

THE BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE MAZDA MX-5 CLUB OF WA INC.

MX-press



Editing, design and production Simon Corston & Bob Sharpe

Mazda
MX-5 Club of Western Australia

Mar-Apr 2017

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Lyall Tilson's MX-5 NA

Vice President's Report

WITH BARRIE AND LIANNA away on a well deserved break it's my turn to give you a (Vice) Presidential report. Let me start by introducing your new club social coordinator Steve Harris who joined the committee at the end of January.

Name and tell us a bit about yourself?

I was born in Yorkshire in the north of the UK, but raised in North Devon in the west of England as the eldest of four siblings. I'm qualified as a master mariner and spent all my working life in the maritime industry in positions at sea and ashore, including ten years as captain of various ships. I moved to Perth from Singapore in 2004 for work in the marine sector of the offshore oil and gas industry. I retired last December and now enjoy spending time on things I want to do, rather than what my former employer and their clients thought was important!

Your first drive and first car?

My first drive was a cousin's farm tractor when I was 13. He was a farmer who owned three different Ferguson tractors – a Massey Ferguson 65, a 35, and a TE20 "little grey Fergie", together with a JCB. The "little grey Fergie" was difficult to start as, unlike the others that had key starting, it had a gear lever starter switch. Starting it involved lifting the gear lever with one hand into an "S" gate marked on the gearbox, while simultaneously pressing a brass button switch on the side of the gearbox housing with the other hand. Somewhat challenging initially, but a useful safety device to stop small children starting one unsupervised. My first car was a black Morris Minor 1000, which featured in a "My First Car" article in MX-press.

How long have you owned your MX-5?

I bought my first MX-5, a Series 1 NC, in May 2007 and drove that as my daily drive for 119,000 km until October 2014. An opportunity came up then to buy a 25th Anniversary NC Limited Edition, which I couldn't pass up!

Your every day drive?

My "Bunnings car", is a 2016 Mazda CX5, which I bought late last year. It's comfortable, economical and the first automatic I've owned (which is not a bonus). It does have some useful functions though like GPS-activated voice and visual warnings when

exceeding the designated speed limit!

What would be your dream wheels?

A white or red late-model Jaguar XK 150 fixed-head coupe with red leather upholstery and wire wheels.

How long in the club and favourite cruises?

I joined the MX-5 club in mid-2007 not long after I bought my first NC. I don't have a favourite cruise, but anything that gets us out of the city onto open country roads with a chance to open the car up is welcome.

What is your favourite MX-5 club event?

The annual 'Five Valleys Dash' or 'MX-500 km' drive that gets members down south further away from Perth and out of the familiar comfort zone. The road from Nannup to Baliningup in the Blackwood River valley is a great MX-5 drive. It's a very picturesque country drive up the Blackwood Valley in any weather except rain. The road itself is made for an MX-5 - slightly challenging, but most of the corners have great cambers that beg to be driven hard.

What is your fashion philosophy?

Casual: jeans and button-down collars. One of the benefits of retirement is dispensing with buttoned up shirt collars and ties.

Your favourite food and drink?

Where to start? A roast leg of young lamb cooked in a French style with slow-roasted garlic and shallots would be high on the list, accompanied by flageolet beans and a bottle of GSM. On the other hand, I'd find life difficult without cheese in all its many varieties. I can understand how Ben Gunn, the castaway in the book *Treasure Island*, developed his obsession with cheese when marooned alone and deprived of it for three years.

You have a choice of any celebrity, politician, musician or family member in the world but only one passenger seat; who would be your ultimate passenger?

My maternal grandfather who died in 1970 when I was 19. At that age I didn't appreciate what an interesting life he'd led and now regret the opportunity I missed in not learning more of it at first hand. He'd been a junior naval surgeon in the Royal Navy during WW I and witnessed the formal surrender of the German High Seas Fleet. He became a radiologist in the 1920s

when X-Ray medicine was in its infancy, worked most of his life as a doctor in China, and spent WW II interned in a Japanese POW camp in Shanghai. I remember him as very cautious and none-too-proficient driver though, so I'm not sure how well he'd cope with being my passenger.

Any final thoughts?

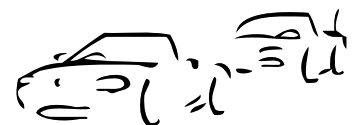
I look forward to contributing to the club as social coordinator and welcome suggestions from members, old and new, with ideas for new social events, or ways existing ones might be improved. You can contact Steve at social@mx5club.com.au.

On a different note at our coming Annual General Meeting, which will take place on 29 August 2017, we will vote on a special resolution to ratify the adoption a major revision of the club's constitution before we can present it to the Department of Commerce for their approval. The WA Associations Incorporation Act, the main act that governs the running of our club, has been substantially changed and what is essentially a new act, the Associations Incorporation Act 2015, become law on 1 July, 2016 and necessitated the major revision of our constitution. Barrie and I have used the Department Of Commerce's model rules document as the basis of the constitution rewrite which has been endorsed by the committee. Our constitution has doubled in size largely due to the number of prescribed items that needed to be included.

The revised constitution is available for members to download from the club website. Please take the time to have a read and feel free to email me at vicepresident@mx5club.com.au if you have any questions.

Have fun in your five!

Aart ter Kuile



Committee

President

Barrie Parker m: 0417 918 359
e: president@mx5club.com.au

Vice President/Events Coordinator

Aart ter Kuile m: 0419 915 784
e: vicepresident@mx5club.com.au
e: events@mx5club.com.au

Treasurer

Bev Wotzko m: 0413 564 372
e: treasurer@mx5club.com.au

Membership

Gary Wotzko m: 0413 564 373
e: membership@mx5club.com.au

Secretary

Carol Messenger m: 0408 929 799
e: secretary@mx5club.com.au

Webmaster

David Turk
e: webmaster@mx5club.com.au

Motor Sport Manager

Warwick Gates m: 0409 103 232
e: motorsport@mx5club.com.au

Motor Sport Coordinator

Don Messenger m: 0419 924 420
e: motorsport@mx5club.com.au

Merchandise

Lianna Parker m: 0437 629 635
e: merchandise@mx5club.com.au

MX-press Editor

Bob Sharpe m: 0430 596 479
e: editor@mx5club.com.au

MX-press Production

Simon Corston m: 0409 139 606
e: production@mx5club.com.au

Social

Steve Harris m: 0412 928 275

General Committee

Lyll Tilson m: 0438 755 007
David Masters m: 0417 923 727

Foundation/Life Members

- ☉ Brian Butterworth
- ☉ Sandra Price
- ☉ Ashley Price
- ☉ Ian Lewis
- ☉ Graeme Martin
- ☉ Peter Randell
- ☉ David Turk
- ☉ Simon Corston
- ☉ Bob Sharpe
- ☉ Barrie Parker

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Cover Photograph: Lyll Tilson's MX-5 NA (Midland to Cunderdin) by Simon Corston

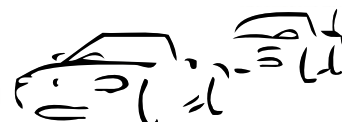
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MX-press is the newsletter of the Mazda MX-5 Club of WA Inc.

Contributions are welcome. Articles and photographs should be emailed to editor@mx5club.com.au

All other club correspondence can be sent to the committee via the club website.

The committee meets on the fourth Thursday of every month at 6:30PM
in the Barbagallo Room at Shannons WA Office, 1500 Albany Highway, Cannington.



Editor's Desk

G'DAY ALL.

Easter has been and I hope you all enjoyed it. I attended the club Easter breakfast which was well organized, as usual, by the Messengers. Thank you Don and Carol and bunny helpers. I was beaten by our President by one in guessing the number of Easter eggs in a jar and then he beat me by one again in the quiz. I guess that's why he's a president and I'm just a scribe. He also knew how many electrons in an oxygen atom and that's just Ein-hawking-stein stuff. As a consolation I did know that there were four legs on a donkey.

