

# mxtra

9/2012

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THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE MAZDA MX-5 CLUB OF VICTORIA & TASMANIA

## Which do you love?

... comparing the MX-5 generations



### **In this edition:**

**New-look MX-5 on the way**  
**2011-12 annual general meeting**  
**All the Chapter and motor sport news**



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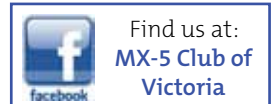
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*Cover image:*

Driving into history in the comparison of the generations.

Photo: Joel Strickland | [www.motorlist.com.au](http://www.motorlist.com.au)



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# Don's Drive(l) ...

■ Don Nicoll – President [president@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:president@mx5vic.org.au)

*Well, what do you say in your first column in **mxtra** as President of this unique Club?*

Perhaps a simple 'hello' is more than appropriate given that we are all simply connected by an interest in the world's biggest selling sports car.

How this interest finds expression is what this Club is all about, and it is both humbling and challenging to find myself in the role of the Club's President. Fortunately I'm backed by an enthusiastic and highly-competent Committee who, for reasons as individual as their personalities, are prepared to donate large slabs of their time voluntarily for the good of the Club.

At the moment I'm feeling a bit of a *Clayton's President*. No sooner had I been voted into the role than Linda (President of the Nicoll family) and I trooped off to the UK on a bitter-sweet journey. Bitter, because we scattered the ashes of Linda's mum in Scotland, but sweet because we spent time in Cornwall with my brother to celebrate his 60th.

While there, the local papers and auto magazines provided a quick oversight of the MX-5 in its UK guise. Which was good ... because I was unable to make contact with anyone in the British Club's management.

In one of the auto magazines there was a picture of a "special edition" of the Series 2 NC. It sported a two-litre engine and 6-speed gearbox as well as a special paint job (crystal white pearl and a few decals) and fancy rims, all for a little more than the standard price.

*What was standard*, I wondered?

Well, it turns out that, in the UK, a 1.8-litre engine with a 5-speed box is the most common face of the Series 2 NC. So, apart from a few decals and the fancy rims ... guess what? In the UK you can get a *standard* Australian NC as a *special edition*.

I was tempted to write to Mazda UK to suggest that they rename it "*The Aussie Special*" but I have this President title to consider now. Mind you, it wouldn't have stopped Murray, so perhaps I'm taking this all too seriously!

Not two days later there was a big advert in one of the large broadsheets, offering MX-5s at a 0.000001% interest rate (*my* interpretation; may have been *slightly* more). There was no mention of run-out deals but the wording was extremely suggestive.

Then, in another car magazine came the picture of the Series 3 NC with its more aggressive nose. So, if my understanding of the marketing campaign is correct, in the UK at the moment you can have a 1.8 litre, 5-speed NC at no cost from the bank, an Aussie Special for a tad more, or you can wait for the Series 3 at an undisclosed price. If you would like a second-hand car, however, the choice is endless on the car-sale internet sites. All the product of 60-something million people I guess. But, when you see them all on the road, you hanker for good old Victoria and a bit of room to blow away the cobwebs as you let the car do its thing.

Back in the real world we have some things to achieve in this Club. Much has been written about business plans and surveys, all of which are necessary if we are to keep moving along. The reality is that we now have a 500-plus membership, almost double the number when I joined five years ago. Murray and his Committee did great things to achieve this result.

But with your membership subscription come expectations which the Committee needs to understand and respect if we are to continue to facilitate the bringing together of people interested in the MX-5.

We have already initiated the motor sport survey and the Club-wide survey is coming soon. We need your responses if the Club is to remain relevant to its growing membership. There is nothing worse than being served a glass of water when you paid for a red.

That's it from me until next month, when there will be more than the UK car market to report.

*Must go ... the driver's seat is getting cold.*

**Remember ... Safety ~~fast~~ first!**

*Don*

*For your diary ...*

**See the full calendar for details**

## September

- 22 Central: Garage Day at Dick's
- 23 Western Vic: Goldfields run
- 29 Central: High country run

## October

- 13-14 Western Vic: weekend run
- 14 Central: GO Road dawn run
- 14 South Tas: Maydena run
- 19 Central: 10-pin bowling night
- 21 Eastern Vic: Gippsland run
- 22-27 NSW south coast 6-day tour

## November

- 4 Central: annual CFA run
- 4 South Tas: Orford show & shine
- 10 Central: Detailing 101 (TBC)
- 17-18 NEV: Summit to Sea run

## December

- 8 South Tas: Christmas run (TBC)
- 9 Central: Christmas break-up
- 16 Western Vic: Christmas break-up

## January 2013

TBA Central: Twilight in the Trees

## February

- 9-10 NE Vic: Snowy Mountains run



**Add our Club calendar to your Smartphone**

The smartphone version of the Club's events calendar is at [www.mx5vic.org.au/smartphone/events.html](http://www.mx5vic.org.au/smartphone/events.html)

You can type this URL directly into your device, or you can visit the events calendar page on the Club website and click on the small icon at the top of the page. Once there you can add the above icon to your home screen. Label it something appropriate ...

Just as with the website and the printed calendar, the events are listed month-by-month. Just tap the month you want and the events will cascade down your screen. Tap the month again to close it.



# Full Throttle!

■ Daniel White – Club Captain - Motor Sport [captain@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:captain@mx5vic.org.au)

**Daniel White is our new Club Captain - Motor Sport, having taken over from Robert Downes after last month's AGM. Robert is Daniel's assistant for the next 12 months.**

It certainly has been **Full Throttle** this month with a lot of MX-5 motor sport activities throughout the month.

## AROCA "Train the Instructor" evening, 30 July

As Robert mentioned in last month's **mxtra**, our friends at AROCA had invited us to attend a "Train the Instructor" evening at the Rising Star Hotel in South Melbourne.

Twelve MX-5 Club Motor Sport Team members attended this evening and were provided with an informative lecture by guest speakers Rick Kemp and Trent Harrison. Rick has had many years of motor sport experience as a racing competitor and a race engineer both here in Australia and internationally. He is also well known for his suspension history with KONI and is heavily involved with race engineering for several V8 Supercar and Formula Ford drivers and teams. Trent is a *CAMS Rising Star* in the Australian Formula Ford Championship.

As a race engineer, Rick explained some of the basics of instructing a driver to ensure maximum safety and enjoyment based on the driver's experience, ability and what they would like to learn on the day. Rick explained the fundamentals of what makes a good lap: **Turn triggers** (the point to turn the car in at), **Vision** (target fixation, eyes up, peripheral vision and join the dots), **Technique** (accelerate and brake smooth), and be **Analytical**. It was a fantastic presentation.

A special thank you goes to Neil Choi and the Committee of AROCA for arranging the evening and for their hospitality. Our MX-5 Club members all enjoyed the evening and certainly took a great deal of valuable information from the session that will be applied next time they are instructing new drivers on track.

## Winton Racecraft Driver Training - Saturday, 4 August

Another successful driver training session was held at Winton, giving drivers the opportunity to take to the track for the first time, or to further develop their skills

with the assistance of an instructor in the car. The format of the day was for drivers to alternate between a practical on track session and then attend a technical theory lecture conducted by Sam and Robert. Thank you to our MX-5 Club members, **Craig Healy, Tim Emery, Russell Garner, Ray Monik, Sam Gumina and Robert Downes**, who all generously gave their time and knowledge for the day as instructors. We look forward to seeing the new drivers on track in our upcoming sprint rounds.

## Winton Sprints - Sunday, 5 August

Only 21 MX-5s competed in this round with attendance numbers for this round down due to 10 of our regular competitors competing in the Phillip Island 6-Hour.

Congratulations to the three drivers who set new lap records on the day – **Russell Garner** in Modified (1:42.129), **Robert Hart** in Standard NC (1:43.998) and **Stephen Downes** in Standard NB (1:47.241). Well done guys. Drivers were certainly pushing hard on the day and apparently Robert Downes' corner speed exceeded his "driving talent" through the sweeper, ending in an excursion (or attempted shortcut) through the midfield ... unfortunately meaning he had to retire the car for the day.

## Sandown Sprints and Motorkhana - Sunday, 19 August

Round 3 of the championship saw great weather conditions on the day with another three new lap records being set. Congratulations to **Robert Hart** – Standard NC (1:31.804), **David Wilken** – Modified (1:29.438) and **Peter Phillips** – Clubman (1:34.348).

There was also MX-5 action in the car park, with MX-5 Club members competing in a Motorkhana event. It was great to see these guys in action too, with a number of the sprint competitors going down for a look and to say hi to the other Club members.

## Motor Sport Team Survey

During the month a survey was sent out to all of our motor sport competitors to gather information in order to compile a marketing portfolio for us to approach prospective partnerships to the Club and



*Daniel White (left) officially takes the wheel from Robert Downes*

in turn look to provide benefits back to the members. Stay tuned for more on this in the next couple of months as we begin to compile the data received.

To date we have had a very high response rate and I thank those who have completed it. For the motor sport members who have not completed the survey yet, it's not too late, so send it in if you can.

On behalf of the committee I would like to thank Tim Emery for his expertise and efforts in setting up the survey and for contributing to the question content.

Stay tuned for the results.

