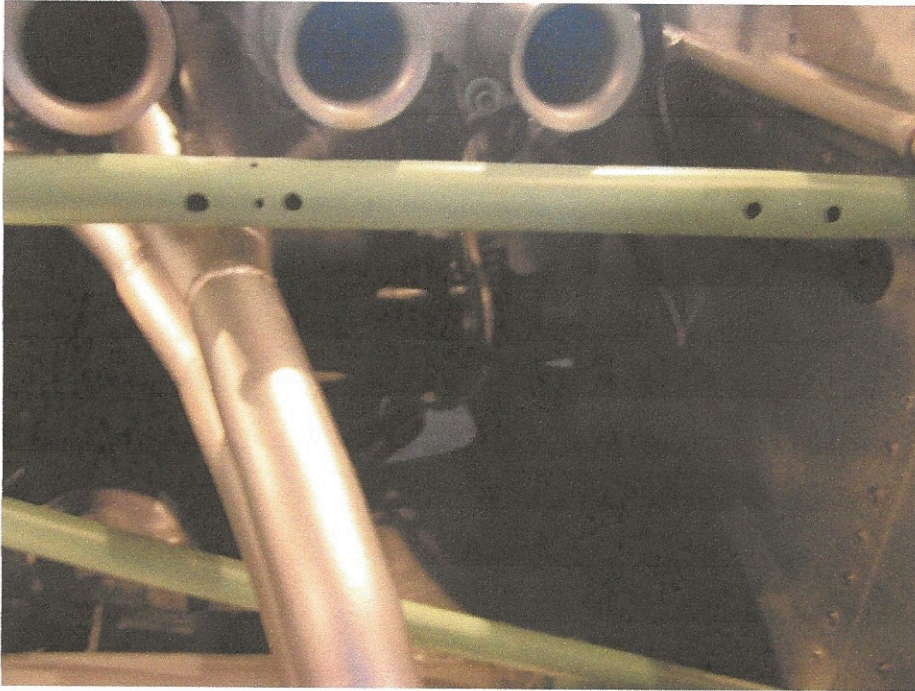
This Eleven has been updated to Club specs with the installation of a Coventry Climax FWE #7594. Date of conversion currently unknown.

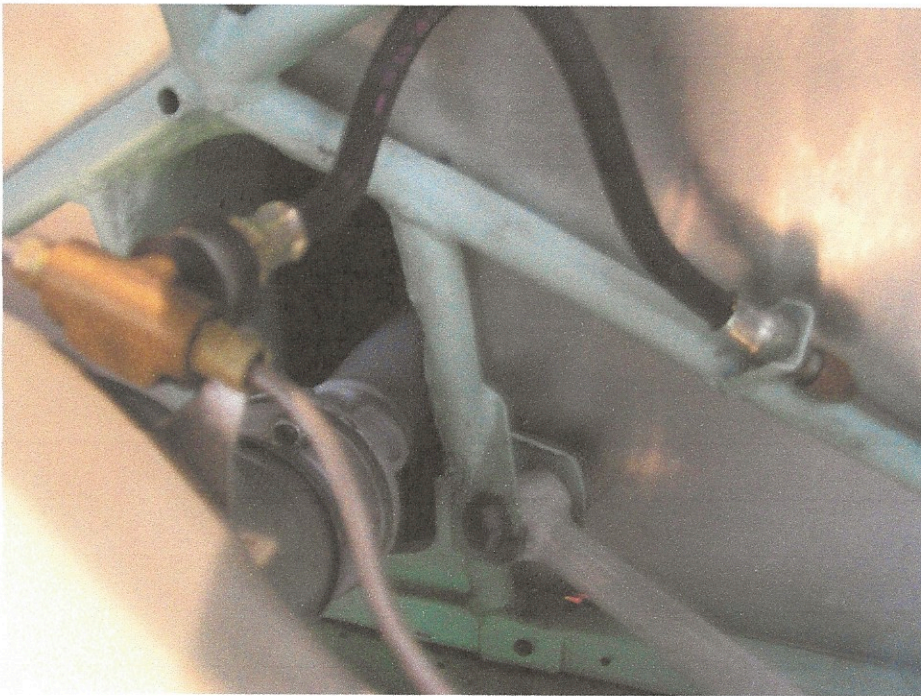
Chassis plate measures 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", is embossed and has been stamped with stamps found on other similar original chassis plates. It is authentic.



