

MX-TRA

The monthly magazine of the
Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria Inc.

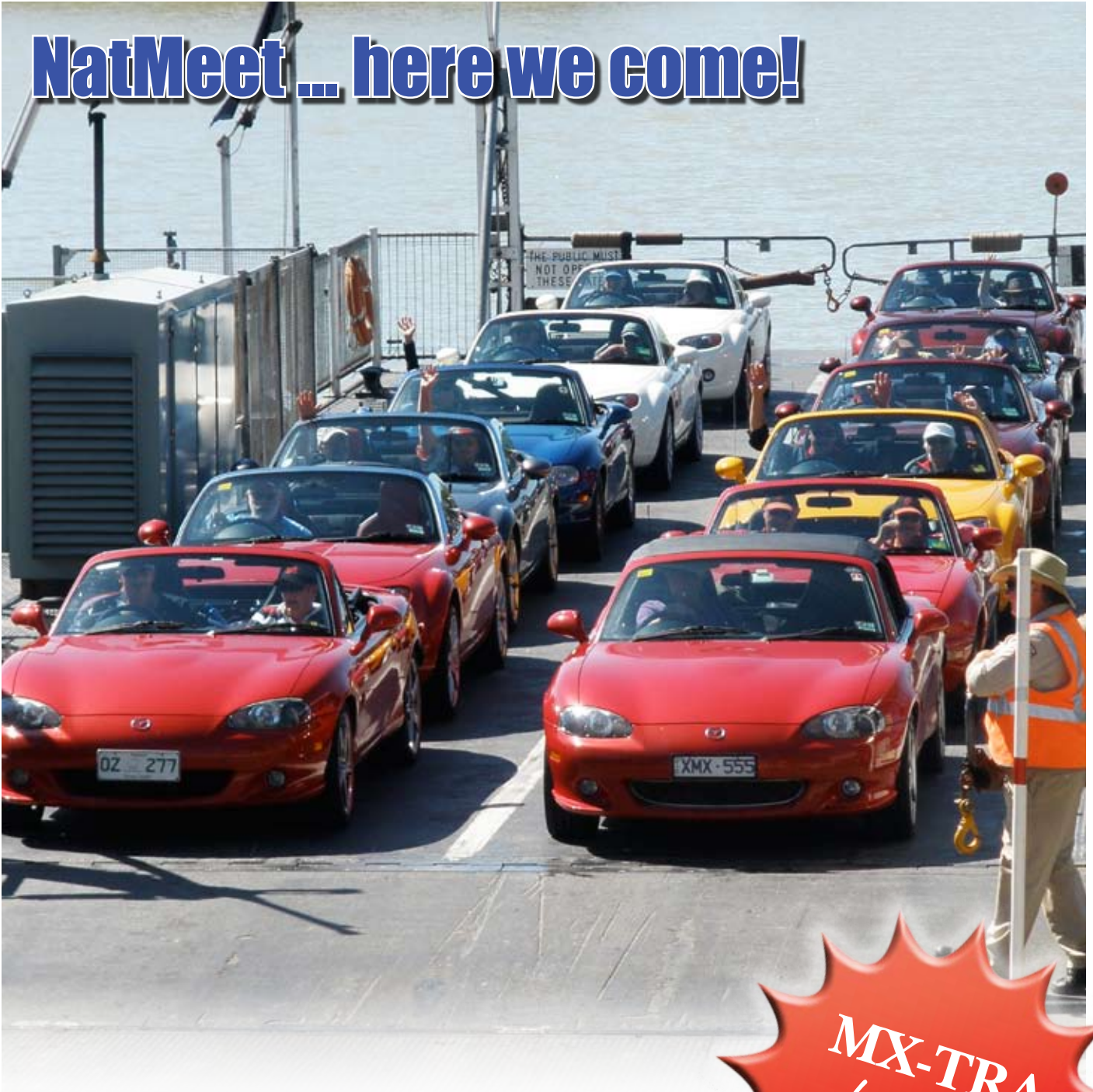
MAY 2010

www.mx5vic.org.au



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NatMeet... here we come!



In this edition ...

- » Letters and winners from NatMeet IX
- » My Ride ... Peter Corkran introduces PCMX5
- » Tech Talk ... tyres and rims

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magazine
... again!



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The Victoria/Tasmania convoy crosses the mighty Murray at Wellington, South Australia, en route to NatMeet IX in McLaren Vale. Photo: Alyssa Finlay

See MX-TRA on-screen: go to < www.mx5vic.org.au/mx-tra_052010.asp >

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Murray's Corner ...

■ Murray Finlay – President

We have two special displays coming up to show off our great little cars to the world.

And we need your help!

Both displays will cap off our 20th anniversary celebrations, and both will be wonderful advertisements for the Club.

The first of these is on **Sunday, 29 August** – a repeat of our 2008 display at **Federation Square**.

As we did last time, we would like to try to gather together as many of the colours and limited editions of each model as we can, to show the full variety of MX-5s that have been released over the last 20 years. We would also like some modified examples, as well as some of the motor sport cars in all their track finery.

Cars will be needed at Fed Square from about 8am until about 2pm. You can stay with your car or you can take the chance to catch a movie or go shopping in the CBD.

It would be great if all those who helped us out last time could help us again, but new faces are also most welcome!

Please help us out. Contact Steve Dunlop on 0408 401 308 or via e-mail on merchandise@mx5vic.org.au to add your name to the list.

The second event is new to us. It's the annual **Cars of the World** show'n'shine charity event on **Sunday, 31 October**.

We've been invited this year as one of the featured marques in the display to mark both the 21st birthday of the Mazda MX-5 (in October this year) and the 20th anniversary of the Club. The other featured marques will be Alfa Romeo and Bugatti,



both celebrating their centenary, and Ford Falcon, celebrating 50 years in Australia.

This is a charity event to raise money for Blind Citizens Australia. Displaying your car will cost \$25, and a food/ beverage package on the day will cost \$35/person. Spectators will be asked for a gold coin donation, which will go to the CFA.

There will be food and entertainment, motor trade stalls and plenty of automotive eye candy for the enthusiasts.

It will be held in the grounds of Rochford Wines in Coldstream (Melway 277 D9), and it would be great to see at least 40 MX-5s – all models, colours, standard and modified – there on the day.

There will be a mass convoy from Wheelers Hill to the venue, with all sorts of cars taking part. It promises to be a fun day ... why not shine up your car and help promote the Club?

For this we need at least 40 cars. Please contact Murray (9589 4317 or president@mx5vic.org.au) for more information.

Please give both events some thought. We need strong support from the members to make them both a success.

Until next time, look up, stay back!

Murray

Vale Don Baker

With sadness we report the passing of Don Baker, who died on 17 April after a long illness. Don is fondly remembered from Club runs in his beloved Velocity Red SE, with his little white dog and her signature "doggles".

Don's wife Lorraine wrote to VP Alistair Dennis: "While we were unable to attend the various drives etc when Don's illness progressed, we both enjoyed the times we had with the Club. A photo of Don in his Mazda with Molly wearing her doggles was on his order of service, and mention of the good times he had with the Club was made at the funeral. I remember how kind you were to him as were others too and I would appreciate if you could pass on to those who remember him my thanks."



For your diary ...

See the full calendar for details

May

- 18 Combined Tassie Chapters' "Picnic at Ross"
- 22 North Tassie run
- 30 09/10 Championship Rd 8: Sprints, Sandown

June

- 6 Pam & Tyrone's Petanque run
- 20 Hobart Chapter – run to Huon

July

- 3 09/10 Championship Rd 9: Sprints, Phillip Island
- 4 Dannock's Drive
- 18 N-E Victorian scavenger hunt

August

- 8 10/11 Championship Rd 1: Sprints, Winton
- 14 20th Anniversary celebrations – Westpac [Lexus] Centre
- 22 10/11 Championship Rd 2: Hillclimb, Haunted Hills
- 29 Fed Square display



September

- TBC 10/11 Championship Rd 3: Sprints, Sandown
- 12 Great Ocean Road run

October

- 3 Todds' Tour of Macedon Ranges
- 3 Ballarat run
- 23-24 Winton 6-Hour
- 31 Cars of the World display - 40+ MX-5s needed, please!

November

- TBC 10/11 Championship Rd 4 [event TBC]

And the NatMeet winners are ...



■ Words: Don Nicoll ■ Photos: Joan Read, Mark Charnley (SA Club)

It is no secret that the Victorian and Tasmanian Club never does well in the Concours d'Elegance at NatMeet, mainly because we seem to have a surfeit of drivers and passengers who are much more interested in driving their MX-5s than looking for dust hidden under wheel arches or in those difficult corners under the bonnet.

It therefore came as a pleasant surprise when we took out four of the gongs in the Concours. **Grant Butler and Saeko Fujiki** took out the **Best Standard NC** despite Grant insisting that he had made no special effort. Nobody had seen any evidence to the contrary but we did see Saeko using one of those sticky rollers to remove the fluff from the soft top.

The **NC Roadster** prize was taken out by **Bruce and Jenny Gray**. This was also a surprise given that Bruce had sustained a ding to the front wing of the car, days before they were due to depart for NatMeet. Such was the repairer's haste that he left a lump in the wheel arch hidden by a very quick paint job. How the ding occurred is a story in itself which I'll leave for Jenny to relate.

