

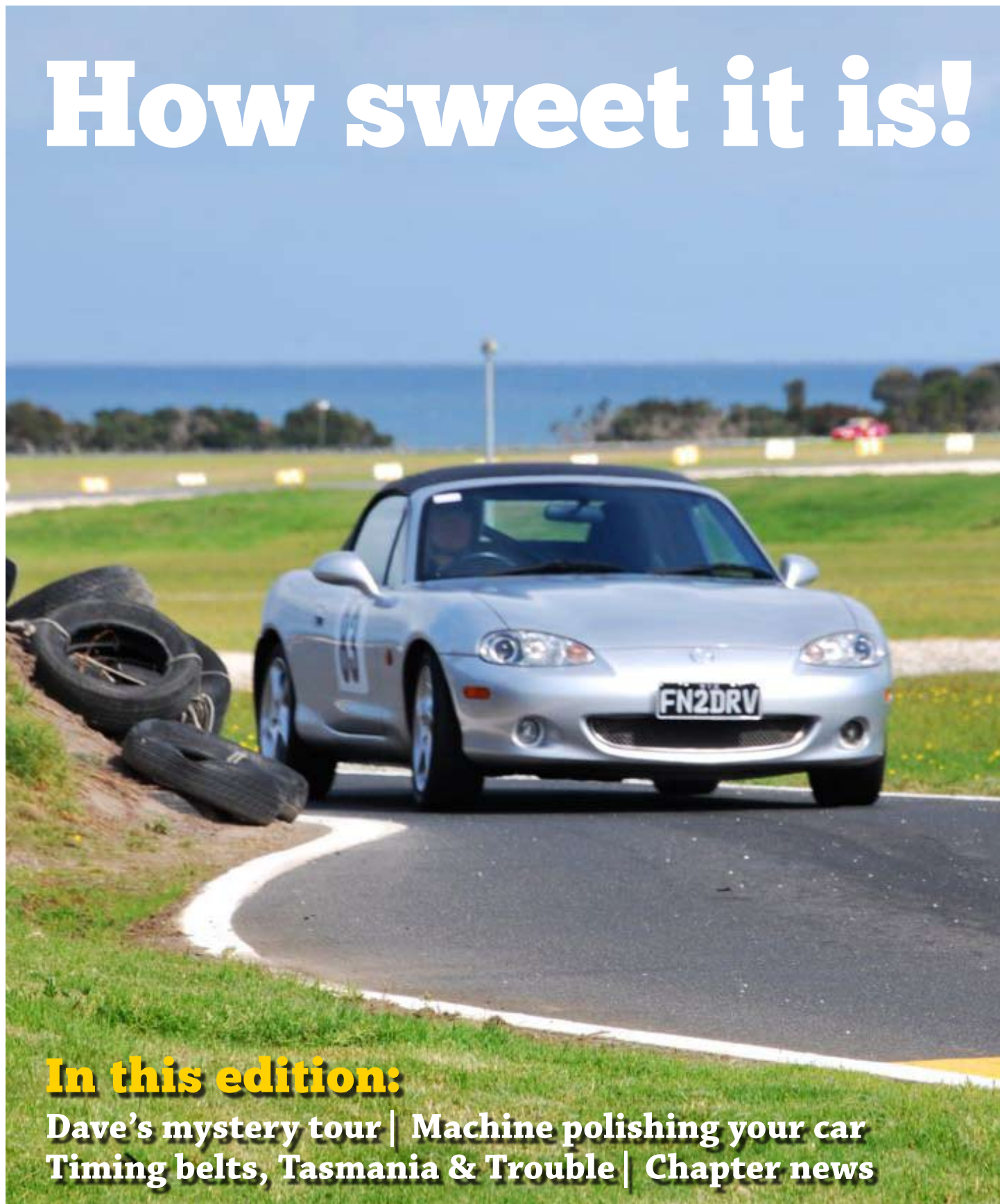
**mxtra**

5/2011

[www.mx5vic.org.au](http://www.mx5vic.org.au)

THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE MAZDA MX-5 CLUB OF VICTORIA INC.

# How sweet it is!



## **In this edition:**

**Dave's mystery tour | Machine polishing your car  
Timing belts, Tasmania & Trouble | Chapter news**



# Max Kirwan **MAZDA**

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**Cover image:**

*Greg Savage gets time away from the control tower to hit the track at Phillip Island. His rego plate says it all!*

Photo: Greg Sale



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# Murray's Corner ...

■ Murray Finlay – President

## *It's time to start thinking about NatMeet 2012.*

For many, **NatMeet** needs no introduction, and your deposits will be on their way as soon as bookings open.

If you're not sure what it is, NatMeet is a national gathering of Australian Mazda MX-5 Club members, hosted by a different State club every second Easter.

It's five days of everything you could ask for: great roads, great locations, great food, great people and great fun! There are convoy runs, motor sport, entertainment, a concours d'elegance, relaxed meals, a gala presentation dinner and much more.

NSW is hosting the 10th event – NatMeet 2012 – in Canberra next Easter. A PDF of their introductory brochure will be e-mailed to all members shortly.

As well as all the fun and frivolity, there is a competitive aspect: each participant earns points for their home State club that go towards determining the "Champion State" at each NatMeet.

And a large part of the winning State's success is determined by weight of numbers. The more members a Club has in attendance at NatMeet, the better chance they have of carrying off the trophy. It's calculated using a formula that, as well as performance in individual events, takes into account the number attending as a percentage of their club's total membership.

Now here's the rub: much to our chagrin, Victoria has *never* won the State title at NatMeet – even in our home State!

Being one of the larger Clubs makes it a challenge – our friends in South Australia, for example, have won it three times; despite being a smaller club, they get a good percentage of their members turning up.

**So ... we need you in 2012!** Please have a look through the NSW brochure when it arrives ... have a look at the NatMeet photos on our website photo gallery and see the fun we have while there, and consider signing up for NatMeet 2012. Canberra's as close to a home event as we will have for several years.

## *Minding our Ps and Qs ...*

Recently we had a bit of a dispute among members in the Club's motor sport section.

I'm delighted to say it's all been resolved and everything is back to normal, but I was disappointed that much of it was played out on a popular MX-5 internet forum.

Now, being in my 50s and an old newspaper journalist, I have to admit I don't really get the fascination with a lot of what's euphemistically called "social media". But it's a fact of life and it's certainly here to stay (until the next big thing, anyway).

The forum is a great place for MX-5 enthusiasts to "meet" others, ask questions, give or garner information, skite a bit and tell all manner of tall tales and true.

But I'd like to take this opportunity to remind all members that forums (fora?) like these are not the best place for private conversations. Every word is there for all the world to see ... and can't be taken back once it's "out there".

I'd also like to emphasise that none of these forums has anything whatsoever to do with the Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria (or any other State MX-5 Club, to my knowledge) and that, while some of their participants and contributors might be members of our Club, the views expressed there do not reflect any official position of our Club.

We have processes in place for handling gripes and grievances, and I ask all members to go through those channels to resolve any differences rather than "go public".

It's timely to remind members of our Club "Code of Conduct", which was introduced last November to set parameters for how members should represent the Club and respect and relate to fellow members.

Whilst complying with this Code is a condition of membership of our Club, for many of us it probably falls under the heading of "fine print" that is glossed over in the enthusiasm of first signing up.

As a reminder, the Code has been reproduced on page 6 of this edition of **mxtra**.

I urge every member to review the Code to see what's expected of you ... and what you can expect. It's there to help everyone enjoy their membership of the Club.

**Until next time, look up, stay back!**

*Murray*

*For your diary ...*

See the full calendar for details

## May

15 Hobart/North Tassie Ross run

17-19 Midweek adventure

22 Ballarat Chapter run

## June

5 Searls' run

12 Hobart Chapter run

13 Queen's Birthday

19 DECA driver training, Shepparton

## July

3 Club run

31 Annual awards lunch, Creswick

## August

7 Club run

10 2010-11 AGM, Albert Park

## September

4 Father's Day

4 Gippsland run

## October

1 Ladies' Day

9 Great Ocean Road dawn run

## November

6 Annual CFA run/show & shine

12-13 N-E Vic Chapter Snowy Mountains run

27 Christmas party (Melbourne)



## Future members?

Jacqui and James Sanderson, both former Committee members who met, married and started their family while Club members, have welcomed twins Alexander Philip and Georgia Jade. According to James, "both bubs look quite different but have their mummy's big blue eyes ..."

Congratulations and welcome from all in the Club.



# Motor Sport Torque

■ Robert Downes – Club Captain - Motor Sport



## Championship Round 7: Phillip Island, 3 April, 2011

Yet another great day of motor sport put on by the Alfa Club (again thanks to Neil Choi and his team plus those from the MX-5 Club who assisted with scrutineering).

The weather was kind and many of the 26 MX-5 competitors completed over 30 laps on the day. A couple of new Club Class Lap Records were established with last year's Club Motor Sport Champion, Russell Garner, lowering his own Modified Class record by 0.66 secs to 1:56.63 and I lowered the Standard NA record to 2:05.95. There were several newbies making their "track debut" and what a place to do that.

