

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



**Ho ho ho!**  
**(he he he!!)**

**In this edition - summer reading:**  
**Ragtop renaissance**  
**All the Christmas merriment**  
**Failure to launch**



# contents



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## features

**6** Summer crossword

**8** Club Grill – meet Alan Bennett

**16** Ragtop Renaissance – Drive's take on the Alfa marriage

**19** **New:** My favourite MX-5 road ... what's yours?

**24** **New:** MX-5 recipe ... the NA burger

**25** Failure to launch – the glitch that (almost) stole Christmas

**26** Wow! What a blast – Newbies take on Winton

**29** Done and dusted – 2012 Motorkhana Championship wrap

## Chapter chatter:

**10** North-Eastern Victoria: Christmas ... seriously?

**12** Central: On behalf of My Elf and Myself ...

**14** Southern Tassie: Cascading into Christmas

**20** Western Victoria: Good thing Santa uses his own run notes!

**22** Northern Tassie: a sumptuous Christmas

## regulars

**5** President's page: Don's drive(l)

**6** Membership

**7** Motor sport: Full Throttle

**9** Scene about

**Cover image:** North-Eastern Victoria Chapter Captain R(ud)o(lph)n Gillick ... leading by example, as usual! Photo: Karen Bradshaw



Find us at:  
MX-5 Club of  
Victoria

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# Don's Drive(l) ...



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

*Hi everyone!*

Welcome to our first edition of **mxtra** for 2013. We hope that you all had a wonderful Christmas and we wish you the best of health and good fortune for 2013.

I would like to take the opportunity to welcome Rob Krygsman to the role of Assistant Club Captain in the Eastern Chapter. He joins Travis McInnes in helping Alan Laine to keep our newest Chapter powering along. We wish Rob lots of energy to keep up with Alan and his plans.

**Plenty of members** showed an interest in the Australian Grand Prix this year despite further murmurings from the media about how much it is costing Victoria. At the time of going to press we have over 30 volunteers to fill the 20 spots available to take the Mazda6 Celebrity Race participants on a parade lap prior to their race. In order to be fair to all Club members, we have followed a strictly first-come, first-served approach and similarly with the reserve list. Details on proceedings will be forwarded to the lucky participants as soon as we have been advised by Mazda and the AGP Corporation. Those of you lucky enough to get a guernsey need to remember that the AGP has insisted that participants must have "cleanskin" cars – ie, no advertising allowed, folks.

**The Club is in the early stages** of negotiating a deal with the company that supports Mazda's merchandise offering, as I mentioned in the December edition. The prospects are really exciting as we hope to offer Club merchandise via a special website where you will be able to select an item of choice and pay for it online. Steve Dunlop and I have another meeting planned with the company in the middle of this month. Stay tuned as we finalise the details.

At our December Committee meeting we signed off on the development of a new Club website. Our current site has served us very well thanks to the enormous efforts of Murray and Alyssa Finlay, but it has become very "clunky" (to use their description) in both its useability and maintenance. The new site will contain both public and members-only areas, the latter fulfilling a long-held dream for a "virtual Clubroom". We hope to have a working draft for Committee review by the end of February and a live launch not long afterwards. Exciting times.

**I had hoped to give you some details** on the outcome of our last survey. I'm going to have to delay this until February as the Committee did not get a chance to discuss the results with Tim Emery at our December meeting. However, rest assured it is on the agenda and we will publish the results.

As a bit of a teaser though, you may be interested in some of my "analysis" with apologies to the mathematicians amongst us. About 50% of us have been Club members for fewer than three years but we have almost identical proportions (25%) of people with three to five years of membership and those with over six years. Around a third of us use the MX-5 as our daily drive. When it comes to watching sport, motor sport is unsurprisingly number one, followed by the AFL (how strange for a Victoria and Tasmanian-based club!).

But for me the most interesting statistic is the participation in Club activities. Over a year, around 150 of us took part in Club runs which, historically, have been the main driving activity organised by the Club. But 60 of us participated in motor sport over the same period. Clearly motor sport is becoming a major Club activity as ever more members give it a try. And, to challenge those who believe that this is a grey-haired club, members younger than 45 outnumber those over 65.

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

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

*Don*

*For your diary ...*

**See the full calendar for details**

## January 2013

- 19 Central: *Twilight in the Trees*
- 19 South Tassie: *Twilight run*
- 20 North Tassie: *post-Christmas blow-out*
- 20 Western Vic: *Back Road Adventure*

## February

- 2 South Tassie: *Twilight run*
- 3 Eastern Vic: *Leongatha lunch run*
- 16-17 NE Vic: *Snowy Mountains run*
- 24 North Tassie: *A day at the beach*
- 24 South Tassie: *Southport run*
- TBA Central: *Kinglake run*

## March

- 3 Central: *Todds' Tour*
- 8-11 Club: *Vic/SA weekend, Halls Gap*
- 17 Eastern Vic: *Licola run*
- 17 North Tassie: *St Patrick's Targa*

## April

- 14 Eastern Vic: *Baw Baw/Icy Ck run*
- 16-24 Club: *Tassie Tour*
- TBA Central: *Anzac run*

## May

- 5 Eastern Vic: *Moe/Rawson run*

## June

- 2 Eastern Vic: *Technical day (TBC)*
- 14 Eastern Vic: *Social night (TBC)*

## July

- 28 Club: *Awards lunch, Mazda Australia, Mt Waverley*

## August

- 23-25 (TBC): *NSW Club 3-day weekend*

## November

- 9-10 Eastern Vic: *Bright overnighter*



# Membership

Current membership count:

487

■ Will Campbell – Membership Officer [membership@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:membership@mx5vic.org.au)

*Hello everyone ...*

**Welcome to 2013!**

Membership continues to grow steadily with the current count at 487. Of course, whilst an increasing membership base is a good indicator of an organisation's health, a club is all about participation.

In the past year, most members attended a number of events and enjoyed the ensuing fellowship. I encourage you to continue this fine tradition and take pleasure in all that the best and most affordable sports car in the world has to offer.

With this in mind, I would like to welcome the following enlightened folk who have joined our ranks since my last report:

### Central Chapter

Martin Griffin	2012 Metropolitan Grey
Paul Kennedy	2006 White NC
Craig Langford	Classic Red NA

*See you out and about ...*

*Will*

### Club video - spread it around!

We have added a new promotional Club video to the home page of the Club's website.