The third gong went to **Bruce Harvey and Cheryl Murray** who took out the **People's Choice Award** for their Sunset Yellow Series 2 NC Roadster. This yellow really stands out in the crowd and they had done a great job with the polish making sure that we couldn't miss it.

To complete the Concours clean up, **Rob and Ros Eastwood** won the **best customised MX-5** award. So, for a club that doesn't pride itself particularly on spit and polish we did a great job.

This brings us to the hillclimb. **Peter Phillips** was a bit miffed when he was first told that his standard NB may have to run as a modified car according to SA rules. However, as it turned out it didn't matter as Peter was the fastest of both classes, in the end

taking out the **standard under 1850** prize. **Kim Cole** was a whisker away and with it he claimed the **modified under 1850** award. The hillclimb proved to be the hidden treasure of the weekend. The climb itself was quite challenging but the SA Club's success in having the road closed for the event was the clincher. Several drivers were heard regretting their decision not to participate after they had seen the course and the organisation.

Many of those that didn't drive the hillclimb took part in the **Funkhana**, which comprised three events. The first was a form of horizontal dart board with a bin for the bull's eye. The driver negotiated the perimeter of the dart board in a clockwise direction while the passenger had to lob small bags at the bin, over the head of the driver. Nobody said that the bags were all of different weights!! It was amazing that more bags were not lost. The second event involved a slalom course through a series of cones while the passenger balanced a balloon full of water on a plastic plate outside the car. One of the Tassie crews, Tim and Dot to be precise, managed to drive over their balloon!! The last event involved following a curved line as closely as possible until stopping at a wooden board (a soft curb) and then backing into a garage. Points were awarded for stopping close to the curb and the back of the garage. **Your Editor and the good lady, Linda**, managed runners-up in this event, mainly due Linda's good balloon balancing and a spot of voluntary marshalling (read extra points) to assist the short-handed SA team.

Finally we took out the **Best Club Communication Award**. I think this belongs firmly in the hands of Murray and Alyssa in recognition of the extraordinary job they do in publishing the Club magazine every month as well as looking after the content of the website.

OK, so we didn't take out the Club Champions award – we congratulate those pesky Queenslanders again – but we must have been mighty close.

Never mind, it was great fun trying.



Letters from NatMeet IX

■ Great Ocean Road convoy travellers: **Victorians** - Pam Bown & Tyrone Dark, Grant Butler & Saeko Fujiki, Will & Coral Campbell, Ken & Joan Read, Pam & Peter Phillips, Alyssa & Murray Finlay, Phil Harris & Jacqui Miroch, Jenny & Bruce Gray. **Tasmanians** - Ken & Ruth Beaton, Tim & Dot Manion, Bruce Harvey & Cheryl Murray, Nils & Billie Powell.

Day 1 - Friday, 2 April

It was a cool morning but Victorian travellers convened at 8am under a clear blue sky. A special presentation was made to Phil Harris by our President, Murray Finlay – a new MX-5 name badge on which was inscribed 'ROWDY'. Anyone who has met Phil knows that this is furthest from the truth as Phil is a very quiet achiever.

After the performance of Will and Coral's GPS in finding our accommodation the day before, they were unanimously appointed 'Tail End Charlies' for the day!!! Pam and Tyrone were our leaders as we travelled through the desolate wetlands of the Coorong towards Kingston for our morning tea stop. The boring drive continued and we noted ominous road markers indicating sites of road fatalities and/or serious injury. Thank goodness for CB radios with a bit of banter to keep all our drivers awake. Then on to Meningie for lunch and to Wellington for a ferry trip across the Murray River. It was quite a sight to see 12 MX-5s filling the deck of the ferry! On the other side of the Murray the scenery changed rapidly to green fields and rolling hills ... and there were actually a few winding roads!

For the last part of our journey to McLaren Vale, Tim and Dot lead the way without a hitch following pre-printed 'Google Maps'. We were very warmly welcomed at the McLaren Vale Visitors' Centre by the South Australian NatMeet registration crew. We all made our way to settle into our accommodation and awaiting us in our rooms were 'Welcome Packs' containing beach towels, mugs, chocolates and other delicacies and liquid refreshments of the region.

No time to rest as the cars all had to be washed and shined inside and out ready for Concours d'Elegance which was taking place the next morning.

We returned to the Visitors' Centre in the evening for a pleasant BBQ and the official opening of NatMeet 2010. Many friendships were made and many rekindled as attendees met once again with interstate members that they hadn't seen for two years.

Joan & Ken

Ken's chrome rego plate frame is to match his chrome head ... says Ruth!

Joan & Alyssa scare the local children as they attack the fitness equipment in the park at Meningie



SE drivers commune ...



2-6 April, 2010



Those who went direct to NatMeet: **Victorians** - Linda & Don Nicoll, Ros & Rob Eastwood, Kim Cole, Dianne & Rob Kiddell, Judy & Jeff Searl.

Day 2 - Saturday, 3 April

A cool morning turned into a glorious autumn day. Drove down to McLaren on the Lake for an early start of the much-anticipated (by some) Concours d'Elegance. Parking on the green lawn overlooking the lake. Cars ranged from the usual entrants like Speedy's blue car with trailer, Seville's champagne gold NA6, Tony Doust's NC LE and new Sunset yellow NC Roadsters. All MX-5s are shining after yesterday's hours of cleaning and vacuuming. There is an official photographer and even a TV camera crew interviewing the important people for a later broadcast. [Here's that video link: <http://bit.ly/a6CwaQ> It's well worth a look! ~ Ed]

While the judges are hard at work it was a good time to catch up with the interstate friends and meet some very new club members still in their prams. I've never seen so many babies at NatMeet before!

After a quick morning tea with muffins, we assembled in convoy according to colour code and off on the run to Middleton via Victor Harbour. A beautiful drive through the vineyards and along the coast gave us many more curves and corners than we had expected from SA. We arrived at the Middleton Tavern safely and were well fed.

On the way back to McLaren Vale we took another route. We crossed over the bridge to Hindmarsh Island to view Murray Mouth. A couple of dredges were working to remove the build up of sand to keep Murray's Mouth open.

Derived from NatMeet 2010's theme, "where the vines meet the sea", the evening was a "Sea & Vines" dress-up dinner. Such a varieties of costumes from one theme! You had to see it to believe it. The Greenlees spent more than an hour to get their faces painted, Keith representing "the sea" and Alison representing "the vines". It was a thoroughly enjoyable evening with talk, music and lots of dancing.

Grant & Sacko



Dredging at the Murray mouth



All photos: Alyssa Finlay, Will Campbell, Grant Butler, Jenny Gray, Rob Eastwood, Joan Read, Mark Charnley (SA Club)

Day 3 - Sunday, 4 April

Today is motor sport day! Either the Willunga Hillclimb or a funkhana, followed after lunch by some tours of local wineries or chocolate shops. Yum! First, however, it was off to the hillclimb course for a photoshoot. The local council had actually closed off the hill, just for the event. We went on to the funkhana and had a great time but by all reports, the Hillclimb was a real hoot!

The evening's entertainment consisted of dinner at Middlebrook Winery with the auction of a range of items (handbags through to Mazda paraphernalia) - proceeds to the local hospital. Entertainment that evening was provided by some lovely ladies from Slovenia who, with a quick change of costume, became blokes from downunder.

Coral & Will



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Letters from NatMeet 2-6 April, 2010



Day 4 - Monday, 5 April

Day 4 dawned as another perfect one for MX-5 touring, slightly overcast with a mild temperature. Maybe not the perfect beach day but the SA team didn't let us down with the weather all weekend so anticipation was high.

At our duly allotted start time we set out with our trip leaders, Dianne and Allen Weber, tail-end charlies, Dianne and Mark Robertson and our excellent trip notes winding our way over some of the best roads on the Fleurieu Peninsula towards Aldinga beach. The trip notes promised windy roads and steep drops and we weren't disappointed.

On arriving at Aldinga beach the sun came out and the temperature quickly rose towards the forecast 31°C.

After morning tea with some celebratory cake it was down to the beach for a quick game of toss the octopus superbly organised by Rae and Ken Edwards. Some adventurous drivers took their beloved MX-5s on to the sand for a special by the sea photo shoot whilst other even more adventurous souls went for a swim (one from the 'mainland' was even heard saying "life doesn't get any better than this"!).

After a short drive back to McLaren Vale it was time for more food then a relaxing afternoon by the pool before the big **Glitz and Glamour** presentation dinner.

This gave everyone a chance to dress up in their finery and the night turned out to be another magnificent meal with fine wines and Mike Quist as guest speaker talking about his experiences in bringing the world's most popular sports car to Australia.

Sadly and all too soon the night and NatMeet IX was over and it was time to say goodbye to old and new friends. Thanks to the SA MX-5 club for putting together such a great event in a great location with perfect weather.

