

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

MX-press



Editing, design and production by Simon Corston & Bob Sharpe

Mazda

MX-5

Club of Western Australia

May-Jun 2024

Time
to renew
your
membership

Inside

- 6 Coming Events
- 8 Most Collectible MX-5
- 10 Event Photos
- 15 Natmeet XV 2024
- 18 MX-5 ND3 First Drive
- 20 The Tall Tree Tour

Serpentine Dam Regroup May Cruise

Everything's Fine

A RECENT LANDMARK RULING HAS sent shock waves through the automotive industry and has significant implications for consumers.

Mazda has been ordered to pay a hefty fine for misleading customers about their consumer rights in relation to faulty vehicles.

The Federal Court found that Mazda had made 49 separate false or misleading representations to nine customers over seven vehicles that had serious and recurring faults within two years of purchase.

The cars had undergone several unsuccessful repairs, including engine replacements.

In one extreme case, a car had its engine swapped out three times.

Despite these ongoing issues, Mazda was found to have ignored or rejected requests by the customers for a refund or replacement car and insisted that the only remedy was a repair the vehicles. The vehicles in question

were Mazda 2, 6, CX-5, CX-5B, and BT-50 models purchased between 2013 and 2017.

The manufacturer only agreed to refund a portion of the car's price or replace the car if the customer made a significant payment.

This practice was deemed in violation of consumer rights.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) Deputy Chair Catriona Lowe claimed Mazda gave its customers the run-around while providing 'appalling' service and engaging in evasions and deceit.

"If a vehicle cannot be repaired within a reasonable time, or at all, consumers have a right under the Australian Consumer Law to a refund or replacement, and we expect car manufacturers to honour those rights promptly and without misleading consumers," Lowe said.

The court has ordered Mazda to pay \$11.5 million in penalties after the manufacturer's appeal against a prior ruling was dismissed last year.

Moreover, Mazda was ordered to pay an additional \$82,000 in compensation to some of the consumers, implement a consumer law compliance program, publish a corrective notice on its website, notify dealers of the court findings and pay part of the ACCC's costs.

Mazda has agreed to compensate affected parties and to pay a further \$3,000 per vehicle.

"Mazda is, and has always been committed to ensuring the best possible outcomes for its customers, having regard to their rights under the law," they said.

"We are carefully reviewing the Court's decision with a view to determining our response."

Renewal Time!

THE MX-5 CLUB OF WA Inc. membership year runs from 1 July to 30 June. If you have not recently renewed your membership, then it will expire at the end of June.

We would like you to continue to be a member and avail yourself of all that the club offers, however, if you do not renew your membership, then this will be the last copy of MX-press that you will receive.

You can check your 2024/25 status at <https://www.mx5club.com.au/index.php?ID=E2024070100>

Please contact membership@mx5club.com.au if you have any queries.



Foundation/Life Members

Graeme Martin (FM)

Peter Randell (FM)

Brian Butterworth (LM)

Sandra Price (FM/LM)

Ashley Price (FM/LM)

Ian Lewis (FM/LM)

David Turk (LM)

Simon Corston (LM)

Bob Sharpe (LM)

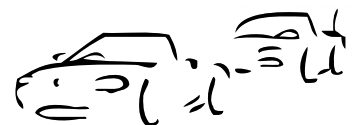
Barrie Parker (LM)

Aart ter Kuile (LM)

Don Messenger (LM)

Mazda
MX-5 Club of Western Australia

2: MX-press: May-June 2024



Committee

President

Lauren Messenger m: 0452 465 766
e: president@mx5club.com.au

Vice President

Neil Harris m: 0417 750 346
e: vicepresident@mx5club.com.au

Treasurer

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

Assistant Treasurer

Christine Smith m: 0400 247 142
e: treasurer@mx5club.com.au

Membership

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

Secretary

Jennifer Ellison m: 0498 364 610
e: secretary@mx5club.com.au

Webmaster

David Turk
e: webmaster@mx5club.com.au

Motor Sport Manager

Lauren Messenger m: 0452 465 766
e: motorsport@mx5club.com.au

Motor Sport Administrator

Jennifer Ellison m: 0498 364 610
e: motorsport@mx5club.com.au

Merchandise

Leigh Scott m: 0412 097 993
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

Events Coordinator

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

Social Coordinator

Michael Clowes m: 0404 704 922
e: social@mx5club.com.au

Southern MX-5 Coordinator

Chris Osborne m: 0400 485 581
e: southern@mx5club.com.au

General Committee

Carol Messenger

Contents

MX-press May-June 2024

FEATURES

<i>Everything's Fine</i>	2
<i>Membership Renewal Time!</i>	2
<i>The Most Collectible MX-5</i>	8-9
<i>Event Photos</i>	10-11
<i>Natmeet XV 2024</i>	15-17
<i>MX-5 N'D3 First Drive</i>	18-19
<i>Tall Tree Tour</i>	20

REGULARS

<i>The Committee</i>	3
<i>Editor's Desk</i>	4
<i>Humour Us</i>	5
<i>Coming Events</i>	6
<i>Bits 'n' BobS</i>	7
<i>Computer Corner</i>	7
<i>Event Write-Ups</i>	12-14

ADVERTISERS

<i>Shannons</i>	17
-----------------------	----

Cover Photograph: Serpentine Dam Regroup May Cruise by Simon Corston

The Mazda MX-5 Club of WA Inc, its officers and committee, cannot be held liable for any errors and/or omissions in articles, reports, notices, advertisements, comment and advice of events that are published in MX-press in good faith. It should be noted that the publication of an advertisement, or expression of views in articles and reports, does not imply endorsement by the club of the advertised product or service.

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.



Editor's Desk

G'DAY ALL.

I was recently fortunate enough to go with Simon to watch his photographic drone at work. Shortly thereafter, I read about one enterprising young entrepreneur who turned a \$115 drone into an assassination drone. It was designed to hunt and kill individuals using facial recognition and AI programs and it only took 15 hours to build. He did not attach the deadly firearm to the drone since it was only developed for a game but he wanted to demonstrate that real hunter-killer drones could be built quickly and cheaply by any computer-savvy person in their garage. Welcome to today's reality and remember don't ever upset Simon or you risk a drone with a grenade launcher coming at you next time you visit your letterbox.

I see where 9000 Jeep Grand Cherokees have been recalled because their wheels might fall off due to a faulty suspension part. That would be embarrassing.

Has anyone else noticed the concrete barriers in the centre of Shepperton Road, Victoria Park? They look to be grey concrete and are less than a metre high. My first thought was that at night in winter they would be almost invisible and someone not familiar with the road could easily try to cross these and cause a very serious crash. I hope I'm wrong, but a normal height centre line barrier would prevent this and the presumed cost saving for low barriers will be meaningless and a tragic mistake.

According to Bloomberg in America, Ford is losing US\$100,000 on every EV that it sells even though sales are increasing. It will be interesting to see what they do about this. Currently, only Tesla and BYD in China make a profit on sales of EVs. It is further reported that in California thieves have started removing the cables from EV recharging stations for their copper content. It has already occurred here too, so in due course we will see how big of a problem this becomes.

The start-stop system in modern vehicles is a pain until you get used to it or turn it off, but does it save fuel. According to a recent study, a two-litre engine will save 0.6 litres per hour if it is switched off as opposed to idling in traffic. It also saves an hour's worth

of pollution. You have to calculate how long you spend idling in traffic to work out the economics of this one.

I see the government is investing more money in speed cameras which will return an estimated \$40 million in extra fines. Does anyone really think the government doesn't know that increasing fines does not improve driver behaviour? It does increase revenue however, which, by the way, goes into a road safety fund which is already awash with cash. It hasn't been spent because, as outlined in a previous MX-press, they don't have, and can't think of, any worthwhile projects to spend it on. Another fine example of government stupidity.