### Daniel #146

**"Racing – converting money into noise!"**

## Motor sport calendar

See the full calendar for details

### 2012-2013 Championship

#### October

13-14 Winton 6-Hour (non-Championship event)

#### November

17 Rd 4: Sprints, Phillip Island

### Motorkhana 2012-2013

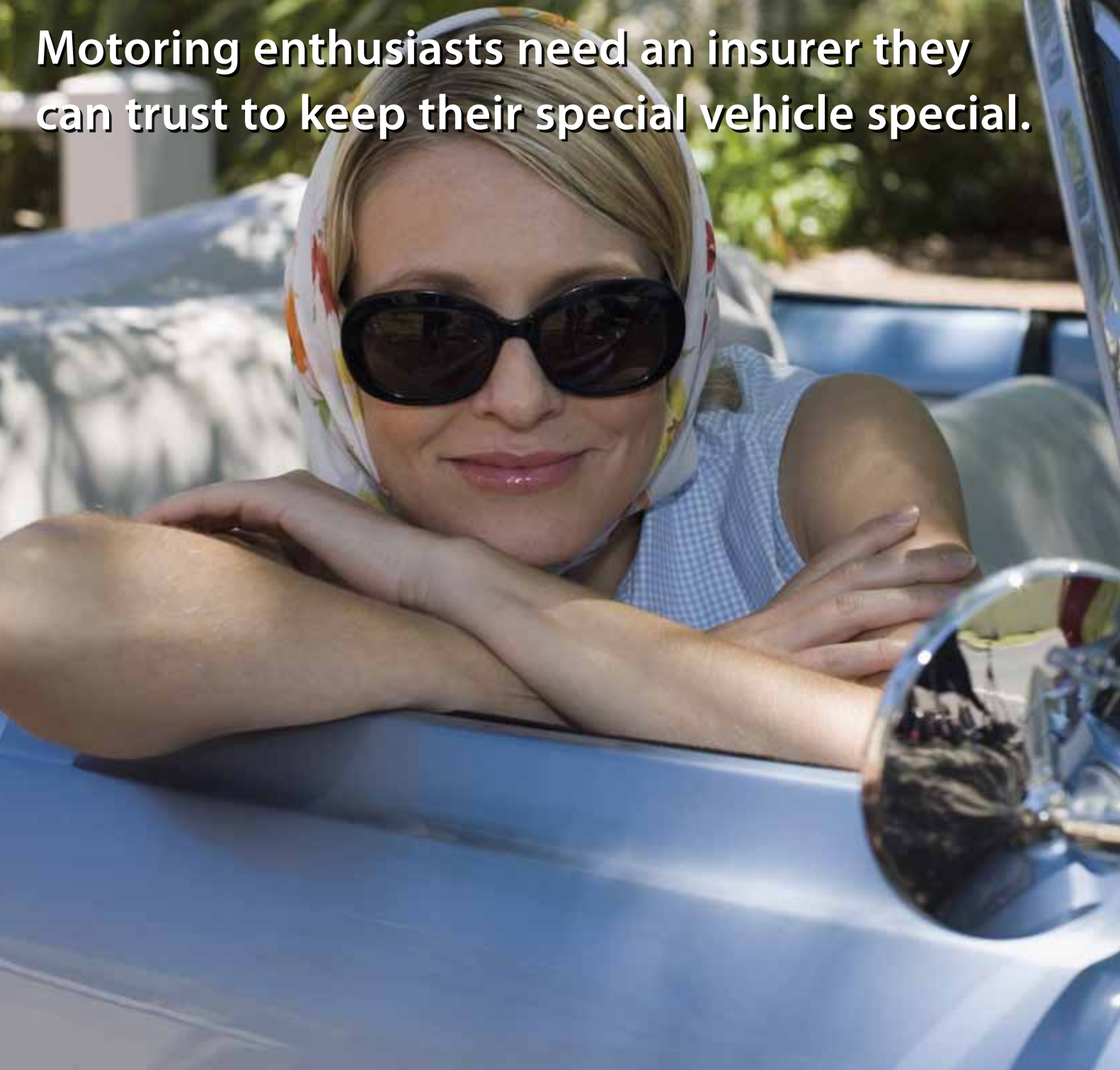
#### September

22 Rd 8: Huntly Saleyards, Bendigo (Saturday)

#### October

13-14 Australian Championship, Queensland

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# Scene about ...



■ Photos: Bronwyn Roche, Karen Bradshaw, Alan Bennett, Ron Gillick, Ron Macdonald



## New-look MX-5 on the way ...

*An aggressive new look and even more fun to drive, says Mazda.*

A newly-upgraded version of the Mazda MX-5 is now rolling off the Hiroshima assembly line and will be available at Mazda dealerships Australia-wide in late Spring.

In addition to exterior and interior upgrades, the new-look MX-5 features enhanced driving attributes to make it even more appealing.

It has a new front bumper design that makes the roadster more aggressive looking and contributes to optimal aerodynamic performance.

A larger front grille opening offers a sense of depth, and a newly-designed front fog lamp bezel and new front chin

spoiler help complete the new look.

Inside, the decoration panel, steering wheel bezel and instrument meter rings now come in a glossy dark grey replacing the current silver colour.

Driving the Mazda MX-5 has now become even more enjoyable thanks to revised accelerator and brake characteristics.

Adjustment to the throttle management program in manual models makes the MX-5 more responsive when accelerating out of corners, while updates to the brake booster make it easier to control the front and rear load distribution – improving braking ability all round.

The enhancements add polish to the pure 'Jinba Ittai – sense of oneness between driver and car' driving pleasure which has made it famous.



## » President ~ Murray Finlay

It's almost a cliché, but once again the year just past was even better than the previous year and, I believe, the highlight of our 22-year history.

The Club is bigger and better in every way, whether that's measured in terms of membership numbers; the growing camaraderie within and between the Chapters; the number and variety of events on offer, or the growth in participation and success of the motor sport program.

This year the Club underwent a significant change in structure, with the introduction of our fifth and sixth Chapters (in Eastern Victoria in October and "Central" in March).

In January the Club Committee met with the (then) five Chapter Captains and agreed to convert the Melbourne metropolitan-based membership to a new "Central" Chapter. This restructure has put much of the day-to-day management in the hands of the six Chapter Captains and their assistants, and has freed the Committee to concentrate more on Club-wide matters – including the important process of planning the future of the Club as a whole through the development of a business plan.

That is an ongoing process that is focussing on six "streams": corporate, social, motor sport, membership, finances and communications. Different individuals on the Committee have responsibility for each stream, and for the 2012-2013 year the Committee itself will be restructured to reflect this and to keep the ball rolling.

This all sounds simple when it's boiled down to a couple of paragraphs, but it represents a major shift in the way the Club operates and, I believe, will have a lasting and beneficial impact on the future success of our Club.

Looking to the year past, the Club's achievements included:

- » membership numbers – we closed the year with 541 members (up on the 479 of last year). And already 385 members have signed on for this year (50 ahead of this time last year), including about 20 new members in the first month;
- » growth of membership in all areas, with new faces regularly joining the ranks of each of the Chapters;
- » membership retention appears to be playing an increasing part on the growth of our numbers. In 2011-2012 we had one new 15-year member, 11 new 10-year members and 19 new five-year members;
- » a very active and revitalised social program, with something of a "back to basics" approach emerging in the events the Chapters are organising. This appears to be helping greatly with retention rates and, being seen out and about, attracting new members;
- » the continued growth and success of our motor sport, including growing participation, success at the Winton 6-Hour, and the successful defence of the NSW-Victoria Interstate Challenge trophy ... not once, but twice;
- » *mxtra* magazine continues to be a great record of Club events and a great read. Credit again goes to Don Nicoll for organising a continuous stream of excellent articles, and to all who contribute to it;
- » our website, despite being in desperate need of a makeover, provides a wealth of current and historical information

about the Club, with our calendar being extended to the realm of the smartphone;

- » and our Facebook page not only keeps people informed of upcoming events but provides a forum for sharing ideas, news and photos and gives the Club a more personal face

I would like to pay a heartfelt personal tribute to the outgoing Committee – all of whom are returning for 2012-2013, albeit with some shuffling of the chairs. Without you all, the Club would be a shadow of what it is today.

In addition, there were many non-committee members who provided great assistance over the last year:

- » helping to organise runs and other events,
- » assisting with our motor sport program,
- » contributing ideas, articles and photos to *mxtra*

I would like to thank the companies that supported the Club through advertising in 2011-12.

Lastly I would like to thank Ben Rounsefell and Mazda Australia for their support of the Mazda MX-5 Club, not just in Victoria but Australia-wide. At a local level Mazda has added to the "Mazda experience" for Club members through things like use of their premises, provision of merchandise and tickets for the international motor show; nationally they continue to support our biennial Club gathering, NatMeet, and increasingly are helping to facilitate greater communications between the Clubs.

As we approach our 22nd birthday this Friday (10 August), I believe the Club is better placed than ever before to launch into an exciting new future. ■

## » Club Captain - Motor Sport ~ Robert Downes

Participation rates in motor sport within the Club continue to grow with between 30 and 50 competitors in most rounds. Significant numbers of new members have expressed interest in "taking to the track".

Again our Championship was substantially aligned with dates and venues where the Alfa Romeo Club of Victoria was the host Club. We continue to enjoy an extremely good mutually beneficial relationship with them. The standard of driving and the level of competition improve each year, with numerous lap records posted in most classes.

Despite a countback system, we have Joint Club Motor Sport Champions for 2011-12 in Russell Garner, Peter Phillips, Stephen Downes and Robert Downes. Class winners and other award winners were all identified in the August *mxtra*. Congratulations to each of you and indeed all competitors.

Other highlights included two top-10 finishes (including second place) in the Winton 6-Hour last October, retention of the Vic/NSW Interstate Challenge trophy both at Wakefield Park in October and at Phillip Island in June, a racecraft training day at Winton, and a DECA day for all members.

The 2011-12 Championship season was the first conducted under the new rules agreed to in May 2011. The Motor Sport group agreed to retain the rules unchanged for the next two years.



# Annual General Meeting 8/8/12



## » Treasurer ~ John Todd

I would like to thank the Club Committee for its continued wholehearted support of motor sport within the Club and indeed to the many people who have offered or willingly helped when asked or have supported our initiatives and activity program throughout the year.

I would like to offer my personal special thanks to Daniel White and Russell Garner for their valuable contribution and support as Assistant Club Captain – Motor Sport and Classification/Results Officer, respectively. ■

Following are the Balance Sheet and Financial Reports of the Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria Inc as presented at the Annual General Meeting on 8 August 2012.

This year, the Club's working cheque account traded at a surplus of \$4,224 for the 2011-12 Year. As at the end of June 2012, we had \$20,453 in our term deposit, and the Committee continues to keep these funds invested for three- or six-month periods, depending on the interest rates applicable at the time.

Throughout the last year the Committee maintained its decision to subsidise some of the major events held such as the Annual Awards presentation lunch and Christmas parties.

In the last financial year there were no major purchases. Our assets now total \$38,345.

As mentioned in my report last year the Committee decided to appoint a Financial Sub-Committee to review our financial position and make recommendations on our future.

