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# OUR CARS FOR

Chasing Nigel Webb's Jaguar E-type through the Dunlop Chicane



## Back in action at Le Mans

### 1964 AC COBRA 289 MKII FIA

OWNED BY KEVIN KIVLOCHAN,  
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MY COBRA restoration was finished ten days before June's Le Mans 24-hours weekend, where I'd entered the car for the 45-minute Le Mans Legend race – held on the Saturday morning.

Alan and Alec of Thunder Road Speed Shop in Woking (01483 763399) worked all hours to get it ready for a test session at Mallory Park with Richard Walbyoff of RW Racing Services (01280 840799). There were a few teething problems: initially the engine wouldn't turn over, but Richard soon fixed that, finding a loose connection on the cut-off switch. When it fired up I could finally hear the car with the new headers and exhaust system for the first time, and it sounded sweet.

After a few gentle laps Richard checked the car over, before I headed out again and gave it a harder push. With the 3.31:1 differential fitted for Le Mans' long straights (we usually use a 3.54:1) we only used first and second gear at Mallory, but still managed a 55sec lap.

At Le Mans I qualified in 21st place, fifth in class, but the car was suffering from bad fuel surge on the exit of the second chicane on the

Mulsanne Straight, forcing me to lift off the throttle until the fuel pressure returned. Very frustrating and not good for the lap times.

The pick-up on the new fuel tanks is clearly the issue, but we weren't able to fix that during the event. So we decided to brim the tanks for the race, which meant carrying around 60 litres too much fuel. We also had to try and stop the hard-top lifting in the middle at speeds approaching 170mph on the Mulsanne.

At the rolling start of the race I picked off a few cars before the Dunlop bridge and enjoyed a great dice with Nigel Webb's Jaguar E-type before having to make the mandatory one-minute pit stop, around 27 minutes in.

After the stop my confidence grew and the lap times fell. I was going 7sec faster than in Bill Bridges' similar Cobra at Le Mans Classic last year, but the fuel surge problem returned and the faster I went, the worse it became. Frustratingly, the E-type pulled away a little and I had to settle for 16th overall, fifth in class.

Back in the UK, it was preparation of a different kind for the Salon Privé Concours d'Elegance later in the month (see p20).

#### NEED TO KNOW

Miles this month 200 Costs £20,000-plus Time owned Nine years Engine 4727cc, V8 Power 409bhp @ 6500rpm Performance Top speed: 170mph; 0-60mph: sub-5sec



Hard-top shows strains of trying to lift off at high speeds



Is this what they mean by 'babe magnet'?



Thundering away from Indianapolis corner, towards Arnage