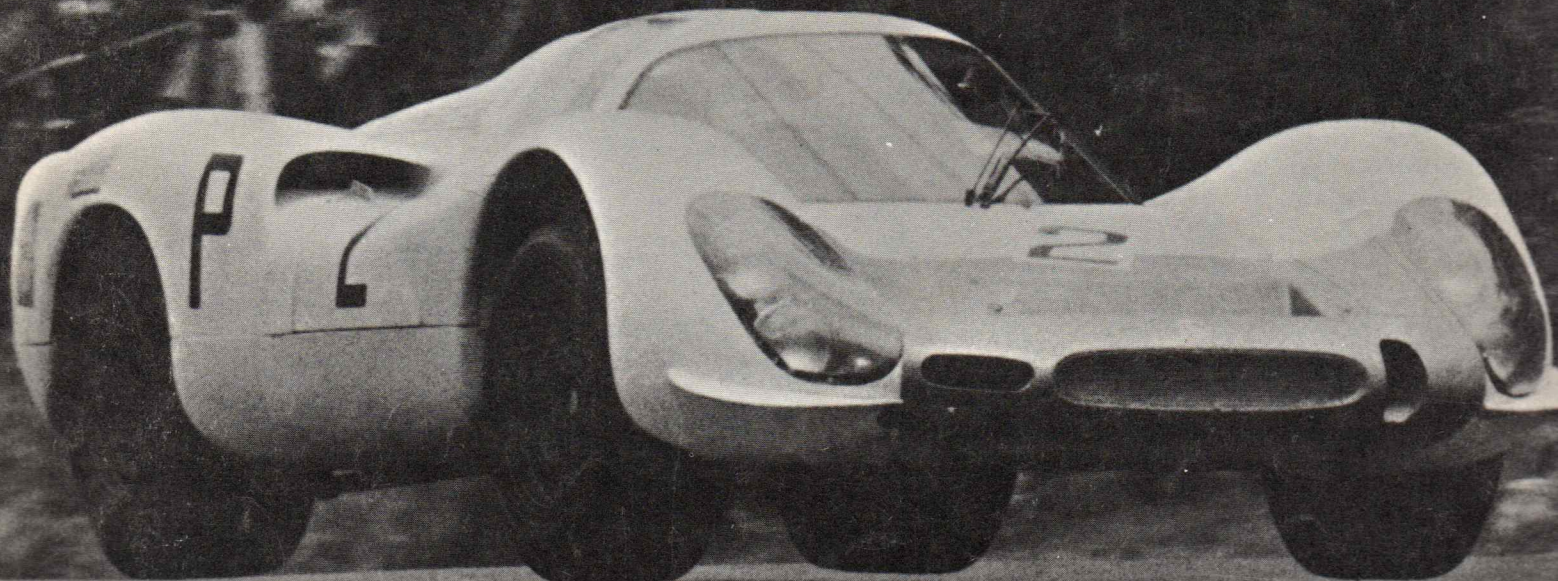


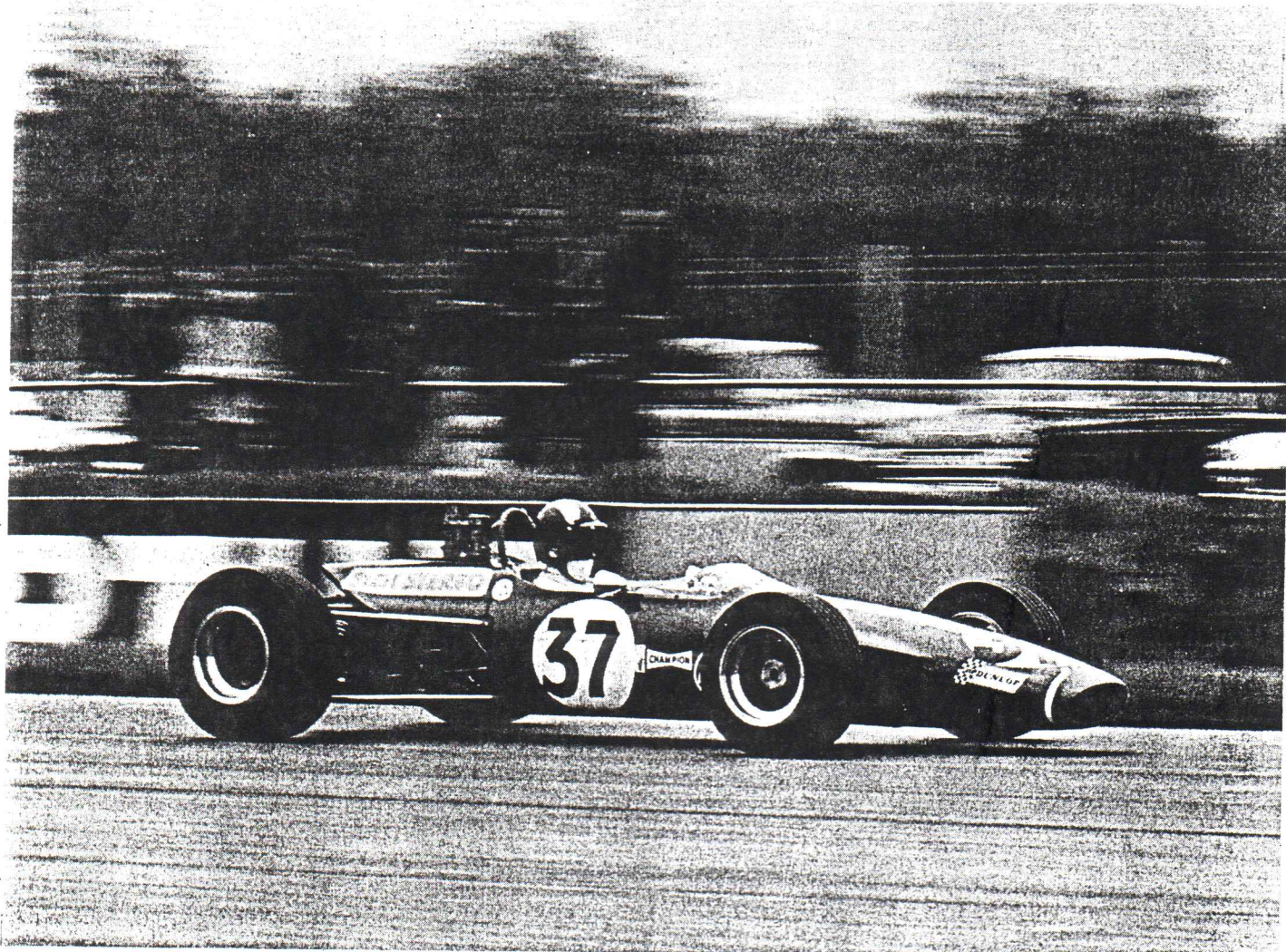
# SPEED WORLD

Week ending May 25 1968 Vol. 1 No. 4 Price 2/6

## INTERNATIONAL

Nurburgring 1000-km  
Indianapolis—weekend qualifying  
Austrian Alpine Rally  
Brands Hatch Charles Lucas





"Charlie Luke" at full chat in his F3 Titan-Ford at Silverstone.

Nigel Snowdon

# HAPPY-GO-LUKE



By RICHARD FEAST

CHARLES LUCAS must be the type of person William Hickey imagines all racing drivers to be. He is young, he is rich, he has a beautiful wife and he sometimes wins motor races. If he had lived between the wars he would have emerged a Brooklands hero and still been receiving honourable mentions today in *Motor Sport*. But he is also a modest and unassuming man, prone, it is true, to unexplainable impulses—like the time he bought a huge teddy bear at the London Hilton: "It seemed like a good idea at the time." He added that the good Mr. Jenkins was doing his best to stop this sort of thing.

Lucas—known to almost all as "Luke"—does not have any illusions of grandeur. He is quite happy being competitive in Formula 3 but thinks he might not make it in Formula 2. In 1966 he raced very little, partly because he was tied up on the managerial side of a project run in conjunction with Team Lotus and partly because he did not think he was good enough. He is still not sure. He freely admits that there is no question of him ever being a really good goer and that he races simply because he enjoys it.