Inspired by Central Chapter Captain **Ron Macdonald** and produced by Committeeman **Ben Sale** of "Otherside Productions", it gives a brief (one minute 40 seconds) insight into the Club's range of activities.

Check it out at [www.mx5vic.org.au](http://www.mx5vic.org.au).

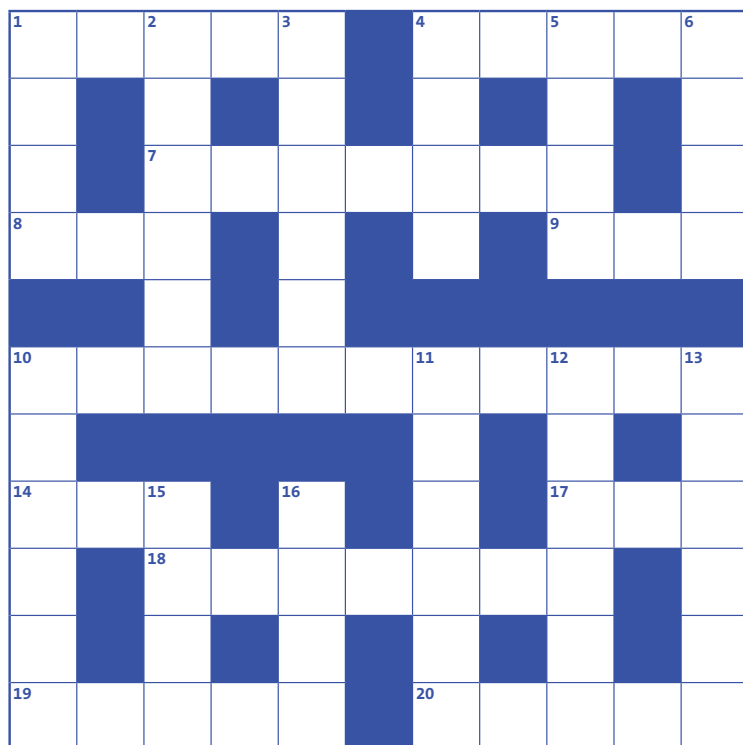


So next time someone asks you, "Just what does the MX-5 Club do?"; point them to the home page ... the pictures tell several thousand words!

And, if you're a current member who hasn't been along to any of our events recently, it would be worth you checking it out as well ...

*Alan Bennett's*

## MX-5 crossword #6



### Across

### Down

- 1 and 4 across. The raw pile gives a pale colour (anag) (5-5)
- 4 see 1 across
- 7 Expressed extreme contempt (7)
- 8 Needling the skin with ink leaves a permanent mark (slang) (3)
- 9 A brood of pheasants sends light to the brain (3)
- 10 A Special Edition colour without 50 shades of porpoise? (7-4)
- 14 MX-5s of this colour just go faster (3)
- 17 Insoluble and of the sun (3)
- 18 On a must have basis, the aggregation of numbers (anag) (7)
- 19 As bare as to knead flour into a skin colour? (anag) (5)
- 20 Forehead to the ground with Chinese origins (5)
- 1 Sounds like I don't know (4)
- 2 The tin sill inserts and programs (anag) (6)
- 3 Plenty or sufficient, it's no huge task (anag) (6)
- 4 Can Alecia Beth Moore sing a lighter shade of red? (4)
- 5 An assistant (4)
- 6 Lemon related with a partial smile (anag) (4)
- 10 To take the light away (6)
- 11 A bore and a nuisance and yet not unkind! (anag) (6)
- 12 Reddish brown (6)
- 13 Young and mellow (6)
- 15 Unpleasantly moist (4)
- 16 It's in them there hills with a rush? (4)

*Answers next month ...*



# Full Throttle!



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

## Happy New Year

Hi all and welcome to a New Year of motor sport and MX-5 action for 2013. I trust you all had a great Christmas and I look forward to catching up with you soon. Our first round for the year kicks off at Winton on 8-9 February, with Full Circuit Training on the Saturday and our Sprint round 6 on the Sunday.

## Round 5 – Winton Long Track, 2 December

A huge weekend of MX-5 Club motor sport with options of:

- » Friday open practice,
- » Saturday Winton twilight sprints,
- » Sunday AROCA driver training and Round 5 of our Sprint Championship and
- » dinner gatherings at the North Eastern Hotel in Benalla on both Friday and Saturday nights which most MX-5 motor sport competitors attended.

### A great finish to the year!

A special thank you to Neil Choi from AROCA and to all of the MX-5 Club members who assisted on the Sunday. Thanks to Jess Murphy, Paul Murphy Senior, Lynda Savage, Melanie Hart and all those who helped with the running of the day, the day would not run without your efforts.

Also a big thanks to all of the drivers who helped out as instructors for the day with driver training in between doing your own sprint runs; it sure was a busy day for you. There was a combination of junior, lady and novice driver – 21 in total – who each had an instructor on board for the day to guide them in a safe way around the circuit.

For a full report on the driver training check out Kerry and Dale Fitzgerald's



Paul Ledwith #39

report on page 26. Results are in the table below.

## NGK Victorian Motorkhana Championship 2012

A fantastic effort and result by all MX-5 Club members who competed in the 2012 VMC. Congratulations to Bob de Bont on his Class win and Tony and Troy Heasley for also taking out podium finishes. Check out Bob's full report on page 29.

## Classifications – Xmas presents added to your MX-5 ???

This is a general reminder to all competitors ... have you have added any goodies to your car over the break?

Please note, if you have made **"any"** changes to your car over the Christmas break which might affect your class, then please ensure you go to our Club website and download a "Competitor's Statement/Classification Form", fill in a fresh form detailing current vehicle

modifications and submit it prior to the next event you enter. (Please e-mail your form to: [captain@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:captain@mx5vic.org.au).)

Each competitor is responsible for ensuring they are entered into the correct class and for ensuring that their vehicle complies with their "Competitor's Statement" and with the Motor Sport Championship Rules. If you are unsure then please read and refer to the 2012-2013 MX-5 Club Motor Sport Championship Rules (also available from the website). It should be clearly understood that "if the regulations do not clearly specify that you can do it, you should work on the principle that you cannot!"

Random classification inspections will be carried out at the next round at Winton on 9 February.