Jenny & Bruce



The MX-5 Club Grill



Warwick Gibbon

Full name (including any embarrassing middle names)? *Warwick John Gibbon*

Age (in years thanks)? *56*

Born where? *Bendigo*

Where do you live? *Bendigo*

Profession? *Public servant*

Married/single? *Married*

Pets? *No*

Cats or dogs (choose one)? *Cats*

Fave food? *Italian*

Can you cook? *Yes*

Favourite tippie? *Beer*

What age did you learn to drive? *15*

What did you learn to drive in ... or on?
VW Beetle & 1970 Toyota Crown

What was your first ever car (make/model/colour)? *1972 KE20 Toyota Corolla SL – canary yellow*

What was your first car's name? *Didn't give it a name*

Where was your first fender bender, and in what car? *1997 in central London at 1pm on a Saturday. Gentle tap to rear of London taxi in a hired Vauxhall Vectra collected just a couple of minutes before incident. The only time I have ever taken out full excess cover, so it didn't cost me anything!*

What is your current car/s (ie, everyday driver if not the MX-5)? *2003 Mazda6 Limited – Jill's car ... I usually ride a bike*

What's your current MX-5 (colour, options, name)? *1990 NA 6 – Crystal White with air conditioning*

What have you done to improve your MX-5? *Smaller Momo steering wheel, lowered King springs, Koni shock absorbers, Genie headers, K&N air filter, front and rear chassis braces, advanced timing and modified suspension settings*

What don't you like about your MX-5? *More feel through clutch and accelerator pedals would be nice*

Why an MX-5? *It's a real sports car without the reliability/quality issues of other makes*

Fluffy dice (yes/no)? *No*

Southpark or The Simpsons? *Have never watched a full episode of either.*

Dream wheels (money no object)?
McLaren F1

Would you ever be seen driving a Daewoo or Hyundai? *Only as a last resort*

Favourite other Mazda vehicle in current line up (ie, RX-8, 6 etc)? *RX-8*

What other car would you buy if not a Mazda (gasp!)? *Classic Porsche 911*

How long in the club? *About 16 years*

Have you been on many MX-5 Club runs? *Only a few recently since the formation of the Country chapters*

Favourite Club run location? *Either north-east area or Great Ocean Road*

Funniest thing seen on a Club run?
None yet

Have you been to DECA? *Yes – but only as a spectator*

If yes, how many times? *Three*

Ford vs Holden? *Ford*

What is playing in your car at present? *Dire Straits*

Footy team (AFL/NRL/Soccer)?
Geelong Cats

Anything else you would like to say? *This is a great club which is ever better now that the country chapters are up and running, as it can be difficult to attend Melbourne-based events due to distance and time issues*



Scene about ...





Motor Sport

■ James Saunders – Club Captain - Motor Sport

We asked James to be brief with his Motorsport report this month as we have a very full magazine. He took us very seriously as you can see.

There are three important motor sport items to report:

1. The annual Motor Sport meeting / BBQ will be held on 28 May in Glen Waverley (as mentioned in the last edition).
Please email any agenda items to me at captain@mx5vic.org.au and send your RSVP to Robert at captain2@mx5vic.org.au.
An agenda and further details will be emailed to all attendees prior to the meeting. So if you're not on my email list and are interested in this or any other motor sport matter, please email me and I'll add you to my list.
2. Our next track day is at Sandown on 30 May. This time we're being hosted by our friends at AROCA. Entry forms can be downloaded from our website.
3. Thanks for your feedback and suggestions for improvement after our last track day at Phillip Island. This feedback has been provided to the WRX club.

That's it. I told you it would be a short one!

Cheers ...

James

Phillip Island

■ Words: John Downes ■ Photos: Teruo Delacroix, Joan Read

As a new member of the motor sport fraternity, the Phillip Island circuit is the one I have been most looking forward to attending.

From the coverage of the MotoGP to the experienced MX-5 drivers' talk of their tactics, successes and near misses, this circuit holds a special attraction for me. And the location must be one of the most picturesque in the world.

With this in mind, I arrived at the circuit for my first Phillip Island race day on a wet and windy Sunday morning, 11 April.

The track was magnificent, beautifully maintained and looking a picture. The map I had downloaded from the internet just didn't do it justice. For me the circuit provides a challenging mix of tight corners, long straights and high-speed sweepers, made more interesting by changes in elevation and camber, made *even more interesting* by wet and wind. All this **and** fantastic views to Bass Strait.

Once the formalities of registration, scrutineering and drivers' briefings were completed, the first group hit the track in the late morning. As always, the more experienced drivers in the Club were happy to advise the "first timers" and a few of us gratefully received the good oil from Sam. The clouds were rolling overhead but a break in the weather had allowed the wind partially to dry the track, which made for some interesting variations in traction. During my first time on this track, Sam's advice was a little hard to assimilate, but I was happy to have found my way around and managed the changeable track conditions reasonably well.

After lunch, as my group gridded up for our second session of the day, the heavens opened and the rain pelted down. Then it started to hail!! We all headed out on to the wettest of tracks (at

least all the track was wet) and discovered how little throttle can be applied when cornering under these conditions: virtually none. I had a few slow-speed sideways incidents to help me understand this fact. The track was super slippery and, for me, it was difficult to relax and feel at all confident in the conditions.

By mid-afternoon, the track was dry and our third session was absolutely fabulous. Everyone on the



Results - Round 7	1st	2nd	3rd
Standard NA	Robert Downes » 2:08.833 ¹	Teruo Delacroix » 2:10.497	Brendan Beavis » 2:11.793
Standard NB	John Downes » 2:22.597		
Standard NC	Lindy Anderson » 2:28.551		
Clubman	Peter Phillips » 2:04.682 ¹	Sam Gumina » 2:05.421	Ray Monik » 2:05.433
Modified	Russell Garner » 2:01.954	James Saunders » 2:05.351	Mike Kirby » 2:06.845
Restricted Open	Randy Stagno Navarra » 2:01.021	Marcus Stacey » 2:07.782	

¹ New Club motor sport group lap record



Phillip Island Sprints 11 April, 2010 2009-10 Championship – Round 7

track was at full pace and confident in the grip of the dry track and the handling of their vehicles. Coming off, you could not have wiped the smile off my face (same for the others as well). That session made the whole day worthwhile.

Racing on the day was a visitor from the NSW MX-5 club, Bryan Shedden. Having driven 11 hours from Wollongong on the Saturday, and facing the long drive back home on the Monday, Bryan showed real dedication to his sport and a keen desire to race the famous Phillip Island circuit. Bryan takes his racing seriously and attracted a crowd as he showed a video of his session on his laptop, recorded using a \$40 miniature video camera attached to the front of his car. Amazing the small size and low cost of this type of technology.

Some disappointment was expressed by many Club members regarding the limited laps/sessions and the inequity of the track time between the groups. I understand that the Club has approached our hosts, the WRX club, with some suggestions to improve the running of these days. I thank the WRX club and all officials on the day, and look forward to any changes that will mean more track time for all participants in the future.

Regardless, for me the day was a great success and most enjoyable. Even though I left plenty of lap time on the table and have yet to implement much of Sam's advice, I feel as though I have at least "opened my account" with the great Phillip Island circuit.



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Championship standings after Round 7 - Sprints, Phillip Island, 11 April 2010

	1st		2nd		3rd	
Overall Champion	Russell Garner	» 70	Peter Phillips	» 61	Ray Monik Brendan Beavis Randy Stagno Navarra	» 52
Standard NA	Brendan Beavis	» 52	Robert Downes	» 49	Teruo Delacroix	» 45
Standard NB	John McGregor	» 44	John Downes	» 39	Max Lloyd	» 24
Standard NC	Lindy Anderson	» 30				
Clubman	Peter Phillips	» 61	Ray Monik	» 52	Damon Ethakada	» 25
Modified	Russell Garner	» 70	Craig Healy	» 27	Mike Kirby	» 24
Restricted Open	Randy Stagno Navarra	» 70	Marcus Stacey	» 21	Andrew Shenouda	» 13
Open	Darrin Morice	» 34	David Wilken	» 20	Hamish Hardeman	» 19

My Ride ...

Words & photos: Peter Corkran

PCMX5 - 1996 MX-5 LE

A punch to the back of the head in a football match in 1975 indirectly lead to me becoming an MX-5 owner.

After suffering concussion for about the seventh time I gave up football and took up something safer: forest rallying. Firstly in a Corolla and then in a Lancer (read Escort built properly), I enjoyed five years of competition.

But after proving the old saying "How do you make a small fortune? Have a large one and get into motor sport", I retired but never lost the urge to have a sporty, rewarding to drive car. I had run a business importing rally gear to finance my habit and had dabbled in motor sport journalism in radio and press so I was a very frustrated petrol head.

In 1988 I went to a school reunion and was shocked to find that six of my classmates were no longer with us. Reasoning that you could not predict the future, I immediately bought a Bug Eye Sprite and had a great time in it for a couple of years, even though you needed about 20 minutes' notice of any rain in order to retrieve and put up the roof plus you stood a fair chance of being dragged off at the lights by a Datsun 120Y! A house purchase meant it was time for the Bug Eye and me to part.

About the same time a motor sport mate made a killing putting deposits on the recently-released MX-5 and then selling the orders for anything up to \$5000 over the odds (\$29,990 from memory). What's more he even let me drive one and I



was hooked, especially when he showed me that the roof went up in seconds and it didn't even leak and it could cope with the threat of a Datsun 200B (a 180B with 20 more mistakes) at the lights.