He has had his fair proportion of spins while racing. Indeed, they became a Lucas trade-mark and hardened reporters in press

boxes practically took bets about which lap he would do it. But for all his misdemeanors Lucas has the simple answer: he lacks concentration. "But I am getting better. It's only a matter of application—ask Graham Hill."

Lucas has driven many types of car but perhaps his favourite is his Maserati 250F. Buying that car was the only decent deal he has done in his life. He bought it after meeting a bloke in a pub (where all the best bargains are struck) for £400. He spent another £150 bringing it into the country and another £200-£300 on tidying it up. In its four years' racing the Maserati has never given any trouble and never had anything done to it. Then Lucas corrected himself: yes, they had put in a new set of plugs once. The car, which has very little oil pressure now, is due for a rebuild.

Born in Ilkley 24 years ago, Charles Lucas went to school at Eton. His father, now retired, had been chairman of a cement company in Yorkshire and young Charles, fresh from an inauspicious academic spell at that noble seat of learning, was expected to follow in father's footsteps. At 18 he started work for a company in Doncaster but soon realised that that was not what he really wanted. He then began a course at the College of Aeronautical and Automobile Engineering

in Chelsea where his fellow students numbered his old school friend Piers Courage, John Miles, Jonathan Williams and poor Mark Fielden who was killed at Silverstone in 1963.

Already Lucas had started racing. His first event was in a Morgan at Rufforth but by college days he had acquired an early sports-racing Merlyn. There was a distinct lack of success with Merlyn, which did not even get him his six signatures for an FIA licence.

## Enter Courage and Williams

By this time Luke had become firm friends with Courage and Williams, the Anglo-Swiss pair who were really the forerunners of all the present day F3 people trekking around the Continent. The college course was ended about three-quarters of the way through. He had done the practical side but left before the section on business application—something which he now regrets.

Then came 1965, undoubtedly the first rung on the ladder. Lucas had reached the ripe old age of 21 and had the world at his feet. He bought a huge transporter, three Formula 3 Brabhams and had a Lotus 22. Charles Lucas Engineering started from a railway arch in Chiswick but the red, white and blue cars

made an impressive sight. The drivers were Williams, Courage and Peter Gethin, who had just carried off the Guards Championship for sports-racing cars. Lucas did not race F3 much but stuck to his sports-racing Lotus 23 in smaller club events. The cars were being looked after by one of the Shepherds Bush enthusiasts, Tom the Weld, known to his friends as Roy Thomas. Thomas had been looking after Courage's and Williams' cars and was taken into the fold. He had designed the Gemini Mk 3A for the Chequered Flag and before that, says Lucas, he built gates. Whether or not it's true, Luke addressed him with a deferential "Mr Thomas."