Daniel #146

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

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

Results - Round 4	1st	2nd	3rd
Standard NA	Robert Downes » 1:49.200	Noel Heritage » 1:49.616	Daryl Ervine » 1:58.511
Standard NB	Steven Downes » 1:47.712	John Downes » 1:51.683	Murray Seymour » 1:52.788
Standard NC	Robert Hart » 1:44.263	Colin Denman-Jones » 1:46.434	Alan Conrad » 1:48.262
Clubman	Peter Phillips » 1:47.143	Max Lloyd » 1:48.342	Tim Emery » 1:48.701
Modified	Russell Garner » 1:42.003**	Ben Sale » 1:44:269	Robert Parr » 1:44.400
Restricted Open	Paul Murphy » 1:43.898**	David Bruce » 1:49.480	Greg Savage » 1:51.555
Open	David Wilken » 1:38.324	Paul Ledwith » 1:40.412	Dave Moore » 1:46.746

\*\* New Club motor sport team lap record

# The MX-5 Club Grill



## Introducing ... Alan Bennett

**Name?** Alan Stuart Bennett  
(Central Chapter and verse)

**Age?** Gee, way over 21; I recall passing 40 and I know I've passed 50 (but can't remember when)

**Born?** Yes [across the ditch in a little country town called Inglewood, West Coast of the North Island ~ Jenny]

**Current abode?** Wheelers Hill (yes, there are hills in them there flat bits)

**Profession?** Looking for the next opportunity (either back in IT or driving a bus)

**Partner?** Jennifer Mary Bennett (happiest 5 years of my life) [What the #=!?^~ Jenny]

**What do you say to a one-legged hitchhiker?** Hop in!

**Pets?** One maniac orange and white cat called Dime, IQ estimated to be below room temperature but great company

**Fave food?** Entree: NZ Whitebait fritters. Main: steak – medium rare. Desert: anything with too much chocolate (as I understand it's a vegetable and therefore good for you) [no it's not~ Jenny]

**Can you cook?** No [confirmed ~ Jenny – though apart from that he's a model husband; you know the type – a small imitation of the real thing.]

**Favourite tippie?** Marlborough Sav Blanc and Central Otago Pinot Noir

**First drive?** Aged about 7 on the farm tractor – the advantage of growing up in "the bush", as you call it here

**First car?** Ford Zephyr Mark 2 with a column shifter, two-tone paint and fluffy dice!

**First fender bender?** Overdid it a bit in my MG Midget when I thought I saw snake eyes (it was just the curious positioning of my fluffy dice) and over-corrected a slide on a lovely windy stretch of gravel

road ... the corner rushed out in front of me and rearranged a few things that didn't meet my approval

**Everyday driver?** "Max", the MX-5 of course

**How many MX-5s have you owned?** Two and counting (I have one or two hidden in the shed that the missus doesn't know about)

**Current MX-5?** 2011 Special Edition, manual (of course), hard top [like you ~ Jenny]

**MX-5 improvements?** Keeping this one standard except for the Club number plate surrounds, just the driver improving with age [doubtful ~ Jenny]. Would like some nitrogen in the tyres (what a gas) and have my eye on a digital radio ...

**MX-5 dislikes?** four cupholders in a car built for two??

**Why an MX-5?** Handling, open air motoring, fun, cost of ownership, can get five bowling balls in the boot plus a carefully folded toothbrush!

**Fluffy dice?** Not any more, safety first – though I do lust after monogrammed type valve caps...

**Passions besides the MX-5?** Family, 10-pin bowling (addicted), photography [and me ~ Jenny]

**Favourite TV show / movie / book?** TV: Classic Restos (I kid you not) and Top Gear! Movie: The Italian Job (1969). Book: Chambers 20th Century Dictionary (not much of a plot but what an index! Well, who could remain sane creating crosswords without some sort of reference?)

**What TV program does an MX-5 radio play?** A car-toon!

**Dream wheels (money no object)?** Mitsuoka Himiko roadster (use your fav search engine and then tell me you don't want one!) [See the May 2012 edition of *mxtra* ~ Ed.]



Alan invents the hands-free phone ...

**Would you drive a Daewoo or SsangYong?** Only in a life or death situation and if I wore a mask and a frown

**Favourite other Mazda?** The new 6 is smashing [not literally I hope ~ Jenny]

**If not a Mazda (gasp!) What?** The new Morgan Plus 8

**How long in the Club?** About 3.14159 days after buying my first MX-5 in 2007 [and I thought the Life of Pi was a movie ~ Jenny]

**How many MX-5 Club runs?** Two score and counting

**What kind of ears does an MX-5 have?** Engine ears!

**Favourite Club run?** They don't call it the Great Ocean Road (run) for nothing

**Funniest thing seen on a Club run?** A French friend navigated for me on the treasure hunt run from Chirnside Park to the Yarra Valley (March 2008), although his English was very good he had me in fits trying to read some of the longer street names; what's a "creek" he asked; what does the "opposite of switch forward" mean – well, I had no idea so gave up translating that one; why are people "dying to get into" (the cemetery – ha ha, he got that after a minute or trois); luckily kangaroo is the same spelling in French but fire hydrants are different so counting them was a problem.

**Done DECA?** Sigh, not yet, whatever it is – hope it's not like Ikea where you have to (re)assemble everything afterwards

**What's playing in your MX-5?** AM693 or FM104.3. Crowded House, Deep Purple, Dire Straits, Evermore, Jet, The Travelling Wilburys (what's not to like about a six-stacker and fabulous Bose sound turned up loud?) [bit of a conversation killer ~ Jenny]

**What do you call a laughing motorcycle?** Yamahaha!

**Footy team (AFL/NRL/Soccer/other)?** The All Blacks

**Final comments?** Our Club is both fantastic and special. It appeals to a wide range of people, keeps in close touch with the membership and has as its headline act the most successful modern sports car ever. I would encourage every reader to get involved when you can, to put something from yourself into this club as you will get more out the more you put in, and to have the courage to simply strike up a conversation at the next Club meet with someone you have not spoken before; they will appreciate the camaraderie and I am sure you will enjoy the conversation as MX-5 owners are a very special breed.