In 2000 I was finally in a position to buy a 5.

I desperately wanted a Neo Green with tan trim LE but couldn't afford one. Any decent 5 was still worth two thirds of that original price and LEs were considerably more. I found a white late '91, 115,000km with a hardtop for what was a bargain \$18,000.

It was a ripper car and had been fitted with inflatable lumbar supports in the seats which were great. It soon sported a blue glass windowed top, adjustable Konis on standard springs (still the best fast road suspension I have had), Genie extractors and a sports exhaust (subject of a previous article in MX-TRA) and MX-5 Factory cold air Intake.

In 2002, I decided that an NA8A would be nice with the extra bit of power, bigger differential and brakes and a bit more body bracing. Finding one wasn't all that easy (they only sold a few hundred or so a year Australia-wide between 1994-1997/8)

and I looked for six months or so, rejecting most because when I jumped back into the white car it felt and went far better.

In December 2002, I was reading Saturday's Age car section (remember ... that's how we used to buy cars back then!) and there it was: 1996 LE one-owner all books and receipts including the original invoice for a staggering \$50,909 with air conditioning, and only 26,000km of which amazingly 12,000 had been put on in the last 12 months. I had to have it and it was in concours condition so a deal was quickly done.

That summer I had lots of friends as I had two 5s and we took them on many runs, after which they consistently told me how much they preferred the white car!!! So I sold it. And got almost what it owed me; a really great car that one!!

I was in a dilemma. I liked to "improve" my cars but this was too good. **Plan A:** only add things that were options or could be removed if I wanted to go back to standard. This lasted a couple of years and was replaced after turning down a very tempting offer from a Japanese collector by **Plan B:** it is your car, make it what you want it to be.

So here is what happened under plans A and B.





Exterior

Tan cloth soft top with no unzip fold-down glass window; *Frenzy* style bar, wind blocker and luggage kit (wonderful quality and price; the wind blocker and the luggage kit make the car top-down useable in winter as they keep all the drafts out from the rear while the luggage almost doubles the capacity.) Chrome fuel filler cap and the latest addition a Mazda OE front spoiler (the only modification I would make to the body as I think they got it right first up).

Interior

Factory style wood grain kit, *KG Works* dash (my favourite addition to the car, very personal as I am the only one who sees it) and hazard/headlight switch for the retro look, *Voodoo* gear knob and *Mazdaspeed* pedals.

Suspension

The LE looked like a FWD when I bought it riding much higher than my NA6 and I was talked into some *King* springs to go with the *Konis*; in a word they were horrible, so they were replaced with *Eibach* springs which gave a great ride/handling compromise but ultimately were a bit low and were sold to be replaced with a set of *Tein Super Street* coilovers. These are adjustable for height and have 16 settings to choose from for rebound and after 30,000km are still doing well.

Brainstorm front and rear under body braces and a front strut brace are also fitted.

Wheels/Tyres

Having always loved the Minilite look I replaced the standard 14" wheels and the rock hard original Bridgestone tyres with some second-hand *Black Racing*

14x6 wheels and *Yokohama 539* tyres. *Chapparral* wheels then became available in 15x7 ET 38 and were duly purchased and fitted with 195/50 15 Yoko C Drives, later S Drives. All these tyres have proved to be good performers and the wheels are a constant source of enquiry from onlookers.

Other Bits

Techno grille; air horns and sill protectors.

Engine /Transmission

At the time I was considering increasing the power of my 5; the easiest and most cost-effective way was probably to turbocharge but I wanted to stay naturally aspirated and to have a really flexible, responsive engine.

A *Town and Country* exhaust was fitted and then dyno tested and developed over a couple of years (figures now show that this exhaust can produce up to 8RWKW increase from the cat back and a further 4RWKW if a steel high-flow cat is used). A lot of fellow MX-5 Club members have used the T&C set up; eg, Chris Hoskin's NB8B went from 72RWKW to 86RWKW with the T&C high flow cat and exhaust.

An *MX-5 Factory* CAI went in as did extractors, the CAI being protected from the heat of the extractors by a *Trackdog Racing* heat shield which does an amazing job. It is worth noting that our testing suggests that NA6/8 cars with cast exhaust manifolds as standard benefit from aftermarket extractors while NBs which have a tubular style manifold do not give a cost effective gain. XFORCE extractors from an NB were wrongly fitted and had some clearance issues but made good power.

Over the years a few runs on the dyno showed that my car unlike most 5s was running dangerously lean at the top of the rev range. A *Malpassi* adjustable fuel regulator made some difference but more was needed.

After some research I decide to fit a *Microtech* 'piggyback' ECU, which gives the tuner control over the fuel and timing programs but allows the standard ECU to run the other functions such as air conditioning. I reasoned that if I was going to get the car tuned on a dyno now was the time to do any other enhancements and after again researching decided on some TIGHE 805c cams.

When I first bought the car it produced about 64RWKW and it was obviously a very average example of the breed. Exhaust and CAI had taken it to 74RWKW so I took off for a two-week holiday leaving it at *Maztech* for the cams and ECU to be fitted, and when I got back it was showing 94RWKW. More importantly it was easy to drive, responsive from 2000rpm with a strong push in the back at 3800rpm and then a real rush at 5800rpm right through to 8000rpm (the rev limiter had been removed). It now revved out like a 1.6!! Unhappy with the clearance issues of the 4 into 2 into 1 X forces I then fitted *Racing Beat 4* into 1 extractors, at huge expense and **LOST** 2RWKW. A high-flow fuel pump was fitted at this time and all the air/fuel ratios were spot on, so my lean running had been fixed.

Given that I had a broader range of power available I then looked at the gearing of the car and opted for a six-speed gearbox





and a 3.9 Torsen LSD. The NA8A has a 4.1 differential standard. The six-speed has a LOWER 6th than 5th in a five-speed so the speedo was now accurate (previously an indicated 105 was a true 100kmh) and a reduction in cruising revs of around 300rpm at a true 100kmh, plus a gear and instant throttle response for any occasion. The overwhelming response of everyone who has driven the car is to praise its throttle response and drivability with 3rd pulling strongly through from 15kmh to 120kmh and 6th usable from 70kmh. The six-speed fits easily, only two of the three starter motor bolts line up and are useable but this has not been a problem in use. An EXCEDY sports clutch was put in at the same time and provides a progressive but decisive feel.

The downside of the six-speed is the lousy shift quality compared to the five-speed. Having driven a few six-speeds like mine, all tended to occasionally find a "nothing" plane when shifting back from 4th to 3rd just when you needed the power to negotiate a corner. A *Simpson Design* shortshifter kit and a *Voodoo* gear knob seem to have helped and the problem rarely occurs.

Another issue that had caused concern was that a vibration in the drive train was traced to a binding universal in the tail shaft. A solid belt with a hammer had freed it but ultimately I knew I needed to source an alternative shaft as the universals are not replaceable. Only \$940 from my friendly Mazda dealer!!!! So it was back to PDR in South Geelong who

had set up the differential for me and a new tail shaft with replaceable universals was built for \$550.

So after over seven years of ownership and 68,000km, how do I feel about PCMX5?

Am I a person who has destroyed the integrity of a concours car or do I have the car of my dreams? The answer is probably neither; sometimes the car feels a bit too basic and raw to be perfect which at the same time is both an enormous attraction and an irritation. The debate about the respective values of the various model MX-5s is sometimes summed up as "the NA is the more pure and better sports car but later models may be better cars" and I tend to agree. The leather seats are not that comfortable on a long trip or supportive when you are having a "go". It is really responsive and still looks good despite having stone chips across the front and some small dints around the body (quoted \$280 to be fixed by *Aus Dint*). People are attracted to it, generally assuming that it is newer and worth way more than it is (but not more than it has cost!!).

It is a really rewarding drive if there are any demands made in terms of handling and performance and it's a great way to blow away the troubles of a busy day. On the wonderful three-day trips I have taken with some fellow MX-5ers through Gippsland and over the Alpine Way and Snowy Mountains or the quick breakfast dashes to Apollo Bay down the Great Ocean Road, that my Geelong location

allows me, I am sure that no other car anywhere near the price could be so rewarding.

I very rarely have the radio on, preferring to soak up the wonderful induction and exhaust melodies.

My friends and fellow enthusiasts also tell me that I am a very harsh critic and are glowing in their praise of PCMX5. It sounds great, has all its power exactly where you want it and handles brilliantly, but at the end of the day a well-driven standard NC still did the same 15.65 for the standing quarter at Heathcote (PCMX5 was still a five-speed with 4.1 diff. at that time) and I would imagine it was a more civilised drive home.

So have I vandalised it? I would prefer to think not as most of the real improvement has taken place out of sight and it still presents well, although every time I see fellow Club member Malcolm Young's wonderful standard example I have some doubts, but only until the next time I am seduced by the sound, performance and handling of PCMX5. I guess it is each to their own.

Will I ever sell it? Probably not, but an NC2 does look more attractive as I grow older.

If I can be of any help to you or if you have any questions about my car or any of the many lessons I have PAID to learn along the way please call me on 0417 562 357.

