

Bond Bug pips Lotus Elan in 236-mile inter-city contest

A Bond Bug, making a cheeky intervention in a widely publicised 'two wheels versus four' contest recently, pushed a 1558 cc Lotus Elan into third place. The 700 cc three-wheeler took part as a 'rogue' entry in the race, organised under the supervision of Ian Morton, the motoring correspondent of the Evening Standard.

Object of the run was to pit a powerful BMW R75/5 motor cycle against the Lotus over a carefully timed and observed London-Birmingham-London course to see how two wheels fared against four in rush-hour, suburban, and motorway conditions.

No one invited a three-wheeler to take part – so *Reliant Review* entered a Bug at the last moment, with staff writer Josephine Lowe as driver and Charles Deane, Editor of *Motor Cycle Mechanics*, as observer.

The BMW – at £1121 the most expensive production motor cycle in the world – was favourite, but the chances of its driver, Allan Robinson, were reduced a little by slimy roads and steady rain in the early part of the race. Martin Colvill, a former racing driver, was at the wheel of the Lotus.

No one gave the Bug much chance of beating the Elan – but at the half way mark, the *Evening Mail* office in Birmingham, the little orange three-wheeler was a minute ahead of the £2,000 Lotus, and just



two-and-a-half minutes behind the BMW.

At the half-way mark, the other official observers – both members of the London Metropolitan Police Motor Club – changed positions, and then the race was on again back to the *Evening Standard* offices near Fleet Street.

On the second leg of the race, the Bug widened its lead over the Elan and the official times for the 236 mile run were as follows:

BMW R75/5	4 hours 42½ minutes;
Bond Bug	4 hours 50½ minutes;
Lotus Elan	5 hours 1 minute.