Having said that, the next day in the "West", someone who probably doesn't know that there are four legs on a donkey, decides that during peak holiday traffic times they want to close overtaking lanes on the major roads to resort towns. As I recall, the reason for installing overtaking lanes was so that drivers would not get frustrated by long lines of traffic crawling along behind a caravan with bikes on the back, towed by a four wheel drive packed to the gunnels with kids, dogs, fridges, kayaks, fishing rods and other mountains of holiday paraphernalia. Said frustrated drivers would overtake a line of traffic to get into a real or imagined space somewhere up ahead as soon as their frustration could be borne no longer. Said

drivers sometimes became statistical road-kill. What's changed? Certainly not drivers. To whomever suggested this, repeat after me, "There are four legs on a donkey and drivers haven't changed and this experiment will kill somebody".

Shannons' new premises in Cannington is going to be the location of our club meetings from the April meeting so anyone thinking of attending, like me, had better get the date and time locked into their noggin.

I recently had the experience of my car being hit from behind whilst stationary. The car behind me was stopped and a bloke changed lanes into the back of it pushing it into me. The guy who caused it was uninsured and had a cheapo vehicle which he walked away from. No injuries but the 70-year-old guy who hit me, whom I saw a day later, said his relatives had told him that he was going to develop whiplash soon so he was considering it. This gives me the opportunity to whine about non-compulsory comprehensive insurance which I think should be compulsory and repeat that I was told that overseas in many places it is the standard practice to claim for whiplash in a rear-end collision and you are regarded as a fool if you don't claim for it even if you don't have it. Speaking to insurance people, it is becoming more prevalent here too along

with jacking up the value of all sorts of insurance claims which is almost the norm now.

Somewhere in this issue is an article about 19 American Miatas (MX-5s). It is interesting to see and read about what has been done to some of these cars and it may give you some ideas of your own. I hope you enjoy this article, especially some of the quotes from the owners.

Recently I sent a car to Melbourne on a car carrier. They offered door-to-door or depot-to-depot delivery or any combination of door and depot for around \$700 bucks all up. Delivery took just under a week, though they said up to two weeks, which I thought was good value and good service. It wasn't even "mates rates" so I'm happy to pass on the name of this mob on request.

Victoria has a single speed camera, they call them road safety cameras, that earned 13 million dollars in one year. That averages 154 fines per day and their total network revenue was \$1 million dollars a day. NSW only earned \$19 million from its entire network in a year. They really need to return to the man with the flag walking in front of vehicles. Now that is positively Victorian.

Well that's all for now so keep having "fun on wheels" and remember to forget these things that you think you know. Juliet was not standing on a balcony in Romeo and Juliet. Shakespeare wrote that Juliet appeared at a window. There were no balconies in Elizabethan England. The brakeman's job in a bobsled team is not to put on the brakes. In fact it is illegal to use the brake until the race is over because it damages the track. As the last man in the sled his job is to boost the sled at takeoff. The Earl of Sandwich did not invent the sandwich, it predated the man by over 2000 years. John Montague, the Earl of Sandwich, did however give it the name which prior to him was called bread and whatever was in it. Finally, Pavlov did not get dogs to salivate by ringing bells to signal food. He used a metronome, a buzzer, a harmonium and even electric shocks but no bells. By the way, he also sold dog drool to help pay for his research, selling 3000 flagons a year as a treatment for indigestion.

Bob Sharpe



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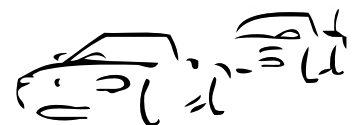
LOCAL PEOPLE SERVING LOCAL PEOPLE

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FINAL ARRANGEMENTS

Donald Trump goes on a fact-finding visit to Israel. While he is on a tour of Jerusalem he suffers a heart attack and dies.

The undertaker tells the American diplomats accompanying him "You can have him shipped home for \$50,000, or you can bury him here, in the Holy Land for just \$100."

The American diplomats go into a corner to confer for a few minutes. They return with their answer to the undertaker and tell him they want Donald Trump shipped home.

The undertaker is puzzled and asks, "Why would you spend \$50,000 to ship him home, when it would be wonderful to be buried here and you would spend only \$100?"

The American diplomats reply, "Long ago a man died here, was buried here, and three days later he rose from the dead. We just can't take the risk."

SMART CLERGY

A little boy was waiting for his mother to come out of the store. As he waited he was approached by a man who asked "Son, can you tell me where the post office is?"

The little boy replied "Sure, just go straight down this street and at the end, turn right."

The man thanked the boy and said "I'm the new minister in town. I'd like you to come to church on Sunday. I'll show you how to get to heaven."

The boy replied with a chuckle "Aww, come on, you don't even know the way to the post office."

ATHEIST IN THE WOODS

An atheist was walking through the woods. "What majestic trees!" "What powerful rivers!" "What beautiful animals!" He said to himself.

Suddenly, he heard a rustling in the bushes behind him. He turned to look and saw a seven-foot grizzly bear charge towards him. He ran as fast as he could along the path. He looked over his shoulder and saw that the bear was closing on him.

He looked over his shoulder again, and the bear was even closer and then he tripped and fell. Rolling over to pick himself up, he found the bear was right on top of him reaching towards him with its left paw and raising the right paw to strike. At that instant the Atheist cried out, "Oh, my God!"

Time stopped. The bear froze. The forest was silent. A bright light shone upon the man, and a voice came out of the sky "You deny my existence for all these years, you teach others I don't exist and even credit creation to cosmic accident. Do you expect me to help you out of this predicament?"

"Am I to count you as a believer?"

The atheist looked directly into the light. "It would be hypocritical of me to suddenly ask you to treat me as a Christian now but perhaps you could make the bear a Christian?"

There was a pause.

"Very well," said the voice. The light went out. The sounds of the forest resumed and the bear dropped his right arm and brought both paws together bowed his head and spoke "Lord, bless this food, which I am about to receive. Amen."

LAWYERS DON'T LIE.

A lawyer had a wife and 12 children and needed to move as his rental agreement was coming to an end for the home where he lived but was having difficulty in finding a new home.

When he said he had 12 children, no one would rent a home to him because they knew that the children would destroy the home.

He could not say that he had no children, he could not lie, after all, lawyers cannot and do not lie.

So, he had an idea: he sent his wife for a walk to the cemetery with 11 children. He took the remaining one with him to see homes with the real estate agent.

He liked one of the homes and the agent asked "how many children do you have?"

He answered "12 children."

The agent asked "where are the others?"

The lawyer answered, with a sad look, "they are in the cemetery with their mother." And that's the way he was able to rent a home for his family without lying.

The moral of the story is that it is not necessary to lie, one only has to choose the right words.

THE CARDIOLOGIST

A Ford motor mechanic was removing a cylinder head from the motor of a V8 when he spotted a well-known cardiologist in his

workshop. The doctor was there waiting for the service manager to come and take a look at his car when the mechanic shouted across the garage, "Hey doc, do you want to take a look at this?"

The cardiologist, a bit surprised, walked over to where the mechanic was working. The mechanic straightened up, wiped his hands on a rag and asked, "So doc, look at this engine. I opened its heart, took the valves out, repaired and replaced anything damaged and then put everything back in, and when I finished, it worked just like new. So how is it that I make \$48,000 a year and you make \$1.7 million when you and I are doing basically the same work?"

The cardiologist paused, leaned over and whispered to the mechanic "Try doing it with the engine running!"

ITALIAN ALTAR BOY CONFESSION

"Bless me Father, for I have sinned. I have been with a loose girl."

The priest asks, "Is that you, little Dominic Savino?"

"Yes, Father, it is."

"And who was the girl you were with?"

"I can't tell you, Father. I don't want to ruin her reputation."

"Well, Dominic, I'm sure to find out her name sooner or later so you may as well tell me now. Was it Tina Minetti?"

"I cannot say."

"Was it Teresa Mazzarelli?"

"I'll never tell."

"Was it Nina Capelli?"

"I'm sorry, but I cannot name her."

"Was it Cathy Piriano?"

"My lips are sealed."

"Was it Rosa DiAngelo, then?"

"Please, Father, I cannot tell you."

