

"Mr. Senna what do you think about the chassis?" "For a street sportscar it has brilliant virtues", he answers. "The handling is superb, its stability is perfect, the steering is direct and very precise. Naturally you cannot com-

pare it to a Formula One car. For an everyday vehicle you have got to make compromises. In addition, taking all that into account the Excel is also a most comfortable car".

Ayrton Senna! The young man whom the Formula One drivers fear the most.

On this occasion he was to drive another type of Lotus, the Excel S.E a car only just becoming known in this country. For the part he was to play in the exercise to follow our reporter was to have his courage tested to the extreme.

Initially, we are to view the test from an observation point, into which we climb and prepare to watch carefully. We are after all about to observe a great Lotus driver. In recent years Team Lotus' selection of drivers has been a small one and here is the very best of those that have sat in a Lotus for

some time.

It was clear that Ayrton was looking forward to his drive in the Excel SE and also to talk a little about it. During his test he was to play with the steering wheel in his inimitable fashion, make figures in the asphalt with the throttle and thereby make it a truly memorable day for us.

Let's face it. A multitude of people in the know think that Senna is the best Formula One pilot of the present period. Let us suppose they are right.

Firstly let us introduce the car. It is at home in the Porsche 944S class—it costs a little more but it is exotic and is hand-made. It has a 2.2 litre engine, 4 cylinders, 5 gears, 16 valves, 180 bhp (or 183



Ayrton takes an expert look at the S.E.'s power unit before his test and sees twin overhead camshafts under the red cam covers.

"OH LÀ LÀ AYRTON"



Bernhard Schmidt of the German magazine Rallye Racing scored a noteworthy scoop by organising a road test of the Lotus Excel S.E

with our Brazilian star Ayrton in the driver's seat. Arranged by Joachim Bohr of our newly appointed German distributor Lotus Sportswagen *GmbH at the time of last year's German Grand Prix, Bernhard was kind enough to provide Lotus World with his collection of photographs taken during the test.

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For checking the accuracy of the translation and the picture captions we thank Joe Waupotitsch of Lotus Cars.

Picture above

With an uncompromising smile on his face and circling hands, Ayrton reduces the prevailing dynamic forces through the S.E.'s steering wheel.