# Scene about ...



■ Photos: Karen Bradshaw, Marg Gillick, John Waldock, Wendy Clark, Kelly Berggren



# Chapter chatter ...

## Christmas, north-eastern style ... seriously?

2/12/12 | North-Eastern Victoria

Words: Ron Gillick ■ Photos: Karen Bradshaw & Marg Gillick ■ Run organisers: Ron & Marg Gillick

*Our Christmas Run this year was held in conjunction with a promotion in Albury's Border Mail newspaper in an attempt to recruit some new members to boost Chapter numbers.*

Gathering at our meeting point at a park in Yackandandah, six cars from our Chapter were joined by Karen and Ian Bradshaw from the Western Victoria Chapter, Club Captain – Social, Dave Collins and one couple, John and Annetta Amer, who had responded to our advertisement. Local attendees were Gerry and Ellie Engwerda, Marge and Andrew Johns, Stuart James, Ian and Val Bruce, Brian Raine and Maree Connell and Marg and me.

We had a brief meeting to welcome our visitors and outline the run. The meeting was brief, I think, because it's hard to take seriously someone wearing reindeer antlers.

No matter the reason, soon we were on our way for a run through a mixture of roads with some picturesque scenery and some fun, twisty bits every now and then.

From Yackandandah we headed towards Kiewa, Tangambalanga then along the edge of the Hume Weir (still full) to Tallangatta. Just past Tallangatta we turned on to the Omeo Highway where we had our first taste of the roads we love, then turned off for the run up to Lockhart Gap where we stopped for a break and a chat. As usual the talk turned to anything to do with MX-5s with most peering into others' cars to check out any recent modifications.

After our stop it was back into the cars for the run down off the Gap before taking the back road through Gundowring to Dederang, then back to Yackandandah to the park which we had left two hours earlier where we had a picnic lunch.

Following lunch a presentation of a bottle of Chambers Wines "finest" Muscat was made to the best "Christmassy" dressed people/car. Thanks to all those who made the effort to dress in Christmas attire, but the unanimous winners were Brain and Maree.

Our first run for 2013 is our Snowy Mountains Run in February. There are a couple of spots left so, if you want to come on a great weekend run, you can find the details on the Club calendar on the website. ■



^ No, no ... of course we believe you!

> Three wise men? Stuart, Dave and Ron



< Santa's little helpers? Maree, Val & Ellie

> Too much egg nog? Gerry gets a bit, er, "tired" and emotional!





▼ The Club promotion Ron organised in the Border Mail...

bordermail.com.au

Sport

# ON THE GRID



**DARRYL STARR**

(02) 6024 0505 darryl.starr@bordermail.com.au

## A season of ups and downs

At times we've shown our potential this year, which is to qualify and run in the top three.

At other times, our qualifying has let us down. We seem to have had more incidents than any other car because of that.

I can't believe the number of times we've been taken out and, even when we have a good run,



**JASON BRIGHT**

something else will go wrong.

Championship-wise, nothing really went right this year and we've had

some shocking rounds that have really seen our championship collapse.

On the other hand, I've been able to be in the top five more than most, what with FPR and Triple Eight gapping the rest of the field and making it hard for anyone else just to get on the podium.

Hopefully, I'll be able to do that again this week-

end because Emmelash has been good to me in the past. I enjoy street tracks; I love the aggressiveness of having the concrete walls right at the edge.

There are a couple of corners that are pretty tricky and, over the past couple of years, it has wrecked people's hopes.

It's obviously going to be the last meeting with

only Holdens and Fords, which is a bit sad, but that's been overshadowed by Shane Van Gisbergen announcing his withdrawal from the sport.

He's a guy who always seems to love driving race cars, the way he drives the cars, having a burn.

He's great to watch and it comes as a shock.

I dare say he'll be back because it's very weird.

This is also the last round for these rare and, from Thursday, the workshop will turn to the car of the future and pretty much everyone at BJJ will be flut out on that for the next couple of months.

We're doing it a little bit differently to some

other teams because we're not manufacturing every last component as it's only natural that the teams who are will be out shaking their components down first. I don't think that's a big disadvantage.

We've just got to make sure that, by the time we do hit the track, we have enough time to make the most of it.

### Milthorpe champion against top field

COROWA driver Steven Milthorpe has been crowned Victorian V8 dirt modified champion for 2012 after taking out the final round at Swan Hill last Saturday.

Milthorpe, who has won just about everything he has tackled this year, easily accounted for the top field of 25 cars and is now preparing to tackle the NSW, Queensland and Australian titles starting in a few weeks.

A month lay-off from sprint-car racing, Albury's Grant Anderson made an impressive return last weekend at Warrambondi during the latest round of the SRA Series.

In a hard-charging result, Anderson, driving the family's Vic No. 37 Anderson Motorsport Foster, had to qualify into the B-main but managed to carve his way through the field to finish fifth.

Anderson will contest selected World Series rounds over Christmas-New Year, starting with Boxing Day at Adelaide's Speedway City.

After that, the plan is to travel to Brisbane's Archerfield Speedway in early January to run the World Series rounds and later the Australian Title.

Anderson will return to Victoria in late January for the Presidents Cup at Avalon Raceway, Kings Challenge at Borderline Speedway and the Grand Annual Classic at Premier Speedway.



● Mazda MX-5s from the Border will be gathering for a pre-Christmas run on Sunday starting at Yackandandah.

### Sporty little number with a touring bent

SOME see a little convertible as a selfish car — only two seats, and a boot just big enough for a credit card.

But a few locals have proved the iconic Mazda MX-5, is perfect for touring and opening up a whole new social life.

They are the members of the North-Eastern Victorian Chapter of the Mazda MX-5 Club

of Victoria and Tasmania, led by Ron Gillick of Corowa.

There are about 500 members, with a thriving core of about 30 in the Albury-Wodonga region — from Birrumbidgee to Beechworth.

"Since we joined the club we have met some wonderful people and shared many fantastic times," Gillick said.

"Each month or so we get together for a day's driving through our beautiful countryside.

Other times we meet up for a weekend run with club members from other parts of the state.

"Whatever we do, there's always lots of fun and plenty of lively chat. We're not all petrol heads but we all share a love of the Mazda MX-5

and driving our great local roads," Gillick said.

To boost chapter numbers, Gillick is hosting a pre-Christmas run on Sunday around Yackandandah, Myrtleford and Beechworth and members are welcome.

Meet at 10am at Isaacs Park, on Yackandandah-Wodonga Road, Yackandandah (opposite the hospital).