An interesting fact I found recently was that in most states it is illegal for a person under 16 years old to refuel a car at a garage and in WA it is under 15 years old. I was unaware of this law. Another surprising rule in Australia is that there is not a law that says it is illegal to park across someone's driveway. The highway code says not to do it but that is legally classed as an advisory rule only, not a legislated law. Technically, your only recourse is to sue the thoughtless parker through the civil courts. Furthermore, if someone parks IN your driveway you could sue for trespass, but the police would not get involved in either case. In practical terms I think there would be more immediate, drastic and illegal action taken by the property owner with court action never considered if the vehicle owner refused to co-operate.

Speaking of laws, did you know it is illegal to drive naked in WA. You could be charged with indecent exposure but more details are still to be "revealed".

Engineers in North Carolina, USA have proposed that a white light be incorporated with the red, yellow and green traffic signals. With autonomous and semi-autonomous cars mingling with normal traffic, the white light would be interacting with the "smart cars" to tell human drivers to simply follow the car ahead through the intersection regardless of what colour signal they face so that traffic can move more efficiently. What could possibly go wrong?

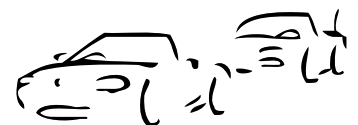
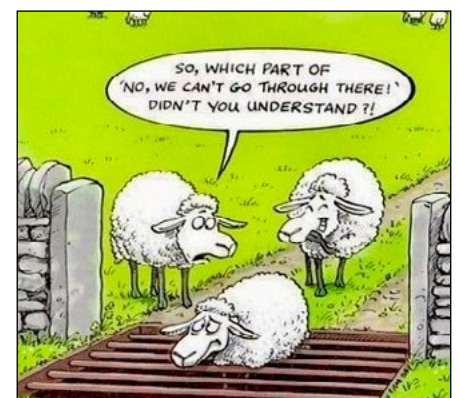
Very interesting is a reference at the start of an English review of the upcoming

2024 MX-5 ND upgrade which will be referenced in our Computer Corner section. This mentions a previously unknown 35th Anniversary edition MX-5 supposedly also being released this year, without giving any details. We will report on this as soon as we get further information.

Just an early reminder for club members that Telstra is shutting down the 3G phone network on 31 August so be prepared for problems with security systems, vending machines, ticket parking machines etc. The appropriate quote is "It's like Y2K only it's real".

Well, that's all for now but did you know that the Lincoln car that carried John F Kennedy on the day he died had a removable roof and it was Kennedy himself who insisted that the roof be removed that day so the people could get a better view of him. A fatal mistake. Meanwhile the ill-fated HMS Trinidad was the only warship in WW2 to torpedo itself. In freezing weather while protecting a convoy taking supplies to Russia, it fired three torpedoes at a fleeing German ship. Two torpedoes froze in the tubes and the third went out in a large circle only to torpedo itself on its return. The ship miraculously survived only to be sunk a short time later. Before the advent of silicone, breast implants were made of ivory. If there was a tunnel to the centre of the earth and you jumped into it, it would only take you 19 minutes to reach there, although you would be very much cooked. Finally, when X-rays were invented, many Londoners thought them indecent and bought X-ray proof underwear.

Bob Sharpe



Mazda

MX-5

Club of Western Australia

4: MX-press: May-June 2024

DISARMED!

A lawyer defending a man accused of burglary tried this creative defence:

"My client merely inserted his arm into the window and removed a few trifling articles.

His arm is not himself, and I fail to see how you can punish the whole individual for an offense committed by his limb."

"Well put," the judge replied.

"Using your logic, I sentence the defendant's arm to one year's imprisonment.

He can accompany it or not, as he chooses."

The defendant smiled. With his lawyer's assistance, he detached his artificial limb, laid it on the bench, and walked out.

DOG TIRED

An old, tired-looking dog wanders into a man's yard. He checks the dog's collar and feels its well-fed belly, realising it has a home.

The dog follows him inside, walks down the hall, jumps on the couch, gets comfortable, and falls asleep. The man finds this odd but lets him sleep. After about an hour, the dog wakes up, walks to the door, and the man lets him out. The dog wags his tail and leaves.

The next day, the dog returns and scratches at the door. The man opens it, and the dog comes in, goes down the hall, jumps on the couch, gets comfortable, and falls asleep again. The man lets him sleep. After about an hour, the dog wakes up, walks to the door, and the man lets him out. The dog wags his tail and leaves.

This continues for several days. Growing curious, the man pins a note to the dog's collar: 'Your dog has been taking a nap at my house every day.'

The next day, the dog arrives with a new note pinned to his collar: "He lives in a home with four children. He's trying to catch up on his sleep. Can I come with him tomorrow?"

PEACHES

A very cranky woman was arrested for shoplifting at a supermarket. She gave the arresting officer a hard time and complained and criticised about everything.

She appeared before the judge who asked what she had stolen.

"A stupid can of peaches", she replied.

"Why did you steal them?" asked the judge.

"Because I forgot my purse" answered the woman defiantly.

"How many pieces were in the can?" asked the judge.

"Nine pieces" said the woman.

"Very well, I will sentence you to nine days in gaol" said the judge. "One for each piece".

Just then a man's voice asked the judge if he could speak.

"Yes" said the judge.

"I'm her husband," said the man. "She also stole a can of peas."

BUSY DAY

Two Irish men were working for the city public works department. One would dig a hole and the other would follow behind him and fill the hole in. They worked up one side of the street, then down the other, then moved on to the next street, working furiously all day without rest, one man digging a hole, the other filling it in again...

An onlooker was amazed at their hard work, but couldn't understand what they were doing. So he asked the hole digger: "I'm impressed by the effort you two are putting in to your work, but I don't get it. Why do you dig a hole, only to have your partner follow behind and fill it up again?"

The hole digger wiped his brow and sighed, "Well, I suppose it probably looks odd because we're normally a three-person team. But today the lad who plants the trees called in sick."

ALPHA

A man goes into a pet shop to buy a parrot. The shop owner points to three identical looking parrots on a perch and says, "The parrot on the left costs \$500 dollars."

"Why does the parrot cost so much?" asks the man. The owner says "Well the parrot knows how to use a computer."

The man then asks about the next parrot and learns that it costs \$1,000 dollars because it can do everything the first parrot can do plus it knows how to use the Unix operating system.

Naturally, the increasingly startled man asks about the third parrot, only to be told that it costs \$2,000 dollars. Needless to say, this begs the question, "What can it do?"

To which the owner replies, "To be honest, I have never seen it do anything, but the

other two call him boss!"

STAY

I pulled into a crowded carpark at the local shopping centre and rolled down the car windows to make sure my labrador retriever pup had fresh air.

She was stretched full-out on the back seat and I wanted to impress upon her that she must remain there.

I walked to the kerb backward, pointing my finger at the car and saying emphatically, "Now you stay. Do you hear me?" "Stay! Stay!"

The driver of a nearby car, a pretty young woman, gave me a strange look and said, "Why don't you just put the handbrake on?"

MATHS

My wife bought a new line of expensive cosmetics guaranteed to make her look years younger. After a lengthy sitting before the mirror applying the miracle products, she asked me, "Darling, honestly, what age would you say I am?"

Looking over her carefully, I replied, 'Judging from your skin, twenty; your hair, eighteen; and your figure, twenty-five.'

"Oh, you flatterer!" she gushed.

"Hey, wait a minute!" I interrupted. "I haven't added them up yet."

ENGINEERING BUDDY

I recently called on an old engineering buddy of mine and asked what he was working on these days.

He replied that he was working on "Aqua-thermal treatment of ceramics, aluminium and steel, under a constrained environment."

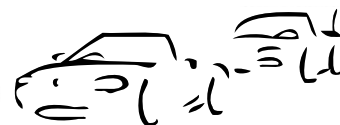
I was impressed until, upon further inquiry, I learned that he was washing dishes with hot water, under his wife's supervision.