The priest sighs in frustration. "You're very tight lipped, and I admire that. But you've sinned and have to atone. You cannot be an altar boy now for four months. Now you go say a rosary and behave yourself."

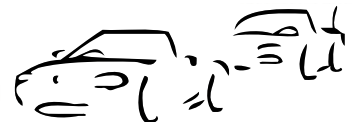
Joey walks back to his pew, and his friend Franco slides over and whispers, "What did you get?"

"Four months vacation and five good leads."

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Coming Events

Don't forget to check out our website (www.mx5club.com.au) for the latest events

MAY

- 7 **MONTHLY CRUISE: MOONDYNE FESTIVAL—SUNDAY**
Join us for a 160km scenic cruise through the Chittering Valley to Australia's only monastic town, New Norcia. We stop for morning tea at the Bindoon Bakehaus. Bring a picnic or have lunch at the New Norcia Hotel. A two-hour guided tour at 1:30PM is the best way to discover New Norcia. Hear stories of the last 160 years and visit the monks' own chapel or stroll through the museum and art gallery.
We meet near the Muzz Buzz at the Central Beechboro Shopping Centre on the corner of Beechboro Road North and Benara Road, Beechboro at 9:00AM and depart 9:30AM.
- 21 **DAWN BREAKFAST RAID: BRITISH CAR DAY GINGIN—SATURDAY**
A early spirited 120 km drive through the Swan and Chittering Valleys to the Bindoon Bakehouse for breakfast. Then to Gingin to have a stroll through the Annual British Car Day before you make your way back to Perth. We meet near the Muzz Buzz at the Central Beechboro Shopping Centre on the corner of Beechboro Road North & Benara Road, Beechboro at 7:00AM for a 7:30AM start. Register by email to events@mx5club.com.au before 19 May.
- 25 **COMMITTEE MEETING—THURSDAY**
The committee will meet at Barbagallo room at Shannons' offices, 1500 Albany Highway, Cannington. Arrive at 6:30PM to share some food before we start at 7:00PM.
- 27 **SATURDAY CRUISE: WAROONA—SATURDAY**
Ray Brown is taking us for a 155 km Saturday drive to the Waroona pub for lunch. We meet at the Gosnells Civic Centre located between Albany Highway and Mills Road West in the parking area near Mills Road West at 9:00AM and depart 9:30AM.

JUNE

- 4 **MONTHLY CRUISE: DWELLINGUP—SUNDAY**
A scenic 130 km drive along some nice roads to Blue Wren Café in Dwellingup for lunch.
We meet at the Gosnells Civic Centre located between Albany Highway and Mills Road West in the parking area near Mills Road West at 9:00AM and depart 9:30AM.
- 13 **AFTER WORK GETTOGETHER: BAYSWATER MAZDA MAINTENANCE NIGHT—TUESDAY**
We have been invited by Bayswater Mazda into their service workshop. You will get the good oil on how to look after your MX-5 from their leading mechanics. They will also explain Bayswater Mazda's exclusive service offer for all MX-5 club members. Make your own way to Bayswater Mazda located at the junction of Guildford Road and Garratt Road, Bayswater (please park in the service car park off Garratt Road) at 6:00PM for a 6:30PM start. Entry is \$5.00 per person for food and drinks. If you want to be in it please RSVP to social@mx5club.com.au on or before close of business 11 June; places are limited to 30 people.
- 22 **COMMITTEE MEETING—THURSDAY**
The committee will meet at Barbagallo room at Shannons' offices, 1500 Albany Highway, Cannington. Arrive at 6:30PM to share some food before we start at 7:00PM.

WANTED: CLUB SECRETARY

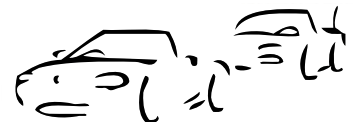
At the last AGM we had no nominee for this position and Carol Messenger reluctantly put her hand up to take on the role. Her work commitments have proven to make it difficult for her to do the role justice so we are looking for a member to step up and take on the role of club secretary.
To do the job you need access to a computer and be able to attend committee meetings which are held on the fourth Thursday of the Month.
If you would like to find out more before committing to the role please call Aart on 0419 915 784



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Bits 'n' BobS

MEMBERSHIP

A quick look down the current membership list shows that the most popular suburb for MX-5 club members, counting family members as one only, is Morley with five different memberships. There are four in Wembley, three each in Bassendean, Canning Vale and Subiaco, two in Belmont, Bickton, Carlisle, Cloverdale, Dianella, East Perth, East Vic Park, Fremantle, Jandakot, Joondalup, Maylands, Mt Pleasant, Mullaloo, Perth, Shenton Park, South Perth, Stirling, Swan View, Thornlie, West Perth, Wilson and Winthrop. All the rest of you are the sole club members in your suburb which makes you special.

FLIVVERBOOBS

This word was introduced to combat a campaign against jaywalkers. Jays are apparently not-so-bright birds so jaywalkers were not-so-bright pedestrians, walking across roads carelessly and in danger of being hit by these new-fangled automobiles. A massive campaign against jaywalkers involving Boy Scouts issuing shaming cards to jaywalkers ensued just after the turn of the century. Pedestrians then hit back citing Flivverboobs as careless drivers. Flivver from the term for a cheap car and boob is an American slang term for a not-so-smart person. The jaywalking campaign was successful. The word is still in our language today and people who cross roads at an angle, at inappropriate locations or against traffic lights are still referred

to as jaywalkers. The Flivverboob campaign was a failure. Cars became more important and the word died but a flivver is still recognized by vintage car enthusiasts and boob is universally recognized, though not predominantly meaning a dopey person today.

ITALIAN, NO!

I watched a New Top Gear show the other day. You know, the one with Matt LeBlanc running it. They tested the Fiat Abarth, which as you should know is built on a Mazda MX-5 chassis and the cabin is MX-5 and it's, well, mostly all MX-5 with the addition of a turbocharger.

The verdict was that it is a slightly quicker car than the MX-5 but it didn't "feel" like an Italian car should. It was agreed that while it wasn't a bad car all three presenters said they didn't like it. The general consensus was that you paid more for the Abarth and lost the "feel" of a genuine MX-5.

BEAR FACTS

In Churchill, Canada, it's become customary for residents to leave their car doors unlocked in case someone is being chased by a polar bear. Bad luck if you pick a soft top, I reckon.

WHO SAYS!

Author Clifford Nass recounts that, a few years ago, the German automaker BMW had to recall a number of vehicles after finding out that drivers refused to follow its GPS directions because they were spoken by a female.

NOT IN THE BROCHURE

It seems that the sound of Maserati motors—set at the factory to specific frequencies—gets the ladies all revved up, as shown in a study of a group of women. Compared to the sound of other vehicle engines, the sound made by Maserati engines is particularly seductive to women.

HORNY INDIA

In India, drivers use their horns constantly. In Mumbai (nee Bombay), car horns are used more in one day than in one year in Germany, according to one Audi representative. That's why the horns in Audis destined for India are specifically designed for this enormous amount of use.



KYLE MOHANS ND MIATA

You say Miata, we say MX-5. Either way, Kyle Mohan's ND built for Formula Drift feeds its rear bags with over 745kW, thanks to a nitrous drinking triple-rotor.

Computer Corner

ROMANCING THE WIND

This Canadian man flying three kites is in his 80s. He comes to the Washington State International Kite Festival every year. His skin is like leather as he normally flies with his shirt off. He is deaf, so when he flies we hold our hands up and wave them for applause. He controls two kites with his hands and the third one is attached to his waist. Towards the end see the amazing landing of the three kites!

http://www.youtube.com/watch_popup?v=nr9KrqN_lg

VERTICAL MAZE DUBAI

When you fly, your mind is fixed on the route and doesn't run free. The flight to

greatness is a fine line between your dreams and reality. The ultimate place to fly this fine line is in Dubai, through its concrete mountains and tarmac valleys. Watch us challenge the maze, the line and the mind.

https://safeshare.tv/x/cfyVNoY3_L4#v

GRAND CANYON

These photos were taken by professionals that most visitors are unable to capture with their cameras (or phones).