One of those was my elder son, Stephen, who turned up in his recently-acquired standard NB8A. I had told him to be happy with something under 2:10 for his first visit but he quietly reeled off a very impressive 2:05.55 to win Standard NB. On reflection I am not surprised, but how much is due to having Russell Garner personally show you around the track in the warm-up sessions? I think I might join that queue!

Another newbie to the Island was Dean Monik. I thought we may have seen the last of young Dean after he beat his father Ray's time previously at another track, but no, he returned and was in my run group. He kindly asked if he could follow me in the first session to "learn the lines". No worries Dean! After two laps he had had enough, passed me and disappeared into the distance with a personal best time for the day of 2:02.10. Very well done Dean!

Other Class winners on the day were Steven Cook in the "Cookie Monster" in Open, Daniel White in the always-impeccably-presented "bling machine" in Restricted Open and Peter Phillips in Clubman.

With only the Sandown meeting in June remaining to complete the season, some of the Championship Class results have been finalised but importantly the overall Club Motor Sport Champion goes down to the wire. Remember to keep 31 July free for the Awards Presentation Day at Creswick. See the flyer in this **mxtra** for details.

Unfortunately, immediately following the Phillip Island round, I had to "manage" a couple of protests regarding Class eligibility on one car. The matter has now been finalised but it reinforces the need for all Competitors to have an up-to-date and accurate "Competitor's Declaration Form" in place at all times. This will avoid any disappointment and/or embarrassment.

## Annual Club Motor Sport Meeting / City Mazda – 8 April 2011

Approximately 30 people attended the meeting held at City Mazda's sales and service facility in South Melbourne. Special thanks to Dealer Principal, Greg McPherson and Service Manager, Daniel White, for their hospitality and making the venue available to the Club. Many items were discussed and agreed, including the introduction of a "buddy" system for newbies to the Club Motor Sport Program, updating website information, feasibility of running our own events, the motor sport component of the Club Business Plan and the proposed rules for the 2011/2012 Championship.

## New Championship Rules for 2011/2012 season

I would like to thank Sam Gumina, Russell Garner and Mathew King for their assistance and feedback in developing these Rules. At the Motor Sport Meeting, it was agreed that the rules would remain unchanged for three years and only subject to "Clarification Notes" during that period should a particular issue arise not covered by the Rules. Essentially, the points scoring system and the number of Classes remain unchanged. It allows cars varying from Standard to highly-modified and/or from the original 1989 NA to the latest NC to be allocated a Class in which they can be competitive. The updated Rules can be found on the Club website.

All Competitors are warned that they need to provide a new "Competitor's Declaration Form" before Round 1 of the 2011/2012 season which commences on 3 July or they will not receive any points.

In addition, please renew your Club membership in a timely manner so your new Card can be sent to you before that event.

## Motor sport calendar

See the full calendar for details

### June

12 Rd 8: Sprints, Sandown

### July 2011-2012 season

2 Rd 1: Sprints, Phillip Island

### August

6 Racecraft training, Winton

7 Rd 2: Sprints, Winton

### September

18 Rd 3: Sprints, Sandown

### October

15-16 Winton 6-Hour, Winton

23: Rd 4/Interstate Challenge v NSW:

Wakefield Park, NSW (TBC)

### December

11 Rd 5: Sprints, Phillip Island

## Round 8: Sandown – 12 June, 2011

Entries are now open and places are strictly limited for this event. It is an ideal opportunity to see the MX-5s in action if you are contemplating participating in motor sport either as a driver, official or as a "flaggie".

## DECA – 19 June, 2011

Entries are now open for this event – have a go! See the flyer in this **mxtra** for details.

Until next month ...

**"drive responsibly at all times"**

## Robert #26

### For sale

- » Vic rego plates, "MIATAX" \$500
- » 17-in 4-stud rims with Kumho V700 205/40/17 tyres \$600
- » Motec 4 ECU \$1500 ONO
- » Garrett GT2560R turbo system off an NA6 \$1750 ONO

Contact Richard Barker: 0419 469 886



# Membership

Current  
membership  
count:

464

■ Will Campbell – Membership Officer

Alan Banks	1998 Classic Red NB
Alan Conrad	2009 Metropolitan Grey NC
Peter Padela	1989 White NA
Gregory Preston	1999 Heritage NB
David Shaw	1991 Classic Red NA
Ian Sonderhof	1990 Neo Green NA
Steven Skrekovski	2006 Galaxy Grey NC

*G'day all ...*

We're still closing in on last year's record membership of 470.

A big welcome to this month's new members.

On behalf of all Club members, I wish the new-comers a long and fruitful association with our Club.

**See you out and about ...**

*Will*

## Code of Conduct

Our Club Code of Conduct was first published in November last year. For those who have joined the Club since then, or who may have missed that edition, it's published here again for your interest:

Members of the Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria Inc ("Club") are required, under this Code of Conduct, to behave at all times in a way which upholds the Club's values and complies with its Statement of Purposes and Rules. The Code of Conduct contained within the CAMS Member Protection Policy applies wherever the Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria's Code of Conduct is deficient.

### Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria - Code of Conduct

<b>Honesty and integrity</b>	A Club member must behave honestly and with integrity in the course of Club activities.
<b>Care and diligence</b>	A Club member must act with care and diligence in the course of Club activities.
<b>Respect and courtesy</b>	A Club member, when acting in the course of Club activities, must treat everyone with respect and courtesy, and without harassment.
<b>Lawful compliance</b>	A Club member, when acting in the course of Club activities, must comply with all applicable Australian laws.
<b>Directive compliance</b>	A Club member must comply with any lawful and reasonable direction given by someone in the member's organisation who has authority to give the direction.
<b>Confidentiality</b>	A Club member must maintain appropriate confidentiality about dealings that the member has with any sensitive matter that relates to the Club.
<b>Conflict of interest</b>	A Club member must disclose, and take reasonable steps to avoid, any conflict of interest (real or apparent) in connection with Club activities.
<b>Proper use of resources</b>	A Club member must use the Club's resources in a proper manner.
<b>Undue advantage</b>	A Club member must not make improper use of: – inside information, or – the member's duties, status, power or authority, in order to gain, or seek to gain, a benefit or advantage for the member or for any other person.
<b>Behaviour – general</b>	A Club member must, at all times, behave in a way that upholds the Club's values, integrity and good reputation.



# Planning for the Club's future



■ Words: Don Nicoll, Vice President

In recent editions of this magazine, President Murray has commented on the activities of a sub-committee formed to review the business of the Club and to formulate a plan for the future.

The sub-committee, comprising John Todd (Club Treasurer), Robert Downes (Club Captain – Motor Sport), Will Campbell (Membership Officer) and Don Nicoll (Vice President), have met on several occasions and will continue to meet into the next membership year in order to complete a comprehensive review of the Club's activities.

The sub-committee is addressing areas such as finances, motor sport objectives, communication challenges and social responsibilities, amongst others. The area of focus in the first few meetings has been the Club finances.

Those in the Club who have been Full or Family members since 2006 will know that membership fees have not increased in that time, although much has changed in the Club during that period. For example, the Club magazine has changed from a monthly black-and-white print publication of 16-24 pages to a 28-page full-colour publication printed on quality paper.

Although Country membership fees were last increased in 2008, since then we have initiated four Club chapters which have, in effect, provided non-Melbourne residents with similar benefits to those enjoyed by members living in the Melbourne metropolitan area.

It will come as no surprise to report that these changes alone have had a significant impact on Club finances in the absence of any changes to membership fees. There have been other changes which have also had an impact on Club finances.

With *only two fee increases since our inception in 1990*, the previous Committees of this Club are to be congratulated on their ability to provide continued improvements to Club services without impacting our members' hip pockets.

However the sub-committee has been forced to the conclusion that the further development of the Club is impossible if we are to continue at the current fee levels. In fact it is the sub-committee's conclusion that *we will become insolvent if the current trend continues indefinitely*.

Our outstanding magazine, **mxtra**, has been cited by many as a major attraction of membership of this Club. However, the printed **mxtra** and its flyers are now costing more to produce and post per member per year than any annual category membership fee (for printed copies) with the exception of Family members. The sub-committee has looked at various alternatives, from increasing advertising rates to discontinuing the printed magazine in favour of online only copies. Neither of these examples provided any solution as the former would have resulted in a magazine dominated by advertising while the latter would have disaffected nearly a third of the Club's membership who receive a printed copy of **mxtra**.

At the Club Committee's April meeting, the members of the sub-committee proposed the following changes to membership fees for the 2011-12 year:

Membership category (renewing members)	current annual fee	2011-12 annual fee	increase
Full Member (print copy)	\$72	<b>\$90</b>	\$18
Full Member (online copy)	\$48	<b>\$54</b>	\$6
Family Member (print copy)	\$108	<b>\$120</b>	\$12
Family Member (online copy)	\$84	<b>\$92</b>	\$8
Country Member (print copy)	\$45	<b>\$56</b>	\$11
Country Member (online copy)	\$24	<b>\$26</b>	\$2

It was proposed that other membership fees and the initial joining fee remain unchanged.