Mazda

MX-5

Club of Western Australia



Coming Events

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

July

- 7 MONTHLY CRUISE: CHRISTMAS IN JULY, CHIDLOW TAVERN—SUNDAY**
Let's get together to celebrate the cool weather with a Christmas lunch at the Chidlow Tavern. Carol Chapman will be leading the cruise and John will be our Santa for the day handing out the Secret Santa presents. This is an RSVP event with prepayment required by close of business 18 June.
We meet near the Muzz Buzz at the Midland Centrepoint Shopping Centre at 309 Great Eastern Highway, Midland at 9:00AM and depart at 9:30AM.
- 14 SOUTHERN MX-5 RUN: ERSKINE TO THE BYFORD TAVERN—SUNDAY**
Chris Osborne will lead this 180km run from Erskine to the Byford Tavern for lunch. The run will head south around the Harvey Estuary the east to Waroona to join Nanga Brook and Nanga Roads to Dwellingup for a regroup in Marinup Park. The run will continue back down the scarp and north along the coastal plain to the Byford Tavern.
We will meet at Muzz Buzz at the Erskine Shopping Centre at 9:30AM for a 10:00AM start.
- 20 SATURDAY CRUISE: CHERITH GROVE CAFE—SATURDAY**
Join Aart for this 100km cruise that ends at the Cherith Grove Cafe for lunch. Cherith Grove is a BYO restaurant, so bring your favourite wine or beer to enjoy with your meal. Soft drinks and "mocktails" are also available.
We meet at the Midland Centrepoint Muzz-buzz at 9:00AM for a 9.30AM departure.
- 25 COMMITTEE MEETING—THURSDAY**
Regular committee meetings are held in the Barbagallo Room at Shannons offices, Cannington.

August

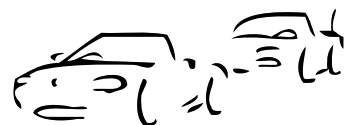
- 4 MONTHLY CRUISE: THREE TOWNS AND A TAVERN—SUNDAY**
Join Aart on a 250km drive through the Avon Valley visiting the Towns of Toodyay, Northam and York. From the Pelham look-out in Toodyay we traverse the Toodyay-Northam road to drive the "Round-the-Houses" street circuit in Northam before the second regroup point at Northam's Riversedge Café.
We continue via the Spencers Brook-York Road to York for a lap of the York "Round-the-Houses" street circuit and travel the back roads through Windowie, Bailup, Wooraloo, Chidlow and Mount Helena to complete the cruise at the Parkerville Tavern for lunch.
We meet near the Muzz Buzz at the Midland Centrepoint Shopping Centre at 309 Great Eastern Highway, Midland We meet at 9:00AM and depart at 9:30AM.
- 17 SATURDAY CRUISE: SPENCER'S BROOK TAVERN—SATURDAY**
Join Carol Chapman on the 135km cruise which ends 95km from Perth at the Spencers Brook Tavern aka The Brook, a charming country pub in an 1884 two storey colonial building.
We meet near the Muzz Buzz at the Midland Centrepoint Shopping Centre at 309 Great Eastern Highway, Midland at 9:00AM for a 9:30AM start.
- 22 AGM & COMMITTEE MEETING—THURSDAY**
The AGM and committee meeting will be held in the Barbagallo room at Shannons Offices, 1500 Albany Highway, Cannington WA 6107, Australia. Members arrive at 6:30PM to enjoy drinks and finger food compliments of the club, before we start the AGM at 7:00pm. The AGM usually finishes about 8:00PM, after which the monthly committee meeting will commence.
Please confirm if you plan to attend by email to secretary@mx-5club.com.au so we have numbers for catering purposes.
- 22 SOUTHERN MX-5 RUN: LAKELANDS TO THE CAFE COAST—THURSDAY**
Christine and Chris Osborne will lead this 160km run from Lakelands Shopping Centre to the Cafe Coast in the Bouvard Marina. The run will head north to a re-group at the Bistro by the Dam at Serpentine Dam. The run will continue south around the Harvey Estuary to finish at the Cafe Coast in the Bouvard Marina.
We meet at the Lakelands Shopping Centre, adjacent to McDonalds at 9:30AM for a 10:00AM start.
- 27 AFTER WORK GET TOGETHER: PARMAGADDON AT THE LOOKOUT—TUESDAY**
We're off to the The Lookout in Scarboro for their \$10 Parmy Night. Make it Mexican, American, Hawaiian or Brazilian for a couple of extra pennies.
We meet at 6:00PM in the Roe carpark, Forrest Drive, Kings Park departing at 6:15PM for a short 45-minute cruise along the river and ocean to The Lookout.

Mazda

MX-5

Club of Western Australia

6:MX-press: May-June 2024



Bits 'n' BobS

ROTTEN APPLE

Apple Corp's decision to cease development of an electric car came after 10 years of development and ten billion US dollars spent. They said that totally autonomous vehicles were an impossibility and even an EV like Tesla produced was not financially worth their effort so they have moved into Artificial Intelligence development. The car project from start to finish was high drama with staff being poached both coming and going and allegations of staff spying and stealing intellectual property for the Chinese. Apple has joined Amazon who have also ceased developing an EV.

QUOTE

I was impressed by a quote in the "Miatabusa" article which will appear in this MX-press or one soon after by engineer/racer Dave Coleman who said "The key to enjoying racing is finding the balance point, where the joy of being physically irresponsible outweighs the pain of being financially irresponsible. I couldn't have said it better."

WIPER SWIPERS

Engineering professor Robert Kearns built the first intermittent wiping system in 1963 and filed a patent for his innovation the FOLLOWING year.

Eager to monetise the invention, which he modelled on a blinking eye, Kearns approached the Big Three carmakers, Ford, Chrysler and General Motors, in a bid to get his invention licensed.

All three rejected the pitch but brazenly replicated the technology in their vehicles. Infuriated by these exceedingly underhanded actions, Kearns sued the trio along with other major auto companies.

Not one to back down, the steadfast academic was finally awarded damages from Ford and Chrysler following an intensely complex legal battle that dragged on for more than a decade.

LOCK'N'LEAVE

Here in WA it is illegal to leave your car windows open and doors unlocked if you are more than three metres from the vehicle. The only exception is when you are paying for parking. Seems to me that this is regularly flouted at service stations when people pay for their petrol but I have never heard of any fine ever being issued.

LEARNERS AND TRAILERS

Q: Can learner drivers tow trailers in WA?

A: Learner drivers are permitted to tow in Western Australia. "L drivers are not restricted from towing a trailer as long as the learner driver is driving within the conditions of their learning permit – and this includes having a supervising driver alongside them in the vehicle."

DUTCH REACH

A road safety initiative originating in Holland in the 1960s is the practice of opening your driver's door after parking with your left hand (For Australia and left hand driving countries).

This forces your head to look directly to the side and towards the rear of the car, eliminating the blind spot, and allowing for full visibility of the immediate area.

This practice is a required section of the Netherlands driving test and is even taught in Dutch schools.

This would take practise until it became a habit, but it seems to be a reasonable idea.

MAZDA MX-5

There are many cases of people around the world fitting rotary engines into MX-5s, but Mazda itself has never done this – at least in a version available to the public. In 1993, however, it did create a development model of this type which used hydrogen rather than petrol as a fuel.

Since most of the exhaust from a hydrogen-fuelled vehicle consists of water, the traditionally poor emissions of a rotary immediately become unproblematic. The difficult part is storing the hydrogen in a car as small as this one. This couldn't be resolved, so the hydrogen rotary MX-5 remained an interesting but impractical experiment, though it was probably never meant to be more than that anyway.



Computer Corner

'MAYHEM' AT EV REPAIR SHOP

Early model EV batteries are dying, and those needing replacements are getting sticker shock, and choosing instead to scrap their cars altogether.