<http://www.humfer.net/gcanyon/index.html>

MAGIC

This might possibly be the most amazing card trick you have ever seen! It was developed by the magician after the terrorist

attacks in Paris, France. Apparently he did this in front of Penn and Teller on TV and they just shook their heads in disbelief.

<https://www.youtube-nocookie.com/embed/xh9GaDgRWX4?rel=0>

GRAPPLER

Police somewhere demonstrate the use of a new device for pulling over a driver that refuses to stop. It appears to be effective and safe. Watch out crims!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=850ZgmDO61U>

BUSH PLANE

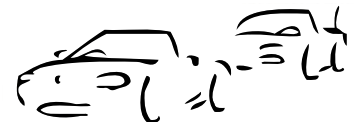
Plane that lands almost anywhere.

https://www.youtube.com/embed/IHR6bpupwJk?feature=player_detailpage

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Continued from the previous issue...

SUNDAY

We woke to a little more precipitation, though it was dry by the time we loaded up the cars. Destination for the morning was the Chateau at Tongariro, with a trip up Bruce Road to the top of the ski-field road. Brilliantly atmospheric, with very thick fog (or was it low clouds?) slowing us down to less than 35km/h – virtually driving blind! I could just see the car ahead, 20 metres away. This was the worst fog I've ever encountered in NZ. After a photo stop by the Chateau, we pressed on, past "Smash Palace", the massive vintage car wreckers at Horopito. We didn't stop this time. Onwards to Ohakune, by which time it was both lunch time and dry and sunny! You wouldn't read about it!

We drove up to the Turoa ski-field, another steep and twisty mountainous road. The weather was dry but the viciously cold and strong wind was straight from the Antarctic! We took a few photos and dove back into our cars. Plenty of snow just metres away, and you knew about it.

We chose the Utopia Cafe for lunch, great value, tasty food. Then tops down and off again, down Highway 4 and the Paraparas. A terrific stretch of road, though plenty of washouts, one-way sections and road works did impede progress a little. Finding Anndion Lodge was a breeze in Wanganui, on the main road in.

A group buffet meal in the Anndion Conference Centre was probably the best on the tour so far. As always, it was fun to sit and talk with people that you perhaps didn't know too well. By the end of the tour, we got to know everyone!

MONDAY

A dry start, tops off and away to the tortuous Wanganui River Road, for our trip to The Bridge to Nowhere. The road was probably the worst I've driven on for many years

– numerous major washouts and slips, sheer drops with no barriers for the hundreds of metres drop to the surging brown Wanganui River below, half a dozen active road works, many narrow and blind one-way stretches, many rough gravel sections, rock falls with rocks all over the road, unstable sheer clay banks towering over the road, together with regular rain showers – a real challenge.

After 90 minutes on this road, we arrived at Pipiriki, having cruised through the towns of Jerusalem, Athens and London! Life jackets on, and the rain stopped briefly as we started our 50 minute jet boat trip up river, with magnificent cliffs, inlets and waterfalls along both sides. The walking track to the Bridge was only 2.7 km and not too steep, apart from the initial ascent to a small information shelter near the drop off point. However, the weeks of continual rain had created mud, puddles and streams along the track, making the walk really challenging. More than a few of us misjudged our footing and landed in the mud. (Yes, that included me!) Constant rain for the walk didn't help, and most got soaked through by the end.

The Bridge to Nowhere was quite surreal, a very solid bridge surrounded by dense native bush; a real curiosity and worth the trek. After the boats' return to Pipiriki, we chose the longer but much better road out via Raetihi, then down through the Paraparas again. Fewer road works today, and most of us had a good and quick run home. Just before Wanganui, one final rainstorm was so violent that we were looking for hailstones!

A free night for dinner, pizzas and fish and chips from the local parade of shops were the popular choice, after using the washing machine and dryer at the lodge for our muddy clothes, and the excellent gas fire for drying our shoes.

TUESDAY

Sunshine! Blue skies! Our luck had turned. Topless it was for the back-roads drive to Hunterville for lunch. We loved the many concrete sheep clustered around the Post Office in the wide empty streets of the town. The drive onwards to Palmerston North was Glyn's territory, and the route strangely seemed to be marked by pubs, and yes, there was a shower or two. Our last two nights were at The Coachman Hotel.

Free night, and Gary and I discovered a gem: Bethany's Cafe on The Square. Trip Advisor reports say it is the best in town, and we think they are probably right. Great food!

WEDNESDAY

Last day on the TT, could have gone shopping, but no, we signed up for the 250km local drive. Weather was still wet and dry by turns, but hey, we're used to that by now! More of a concern were the incredible winds up by the Te Apiti Wind Farm. I suppose that's why they are located there! As usual, Glyn had directed us down some wonderful twisty back roads through the hills, the Manawatu Gorge, Pohangina Valley. Afternoon tea was in Kimbolton, where G&C live, then down to Fielding and return to "Palmy".

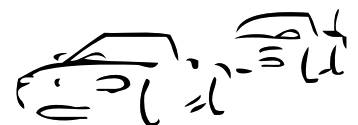
Our farewell dinner was in The Coachman, a real celebration of all the fun times we'd had over the last ten days. Cathy and Glyn were brilliant hosts and held a raffle with a huge range of Mazda-related merchandise. The crews who have been on all five TTs were recognised, and the proceeds of the raffle were handed across to Caryl and Grant Simpson, to start preparing for the next Tiki Tour. This will be down the bottom of the South Island, tentatively planned to be September 2017. Any expressions of interest can be sent to caryl@simtronics.co.nz.

Ash Price



Mazda
MX-5 Club of Western Australia

8: MX-press: March-April 2017



Miatagasm

SAM SMITH WROTE AN article called *Miatagasm* for *Road and Track* magazine on 25 January 2017 about 19 modified MX-5s (Miatas).

Here is a very edited version of what he said in an attempt to find out about the cars and the people who own them. It is still very long but some of the comments are insightful and interesting.

1. 2006 NC (MILD SUSPENSION UPGRADE, 2.5 LITRE SWAP)

The engine is a 2.5-litre Mazda MZR four, replacing the factory 2.0-litre MZR. This is a common NC swap; the 2.5 makes similar horsepower but almost 20 more lb-ft at lower rpm. These engines were shipped in—among other things—the Ford Escape and Mazda 6, so they're easy to find, and the swap is cheap. It also addresses a common Miata complaint: You have to rev the crap out of the car to get anywhere.

2. 1994 NA (TRACK BUILD)

The traditional, naturally-aspirated, high-rpm track build—rare in Miata circles, as turbo charging is usually cheaper. Stripped interior, AST suspension, a roll bar tied into the front floor. The engine was over-bored (1.9-litre) and focused on high rpm, with hotter cams, port work, and individual throttle bodies, rumoured 175 hp at rear wheels. There's so much to be said for the old-school way of making speed: It sounds killer, for one. Snarly and clean. It's also cammy and weird; you have to rev the thing, like a stock Miata, but power delivery is gloriously light-switch. It's still a momentum car—still more grip than motor—and if you stay off the curbs, the front tires slide before the rears. Just gobs of throttle and short gearing.

3. 2016 ND (MOSTLY STOCK)

This car had a stock drivetrain but dual-purpose Flyin' Miata suspension. Plus an FM big brake kit and muffler. Save the aftermarket wheels, the whole thing looked showroom. Slidey, neutral, sublime. You take the car by the scruff of its neck and just chuck it toward the horizon. It makes a stock car look lethargic, roll-heavy, almost stupid. And at no time does it even hint at biting you. So good. At one point, I get into traffic with a couple of purpose-built Miata race cars with more grip than this one but less power. The spec cars are on race tires and this one wears



street rubber, but our pace is similar. The stock car's magic didn't go away. The magic is your new best friend. Dollar for dollar, if there's a more entertaining new car on the market, I'll eat my shoes.

