

EST 1973

8 LITRES OF THUNDER A proper test of WO Bentley's own car



classiccars

Join the *Jensen jet set*

Intoxicating thrust and hand-built exclusivity are yours from £9k
541-R • Interceptor • CV8



ASTON MARTIN VANQUISH

Fit a manual 'box, take on the world

1628 MILES IN AN E-TYPE

Historic re-run to the Geneva show

The stormy career of Standard Triumph stylist Walter Belgrove

JULY 2011 £4.30



BUY A REAL MINI COOPER *Avoiding rust, fakes and bodgery*



LOTUS 49 TECHNO-WIZARDRY *Why it changed F1 thinking forever*



BMW'S EIGHTIES TOP GUNS *M3 and Alpina 3 Series shoot it out*



OUR CARS



Second at Le Mans
with owner Shaun
Lynn was a good start

A challenging Tour Auto



**1963 AC COBRA 289 MKII
FIA LE MANS PROTOTYPE**
RACED BY KEVIN KIVLOCHAN.
CLASSIC.CARS@BAUERMEDIA.CO.UK

Walking down the steps of the Jardin des Tuileries in Paris to parc fermé for April's Tour Auto rally made me understand how the gladiators in the Roman Colosseum must have felt: there was a roar from the crowds behind the barriers, yet somehow I heard nothing. We were going into battle against the unknown – would we survive? Survival meant reaching the finish line in Biarritz.

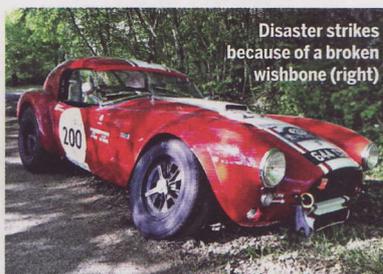
My chariot would be Shaun Lynn's AC Cobra, the Le Mans Prototype CSX 2130. My role would be navigating the 1500-mile route using tulip notes. With 230 pairs of drivers going against each other for five days of racing on roads, circuits and special stages, the Tour Auto is far from an easy ride.

Shaun and I have entered the event five times. The first time with the Cobra, in 2006, we were just pleased to finish, even if it was in 30th place. The second time, in 2008, we started the last day with a 28sec lead over Frenchman Ludovic Caron's Cobra, but the engine blew with one race circuit to go. It was third time lucky in 2009: we won and amassed zero penalties driving Shaun's Ford GT40. It was the first time Brits had won the event in more than ten years.

We were challenged by Ludovic Caron to beat him in a similar car the following year. Monsieur Caron did not buy a GT40 for 2010,

so we resolved to try and beat him in Shaun's Cobra. We were leading on day three, until points failure forced us to retire. This year we'd be going head-to-head with Caron in the Cobra again, plus stiff competition from three GT40s and last year's winning Lotus Elan 26R of Jean-Pierre Lajournade.

Day one sees all 230 cars driving from Paris to Poitiers, setting off just after 6.30am on a cold morning, with a police escort out of the city centre. The first stage takes place on the road circuit at Montlhéry rather than its famous banking, which closed in 2004. The four-mile course resembles more of a hill



**NEED TO
KNOW**
Miles this month
325
Costs I daren't
count!
Engine 4727cc, V8
Power 450bhp @
6500rpm
Performance Top
speed: 170mph;
0-60mph: sub-5sec