The Financial Sub-Committee continues to meet and is now part of a larger group focussing on completing a Business Plan to allow the Committee and Club to better understand our members and thereby deliver functions and services better aligned to our members' desires. ■

## 2011-2012 Balance Sheet

<i>Income</i>	
Excursions (In)	22,139.15
Westpac acct closure	\$3,992.70
Membership subscriptions	\$24,536.57
Merchandise (In)	\$3,184.75
<b>mxtra</b> advertising	\$8,430.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$62,283.17</b>

<i>Expenses</i>	
Bendigo acct open	\$3,992.69
Albert Sailing Club	\$370.00
Bank charges	\$123.90
Christmas party door prizes	\$631.97
Convenors meeting	\$1,980.13
Courier	\$31.75
Diecast model	\$41.00
Donations	\$250.00
Equipment	\$696.90
Excursions (out)	\$23,052.10
Flowers & gifts	\$105.00
Fuel	\$103.27
Government charges	\$86.70
Insurance	\$1,042.00

Investment account deposit	\$5,000.00
Membership expenses	\$2,133.50
Merchandise	\$4,023.77
Miata books	\$56.15
<b>mxtra</b> printing	\$8,026.70
<b>mxtra</b> award	\$38.90
Parking	\$20.40
Postage	\$2,369.63
Refreshments	\$508.66
Stationery & printing	\$1,190.59
CAMS affiliation fee	\$1,035.00
Telephone	\$62.36
Trophies	\$734.45
Website	\$351.21
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$58,058.73</b>

<i>Current assets</i>	
Cash at Bank	\$11,973.29
Investment Account	\$20,453.84
Stock on hand	
- Merchandise	\$3,316.29
- Key Rings	\$1,890.00
- Models	\$350.00
- Lanyards	\$262.40
- Plastic Cards	\$100.00
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>\$38,345.82</b>

<i>Non-current assets</i>	
Name card printer	\$3,107.20
Accumulated depreciation	-\$621.44
Club equipment (incl Motor Sport)	\$13,261.70
Accumulated depreciation	-\$7,702.34
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>\$8,045.12</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>46,390.94</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$46,390.94</b>

# Meet the 2012-2013 Club Committee ...

## Don Nicoll

President  
2010 Crystal White Pearl NC



Last year when I was writing this piece I made a comment about the journey of being a Club member since 2007. Well the journey has taken another twist and now I find myself in the privileged position of Club President.

When I bought my first MX-5 in 2007, I did not imagine what would await when I joined this great Club: a series of pleasant and enduring surprises as I've had a go at most of the events and activities the Club offers. Having a shot at the motor sport sprint series remains a goal. To top it off, receiving this year's *Jinba Ittai* award was a real surprise and a very humbling experience.

I have often wondered what other car clubs are like. Surely they have a range of interesting activities on offer for people who share a similar passion. And yet, when new members join who have experienced other car clubs, they often comment on the difference in our club. The MX-5 is clearly very attractive to a certain section of the community who, besides liking the MX-5, seem to have a happy knack of getting on well with other people. *Thanks Mazda* is all I can say.

I'm looking forward to the coming year on the Committee. Our main goal has to be to keep doing the things that attracted people to the Club in the first place and enjoying that wind in the hair, glued to the road feeling that comes from putting our little cars to the test, be that on the track or in a convoy snaking through some lovely twists.

## Murray Finlay \* †

Vice President / Communications  
2005 Velocity Red SE



I've been in this fantastic Club for all of its 22 years, and it just keeps getting better!

Participation at both our social runs and motor sport continues to boggle the brain ... it's just amazing what a positive impact this simple little sports car has had on so many lives.

This is my second stint as Vice President, with my focus on Club communications – *mxtra* and the website. I also serve as the national liaison person with Mazda Australia on behalf of the five state clubs.

My Velocity Red NB SE is my second MX-5, which I bought seven years ago to replace the Classic Red NA I bought in March 1990 and drove almost every day over 15 years and about 240,000km.

I love being involved with this Club and the Committee, and I'm grateful to my wonderful wife Alyssa who gives me the freedom to stay so deeply involved.

My motivation is always to try to make this the sort of club that I would like to join and participate in at any time. I hope that we on the Committee achieve that goal, and I think the constantly-growing numbers and high membership retention suggest that we are doing most things right.

## Peter Dannock

Secretary  
2008 Stormy Blue NC



Hi, I am Peter Dannock and the Secretary of the Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria.

I have been a Club member for five years and am now embarking on my fourth year as Secretary.

As a member of the Club, I enjoy all of the drives, social activities and friendships that the Club provides. My wife (Jane) and two daughters (Melanie and Georgia) are now members of the Club through our family membership. Since purchasing my 1991 White NA6 in 2007, I have thoroughly enjoyed my weekend roadster. I have now added to my MX-5 collection by purchasing a 2008 NC hardtop as my daily driver. I now continue to enjoy the terrific experience of driving an MX-5 on a daily basis.

I encourage everyone to make the most of what the Club has to offer.



Central

Ron Macdonald  
1998 Grace  
Green NB



Eastern  
Victoria

Grant Butler \*  
2006 Copper  
Red NC



## John Todd

*Treasurer*  
2003 Cerrion Silver NB



This year marks 10 years of Club membership and my fifth year as Club Treasurer. Hard to believe that both these milestones have gotten here so quickly. The saying that time flies when you're having fun certainly applies to every aspect of this Club and I must say that I have enjoyed every event that I have attended, even the Committee Meetings aren't too bad!

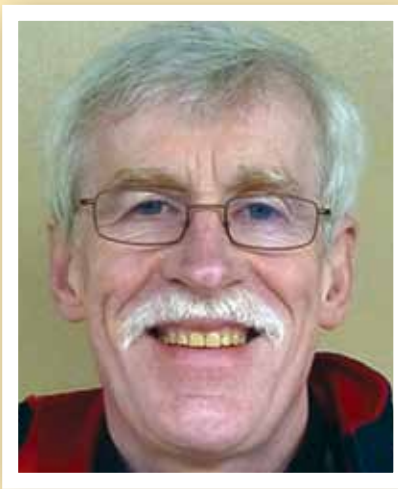
With the continuing focus on the future by the entire Committee I believe that our Club will continue to grow and offer a wide variety of events to keep us all interested and active.

As I intend to step down as Treasurer at the end of this Club year the Committee will be looking for a replacement so if you're interested in taking on the role please let me know – I've done it for five years so it can't be that hard and it doesn't take much time.

See you out and about at a Club event in the future.

## Dave Collins

*Club Captain – Social*  
2010 Metropolitan Grey NC



Having spent 40 years in IT (or *Data Processing* as it was called when I started), I am now in my second year of the unpaid, and over-worked, time of life.

As well as all those jobs that need undertaking and of course completing, I do some volunteering. Gail and I love a coffee, going to the movies, local theatre, dining, socialising, and being grandparents.

Part of the transition to unpaid work has been the acquisition of first one then two MX-5s, joining the Club and the Committee. Which of course means less time for the jobs!!!

Thoroughly enjoying the friendship and enthusiasm of the Committee and Club members.

I hope to contribute to keeping the Club something that we all will enjoy being part of.

## Daniel White

*Club Captain – Motor Sport*  
1993 Classic Red NA Clubman (x2)



I originally joined the Club in 1998 whilst working as a salesman for Bendigo Mazda. I went to the MX-5 release night in Melbourne and was instantly hooked. And so began my MX-5 addiction.

My first MX-5 was a new 1998 NB in twilight blue. I had this car for five years and highlights were a day at DECA, a road trip from Bendigo to Hervey Bay and many laps of Queensland raceway.

Ten years on, my next MX-5 purchase was a 1993 NA8 Clubman, which I used for six rounds in the Club Motor Sport Championship in Clubman Class and then decided the car was too good for the track, so retired it as my road car.

In 2010 I added another 1993 Clubman to my *fleet* to use as a dedicated track car and have been competing in this since June 2010 in Restricted Open Class.

Since rejoining the Club in 2009 I have thoroughly enjoyed competing in our Club's Motor Sport Championship and associated events. I have formed many great friendships along the way with fellow club members and last year I joined the Club Committee as Assistant Motor Sport Captain.

This year I am pleased to take on the role of Club Captain - Motor Sport. I look forward to the role and to contributing as much as possible, to maintain and add value to the motor sport aspect of the Club. What makes our Club great is that it provides an enjoyable environment for members to have a go at motor sport, meet some great people, form friendships and enjoy their MX-5.

## CHAPTER CAPTAINS



**North-eastern Victoria**  
**Ron Gillick**  
2002 Sunlight Silver NB



**Western Victoria**  
**John Gleeson**  
2001 Supreme Blue NB



**Northern Tasmania**  
**Bruce Harvey**  
2009 Sunset Gold NC



**Southern Tasmania**  
**John Waldock**  
2004 Velocity Red NB SE

## Your 2012-2013 Committee (continued)

### Janette Todd

Assistant Club Captain – Social  
2003 Cerrion Silver NB



Well, here we are again at the beginning of another Club year.

My position on the 2012=13 Committee is that of Assistant Social Captain, and my role is to schedule and look after Club-wide events such as the AGM, Awards Presentation function and New Member Nights as well as any other events for the Club as a whole (as opposed to Chapter-based).

John and I joined the Club in August 2002 and first nominated for Committee in 2008-09, so this is my fifth year of being involved with the Social portfolio.

I am proud to work alongside such an enthusiastic team of volunteers who continually strive to ensure that our Club is the best it can be – it is lovely to be able to give back a little of what I have received over the past 10 years.

We try to get to most of the Central Chapter runs and equally enjoy joining in with the other Victorian Chapter events whenever we can (as well as the odd Tassie event!), so keep an eye out for “Cerri”, our 2003 NB, in the convoy!

### Robert Downes

Assistant Club Captain – Motor Sport  
1997 Classic Red NA



- 2005-06 “Standard Class” Winner
- 2006-07 “Clubman Class” Winner & joint Motor Sport Champion
- 2009-12 “Standard Class” winner
- 2011-12 “Standard NA Class” Winner & joint Motor Sport Champion

I have been a Club member for 10 years, participated in the Club motor sport program for eight years and owned *three* MX-5s (all red) in that time.

Motor sport enables you to enjoy the full performance potential of your MX-5 away from public roads and to improve and benchmark your driving skills. Participation rates continue to grow.

There are plenty of opportunities to be involved in Club motor sport without having to be a competitor. *Ask me how!*

I look forward to contributing to building on the exciting initiatives of the past 12 months.

### Ben Sale

Department of Youth / Facebook  
1990 White NA



I’ve been a proud member of the Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria since I’ve been old enough to hold a driver’s licence ...

That being said, as my car and I share the same birth date in April 1990, I’ve not been a member for that long ... in fact I’m only a few months older than the Club itself!

I feel that over my 4½ years as a member I’ve been lucky enough to get a lot out the Club and am thankful for the opportunity to give a little back too.

Through working with the Committee we have been able to develop both an MX-5 Club of Victoria Facebook page and group as well as a promotional video which you can see on the front page of the Club’s website. These put together have seen the Club exposed to thousands of new people.

I also aim to provide a youthful opinion at the Committee level, different and new ideas and help the Club continue to appeal to both young and older MX-5 enthusiasts alike.

I’m looking forward to another year on the Committee and hope to be able to continue to represent the growing number of young people in the Club.



## Will Campbell \* †

*Membership  
2005 Galaxy Grey NC  
& 1999 Innocent Blue 10AE*



I have been a sports car fanatic since my youth, my first car being a Triumph Spitfire.

However, all good things must come to an end, and so the Triumph was traded for a more family-friendly vehicle when my first child arrived. It was to be 25 years before I was able to again entertain the thought of a sports car when Coral and I purchased a 1989 White NA advertised in our local paper.

