

Type 26 Register Update No. 7



We are indebted in this article for the following contribution from the well known and respected expert in all Type 26 related matters Norman Lupton. He writes as follows:

"Of the various world sports cars icons, i.e. Cobra, E-Type, Porsche 911, Corvette, Elan, etc, the last is arguably the most affordable and certainly the only one with multiple Formula One Manufacturers and Drivers Championships in its heritage.

Of the Elan two seater, or original Elans (not, please "baby Elans") only the Type 26 (S1 and S2) are eligible for full FIA competition use. It is thought that 900 Series 1's and 1909 Series 2's were made out of the total Elan production run of around 12,000 cars (some sources say less than 10,000).

With a perfect and correctly restored Series 1 or Series 2 only able to make up to £25,000 in exceptional circumstances and a complete but tired car needing total restoration currently making up to £9/10K, it needs a very hands-on owner to restore an early car within its value.

A full FIA replica of a 26R is known as a GTS car and can be every bit as quick as a 26R if properly built and set up; however, it needs a genuine road car, or its papers, as a starting point. The Type 26 is already very thin on the ground and in some respects it is the purist's choice - the simplicity, the push-up windows, the lightness all have their attractions, despite the difficulty and expense of restoring one for the road. As the "flat floor" early E type attracts the purist owner, so too perhaps is the Series 1 and Series 2 becoming more sought after.

It needs a very strong level of commitment from the owner to

restore a Series 1 or 2 to "condition 1" despite the current full availability of remanufactured parts for the most difficult items.

However, even the most obscure items can be sourced, sometimes on a swap basis, amongst the current group of owners. It may take a while for that impossible "widget" to turn up, but then two or three may come along in quick succession, a bit like Cabinet Ministers, really

To be fully FIA compatible and to be competitive you need a finished weight of around 600 kgs, a full-house race engine giving 170-180 bhp, an all lightweight body and panels, plus lightweight gearbox and axle casings, magnesium wheels etc. This will give around 280 bhp per tonne and a standstill to 100 mph time of just under 10 seconds, plus unbelievably good handling and road holding when set up properly. If the project car still has its close ratio gearbox, if rebuilt, it will do a full season, but many owners now prefer to run with straight-cut or dog gear sets.

So, the body, panels and trim will all have to be sold off, along with all the suspension and wheels, also the block and head may not be useable. The FIA limit is 1600cc, which is 1558cc plus 40thou and both block and head need to be perfect, with no repairs, and able to withstand high-pressure testing before being re-worked. Any old repairs to either item usually mean they cannot be used.

A car which I owned some years ago, but did nothing to it, with a famous race history is close to being back on the tracks. This is the Minilite car, 849 URO, a 1964 Series 1, which raced from day 1 driven by Brian Sherwood. Even that car, which still had its original standard-weight body, has had to go full lightweight to stand a chance

of being competitive. The new owner told me last year that only the steering column and chassis plate are now original. A car with a fascinating history. At one time it raced win fastback form - the mechanic who made the fastback out of chicken wire and fibreglass is still around!

With a derelict but complete Series 1 or 2 bringing up to £10,000 and nearly all of the parts having to be abandoned, it is far cheaper and easier to try to find an incomplete or badly damaged car with documents and chassis plate, or perhaps documents only, as the basis for an FIA car. Instruments are usually to the owner's preference anyway, the door locks come from a series of 1960s British saloons as do the striker plates and the steering column is Triumph Herald/ Spitfire. All these items can be found readily.

My last project car, a Series 2 26R (26-S2-6) is now out doing its second hard season of campaigning with new owners and has already had to have another new body, panels and chassis following involvement in someone else's accident. All race cars are working tools, so brooms with multiple heads and handles are not unusual. The photos set out here show various stages of the rebuild.