4. 1990 NA (TRACK FOCUSED TURBO CONVERSION)

Tailpipe flames under braking. A 23-year-old built his own ECU and turbo manifold. He wasn't sure on horsepower, because the car has never seen a dyno. One of the engine heat shields was made from an old license plate. The car sported a six-speed gearbox in place of the stock five-speed and track-focused suspension; Added ABS. The car is used for road trips and camping, often towing a trailer full of gear. What did it feel like? Laughs. Laugh and laugh and so much silly laugh. Boost. Boost and delayed-reaction slides at the end of each corner. Words that come to mind: Home-built atomic rat turbo manual-steering nutbag. The clutch is a tight, short-travel comp unit—quick take-up, just immediately spitting torque back to the rear wheels. You wrestle-bend the car into a corner, then wait on the gentle wallop of torque. Something tells me it becomes a big hairy weirdo when you ask for everything it's got. Still a Miata, still goofy and small. But Michael J. Fox in *Teen Wolf*.

5. 1998 NB (STREET/TRACK TURBO CONVERSION)

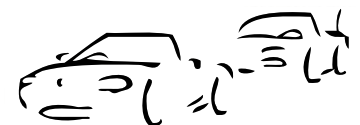
Claimed 340 hp at the rear wheels. That power in a dual-purpose street car. Flyin' Miata FM2R turbocharger conversion, Ground Control coil-over suspension with revalved Bilsteins and Eibach springs. This car was turbocharged partly because of track days: The owner was tired of being held up by more powerful cars. This is

old-school turbo stuff, like a Porsche 930: brake, mat the throttle, turn, nothing, then ruuuuuuuuubberband power. The No. 4 car was brainless, but this takes a careful foot and thought. Turbo cars used to feel turbocharged, like this—back when turbos were special, not just a piece of hardware that some factory engineer hung on a Fiat to keep it from getting run over in traffic. Some of these cars are serious speed science, and some are simply wicked little snot rockets. I can't decide which approach suits the platform better. But five cars in, it's pretty clear that the wicked part is important.

6. 1990 NA (STREET TURBO CONVERSION)

Originally built by Flyin' Miata engineer Ken Hill in the late Nineties, and basically unchanged since. A snapshot of how people modified the NA when it was new. The first-generation Flyin' Miata turbo kit and suspension. Estimated 220 hp at the crank. A silly little wonderbox. Gobs of lag, just entire months spent waiting for power. Soft throttle, too—the car needs huge blips on downshifts, like you're angry with the pedal. It isn't fast by modern standards, but 15 years ago, it must have felt nuts. Just answering a problem, and then you eat Porsches for lunch. The car feels stiffer in roll and damper than the other Miatas; you have to be a little more gentle with the tires because of it. It still feels like a Miata—the miles-out warning on a slide, the wear-it-like-a-suit cockpit—but the hardware is sharper than the rubber. Just little fits and dances if your hands get too quick. One basic car, a zillion different choices in how people change it.

(Continued on page 14) ►



MARCH CRUISE



APRIL CRUISE TO CUNDERDIN



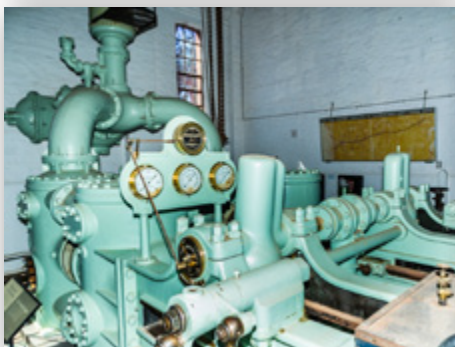
MX-5s At Midland Start Point



Morgans At Midland



Ettamogah Pub Cunderdin



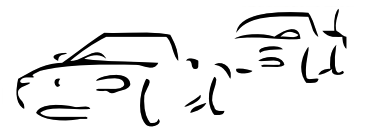
Engine No 2699 Cunderdin Pump Station No 3



Fordson Tractors - 1920s



Bedford Truck



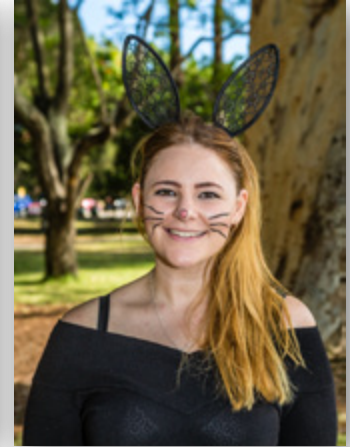
GOOD FRIDAY EGGSTRAVAGANZA



Carol Messenger



MX-5 Drivers At The Narrows



Lauren Messenger



Egg Racing Winners



Kids On A Roll



Carol Martin - Runner Up



Sheila Wallace - Quiz Winner

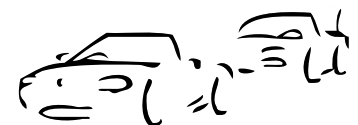


Sophie Pilot - Quiz Runner Up



Don Gives Phil His Prize

For more photos of Mazda MX-5 Club event photos go to http://www.flickr.com/photos/simon_corston/



Event Write-Ups

MONTHLY CRUISE: THE PRINCE HARRY RUN—5 MARCH

When I attended the launch of the MX-5 RF at Bayswater Mazda in February, I realised that I wanted that car. Lacking logical arguments to own this beauty, I decided that I had to come up with a cunning plan and funds from a less traditional source than Parkers' piggy bank.

For that reason I volunteered to do the March cruise write-up: as a volunteer you get a scratchy, which is a chance to win heaps of money. I got \$15 which is not enough but an encouraging start on my way to an RF. Also not winning the required money straight away gives me sufficient time to deliberate which of the three shades of white is my favourite one.

Where was I? Oh yes, the March Cruise. It was hot that Sunday, in fact at 9:15AM it was that warm that we all decided not to proceed past 11:00AM as the expectation was the mercury to rise to 40 degrees centigrade. This meant that we would all be cruising to Bindoon Bakehouse for a re-group and finish point.

The pre-cruise chat and catch-up was relaxing and gave us a chance to be introduced to Sian who was attending a Sunday cruise for the first time. She would be navigating for dad Jason. Lyall was introduced to the world of merchandise as he will look after your caps while I am away.

Two new members chose their caps while Michelle scored herself a visor, headgear especially popular amongst the ladies. And so 9:30AM arrived, time for take-off.

The gentle Sunday morning traffic gave us the opportunity to enjoy the countryside

around Chittering, the blooming eucalypts and the gently rolling hills.

It looked such an easy trip yet suddenly we had lost all those behind us. Where had they gone? All I want to say is: follow your trip notes and don't rely on the driver in front of you as they may go wrong and lead you astray.

Steve managed to flatten a wallaby and consequently had to suffer a nearly unbearable smell in his car brought in by the air conditioner.

Apart from this sort of small personal drama we had a great time driving and catching up again at the Bindoon Bakehouse for coffee and cake.

Rumour has it that during his most recent visit to WA, Prince Harry enjoyed a Banoffee Croissant at this very same place; hence we christened the March cruise the Prince Harry Run. Great run, great fun.

Lianna Parker

MONTHLY CRUISE: ETTAMOGAH PUB, CUNDERDIN—2 APRIL

Sunday dawned fine and sunny with fourteen MX-5s gathered at Centrepoint Midland for coffee and conversation.

We shared the carpark with a collection of Alfa Romeos and some very well presented Morgans that were headed to the Northam Flying Fifty.

After the customary briefing, eleven cars travelled the scenic route to regroup in Toodyay at the Cola Cafe, where those who were in need could conduct pressing business, and then continued for a spirited drive to Cunderdin via Dowerin and Wyalkatchem.

We enjoyed a hearty lunch at the iconic Ettamogah pub, and some enjoyed a visit to the Cunderdin Pumping Station Museum. The earthquake room was popular with the movers and shakers.

We then headed to Quairading and on to Beverley, continuing down Talbot Road West and on to the lakes, where I had a much-needed fuel stop and bug removal.

Those that were thirstiest finished the run at the Mundaring pub for some very enjoyable liquid refreshment.

