



1966 Lotus Elan S3 | Classic Rally Car

PRICE £27,500



ABOUT THIS CAR

The Lotus Elan has been a benchmark car in terms of handling and pure driving enjoyment since it was launched in 1962. Perfectly embodying the lightweight ethos of marque founder Colin Chapman, it used a clever backbone chassis and a glassfibre body. Beneath the bonnet was Lotus's Ford-based 1558cc Twin Cam engine, which drove through a four-speed Ford gearbox.

During its production run – which lasted until 1975 – the Elan was developed from the original Series 1 to the final Series 4, with more powerful SE and Sprint models being added along the way. Originally supplied as only an open-top roadster, a fixed-head coupé was introduced in late 1965. Electric windows were standard, the boot was enlarged and the interior trim was improved.

This was a period when Lotus was enjoying huge success in motor racing, with Jim Clark twice winning the Formula 1 World Championship. When Autocar magazine tested an Elan in 1964, it said that: 'Without doubt the Elan is a sports car, [a] thoroughbred because it owes its characteristics almost entirely to Lotus racing experience'.

It's thought that the first owner of this Elan Series 3 SE FHC was based in Kirby, Merseyside, and when it was 18 months old it passed to Liverpool-based Stanley Cunvin. He bought it for his wife, registered it 'VAL 177' and fitted a 1300cc Crossflow engine. It then stayed in the same ownership until June 2003, when Geoff Reiss swapped it for his restored Jowett Javelin.

The Elan had been in storage for more than 10 years and Reiss embarked on a full restoration. Having stripped the car down and removed the body, he found that the steel backbone chassis was beyond repair so he replaced it with a Spyder chassis. The Crossflow engine was removed and a correct Twin Cam sourced, to which Weber carburettors were fitted.

At the same time as restoring the glassfibre bodywork, a Spyder roll cage was installed. This gives side protection in the sills and also in front of the occupants' feet. The interior was retrimmed in leather and everything reassembled using new components wherever needed.

Reiss sold the Elan in 2012. The engine was rebuilt in 2016 and then again in 2022, when the work was carried out by Craig Beck Racing. A professional inspection that was done in 2021 noted that the chassis was in 'great condition' and that all chassis legs and seams 'are good'.

Its conversion into rally specification included the fitment of Sabelt harnesses, a Brantz Tripmeter and Hella spot lamps. A battery isolator switch was installed and there is a handheld fire extinguisher, plus a rollover bar and a map-reading light. A competition clutch is fitted, along with an uprated propshaft and driveshafts.

This lightweight, nimble little Elan completed the 2020 Rallye Monte Carlo Historique and is offered for sale complete with a substantial history folder that includes a FIVA passport. With its combination of a strong Twin Cam engine and legendary handling, it would make a superb choice for many classic rally events including more challenging ones such as the Monte Carlo Historique and the Tour Auto, where it would be capable of humbling much more exotic machinery.

The car is currently with Rally Preparation Services sister Company, the SASCo storage facility and available for inspection. All viewings and test drives welcomed through direct contact with Rally Preparation Services.

All email enquiries please contact us on mail@rpsrally.com or telephone +44(0)1993 358009

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SPECIFICATIONS:

- Date of original registration 29/07/1966
- FIVA card
- Recent engine refresh
- Big bore manifold
- Aluminium radiator
- Competition heavy duty clutch
- Minilite Alloy road wheels
- Koni and TTR shock absorbers
- Uprated prop/driveshafts
- Roll Bar
- Sabelt Full Harness Seat Belts
- Brantz Trip Meter
- Stopwatch
- Map light
- Heated windscreen
- Spotlights
- Uprated alternator