Buying the car was one of the best decisions we have made, although it has since been replaced and we now have three MX-5s – an NA, an NB and an NC!

We enjoy driving all three although the oldest, our '91 NA is the daily drive.

I joined the Committee in 2000 and after serving a three-year stint as President, I now look after Membership.

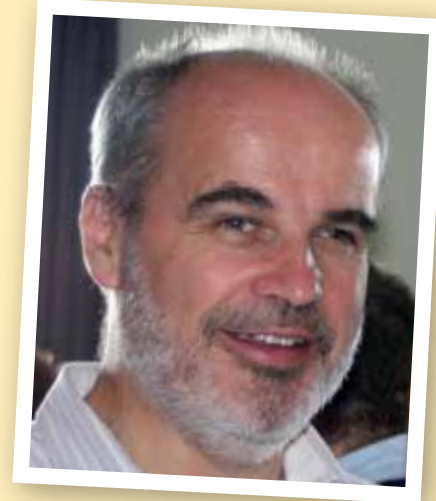
I thoroughly enjoy my involvement with the Club and hope it continues for many years to come.

*\* Club Life Member † Past President*

*Contact details for all committee members are listed on page 3 of each edition of **mxtra**.*

## Steve Dunlop

*Merchandise  
2002 Grace Green NB SP*



I joined this fantastic club of ours about 6½ years ago, soon after my shameless, self indulgent purchase of my Grace Green MX-5 SP and haven't stopped smiling since!

I continue to smile each day I drive it.

In that period, I have participated in the wide variety of events offered by our Club including social runs, DECA, motor sport events as a spectator and flaggie, detailing days, car displays and other social events etc, and I have also been involved in organising the odd event.

I think that is one of the great benefits of this fantastic Club of ours – the broad range of activities offered has something for just about everyone.

For the past 12 months I have been looking after the merchandise portfolio and will continue on in this capacity for the 2012-13 term.

So I'm your man to help you out with that Club merchandise to go with your favourite sports car!

## Coral Campbell \*

*Championship Points  
2005 Galaxy Grey NC  
& 1991 White NA*



I have always had an interest in cars, seeing them as more than just means of transport – for a female growing up in the 1960s, a car represented my independence.

My first car was Hillman Minx station wagon which could transport half of my lacrosse team to its weekly game, and which served as 'designated vehicle' for social functions.

However, it was when I purchased a Mazda 1800 sedan that I started to realise the fun of driving. It just handled so well compared to the other cars I had driven. Practicalities took over again with a family and it wasn't until we were 'kid free', that Will and I bought our first 1989 white MX-5 and joined the club (1998).

It opened up a new world for us. Over the years we have participated in car rallies, social events, motor sport events, driver education and a host of other activities.

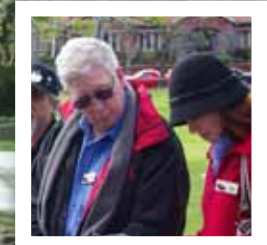
We have had many hours of great fun, meeting new friends, travelling to parts of Victoria previously unseen (and Tasmania, South Australia, New South Wales, Queensland, New Zealand and North America!) and generally becoming involved in a fantastic club.

We currently own three MX-5s – an NA as a daily car, an NB (Will's 60th birthday gift) and an NC (which is my favourite). Over the years, I have held various positions on the Committee.

## Chapter chatter ...

# All the single-lanies (sorry, Beyoncé)

4/8/12 | Central



^ Alan & Jenny

*Variety, they say, is the spice of life.*

Every so often there is a Saturday afternoon run and, as Will Campbell explained, they tend to be occasional, shorter than Sunday runs, afternoons and set to appeal to those that can't make other events. Easily tempted, my wife and I (sounds regal, doesn't it?) decided we had missed out on too many runs lately and made the effort to participate in a experience that we had not been on before. (I admit to having to look up Trentham on the internet portal thingy just to find out where we were headed – when pressed I will admit to being a foreigner.)

So getting to the start line on a Saturday – what could possibly go wrong? A quick entry on the TomTom and we headed off in “plenty of time” and discovered that the designated starting streets split in two are more fun if you get on to the right half sooner rather than later – yes we almost missed it. Ahhh, to be lost! Ever had that feeling that it would be a very quiet drive straight home after getting 99.9% there and just not connecting the last little bit? We went left, we went right. We went left again, just in case. Then, by chance, we spotted two MX-5s (albeit with their rooves up!), and immediately decided this could not be a coincidence as more than one MX-5 in a row makes a convoy – a little heel and toe as I threw the ‘box into second, sliding the rear out, a bit of wheel spin and a quick change of direction and, hello, a line of MX-5s and the park as promised in the flyer. Phew, no problem really. Tried to slink up quietly so no-one would notice a couple of shy late comers.

As the departure time ticked on Will and Coral ensured we were signed in and

■ **Words:** Alan Bennett ■ **Run organisers:** Coral & Will Campbell  
■ **Photos:** Karen Bradshaw, Alan Bennett, Bronwyn Roche, Ron Macdonald

the briefing began. Hills, twists, turns, a touch or two of blue sky between greying clouds – a perfect combination. As soon as the request for the obligatory honorary journalist went out the growing of the blades of grass became irresistible and eyes went down to investigate. My turn I think I heard myself say, to my own surprise. Still, the bottle of wine promised was bribery enough! With first position and last sorted, a few spare radios offered and we were thinking about making sure we didn't get lost at the first set of lights. *Was that first right-then-left or left-then-right and set the odometer at the lights or at the first intersection or was that the same thing??*

And then a surprise – soon to be past-President Murray (he must have an excellent memory and a pocket full of badges) announced that yours truly and regal spouse, Jenny, were awarded five-year membership badges. Can it really be five years? *Wow yes!* No regrets ... and then, all of a sudden it seemed, it was time to get belted up, in the nicest possible way of course.

**Radio here, scarf just so, seat belt, engine, lights (camera, action anyone?).** Nice to see some sightseers taking photos of the line up of cars! Setting off, we were one of six that didn't make the lights (amber is the new red) but great directions and instructions up front kept confidence high and we were soon back in touch with the 13 cars that made up the rest of the pack.

Avoided the pedestrian who was taking his time and headed towards Bendigo, moved left on to the Tulla and then veered right towards Sunbury, right hand

turn on to Oaklands Road being watchful of slow moving traffic pulling over to spot planes, a quick left hander then a right, the first of three single-lane bridges so eyes out for oncoming traffic. Left on to Gellies Road, another narrow bridge and some lefts and rights and we were on the Bulla-Diggers Rest Road heading for the next one-lane bridge, following a slow ute and trailer which split the convoy up. Chatter on the radio alerted us that this twisty stretch of road was very pleasant in daylight with sunshine but not recommended if in a hurry to a CFA meeting at night. Will and Coral pulled up beside a bowling green to bring the convoy back together. That achieved, we were off again, over the Calder and left on to Coimada Road and heading for Toolern Vale where a couple of oncoming cars flashed their lights at us ... so we proceeded with more caution in case there was an accident ahead. Plenty of hay for sale but no room in our boot and the wife didn't want to walk home. Bags of chicken manure smelled cheap at \$1.50 but navigator still refused to budge.

Carefully passed an L-plater as we ventured on to a wider stretch of freshly sealed road with a lower than average speed limit (apparently still hovering low after a spate of pre-resurfing accidents) and a short burst on the Western Highway before exiting with some quick turns then a 10km stretch towards Ballarat again. It was refreshing to see the fire warning rating low as we turned right towards Blackwood and Trentham, then on to the gentle conclusion to our driving adventure.

At 3.15 and with 120km on the clock, we pulled up on Albert Street ahead of coffee



and a sticky bun at the very well-patronised RedBeard Bakery ([www.redbeardbakery.com.au](http://www.redbeardbakery.com.au)) – highly recommended if you are in the area – very olde fashioned baking process, in an olde and rare oven (the bakery cooks organic bread in a 19th C century Scotch oven). The size of our group stretched their coffee production line for a while but like all good things, it was worth the wait.

My thanks to Wendy and Ron for lending us a radio for the run; it allowed us to remain confident about what was happening way up front as well as towards the end of the cavalcade. Another plus was the consistent waiting at turns; we never felt that we were alone or lost – after having missed a turn once when driving on my own *I really like to see people waiting for others!* Special thanks to the Todds in JT-000 in front for being patient and waiting for us several times and to Eric, following us on his own, for waiting at corners and catching up when it mattered. Typically, the further you are away from the lead the harder it is to keep in touch with the procession. Not on this day.

For those, like me, who like closure, this was advertised as “not a Run to Steiglitz”. *Wot the?* Well, initially it was a run to

^ 82 years of Club membership in this photo: (L-R) Janette, John & Alistair (8 years each), Murray (22), Brian & Sandra (11 each) and Will (14), giving his pre-run briefing ...

Steiglitz, however (putting it mildly) when Coral and Will checked the route from a previous run, the café in Steiglitz was no more and there were no local alternatives. So, hats off to the organisers, they invented a new part of this established run. This was a process that took several hours, all so that we could enjoy a rare Saturday Club outing, such is the dedication of the Committee to ensure the events are worthwhile. FYI, the Club has a bank of runs (re-runs anyone?) that have been tried and tested so if you are contemplating how to take the reins yourself I am sure your Chapter Captain would love to hear from you.

My thanks to Coral and Will for a well-researched and organised, and enjoyable if rare, Saturday afternoon outing. ■



# Chapter chatter ...

## A Bright idea!

12/8/12 | North-Eastern Victoria

*Ian and I decided to make a weekend of our trip to Wangaratta for the Northern Victoria Chapter run to Bright on Sunday.*

We left Friday afternoon and had a good trip up to Wangaratta – with the roof up as it was pretty cool. We filled in Saturday resting up for a big Sunday but we did take advantage of a beautiful cloudless day to venture out to the Warby Ranges for a short squirt and to check out Ryan’s lookout.

Then Ian had to wash the car of course as we couldn’t turn up with a dirty car on Sunday morning!

We met up with the North-eastern Victorian group at 9am Sunday and were introduced to new members, Brian and Maree. After some catching-up chatter, Ron presented

Gerry and Stuart with their Assistant Chapter Captain Badges and Gerry with his

Chapter Champion Award (again).

At 9.30am on a bright sunny morning eight little MX-5s – with every roof down – made a quick burst to Milawa for morning coffee and more catching up and storytelling. What was that about speeding tickets, Tyrone? Some of us even made a start on the Christmas shopping.