You are asked to bring an unwrapped gift, suitable for a child or adult, for the ABC Wodonga appeal.

Wear something "Christmassy", there will be a prize.

For more information contact Ron Gillick on (02) 6033 0253 (AHL) or, for more about the Mazda MX-5 Club, visit mx5vic.org.au.

### Lighting up speedway

LEETON Motor Sports Club will turn on the lights at Brokenah Speedway tomorrow for a packed program that will feature production sprints, Goulburn Open sprints, Wilby Park sprints, standard sprints and juniors.

Gates open at 4.30pm with racing from 6pm. Seating in the grandstands has been upgraded with metal replacing the old wooden boards.

Admission is \$20 for adults, \$15 for kids 12 to 16 and invalid and aged pensioners.

For further inquiries phone 0469 694 825.

### 4WD added to

THE East Coast Bullhorns Australian Rally Championship has announced a new four-wheel drive series to complement the outright title next year.

The East Coast Bullhorns Four Wheel Drive National Series will be decided over the best three of four rounds, out of the six available, selected by competitors.

It will be open to unrestricted AWD cars, FRC, Group N, Group N Prototype, Showroom and SUV cars.

The East Coast Bullhorns ARC begins in Canberra on March 2-3.

### Courtney is a centurion

THE Holden Racing Team's James Courtney, who won the 2010 championship, will defend his 100th V8 Supercar Championship Series title in Sydney this weekend.

Courtney made his V8 debut with HRT in 2005, partnering four-time champion Jim Richards in the endurance races at Sandown and Bathurst.

Courtney said he was looking forward to ending the year on a strong note on the Homestead street circuit where he claimed his V8 Supercar Championship Series title two years ago.

### SPORT SHORTS

GOLF

#### Norman backs ban

LOS ANGELES: Greg Norman has backed a ban on anchored putting despite its effect on his protégé Adam Scott. The Royal and Ancient and US Golf Association yesterday proposed a law prohibiting strokes made with the club held against the player's body, or with a forearm held against the body to establish an anchor point. "Sometimes people have a tendency for a little bit of a twitch or their muscles tighten up. I think the situation of anchoring a putter takes away that element of the game," Norman said.

TENNIS

#### Matosevic in box seat

AFTER claiming the title of Australia's No. 1-ranked men's tennis player, Marko Matosevic has a couple of big aims for next year. He wants to turn around sorry record at the majors that sits at 0-7 and makes attempts for a Davis Cup redemption. He has the ideal chance to get off to a flying start with his ranking of 49 guaranteeing him a start in the Brisbane and Sydney Internationals. "I'm very happy to be top 50 and to have reached the No. 1 ranking in Australia after the 2012 season. I'm just looking forward to the summer," he said.



SOCCER

#### Emerton to lead side

BRETT Emerton, pictured, will captain a 20-man Socceros squad when Australia travels to Hong Kong for next week's East Asian Cup qualifying tournament. Eight players are in line to debut for the Socceros at the tournament. Coach Holger Osieck said Emerton, who has 92 caps, was "the obvious choice as skipper." "It won't be a secret when you have the most capped person in that squad and the second most capped person in Socceros history that this person will lead the crew, that's for sure."

RUGBY

#### Sorry Hore out for 5

LONDON: All Blacks hooker Andrew Hore has apologised for the hit that floored Wales forward Bradley Davies, saying he was embarrassed at the incident that has resulted in a five-week ban. The punch, in the opening minute of New Zealand's 33-10 win, left Davies with concussion. Hore pleaded guilty to foul play at a hearing and his suspension means he is out of the tour-trainer against England. "It's not the All Black way. I've let myself down and the team, and probably the whole country that is pretty proud of what we do," he said.

**FAZE**  
Results out 21 Oct

880-0000000 John the member  
intentionally for a chat and a rap.  
Main: Isaac's Park, Yackandandah  
Sponsor: [unclear]  
Host: Saturday, 2 December  
Contact: Ron (02) 6033 0253 (AHL)  
www.motorsport.org.au

# Chapter chatter ...

## On behalf of My Elf and Myself ... 9/12/12 | Central Chapter

■ Words: Ros Eastwood ■ Photos: Wendy Clark, Kerry Pratt, Ron Macdonald ■ Run organisers: Ron Macdonald & Wendy Clark

*Arriving for the Central Chapter Christmas run at the Rosebud Hotel, we were a little surprised to find only two other couples parked outside – Jeff and Judy Searl, and David and Gail Collins.*

After chatting amongst ourselves for a few minutes we decided to wait inside as the sea breeze was decidedly cool at 8.45am. What a surprise when we entered and found many of our MX-5 friends were already there and tucking into their breakfast. As we gazed out through the back window on the car park full of MX-5s (27 in total) we remembered the email advice from Ron Macdonald to “park at the rear of the hotel” – oops!

Our next surprise was the fact that we couldn't actually see Ron or Wendy Clark in the hotel, although as they were the run organisers this did seem a little odd. However, we were soon enjoying our hearty breakfasts and catching up with people. Our table was visited by Santa and his elf helper who were giving out both chocolates and the run notes (funny, perhaps Ron asked them to do that in his absence?) Then Santa took the floor and commenced a fine explanation of the run ahead, commencing with “On behalf of my elf and myself ...”

Our tummies now full of breakfast, we got into our cars and prepared to follow the leader on our tour of the Mornington Peninsula. The gods had been kind to us and the fine drizzle, which had been coming down while we were inside having breakfast, lifted and we set off under blue skies with puffy white clouds. The lead car, complete with a tinsel-swathed aerial, took off with Santa at the wheel. Oddly Santa seemed to have ditched his elf and had Wendy in the passenger seat as his navigator. *Still no sign of Ron though ...*

Along Point Nepean Road with its many shops and beach houses and then up Boneo Road where the buildings were quickly left behind and we were soon driving through rolling hills and open paddocks. Just when I was starting to relax the “kangaroos ahead” sign loomed and I commenced my side-to-side head





turn as I waited for boomer to lurch itself across our path. Safely through this patch and on to the next obstacle which was a string of horse-riders who stopped as part of our group drove by, but then decided it was their turn and started to cross the road in front of our next lot of cars.