The sub-committee also proposed a substantial increase in advertising fees to reflect industry norms, even though it acknowledged that such an increase would not have a significant impact on Club finances. The full committee accepted all the proposals unanimously.

Even at these new rates, our membership fees are well below those charged by many other recreational organisations, and the Committee believes that they remain very affordable, especially considering the quality of our magazine and the range and number of activities offered. The Committee believes it is very important to at least maintain the quality and standard of all the Club's activities, and believes our membership supports that view.

The sub-committee also has further suggestions on how to structure membership fees more equitably but these will need to be discussed with the incoming 2011-12 Club Committee. In the meantime one proposal is being prepared for the AGM in August which will also assist with Club finances. Details will be circulated with the AGM agenda and invitation.

The sub-committee will continue to work on the business plan and report back to Club members via **mxtra** as proposals are finalised. We welcome feedback and commentary as we pursue the challenge of securing the future of the best car club in Victoria and Tasmania.

If you have comments please e-mail them to [vicepresident@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:vicepresident@mx5vic.org.au) – you can be sure that your ideas will be tabled for discussion during meetings of the sub-committee.





# Club merchandise

■ Steve Dunlop, Merchandise

**NEW!**

## “Nitro” polo shirt range & matching baseball cap



**Polo shirts:** Men's and ladies' sizes. Low pill 210 gsm 65% Polyester / 35% Cotton pique knit yarn with contrasting panels, white piping, knitted collar & cuffs and side splits with twill tape. Embroidered Club logo.

**Colours:**

- » Black / green with matching green Club logo
- » Black / red with matching red Club logo
- » Black / royal blue with matching royal blue Club logo
- » Black / orange with matching orange Club logo
- » Black / purple with matching purple Club logo
- » Black / grey with matching grey Club logo

[Postage is additional, if required.]



**\$12**

Cap

The caps match the polo shirt design, but have black embroidery to match the body of the shirt.

One size fits all.

**\$30**

Polos

Ladies'	8	10	12	14	16	18
Half chest	46.5	49	51.5	54	56.5	59
Men's	S	M	L	XL	2XL	3XL
Half chest	52	55	58	62	65	71

Be the first with the new Club gear! Contact Club Merchandise Officer Steve Dunlop to order yours: [merchandise@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:merchandise@mx5vic.org.au) ...

## Club number plate frames



We are looking to see if there's any interest from members in purchasing pairs of plastic number plate frames bearing the Club name and web address.

They are a nice way to help promote the Club when we're out and about ... and a nice replacement for those "complimentary" dealer frames which are unpaid advertisements for the dealer who sold you your car.

The frames will be available in black with white text, and in sizes to fit both standard "large" rego plates and the six-character slimline plates.

Unfortunately, shorter slimline plates with three, four or five characters won't be accommodated. That many variables

blow the set-up costs out of the water! It will be possible to order one of each size if you have, say, a large plate on the back and a slimline on the front.

The frames will cost \$10 a pair (plus postage). However, to achieve that price we need to order a minimum of 50 frames (25 pairs).

So, before the Club places a bulk order, we'd like expressions of interest from Club members to see if it's worthwhile going ahead.

To reiterate, we will need orders from members for at least 25 pairs before we order any.

If you would like to order a pair, please e-mail [president@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:president@mx5vic.org.au).

## Here's something we don't promote enough ...

Doing it yourself doesn't have to mean buying all the bits yourself.

**Books:** The Club has a small library of MX-5 service manuals that are available for short-term loan to Club members. We have:

- » **Rod's Enthusiast's Workshop Manuals** for both the NA 1.6L and the NA 1.8L.
- » **Haynes or Chilton workshop manual** that covers *all* models from 1990 to 2009.

To borrow a book, please contact [president@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:president@mx5vic.org.au)

**Tools:** We also own:

- » a **bushing tool** (for servicing/replacing suspension bushes) and
- » a circular drill bit suitable for drilling holes through metal.

To arrange a short loan, please contact [president@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:president@mx5vic.org.au)

We have also just purchased a **random orbital polisher** for machine polishing your car. Full details are on page 21.





# Scene about ...



Friday, March 11, 2011 11:24 AM  
**TARRANGOWER TIMES**  
 Published Maldon 13874440  
 www.tarrangowertimes.com.au  
 Photo: 14751254

## MATCHBOX CARS?

☆ No. The Ballarat & Western District Chapter MX5 Club joined The Northern Chapter MX5 Club in a drive to Maldon recently. Picture was taken from the tower on the Mount.





# Dave's Mystery Tour

■ Words & photos: Ron Macdonald



*The end of daylight saving (at last!) gave everyone the opportunity of an extra hour in bed.*

Having made good use of that time we headed off to the meeting point in Berwick, tempting the weather Gods by leaving home topless (well, *Gracie* was; we had jackets on).

On arrival we noted a black NB already in the car park and sauntered over to introduce ourselves. The owner advised his name was Paul and that he was not actually a member of the Club; he was here to “check us out”, having seen the listing for this run on the Club website.

We naturally extolled the virtues of being a member and hope to see Paul on some of the future runs. There followed a string of “newbies” all out for their first run: Andreas and Birgit in their Classic Red NA, Adam in another Classic Red NA, and finally Dave and Kim in their white Eunos NA (*was an NA kinda day*). It is most pleasing I have to say that with only two runs so far this year Wendy and I have had the pleasure of personally meeting eight or 10 new members – a very healthy sign for the Club’s future. As an aside, we were able to catch up with two of the new members right at the end of the day and from their comments I think we will be seeing Dave and Kim on many more runs.

With 21 shiny little bundles of joy now waiting patiently, Dave decided it was

time to get the ball rolling with a quick briefing covering the usual culprits and we were off. We were a little hamstrung this time with only two radios in the entire convoy ... one in the lead car and one at the tail, with a fair bit of real estate in between.

Having had to go through a few sets of lights and a railway crossing in the first couple of kilometres, Leader Dave decided to have an early re-group so we didn’t get too strung out. To that end he organised for our little band to “line out” in a no standing zone (*thanks Dave!* 😊) in Lyall Road, Berwick. With no sign of Mr Justice (whew) we then got underway, winding our way through the lush green hills up into the mountains.

The day was still very overcast with the odd spot of rain on the windscreen but nothing too serious as we hit the 100kmh zone only to find ourselves slowed by someone not lucky enough to have an MX-5. I am not sure if the lady in question was a very courteous driver or if Dave had been playing pin-the-tail-on-the-Korean-buzz-box but she pulled to the side of the road and gave us the opportunity for our chargers to “stretch their legs”. This section through the trees was quite “interesting” as the drizzle had made the road very greasy and

one needed to keep one’s wits about one to keep the car on the black stuff. Finally clearing the slippery section we started playing a game of “where’s Dave” (the boy can move that’s for sure); it was only a couple of kms down the road however that we caught up with him and Andreas (we were #3 car at this point).

I feel Dave wanted to make the most of our time on the road so had decided to teach those at the head of the convoy Morse code (well I think that is what he was doing). We approached a street on our right, Dave put his indicator on, Andreas put his indicator on, I put my indicator on, then Dave turned his indicator off, Andreas turned his indicator off and I turned my indicator off. This was repeated three times before we made our turn! I have to say that this little moment did add to our day, both my partner in crime and I finding it most amusing.

Time for another re-group, this time outside of the Upper Yarra Secondary College where a mystery was about to be revealed. My navigator had become quite confused and couldn’t find her place on the run notes, however we found out that where we were at that time was NOT actually on the run notes. The front group of cars (following Dave) had missed a turn and the second group of cars (following the run notes) didn’t. Now I know one of the convoy rules is use your run notes and not to follow the person in front as they may be lost but I didn’t think that applied to the run organiser! A quick bit of mobile phone traffic and it wasn’t long before a little way down the road mother hen (Dave) gathered all his chicks together and we were off again. I must at this point out that there was one interesting street mentioned on Dave’s run notes “Nookie Road”. Hmm, consideration was given but alas after having lost time with the wrong turn that would have wait for another day. Through Powelltown, where





fortunately there were no log trucks (despite the sign), however there were a few dozen motor bikes to contend with as we headed towards our smoko point. Very ominous clouds rolled in as we made our way past the Ada Tree turn off (worth a look if you have never been) and another Morse code lesson as we rolled into Neerim South, much to Don's confusion (now the #2 car).

I realise it has been many, many years since I have felt the need to use hand signals in a car, however I do not remember the *two hands straight up in the air* signal, Don! Due to the combination of a longer than usual "first half", the time spent because of the wrong turn and a few McDonald's coffees at Berwick one place was most popular, with patrons lined out the door (and no, it wasn't the shop).

Off again, there was a little jostling for position as a few of the more sedate members had found themselves at the front of the convoy, but everyone was soon sorted out and on their way. The weather then decided to turn to fertiliser, quite heavy rain but due to the design of the MX-5 causing us little concern with the wind flowing over the car keeping the interior dry. Well, that was until some of the cars decided to slow down so they could throw their tops up (hey, getting damp here guys 😊); once back up to speed the rain again stayed out.

After a short stop in Drouin (some of the beasts were a tad thirsty) we passed

through Poowong and Loch.