<https://www.king5.com/article/news/local/ev-repair-shop-more-early-adopters-experience-battery-death/281-4b9cddb7-9245-4a5a-a3d3-5bb01ee2ca92>

MX5 ND3 REVIEW

Another review of the upcoming ND3 MX-5 that says the upgrades are subtle but noticeably better.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5qCzJo0yKJc>

EV MYTH BUSTER

In the ongoing debate about EVs the bad news always seems to outweigh the good but have a look at this clip which lays out the pros rather than the cons of EV ownership. A well balanced argument which, while it won't end the debate, is certainly worth looking at. My thanks to Ian Lewis for bringing this to my attention so that a balanced view can be presented.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gXdLA63zZFE>

MX-30 R-EV

Here is a Mazda Electric Vehicle with a rotary engine. Sold in Britain, this Mazda

model never came to Australia but the EV-Rotary combination is being discussed for the future electric MX-5.

<https://www.bing.com/videos/riverview/relatedvideo?q=Mazda+MX-30+R-EV&mid=4C6E63EDE025A2402ACD4C6E63EDE025A2402ACD&FORM=VIRE>

ND2 VERSUS ND3 STEERING

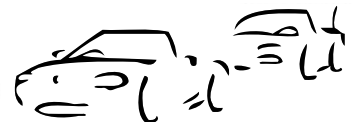
How much of a difference is there actually a true improvement or just marketing hype from Mazda.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iICvudoYP1Q>

Mazda

MX-5

Club of Western Australia



The Most Collectible MX-5

This article is reproduced with permission from the Victorian MX-5 club editor and the author of the article. (Mxtra 3/2024 pp6-10.)

IN ABOUT 2017, MAZDA produced the one-millionth MX-5. With the success of the ND, one imagines this number is probably at 1.2 or 1.3 million by now.

So, in that number what do you think would be the most collectible of all MX-5s?

While the 30AE would have to be “up there”, it’s difficult to justify these as there were 3000 worldwide, although only 29 available for sale in Australia – so it’s a strong contender.

But there is a model that breathes more rarefied air than this ... AND it has a hard roof (not a drop top)!

In the early 2000s, Mazda decided to produce a coupé for the Japanese domestic market (JDM) ONLY. This followed a one-off experiment during the NA model run of a hardtop.

You thought there was never an MX-5 hardtop coupé? You’d be wrong.

Mazda decided to build a fairly small

number of NB Coupés, based on the NB8C model and there were to be very restricted numbers across four specific models of the Coupé.

Unfortunately, before many were made, there was a large factory fire and production of the Coupé ceased while production was re-established of stronger selling models – unfortunately, the NB Coupés were never to re-enter production, leaving those that WERE produced now extremely collectible.

Surely then, this batch of NB Coupés have to be some of THE most collectable of all MX-5s!

TOTAL PRODUCTION NUMBERS:

Type A	40 built (against the 200 originally intended). The most expensive model, and two of the 40 are in our club.
Type E	23 (against the 150 intended).
Type S	63 - one is in our club!
Roadster Coupé	53

A total of 179 cars were built before the factory fire.

Incredibly, as unique as the cars are, we have THREE of them in our club: two in Victoria and one in Tasmania. All of course, were privately imported and went through a compliance process that meant they had to be first road-registered in NSW.

Club members Alan Wilson (Eastern Victoria Chapter) and Stuart Thorp (Northern Tasmania) each have yellow Type A Coupés, while Andrew Ogg (Central) has a red Type S.

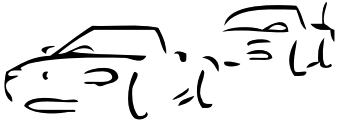
The coupés, all right-hand drive for the JDM, were delivered in four configurations:

Roadster Coupé (base model) – 1.6L, 123 hp, five-speed manual.

Type A – 1.8L, 158 hp, six-speed, special grille, fog lamps, fascia, headlamp bezels etc. Yellow and a “different” red from the three other models.

Type E – 1.8L, 152 hp, four-speed auto only.

(Continued on page 9) ►



The Most Collectible MX-5

◀ (Continued from page 8)

Type S – 1.8L, 158 hp, six-speed manual. White, silver or red.

It appears that the Type A, and the Type S are the only models allowed to be imported and complied for Australian road use so, as it happened, Alan first bought the “wrong” model; then when he discovered the restriction, had to re-sell it in Japan and then source and import the current car. It was complied and first registered in NSW in late 2023.

The cars, while based on an NB8C and sharing most parts, have several very specific parts.

There are at least seven or eight unique steel pressings involved in the rear of the car – all of which would have needed expensive tooling to produce. These include three roof pressings, both rear guards and the rear lift up door.

The front guards have unique flares and the entire nose, made from some form of reinforced plastic, is different from any NB. In fact, on the Type A model (the most

“upmarket”) which Alan and Stuart have, the front treatment (see around the headlights and grille), is unique even amongst the four models of coupé.

One shudders to imagine the cost of tooling that went into the manufacture of these cars and, with the small number built, it’s questionable if Mazda made any money out of them!

It is difficult to establish how many spare parts were produced for these cars body-work-wise and it appears safe to say they are made of “unobtainium”. Imagine the difficulty of repairing a hit in the rear which may have bent the roof, rear guards and rear door!

There was an article written by club member Richard Travers in Mxtra in October 2022 (see link at the end of this article) and he tells us that the cars were pulled from the production line to have the “one-off” steel roofs bonded in place. The cars were finished off by a specialised arm of Mazda.

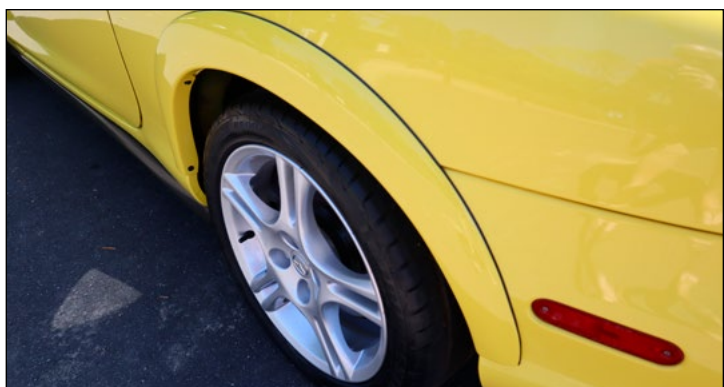
The result was a stiffer body with a weight gain in the order of only 10kg. The track guys

in the club would love these shells if they were available!

It is interesting to note that although the car is roofed, it appears all interior carpeting and fittings up to the rear firewall remain identical to the standard car – so much so that the carpet still has press studs for the tonneau, and the cushion points for the drop top remain. All of the interior of the boot also seems as per the standard car so it has been an interesting modification process, clearly minimising changes to the existing body on to which the roof is grafted. Without parking a drop top beside the Coupé and comparing, it looks very much like the basic boot opening is retained but that the front edge (nearest the seats) is raised and the sides sloped to suit the new “lid”.

Peter Ferguson

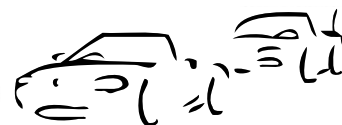
(Part 2 of this article will appear in the next issue of MX-press)



Mazda

MX-5

Club of Western Australia

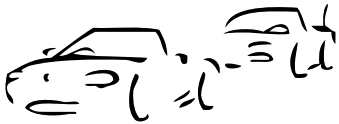


MX-press: May-June 2024:9

Event Photos

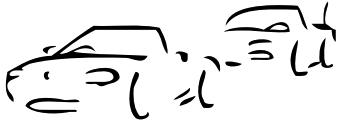
MONTHLY CRUISE – MAY

Photos by Simon Corston



MONTHLY CRUISE — JUNE

Photos by Simon Corston



Event Write-Ups

SOUTHERN MX-5 RUN: JARRAHDALE TAVERN 14 APRIL

We gathered at Mandurah Forum's HJ's at for a 10:00AM start. The morning air carried a mild chill as nine cars (eight MX-5s and Darryl's Kia). With 15 enthusiastic participants, we were primed to conquer the roads. Pat took a moment to reiterate the cruise rules before we hopped in our cars, resetting our trip meters. Our journey began tracing the scenic path alongside the Harvey Estuary.