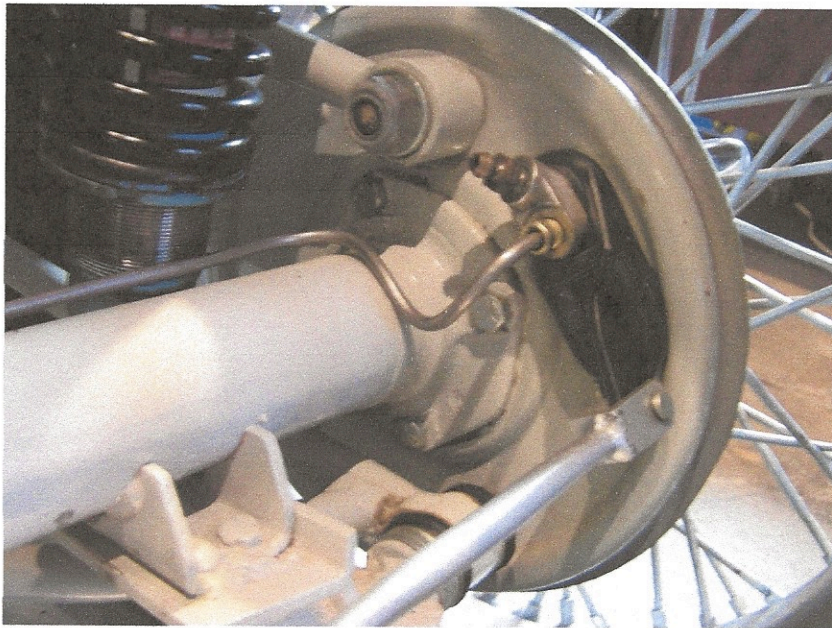
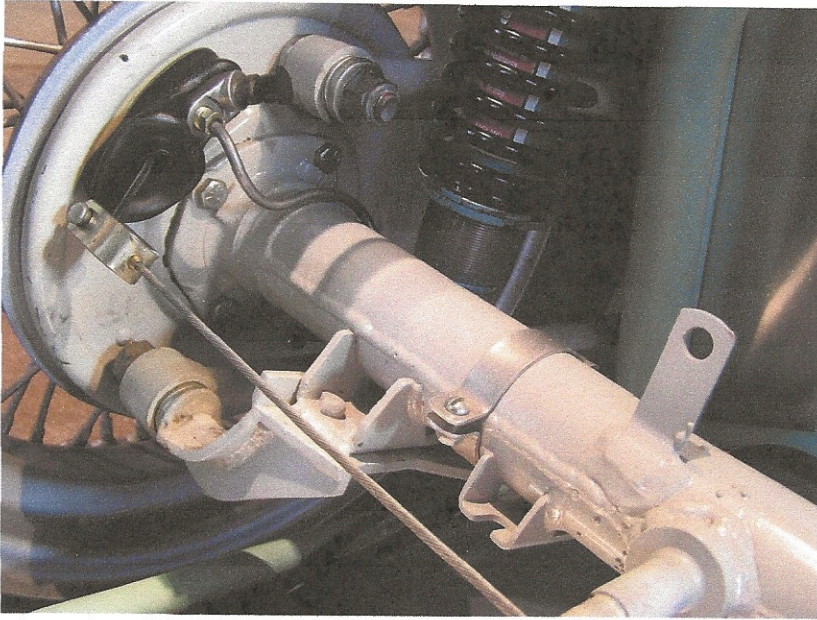
Chassis: color is a light flat green (incorrect). At first I thought the front was new from possible crash repair, but after comparing welds throughout the chassis, determined that this was an entirely new chassis. Some of the chassis brackets did appear used, but the majority appears brand new. Chassis dimensions are correct. The forward upper cross tube is perfectly straight which shows this frame has not been raced or driven hard. The channel angle was not measured. Rack & pinion mounting tubes are $\frac{1}{2}$ " square. Expansion tank mounting tube diameter is $\frac{1}{2}$ ".