It was around this time that a little more concern arose as we found ourselves at the Bass Highway five turns before we had expected (later we found out Dave had cut one loop out due to time constraints). Pretty easy run from here: San Remo, across the bridge and straight on to the Phillip Island race track.

On arrival we were met by Lyn who gave us the drum on the set-up at the track (thanks Lyn). After "feeding the worms" we wandered over to look at the Motor Sport guys' (and ladies') cars then went aloft to get a few happy snaps. There was one white NA that seemed to be having just a tad of trouble with a corner on the back straight. I looked up just in time to see it get a tad out of shape (bugger, missed the photo). On the next lap he did it again (missed the shot again too!). The third time I was ready with the 300mm zoom fixed on that corner but alas he decided to take it a tad easier for the rest of the session. [Ed: we saw it; see page 12.]

Having had our fill of watching the cars and following some very pleasant conversations, it was time to wend our way home. The weather had been pretty crappy (meteorological term there) at times however a little bit of rain does no great harm.

All in all it was yet another very pleasurable day in MX-5 land, many thanks to Dave for organising and hosting the run.

*PS: Dave, you will have the chance to return the favour and take the P155 out of us on our 4 July run 😊.*

### **A convoy rule reminder ...**

**Having only two radios on this run highlighted a challenge when a convoy run spreads out.**

**Rule 9** has the least to do with safety, but it has the most to do with keeping the convoy together and the enjoyment of the day.

It asks us to wait at intersections and at places where the direction taken by the convoy may not be clear to a car following.

On this run we had a number of instances where cars did not wait at corners, and tail-end Charlie (me!) was kept busy rounding up those who missed turns, but there's only so much the tail-end can do. Someone at Loch didn't wait at a key corner and half a dozen cars found themselves heading back towards Melbourne. Only three realised the error, so it must have been an early (and confusing) finish for those who sailed on.

For the benefit of **all** run participants, please observe this convoy rule strictly.

Especially for those new to the Club or on their first run, it's very disappointing to find themselves seemingly abandoned.

~ Murray Finlay



# Another pleasant Sunday ...

■ Photos: Greg (Ben's dad) Sale ... ■ Words: see Robert Downes' *Motor Sport Torque* on page 5 for details



Results - Round 7	1st		2nd		3rd	
Standard NA	Robert Downes	» 2:05.952 <sup>1</sup>	Robert Heritage	» 2:06.806	---	
Standard NB	Stephen Downes	» 2:05.557	Max Lloyd	» 2:06.548	Robert De Bont	» 2:07.137
Standard NC	---					
Clubman	Peter Phillips	» 2:03.308	Teruo Delacroix	» 2:04.160	Ken Read	» 2:10.656
Modified	Russell Garner	» 1:56.638 <sup>1</sup>	Ben Sale	» 2:01:751	Dean Monik	» 2:02.106
Restricted Open	Daniel White	» 2:04.742	---			
Open	Steven Cook	» 1:49.683	Logan Gan	» 2:08.056	---	

<sup>1</sup> New Club motor sport group lap record

## Championship standings after Round 7 - Phillip Island Sprints, 3 April, 2011

(corrected points)	1st		2nd		3rd	
<b>Overall Champion</b>	<b>Russell Garner</b>	<b>» 60</b>	<b>Steven Cook</b>	<b>» 57</b>	<b>Robert Downes</b>	<b>» 54</b>
					<b>Robert De Bont</b>	<b>» 54</b>
					<b>Peter Phillips</b>	<b>» 54</b>
Standard NA	Robert Downes	» 54	Robert Heritage	» 47	Brendan Beavis	» 35
Standard NB	Max Lloyd	» 54	Robert De Bont	» 48	John Downes	» 33
Standard NC	Colin Denman-Jones	» 60	Lindy Anderson	» 13	Mark Davies	» 7
Clubman	Peter Phillips	» 54	Sam Gumina	» 47	Teruo Delacroix	» 42
Modified	Russell Garner	» 60	Craig Healy	» 33	Ben Sale	» 18
Restricted Open	Randy Stagno Navarra	» 60	Daniel White	» 44	Kim Cole	» 7
Open	Steven Cook	» 57	David Moore	» 13	Christine Boak	» 13



**In more motor sport news ...**

*Club member Alex Hailstone and driver Andrew McKay finished third in "Showroom Class" at this month's Targa Tasmania in a 2006 NC.*

*They also won the Australian Tarmac Championship for showroom cars. A fantastic effort by Alex in her debut season of co-driving!*



■ Photo: Ben Sale



# Flying the flag at the Deni "5" muster ..

Words & photos: Bob de Bont #632



## Victorian Motorkhana Championship Round 2

The second round of the Victorian Motorkhana Championship for 2011 was held on 10 April, hosted by the Deniliquin Sports Car Club (DSCC) at their club grounds.

To make the trek north a worthwhile venture, DSCC put on an autocross on the Saturday using their 1.6km autocross track followed by the motorkhana on the Sunday.

The road trip north started on Saturday at 6.30am, from Heathcote through to Echuca for fuel and breakfast, then a leisurely run to Deniliquin for scrutineering by 9.30.

Saturday heralded a couple of milestones with the unveiling of the Mazda MX-5 Club banner at its first motorkhana event and the addition of our third member to the Motorkhana Team, Nikkolas Falkenbach in his Twilight Blue NB8A, joining Bob de Bont and Pam Collom.

The autocross track is set in a flat paddock (after removing the sheep) and is formed on a fine gravel base providing both a challenging surface and large run-off areas. Each timed run consisted of a standing start lap followed by a flying lap with a total of eight timed runs. Results are based on a combination of our best three runs. The MX-5s acquitted themselves well resulting in a 6th outright and third in class.

At the end of the competition, we joined our hosts at their club facilities before heading to our motels to clean up prior to dinner at the RSL.

Sunday dawned damp and cool after overnight rain; however the weather cleared to a good day with only a couple of brief showers.

The banner was again unfurled and with quality attracted more quality: a mint, late '70s Rolls Royce Corniche residing with the MX-5s. The owner, Mr Richard Carlson, retired from motorkhanas in 2003 after winning six Victorian Championships and treated us with a couple of runs on some of the larger tests in his Rolls. A truly unbelievable and amazing sight.

Ten tests were conducted on a damp but drying surface, which assisted with keeping the dust to a minimum. By the end of the day we were rewarded with a first and two seconds in our respective classes which propelled the MX-5 Club to fourth in the Club Championship. Pam has moved into the lead while Bob retained the lead in their respective classes.



Bob

All that was left was to repack the cars ahead of an uneventful and safe trip home.

For anyone wishing to join the Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria's Motorkhana Team, or to come and have a look, Round 3 at Pakenham (8 May) will have been run and won by now on but Round 4 is on 19 June at Avalon. All you will need is a CAMS licence to come and join in the fun.

Further information is available from <http://motorkhana1.webs.com/> or contact Bob de Bont on 0402 345 562. ■



Nik



Pam



Class field on a dull day



# The MX-5 Club Grill



## Introducing ...

*Bruce Harvey*

*Northern Tasmania Chapter*

**Name?** Bruce Nelson Harvey

**Age?** 55

**Born?** Motueka New Zealand

**Current abode?** Georgetown Tasmania

**Profession?** On call for Australia Post

**Partner?** Cheryl

**Pets?** Miffy, a Jack Russell X ... no time for cats at all

**Fave food?** Roast lamb with all the roast vegies

**Can you cook?** I love to cook and my kitchen is sacrosanct

**Favourite tippie?** A slightly sweet malty beer served marginally warmer than is PC in Australia

**First drive?** 1950s Morris Minor "lowlite" that belonged to my Grandmother. I used to call in after school nearly every day and drive around and around her house when I was about 10

**First car?** Austin A35 – British racing green with customised alternate white stripes on the grill

**First fender bender?** Rolled a Volkswagen at about 5mph doing a U-turn on a river bank. It was only a slight slope and it just rolled over. Found out later that in some countries they chromed the bottom of Volkswagens because they were seen more on their roof than on their wheels!

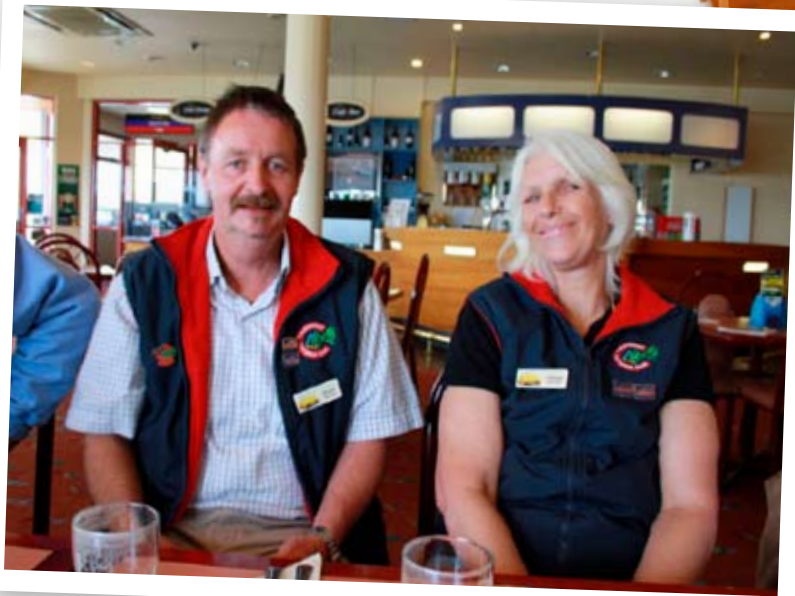
**Everyday driver?** Audi Q7

**Current MX-5?**

NC sports roadster coupe Sunset Yellow

**MX-5 improvements?**

Ticked all the boxes when Cheryl ordered the car. Really like the Recaro seats. BBS wheels a bugger to clean though ...