Meanwhile let's just enjoy our wonderfully balanced, durable and rewarding little cars.

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Ladies' polos

Approx. 210 gsm, 96% Cotton / 4% Elastane stretch pique knit with "Y" front placket, black with gold 20th Anniversary embroidery.

Sizes / Half Chest (cm):

8 (46.5) 10 (49) 12 (51.5)
14 (54) 16 (56.5) 18 (59)

Men's polo

Approx. 240 gsm, Combed 65% Poly / 35% Cotton, easy-fit, tight piquot knit black with gold 20th Anniversary embroidery.

Sizes / Half Chest (cm):

S (53.5) M (56) L (58.5)
XL (61) XXL (63.5)



Rugby top

Approx. 350 gsm, 65% Poly / 35% Cotton black with black trim & gold 20th Anniversary embroidery.

Sizes / Half Chest (cm):

S (57.5) M (60) L (62.5)
XL (65) XXL (67.5)



Postage is additional

This one-off range of Club merchandise is already proving incredibly popular among members. To order yours, contact Club Merchandise Officer Steve Dunlop: merchandise@mx5vic.org.au

Come join the party!

20th anniversary celebrations

Saturday, 14th August 2010

It's our birthday – and what better way to celebrate than with a party?

The President and Committee of the Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria invite you to what promises be the best event ever – a Dinner Dance at the Westpac Centre (formerly Lexus Centre) in Melbourne.

With the presentation of our annual motor sport and social awards, a major prize raffle, commemorative giveaways for all attendees and live entertainment by “Band o’ Gold”, this evening will be one to remember.

Our special guest on the night will be Mike Quist who, as Mazda’s national public relations manager in 1989, orchestrated the launch of the Mazda MX-5 into Australia and set the ball rolling for all the state MX-5 Clubs.

Seating will be limited so make your reservation now – payments can be made online for either a Single or Double Reservation by following the link on the Club website homepage.

(If you prefer to send a cheque or money order it may be posted to: Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria, PO Box 7438 Beaumaris 3193. Please include a note with your details and any special dietary or other requirements.)

Cost: \$55 pp (\$110 double)
~ 3-course meal with drinks at bar prices

**** A strict no cancellations/no refunds policy applies to this function ****

MX-5
Mazda MX-5 Club
of Victoria Inc.
20th Anniversary
1990 - 2010

Contact: Janette – Club Captain (Social) social@mx5vic.org.au
RSVP: (and final payment) no later than 30 June 2010
– book online via the Club website: www.mx5vic.org.au

Dress Code: Smart casual or lounge suit – please, no denim

We hope to see you there.

President & Committee – 2010

Grand Prix in the 'burbs

■ Words: Ben Sale ■ Photos: Murray Finlay, Teruo Delacroix, Cheyne Toomey and Ben Sale

On Thursday 25 March some of the more competitive (and not so competitive) members of the MX-5 Club arrived at Go Kart Sport Racing in Moorabbin ready to commence battle.

The 14 combatants first took part in a 10-lap qualifying session. Traffic was a problem in this session as there was a lap time difference of up to 10 seconds between the fastest guys and the slower drivers learning the track. A pecking order was starting to take place however.

It came as no surprise that the motor sport guys were up at the top of the time sheets: Russell Garner, Damon Ethakada and James Saunders in 2nd, 3rd and 4th place. However, in pole position by a margin of 0.7 seconds was *yours truly!*

The first race started and in a lot of ways played out like a race of V8 taxis with plenty of nudges and forcing of positions. From go, a pack of 14 karts hurtled off the grid down into the tight turn two all wanting to occupy the same piece of road ... as a result there were a few minor collisions and I ended the first lap in fourth place. From then on it was a case of fighting back. I spent much of the race duelling with Russell and Damon for the lead (awesome battle!).

A few laps from the end, the lead having changed between the three of us at least 10 times already (the moment one of us got the lead we'd be re-overtaken at the next corner) I managed to find a way through and make just enough of a break to maintain the lead to the end winning from Damon, Russell and James. Russell scored fastest lap by 2/10ths from me. Throughout the field people were having their own battles. Between positions four and eight the driver lap times



Membership

■ Will Campbell – Membership Officer

Membership numbers have slowed a little this month, but every new members is a new Club record!

Current membership count:

461

On behalf of our fine Club, I extend a warm welcome to:

» Lester and Lois Scott	1995 Black NA
» Frank Howard	1990 White NA
» Peter Sisson	Silver NB

See you out and about ...

Will

Karting night - 25.3.10



were only 4/10ths of a second apart. Likewise the lap times of positions nine to 12 were only 4/10ths apart. It was great to see everyone getting out of their karts with a big smile on their faces.

Race two was somewhat more understated for me ... you see I'm just a little bit competitive so on the warm up lap I went out quite quickly on the track and did a number of donuts out on the back end of the track warming up my rear tyres. This combined with the standard weaving meant I had reasonably warm tyres all round. In karts like these, rear tyre temperature is critical; when the tyres are heated up (which normally takes a few laps) you have much more traction which means you slide less and go faster. Off the line Damon yet again made a cracking start (don't know how he does it)

and we went into the first corner pretty close. However, after a bit of a talking to from the guys who run the venue, the racing was a bit cleaner. I exited turn one in the lead and exploited my slightly warmer tyres pulling out a second a lap on the first three laps. By the time our times leveled out I was far enough ahead to consolidate the gap for the rest of the race despite Damon beginning to slowly catch me at the end. The final results were myself in first place, Damon Ethakada in 2nd and Russell Garner in 3rd with Damon's fastest lap 2/10ths quicker than mine.

Throughout the rest of the field the racing was close, many people significantly improving over the night. The most notable was Lindy Anderson who improved her qualifying time by 5.5

seconds and Nick D'Souza who improved his qualifying time by 2.7 seconds.

I would like to make mention of Keith Smith who travelled all the way down from Ballarat to take part in the night, managing to finish 6th in race one.

The smiles on the faces of everyone when they got out of the karts said it all, what a great night. Thanks to the 14 drivers and the number of people who came along as spectators. Looking forward to doing it again within the next 12 months.

Chapter news ...

Rob's Runaround ~ 18.4.2010 | Northern Tassie

■ Words: Marilyn Clues ■ Photos: Rob Bryan
■ Event organiser: Rob Bryan

The day started out very foggy but we still made it to Longford and met the rest of the team at the bakery.

Since we were there it was decided to enjoy their hospitality while those members who had returned from NatMeet gave their reports. Plus many members had been involved in the Devonport Motor Show so we were a captive but an appreciative audience.

Rob gave us a briefing, outlining the route we would be travelling, including a promise that we would reach Campbelltown without venturing near the Midland Highway. He more than fulfilled this promise – *with bells on*.

We set off south under a clearing sky towards Cressy, passing paddocks that were lush and green side by side with dry arid ones; all of this against the dramatic backdrop of the mountain ranges, the Western Tiers.

To give the reader an idea of how convoluted his trip was, after an hour covering approximately 80km we came upon a road sign stating that Longford was only 11km to the west ... that was the longest 11km I have ever travelled.

The small towns of Bracknell and Cressy were delightful with their old cottages, rustic churches and the locals who gave us a welcome wave or two.

Morning teatime found us turning into the peaceful River Brumby Park ... it was peaceful for the couple who had made their camp beside the quiet waters for a spot of fishing. Can you imagine their feelings of dismay as a convoy of MX-5s trundled over the grass to join them. We took time to stretch, chat and talk about the first leg of the tour and then headed off eventually to allow the couple to enjoy the pastoral peace once more.

We travelled through the historic village of Bracknell with its old cottages and churches, on roads that were extremely well surfaced allowing our leader, Rob, to set a comfortable pace. Lunchtime found us at the Lions Park in Campbelltown and true to Rob's word we never touched the highway once. Out came the rugs and flasks and out came Emma, a cross between a border collie, golden retriever and a few other breeds. She was a delight to watch, gambolling with a ball until a flotilla of ducks appeared and Emma took a flying leap into the river and the peace was shattered as she gave chase. Ducks squarked ... Emma barked and the river became a live show much to the entertainment of all. Shame on us! She came out on command but decided to punish a few by shaking herself liberally.

The weather had settled into an autumn warmth, all tops were down and we enjoyed the driving once more through roads less travelled for most of us. The undulating and curvy route came to a halt briefly as we discovered that a new member had decided to turn off and head for home. Due to the landscape she managed to take a couple of cars with her. Luckily with the tight management of these runs it was soon discovered and a car was despatched to herd them up once again.

Finally we entered Longford, hoping to meet up with the Muscle Cars and Coupe rally but they had disbanded early.

A lively discussion was held as Delma related her sighting of "an emu" alongside the road ... I was driving and missed it ... so did all of the other members. It was mooted that perhaps her flask contained more than coffee but we relented and allowed her the unusual sighting.

A group then travelled through to Trish and Rob's home where we all sampled their hospitality at afternoon tea. Everyone relaxed and the consensus was of a good day out and, for many, a learning experience about the beautiful country around the back roads *without touching a highway*.





Autumn in the Derwent Valley

~ 11.4.2010 | Hobart Chapter

■ Words & photos: John Waldock
■ Event organiser: John Waldock

Tasmania is a pretty special place any time of the year, but particularly so when the autumn colours appear in the countryside.