Lyall Tilson

M-EGGS-FIVE GOOD FRIDAY BREAKFAST—14 APRIL

Phil and I were up early to get to the Narrows Bridge on time. To our surprise there were not many cars on the road so we had a clear run down the Kwinana Freeway. We didn't want to miss this special event. It is one of the highlights of the MX-5 year. This was the seventh M-Eggs-Five Extravaganza. Ten cars and 18 people hit the road for the pre-breakfast road trip. As we left, we were handed Easter eggs by Carol and Lauren to sustain us through the journey. It was a fun drive highlighted by bunny ears wobbling out of the top of an MX-5 and pedestrians stopping to count the passing sports cars. Our youngest navigators were Sian and Esther (well done, girls) and all the cars soon arrived at Matilda Bay for the real fun.

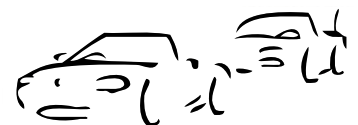
There were hot cross buns and BBQs going and everyone was having a good chat. The children were busy colouring the Easter competition with very skilful results.

(Continued on page 13) ►



Mazda

MX-5 Club of Western Australia



Event Write-Ups (Continued)

◀ (Continued from page 12)

A never-seen-before quiz was given out to make us all think like James Bond. Well done Carol, no-one achieved a full score. We also had to guess how many eggs were in a jar, with a full mix of sizes plus a Malteaser bunny. The games were coming on thick and fast keeping us all active and involved.

Then the big event arrived – what we have been waiting for all year.

The M-Eggs-Five race: The big race with pride and honour at stake for children and adults – decorate your eggs!

The children went first. They played off against each other, Keedyn, Sebbe, Ryan, Archie, Xaiti, Sydney, Grayson, Sian, Esther, Charlie and Xavier. They all had a go and were fast and competitive, all ready with their eggs moving to the start line when their name was called.

Then it was the adult race with some false starts, some re-runs, crashes but we got there in the end with some very fast eggs. (Turbo Charged with Boost Up at Max) The winners of the day were:

Colouring competition: Xaiti and Sydney.

Quiz 2017: Sheila Wallace (Sophie Pilot second).

Eggs in a Jar - Barrie Parker (Contents donated to the kids).

Children's M-Eggs-Five Race: Keedan, Esther and Grayson.

Egg Decoration: Kaye Schultz (Lauren Messenger second).

Adult M-Eggs-Five Race: Phil Schultz (Catherine Martin second).

A big thank you to all the Messengers for this wonderful event. It seems to be getting larger and larger each year. This year we

had 37 adults and 11 children taking part. It was lovely to see grandparents, parents and children all enjoying themselves. Well done, everyone in making it a fun and enjoyable family day.

Kaye Schultz

SATURDAY CRUISE: THREE DAMS AND A WEIR—8 APRIL

Ray Brown took us for a beautiful drive of 93 kilometres on the “three dams and a weir”. It was a small group with only eight cars and the weather was lovely for a drive to the dams and being a small group we were able to all chat together.

We headed up into the hills with beautiful views, and into a smoke cloud, due to some back-burning just as we turned off at Chevron Road. It was surprising how much smoke was caused by such a little fire. Our first stop was Churchman Brook dam where we all stopped for an extended chat and views surrounding the dam.

The second leg was faster and took us through more forest where Terry Smith swerved around two kangaroos that were crossing the road in front of us. There were some very slow cars on the road, but this helped us regroup a bit more.

The third leg was through Korong National Park and past a lot of fruit trees in season on the way to Mundaring weir, and finally to the beautiful and relaxing Sculpture Park, Mundaring, where many stayed for a picnic or barbecue and more chatting about the run. It was a great and relaxing run and a big thanks to Ray for organising it.

Christine Smith

MIDWEEK CRUISE: CHIDLOW TAVERN-22 MARCH

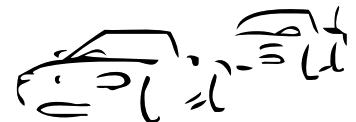
On a glorious clear 28° centigrade autumn day we had 26 people with 16 MX-5s assemble at Centre Point Midland for a leisurely drive to the Chidlow Tavern for lunch.

Of course there is no such thing as a “leisurely drive” when there are almost-deserted winding roads through the bush. Especially when it included some of our favourite roads like the Joshua Mews hill climb, Lancewood Road big dippers, O'Brien, Berry and Bailup Roads.

The clean air of the forest and the sun beaming through the trees and an MX-5 with the top down zoom zooming along was most enjoyable.

The Chidlow Tavern is a great little hills pub that sees motorcycle and custom car groups every weekend but don't let this frighten you away—they know how to handle crowds. The speed and quality of the reasonably priced food is impressive.

Don Messenger



Miatagasm (Continued)

◀ (Continued from page 9)

I had no idea these things would feel so different from each other.

7. 1994 NA (SCCA SPEC MIATA RACE CAR)

A front-running example of the single greatest thing to happen to road racing since the invention of the helmet. The Miata basically saved club racing, made it affordable and attainable again. "It doesn't make anything below 6800," Auger told me. The shift light triggers just past 7000. The engine, a 1.8, feels like most Spec Miata engines—loud, top-heavy. Two basic pitches of noise—brappy droning off-cam, and brappy droning on-cam. (If you hear the brappy off-cam a lot, you're slow. Brake less.) Like most quick Spec Miatas, the car is set up to rotate, so it moves quickly when you make a mistake. An inch of understeer here, a half-second of rear-tire motion there, and every ounce of a slide is painful. You can almost smell the vanished momentum. Even when you get a corner right, you spend straights counting your toes and cleaning dust off the shift boot. Never drive a Spec Miata by yourself. The cars really only wake up in packs, bump-drafting at 90 mph. I've run a few Spec Miata races; under a flag, the car just disappears into the balls-out work of a road race. It becomes a kind of crazy herd animal—so talkative and easy, you begin to think that driving a race car is the whole reason for your existence.

8. 2007 NC (STOCK)

100,000 miles, and essentially stock, save wheels and tires. The NC was thus noticeably bulkier than any previous Miata, and it's now widely viewed as a departure from form. The shocks are almost spent and original. It means the car grips and points okay but never really settles into a corner. We discuss what the worn shocks have taught him on the track. Slow hands, he says; you have to make buttery steering inputs, to not overwhelm the dampers. I'm not sure it matters; the car is just always on your side.

9. 2001 NB (MILD SUSPENSION UPGRADES)

Flyin' Miata Stage II suspension on a nearly stock NB. The NB was basically a heavy face-lift of the NA—cosmetic tweaks, plus a little more power and brake. More

Flyin' Miata suspension! Their stuff just works. I can't tell you how rare that is with aftermarket parts—too many companies just throw a bunch of spring and damper at a car and call it a day. FM's bits give gobs of travel and nice, progressive behaviour at the limit. The NB feels like an NA. Stand under one on a lift, it's clearly the same car, but the edges have been honed. The extra power and brake don't change it—it's still less than fast, more than slow. You mostly just notice the windshield frame, the door tops, how dense the interior feels next to an NA. How much the whole caboodle wants to be your friend. That short-throw gearbox, maybe the best in history, hasn't changed. The balance, you know? It's cheap. The way I've got it set up, it uses almost no gas, no brake pads. The tires will last for a year and a half of tracking. Everything is super-affordable.



10. 2002 NB (HONDA K24 SWAP)

A claimed 215 hp at the wheels from a Honda motor. A cammy, high-rpm four-cylinder, and that awesome yowly \$2000 noise. You know the one. Miata engine swaps are common; there's room under the hood and the car begs for more power. The fenders of an NB are barely taller than a K-Series long block. It ripped. And the noise. Oh lord, the noise. The shifter is weird and angled, like in a Shelby Cobra. The tach is reprinted, presumably because the K24 is a snoozy pet below 6000 rpm. You have to rev the yowling whee out of it, and you try to keep it up high, on cam, where the intake honk goes from bass to treble. The engine's personality makes you think you're getting more done than you really are. It has a power-assisted Miata steering rack and then de-powered it, no hydraulic boost. The quick, unassisted ratio means you have to muscle the car around, loading the car with your biceps. But that engine. Skip over an apex with the motor on cam, it's voodoo. It sounds big-league.