**MX-5 dislikes?**

0-60 time could be a bit better

**Why an MX-5?** The MX-5 was a turning point in the evolution of the car. No other manufacturer has captured the essence of a two-seat roadster before or since

**Fluffy dice?** NO!

**Passions besides the MX-5?**

Collecting Jazz figurines. Have a couple of hundred now for Cheryl to dust. Also enjoy music and have an ever-increasing collection covering all genres on vinyl, cassette and CD

**Favourite TV show / movie / book?**

**TV:** Coronation Street – six times a week on UK TV. **Movie:** Invictus – the story of how Rugby Union united South Africa.

**Book:** anything by Clive Cussler is good to escape reality

**Dream wheels (money no object)?**

Aston Martin V12 Vantage

**Would you drive a Daewoo or**

**SsangYong?** They should be all crushed and used to construct a bridge between Tasmania and the rest of Australia so that all MX-5 drivers can drive the best roads in the world and I could get to DECA

**Favourite other Mazda?**

Mazda 3 MPS

**If not a Mazda (gasp!)**

**what?** Maybe an Audi R8 Spyder

**How long in the Club?**

Since 2007

**How many MX-5 Club runs?**

Nearly every one here in Northern Tassie and a couple of NatMeets

**Favourite Club run?** Tas has so many great roads that every drive is so good. Do enjoy the overnight runs, exploring new areas and finding a road that I haven't been on before. Targa Tasmania route maps are very useful when exploring

**Funniest thing seen on a Club run?**

The blindfolded driving part of the funkhana at Winton during the 2008 NatMeet

**Done DECA?** On the bucket list but not yet.

See above for bridge idea. With a bridge the Club motor sport guys and gals could come over here for some fun as well.

**Ford vs Holden?** Ford

**What's playing in your MX-5?**

Hogsnot Rupert

**Footy team (AFL/NRL/Soccer)?**

Anything with Black or Silver or Fern in the name. Was actually a foundation member of the Melbourne Storm – didn't renew after they were caught cheating

**Final comments?** In the welcoming letter when I first joined the Club it said I had now joined the Victorian Chapter of the largest single-model car club in the world as recorded by the Guinness Book of Records. Well, not only is it the largest but in my short time as a member it is also has the best group of people it has been my pleasure to meet anywhere. Thank you to everyone who has the common interest of the MX-5, for sharing your passion with us so openly and honestly



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# Chapter news ...



## Molly misses out ...

~ 27.3.2011 | Ballarat Chapter

So, the Ballarat Chapter has organised another run and I want to go.

Trouble is, the night before is my daughter's 22nd birthday and I had promised to bring the Landcruiser ute to Ballarat to help my son clean up his massively overgrown garden and cart rubbish to the tip. No room for Molly, my NA. Quandary.

OK, if I come down Friday instead and do the whole rubbish thing on Saturday, party Saturday night, then maybe I can bum a lift on the Sunday. Trouble is I have tickets for Tracey, the girls and me for Mary Poppins on Sunday. OK ... Emma's boyfriend. I'm sure he would like to go, especially with a free ticket. Problem solved. Next problem. If I have the ute in Ballarat, what about Molly? Tow? All too hard, so I will see if I can get a lift for the day.

Next I called John Gleeson to see if I could hook up with someone as a passenger. Thanks to those who offered; it was most kind. I ended up with a relatively new member, Gwenda Parkinson, who gave me a lift in her brand new retractable hardtop NC (Niiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii Car).

I turned up in Sebastopol in my beaten up Landcruiser (stripped of anything vaguely valuable), to a chorus of "Don't park that thing here" and "You're bringing the whole tone down with that" (in Sebas?) and other less-than-flattering and some unprintable comments.

Precisely at about somewhere near the starting time we left, picking up Ian and Karen Bradshaw and Allan and Liz Everett at the Willinduc Fire Shed, stopping for a quick cuppa. The NC was so comfy that I went to sleep, or so it is claimed. Personally I think it was an instant molecular transport to the first stop, atop Mount Leura Lookout. This gave a brilliant view of the huge volcanic crater that is the whole district, and the many smaller volcanic piles inside the outer rim. It was also fantastic to see so much water in the lakes and dams and swamps. It was then on to Bullen Merri Reserve for a break.

Next we headed for Timboon, by a circuitous route with some really great roads, for a picnic lunch alongside the open sewer. (It really wasn't a sewer, just looked like one.) After a convivial lunch with people I had met for the first time, it was back to the cars for the trip to Port Campbell. Top spot. I made it to the ice cream shop for a milkshake, then fell to temptation and had a Bailies ice cream as well. As I folded myself back into the car I began to regret both the milkshake and the ice cream.

Then a fast trip down the Great Ocean Road to Lavers Hill, then a truly brilliant back road to a staging point near Forrest. This back road had it all: climbs, descents, curves and switchbacks, hairpins and blind corners. Above us were the massive tree ferns that you can only find in a true rain forest and the towering Mountain Ash trees. At one point I said to Gwenda "check out that tree, must have been hit by lightning." As she turned to look I said "No no, better watch the road!"

I was impressed with Gwenda's driving and told her so. No-one had bothered to tell me she had been a successful drag racer in her day and had even beaten the Australian Champion driving a tricked-up FJ Holden running nitrous oxide!

■ Words: Lockie Story ■ Photos: John Gleeson  
■ Run organisers: Ian Bradshaw & Allan Everett



From here some of the Geelong people headed for home and the Ballarat group split, half back to Ballarat and the rest of us to Cape Clear, about an hour away. It was then that the sun made its first appearance for the day and within 10 minutes there wasn't a cloud in the sky. We stopped at Cape Clear for a pint of amber, and then headed for Smythesdale, arriving about 6pm where we stopped for dinner. We had a terrific evening to end an absolutely fantastic day. Gwenda dropped me back at the ute at about 8.30, making it a 12-hour day, and surprise upon surprise, not only was my ute still there but all of the wheels and aerials were still on it! I wandered back to Matthew's place and crashed out for the night, heading home the next day.

It was great to have Peter and Anita Silva from Eltham and long-time Club member Peter Corkran from Geelong along for their first run with us.

I would have loved to drive the route because of the fun roads and the brilliant scenery, but it was nice to be a passenger for a change. Thanks Gwenda. Poor Molly missed out.

These trips are getting better all the time and if you haven't been on one, give it a go. You will find people who will look after you and introduce you around and – you may even have a great time.

Thanks so much to Ian and Allan for another well-thought-out and enjoyable run over some great roads. ■





# Chapter news ...

## Of spiders and unsealed roads ...

~ 17.4.2011 | North Tassie Chapter

■ Words & photos: Sandra Tillack

In fine, if not cloudy, mid-morning conditions, 11 cars gathered at the Blue Barn Café on the Frankford Highway, an approximate half-way point between Devonport and Launceston.

Twenty-two keen drivers and passengers enjoyed coffee and cake on the deck of the café whilst welcoming newcomers Robert and Liz Purse from Cressy and Trevor Sims and Alanna Page from Launceston.

Forming into our usual convoy we meandered west on the winding Frankford Highway and then headed along the Thirlstane Road towards Port Sorell, a lazy little holiday port, and then through new suburbs and elite houses at Shearwater.

Finally, wending through the Esplanade at Hawley Beach, we enjoyed a stopover besides the sparkling blue waters of the Rubicon River, crystal white sand and views across the river towards the Narawntapu National Park and Asbestos Range.

After circling the car park at Hawley House, a local restaurant/vineyard infamous for its bath on the roof, we headed towards Latrobe through rich, undulating hills and beautiful farmlands.

On arrival at Latrobe we were minus a couple of cars. Apparently one of our lady drivers was startled by a rather large, hairy, huntsman spider which make a very sudden and unwelcome entrance by dropping on to her lap. Her husband, a passenger in the car behind and a local



resident who heard the shrieks, came to the rescue, the resident with a can of insect spray at the ready! A very subdued Lyn with offside, Ruth, and the two Kens in the following car, rejoined us at Latrobe. The group then headed (*horror of horrors*) up an unsealed road to Warrawee Park, a local forestry reserve, which boasts a nature/boardwalk around a lake in which platypus can be seen if you're lucky (we weren't).

After a picnic lunch beside a rippling stream a game of bocce was enjoyed by a few prior to stretching our legs on the walk around the lake to search for the elusive platypii.

On our way out of Warrawee Park we were joined by Bob and Sue Strachan –

Bob was the envy of our group as he had won a drive in each of three Targa cars!