So this month's run was designed to highlight the autumn colours of Bothwell and the Derwent Valley. It is pleasing to mention the attendance of Frank and Hillary Howard and their lovely white NA. This was their first run and hopefully one of many more to come.

The chapter met as usual down at Salamanca, for the pre-run caffeine refuelling stop. By some miracle we managed to get away pretty much on time, but struck problems early when your author stopped to check his tyre pressure and managed to lose half of the chapter. Thank goodness for radios and route notes!

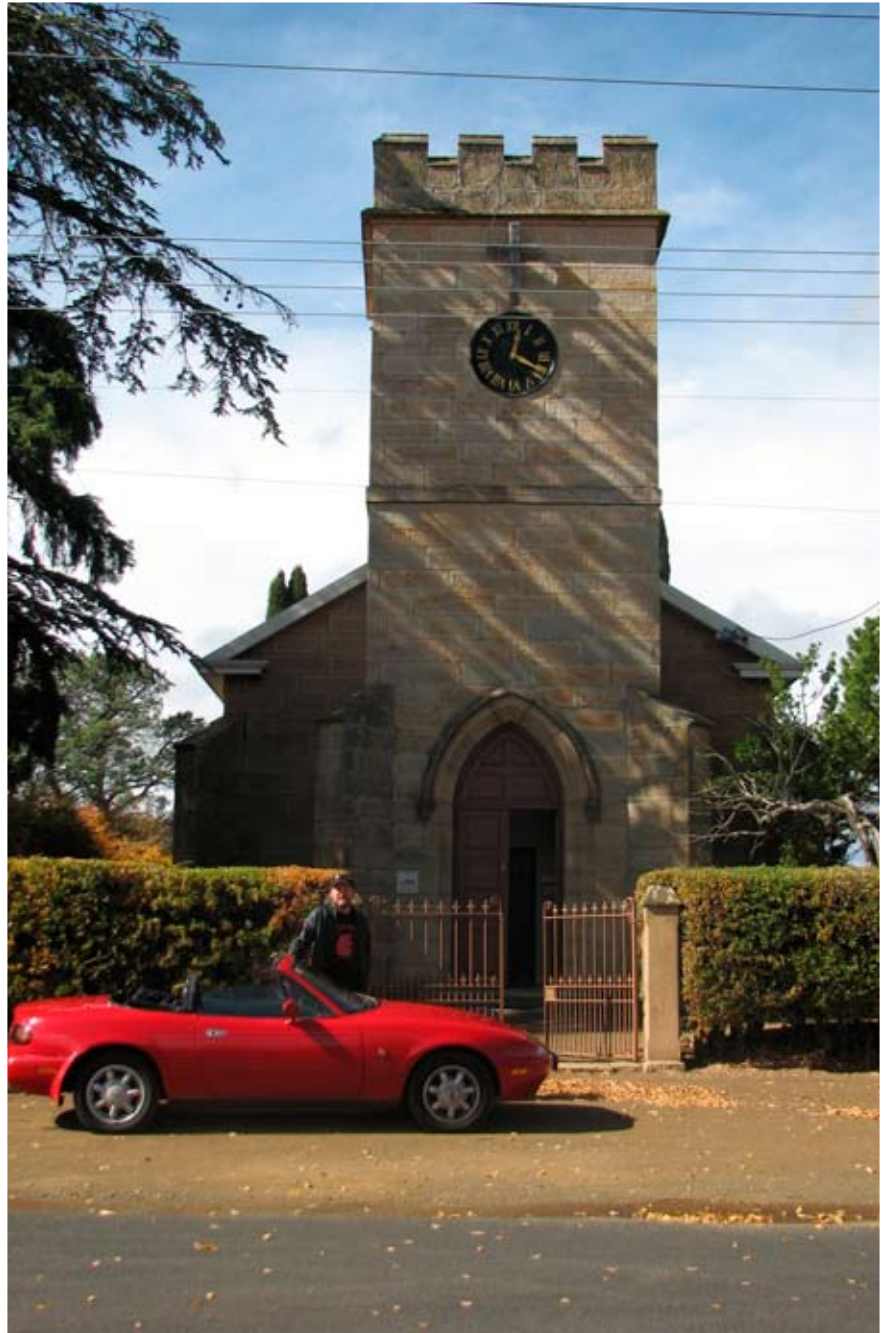
Despite our small hiccup we made our way to Bothwell, where we met up with Frank and Hillary, whom we had managed to lose in our early run mix up. Thankfully Frank knew where we were meeting, so it all ended well. We had a nice morning tea at Bothwell, enjoying the autumn colours and colonial architecture. The weather gods had been kind, and the April sun in Bothwell was quite warming on our backs as we enjoyed a little social time.

Soon we were off to Hamilton and lunch, we had a lovely run down through Hollow Tree Road to Hamilton, where we assembled at the local picnic ground for lunch and a chance to discuss important issues such as why my car was overheating (it ends up it was the water pump packing it in!).

We were also able to do a little planning, with run dates allocated to different Chapter members so that we can get some new ideas out there to give a bit more variety to our assemblages. I would like to thank the members who so readily warmed to the idea of planning and taking responsibility for our program.

Reluctantly we left the picnic grounds, running back to Hobart via New Norfolk and saying our farewells there. Losing Frank and Hillary can't have been too traumatic for them, as I am told that Frank went home *and joined up that night online*. Excellent effort Frank!

Thanks to all who attended.



Chapter news ...

Wang to Yack ~ 18.4.2010 | Northern Tassie

■ Words: Ron Gillick ■ Photos: Marg Gillick, Steve Dunlop ■ Event organisers: Marg & Ron Gillick

Sunday, 18 April, dawned as another perfect day in the North East.

A little bit of cloud, but sunny enough to have the top down on our way to the meeting point in Wangaratta for our Chapter's first run of the year.

For a variety of reasons we normally do two-day weekend runs a couple of times a year but we do have the occasional day run finishing with a lunch at one of the many fine eating places in the region.

We had five cars from our "local" area and, to our surprise and pleasure, another five from Melbourne and beyond had come up to join us. We are extremely grateful to our visitors that they travel so far to take part. Even better was the fact that two cars belonged to new members on their first run: Colin Lawrence-Parnaby from Albury and Lester and Lois Scott from Melbourne. Lois and Lester had only joined the Club a few days earlier.

Also waiting at the meeting point when we arrived was Club Merchandising Officer, Steve Dunlop, with a range of the Club's apparel for us to buy. Business appeared to be brisk and we certainly appreciated the opportunity to see the goods "in the flesh" and we thank Steve for driving all that way for our benefit.

After we had made our purchases and enduring the all-important briefing on the new Convoy Rules, it was time to get into our cars for a short run out to the Milawa Cheese Factory for a coffee, cake and a chat with the new members and those others we hadn't seen for a while. Having done that and having

made our purchases of cheese or chocolate (or both) it was back into the cars for the main part of the run.

Leaving the Cheese Factory we headed down the back road to Myrtleford where we stopped to regroup. The next section of the run was the part which reminds us why we enjoy owning our MX-5s so much. Turning off the Great Alpine Road at Ovens, we headed through Happy Valley towards the Kiewa Valley Highway some 35km away. The first 25km winds its way through the Happy Valley with beautiful scenery and plenty of corners. But the best is saved to last with the final 10km taking us through dense bushland with plenty of tight twists and turns. I may be biased, but I believe that this area of Victoria has the best and the most MX-5 country anywhere in the State.

Once again we stopped to regroup before heading off through the beautiful Kiewa Valley to our lunch destination in Yackandandah at the "Sticky Tarts Café". This spot was chosen for us by "Yack" locals Gerry and Ellie Engwerda and I'm sure everyone agreed that it was a good choice.

With lunch finished and with many of the people having a long way to drive home, farewells were exchanged with old and new friends and the group scattered in all directions bringing to an end another great day with our cars.

Footnote: We only have 15 members in our Chapter area stretching from Bendigo to Khancoban and I would urge every one of you to participate in our runs whenever you are able. The runs are a great way to meet other members and an even greater way to get the most enjoyment from our cars. ~ Ron



Ballarat turns One! ~ 11.4.2010 | Ballarat & Western Victoria



■ Words: Lachlan Story ■ Photo: Janette Todd
■ Event organisers: John & Noellene Gleeson

They say time flies when you are having fun. In my experience, time simply flies.

About a year ago I received an email from some bloke calling himself John Gleeson, from Ballarat. John wanted to know if I was interested in participating in some Ballarat-based runs. Despite living some 200km north-west of Ballarat I thought it would be a good idea and in April of last year John and his wife Noeleen organised our first run.

I arrived at the co-ordinates and saw one lonely MX-5, belonging to the Gleesons. We introduced ourselves and decided that two cars would, if necessary, constitute a run. We stood there in sub-arctic conditions (it was Ballarat after all) hoping that someone else would turn up. Eventually some 16 cars arrived and we had a great run, culminating at the Court House Hotel in Smythesdale.

Fast-forward 12 months and the Ballarat group had exceeded all and any expectations and, thanks to the huge efforts of the Gleesons, we have had many brilliant runs. John thought it would be nice to revisit the original run and so it was.

