



yesterday's pants inside. No time to faff, though, and with adrenaline pumping I made a Mr Muscle type super effort and punched my arms through the sleeves to the sound of ripping stitches.

The cause of the blockage immediately became apparent as the Grand Prix Racewear logos that my girlfriend had dutifully sewn on the arms the day before flapped in the breeze. She'd sewn right through the arms of the suit, making neat little pockets out of the upper arms.

Jamie was too busy watching for the Lotus to appear to watch this farce so I carried on getting ready as I heard the call of 'here he is'. Andrew brought the Seven to a controlled halt, pulled the safety harness release and leapt out, all

in one continuous movement, like a gymnast dismounting from the beam. And like a pig falling off a pole I clumsily clambered in. Then out again as I was sitting on the safety straps.

The Enduro race the next day would require a quick driver change. So getting the practice right under the pressure of putting in as much qualifying time as possible made me realise nothing is easy when this much adrenaline is pumping.

Strapped in tighter than I've ever been held before it was time to hit the track. More huge V8s thundered past and for a split second I saw God.

Actually, it was Johnny Herbert and the Bentley team – there for the big event of the weekend, the Sebring 12-hour race. But it gave me strength, as I

wondered what I was doing and waited for the nod to go.

It had seemed like a nice little jolly when I'd received the e-mail from Andrew a couple of weeks earlier inviting me to share a drive in the Vintage Enduro race during the Sebring 12-hour race week.

How could I say no? I owned a Lotus Seven years ago, so knew what they were like. Florida usually has great weather during March so my girlfriend Michelle could come along and not get drizzled on. Sebring is steeped in racing history so I expected it to be a pretty big event.

What I didn't expect was a '700,000 people attend' type pretty big event. Okay, no one was interested in it being my race debut, but to me it was akin to ►►

Above: despite the Lotus Seven series III's sticky Avon tyres, cornering flat-out at 110mph calls for commitment.