The afternoon run saw us heading south to Railton, the town of topiary, where four Launcestonians peeled off to return home, the remainder of us enjoying challenging roads (frequented by the Targa group) through Sheffield, Palooka and down to Forth. Three more of our Launceston cars peeled off at the Don Roundabout and the remaining four cars enjoyed a rehash of our day over a coffee at Keith and Sandra's.

Great little cars, terrific company and new people joining our group made it an enjoyable day all round. ■

### The group:

- » Ken & Lyn
- » Ken & Ruth
- » Keith & Sandra
- » Bruce & Cheryl
- » Michael & Anna
- » Robert & Margaret
- » Garry & Debbie
- » Ian & Helen
- » Robert & Liz
- » Trevor & Alanna
- » Bob & Sue





# Low flying at Longford ...

## ~ 2.4.11 | Hobart Chapter

The MX-5s assembled at Risdon Road at the crack of dawn (well, 8am is early for us and it was barely light).

All were on time for a change, though one driver felt the need to let nearly all the air out of his tyres and went off to find a servo and replace it. Most of us decided to keep our hoods up as it was perishingly cold. We finally set off to the Longford Revival Festival.

Longford (Tasmania) was the home of car races that were the talk of the nation from 1953 to 1968. The Festival celebrated this at what is left of the original track, with three days of races, food and wine as well as information about the track and its heroes. There was also a Show and Shine. All this was set to the background of a Beatles tribute band, The Melbeats, playing tunes of the era.

### Back to us...

The road to Bothwell is a joy to drive with its long sweeping curves and views of open farmland. Then the climb to the Central Plateau where the roads are surprisingly straight and the scenery full of massive trees, alpine plains and a myriad of lakes. Descending to Poatina, the most challenging section, I didn't count the hairpin bends but there are quite a few. Cressy saw us regroup to take off our tops (human and motor) as the temperature had crept up to warmish.

We arrived at Longford at midday. It had been a great drive. My car had just had a service and tune so it was feeling especially lively. What a joy!

The convoy, led by driver John and navigator Allan (he had the map), did a few *Amazonian lost caterpillar*-like laps of the Longford township in the search for the actual entry. But we made it, drawing admiring glances from a very discerning gate staff.

We parked up and set forth, admiring a TR2 and an immaculately-restored MGB in the car park on the way to pay our entry fee (discussion about that, but no-one asked our opinion so it wasn't given) and instantly became engrossed in lengthy restoration discussion with the owner of the first car we saw in the Show and Shine. Personally I set forth to find all the Lotuses (three), John and Lawrence went their own way and the

■ Words: Caz Timbrell ■ Photos: John Waldock

other John and Allan got into debates about the authenticity or otherwise of the various restorations. The cars on display ranged from all eras and motorsports, from the sublime to the ridiculous depending on your taste. Cars we looked at (and drooled over) included: an Austin Healey Sprite mark 2a, an MGA, an MGTD, an MGTf, a John Goss special Falcon, a Lotus Elan, an Austin Healey 100/4, a Ferrari 248 Dino and many more!

A quick circuit of the food and wine stalls, set up near the stage where the band was playing '60s music, several patrons dressed in their '60s gear (not such a good look when you are actually in your 60s), and a bite to sustain the inner person, then on to the main event of the Festival. We found a good spot on the rails to see the best of the action.

The time trials began. The "Flying Mile" was barricaded, which rather restricted our view and the Goggomobile led the competition, in a cloud of smoke. Then at intervals the entrants flew (not literally) past at speeds of up to 233kmh. In all cases either the car or the driver, sometimes both, had competed at Longford in its heyday.

As the day cooled and the fun ended we each went our own way, some catching up with friends and families or dashing back to Hobart for a party. I stayed overnight and headed back on Sunday, stopping in Cambelltown for fuel and Everton Mints where Allan and Stacey were just pulling in as I left.

Brilliant weekend!! ■



### Any colour as long as it's ...





# WAXIT car care cleaning & detailing guide

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

In the first instalment of this series we stepped through a couple of different techniques for **washing your car** using little or no water.

Instalment number two discussed using **detailing clay** to de-contaminate your paint.

The third instalment looked at **hand polishing** the paint to remove dirt that washing and claying can't remove.

This instalment looks at **machine polishing** with a random orbital polisher ...



\* Articles 1-3 can be found on the [Technical page of the Club website](#).

To help you achieve the most beautiful finish possible on your vehicle, **AG Group** has written this polishing guide with detailed instructions and what we hope are helpful tips on how to use a Random Orbital Polisher (ROP).

## *What is a Random Orbital Polisher?*

These polishers are characterised by the motion of the head. It spins on a central spindle, like a rotary polisher, but it also moves this spindle around an eccentric offset. This produces a random motion. This motion reduces the chance of the polish burning the paint, which refers to the removal of paint to below the clear coat. ROPs are far more user-friendly as a result of this feature.

The lack of heat created by an ROP to which helps to prevent damage to the clear coat can also prevent it from totally removing scratches and other imperfections. It will greatly diminish the appearance of scratches and will remove light swirls, but does not really cut the paint. For complete scratch removal, you must use a rotary polisher. Rotary polishers have a high risk of burning the paint and should not be used by a novice.

For best results you will need a machine with variable speed and 125mm velcro backing plate attached, these will take 152mm (6") buffing pads.

An example of a suitable ROP is the *Festool ETS150/5* machine which is considered the top of the range and admittedly is priced accordingly.

As with most things in life, you get what you pay for when purchasing power tools. Spend a little more and get a machine that will last more than a couple of jobs. It's for this reason we have avoided the sub-\$100 tools.

## *What accessories do I need?*

You will need an assortment of foam pads. Pads come in four varieties: cutting, light cutting, polishing, and finishing foam. For a 125mm or 150mm backing plate, you need 6" or 6.5" pads.

**Cutting Pad:** This pad is the most abrasive of all. It is intended to remove moderate to heavy oxidation, swirl marks and light scratches. Use it with compounds and polishes on older vehicles with neglected paint.

**Light Cutting Pad:** This is an all-around swirl removal pad. It will remove or greatly improve light to moderate swirls and oxidation. Use this pad with microfine polishes, pre-wax cleaners and swirl removers.

**Polishing Pad:** Use this pad with any pre-wax cleaner, microfine polish, or cleaner wax. This pad has no cutting power and will refine your paint to a glossy shine.

**Finishing Pad:** This pad can be used to apply glazes, waxes and sealants. Use it to buff your paint to its final finish.

Optional accessories include a pad conditioning brush to keep your pads from caking with product.



## *How do I polish out swirls and scratches?*

The following is a general guide to polishing. It will take you from swirl removing to polishing to finishing. If your paint problems do not require swirl removal, skip to polishing. If you are not sure whether your blemishes will require compounding, start with polishing to see if you can remove the blemish. If you do not get the desired results, use a swirl remover.

**Please note:** Deep scratches and swirls and severe oxidation will require compounding with a rotary polisher. If you are inexperienced with this type of polisher, consult a professional. If your fingernail catches the scratch or swirl, it will require painting and must be repaired by a professional.

**1. Swirl Removal:** It may be helpful to mist the pad with water or a quick detailer to make application easier.

Use the cutting pad or light cutting pad when applying a swirl remover (SMR). SMRs are sometimes labelled as compounds or cutting compounds. Choose a light cutting pad and a fine SMR for light to moderate imperfections and a heavier cut SMR and cutting pad for moderate to severe blemishes. Always start with the light cutting pad and fine SMR. Upgrade to the cutting pad if necessary. **Start with the least aggressive option first!**

Apply SMR in spots the size of a 10c piece around the outer edge of the pad at the 12, 3, 6 and 9 o'clock positions on the pad. With the polisher turned off, lightly smear the pad across the paint surface you are working on to spread the product, then turn the machine on at the lowest speed to avoid splatter. As it spreads over the section, gradually increase your speed. Work in a back-and-forth motion,

## ~ part 4: machine polishing



overlapping your strokes and changing direction as per the picture (left) on an area no more than 600mm wide. Work the SMR in well and keep the pad moving at all times.

Always start at the lowest speed and gradually increase as the product is broken down. Depending on the paint, pad and product combination you may need to end up using maximum speed ... this is discovered purely by trial and error.

When your SMR has broken down and starts to dry, **turn off** the machine and **then lift it off the paint**. Buff away the residue with a soft, microfibre towel and inspect your results. If you are not satisfied, repeat the process with the same SMR or a more aggressive SMR. If you still see no results, upgrade to the cutting pad.

It is not always necessary to SMR your entire vehicle. Work on the problem areas only and stay away from corners and edges where the paint is thinner.

Using an SMR may leave a light haze. This is normal. Polishing will remove the haze and restore the shine.

**2. Polishing:** Use a polishing pad with a finishing polish or a pre-wax cleaner. This step refines your paint after compounding and restores the shine to dull paint.

It may be helpful to mist the pad with water or a quick detailer to make application easier.

Apply polish to the pad as explained above. Place pad on to surface and smear the product, then turn the machine on a low speed. Gradually increase the speed as you spread the polish in the same manner as when doing SMR. Work in 600mm areas. When the polish begins to dry, turn off the machine.