We rolled up at the appointed time with the 15-below wind howling at us from Antarctica via Warrnambool. I was the only idiot with the roof down, dressed up like the Michelin man. We were graced by the presence of King Murray and Janette and John Todd, who brought with them a birthday present.

The committee in their infinite wisdom have given the Ballarat group Chapter status, now to be known as the Ballarat and Western Victoria Chapter (the "Western Victoria" bit is for me I think). The Club does not make these decisions lightly and we are truly honoured.

Back to the run. Cold as a Mother-in-Law's kiss! To misquote Shakespeare, "Fair is foul and foul is fair, such a fair and foul day I have never seen" or to quote this correspondent, "crikey it's bloody freezing here".

With my trusty deerstalker hat, nine-foot scarf and my other Ballarat weather clothing I was set. King Murray dropped his lid too and we were off.

Now, last trip we saw signs advertising every type of manure you could think of, including quail poo. This time it was nuts. Hazelnuts, walnuts, pine nuts and even bum nuts (eggs) – I guess it is the nut season. After a while the sun made a poor attempt at poking its head out, decided it was too much trouble, and went back to bed. A little way into the run a couple of more roofs came down, including that of our fearless leader John.

The run went very well with only one wrong turn, which Noeleen will never live down, and only a little rain, which did not necessitate the raising of our roofs. To be honest I am not even sure where we went without consulting the run notes, as I was wholly living in the moment; an MX-5, no roof, great day, the smells and sights of the bush and the company of like-minded people.



Eventually we arrived at the Court House Hotel in Smythesdale for lunch. It was here that I met up with my wife Tracey, who could not make the start, driving my beat-up Austin 1800 ute. The lamb shanks were, as usual, superb and I guess that the rest of the food was equally as good as it disappeared post-haste with not one complaint. Eventually we left due to our having to drive home to Mockinya after a truly fabulous time. Of course I lost Molly and was relegated to the ute for the homeward trip.

My thanks go to the Gleesons, whose hard work has pulled this group together and who have organised so many great runs. They work very very hard for us. Also thanks to King Murray and the rest of his court of nobles for their support, recognising the aforementioned efforts and awarding us Chapter status.

Anyone who has not been on a Ballarat run should make the effort. *They are a hoot!*

2010 Devonport motor show

The Devonport Motor Show is run by the Devonport Rotary Club each year, alongside the Mersey River, and this year the North Tassie Chapter decided to enter our Mazda MX-5s.

There was a large turnout of cars from vintage, an old ambulance, Cadillacs, Porches, Hot Rods, Holdens, Fords and of course our eight Mazda MX-5s.

The car show also had a motor bike section, food stalls and competitions such as changing a tyre, spark plugs etc. The kids were also catered for with a jumping castle and face painting. There was a great public response to this advent and we were fortunate that this time the weather held off.

A good day was had by all and we may have picked up a couple more new members.

■ Words & photo: Ruth Beaton

~ Northern Tassie



Tech Talk ... Tyres & Rims

Tyres & Rims ■ Words: Robert Downes, Assistant Club Captain - Motor Sport

Quality tyres and an accurate wheel alignment can enhance the beautifully balanced chassis, impeccable road manners and fine handling that have been a major attraction of the MX-5 since its introduction.

Each successive model has endeavoured to elevate these features to new levels partly through the use of larger diameter wheels with lower profile (and wider) tyres.

Tyres: philosophy & performance criteria

Tyres are the car's only point of contact with the road and all acceleration, braking, cornering and directional control are through them. Considering the important job they perform, the amount of time you will use them and the fact that it will be expensive to discard a near new set of tyres if you are really unhappy with your purchase, it is worth finding the tyres that best meet your requirements and budget.

What are we looking at in terms of selection criteria? Its:

- » braking modulation, cornering stability, steering response, handling predictability in both dry and wet conditions
- » ride comfort and noise generated
- » treadwear
- » price and availability

I do not know of a tyre that can get "top marks" on each of the above items but I for one am not prepared to compromise on the performance criteria.

Tyre brands

The quality of tyres now being made available by the major global manufacturers has dramatically improved over the last couple of years. Each offers a range of tyres from budget to expensive, ultra high performance. Inside the MX-5 Club motor sport fraternity several makes / models have surfaced as great performers including, in no ranked order:

- » Toyo RIR
- » Kumho KU36
- » Hankook RS2
- » Dunlop DZZI
- » Bridgestone Adrenalin RE001

As stated earlier, every tyre manufacturer is forced to make a compromise of some kind and so it will also be with those mentioned. Other brands and models should definitely not be excluded and some websites provide tyre tests and/or reviews eg, www.tyrereviews.co.uk and www.tirerack.com. In addition also speak to tyre retailers that carry tyres from a range of manufacturers. **DO NOT** even consider retread tyres or second-hand tyres and don't wait until your tyres are completely worn out before you replace them – that's when you can have an accident.

Tyre & rim size selection consideration

Mazda fitted lightweight rims to each MX-5 model to reduce "unsprung weight" which affects handling and we need to be aware that some (not all) aftermarket rims, although looking "beautiful", can be substantially heavier than identically-sized stock rims. Also some aftermarket rims do not have the correct "offset", which refers to how far "out" from the car a wheel sits. This can risk rubbing the tyre on the lip of the guard and other problems.

Factory rim details

MX-5 model	NA	NA	NB8A	NB8B	NC
Year	89-93	94-97	98-99	00-04	05-
Diameter (in)	14	14	15	16	17
Width (in)	5.5	6	6	6.5	7
Offset (mm)	45	45	40	40	55
Rim weight (lb)	12.3	11.2	13.1	15.5	17

Typical tyre details

Tyre size	Weight (lb)	Revs / km
185/60/14	18	575
195/60/14	19	560
195/50/15	18-19	575
205/50/15	19-21	565
205/45/16	20-21	561
215/45/17	25	530

As you can see, even fitting a 16" X 6 1/2" rim and tyre off an NB8B on to a 1994 NA will result in a rim/tyre combination of about 36lb versus 30lb. Not only is this enough to affect the car's handling adversely but it will also:

- » reduce the car's acceleration
- » put your speedo out 2.3%
- » increase the ride height 7mm
- » require an additional 5mm inside clearance but critically an additional 15mm outside width clearance together with 7mm vertical clearance.

Go to www.superjamie.net/garage and the Tyre Section Calculator to work out any comparison you wish.

Also remember that large diameter tyres usually cost more and low profile tyres give a harsher ride.

On the NA8 racecar we either use factory 14" x 6" rims with 195/60/14 tyres or factory 15" x 6" rims with 195/50/15 tyres - weight and dimensions virtually identical. These are my two recommended combinations for any NA model. I do **NOT** recommend lowering or stiffening the suspension of a "public road"-only driven car – I'm happy to explain in a separate MX-TRA article if requested.

Proper fitment

It's all a balancing act! You have done a deal for a set of new tyres and it's time to fit them. Suggestions: insist on the "rims only" being spun up on the dynamic balancer to see if they run perfectly true. If this is not the case pick the best two and earmark those to be used on the front of the vehicle. I make arrangements at time of purchase to stand next to the chap doing the balancing to ensure I get the best outcome.

Tyre pressure

Very important! My recommendations:

- » City driving NA/NB front & rear: 29 psi (200kPa)
NC front & rear: 34 psi (230kPa)
- » Country driving NA/NB front & rear: 33 psi (225kPa)
- » Check tyre pressures every 2-3 weeks

Ask an Expert Mazda Australia are about to add an "Ask an Expert" section to their consumer website, and they are looking for "real life" ideas and suggestions for them to address. If you have any questions or topics (including modifications or motor sport questions), please send them to <editor@mx5vic.org.au> and we will pass them on. Mazda have agreed that we can use any MX-5 topics in MX-TRA.



- » Check spare every three months: 60 psi (410kPa)
- » Don't trust "servo" gauges; keep a dial pressure gauge in the glove box
- » Always use metal valve caps
- » Rotate and rebalance tyres at "half-life".

Wheel alignment

Which way are your wheels pointing? A set of good quality, well balanced tyres in combination with an accurate wheel alignment can virtually transform your MX-5 in terms of the way it steers and rides. Mazda, like all manufacturers has wide tolerances on its wheel alignment specification. The MX-5 requires a four-wheel alignment. My recommendations are as follows:

NA & NB	Front:	Camber:	1.0 deg NEG
		Toe in:	0.8mm each side
		Castor:	3 to 5 deg
	Rear:	Camber:	1.5 deg NEG
		Toe in:	0.8mm each side
NC (as supplied by Randy ...)	Front:	Camber:	2.1 deg NEG
		Toe in:	1.0mm each side
		Castor:	6 deg
	Rear:	Camber:	2.0 deg NEG
		Toe in:	1.0mm each side

Tell them what you want and ask for a "before and after" printout – keep with your service records. I prefer to take the

car to a specialist alignment company but it is certainly not as convenient as having it done when the tyres are being fitted. The alignment is not going to last forever and I would suggest another one at tyre "half-life". I have several friends who, when they take delivery of a brand new car, have the alignment checked and measured immediately to ensure they do not prematurely scrub out expensive new tyres.