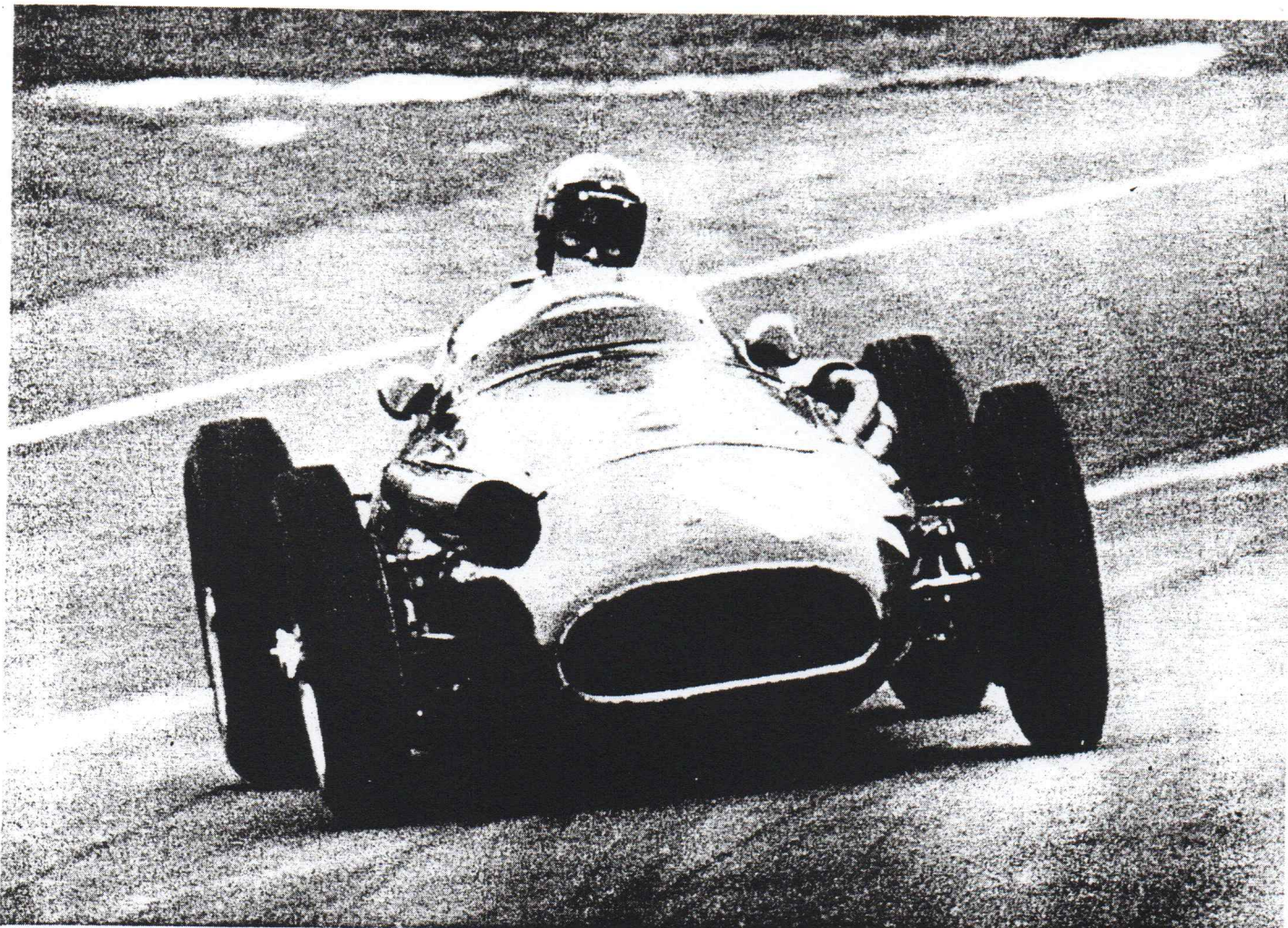
The year 1966 was equally critical. Charles Lucas Engineering had moved to the old premises of the British Racing Partnership in Duke's Head Yard, Highgate High Street, and they had a contract with a highly respected man. Colin Chapman, the famous designer, had approached Charles Lucas, a comparatively unknown team manager, and asked him to run a couple of the recently announced Lotus 41s in Formula 3. Luke wasted no time in accepting. Charles Lucas-Team Lotus they were called—it all sounded very grand. Piers Courage and Roy Pike scored many wins in the 41s but when the year was through Lucas and Chapman just drifted apart. Until the tie-up with Lotus, Charles Lucas Engineering had been a mainly amateur effort but after that year they were a lot wiser, "businesswise," as Luke would say.

That year the firm also ran another Lotus 41 for Cacho Fangio, son of you-know-who. It was a difficult name to live up to and Cacho never really made it. Meanwhile, Lucas was racing his Maserati but was still not convinced of his own abilities.

Lucas's big effort last year was with a

*The Formula 1 car that never was. The nearest Lucas' V8 Martin-engined Lotus 35 ever got to serious racing was practising for the 1967 Daily Mail Race of Champions at Brands Hatch. Engine trouble knocked the car out for the race and a few weeks later the car was destroyed by fire while Piers Courage was testing at Snetterton.*





E. Selwyn-Smith

"Only decent deal" Lucas has done in his life was to buy his famous Maserati 250F, a car which has opposite-locked its way round many British circuits.