After we stocked up on Ian’s favourite Bengal Relish (a nice spicy relish) we headed off towards Myrtleford in glorious sunshine and Tyrone didn’t get misplaced this time! A beautiful early spring day and the roofs down. *What a difference from a couple of weeks ago when we had thick fog for our Beechworth weekend!*

We waited down the track a bit for the convoy to regroup. Together once again, we went to leave only to get a couple of interlopers in our smart little convoy. So it was a right turn into Myrtleford and on to



^ The group at Tawonga Gap lookout



^ Stuart (centre) and Gerry (right) try to convince Ian that “cool” has nothing to do with temperature!





■ Words & photos: Karen Bradshaw ■ Run organiser: Ron Gillick

the Great Alpine Road and another quick stop to regroup and lose the interlopers. Then it was into Ovens where we turned off towards Mt Beauty – great snow-peaked mountain views (Happy Valley Tourist Drive). On our left were very large pine plantations with some mountains bare from harvest.

Then it was up and down and around mountains with non-stop MX-5 corners and magnificent views of the valley below. We pulled over for a regroup of the convoy ... our esteemed leader has a bit of a lead foot (and it wasn't Mr Bradshaw's). Then when we were all together ... but where was Marg? – off taking photos of the snow peaks!

We turned right on to Kiewa Valley Highway – just wonderful to hear the hum of the MX-5s travelling along great roads. We stopped at a lookout and took photos of Mt Bogong with snow on it –

learning that Mt Bogong is the highest mountain in Victoria ... so not only are the North-Eastern Victoria runs enjoyable, they are educational, says a boasting Ron.

Then it was off up the mountains again to Tawonga Gap with Tyrone almost leaving Pam behind. Up the mountain and no time to look at the views with lots of corners – whoops, Ian, where did the back of the car go?

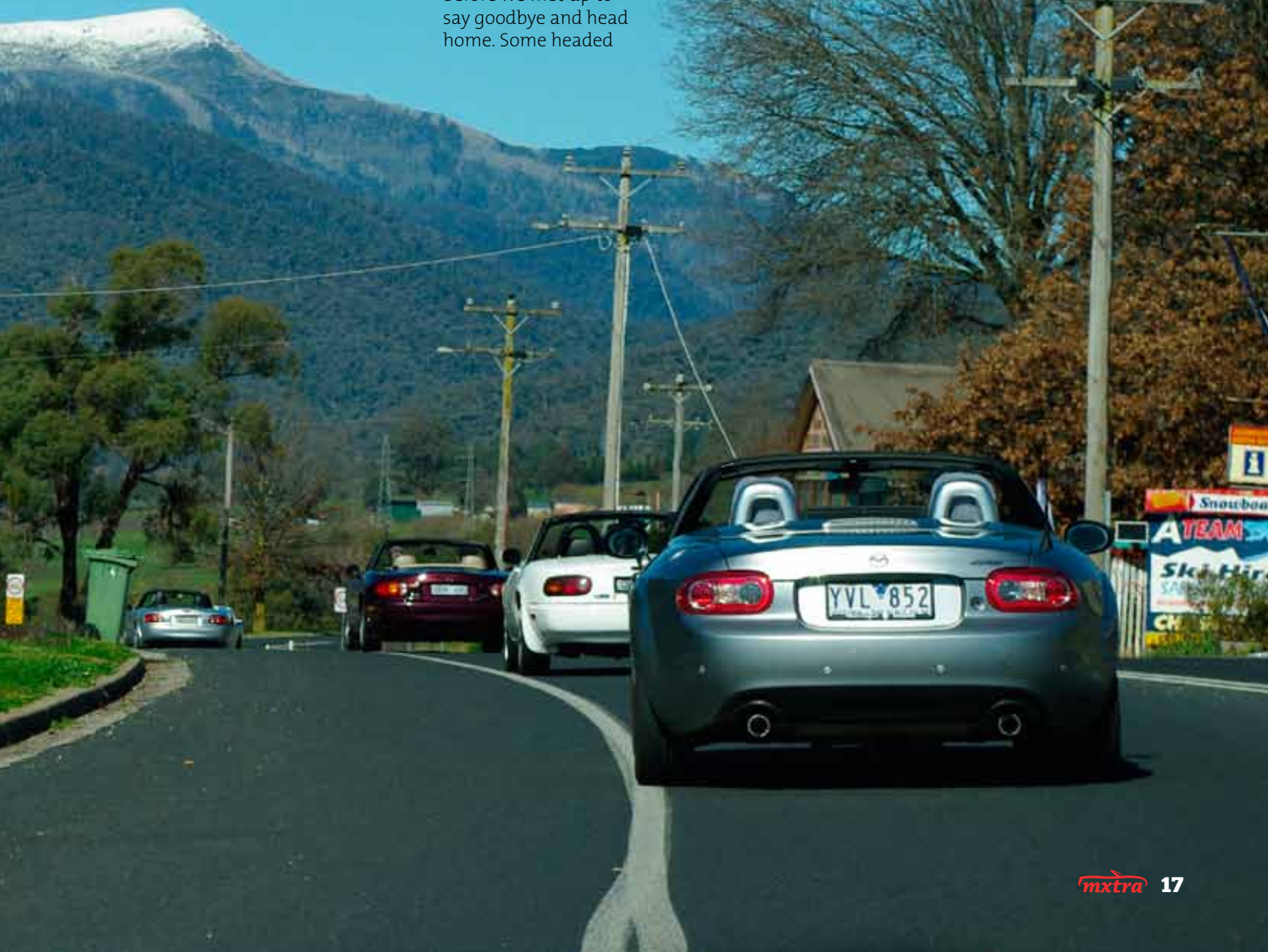
In no time at all we are at Tawonga Gap Lookout for a group photo. Off we head with we Bradshaws in the lead – what a great run down we had until we caught up with “slow” cars. We stopped at Germantown Bridge to regroup, then with Ron and Marg in the lead again it was off into Bright for a delicious lunch at the Alpine Hotel *and of course some more yack and chat.*

We had a half hour to wander around Bright before we met up to say goodbye and head home. Some headed

off to Beechworth for coffee whilst Ian and I headed back to Ballarat and home.

**What a great weekend we had – of course it helps that the MX-5s are such a great car and the owners are great people too.**

**Thank you to Ron and Marg and the North-Eastern Victorian Chapter members for a great run and a great day. ■**



# Generations: Mazda



## The MX-5 is a sports car icon ... but which is best?

**When it comes to a modern take on the quintessential British Sports Car scene of the Sixties, it remains very hard to go past Mazda's perky MX-5.**

Introduced to much acclaim in 1989 and designed to provide simple, open-topped, rear-drive thrills, it also provided a level of Japanese reliability completely foreign to its illustrious predecessors.

Though inspired by several, it was the iconic *Lotus Elan* that resonated most with Mazda's engineers during the development process. In fact, MX-5 concept engineer Norman Garrett acknowledged that Chapman's "driver and car as one" approach resonated throughout the MX-5 development group.

Now in 2012, the MX-5 has proved a success, both in terms of global sales and in delivering a vibrant, interactive driving experience. And that, in this day and age, is something worth celebrating.

To do so, we've assembled three generations of MX-5, from an early 1989 NA through to the latest specification, with a factory turbocharged interloper in between.

**Is original still best?**



### NA

*On this bleak, wet Victorian day, it makes sense to ease into the grip levels of these twisty Yarra Valley roads with the NA.*

It's a small car, especially when lined up with the later models, and has a sense of fragility about it on first appearance, sitting on diminutive 14-inch Minilite-style wheels wearing 185/60 high profile tyres.

With the soft-top up, there is a struggle for adequate headroom, my line of sight coinciding with the top section of the windscreen. Although the lack of space in the foot-well makes me consider removing my shoes for a brief second, the rest of the cockpit is snug but not uncomfortable. Twist the key, and the ignition fires the 1.6-litre, DOHC four into life. It produces 86kW at 6500rpm with 135Nm at 5500rpm and red-lines at 7200rpm; peaks that indicate its appetite for revolutions. Matched to a rifle-bolt five-speed manual transmission, the engine is eager to respond to the throttle as the clutch is fed in and we are away.

You immediately notice the weight of the manual steering during slow-speed manoeuvring but once out on to the

greasy, windy road loop the steering effort ebbs and you are left with a firm ally that finely details the tyre's purchase on the tarmac beneath.

Complementing the beautifully resolved steering is a chassis with sparkling balance. Ultimate grip levels are modest, especially when compared with modern sports vehicles, but that is perhaps the NA's greatest asset. It generates cornering force from its chassis and the feedback it gives the driver, rather than a set of R-spec rubber. The front turns-in naturally, no artificial weighting dulling the feedback, while the rear is happy to follow in-turn, as benign as can be. The relative lack of torque and outright power means you can apply more throttle earlier without fear of the back tyres dissolving into wheelspin; it simply tightens you toward the apex. In all, it's great fun, and more educational than you may think- teaching you about maintaining momentum, being smooth and working with the subtle shifts in weighting that are so well communicated.

# MX-5



■ **Words:** Adam Davis, [www.motorlist.com.au](http://www.motorlist.com.au) ■ **Photos:** Joel Strickland Photographics  
■ **Cars:** David James' 1989 NA, Steve Dunlop's 2002 NB SP, Don Nicoll's 2010 NC

## SP

*If the NA offers a subtle introduction into the intricacies of front-engine, rear-wheel drive dynamics, the SP skips the pleasantries and kicks you straight in the gut.*

Borne out of the same stable that brought us the Bathurst 12-Hour winning RX-7 SP, the NB MX-5 SP was a 100-build special edition intended solely for the Aussie market. It addressed perhaps the single greatest criticism of the original MX-5 concept – a lack of real grunt – by utilising a Garrett ball-bearing turbocharger and front-mount intercooler to extract WRX-shaming numbers; try 157kW at 6800rpm and 289Nm at 4600rpm from the internally standard 1.8-litre NB four-pot. That's right- even the compression ratio remains unchanged from standard, the turbo blowing at a relatively modest 8.0psi to allow NA levels of compression to be maintained. A new stainless-steel



exhaust was fitted along with a turbo-friendly inlet manifold, but the coolest underbonnet addition, at least visually, is the carbon airbox and pipe that feeds cool air to the motor. Larger injectors and a modified ECU handle the increased fuelling demands and a bigger radiator keeps things cool.

Surprisingly, the rest of the MX-5 package was deemed sufficient to control these massively increased outputs. That means standard NB-series six-speed manual transmission, stock brakes, clutch and (open) differential. It also rode on 205/45 R 16 tyres.

Inside things were kept understated with a wonderful Nardi wheel and alloy highlighting, including the gear knob and vent surrounds. These flecks

of individualism accompanied the otherwise familiar MX-5 fittings, with air-conditioning a \$2,500 option.