Typically polishing will be done at a lower speed than using a SMR.

Check your work by wiping the area with a microfibre towel. If it is still hazy, continue polishing. If it is glossy, move on to finishing.

**3. Finishing:** Use the finishing pad to apply your favorite wax or sealant.

Apply the product to your pad and work at a low speed. Cover the surface evenly. Depending on the product's instructions, you may apply it to one section at a time or to the whole vehicle before buffing it off by hand.

We have found that practice makes perfect with machine buffing, start slowly, take your time and use the least aggressive products and pads until you are comfortable. Once you have the knack you will never go back to hand polishing again.

## Loan polisher now available for Club members

The Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria has purchased a Random Orbital Polisher for Club member use, *free of charge!*

You just need to buy your own pads, polish and other consumables.

The Club's random orbital polisher (ROP) – a **Councours DAP900** machine polisher (pictured) – has an inbuilt clutch system making it almost impossible to burn your precious paintwork when used with a little common sense and is available to Club members for loan on the following conditions.



### Club member loan conditions:

- » Free of any hire charge.
- » The ROP machine is loaned out for a period of one week only.
- » All polishing consumables such as polishing pads and compounds are to be supplied by the Club member at their own expense. **Please note:** A small range of polishing pads is available for purchase from the Merchandise Officer.
- » The ROP machine must be returned to the Merchandise Officer in the same clean and fully operational condition, complete with all accessories as when it was made available to the club member.
- » All damage and/or missing accessories will be repaired or replaced at the Club member's expense.
- » A \$50 deposit is required and will be refunded in full upon return of the ROP machine and accessories in satisfactory condition.
- » The Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria Inc. and its office bearers and/or members will not be held responsible for any damage or injury whatsoever resulting from the use or misuse of the ROP machine and its accessories.

Please contact Steve at [merchandise@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:merchandise@mx5vic.org.au) to book the ROP machine, free of charge!

*"I've used this same machine with no prior skills or experience and achieved great results. It makes the job of polishing your pride and joy so easy ... I'll never polish a car by hand again!" ~ Steve Dunlop*

If you wish to know more about polishing or the products, please do not hesitate to contact Russell Van or Brian Gardner at their Tullamarine location – 34B Trade Park Drive (tel: 9330 2177).

**AG Group in Tullamarine are pleased to offer a 5% discount to all financial members of the Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria. Produce your valid membership card and number to secure the discount. (Swissvax and Festool products and all Kits are exempt from the discount.)**



# My (other) Ride ...

■ Words & photos: Lockie Story, Mockinya

This is just a short story about my other ride. It is neither an MX-5 nor even a Mazda but it may be interesting.

The car is a Jaguar Supercharged XJR. The XJR was created to be the Jaguar flagship for the launch of the new Jaguar X300 in early 1995. There were to be 200 made and all painted turquoise.

I have been a member of the Jaguar Car Club for 30 years and in that time have served on the committee for 12 years and was President for two. As a result of this I had the privilege of driving a pre-production car in 1994 (a hand-built prototype) and fell in love with it.

The cost of these cars was to be \$185,000 **in 1995**. As it happened, due to huge demand, some 9000-odd were built, 84 of which came to Australia. All subsequent Jaguar models have had a limited production supercharged "R" version.

**Fast forward 2011.** I saw, and eventually purchased, a turquoise XJR in mint condition for the princely sum of \$12,000. A *Jaguarophile* friend of mine took it for a drive and proclaimed it to be a pre-production car. To cut a long story short, it was indeed the pre-production car I drove in 1994. It is believed to be the 10th car built and the third in right-hand drive. It is also believed to be the second-oldest XJR in Australia and the car used to demonstrate to dealers around the country. It was first registered in November 1994, six months before the car was released for



sale. The specs are: a 4 Litre in-line 6-cylinder AJ16 engine with an Eaton Supercharger built specifically for the engine. Rear wheel output of 340 HP (and believe me it feels like it).

It has all the normal Jaguar features such as leather, wood, electric everything and all the other goodies associated with a Jaguar. It does not have a number of things found on the production cars such as a glove box, cup holders, sunroof etc. I have confirmed with Jaguar Cars that the car is what it claims to be and they are issuing a Heritage Certificate proclaiming same.

It is a magnificent car to drive and is *not* for sale. I have registered it with the plates **JAG 069**. Not an MX-5 but interesting all the same. ■

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# Timing belts, Tasmania and Trouble

■ Words & photos: Ron Diprose



The story starts with my search for a sports car, I was on the lookout for something to keep me busy in retirement.

*Triumph? MG? Alfa? All possible. Morgan? Lotus? Ford GT40? Ferrari 250 LM? Keep dreaming ... how are those Lotto numbers looking?*

I also needed something that Debbie would possibly like that is not old, ugly or smelly and also reasonably comfortable, unlike some of the motoring icons we have owned. If you read Ron Macdonald's article in January's *mxtra* you will have seen the "Gem of Wisdom" from the internet which also inspired me.

So after a long search and too many test drives in cars that were not quite there and some that were nowhere near there, I spotted one that sounded good at a reasonable price and in a colour that was approved. The only minus was that it was in Echuca. Not such a big issue, as in my lease car days I have driven there for a coffee, just to get up the right number of kilometres for the year. Having phoned the dealer and heard the right salesman-type noises, a time for a look and a test drive was agreed.

*Black Bob*, the Mitsubishi Colt, and I set off bright and early for Echuca. (If you are Tasmanian you will understand the name. If you are not so lucky look up Black Bobs on the internet.) I arrived at Echuca Mazda after a relaxing drive on the new freeway, only to find no car in sight. No problem though as it was parked in a shed at the back. It all looked good and it drove well except for a little hesitation with the gear change. Luckily I thought I knew what the problem was, as I had done lots of internet research. So the deal was done. On the way home I thought of some things that I would need for the new acquisition, so I dropped in to Bendigo Mazda to order a tensioner spring for the timing belt.

A week later the car was ready. After some debate Debbie and I decided to take the train from Sunbury to Echuca. We had a very comfortable trip to Bendigo, then swapped to a coach which runs more-or-less parallel with the train line for the last leg to Echuca. Someone will know



*Our first run with Blue Maxx*

the logical reason for that. The times worked out well, as we arrived around the arranged afternoon pick-up time.

So we welcomed *Blue Maxx*, a 1998 Twilight Blue NB with 112,000 kilometres on the clock, and set off for an easy cruise home down the freeway. We arrived in Bendigo a few minutes after 5pm, hoping that the spare parts area would be open and so save us a couple of hours' round trip later. Luckily the spare parts people were still there 10 minutes after their closing time, and kindly re-started their computers to process my part. Excellent service.

The first and best thing we did was to join the Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria. Over the next few weeks we did a few cruises following the old Club run guides around the Lancefield area and as a bonus found some nice wineries near Tooborac. *Great fun!*

Then the work began. Gearbox and differential oil change plus Nulon G70 additive. Change the top gearbox, gear-change seal. Change the clutch fluid. All of which was supposed to smooth the gear change, but did not totally solve the problem so that's still a work in progress ... hopefully a more thorough bleed of the clutch fluid will do the trick. Further internet research, which is totally infallible, revealed that the gear changes are a little notchy anyway so I may be being too fussy. The next job was to order all the parts for a timing belt, water pump, coolant and engine oil change. All of which the history showed as done, but I had some doubts – so for peace of mind I decided to do it all again.

To fill in the time waiting for the bits we adjourned to Tassie for Christmas. We had a great time – boating, a bit of fishing, a lot of drinking, socialising with all the rellos, golf at the Murraville golf



*Blue Maxx's first Club run*



club and dinner at the Dunalley pub, but no MX-5 which was a terrible waste of some brilliant roads. During all that fun we had a family trip to Fortescue Bay, a great spot on the Tasman Peninsula near Port Arthur. The kids had a ball swimming in water which had come straight from Antarctica and remained fluid only through the salt content. Needless to say older and wiser people dipped a big toe in, adjourned to the barbecue and left them to it ...

Returning home in a Renault Scenic owned by our daughter and her husband, we were lucky to have a bonus three-hour scenic interlude in the bush, as the car stopped on the Fortescue road. It is the road where Mark Webber had the accident which broke his leg, which must explain why I drive like him! It is a fairly rough dirt road so we looked for a loose connector or something simple. Peering into the cam cover revealed no ills, as the cam was turning.

Oh well, call the RAC. The problem was that we had minimal telephone reception and also did not have the Tassie RAC number. We eventually contacted the RACV and, through a broken conversation, made them aware of our trouble. Everybody who drove past stopped to offer assistance which we all appreciated – another of the nice things about Tassie. Eventually the best RAC breakdown person that I have ever seen arrived to assist – a great local bloke, Richard Briggs, well into his 70s with a ripper white beard and a mechanic for 58 years. He eventually diagnosed zero compression, so a tow truck was required. Thanks Richard and RAC.

We decided to get the car taken to *Forcett Auto Repairs* in Forcett, as it was close to where we were staying and we had heard good reports about the mechanic there.