There are various unusual chassis details as follows: there is no engine ground strap hole on the right lower square frame tube (use the Ford engine mounting tube holes?). The oil filter location is not correct on the lower left square frame tube. Both of these lower tubes have a pair of $\frac{5}{16}$ " diameter drilled holes, spaced $1 \frac{5}{8}$ " apart with the rear hole located 12' from the firewall (Ford engine mounting tubes?). On the upper left diagonal frame tube under the carbs there are two groupings of two, $\frac{1}{4}$ " diameter drilled holes spaced $1 \frac{5}{16}$ " apart, with the forward pair located $10 \frac{7}{8}$ " from the firewall and the rear pair located $2 \frac{3}{4}$ " from the firewall (this tube has been compressed by overtightening something thru the forward holes and has a small kink in it (the tube is still straight). I originally thought it was an original tube but after measuring it determined it to be new but damaged somehow. What was there is unknown. There is no float bracket or any carb support bracket along either upper tube. There are no SCCA seat belt mounting holes in either the seat back uprights or the transmission tunnel hoop. There are no remnants of any roll bars except the existing one. There are non-standard gussets welded upright at the seatback frame tubes and floor tubes for seat belt anchors. The rear spring upper mounts have large diameter washer welded on top rather than on the bottom of these brackets. The battery box construction is incorrect, the spare tire support tubes are straight as on very early Elevens rather than kinked. The small diameter tube directly in front of the right rear body mounting tube has been removed (this tubes helps secure the rear body from lifting).





Suspension: Front appears to be completely standard with standard steering arms, except for the aggressive drilling of both the backing plates and brake drums. Rear appears to be somewhat cobbled up with the axle mounting both welded and bolted together, and the curved "A" (panhard) arm is new (this piece required many shims, approx. 5/8" worth, to fit to an Eleven). Rear drums are also drilled for cooling.



Electrical system: appears all new, voltage regulator mounted in an incorrect location on foot box, headlights/running lights need finish parts or correct design. No horn, but the horn mounting holes are present on the front engine cross bar.

Brake system: existing brake line clip holes in frame not utilized. Parking brake operating system is incorrect.

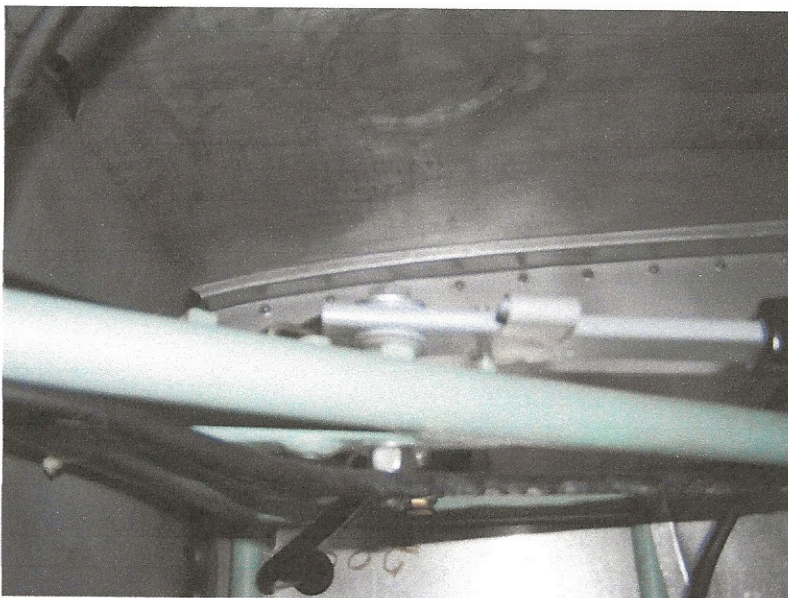
Wheels and tires: Did not record. All four knock offs are unstamped originals.

