



Flared arches accommodate 13x7 Minilites—standard Elan Sprint wheels were just 4.5 inches wide.



The 1600cc Formula Atlantic Cosworth BDA engine was capable of far more than its rated 170hp, but streetability demanded a more conservative power figure. Radiator had to be relocated to fit.

styling that had more than a whiff of Aston Martin about it despite the stunted proportions, the Broadspeed GT had only a short run—but it brought about plenty of attention. (A more recent round of Broadspeed-fettled Minis, from the late '90s, were built long after Ralph Broad had left the car world behind following his disastrous turn with Leyland-sponsored Jaguar XJ12C touring cars.)

Between his '60s Mini-aided and his mid-'70s Jaguar racing activities, Broad was playing with twin-cam Fords—prepping Escort twin-cams for competitive use in road races and rallies in the U.K., offer-

ing bolt-on performance kits for lesser 1,300-powered Ford models, and gaining plenty of experience with Cosworth BDA engines—all with the apparent blessing of Ford U.K.'s competition wing AVO in Boreham. Broad's success was great enough that Castrol used his name, and sketches of both his likeness and that of some of his cars, in a print ad in the early '70s.

And so, just the one BDA-powered Elan came from the Broadspeed garages, but even then, no one at Ford, Lotus, Cosworth or Broadspeed thought it up. No, this was a commissioned machine, brought in by a customer. Its history is long, convoluted and occasionally dodgy. This machine started life as a Colorado Orange '72 Elan S4 Sprint, sold as a kit to a Mr. Pennell in January of 1972. He lived near the Broadspeed works, and delivered the car for modification.

Those mods were extensive. Let's start with the BDA itself, a 1,601cc variant as seen in Formula Two racers of the day, but detuned to be suitable for street use, thanks in part to a set of Broadspeed BD2 camshafts. The BDA was also treated to a Tuftrided crank; a conversion to wet-sump oiling; new, larger intake valves (illegal in the racing classes but entirely possible for the street); and a balanced reciprocating assembly, including a lightened flywheel. The Weber carbs were choked and re-jetted, and the intake manifold was polished internally.

But it wasn't as easy as just dropping in the engine and letting it rip. The steering had to be modified to accommodate: A re-shaped engine crossmember cleared the BDA's sump, and the rack-and-pinion steering was relocated to eliminate bump-steer and given new steering arms as well. The gearbox was rebuilt internally to accept Group 2 touring-car tranny guts, with their needle-roller bearings and evenly spaced ratios. The coil springs were trimmed by an inch all 'round, and Bilstein gas shocks replaced the standard pieces. A stock 3.77 gear lived in the rear axle, but a Salisbury limited-slip was added. The engine cover had to be gently flared and scooped to clear the BDA's exposed cam belt and pulleys. And then there were those outsize wheel arches—all the better to keep the 13x7 Minilites (and 195-wide Goodyears) under wraps. (The brakes were mostly left alone, save for more aggressive pads and a proportioning valve that gave a more forward-biting bias.) Its registration number was DUE886K, which Tim Wilkes of lotuselansprint.com says was a Dudley-based registration, not far from the Broadspeed works in Warwickshire. The result? 170hp at 6,200 RPM, a 7,500 RPM redline, and a thorough understanding of why no one else had tried such a conversion earlier.

The result was then submitted to the English magazine *Motor Sport*, which hooked on a fifth wheel for testing, with