I have a soft spot for these roads. Usually we traverse them in the opposite direction. But experiencing them in reverse amplifies their beauty. The Estuary on our left, adorned with some exquisite homes on the right—absolutely breathtaking. I couldn't help but dream, "When I win the lotto..." Some stretches of the road were quite narrow, with picturesque hills in the distance. The cows seeking shade from the sun clustered under the trees, while the parched paddocks bore witness to the need for rain.

Ah, the infamous beep! Someone we all know received a hearty honk while turning right into Burnside Road, courtesy of a ute. My pilot's giggle spoke volumes; I doubt he'll ever live it down. Did anyone else catch a glimpse of the majestic Scottish Highland cow on our left? The regroup at Dwellingup is always a welcome break—a chance to stretch our legs, relieve our bladders, and exchange banter with fellow MX-5 enthusiasts. As we turned right we found ourselves briefly stuck behind a learner driver, but the convoy soon dispersed.

The vistas ahead were simply breathtaking, against the dry beauty of the natural bush. Even the stark blackness of bushfire-affected areas held a unique allure. This cruise also encountered a multitude of cyclists and motorbike riders sharing the road. Vigilance was paramount.

As we passed Karnet Prison Farm, perennially lush and green, with fields dotted with pumpkins and fruit trees ensconced under netting—an insider's knowledge from a friend who once worked there! Through the tunnel, we honked our horn triumphantly over the dam bridge, eliciting waves from pedestrians on the other side. This road also bore witness to the ravages of bushfires on the surrounding trees and bushland. We

turned into the Jarrahdale Tavern parking area, finding places to park before gathering around tables, ordering hearty meals, and revelling in each other's company. The portions were generous, the food delicious, and the wait time bearable. Thank you for making this drive truly unforgettable, and to Pat and Colleen Gannon, your efforts never go unnoticed. Here's to many more adventures, but until then, stay safe.

Carol Chapman

AFTER WORK GET TOGETHER: VARSITY BAR—17 APRIL

Tonight's adventure was supposed to be led by Aart ter Kuile, but with his cousin's arrival from Chile, South America, Aart handed the reins over to Michael Clowes. Meeting time was 5:45PM at Roe Gardens, Kings Park, for a 6:00PM departure. The park was bathed in a glorious evening glow, a gentle breeze making it just perfect for the three cars and intrepid MX-5 drivers and their partners to kick off the journey.

With trip meters set to zero, we turned left onto Forrest Drive, then left onto Lovekin Drive, and another left onto Poole Avenue. As dusk settled in, lights flicked on to illuminate our notes. But it seemed that following the leader was the name of the game, with our trio of cars forming a convoy all the way to East Street and beyond, down Carroll Drive to Fraser Road.

The riverside views were simply stunning! This cruise hugged the river closely, showcasing the beauty of our city in a breathtaking way. Seeing the city across the river, all lit up, was a sight to behold. Apart from navigating the darkness and dodging oncoming traffic, my eyes were glued to the road ahead, if I'm honest. There were a couple of moments where I held my breath—the roads were so narrow, and my pilot was channelling his inner Daniel Ricciardo! And those oncoming lights were like a blur hitting my eyes!

From Nisbet Road to Canning Beach Road, then onto Canning Highway and Manning Road, the twists and turns kept us on our toes. Finally, we made a left into The Waterford Plaza Shopping Centre, up the ramp to the top car park, where we parked our cars and set off in search of The Varsity Bar.

Once we found it, we indulged in some classic American-style food: all burgers, or should I say, cheeseburgers, accompanied by wine and sodas. Silly me decided to order a Spearmint milkshake, which arrived resembling Mount Everest with snow on top! It was so massive that my mouth hung open. I was too scared to tackle it, fearing it might cause an avalanche!



Nevertheless, it was a fantastic night spent with five fellow MX-5 enthusiasts. There was laughter, lively chatter, and great vibes, all topped off with delicious food.

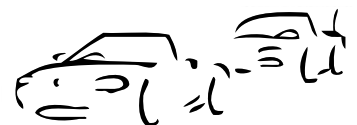
Michael and Lois, a big thank you for being our fearless leaders. We stuck to you like chocolate to a blanket. Much appreciated.

Carol Chapman

SATURDAY CRUISE: SUNSET AT THE BEACH—27 APRIL

Perth put on another picture perfect autumn afternoon for our cruise to Cottesloe with a sunset dinner to follow. By 4:30PM, eleven of us have assembled at the Roe Gardens carpark in Kings Park. There's a nice chatty vibe going on as we take in the stunning city vista before us with plenty of

(Continued on page 13) ►



Event Write-Ups

◀ (Continued from page 12)

friendly banter as we catch-up with regulars, as well as meet new member Adam.

We head off around 4:45PM to ensure we arrive in Cottesloe close to sundown. Six of the seven MX5s on tonight's cruise are NDs with our golden NB being the exception. The mostly familiar route takes us past many of the western suburbs' best outlooks. Starting with Crawley Bay as viewed from Hackett Drive, we motor along passing the Perth Flying Squadron Yacht Club before veering left into The Avenue.

A mix of sometimes tasteful, sometimes ostentatious riverside homes periodically hide the river views as we breeze along lovely leafy streets. The highest point along the aptly named Bayview Terrace offers up the best views across a river bay with the city in the distance, all beautifully lit by late afternoon sunlight. Traffic slows us here and there, enough that we intermittently reform our "not-a-convoy" MX-5 conga line for many segments of this trip. Smiles and thumbs up coming from onlookers as we enter Stirling Highway.

Ducking off the highway we are back on leafy streets and enjoying river views from The Esplanade approaching the Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club, then Mosman Park and Minim Cove. Soon enough we are back on the highway negotiating North Fremantle and Port traffic before hitting the coast at Leighton beach. A scenic, if short, northbound coast run has us in Cottesloe in time to stroll into our dinner venue, the C Blu Restaurant, all in time to see the sun setting from our window-side table. Lots of happy chat and enthusiastic eating follows as the post-sunset sky lights up with the pinks and orange tones which our west coast is justly famous. Thanks to Michael Clowes for planning and running this fun and relaxing evening cruise.

Brett Evans

SOUTHERN MX-5 RUN: WAROONA – 5 MAY

The weather that greeted us for this historic combined north-south cruise was perfect for top-down motoring: 21°C and sunny.

Twelve enthusiasts in eight cars enjoyed

the sunshine, car inspections and social mingling in the carpark at Meadow Springs. We were pleased to welcome Dave who drove up from Australind to join in the fun.

After the obligatory briefing and warnings from Christine we were off precisely at 10:00AM. We started with a brief cruise down the main drag, before heading east on the Kwinana Freeway allowing us to blow the cobwebs out as we dodged the slower cars in the right lane while heading north to the Paganoni Road exit.

The next stage took us to the curves on Armarillo Drive, Karri Street and Fletcher Road in what is pure MX-5 territory. Another five kilometres of twists and turns had us on Karnup Road for the run to Serpentine.

The previous week's rain had done nothing to revive the farmland along the way, but the golf course and equestrian centre at Serpentine remain green and tidy as also is this pretty township.

As we stretched our legs at 110kms along the South West Highway we questioned the total distance claimed on the notes, but we were not deceived as the 4.5kms intermediate distance had us spot on at the turn in to Kingsbury Drive. Someone copped a bit of good-natured ribbing later as a result of the slip up.

Kingsbury Drive is always a delight at any speed, but the roadworks with its dust and loose blue metal as we approached Karnet had us obeying the 60 km/h temporary speed limit. Further along the blackened trees and burnt-out scrub reminded us of the scorching summer we have just had.

After crossing the dam, we joined the northern group at Bistro on the Dam for a lengthy regroup allowing plenty of time for coffee, the essential toilet visits and lots of social interaction.

Thanks to Christine and Chris who, once again, did a great job in compiling our section of the cruise.