*(This was an excellent decision as Peter Howell did a great job fixing the car and was more than helpful. The phone number there is 6265 9474 / 0409 191 159 in case you ever need it!)*

We then had the problem of getting my daughter and her husband to the *Spirit of Tasmania* in Devonport without the car. They had to return to Melbourne for work and the car repairs would take a couple of weeks! Rental cars in Tassie at that time are difficult to get at short notice and of course only the most expensive was available, so it was Uncle Steve and Redline coaches to the rescue.

So what was the problem with the Renault and where is the MX-5 connection? One possibility was a broken timing belt, but one cam was turning. This car has twin cams, like an MX-5, so while the inlet cam was behaving the exhaust cam had jammed. The timing belt skipped over the stationary cam gear. The cause was a broken valve spring. The collets eventually parted company and locked up the exhaust cam, neatly allowing the pistons to bend all the exhaust valves. Fortunately this did not damage the pistons so the head was rebuilt and everything put back together for a tad under \$3,000. Much better than some of the other mainland cars which had also come to grief. How about a new engine and auto gearbox, because the radiator had failed, allowing coolant into the automatic gearbox, which then

expired? Then the engine over-revved and expired as well. Some \$7,000 later all fixed. Holiday heaven? Ouch.

This of course was food for thought. Even though a broken MX-5 timing belt will not damage an NA or NB engine (the NC uses a chain, I think), being stranded a long way from home is a major pain. So as soon as we had arrived home *Blue Maxx* was up onto jack stands and the timing belt

change started. There are lots of websites that explain the procedure; *Mike The King Of Miatas* has some really good videos on *youtube*. Search for *Miata king* on the internet or the *youtube* site.

There are also lots of sites with step-by-step photo guides: [mx5unleashed.com/tech/timing-belt-mx5.html](http://mx5unleashed.com/tech/timing-belt-mx5.html) is one. [www.jeff-tech.com/blog/?p=104](http://www.jeff-tech.com/blog/?p=104) is another.

*Mikes Ebay* store is also a good source of parts. There are others, but do your research and get quality parts. Genuine of course would be the best, but cost is an issue for most people. Through bitter experience and, on advice from a work colleague who does a lot of diagnostic work, the only genuine parts I always buy now are spark plug leads. The majority of after-market leads are, despite all the hype, rubbish. The argument clinic is two doors down, on the left ...

My big tip is to drain the coolant and remove the radiator. The *mx5unleashed* web site said this is difficult, however I found that if you disconnect the fan plugs, remove the hoses from the radiator and remove the two upper mount bolts, the whole assembly lifts out easily. Please do not pour the old coolant or anything else down the sink or into the gutter; catch it and dispose of it properly at a recycle place, or if you are lucky you can take it to a local garage or workshop. Ask first; some will help you, some won't.

With the radiator out and carefully placed aside, you have plenty of room to work and no chance of damaging it. You also need to release the anti-roll bar mounts so it can drop down out of the way.

You should also change the water pump, otherwise you will be doing the job again before the next belt change is due. I found you have to remove the dust shield that sits over the top of the pump (NBs at least) otherwise it won't come off.

With everything removed, change the front crankshaft seal, both the front cam seals, the idler and tensioner bearings and the tensioner spring. The spring is a genuine part only. The "O" ring on the water pump should be replaced too. Lubricate it with coolant or a very light smear of petroleum jelly, snow white parmo or Vaseline (all the same stuff) when you fit the new pump. A great tool I found for the seals is a seal remover. It looks kind of like a hatchet, but makes a difficult job easy.



*Hirsute Richard diagnoses the problem*



One guide recommends holding the cams (once you have the engine on #1 cylinder top dead centre) with two spanners on the cam flats, held together with vice grips. This sort of works but will slip when you undo the cam pulleys, which are removed to change the camshaft seals, so hold each cam individually when undoing the nuts. Loosen the cam pulley nuts off a little, recheck top dead centre and then use the spanner/vice grip holding trick. Now remove the nuts and cam gears. I found the alternator and air conditioning belts were a bit sad, so replaced them too.

Following a fight with the oil filter, because of the limited access, it was changed and the oil refilled.

OK so once you have everything back together you will need to fill the coolant. This is when the fun started for me. To circulate the coolant properly you fill the radiator very slowly, start the engine, run it at the specified revs for a few minutes then run it a little higher for five seconds and repeat. As I got to the high rev bit there was an alarming high pitched scream from the engine bay. I smartly turned the engine off and went looking. The new alternator belt had ridden up onto the crank pulley flange and was way too tight. The front alternator pulley was unbelievably hot.

"Oh dear," I said quietly, or something equivalent. One reason polite young ladies should not frequent workshops or sheds.

I removed the alternator, first removing the inlet manifold support to allow the pivot bolt to be removed, then pulled the alternator apart to find the front bearing was in very poor shape. To change the bearings you need a press, which I don't have. So, off to the auto electrician, *MJ Auto*, in Sunbury. They said that if they had the bearings they would have it done later that afternoon. By the time I had picked up a couple of bits and pieces and driven home they had already phoned with the job done. Fantastic service. Straight back to them and \$50 later one

happy customer departed. Back home to reassemble and refit the alternator etcetera and all was good.

I think the bearing was on the way out and the extra tension with the new belt caused it to fail, however I was super careful installing the belt the second time. I finished the coolant fill and went off for a road test. There were no problems this time.

Next day we were heading off to Geelong. Into *Blue Maxx* (better throw in some spanners) and off through the Brisbane Ranges where we hoped to find some good MX-5 roads ... but didn't. As we were driving slowly through the bush on a dirt road with the air conditioner on we were entertained by the occasional chirping of the birds ... or was it? Out on to the tarmac and a bit more speed, no bush but the birds became louder and more regular. Turned off the air conditioner and no more noise. "No worries, it's the air conditioner belt." Luckily I put the spanners in, will tighten that belt tonight.

We arrived at Geelong and checked into our hotel. Straight to the pool for a swim, met some very pleasant American boys who were staying there, but could not work because of the previous week's rain. Being country boys from the mid-west helped them cope nicely with that adversity. They worked for John Deere so Deb had a nice chat to them about her favourite subject ... tractors!

Out for dinner then back to the hotel TV so Deb could see all about Australia from an American point of view. I excused myself and went to adjust the air conditioner belt. It felt about right but must have been a little loose. I tightened it a little and tried it with air on and off a few times. All good. We drove home the next day on the freeway, turned the air conditioner on and the noise was back! Bother. Home and did some more checks. With the air conditioner turned on the extra cooling fan starts. This loads up the alternator and the belt chirps. I tightened that belt a little more and no more noise.

Following the drama with the alternator bearing I was very wary of over-tightening the belts. The manual gives the deflection and load figures, but how to measure these was a problem. A spring scale could measure the load but most are too big, as access is restricted.



I found a spring scale for weighing your luggage, shown in the picture, in an import shop. It was cheap, small and does the job nicely. It is OK for occasional use and way more accurate than a push with a thumb. Now to the deflection. I have a tyre depth indicator that is ideal as it has enough friction to hold a reading when moved. I found a piece of building bracing which is strong enough to place on the pulleys and hold the tyre indicator near the centre of the belt run. It could be glued in place but *Blu-Tack* works well enough and allows everything to go back to its original use.



Using these devices requires two people at the moment but does work well. A bit more modification would allow for a one person operation. Depending on how much skin you would like to retain, some thin mechanic's gloves are good when doing any of these jobs. I used not to like gloves as I found it difficult to feel what you were doing. The new ones are very good with the great bonus of clean hands and fingernails when you have finished.

With all the major work done *Blue Maxx* has been out and about searching for good roads and on a couple of club runs. She is performing very nicely and should only need routine maintenance.

So what would happen now if the lotto numbers came up? I think the answer would be ... **build a bigger shed and buy more MX-5s.**



# Vale Common Sense

## ... an Obituary printed in the London Times

**TODAY** we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, *Common Sense*, who has been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape.

He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as:

- » knowing when to come in out of the rain;
- » why the early bird gets the worm;
- » life isn't always fair, and
- » maybe it *was* my fault.

**Common Sense** lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you can earn) and reliable strategies (adults, not children, are in charge).

His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well-intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place. Reports of a six-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student only worsened his condition.

**Common Sense** lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job that they themselves had failed to do in disciplining their unruly children.

It declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer sun lotion or an aspirin to

a student, but could not inform parents when a student became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.

**Common Sense** lost much of the will to live as the churches became businesses and criminals received better treatment than their victims.

**Common Sense** took a beating when you couldn't defend yourself from a burglar in your own home and the burglar could sue you for assault.

**Common Sense** finally gave up the will to live, after a woman failed to realize that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little in her lap, and was promptly awarded a huge settlement.

**Common Sense** was preceded in death, by his parents, **Truth and Trust**, by his wife, **Discretion**, by his daughter, **Responsibility**, and by his son, **Reason**.

He is survived by his four stepbrothers:

- » I Know My Rights
- » I Want It Now
- » Someone Else Is To Blame
- » I'm A Victim.

Not many attended his funeral because so few realised he was gone.

If you still remember him, pass this on. If not, join the majority and do nothing.

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