For those of us who own Elans, we need to preserve them and foster this wonderful heritage, whatever the series of car. Many of us are the wrong side of 60 now - are we nearly all owners of a car we could only dream about in our youth? It is always a pleasure to meet a new owner under 40, but we need more of you. After all, you need never lose money on a good Elan, bought "right". Ownership can be a wonderful experience and show why even 40 years on, the original Elan is still the benchmark by which all

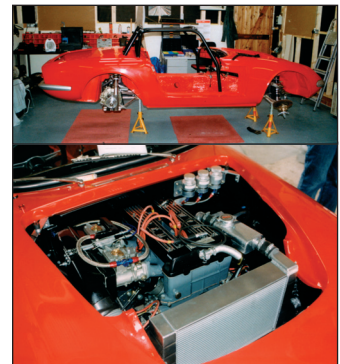
others are judged. A rebuild can still provide great satisfaction."

Most readers will probably have gathered that Charles and I are firmly entrenched in the "keep it original" camp. We are resisting the temptation with our three Type 26 cars under rebuild to convert them into racers and the intention is that all three will be returned to as near original standard condition as possible. We believe that the original two seater Elan in all its forms is seriously undervalued as mentioned by Norman Lupton in his piece above. We were however heartened in speaking to Paul Matty recently when he said that he considered that a correctly restored to original specification type 26 car should command £35,000 or thereabouts. Sounds a lot perhaps, but not when compared to Healeys Tigers, E-Types etc. So, if you're tempted to fit fuel injection or some other mod, think carefully; it is likely that you will be damaging the value of your car.

As ever, we can be contacted on 01189 891705 for advice or for parts. The ever growing list is set out below.

Tim and Charles

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www.type26register.com**



Application	Description	All prices plus post & packaging	Price
S1.....	26B265. Rear light cover (inside boot) - supplied in pairs.....		£30
S2.....	A26B265. Rear light cover (inside boot) - supplied in pairs.....		£30
	Rear light cover with extra holes for soft-top retaining strap (not supplied).....		£35
S1 & S2 (polished stainless)	26B246 & 26B247. Exterior door weatherstrip mounting channel LH/RH. Simplified "L" cross section design		£30 per pair
S1 & S2.....	26B244 & 26B245. Door trim panel "top capping strip". Correct profile, in pairs, un-plated and.....		£40 per pair
	uncut (therefore not handed) to accommodate small variations in existing door trim size		
S1 & S2.....	26B011, 26B017, 26B016. Boot support assembly: Complete assembly with plate-boot support.....		£40
	rod, rod-boot support, clip-boot floor, riveted terry clip and correct stainless self tapping screws		
S1 & S2.....	26B024. Windscreen tie rod.....		£39
S1 & S2.....	Rubber gasket - rear numberplate light to body.....		£10.00
S1 & S2.....	Door scissors: high quality exact reproductions.....		£110 each
S1 & S2.....	Door armrest bracket.....		TBA
S1 & S2.....	Brass window channel: un-chromed, correct length, ends are correctly angled and radiused. Holes.....		£60 each
	required to fix to mounting plates, no trimming required		
	Also available chromed.....		£75 each
S1 & S2.....	Metal bases for door glass.....		£40 each
S1 & S2.....	Lock plate near side (Left) nos (would need re-chroming).....		£30 each
S1 & S2.....	Chromed U section, fixes to brass window channel at front and to window channel at rear - pair.....		£48 per pair
S1.....	NEW!!! Seat retrim kit: Black stag as original.....		TBA
S2 & early S3...	NEW!!! Seat retrim kit: Black stag as original.....		£225 each
S1.....	26L001 NEW!!! Petrol filler neck for screw-on type cap - as original.....		TBA
S1 & S2.....	NEW!!! Centre arm-rest trim, welded as original: Grey or black.....		£35.00
(+ other non-SE cars)	Complete with hardboard backing and correct metal fixings for attachment to tunnel top		Limited quantity
S1 & S2.....	NEW!!! Door armrest trim with welded embossing: available in grey or black. Supplied in pairs.....		£95.00
			Limited quantity
S1 & S2.....	NEW!!! Spigot, attaches boot floor to spring clip on body.....		TBA