The SP we have on-test (number 66) benefits from a couple of further upgrades, including coil-over dampers and a Torsen LSD. Pulling away from our changeover point, the SP immediately hisses and hums, its potential for turbocharged theatrics apparent as soon as the throttle is applied. With its RPM-sensitive power steering there is less feel than the original, and the kick of boost that arrives at around 2000rpm feels eager to light up those relatively narrow rear treads. On these wet roads, a cautious application of throttle is required as a result; lest the manic motor head-butt its 7000rpm redline. It feels like it could swallow the NA whole.

Between blowoff-valve flutters, the SP remains planted and reasonably faithful, with good turn in response and a lovely gearshift, though in this weather a realistic test of the standard brakes was impossible- contemporary reviews suggested they were fine for road use regardless, having been substantially upgraded in 2001 for the base model NB.





## Generations: Mazda MX-5 ...

### NC

*After the SP's turbo-fuelled adrenalin charge, sliding into the seat of the latest NC offers welcome relief.*

The cabin feels eight years more modern, with both layout and control surfaces being of higher quality. You also feel more ensconced in this cockpit, with the higher sides adding peace of mind; its ambience is sturdier and I have no doubt it would be much safer in the event of an accident.

Interestingly, it's slightly lighter than the SP, 1135kg plays 1140 (both, incidentally, are far chunkier than the 960kg NA), but in terms of driving feel, the NC is a step away from the core MX-5 character. It takes that grown-up mantra and applies it to the drive, but it comes at the expense of interaction.

That's first felt through the power steering, which is more artificial than the rack of the SP's and nowhere near the manually-steered NA's for feedback and response. In the wet especially, the vagueness of the steering contributes to a slightly un-nerving cornering experience; you never know how much grip there is to lean on, and the whole car feels less keyed into the road than the earlier examples. Obviously the grip is there – its stiff chassis and modern 205/45/17 tyres

see it ultimately out-grip the others- but it takes some familiarity before you can place the car with confidence, and the weather doesn't really allow me to find that level.

The NC's engine also lacks some sparkle. It will rev, of course – to 7250rpm – and is ably abetted by another delightfully slick, short-throw, six-speed manual gearbox, but its 118kW at 7000rpm with 188Nm at 5000rpm don't truly *zing*. Aurally, it also lacks that classical twin-cam *zing* found with the NA.

Beyond the minutiae of driving, the NC is a far more practical proposition than the others and its grown-up feel is probably better suited to today's buying demographic ... but I'd love to see a modern SP version ...





NA



NB



NC

### 1989 NA Series 1

- Capacity:** 1597cc DOHC inline four
- Gearbox:** Five-speed manual
- Power:** 86kW @ 6500rpm
- Torque:** 135Nm @ 5500rpm
- Tyres:** 185/60/14
- Weight:** 971kg
- Weight/Power:** 11.29kg/kW
- Price when new:** \$29,550

### 2002 NB Series 2 SP

- Capacity:** 1839cc DOHC inline four, turbocharged
- Gearbox:** Six-speed manual
- Power:** 157kW @ 6800rpm
- Torque:** 289Nm @ 4600rpm
- Tyres:** 205/45/16
- Weight:** 1140kg
- Weight/Power:** 7.26kg/kW
- Price when new:** \$55,540

### 2010 NC Series 2

- Capacity:** 1998cc DOHC inline four
- Gearbox:** Six-speed manual
- Power:** 118kW @ 7000rpm
- Torque:** 188Nm @ 5000rpm
- Tyres:** 205/45/17
- Weight:** 1135kg
- Weight/Power:** 9.62kg/kW
- Price when new:** \$42,460

## Conclusion

For all the shared ancestry, it is quite easy to categorise each of these cars separately. **The original MX-5** is bubbling over with enthusiasm and approachability, and is with you every step of the way. The engine, though relatively underpowered, is nevertheless a revvy, willing companion with a little old-school, twin-cam bark to its exhaust note.

**The SP is characterful** in its own right. Altogether bolder, its intent is exemplified by the ever-present hissing and sighing of the turbocharger. In this case, it's mostly about power.

**As for the latest iteration**, well, it sits somewhere in between. It doesn't have the NA's user-friendly, indulgent character, nor the SP's rapid punch to the small of your back. It is however a far more modern, comfortable place to twirl a wheel, with higher quality trims and a feeling of solidity lacking in the others.

**Overall, if you place driving purity and enjoyment above all else, the NA wins this battle. It feels like a modern-day Lotus Elan, and for as little as \$5,000 in today's used market you can find an Australian-delivered entry into one of the best driver's cars of all time.**

*\*We'd like to thank the Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria & Tasmania for their assistance in putting together this feature, along with owners David (NA), Steve (NB SP) and Don (NC).*



NA



NB



NC

# Chapter chatter ...

12/8/12 | Southern Tasmania

■ Words: Michelle Waldock ■ Photos: Rob Tanner  
■ Run organiser: John Waldock



*"Roll up, roll up for the Mystery Tour..."*

These lyrics from the well-known Beatles song were the inspiration for the Southern Tasmanian Chapter's August run.

It has been mentioned in previous articles that new touring routes around the greater Hobart area are very difficult to devise, so a plan was hatched to travel over old ground with a new twist – namely, *a quiz involving both landmarks and Beatles music.*

Participants had to ensure that their car had a CD player (which catered for NBs and NCs) or a gadget that would allow an MP3 player to connect to the car speakers (for our NA members.) After much e-mailing to check gadget compatibility, all the cars and their owners were primed

and ready to roll.

We met in typical *four seasons in one day* Tasmanian weather – bright sunshine and squally winds fought for dominance as we gathered in our usual meeting place. After distribution of CDs, quiz sheets and a drivers' briefing, nine cars set off.

The planned route took the cars along the Derwent River for a short while (with some cars already backtracking because they had missed a clue) then inland past Baskerville Raceway to Brighton. By this stage, the verge was dotted with MX-5s and puzzled drivers/passengers poring over the quiz sheets.

But the lead cars were already through the peri-urban township of Brighton and wending their way to the hamlets of Broadmarsh and Elderslie. These "ribbon

towns" (so called because their only marker is a 'ribbon' of road threading through a knot of houses with two signs at either 'end') provided opportunities for the quizmasters to mislead and confuse the participants – ambiguous questions and similar landmarks caused great hilarity when marking the sheets at the conclusion of the run.

Past Elderslie the already-pitted bitumen disintegrated into dirt, prompting a flurry of radio traffic – "*where the @\$%^ is the road?*" being among the most common remarks. This caused a rather shamefaced Captain to admit he hadn't reconnoitred the whole route personally, *but Google Maps had indicated that the road was sealed!* He pointed out that it did give drivers the opportunity to drive slowly and enjoy the music part of the quiz ... an ominous radio silence ensued.



◀ Mum! Someone's parking MX-5s in the driveway again!

› Some surprise interlopers ...



✓ Caz, John H, Lawrence, John W, Stacey, Allan, Michelle, Liz, Mike and Royce



↳ Allan Pryer ... eating, again



↳ Liz & Mike Williams



↳ Royce and Rob pick up a prize



↳ Rob Tanner and Royce Darling enjoy a Tassie day out



↳ And modelling a lovely leather jacket is ... John!

The journey through Pelham Tiers to Hamilton did provide some spectacular scenery, albeit through a light drizzle that began to fall just after the cars hit the dirt road.

A bevy of somewhat dirty MX-5 beauties arrived in New Norfolk just before lunch. New Norfolk lies in the Derwent Valley about 40km from Hobart and is often called "The Valley of Love" due to the apparent resemblance everyone has to each other, leading to some unkind jibes

about possible inbreeding. New Norfolk was the final destination for the run and the quiz stipulated that three photos depicting something to do with 'love' be snapped, so the cars were parked along the main street and the natives watched on bemusedly as MX-5 owners in caps and sunnies took photos of the local shop windows and the goods therein.

After a brief snack in the park, the cars left New Norfolk behind and scooted down the picturesque Derwent River's

western side before ending at Rob and Di's for afternoon tea, giving the Convenor/Quizmaster a chance to check the answers and judge the photographs.

A hearty thank you to Rob and Di for hosting and to Garry and Maureen, Allan and Stacey and DJ Motors for donating prizes to the event.

The consensus was that, like the Beatles original Magical Mystery Tour, *satisfaction was guaranteed.* ■

# Chapter chatter ...

## Spring in the air ... 26/8/12 | Western Victoria

■ Words: Noellene Gleeson ■ Photos: Karen Bradshaw ■ Run organiser: Noellene & John Gleeson

*It is 26 August and the start of the Western Chapter's Spring/Summer season.*

Twenty-four MX-5s of various colors line up in Victoria St, Ballarat.

After a good catch-up and chat, John calls us together and starts with the welcome of new members: David and Georgie Wray from Warrnambool and Ian and Julie Quick, locals from Ballarat.

Then a thank you to members who have travelled from far and wide to join us. They came from Corowa, Yackandandah, Bendigo, Geelong, Warrnambool, Melbourne and Horsham.

Time now to present the new Assistant Captains, Ian Bradshaw and Jeff Woolf with their name tags (pictured below, centre). Thank you guys for accepting these positions and for all your help.

After the normal "run talk", we are off. We head out Yankee Flat Road towards the top of Mt Buninyong. The views are great, but because of roadworks and soft edges we decide not to stop, and move on towards Lal Lal and through the bush to Clarendon. Then it's down the Midland Highway to Meredith as the backroads

we had planned to travel have been chopped up and deemed not suitable for MX-5s.

On reaching Meredith we pick up another couple, Ian and Jill Edward in their red NA.

Now the MX-5 is having fun twisting and turning on the road to Stieglitz. Through Maude and then turning right onto Perdrisart Road, down into the valley over the Moorabool River and climbing up the hill to the Midland Highway. A short way down the highway, passing Lethbridge, we turn into the Clyde Park Winery for a coffee.

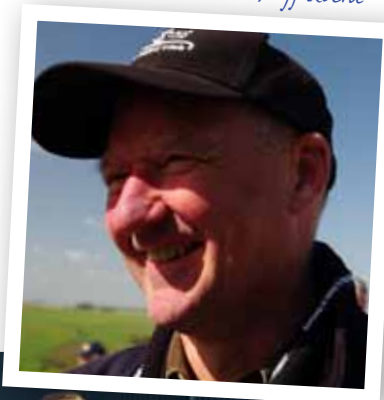
This is a fantastic place. Coming in around a large dam we drive towards what looks like a big shed. We walk around the other side to be greeted with the most beautiful view over the vines and down into the valley. With a 30-minute stop here, we order our coffee and wander around to check out the restaurant and the wine tasting area.

A few of we girls see something we have never seen before. *The guys have to line up for the toilet!!* Welcome to our world, guys. Once inside the loo we have a floor-to-ceiling window overlooking the valley – *what a view!*



^ Jeff Woolf has another of his series of unfortunate events with sunscreen!