As we were now split into two groups, we slowed the pace a little and enjoyed glimpses of Port Phillip Bay to our left through the trees. I spotted a nice looking cherry farm too but there was no time to dally – Arthurs Seat and its MX-5 friendly road were waiting!

Just before we turned into this road our leader stopped to allow our horse-separated group to catch up. We attracted little attention from the neighbours – just one small boy and a Siamese cat which stopped its stalking activities on the front lawn and climbed on to a brick wall to get a better look at us.

As the crowd of MX-5s wound its way rapidly through the curves of Arthurs Seat road, I couldn't help wishing I hadn't put my hand up to do the run report as I struggled to manage run notes, pen, paper, water bottle, navigation and, most importantly, to keep the Eggs Benedict in my stomach. Success all around as we reached the top intact. I had a momentary glimpse of the bay on my left and a very pretty garden on my right, and then we were away again heading towards Main Ridge. We passed the Main Ridge Dairy, which was offering goat cheese tastings, and signs to a blue berry farm, but no thoughts of food – we were almost back to the top of Arthurs Seat to do that curvy road in reverse!

So down we all went and, although I missed the thrill of driving under an operating chairlift, I also thought it was probably just as well, as the temptation to drop objects into a stream of open-topped cars may well have proved too much for some! (Does anyone else remember riding on that chairlift whilst wearing thongs and the effort one had to use to grip with your toes so said thongs did not go flying off your feet to land far below?)

Safely at the bottom of Arthurs Seat, we headed off towards Mornington along the Nepean Highway. The highway was blocked at one point but the detour up, around and back down provided an insight into how the other half live - in expensive homes with expansive views. The homes became even bigger and more expensive as we headed into Mornington – although at one point I was a little distracted by the sight of a brightly painted red, blue and yellow tin cow looking fairly out of place on the massive decking on one such home.

Through Mornington we had to slow down for the pedestrians so got the full sea-side experience with the sound of the seagulls circling above, the smell of fish and chips coming from the cafes, and the sight of the Latte set watching the world go by from their street-side tables. Back on to the Nepean Highway and one final swoop down Oliver's Hill coming into Frankston. At the bottom the local police had set up a breathaliser and we all thought it would make a fine picture for mxtra if Santa got pulled in ... but it was not to be.

Into the car park at the pier and we found Santa had left his red sleigh there so we could fill it with children's gifts for the Salvation Army Christmas Appeal. As we did so, the local police came through and after asking Santa if we had enjoyed our run, went on to ask him which was the fastest and noisiest MX-5 there so they could issue it with a few tickets. Santa said Ho, Ho, Ho and they went away.

By this time I was really starting to worry about Ron, as Santa seemed well settled in his car and very friendly with Wendy. However, all was explained when Murray denounced Santa as an imposter and he was unmasked – it was Ron all along! And apparently Wendy had been the elf! *Who would have guessed!?*

**Well done to the two of them for a fabulously well-organised Christmas run and thanks to all those who took part and generously donated toys for the appeal. ■**

- » Top: Bob de Bont surveys the MX-Sleighs
- » Centre: Central Chapter Captain Ron Macdonald (right) presents the collected gifts to Lt Michael Shanks, the Salvation Army's Corps Officer Frankston
- » Above: Mark & Dale Fitzgerald lead the charge

# Chapter chatter ...

## Cascading into Christmas

15/12/12 | Southern Tasmania

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

*There seems to be something about end-of-year runs that gives them a life of their own.*

In the past we have had wine tastings, raffles, nice runs in the country and Christmas lunches to die for.

The planning for this year's Christmas run started modestly. We would do the same as normal: a short drive through the countryside followed by a wine tasting and a raffle, with some nice food to finish everything off.

But, then ideas began to float around.

Ian and Carla Long are dance teachers, so perhaps we could have some dancing as part of our Christmas run. Great idea, let's see if they are up for it.

Then after my birthday party the idea grew that maybe we could get the band to play as well, and make a real afternoon of the celebrations. Sure I thought, why not? Might as well do that too. We also decided to make this year's raffle a charity event, with the proceeds going to Breast Cancer Tasmania. Great idea ... we'll need a few prizes for that too.

So, on to the last run of the year. We traditionally have the Christmas run on a Saturday, as we tend to have a shorter drive and make more of the celebrations afterwards. The Chapter met at the usual spot in Bellerive. The run leader hadn't factored in that it was a Saturday, and that a farmers' market had set up on the boardwalk, meaning the car park was already pretty full when he arrived (tsk tsk!).

The members, as usual, are a resourceful lot and figured it all out and it didn't take us long to get going on the drive, which was a short drive through Tea Tree and Richmond. The weather being a bit dodgy, we started off with tops up but at our first stop we all decided to brave it and feel the wind in our hair.

After our drive we ended up in Glenorchy for our dance lesson. We all tried something called the *Hucklebuck* and followed on with a *Progressive Jive*. Lots of fun, and it was a surprise to see the nervousness in the faces of the normally unflappable MX-5 drivers.

We headed off to another venue, where we sampled some nice wines and tried, mostly unsuccessfully, to guess their grape type and state or country of origin. Food and nibbles were also on offer, much appreciated after all the jumping around I'm sure.

We finished the afternoon with the band (no name as yet), made up of fellow MX-er Allan Pryer, myself, and a few friends. We played 16 songs, and the audience still asked for an encore! We also drew the raffle, which raised \$122 for Breast Cancer Tasmania – a handy total going to a very worthwhile cause.

Finally, I would like to thank the following people for their efforts in helping the day being such an enjoyable one: Ian and Carla Long for organising and running the dancing, Stacey Pryer and Michelle Waldock for organising the food, and the band for putting on such an excellent show.

***A great end to 2012 ... and now we look forward to 2013. ■***





⌋ *Opposite page:*  
 » Alan & Suzie Dear  
 » Rowena & Brandt,  
 Lisa-Ann Gershwin  
 » Gaye & Royce Darling

⌋ *Michelle Waldock serves the nibbles while John doles out his favourite tippie ... Chateau Brown Paper Bag!*

⌋ *Liz Williams & Stacey Pryer*

⌋ *Sultans of Swing ... John Waldock (top) and Allan Pryer*

# Ragtop renaissance.

■ Words & photos: Peter McKay ... reproduced from "Drive", *The Age*, 10 November 2012

## In life, we are dealt good cards and bad cards.

*A bad one would be a scenario involving an English chef, American barista, Chinese car, Afrikaans stand-up comic, Indian traffic system, French plumber and a New Zealand elocutionist ...*

Here's a more positive tale – about a sports car collaboratively produced by an Italian and a Japanese manufacturer.

