

LOTUS/WEST OWNERS SURVEY
(FAILURE REPORTS)

The following paragraphs and chart appeared in the April 1972 issue of Stress Cracks under the authorship of then-Technical Committee Chairman, Tom Dill. No attempt has been made to update this survey since then because of the response problems mentioned by Mr. Dill. For those with further interest in this subject, the Road & Track Elan Owner Survey appeared in the April 1971 issue of R & T.

Inertia is readily overcome with a Lotus, but not so the human being, even the Lotus owners when asked to reply to an owner's survey. It's rather discouraging that Road & Track can get response from 70 individuals (which it called marginal in terms of sample size), while the largest owners club (us) can get a paltry 16!

It would not have been worthwhile to analyze the data were it not that they seem representative of the myriad Elan owner's reports and complaints I have personally heard over beer and busted knucks. Of the Europa results it is not for me to comment, being relatively unfamiliar with the car's characteristics. Lotus Cortina owners had little to say (that's good, that's good!) They undoubtedly have interesting facts to relate. I have a sneaking hunch the car may be most reliable of all.

Total Miles 380,000
Average Miles 31,600

FAILURES REPORTED
Elan

Number 12
Models '64-69

% Owners Reporting	Power Train		Electrical-Instruments	Body Cracks, Leaks	Chassis-Suspension
	Engine/Cooling	Transmission			
75-100%		Slave Cylinder			
50-74%	Water Pump, Starter Drive	Clutch Master Cylinder	Generator Bearing, wiring, Switches	Electric Windows, various, '66 on weather leaks, wind	Rear Wheel Bearings, Motor Mounts
25-49%	Oil leaks Broken cam Broken generator bracket	Throw-out Bearing	Donuts, from jacking	Water temp Gauge	
I-24%	Fuel blockage, Gen. pulley, Throttle cable Freeze plugs leak, out Carb., Zenith only	Front U-joint 1st-2nd synchro assy., shaft nut	Output shaft wear, break Pinion seal	Speedometer, Headlight vacuum syst., leaks, pots, Distributor adv., Zenith	Fuel pump v. body Handbrake Shocks, rear

Total Miles 93,000
Average Miles 23,250

Europa

Number 4
Models S2-'71

75-100%	Overheating	Clutch cable		Battery, Wiring, Switches		
25-74%					Leaks, Door alignment	
I-24%	Fast idle, head gasket, throttle cable	Shift lever		Speedometer	Paint Stress Cracks	Rear hub, Shocks