In summary

- » MX-5s respond positively to quality tyres inflated to the correct pressure, accurate wheel balancing and wheel alignment.
- » Tyres are a compromise between performance, treadwear and price. Do your homework before purchasing.
- » Beware of fitting larger diameter and/or aftermarket rims and tyres.
- » Have the tyre/rim accurately balanced.
- » Keep your tyres inflated to the correct pressure.
- » Nominate your required wheel alignment settings ... don't just take what they give you.

Perhaps we could have some feedback from Club members on this article regarding tyres, rims, pressures and/or wheel alignment settings. Please send your comments to editor@mx5vic.org.au

I hope the information makes your MX-5 even more enjoyable to drive.

Introductory discount for Club Members on new DZZ1

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Market place ...

Please note: notices in the Market Place section are presented as a service to members only. The Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria Inc. has not tested the products, equipment or services listed and makes no warranties or representations about any of the products or their purported uses.

Personal **2001 NB ... looking for love**

My cosy garage is where I'm tucked under the covers, but I am young at heart and just want to get out and go.

Now before we start, let's get something straight between us. I love to get my top down for that fresh feeling, whether it be a short run to the shops or a leisurely drive down a winding road.

I have new boots, a slick, fit body and keep myself in excellent condition.

And if we get too hot, just imagine the chill as my AC keeps us comfortable.

Don't be offended, just pick up the phone and call me, call me now!

- » first registered 24 December, 2001
- » 59,000km
- » air conditioning, 6-speed manual

Asking price: \$20,890 neg.

Contact David: 0411 446 886
(Club member, Ashburton)



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WAXIT car care cleaning & detailing guide ~ part 1



Welcome to the first in a series of articles from Waxit Car Care covering the various aspects of car appearance maintenance and detailing.

Pretty much all detailing tasks commence with washing the car to remove road grime, dirt and dust. Washing and drying is also the major maintenance task that needs doing on a regular basis. Our preferred washing frequency is weekly or, if this isn't practical, bi-weekly.

Of course with water restrictions affecting most parts of Victoria it is illegal to use potable water for the purpose of vehicle washing. Tank or recycled water is the only option if you wish to use the traditional method of a hose and bucket. For this reason we will outline a couple of alternative methods which use either no water at all or a very small amount (six-eight litres, recycled or tank sourced of course).

Rinseless Wash Products and Techniques

Rinseless wash products are designed to be used with a very small amount of water, typically four litres per bucket with two buckets being used. Unlike traditional wash shampoo they don't suds up; rather they rely on polymers and mild detergents to loosen the dirt on the paint, this is then wiped away with a mitt. At Waxit we stock three brands of rinseless wash: *DP*, *Optimum* and *Quick & Easy Wash*.

When doing any car appearance maintenance or detailing task, always work on a cold car in the shade or in your garage.

The process you need to follow to ensure a minimal amount of marring is as follows:

1. Put four litres of clean water into a bucket and measure in 30ml of rinseless wash.
2. Put another four litres of clean water into a second bucket; do not add any product to this bucket.
3. Dip your microfibre wash mitt into the first bucket and commence wiping over a panel of the car. Always start at the top and work down.
4. Once you have wiped down the panel, drop the mitt into the second bucket.
5. Use a microfibre drying towel or chamois to dry the area you have just washed.
6. Pick up the mitt from the second bucket by the cuff and allow the water to strain through it. This will wash out most particles of dirt, road grime etc and stop them being wiped back over your car.
7. Dip the mitt into bucket one which contains the rinseless wash solution and wipe down the rest of the panel you are washing then repeat steps 4 and 6 until you have washed and dried the entire car.
8. Typically we then go over the car with a Quick Detail spray to ensure nothing is missed and to add that little bit of extra shine.

If done correctly you will find the water in second bucket is very dirty while bucket one is fairly clean. Over time some minor marring will result from this method of washing which is unavoidable as you don't rinse off the surface dirt prior to commencing the washing process.

AG Group are pleased to offer a 5% discount to all financial members of the Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria.

Swissvax and Festool products and all Kits are exempt from the discount.

Produce your valid membership card and number to secure the discount.

See AG's ad on page 28.

Waterless Wash Products and Techniques

Waterless wash products often come under attack due to the fact that many claim that they are 100% scratch free. Unfortunately this isn't the case; in our opinion prolonged use of a waterless product, regardless of how careful you are, will result in marring of the paint. This marring isn't a huge issue to most car owners ... however most enthusiasts find it unacceptable.

Waterless wash products are best used on cars that are only moderately dirty; we definitely wouldn't use them on a car that has been driven on wet roads for a few days a week and has the resultant abrasive road grime on the lower panels.

At Waxit we stock *DP Waterless Wash*, *Poorboys Spray & Wipe* and *Freedom One*.

To get the most from a waterless product use the following process and you will minimise the chances of marring your paint.

1. Spray the area you are cleaning until it is nice and wet.
2. Using a damp microfibre cloth, wipe the area with long gentle wipes, working in straight lines, do not use a circular action.
3. After a single wipe, turn the cloth and go over the same area again. Continue wiping and turning until you have finished the area.
4. Using another dry cloth wipe down the area again, ensuring you remove all the product and catch any bits you may of missed.
5. Repeat steps 2 to 4 over the entire car.

We do recommend that you change the damp towel once or twice during the process as this will reduce the incidence of swirl marks and marring.

We trust that this article has been of interest you and invite you call Russell Van or Brian Gardner at our Tullamarine location should you require further advice on this area of car care or any other.

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Market place ...

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For sale number plates and NA bits

Our NA was written off in the recent hail storm.

So, sadly we have several items on offer:

- » **Number plates** (standard size)
Price: \$2,500 ono



- » **Track bar** – Sits between the rear independent suspension, benefits handling as well as greatly reducing any scuttle, shake and twisting of the bodywork, anyone handy with a spanner can fit this in a few minutes. **Price: \$100 ono**



- » **Roll bar** – The roll bar includes a child restraint fixing point.
Price: \$300 ono



- » **Rear vision mirror** – This includes internal map lights – great at night if you're trying to read anything.
Price: \$50 ono



- » **Car Bra** – Comes in a storage bag with press stud closure and has velcro detachable panels that allow the pop up lights to function, in as new condition. **Price: \$200 ono**

- » **Headrest speakers x 4** – The earlier MX-5s had wiring already in the seats with the speaker cavities in the headrest. **Price: \$50 ono**



- » **Tonneau cover** – Original factory cover in as new condition. **Price: \$50 ono**

Plus ... **free to a good home**

- » **NA exhaust system & headers**
- » **original NA airbox**

Contact Gavin: 0419 235 203
(original Foundation member)

For Sale NA hardtop ('91 Limited)

- » British Racing Green, as new (hardly used)
Price: \$1,600

Plus ...

- » **NA towbar** **Price: \$200**
- » **Haynes MX-5 Repair Manual '90-'97 Complete Teardown & Rebuild** **Price: \$25**

Contact Alan: (03) 5195 5375 (Club member, Traralgon)

For Sale Brand new black MX-5 roof

Due to the recent hail storm in Melbourne my beloved MX-5 was written off and I was unable to install the new roof. It's brand new and **un-opened**, still in the box.
Price: POA

Roof details: Robbins Sunfast ZIPPERED convertible top – heater defogger, glass window with rain rail. Fits 1990-2005 only.

Contact Ben: 0401 375 591

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phone: 0414 630 024 or 9439 1466 (ah)

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(NB: Only Peter Rutherford or Hayden Dally are authorised to give club discounts in-store.)

A new option for the MX-5 owner

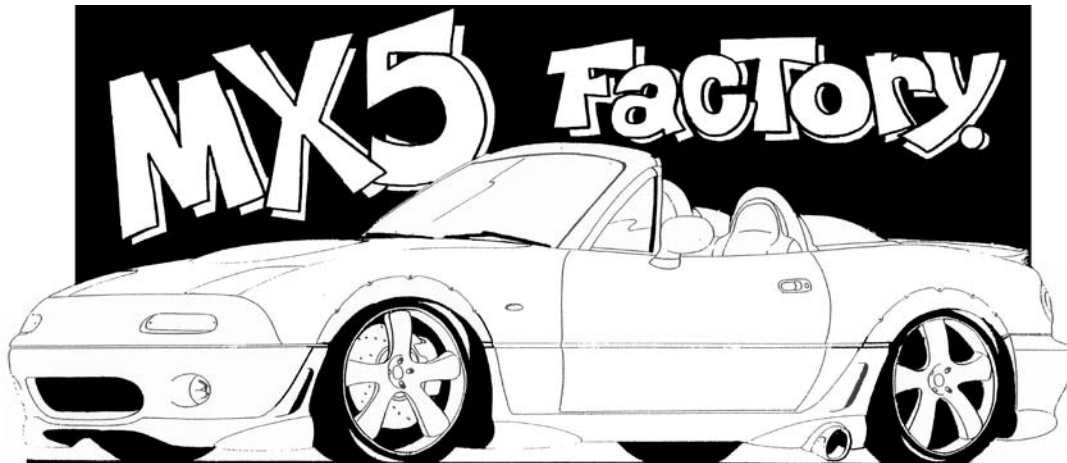
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