✓ Geoff Roche







OK, time for a group photo and off again towards Anakie. Down the valley, around some twists and turns, through some bush, past Anakie Fairy Park and on to Ballan.

Quiet a few heads turn at the sight of these 25 little roadsters passing through their towns.

We pass the Greendale Hotel and head into the Wombat State Forest. I love this road as it is really suited to the MX-5 ... but it is a bit frustrating that you can only travel at 80km/h.

Twenty minutes later we arrive in Trentham for our lunch stop. This a lovely old town and we head to the small lake and park which is really pretty with lots of friendly bird life. Some people enjoy a picnic lunch, while others head into town to get their tucker. Once again we all get to enjoy each other's company, with the bonus that we are joined by local members Ian and Lyn Williams.

It is about 2.30 and some are heading off in different directions towards their respective homes, having had a great day. We say our goodbyes and head for the Daylesford Chocolate Mill. *YUM YUM – chocolate everything!!* John hand-picks a special tray of treats. I am in heaven ... they even have four varieties of drinking chocolate. I would

loved to stick my finger into the soft running chocolate machine. After a hot chocolate in the cafe we farewell another couple of cars as they head for home.

The diehards now pass through Shepherds Flat, Daylesford, Creswick and into Ballarat. As it is too early to go out for dinner we have a cuppa at our house and then meander up to the Ballarat Golf Club for our meal.

*What a great day!*

Thank you to all who joined us; we look forward to your company again.

**Great day, great company and a great start to our spring/summer season touring in the best cars, our MX-5s!!** ■



# Chapter chatter ...

## Pub in a Paddock ... 26/8/12 | Northern Tasmania

■ Words & photos: Trevor Simm ■ Run organiser: Alana Page

*The day started at the Launceston Auto Museum, and the weather was looking promising with few clouds and blue skies, although a bit chilly (7°!).*

We headed off through town and out on to the Tasman Hwy and on to the much-loved "Sideling".

Once at the base of the Sideling, the cars were sorted into those who wanted to push it hard and those who wanted a more sedate trip up the mountain.

It had been raining the night before so we were expecting a slippery road ... it did not disappoint. With little sunlight reaching the road all day and snow down to 300 metres it was a fun drive to say the least; a few of us did a good impersonation of Max Merritt (slip-sliding our way to the top).

All too quickly the summit was reached

and we all stopped at the lookout to catch our breath before a fast blast down the mountain and into Scottsdale to pick up a passenger for Alana (our run leader and new member in her 2000 NB Heritage model).

From there it was off to Branxholm (Alana's old home town) for morning tea at the Art Café.

After a nice cuppa and some scones we headed off to Winnaleah via back roads – nice fast tight twisty corners and no traffic ... *perfect!*

We all then headed towards Weldborough pass (which the Targa Tasmania teams voted the best road in Tassie). It is a hard, fast climb up the mountain with a mix of fast sweeping corners and tight hairpin bends and mixed with water and moss; it really is a great test of car and driver (the MX-5 makes us all look good, though!) ... there's nothing like coming flat out through a corner from sunlight to dark shadows and then finding a icy stream running

across the road (not sure whether to yell with joy or scream in fear!).

After a blast down the other side we reached our lunch destination at the *Pub in the Paddock* in Pyengana, which has a pig that loves beer ...

It was good to sit down after some hard driving and tell tall stories of our drive and to enjoy a great meal.

We then headed just down the road to the Pyengana cheese factory (I was not at all cheesed off at having to stop again) ...

A quieter drive took us back the way we had come to Scottsdale, where where we all headed off in different directions to our respective homes.

A great day was had by all and with no traffic to hold us up on the mountain stages – very rare these days.

**A big thank you to Alana for setting up and organising a great run (it was a great first-up effort).**

**Bring on the next one. ■**





- ^ The Pub in the Paddock
- < Run organiser, Alana, and her passenger, Chris
- > Rob & Marg



^ Michael & Anna



^ L-R: Louise, Tony, Michael, Anna, Cheryl, Bruce, Chris, Alana, Marg, Rob, Bill and Trevor



^ Priscilla, the beer-swilling pig

# Racecraft training at Winton

4/8/12



■ Words: Leon Bogers  
■ Photo: Stuart Thomson (AROCA)

In August our friends in the Alfa Club (AROCA) invited a lucky few of our motor sport team along to Winton for some intensive training to improve their racecraft.

After completing an exhilarating day on the Saturday, Leon Bogers – pictured above with instructor, fellow Club member, Ray Monik – wrote this note to our (then) Club Captain - Motor Sport, Robert Downes, and AROCA Competition Secretary, Neil Choi.

And if that wasn't enough fun, Leon got to put what he'd learned into practice at the sprint day on the Sunday.

Class placings from the Sunday sprints are below.

*Hi Neil & Robert*

I was one of the lucky circuit training trainees on the Saturday at Winton.

A big "thumbs up" and thank you to yourselves and all the other volunteers who made this event possible.

I can imagine it takes an enormous amount of work by many people to pull it all together, behind the scenes before the event and on the day.

All aspects were a success – scheduling, the logistics of getting on and of the track, safety and content (practical and some theory) and also the socialising with other members. Enormous value having an experienced driver volunteering his time to sit next to me in the car establishing the routines and pointing out what to do and what not to do on the track (in my case this was Ray Monik) with plenty of "on track" time.



And then Sunday sprints to top it all off!

All in all a most enjoyable and highly rewarding weekend. I look forward to the next motor sport event.

Once again a big thanks to yourselves and all the other volunteers that made it all possible.

*Leon*

## 2012-13 Championship | Round 2 | Winton Sprints ~ 5 August, 2012

Results - Round 2	1st		2nd		3rd	
Standard NA	Robert Downes	» 1:49.663	John Stone	» 1:51.894	Noel Heritage	» 1:59.124
Standard NB	Steven Downes	» 1:47.241 <sup>1</sup>	---		---	
Standard NC	Robert Hart	» 1:43.998 <sup>1</sup>	Colin Denman-Jones	» 1:46.142	Alan Conrad	» 1:47.760
Clubman	Max Lloyd	» 1:48.761	Fabian Mastronardi	» 1:54.538	---	
Modified	Russell Garner	» 1:42.129 <sup>1</sup>	Robert Parr	» 1:44:208	Dean Monik	» 1:45.888

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

# Sandown Sprints

19/8/12



■ Photos: Chris Simpson, motor sport enthusiast & photographer, and Daniel White



## 2012-13 Championship | Round 2 | Sandown Sprints - 19 August, 2012

Results - Round 3	1st		2nd		3rd	
Standard NA	Noel Heritage	» 1:38.225	Robert Downes	» 1:39.189	Alan Peet	» 1:39.916
Standard NB	Steven Downes	» 1:35.350	John Downes	» 1:38.335	Murray Seymour	» 1:41.088
Standard NC	Robert Hart	» 1:31.804 <sup>1</sup>	Randy Stagno Navarra	» 1:31.908	Colin Denman-Jones	» 1:33.398
Clubman	Peter Phillips	» 1:34.348 <sup>1</sup>	Max Lloyd	» 1:37.569	Fabian Mastronardi	» 1:40.283
Modified	David Wilken	» 1:29.438 <sup>1</sup>	Russell Garner	» 1:30.234	Robert Parr	» 1:33:080
Restricted Open	Brendan Beavis	» 1:31.906	---	---	---	---
Open	Mark Fitzgerald	» 1:28.573	Dave Moore	» 1:34.408	---	---

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

## Championship standings after Rd 3 - Sandown Sprints, 19 August, 2012

(corrected points)	1st		2nd		3rd	
<b>Overall Champion</b>	= Stephen Downes / Robert Hart		»	30	Noel Heritage	» 26
Standard NA	Noel Heritage	» 26	Robert Downes	» 22	John Stone	» 18
Standard NB	Stephen Downes	» 30	John Downes	» 14	Murray Seymour	» 12
Standard NC	Robert Hart	» 30	Colin Denman-Jones	» 19	Alan Conrad	» 16
Clubman	Max Lloyd	» 22	Peter Phillips	» 20	Fabian Mastronardi	» 19
Modified	Russell Garner	» 24	David Wilken	» 20	Robert Parr	» 18
Restricted Open	Brendan Beavis	» 20	Charlie Tickler	» 7	---	---
Open	Mark Fitzgerald	» 17	Owen Boak	» 10	Dave Moore	» 7

# Dynotech Phillip Island 6-Hour Relay ...

■ Words & photos: Daniel White, Club Captain - Motor Sport

*A huge weekend, changing weather conditions, great team camaraderie and a whole lot of fun in your MX-5.*

This was the first time any MX-5 teams had entered this event and we had five teams entered – two from Victoria and three from NSW. A total of 50 teams entered the event and there was a very high standard of vehicles in the field. There was a good mix of cars: Mustangs, Porsches, ex-Group A Touring cars, Lotuses, Minis, etc ... all providing good competition for our MX-5s.

The planning for this event began months before, and a sincere thanks go to motor sport team member Christine Boak for all of her efforts in organising everything from entry forms, pre-race meetings to plan the weekend, arranging team jackets for all participants, arranging race numbers for all cars and let's not forget the pie warmer full of hot jam donuts over the weekend. Thank you Christine!!

Thanks also go to Peter Maloney, a friend of the Club, for his generous hospitality by providing the venue for the pre-race meeting and for hosting a BBQ at his home at Phillip Island on the Saturday night before the race which was attended by both teams.

Our two teams from Victoria were fortunate to be assisted with sponsorship for the event, and we thank these businesses for their contribution:

- » Elements
- » Dryforce
- » Reece Motorsport
- » Arma Tinting Essendon
- » City Mazda

Conditions for the event provided quite a few challenges – practice on Saturday was dry and race day on Sunday had it all. The weather in the morning started okay ... a strong tail wind down the straight but nice and dry. At about 12 o'clock the officials told us to tie down any loose objects and get ready: a storm cell was on the way in the next hour.

*They were right!* The weather took a nasty turn with very high winds and pouring rain making it difficult for drivers to stay on the track, causing a few spins and a few extended periods behind the safety car. *But the race must go on!* A special thanks to all of our helpers, time keepers and team managers who had to stand out in the rain and keep the stop watches and pit boards going for the drivers – we could not have done it without you all.

Ben Sale and his team from *Otherside Productions* put a great deal of effort in over the entire weekend filming and producing *YouTube* footage of the event for Mazda Australia. *Thanks Ben!*

Please type in and search these links below on *YouTube* (or, if you're looking at this as a PDF, click on the bullets below) and see everyone in action.