You feel like some kind of real deal. Hot-rod people will tell you that any good sports car is a small-block V-8 away from being great. I am here to tell you that any good Japanese car is a Honda K-series away from giving you Senna Monaco fever dreams.

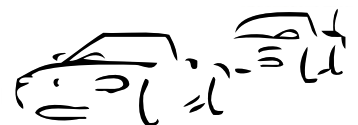
11. 1991 NA (CHUMPCAR RACE CAR)

Like the 24 Hours of Lemons, Chump Car sanctions endurance races in \$500 cars. The rules are thin, and home-built solutions are encouraged. Miatas are common, for obvious reasons. Almand's car sported open-source fuel injection (Megasquirt), a 1.8-litre four, an intake made from PVC pipe, used Hoosier R-compound tires, Spec Miata suspension, and dented, multi-hued bodywork. It represented the Miata way into budget road racing—dirt-ugly and DGAF. It was also spectacular. The car is ferociously hideous but charming anyway. The whole car seems to be held together with zip ties and a healthy dose of middle finger. The stock shifter still wears the factory knob—plastic, shaped like a kernel of corn, polished from years of use. In traffic, with the obnoxious exhaust note, I find myself just ripping the box from third to fourth gear, over and over, because it's fun.

12. 1990 NA/NB HYBRID (TRACK FOCUSED MAZDASPEED TURBO CONVERSION)

Drivetrain swap from a 2004–2005 Mazdaspeed Miata. Factory turbocharger and 178 hp. The Mazdaspeed bit, and the NA/NB hybrid part. The two cars are so similar, people often backdate NB parts onto an NA. Stripped interior, track-focused aftermarket suspension (949 Xidas shocks, gobs of spring rate, nine-inch-wide wheels), not a street car. The kind of thing you'd hand to a track novice with a few caveats. The lag isn't so great as to require a huge amount of planning. But more important: At this point in the test, the NA feels like an old friend. It just takes so well to anything people do to it. I got this one for \$1400 with the hardtop, and bought a wrecked Mazdaspeed for the drivetrain. The cars are cheap, they're light, and they don't break until you do things like this. Also, I can eat \$150,000 German and Italian things for lunch.

(Continued on page 15) ▶



Miatagasm (Continued)

◀ (Continued from page 14)

13. 1999 NB (TRACK FOCUSED TURBO CONVERSION, BIG POWER)

Claimed 358 hp at the wheels on 20 psi of boost. Owner is 72. He raced Corvettes in the Sixties. As he said, "It's just a stock Miata motor with forged rods and Wiseco pistons, bored a couple of millimetres over. Big-valve head, Precision 5558 turbo. Hydra ECU. At low psi, it's about 327 hp at the wheels." Plus R-compound tires and a pared-down interior. In other words, the most powerful non-V-8 Miata at the event. There's lag, and then there's Lag. As in pedal down nothing, whoa yup there it is and you have a moment of personal clenching. This car is scaly fender vents and a big splitter. Fast in a straight line, but the rear suspension is—how to put this—maybe not entirely down with the program. Which wouldn't matter if it weren't trying to channel a decent amount of torque. It fights back, leaves corners sideways in snatchy, on-off jerks, so you either tiptoe up to the tires' limits or agree to constantly battle the steering. Don't get me wrong: I love cars like this. But it was exhausting like nothing else here. If this were a dog, it would be a Rottweiler with a collar made of knives. And you would give that dog hamburger by the pound, in nailed-shut wooden crates.

14. BAUER CATFISH NA/NB (TUBE FRAME KIT CAR)

A Miata, just lighter, stronger, and faster. Also, it looks like a bad-ass fish. The Catfish, one of the better Miata kits, pairs a steel space frame with NA or NB mechanicals and suspension. It costs \$13,900 plus the donor car, and the finished product weighs around 650 pounds less than an NA or NB. The kit was developed by Bauer Limited Production of San Marcos, California. This car had street tires, a Japanese-market 1.8-litre, a turbocharger, a Torsen-limited-slip, a six-speed, and Wilwood brakes. It made a claimed 215 hp at the wheels. Weird little thing. Also fantastic. Really nice bodywork quality. Just lovely lines. The Catfish is a little too low and stiff for my taste, so it kind of instantly leans on the tire—it can be a handful if you're feeding in power anywhere near full suspension load. The engine is obviously Miata, but the rest of the transplanted bits blend together. The nose knifes into corners,

and the whole package is rigid as hell.

15. 1995 NA (400HP & CHEV V8 SWAP)

Built by Flyin' Miata, is believed to be the first street-legal LS3 V8 Miata in California. The state's notoriously stringent emission laws required that you use specific, government-certified parts in order to register the car for the street. This took time and effort, because some of those parts didn't really fit onto the car to begin with. The building process included seam-welding the body and modifying the rest of the car to handle the torque. (The gearbox is a Tremec, the differential is from a Camaro, etc.) All told, the job booked about 1000 hours of shop labour. It's not that fast. The turbo cars were almost as quick, and I've driven modern cars that are quicker. It's the grin-so-hard-your-teeth-hurt thing, where you feel like you're playing a giant joke on the universe. You get grunt everywhere, always and forever, no lag. In a car the size of a lawn tractor. Plus hooty roller-skate yaw. Here's how a sorted V-8 Miata works in a corner: Brake deep and hard, then roll off the pedal gently, to keep the nose happy. Roll the car down to the apex in a kind of hurried saunter, then find the throttle and quickly walk it toward the floor. If you do it right, you get a skittery, sinewy little rip toward the edge of the track and a bunch of imploded scenery. If you do it wrong, the car is sloppy, slidey, not fast but also not slow. It's a big-boy car. You cannot be timid. You will go fast if you are timid, but you will not see the light. I drove a Shelby Cobra once—the real thing, built in the 1960s. Despite what everyone says, they're docile cars. They slide like big, compliant go-karts, because Shelby's people took the time to sort them. To make the chassis work, without being bound up and awful. Flyin' Miata did a nice job here; they resisted the temptation to overspring the car, for one; the street-focused suspension is compliant but still satisfying and capable for track work. Stopping is handled by Wilwood six-pot calipers, front and rear, and the car always has enough brake. The steering is light but full of feedback. The engine wants to spin and makes nutball noise in the process. The gearbox, a Tremec, feels muscle-car durable. It's all just enough. They're amazing cars, almost telepathic, no bad habits whatsoever.

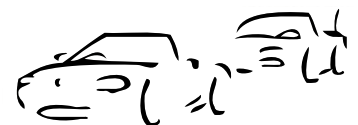
16. 2004 NB (STOCK MIATASPEED)

178 bone-stock horsepower, sorted by factory engineers. Plus factory-tweaked suspension and brakes. This is a reminder of just how good big-league carmakers are at making fast machines with a warranty. Aside from aftermarket wheels and a few minor tweaks for durability, it was essentially stock. Minimal lag. Good brake feel. On street rubber, just enough tire that the car slides without much roll. More neutral than the stock NB; you leave faster corners with a few degrees of yaw on the taillights. (Hey tuners: Suspension travel is your friend! Use it.) You could live with this. Not a hard core track car, but a nice compromise, a turnkey package for any purpose. I'm having more fun than I thought I would. You always hear driving a slow car fast is better than driving a fast car slow. It's infinitely more fun than the WRX, with much less power.