Pat Gannon

DAWN BREAKFAST RAID: BRITISH CAR DAY, GINGIN—19 MAY

Hi, I am Jenn, the partner of Jeff Green, and this is my first cruise write-up, and hopefully not my last. My experience of the MX-5 club are some after-work city cruises

that I liked very much. However, when this Sunday cruise came up, Jeff told me it was going to be "something else" and he was not wrong!

The day began with a blue sky showing paintbrush wisps of high cloud. We started early (for me) by leaving home at 7:00AM to get to the Vibe Roadhouse on Greatt Northern Highway in time to have a coffee and a chat before charging off to the Bindoon Bakehaus for breakfast. While standing around Vibe chatting and waiting for the group to assemble, I for one, was happy to see a number of classic British cars in the carpark so we could admire their rides. I was impressed with the owner-driver of the Austin Special who looked like he was piloting a Spitfire (not a Messerschmitt).

Setting off with nine cars we were dismayed to find the pack stuck behind a long and wide load carrying an unrecognisable piece of machinery. Back in the queue, Jeff and I could almost hear the groans and gnashing teeth of the frustrated MX-5 drivers as we followed.

Thank goodness this didn't last long as the wide load pulled over just before Stock Road where we were able to overtake several cars including some classic British cars on their way to Gingin, including a Lotus Elise and a rare Jaguar XKSS. Unfortunately, we didn't get to the front of the MX-5 pack, but then we weren't at the end either. Craig and Samantha took and kept the lead all the way to Bindoon Bakehaus.

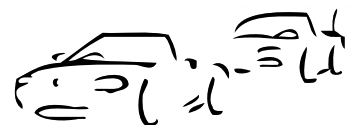


(Continued on page 14) ▶

Mazda

MX-5

Club of Western Australia



Event Write-Ups

◀ (Continued from page 13)

The route took us through Bullsbrook, then Chittering, along some high and low winding roads. The scenery was great and the turns exhilarating! The hills and bush were brown and dry after our long (and getting longer) dry spell. The cattle, horses, sheep, and emus didn't turn a hair or feather as we passed, but the kangaroos took a good look as we zoomed by around another hairpin bend. Along the straight sections we could see three MX-5s in front and one behind.

By the time we got to Bindoon Bakehaus, we realised the leaders Craig, Samantha, and Uno, among others, were ahead and waiting for us to order and join them for breakfast. I missed some of you as we split into conversation groups while sitting eating breakfast and drinking our coffees. I also missed some photo opportunities, sorry!

Soon enough, we looked around and saw we were the last table to leave, so jumped in our cars and took off for Gingin and the classic British Car Day. This drive was more straightforward and shorter, so we were soon looking for parking on Church Street.

We saw the other MX-5s parked along the road but had obviously missed most of the group. Looking around the classic British cars, we didn't bump into many others from the club either.

At the end of the cruise there were no injured animals or MX-5s and I found the experience very enjoyable, it really blew the cobwebs away!

Thank you, Aart, for organising the run, and all the participants for making it a day to remember.

Jennifer Magenta

MID-WEEK LUNCHTIME CRUISE: STRINGBARK WINERY—22 MAY

What a blessing to have a free Wednesday, and what better option could we have than joining a midweek MX-5 club drive! The weather was perfect, sunny but not too hot, as we drove to the meeting point at City Beach for the leisurely 11:00AM departure. Some bought a coffee at Clancy's Fish Bar, some discussed technical issues with mapping software on iPhones, others strolled

along the edge of the Indian Ocean taking in the calm blue waters and the interesting sculptures along the shore.

Cruise leader Michael talked participants through club drive rules, and mentioned the risks of today's route: numerous and varied speed limits with police waiting to pounce, also emus and kangaroos waiting to dash over the road in front of us. The 11 participants took a deep breath, donned their hard hats and set off for the drive.

NDs once again outnumbered other models on the run. So thanks to Jeffrey and John (in a Silver NC and a Copper Red NC respectively) for adding some variety.

The drive was lovely, up along beachside roads, through some suburbs sporting impressive houses, then to Joondalup, Bullsbrook and large lifestyle blocks with grape vines, and fruit trees. The countryside was parched and dry (when will we get some rain?) The gum trees along the side of the road were majestic, although looking a little grey with dust as someone on our lunch table observed later.



As a passenger, my mind wandered into noticing trivia in case it might be useful in the future e.g. the location of a 'Miniature Horse Activity Centre' on Chittering Road. Then I got to wondering how road names are chosen? e.g. Seismic Road Zantho Place. Then up popped Timely Hostess Mews which must surely have a funny story behind it!

Lunch choices at Stringbark Winery were tasty and very generous. Being midweek it was not very busy, so pleasantly quiet for our MX-5 chatting. We were off and away by 2:30PM, a very enjoyable outing. Thank you, Michael, for organising another winner.

Sandra Price

MONTHLY CRUISE: JULIMAR JAUNT—2 JUNE

Michael Clowes led the charge on this cruise, with six MX-5s and eight brave MX-fivers faced the weather to meet at the Vibe Roadhouse. It was great to see Craig and Samantha with Uno, their poodle cross, joining us. Our adventurous crew included Aart ter Kuile, Simon Corston, Paul Andriessen, Michael Clowes, John, and me.

We zeroed the trip meter as we turned left onto Great Northern Highway then onto Chittering Road. Smith and Fraser Roads greeted us with beautiful landscapes, featuring vistas and gullies. Meadowbrook Ramble was particularly stunning, with flocks of sheep, including some black-headed ones, and cows, most with calves.

Hills to the left, undulating paddocks to the right, Chittering Valley was breathtaking. Julimar Road stretched out before us. We finally reached Pelham Lookout and wow, the views of Toodyay were spectacular! From there, it was onward to Bindoon and the Bakehaus for coffee and delectable pies or cakes.

We reset the trip meter, following Aart to Chittering Road, then left into Wandena Road. Oh, the views here were nothing short of breathtaking! We got back onto Great Northern Highway, then turned right onto Rutland Road, inching ever closer to pizza paradise. Did anyone else spot the tin cow in a tin boat? It felt like a scene out of "Hey Diddle Diddle."

Finally, we navigated Neaves Road, rounded the roundabout, and into the parking area of the Red Shed Pizzeria in Bullsbrook. Our tummies rumbled in anticipation. Orders placed and paid for, we devoured our pizzas. Yum, as Bart Simpson would say!

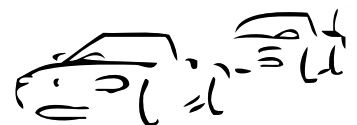
A huge thank you to Michael and Aart for a spirited run—it was exceptional, and the company of the MX-fivers made it even more fun. Thank you all!

Carol Chapman

Mazda

MX-5 Club of Western Australia

14 MX-press: May-June 2024



Natmeet XV 2024

AFTER COVID HAD STOPPED all our fun for a while, we were well overdue for a catch up with our east coast friends at Natmeet. When it was officially announced it was going ahead seven WA attendees RSVP'd with great excitement.

Paul and Judith Adriessen were the first to depart, taking their time to complete the drive to Toowoomba. Lyall and Linda Tilson departed next, flying to Melbourne to pick up Lyall's NB and spend a few days driving up the coast to meet the Messengers in Warwick. Then it was finally our turn, excitedly boarding the plane to Brisbane.

Meeting at Morgan Park Raceway in Warwick on Wednesday evening, we met other club members from around Australia and got our first look at the track. A social barbecue for dinner followed before an evening lap of the track in readiness for race day.

Thursday started fresh and early as we arrived at Morgan Park and prepared for a day of racing fun. Smiles got bigger and bigger as cars zoomed round and round and Lauren got a chance to take a custom Clubman round the track for a few laps.

That afternoon we were on the move to Toowoomba for the official start of Natmeet 2024. We checked in and met up with Paul and Judith putting on our "Team WA" shirts before the welcome where we enjoyed spending a few hours chatting with other MX-5 lovers from around Australia.