- » The Phillip Island 6 Hour Relay
- » Driver profile: Randy Stagno Navarra
- » Driver profile: Gary Prescott
- » Driver profile: Chris Boak
- » Driver profile: Daniel White

All MX-5 Club teams from Victoria and NSW successfully completed the event without major incident or breakdown, however some teams fell back in the rankings due to penalty laps being applied for going under their nominated lap times. Congratulations to the NSW teams for their results and for getting on the podium.

Final MX-5 placings were:

- 2nd: “TeaMX-5” (NSW)
- 7th: “Team NA” (NSW)
- 15th: “Team NB” (NSW)
- 26th: “City Mazda Motorsport” (Vic)
  - » Daniel White
  - » Teruo Delacroix
  - » Mike Kirby
  - » Peter Phillips
  - » David Wilken
- 34th: “Elements Racing” (Vic)
  - » Christine Boak
  - » Owen Boak
  - » Randy Stagno Navarra
  - » Gary Prescott
  - » Mark Fitzgerald

**We will be back next year to take them on again. ■**



^ The valiant (small “v”) drivers and crew who braved the track and the elements at the Phillip Island 6-Hour

4-5/8/12



> Ready for battle ...

> Ben Sale in action for Mazda, Australia



> Teruo Delacroix



✓ Anastasia, Pam, Tammy & Scott

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# Membership

■ Will Campbell – Membership Officer

[membership@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:membership@mx5vic.org.au)

*Hello everyone ...*

I'm away this month, but new memberships and renewals keep rolling in!

Just over two months in to the year we're already at 433 members!

I extend a hearty welcome to:

Current membership count:

**433**

## Central Chapter

Anna Wilde	2007 Stormy Blue NC
Adam & Sol Leski	1991 Neo Green NA Ltd Edn
Daniel Drummond	1999 Classic Red NB
Sam Fisher	1992 White NA
Curtis Kneisel	1998 Classic Red NB

## Western Victorian Chapter

David Wray	1996 Mariner Blue NA
------------	----------------------

Enjoy your MX-5 and I'll see you out and about ...

*Will*

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# 'Khanas shows their class ...



■ **Words:** Bob de Bont

■ **Photos:** Bob de Bont, Tony Heasly

*Round 7 of the Victorian Motorkhana Championship for 2012 was held on 1 September at the Leongatha Livestock Exchange and co-hosted by the Huntingdale Auto Club and the Ford Four Car Club.*

The MX-5 Club was represented by Troy and Tony Heasly in Troy's NB8B, Bob de Bont in his NB8B and Bruce Telfer in his BRG NA6. Tony, Troy and Bob set off from the BP outbound near Pakenham for the pleasant cruise down the South Gippsland Highway to Leongatha and met Bruce at the venue.

The weather gods finally smiled on us and we were greeted, for a change, with *warm sunshine!*

With the cars scrutineered, drivers brief completed and trophies from Rd 4 presented, we walked around the test area to assess the surface. It would be slippery, inconsistent with a fine layer of loose stones or mulch and on a slope with some broken bitumen for those who use the scenic route around the flags.

In all there were 35 competitors entered with seven in Class B and three in MX-5s. Two competitors had made the trek down from Moruya, NSW, which included Connie East-Johnstone who is the current Australian Motorkhana Champion.

With two test areas and a small entry field we were kept on our toes as everyone negotiated the tests quickly. After four tests we had a break for lunch and were tempted with some great home-cooked food presented by the ladies at the kiosk. We sat around and enjoyed the company and food before resuming the remaining six tests. During the afternoon another competitor in Class B jumped ship and joined Bob in his NB8B.

The event also co-hosted a round of the CAMS JRACE program for junior drivers supported by the Pakenham Auto Club. During the lunch break and at the end of the day a number



^ *Bob sticks the boot in ...*

participants were treated to rides by a number of experienced competitors which was greatly appreciated by the juniors.

The day finished about 5pm, we repacked our gear, said our goodbyes and headed back to Melbourne with a pleasant detour through Poowong, stopping at the BP inbound at Pakenham for a coffee and to let the sun set.

This event was what a motorkhana is all about: great fun, enjoyable warm weather, excellent company and a pleasant drive home with the top down ... a great way to spend a Saturday.

**Results:** Class B finished with Bob in 2nd followed by Bruce, Tony, then Troy. Bruce took the win in Novice after a clean and consistent drive with Tony in 2nd, and Troy took the win in Juniors. In the Clubs' Championship, the MX-5 team has moved to a close 4th with two rounds to go.

Bob's videos of these events are at: [www.youtube.com/user/deBounce60/videos](http://www.youtube.com/user/deBounce60/videos)



◀ *Tony (left) and Troy Heasly (below) navigate the 'witches' hats at Leongatha*

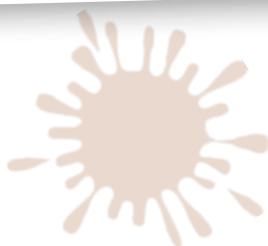


## Next events

- » **NGK VMC Rd 8** on Saturday, 22/9 at Huntly Saleyards, Bendigo (bitumen).
- » **2012 Australian Motorkhana Championship**, 12-14 October at Willowbank Raceway in Ipswich.
- » **HAC Interclub Motorkhana**, Sunday 18 November at Lardner Park on grass/dirt.
- » **NGK VMC Rd 9** on 25 November – details TBA.

More information is available from [www.motorkhanavic.com.au](http://www.motorkhanavic.com.au) or from Bob de Bont on 0402 345 562.

Information and entries for the Australian Motorkhana Championship in Brisbane on 14 October are now available at [www.motorkhana.com.au](http://www.motorkhana.com.au) ■



# The MX-5 Club Grill



## Introducing ...

*Alan Laine*

- Eastern Victoria Chapter

**Name?** Alan Laine

**Age?** 55

**Born?** Yallourn (now swallowed up by the open cut)

**Current abode?** Traralgon South

**Profession?** Power Station Operations

**Partner?** Tricia, absolutely precious – married 18 years, second best purchase next to the MX, but don't tell her that

**Pets?** Cats: Nitro (Ragdoll, ADHD), Mikha (Grey Burmese, Neurotic), Sarah (Brown Burmese, just cute) – oh, and two kids, Rohan, 13 and Jason, 16

**Favourite food?** All things pasta and pastries

**Can you cook?** Not according to Trish, usually a crisis or disaster happens when I enter the kitchen to prepare something

**Favourite tippie?** Coke with an ouzo flavour enhancement

**First drive?** VW halfback, went OK till the gearbox gave out (not my fault – honest)

**First car?** VW Beetle, a red one to match the P-plate

**First fender bender?** Driving along the Mulgrave Freeway in the pouring rain, slowing for an accident ahead and being slammed in the rear by a bloody Volvo driver (don't recall him wearing a hat)

**Everyday driver?** Mercedes GL 320 CDI

**Current MX-5?** 2008 NC Limited Edition, nickname "Mia"

**MX-5 improvements?** Racing Beat sways, Yellowspeed coilovers, Enkei GTC 01s



**MX-5 dislikes?** No exhaust note, position of the electric window switches (I prefer them on the doors)

**Why an MX-5?** After giving away motorcycling, pressure from Trish to go and buy one when she realised I kept the original brochure for 18 years (only a few drool marks ... on the brochure, not Trish)

**Fluffy dice?** Wasn't that standard equipment on purple Valiants?

**Passions?** Eating pastas and pastries, mountain biking, photography, computer racing in a motion Hyper Stimulator (not a sex toy!) and family interests

**Favourite TV, Movie, Book?** TV: *Whose Line Is It Anyway*, *Top Gear*; **Movies:** *Big Blue*, *Goofy Movie*; **Book:** *Zen & The Art Of Motorcycle Maintenance*

**Dream wheels?** Jay will kill me if I don't say Lamborghini Aventador, but a C63 AMG or Audi R8 would hit the spot nicely

**Daewoo or Ssangyong?** Only with a paper bag over my head with eye cut-outs!

**Favourite other Mazda?** Shinari concept

**If not a Mazda?** Lotus Elise

**How long in the Club?** Four years (I think)

**How many Club runs?** Not enough ... working shifts on weekends is a problem

**Favourite Club run?** All of them ... any chance to join other members is a great day

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

Hosting the first Gippy run ... thinking maybe 15 cars will show up, then having 34 cars, not enough run notes and filling up the main street of Yarragon with MX-5s

**Done DECA?** not yet

**Ford or Holden?** Biased toward Ford with my AU having achieved 409,000ks without a problem

**What's playing in your MX-5?** Usually something with a good rock beat, though it's hard to go past roof down singing along with Pink Floyd's *Wish You Were Here* while driving a favourite road

**Footy team?** Having grown up with cats in our family it had to be Geelong; to show our dedication, one of our cars had "CAT 015" plates

**Final comments?** What a great club – enthusiasts who love their cars and enjoy DRIVING as well as the social destination. Many thanks to all the Committee and contributing members who have made the Club what it is. Let the good times roll!



↳ Alan's personal motto

## *A new option for the MX-5 owner*

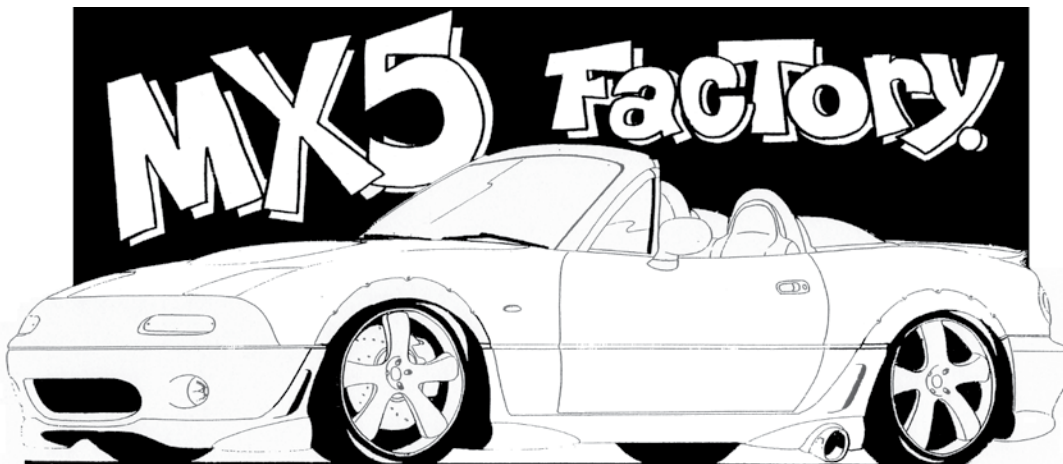
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- ◆ Contact Dick to discuss your mechanical needs



**Oven Baked Enamel Services** are a factory approved repairer with 20 years of experience on Mazda, your smash repair specialist

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