Formula 1 car. He had an offer from Ted Martin to use his V8 engine, which was duly installed in a Lotus 35 that Piers had raced in Argentina. It was a good fit, and although not fully developed, Lucas hoped it would be at a more advanced stage than any of their rivals' cars. The plan unfortunately came to nought: while Piers was testing at Snetterton the car caught fire and was destroyed.

Lucas still had the Lotus 41 that Cacho Fangio had driven and mid-way through the season decided to have another go at Formula 3. He was joined by Harry Stiller with a couple of Brabhams and the red, white and blue cars were in action again. Lucas also bought an "ex-everybody" Ford GT40 but later sold it to John Woolfe. A GT car, he thought, needed far too much attention and he put its purchase down to impulse.

The firm were concentrating on engine development, while the Titan Formula 3 project finally materialised at the British Grand Prix meeting at Silverstone. Roy Pike drove the car but was involved in a collision with Luke's Lotus 41. Lucas rejoined the field well down and drove magnificently to win by a fraction. Watching that race from the excellent press box on the outside of Woodcote it was easy to understand what Lucas meant by "understanding one's opponents." The way those drivers changed positions several times round a corner and the closeness was a little un-nerving. Last year Lucas was confident in his fellow competitors but this year he is not.

He told a horrifying tale of his accident at Montlhery a few days before: Montlhery is a funny little circuit with long straights, straw bales forming chicanes and several difficult bends. The entire field came streaming

down the straight in a tight bunch and three cars went off at the first corner. Two came off at the second and on the third Jabouille, Lucas and Pike were all involved. (The French Press accused Lucas—Lucas thought Jabouille's braking spot was a little strange.) Lucas's car did a Red Arrow act of death—and almost as low—and landed the other side of a barrier. It was Lucas's first big accident and the first occasion on which he had worn a safety harness, which he believes saved him from serious injury. That accident, Lucas thought, was typical of present day Formula 3; it would not have happened in anything other than F3.

#### Tie-up with Cosworth

Meanwhile the engine development side of the company is progressing well. Originally Lucas had taken a customer's F3 Cosworth engine and replaced the head with one incorporating his own downdraught inlet manifold. Now he has a tie-up with Cosworth themselves; he orders, say, a batch of 20 engine kits, puts on his own heads and sells them to customers. The 100th downdraught unit has just been completed.

Nine Titans have been built, including their own F3s and Formula Ford model. The next step is towards Formula 2 but Lucas thinks this may be going the way of F3—over-priced and under-supported by the trade. The Roy Thomas-designed Titan is easily adaptable to F2, although Lucas thinks it inevitable to go to monocoque construction in time but not until they have sorted everything with a space-frame chassis. Lucas has just bought all of Ted Martin's machinery and stock of castings (apart from the V8) and plans to build engines and sell serious mods. What

engines? Lucas looked slightly pleased and embarrassed and was evasive with an answer. "We are not going to stay Formula 3 all the time," he said.

Towards the end of this year the company are moving to Huntingdon where they will be near chassis makers Arch Motors and body builders Specialised Mouldings. Original plans to move to King's Lynn fell through. They are now finding it difficult to do car and engine development at the same time, mainly because of the shortage of good men, who can earn more with an F2 set-up.

Charles Lucas was married last November to Antoinette von Westenholz after a fairy tale romance. He had been asked by the *Daily Express's* William Hickey what he most wanted for Christmas. His reply: "Antoinette von Westenholz." The ending, like all such tales, was happy. But what does she think of him racing—and what do his parents think? Antoinette was a little worried after the Montlhery accident but everything has now been smoothed over. Luke's parents pretty well accept motor racing, especially since they have two people very much involved in it, Charles and Chris Irwin, who is married to Charlotte, Lucas's sister. Mr. and Mrs. Lucas are both mad-keen on horse racing and Luke thinks they know what it is to be involved in something.

Charles Lucas has done much in his few years in motor racing. What he has achieved has been with a seriousness that does not amount to out and out dedication which can so often give the best drivers such negative personalities. Lucas must have the financial means to be able to go Formula 1 racing—and we reckon he probably has the ability, even if he doesn't.