Friday we got to explore Queensland. Unfortunately due to a crash on the Eyre Highway and some localised road flooding our cars were delayed in arriving, but in true

MX-5 generosity we were offered seats in every car that had a spare seat. The organisers thoughtfully buddied up with someone in each of our respective groups and all three of us were lucky to have the most amazing drivers paired with us.

The roads in Queensland were nothing like we have in Perth, hills and valleys galore and the most exciting twists and turns had us grinning and snapping photos and videos all day, playing passenger princess for the day certainly has its advantages.

Saturday involved more incredible driving and scenery. We ended up at the Army Museum to see Black Hawks, Chinooks and other military vehicles before heading back to town to prepare the cars for the Concourse and "Show 'n Shine" the next day. Saturday night was the traditional dress up night with a "flowers and the farm" theme, and boy did peoples' costumes not disappoint! We had a pack of sheep, some "Bill and Ben the Flowerpot Men", couples' costumes and lots of florals and farmers. Don looked great as the "almost" rhinestone cowboy and your president was the cutest cow (as her sister, I may have taken full advantage of being able to call my sister a cow for the night and get away with it). Then came the call we had been waiting for, our MX-5s had arrived!

Sunday morning was an early rise as our cars got a well deserved bath and some TLC getting polished and primed ahead of the "Show 'n Shine" and it was so exciting to drive our cars to the event. The smiles, waves and small cheers from other MX-5 owners for us as we drove in was so lovely and part of

what makes the MX-5 community so great. Apart from the Natmeet attendees, a huge number of MX-5s from across Queensland joined us for the day and final numbers were close to 200 MX-5s on show, and boy, were there some amazing cars.

Monday morning rolled around and we couldn't wait to get out and explore those roads in our own cars. A beautifully sunny day and roads with twists and bends like we have never seen before had us zoom-zooming around enjoying the day on the roads seeing everything from flood ravaged towns, farmlands, valleys, lakes, rivers and The Great Divide.

Monday afternoon was spent scrubbing away at ourselves this time as we all prepared for the formal dinner and awards night. Looking like we had stepped off the red carpet we made our way to the stunning Empire Theatre which played as the backdrop to the last night of Natmeet.

Speeches were made, awards were given and your club secretary won the WA Pride of Natmeet award for her overly excitable manner, her love of MX-5s (especially her own) and the constant social media updates and photo-bombing on the Natmeet group page.

I want to thank the Queensland chapter for all their hard work and dedication to Natmeet; it may have been my first, but definitely not my last! See you in The Hunter Valley in 2026.

Jennifer Ellison

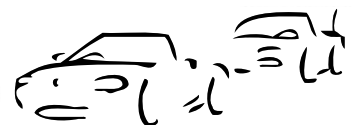
(Continued on page 16) ►



Mazda

MX-5

Club of Western Australia



MX-press: May-June 2024 15

Natmeet XV 2024

◀ (Continued from page 15)

SEVEN WA CLUB MEMBERS in five MX-5s attended this Natmeet, which was very well organised by the local committee.

For the three daily runs we were split up in 12 smaller groups of around seven cars each with communications via UHF radio.

This works well in city or congested traffic, (to regroup at shorter intervals), but here in WA we just go our own way with one regroup about halfway before arriving at our final destination at whatever pace you would like to drive.

One awesome road that comes to mind is Silver Pinch Road which happened to be resurfaced recently and makes our O'Brien and Berry Roads look like a picnic.

The runs included three museum visits: Qld Transport Museum, Oakley Army Flying Museum and Cobb & Co.

Unfortunately, the three Messengers' cars (Don, President Lauren and Jennifer) who were trucked across the Nullarbor, didn't arrive until the last day of Natmeet. It was a sad let-down for all involved.

We (Paul and Judith) drove the 4184km to Toowoomba without a single hiccup, including two flood-ways north of Moree. The total distance for the return trip, including 1,074km running around in Toowoomba and surrounds, came to 9,442km.

Fully loaded with two people plus luggage we managed 15.98km/litre or 6.26l /100km. Average price of fuel was \$2.32/l with the dearest \$2.90/l.

The photo shows to be careful about camels, kangaroos and wombats for the next 96km. I'm perplexed who and how someone can train this wildlife to stay within these boundaries.

I'm confident that all attendees (around 140 people in 85 cars) would like to thank all friendly helpers who made this Natmeet a great memorable event.

Paul Andriessen

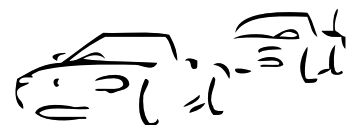


Mazda

MX-5

Club of Western Australia

16: MX-press: May-June 2024



Natmeet XV 2024



“NO ONE KNOWS YOUR
PASSION LIKE SHANNONS.”



The passion, the pride of ownership, the sheer emotional attachment – no one understands it better than Shannons. So when it comes to insurance for your special car, daily drive, bike or even your home, there's only one person you should talk to – a fellow enthusiast at Shannons. And remember, you can pay your premium by the month at no extra cost.

So call Shannons for a    quote on **13 46 46**.



SHARE THE PASSION

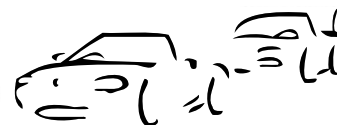
INSURANCE FOR MOTORING ENTHUSIASTS | CALL 13 46 46 FOR A QUOTE | SHANNONS.COM.AU

Shannons Pty Limited ABN 91 099 692 636 is an authorised representative of AAI Limited ABN 48 005 297 807, the product issuer. Read the Product Disclosure Statement before buying this insurance. Contact us for a copy.

Mazda

MX-5

Club of Western Australia



MX-press: May-June 2024 17

MX-5 ND3 First Drive

NO, THERE ISN'T MORE power. And there certainly isn't more weight. What Mazda did to the 2024 MX-5 Miata was a bunch of thankless, non-flashy updates that most folks will dismiss on the ND's 10th year of production. Hell, they didn't even change the bumpers for this final facelift—just some new headlights and tail lights.

Instead, Mazda went to town developing a new limited-slip differential with more-favourable locking and unlocking rates, and took an opportunity to re-engineer and recalibrate the electronic power steering system. Things that, to the casual driver, wouldn't make a difference. But it made all the difference.

I can put my hand up and say that the subtly updated 2024 Mazda MX-5 is the sports car I always dreamed the Miata should be. No more overly whimsical, roly-poly, soft-suspension imprecision. With just the simple re-engineering of several small parts, the ND3 is an entirely different car to drive.

Dave Coleman is a Hayabusa-swapped NA Miata owner, and a true lover of driving, you really couldn't pick anyone better for the title of Vehicle Dynamics Manager for all of Mazda's cars. He is a steering snob of the highest order. His benchmark for steering is the Lotus Elise. He knows good steering, possibly better than anyone in the business. He also understands it isn't a simple matter

of calibration, but of physical engineering in the steering rack, suspension, drive train—basically everything.

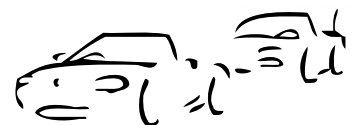
Nothing major was changed but one of the world's biggest suppliers of electric motors for power steering systems changed a magnetic part within their motors, completely changing their behaviour. Thus, Mazda was forced to recalibrate the steering, so Coleman and his team seized the opportunity with both hands. With that, they also took an opportunity to reduce friction in the steering system, something he sees as the enemy of good steering.