17. 1993 NA (TRACK FOCUSED SUPERCHARGER CONVERSION)

Digitally managed turbo charging is now crazy affordable, which is cool. But you know what that technology has basically made extinct? Supercharging. You know what's cool as hell? Supercharging. A stock 1.6-litre, 178,000 miles, and a Moss M45 blower paired with Megasquirt. Plus a roll bar. The stock exhaust had been fitted with an electronic dump valve activated by the switch for the pop-up headlights: Quiet when you want it, noise when you don't. Linear. Like a Spec Miata with more special. A reminder that turbo charging robs any engine of linear power, and linear power is good. Satisfying, because it's innately predictable. In the 1990s, this kind of power must have been giant-killing. Now it's the same pace as a used VW GTI. But a GTI isn't on your side this much, at the limit. Funny, too, how NA Miatas don't feel old. Not new, but not aging, either. Just a timeless thing, sitting outside the normal spectrum of used cars, their own little world. This is my second Miata. It's never going away. I sold the first one six months after I bought it and regretted it. I wanted more horsepower but I came back, because nothing beats a lightweight car. There's huge aftermarket support, plenty

(Continued on page 19) ▶



Mazda

MX-5

Club of Western Australia

Motor Sport Report



MX-5 CLUB MOTOR SPORT - SERIES 8 ROUND 2

It was a very nice Sunday evening back at the Barbagallo Infield for Round 2 of Series 8. The course was quickly put together and the timing was set up with everyone helping out. Before we knew it, we were weaving up and down the course, getting a feel for the kind of grip the evening had on offer for us.

Andrew Cathie and Ross James were both running a new motor sport tyre from Kumho, with some very positive feedback.

The first course was tight and twisty and the second course opened up a little more, with some very competitive times coming out in the last few runs.

Class D top three, were also the top three outright. Warwick Gates took the lead followed by David Turk, then Rod Willis. Class C top three, took out the next three outright positions, with Dave Dubbelboer in the lead, following by only 0.008 seconds was Andrew Cathie, then Neil Harris. Class B was taken away by Olivier Pilot, with Michael Tite and Ben Marshall close behind. Class A was cleaned up again by newcomer Shay Ward, with Ross James creeping up to second spot and Lyall Tilson grabbing third. Round 3 is back at Barbagallo on the Evening of Sunday the 14 May for the full track. See you there.

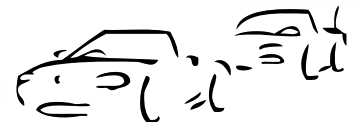
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Motor Sport (Continued)



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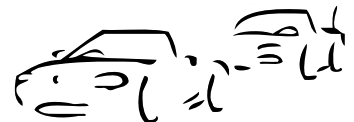


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Mazda
MX-5 Club of Western Australia



MX-press: March-April 2017 17

Removable Hard Top

RACERS ONLY: MAZDA ANNOUNCES REMOVABLE HARDTOP FOR MIATA

The latest Mazda MX-5 Miata is available with either a soft top or, on the RF, a retractable hard top. Noticeably missing, though, is a removable hard top for the former car. That all changes now.

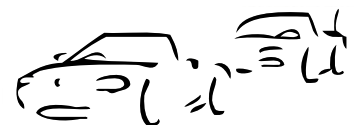
Mazda Motor sports has announced that it will sell a removable hardtop for the Miata beginning in April. Except there's one catch: It's designed exclusively for the Global Mazda MX-5 Cup race car.

At US\$4420, the top isn't cheap. Nevertheless, it's a necessary cost for MX-5 Cup car owners looking to race their roadsters in racing series that require the use of a factory-approved hardtop. To fit the tin top around the MX-5 Cup car's FIA approved roll cage, though, aesthetics were forced to take a back seat. As a result, the hard top's rising roof line awkwardly peaks well past the driver's head.

Don't get any ideas about trying to fit this top on your run-of-the-mill Miata daily drive, though: A Mazda motor sports spokesperson told us that installing the mounting hardware "requires things you wouldn't want

to do to your street car." Bummer.

(Source: <http://blog.caranddriver.com/racers-only-mazda-announces-removable-hardtop-for-miata/>)



Miatagasm (Continued)

◀ (Continued from page 15)

of parts, always people doing different things. I don't know what it is about them, but there's a reason they built a million of them.

18. EXOCET (TURBOCHARGED OPEN-WHEEL HEART ATTACK)

Basically a cheaper Ariel Atom made from Miata parts. If that doesn't mean anything to you, just picture an engine bolted to two stepladders and a seat. I've always wanted to die smiling. The Exocet is a kit, like the Catfish—a steel-tube frame carrying Miata suspension and driveline bits. Unlike the Catfish, there is no bodywork. Bugs go up your pants. Weight varies with configuration, our test car was 1550 pounds wet. Two hundred and fifty turbocharged horsepower at the crankshaft. Like every other car on track was a ponderous turd. You leave every corner sideways. You hummingbird your way through a lap. You could rob banks with this, because no one would ever believe the witnesses describing your escape. ("Just some kinda space car, I dunno. It was weird. Alien bug.") Ridiculous, screaming acceleration. The car is light enough to make a standard Miata seem dipped in marshmallow. The tires yell at you through the wheel or the seat whenever the car is sliding, the steering getting light or your spine talking to the rear sidewalls. When the car goes sideways—usually under power, but not always—you just ride it out, more throttle, these caffeinated, snatchy little yips across the track. It is concentrated essence of Miata, and if that essence could be distilled into a powder, the car would be badgering you to snort the stuff, like a drug. Get an Exocet with sticky tires, head to track days and make Porsche guys feel butt-hurt. Then go home and pick the

bugs from your nipples.

19. 2015 FLYING MIATA ND (525 HP CHEVROLET V8 SWAP)

FM acquired one of the first American-market NDs early last year. In addition to predictable hardware—gearbox, differential, V8—the car got a new variable-ratio hydraulic steering rack, replacing the stock electric unit; reinforced front and rear subframe; and upgraded brakes. To say nothing of countless other small fixes required to make the swap work, from functional factory gauges to keyless go and a working factory start button. The only noticeable absence is electronic traction and stability control, standard on a 2016 MX-5. FM does not offer traction control on the V8 ND. The base conversion costs \$49,995 on top of the cost of a donor Miata. The package includes a new 6.2-litre, 430-hp, GM LS3 crate motor, basically the engine from a fifth-generation Camaro SS. It carries a two-year warranty and bolts to a Tremec T56 six-speed, an LS7 (C6 Corvette Z06) clutch and flywheel, and the AAM differential from the same Camaro. The package also includes a new aluminum driveshaft, heavy-duty half shafts, Magnaflow catalytic converters, four-piston Wilwood Powerlite brakes, stainless-steel headers, functional air-conditioning, a custom dual-pass crossflow radiator, twin electric cooling fans on a custom shroud, Flyin' Miata/FOX Racing dampers and springs, a custom-baffled Moroso oil pan, and Flyin' Miata sway bars with adjustable end links. Is it fast? What the hell do you think? The last V8 Miata swap we tested was an older, NB-chassis car with around 480 hp. It weighed 2660 pounds and hit 60 mph in 3.8 seconds. That's a tenth of a second slower

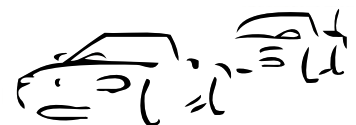
than a Z51-pack Corvette and a full half-second faster than a Shelby GT350. This thing is special. It is weird and neat and raw and primal in a way that makes your kidneys itch.



SUMMARY

In ten years of doing this job, I've hung out with a lot of car clubs, and I've met thousands of track-day guys. Miata people are something different. When we planned this test, I assumed the people had something to do with the machine itself. After the test, it occurred to me that the machine was merely a means to an end. A Miata is simply meant to make you drive. In stock form, at least, you aren't supposed to fix it much, or think about where you park it, or obsess over anything save a road map. If some cars are art that can live in museums, this... isn't. Other reminders from the weekend: Good suspension is better and more usable than a good engine. Great suspension is way better than a great engine. There are apparently a billion ways to make a turbocharger work on one model of car, and each will give you a different result. Drivability is critical on anything. Making your rear suspension work is just as important. A bad Miata is still better than most cars on their best day. The most "Miata" car that I drove was the lightly modified ND. The most entertaining one was the V-8 NA. The fastest weaponized giggle was Flyin' Miata's V-8 ND. The Exocet was the sharpest track tool.

(Source: http://www.roadandtrack.com/car-culture/a32131/miatas-at-mazda-raceway-miatagasm-mega-test/?src=nl&mag=rdt&list=nl_rdt_news&date=012717)





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