



Lotus Cars

25 August 2005

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Lotus Esprit claims top spot in two independent polls

The world-renowned mid-engined Lotus Esprit has claimed first place in two separate polls. Crowned as “the most memorable car in film history” by members of LOVEFiLM.com, and the “greatest performance car” of 1970-79 in Auto Express magazine’s “50 years of Speed” feature of 24 August, 2005.

LoveFilm Success

In a poll of 5,000 users of Europe’s biggest online DVD rental service, LOVEFiLM.com, the Lotus Esprit as featured in the 1977 James Bond film “The Spy Who Loved Me” was voted as “the most memorable car in film history.” James Bond’s white Lotus Esprit was made famous for transforming into a submarine as it speeds off of a jetty into the sea at the hands of Roger Moore, following an enemy helicopter chase.

The Lotus supercar beat off fierce competition from other famous automobile protagonists including the 1981 DeLorean from Back to the Future which claimed second place, and the red and white Ford Gran Torino of Starsky and Hutch, which completed the top three most film memorable cars. Other memorable cars included the VW Beetle in Herbie and the Dodge Monaco 440 in the Blues Brothers. The Top 10 classification was concluded with the AMC Pacers car that featured in the hit film Thelma and Louise.

Commenting on the importance of the recent poll in the Sun Newspaper, Fliss White, Marketing Manager of LOVEFiLM.com explains, “It’s always the actors that take the glory for a great movie, so we felt it was about time the cars were recognised for their roles too.”

The Lotus Esprit has starred in a number of other blockbuster films over the decades including Pretty Woman (1990) where a silver model was driven by Julia Roberts and Richard Gere and two Esprits featured in Basic Instinct (1992) starring Sharon Stone and Michael Douglas.

AutoExpress Honour

The car has also claimed another honour, named by Auto Express as the “greatest performance car” of 1970-79 in an evaluation of more than 60 cars spanning the last 50 years from 1950 to the present day.

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Highlighting the importance of the Lotus Esprit as a major leader in automotive development during the Seventies, the magazine said, "The mid-engined Lotus Esprit, with its backbone chassis and Colin Chapman-inspired suspension, set a new precedent in car design."

Delighted at the success in both of the recent polls, Clive Dopson, Managing Director of Lotus Cars explains, "The double accolade reinforces the starring role that the Lotus Esprit played in shaping automotive history and even today continues to be held in such a high esteem. To be also have been associated with cinema blockbusters such as James Bond, provides a solid foundation on which to continue to draft product placement strategies for future products."

The new mid-engined Lotus supercar is scheduled to enter production at the end of 2007. Further details will be available closer to the production date.

Ends.

Notes:

About the Lotus Esprit: The Lotus Esprit, regarded by many as a classic supercar, began production in 1976. During the 28 years of assembly, 10675 Esprits were hand built at Lotus' headquarters in Norfolk and sold all over the world. The last Lotus Esprit came off of the production line in February, 2004.

Top 10 best ever film cars:

- 1) The Spy Who Loved Me: LOTUS ESPRIT, James Bond drives his Lotus Esprit straight into the sea.
- 2) Back to the Future: 1981 DELOREAN, The 1981 DeLorean was customised by The Doc to travel back in time.
- 3) Starsky & Hutch: 1976 FORD GRAN TORINO, Starsky's beloved Ford Torino.
- 4) Herbie: The Love Bug: VW BEETLE, The VW Beetle with a mind of its own.
- 5) Batman: BATMOBILE, Voice activated, its own protective shield and packed full of gadgets.
- 6) Bullitt: 1968 FORD MUSTANG, Steve McQueen drives this Ford Mustang through the streets of San Francisco.
- 7) Blues Brothers: DODGE MONACO 440, This ex-police car is a key attribute for Jake and Elwood on their mission from God to "get the band back together."
- 8) Grease: 49 MERCURY CUSTOM, This car gets an automatic, systematic and hydromatic makeover.
- 9) Ghostbusters: 1959 CADILLAC AMBULANCE, Venkman, Spengler and Stantz save the world from ghosts with their trusty 1959 Cadillac Ambulance.
- 10) Thelma & Louise: 1975-77 AMC PACERS, Thelma & Louise put this car through its "pacers" by becoming two of America's most wanted fugitives.

Source: LOVEFiLM.com

About LOVEFiLM.com: LOVEFiLM is the biggest and best online DVD rental company in Europe. It has more members than anyone else in the industry and 96.8% of its members recommend us to their friends. It is proud to have been voted the best by industry peers, by winning the prestigious British Video Association "Retail Success of the Year" award in April 2005.

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Since LOVEFiLM was created in December 2003, investment from the film-focussed Arts Alliance Media has enabled the company to recruit a top management team and build a leading edge in-house technology team. Since then, the company has never looked back and continues to grow at an astonishing rate.

About Group Lotus plc: The main operating subsidiary of Group Lotus plc is Lotus Cars Ltd. which has two operating divisions – Lotus Cars and Lotus Engineering:

Lotus Cars builds and commercialises Lotus sports cars, Elise and Exige; builds sportscars for General Motors and manufactures the advanced composite front and rear crash structures for Aston Martin V12 Vanquish. Lotus Engineering provides comprehensive and versatile consultancy services to many of the world's OEMs and Tier 1 suppliers, offering a full engineering service from initial concept and project design through development to full production prototype build.

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