Then they looked at another often forgotten but hugely influential component of handling: The differential. Most folks think, "open diff bad and limited-slip good." but the setup of a diff can influence everything about how a car handles, whether it understeers or oversteers at any phase of the corner. A more-locked diff on deceleration means more understeer because the rear wheels are dragging together at the same speed, encouraging the car to keep traveling straight. The opposite is true for acceleration. A locked diff forces the outer and inner tyres to spin at the same rate, increasing stability under straight-line acceleration, while allowing the driver to comfortably and predictably induce rotation on corner exit. For the ND3, Mazda developed a new cam mechanism

that allows for different ramp angles on acceleration and deceleration—basically, how and when the diff locks and unlocks. It still uses the same novel conical clutch design, but to address the strange handling of the ND1 and ND2, Mazda increased diff lock during deceleration and reduced locking on acceleration. Folks familiar with the previous cars will know it was particularly eager on turn-in and was happy to slide. Depending on the aggression of your inputs, it could get uncontrolled, partially a symptom of its soft suspension and roll characteristics, so the ND always took a level of precision and respect to drive. Mazda aimed directly at this complaint with the new diff, a small, extremely nerdy change. Like the rest of the ND, it's worth noting that these changes go against everything the contemporary car business does. They didn't make the diff electronic, nor did they widen the Miata's tyres. I don't think they ever even considered adding more horsepower. These changes don't show up on a spec sheet. But on a sunny, top-down drive through the northern end of Los Angeles County, I may as well have been driving an entirely new Miata.

It took all of 300 feet to realize that Coleman hit a home run with the new steering calibration. It was simply delicious and

(Continued on page 19) ►



MX-5 ND3 First Drive

◀ (Continued from page 18)

blindingly different to before; weighty on centre, with none of the wandering strangeness of the ND2. Overall steering effort is significantly increased, but the true marker of steering brilliance is weight build-up off-centre and feedback once you're stuck into the corner. The signs were promising, with even a simple left turn through an intersection demonstrating the Miata's EPAS mastery—a linear build-up of weight that is perfectly assisted. It's not so assisted that it feels artificial, nor is it a heavy butter-churner that some automakers prefer in lieu of actually understanding what steering feel should be. It feels simply like a manual steering rack with less weight.

Ascending into the well travelled curves of the Angeles National Forest, the steering remained incredible. Thanks to low-grip Bridgestone Turanza all-season tyres (the same spec as before) the limit was low enough to feel the full range of steering feedback. While there wasn't much high-frequency granularity, the important stuff was there. The wheel broadcasts every step along the approach to the limits of traction, with the steering reaching a perfectly round peak of effort just as the front tyres reached their limit. Just beyond the limit, the steering would lighten slightly and flatten in effort, clearly communicating exactly how the tyres

wanted to be driven.

Bumps and undulations came with requisite increases and decreases in weight, a rare phenomenon for electronic power steering. Even with a cheeky lift and provocation into a slide, the steering wheel would beautifully chase the front tyres. Yaw was clearly communicated with a two fold stream of information, the rear axle joining the steering conversation with more global suggestions, once the car began rotating. Completing the experience was an astutely judged steering ratio, where a deft driver can simply suggest the Miata into a curve and hold it near-centre, only adjusting in fine motions to add more or less yaw to the car range of steering feedback. That new rear differential, while perhaps less obvious to most than the steering retune, also plays a huge part in this overall sporting picture. It's tuned in such a way that instead of the ND2's eager turn-in, the ND3 can be guided to the apex with supreme stability, but without the sensation of understeer. It's night and day more buttoned down in the area it suffered most. With 181 horsepower, the more unlocked diff on acceleration is an almost imperceptible difference—the Miata never had an issue beyond the apex to my hands and ass. It almost certainly feels like the dampers were retuned to match, something Mazda wouldn't confirm or deny to me, but my butt

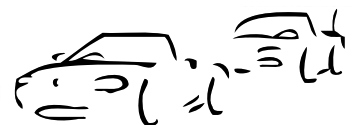
dyno is certainly suspicious.

It feels masterful, a level even beyond Porsche's benchmark work in the Porsche 718 Cayman. Yeah, a journalist spending three paragraphs waxing lyrical about steering and handling; I'd be rolling my eyes too. But the difference from the ND2 is enough to make the Miata driving experience almost fundamentally different as a sports car. Where a stock Miata almost couldn't be taken seriously as a precision instrument, the ND3 is now right there with a Subaru BRZ or a Porsche Cayman. I also love that Mazda didn't fall prey to the light-steering-equals-light-car trap that befalls so many of the modern heavyweights. Steering is the heart and soul of any sports car.

The magic is that it doesn't lose a bit of its MX-5ness. It's still fun above all else, a car that is meant to put a smile on your face. It still has a lovely, zingy engine and gearbox. It still weighs less than 2,500 lbs with a single human in it. It hasn't lost its whimsy or its charm. And even though I was done with the "work" of filming and photographing the car about an hour into a five-hour long press drive, I didn't stop driving until the sun went down and the gas gauge read empty.

That is the mark of something spectacular.

(Source: <https://www.motor1.com/reviews/716685/2024-mazda-miata-first-drive/>)



Tall Tree Tour

The Tall Tree Tour takes in some of the best roads through the tall tree country of the Southern WA forests. The tour is based in Pemberton with participants arranging their own accommodation for Friday and Saturday nights.

FRIDAY 18 OCTOBER: HARVEY TO PEMBERTON

About 250km or 3½ hours' driving with stops at Gnomesville, Kirup Tavern for lunch and the Donnelly River Store for afternoon tea. We meet at the [Stirling Cottage](#) in Harvey for a 10:30AM start and travel via Wellington Dam to [Gnomesville](#) for a leg stretch and toilet stop and a gander at the Gnomes before continuing to the [Kirup Tavern](#) for lunch. After lunch we continue via Balingup and Nannup to the [Donnelly River General Store](#) for another leg stretch and toilet stop and a coffee before heading to Pemberton. We should get you there around 4:00PM for you to check in to your accommodation. (See [here](#) for the route for the day).

That evening we gather at the Red Robin Cottage, which is in walking distance from the Pemberton Hotel, for pre-dinner drinks and nibbles courtesy of the club before dinner at the [Pemberton Hotel](#).

SATURDAY 19 OCTOBER: THE SOUTH COAST

About 440km or 5½ hours with stops at Walpole, Valley of the Giants, Sly Fox Diner and Swarbrick. We meet at 8:00AM in the carpark opposite the Pemberton Hotel departing at 8:15AM via Shannon to the [Golden Wattle Bakery](#) in Walpole for a quick morning coffee.

Next we drive a loop around Coalmine beach before heading to the [Valley of the Giants](#) to explore the Tree Top walk or for those that rather stay closer to the ground you can explore the Ancient Empire.

Afterwards we drive via Denmark and Scottsdale to the [Sly Fox Diner](#) for lunch. After lunch, we visit [Swarbrick](#) for a 500m walk around art exhibits through some of the state's oldest karri trees before driving to Walpole for a toilet stop and takeaway coffee at the [Philippine Magic Cafe](#). From here, we head back to Pemberton via Wheatley Coast Road and Northcliffe. We should have you there around 5:00PM. (See [here](#) for the route for the day).

That evening, we gather at 6:30PM at [Hoopz](#), a family-run restaurant located in the Pemberton Sports Club in Pemberton for dinner.

SUNDAY 20 OCTOBER: PEMBERTON TO DWELLINGUP

About 305 km or 3½ hours with stops at Bridgetown, Collie and Dwellingup. We meet at 9:00AM in the carpark opposite the Pemberton Hotel departing at 9:15AM driving via Channybearup and Manjimup to the [Wattleseed Barn Cafe & Florist](#) in Bridgetown for a quick morning coffee.

Our next stop is the [The Crown Hotel](#) in Collie for lunch. After lunch we head for the [Waypoints Cafe](#) in Dwellingup arriving around 2:30PM for a toilet stop and coffee and to say our goodbyes before making your own way home. (See [here](#) for the route for the day). It's about 106 km or 1½ hours back to Perth.



ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS IN PEMBERTON

[The Pemberton Visitor Centre accommodation page](#) lists many options from quaint cottages nestled under majestic karri forests, to comfortable motel suites with the comfort of reverse cycle heating and cooling within walking distance to everything. It will be peak demand so book quickly as it's a very popular holiday destination!

INTERESTED?

Please email Michael Clowes at social@mx5club.com.au to note an expression of interest.