Tub: All panels are new, .031" including the two floor panels which should be .048". The front floor pan engine cutout shape is incorrect and not wire beaded. The rear floor pan is correct (except thickness) but the "ears" at the rear are bent vertical and are not the correct shape. The sponson panels are basically correct except for the rivet pattern to the forward side panels (zig-zag vs straight) and in places, the number of rivets. The rear bulkhead panel wire beading is not welded to the frame as are the front wire beaded panels behind the tires are not welded to the frame. Under each seat squab are 4 drain holes. The transmission tunnel is secured to the frame hoop with only 1 row of rivets. On the left sponson behind the exhaust cutout, the "strap" is present which most restorations omit, but the assembly to the rear bulkhead on both sides not correct.

Outer panels:

Bonnet: looks good with a thin layer of filler over most of the entire surface. Lotus emblem holes are visible inside. With the bonnet removed (there are no stay cables on the bonnet, tail or doors) and measured from the rear, there is an 8" diameter patch centered approx. 19" down from the firewall edge and 26" in from the left edge. This is left center of the bonnet centerline. Inner panels are correct, but there is interference with the tub forward panels behind the front wheels. Something is out of position here. The bonnet has had some minor front end damage repair. The 8" round off center patch could have been a clearance bump for a Ford engine distributor.

Cowl measures 21 3/4" right and 21 1/4" left. It was not removed but used an inspection mirror to visually examine the underside plus by feel. There are two, approx. 1/2" patched holes to the right of the steering wheel for mirror location(s?), or possible a street windshield mounting (holes do seem correct for any known windshield mount). This area has also been pecked out to correct some damage in this area. Because of the fuel tank and not removing the cowl, was unable to find if these same holes were located on the left side which appears new. There is no evidence of any other windscreen mounted to this panel. There are no steel street windshield mountings on the underside of the cowl. There is no recess on the left side for a tonneau cover. Above the hand brake area, there is an approx. 4" diameter patch. Below this area on the firewall there is a large patch. This panel may have been repaired on the far left side, but center/right is original. There is an approx. 3/4" diameter hole centered near the inner forward edge of the "Club" windscreen. The Club windscreen mounting frame/flange has a scallop on the left side to clear the dzus fastener. This is the same as the Road and Track Sept. '57 test car. On the firewall there are two plugged holes that could correspond with a wiper motor mounting similar to #257. If that was the case, the 3/4" hole above would allow the cable drive up to a wiper blade on a street windshield (Note, Lotus factory records indicate #234 was delivered without a windscreen). The dzus fastener is located off center inside the windscreen area.



Doors: new right door measures $17 \frac{3}{4}$ " x $20 \frac{1}{2}$ " and is fabricated correctly.