Mazda's next-generation iconic rear-drive sports car, the MX-5, expected next year, will also spawn a revived Alfa Romeo Spider from the same Mazda-developed architecture.

The Japanese-Italian fusion is reason to salivate.

If history is anything to go on the MX-5 will be predictably brilliant. And when it is introduced in 2015, the Italian interpretation will be rear-wheel-drive, unlike the last Spider-badged car, which was a forgettable open version of the front-drive Alfa GTV from 1995-2006. The last proper *Alfa Romeo Spider* ended production in 1993.

The new one will be a contemporary reading of the classic car that starred alongside Dustin Hoffman in *The Graduate*. Alfa would love it to seduce with the same telling effectiveness as Mrs Robinson managed onscreen in 1967.

Alfa will use the basic underpinnings of the MX-5 architecture but is expected to have freedom of styling and detailing, and its own engine.

**So, as Alfa chases some of the unstoppable appeal of the best-selling roadster in history, stand by for Italian bravura and passion married to the purity and simplicity of the Mazda original.**

Capitalising on the strength of Japanese car makers – build quality and reliability – both the Spider and the MX-5 will be produced at Mazda's Hiroshima plant.

Suspension and steering characteristics will be different, too, tuned to suit the varying expectations of Mazda and Alfa customers.

The all-new Alfa roadster may be powered by an alloy 1.8-litre turbocharged engine from the Alfa 4C coupe expected in 2013. A turbo would help give the Alfa further differentiation over the earlier-to-market MX-5. Some speculation suggests a twin-clutch transmission will be standard.

Both Mazda and Alfa Romeo expect this new marriage will be happier and last longer than the last one involving the MX-5. *Anyone remember the Ford Capri?* That was Ford Australia's bewildering call to take a beloved rear-drive and playful MX-5 and turn it into a fault-ridden front-driver with a soft roof that leaked like the Labor Party caucus room.

Facing the recent considerable competition from the Toyota 86 / Subaru BRZ sports coupe, the next-generation MX-5 will certainly be lighter, the target being to come in less than one tonne. The project suggests that Alfa Romeo, a little neglected in recent times by owner Fiat, clearly has a future. It is one of a brace of new Alfa products on the launch pad.

With these plans in mind, *Drive* this week tested the market at

the wheel of the latest updated MX-5 with 1200 kilometres of brisk research in Alfa's homeland.

**Our search for truth (and sunshine) began in Milan, Italy's epicentre of fashion and style (but, in truth, also a worrying showcase of graffiti and discarded cigarette butts). Garbage chic, anyone?**

We quickly raced off to Varenna at the water's edge of Lake Como. Impossibly snaky, narrow roads including one memorable 18-degree descent reinforced why Italians love small cars. The MX-5 is of a most useful size for threading through villages designed for pedestrian traffic. Not so big to pose problems wending a path along thoroughfares designed for horses. And not so small to be laughed at.

So high into the mountains that the clouds were below us, we traced some of the Giro d'Italia cycle tour route, easing past the occasional wannabe Michele Scarponi.

Past Brembo, where excellent performance brakes are made, and Mandello del Lario, home to motorcycle maker Moto Guzzi, we dropped the MX-5's folding hard-top to better take in the glorious autumn tones on trees preparing for a snowy winter.

Italian topography and road design (with a sprinkling of precipitation) create a passion for good brakes and handling, and ultimately, skilful motorists.

*A Ferrari would not be a better tool in these conditions than the MX-5 – too wide and too prissy for these patchy, claustrophobic tracks, where a wheel misplaced could mean a gravity-fuelled drop to the valley floor.*

With a bossy photographer demanding the hardtop stay lowered, despite drizzle and the five-degree ambient, those heated seats kept the backside cosy. With bad weather closing in fast, we headed for Tuscany in search of more great driving roads and blue skies.

**It took until the morning of day three of our mission, in San Casciano in Tuscany before anyone reacted to the impending Mazda-Alfa relationship.**

While we were photographing the MX-5 in front of an old-style Alfa garage in San Casciano, the owners of the premises unexpectedly turned up.

The smiles and hand movements indicated they immediately knew the connection between Alfa and the Mazda roadster. Cousins Cosimo and Allesandro Bellini chatted animatedly about the upcoming Alfa.

Their grandfather ushered us into the old workshop, to show us faded mono photos of ancient race drivers lining most of the walls. The workshop, we learned, was a mandatory checkpoint for cars in the original Mille Miglia. Pre-war racing ace Tazio Nuvolari had been there, and other legends.





***A trip through the Italian countryside proves why Alfa needs an MX-5 clone.***

And the impending "collaboration"? "We have the Alfa Romeo snake [emblem] flowing in our blood and we hope that the next Spider will be a success," Cosimo says. "We think that Mazda will be a good partner." Cosimo tips the Spider will take the 1.8-litre turbo, the current performance engine. Or a *MultiAir* engine from the Fiat family.

**Out into the Tuscan countryside of grapevines, olive trees and pastel villas, the Mazda relished the wonderful driving roads under leaden skies.**

After easing the MX-5 through the corridor-like lanes of Pomarance, we got to again delight in the pin-sharp steering, a stumpy, short-travel gear lever and handling that laughed at the greasy roads under leaden skies. We headed south and west, to Orbetello, on the land-linked island of Monte Argentario. More confining streets but always some fun mountain passages as a reward.

Finally, our destination: Rome. Amid the crazy freestyle competency packaged as thrill-seeking Roman drivers and scooteristas, we did a chequered flag lap around the walled Vatican, a blast past the Colosseum and a cruise down magical Via Veneto ... *aah, La Dolce Vita*.

**Four days, 1200 kilometres, 21 macchiato coffees and 1000 smiles after we began, there was the understanding that there will always be a place for breezy, charming sports cars.**

**Mazda has one. Alfa wants one. ■**



## *New MX-5 ready for the challenge*

The Mazda MX-5 was introduced in 1989 as a modern, fun-to-drive interpretation of the traditional British sports cars such as MG and Triumph. But with the added benefits of being reliable, efficient, well built and comfortable. Mazda has sold almost one million MX-5s globally. Next year's all-new MX-5 will be the fourth generation.