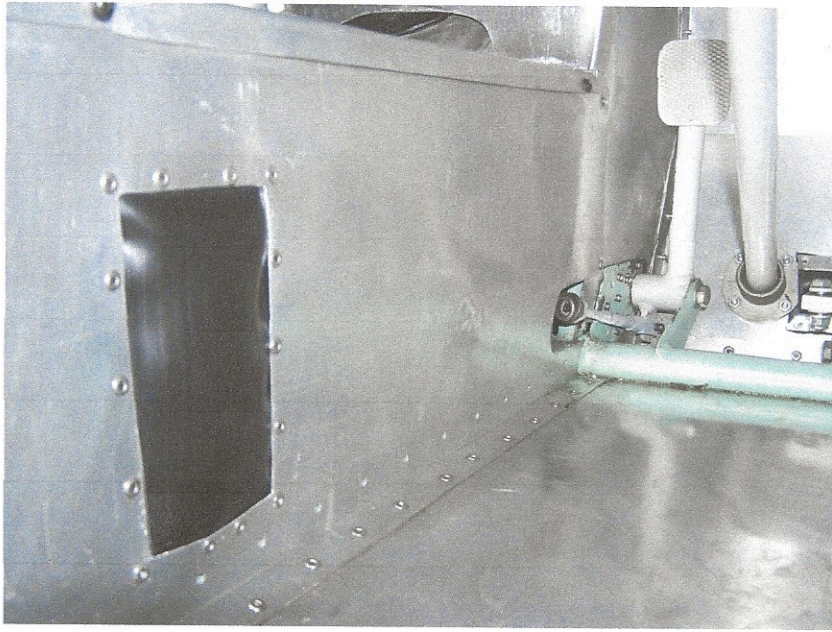
New left door measures $17 \frac{7}{8}$ " x $20 \frac{3}{4}$ ", fabricated correctly but dimensionally incorrect. It looks to have been made to fill an opening and it does not fit well. Both door locks are incorrect.

Tail: has an integral headrest with a $2 \frac{1}{2}$ " x $12 \frac{3}{4}$ " slot cut in the top for roll bar clearance. Because of this construction, the tail can only be removed by lifting straight up. This is most likely why the rear frame tube was removed on the right side. There is no center dzus fastener but there is a bracket on the frame for a dzus fastener. There are no slots in the rear which is to be expected on solid axle cars. This tail panel may not be original to this car. There is an approx. 4" long crease on the rear of this panel.

Both bonnet and tail are secured with loose fitting leather belts. I could find no evidence of terry spring mounting holes.

Color history: unable to determine as all painted panels are painted inside aluminum/silver with no past overspray visible.

Interior: All new except possibly the bench seat back plywood. Dash is new and incorrectly assembled outside the side panels. Steering wheel is new as well as its mounting hub (both incorrect with 3 holes vs 6 hole mounting). The seat back area has been closed off with aluminum which is common, but not original, but it should be cover in the same material as the seats. Clutch pedal and brake pedal operation is correct.



Engine/Transmission: did not pay attention to as not original to car. Did note the engine has a square vs angled sump which will need changed to restore ground clearance.

Comments:

I first want to thank Andrew Mastin and Adolfo Massari of LBI, Philadelphia for their patience and hospitality with me while allowing the car to be examined.

It is my opinion that this is an entirely new Lotus Eleven built up around an authentic chassis tag and main body panels (bonnet, cowl, windscreen, and possibly the tail), from #234 (Note, #234 did not have a headrest when delivered). The balance of the car is new which may not be a bad thing, but its creation is currently not documented. The assembly shows many incorrect details. I have an e/m indicating the restoration was done in the early '90's, but today's condition of the car reflects a more recent completion and not a 20+ year old restoration. The unusual frame hole positions seem to show that the current frame was copied from the original frame, my only logic being why else would they be there. The pair of holes on the lower square frame tubes are likely for Ford engine mounting tubes. Chassis #257 was built the same time as #234. In examining #257 photos, similarities in details could not be determined. Some of the chassis brackets appeared old/used (clutch area) with most being new. It would have been very likely brackets off an original chassis were reused. The very important point to consider is intended future end use of this car as to how it was constructed and sits today. For racing, it would need the tub rebuilt correctly and panel fit corrected.

This is a nicely presented Eleven Sport, updated to Club specs. I have been unable to find any west coast race history for this car or verify any of its suggested history to date. There are numerous unique details of this car that should allow it to be identified in the future if they are historically correct.

Within the LBI web site there are many detail pics of the car www.LBILimited.com. So only a few detail photos are included within this report.

Thoughts and comments always welcome,

Regards

Russ Hoenig

Lotus #234