To meet the challenge from recent arrivals, the new MX-5 will need to be faster. Speculation suggests Mazda will stick to 2.0 litres but in a livelier, more fuel-efficient form. The 2.0-litre *SkyActiv* four-cylinder used in the new Mazda6 in some markets is a possibility. ■

# My favourite MX-5 road ...



■ Words & photo: Alan Laine, Eastern Victoria

## The C456 from Boolara to Mirboo North, Gippsland

This 11km of MX-5 motoring heaven has everything – sweeping bends, tight corners, uphill switchbacks. It's a good quality road with farming properties along the way and generally not a lot of traffic on week days. It's 100kmh, and if you can maintain that you have a pretty well set up MX. But it's a school bus route, so avoid during school drop off and pick up times.

There's an option of doing a 31km loop back to Boolara ... zero the odo at the shop when you start, when coming into Mirboo North at the end of the downhill. At 14km turn left on to Grand Ridge East Rd, then at 21.5km turn left on to Limonite Rd. It's another good road – more sweeping corners than tight ones – and at 31km you're back where you started. *It's great in reverse too ... enjoy!* ■



**Thanks for the idea, Alan!** If other Club members have a favourite MX-5 road, you're welcome to submit a short description (150 words) and a photo to <editor@mx5vic.org.au> and share it around!

**Of course, you can discover** the Club's favourite MX-5 roads with your own copy of our book, "**20 Roads for 20 years**" ... just \$20 + postage from merchandise man Steve Dunlop, [merchandise@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:merchandise@mx5vic.org.au). **Perfect for a glove box near you!**

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# Chapter chatter ...

## Good thing Santa doesn't use our run notes!

16/12/12 | Western Victoria

■ Words & photos: Karen Bradshaw ■ Run organisers: John & Noellene Gleeson



*With Christmas fast approaching our end-of-year run was upon us ...*

We gathered at John and Noellene's in Ballarat and were promptly introduced to the newest addition to their family – a ball of fluff named Ted, who instantly stole everyone's heart.

Neil came with his car dressed up like Rudolph the red-nosed reindeer. We headed off at 10.30am with 18 cars including one from Bendigo and three from Central Chapter, heading for the M8 highway, then on to the Western Highway exiting towards Lexton via Learmonth and Waubra – my the wind towers are imposing.

From Lexton we headed left to Beaufort. When we arrived at Beaufort for morning tea, there were lots of giggles coming from the leader's car – apparently our leader never read his run notes! We were supposed to turn right at Lexton and head to Beaufort the long way round! – Never mind, getting to Beaufort earlier meant we had more time to chat and natter.

On leaving Beaufort Allan and Dawn almost left their picnic bag behind – Dawn was busy on the phone! Then I spotted an abandoned camera on the park bench – what sacrilege! We gave the camera a ride back to Ballarat to be reunited with its chastised owner – *shame on you Neil!*

We headed back to Ballarat via Mt Buninyong – the run notes didn't seem quite right... when we got to the roundabout in Buninyong saying left, instead we went straight ahead – no wonder our leader has navigational trouble!

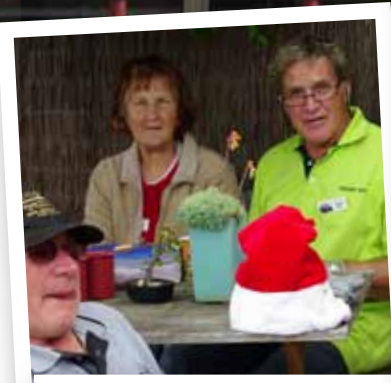
We arrived back at the Gleesons' for our BBQ lunch. Thank you, Noellene, for all the "little Christmas extras" – they made the day even more enjoyable. We had a terrific afternoon eating, talking and joking! So nice to be able to sit and catch up without having to rush off to continue on a run.

The Gleesons' two little dogs lapped up all of the attention given to them, with Ted stealing the show! They were very exhausted little doggies by the end of the day.

Thank you to John and Noellene for organising a great morning run and for their hospitality for the day. ■



*... awwwww*



# Chapter chatter ...

## Northern Tassie's sumptuous Christmas

18/11/12 | Northern Tasmania

■ Words & photos: Kelly Berggren ■ Run organiser: Bruce Harvey

*We celebrated Christmas this year with a short run through some fine roads around Mole Creek, Mt Rolland, Sheffield, Barrington, with a finish at Carl and Kelly's place on the hill in Aberdeen.*

Our cars watched the view from the sheep paddock next door and we all enjoyed looking over them and the rolling farms, river and sea from the back deck. Everyone brought a platter and dessert, so our lunch was a superb selection topped off with: Kel's granny's plum pudding, Anna's tiramisu, Lyn & Sandra's pavlovas (multiple - yum!), Louise's raspberries (since we didn't really need to stuff ourselves with three pavs - I miscounted when organising!) Margaret's yule log, cherries and choccies!

Secret Santa pressies were delivered by resident elves Stasi (5) and Charlie (2), and the only downside to the day was when Yvonne twisted her ankle on the kitchen step! ■



- *The upside (the sumptuous spread)*
- *and the downside ... Yvonne the Angel nurses her twisted ankle*
- *Half the cars in the paddock next door, taking in the view towards Latrobe and Launceston*



- *Trevor, Michael, Corrina, Tony, Louise, Margaret and Rob enjoy Christmas lunch*





^ Top: Michael, Anna and Ken B  
Above: Margaret, Rob, Peter and Lyn

^ Top: Carl spins a yarn to Ruth, Louise and Tony  
Above: Chez and Bruce

# The MX-5 burger

■ Recipe & photos: Ron Macdonald

In 1989 Mazda launched a revolution in two-seater roadsters with the MX-5. Mazda integrated some of the best ideas of the '60s but added a modern twist to improve the overall package.

With this inspiration I came up with a variation on the old hamburger. Just like the MX-5 there are three variations ... this month is the *NA Breakfast Burger*.

**The NA Breakfast Burger ...** What better way to set yourself up for a Club run than with this good hearty breakfast ... far better than the commercial fare.

## Ingredients (per burger):

- » 2 flat mushrooms (around egg ring size)
- » 2 slices of processed cheese (can go with Gruyere if you want to be "a little bit fancy")
- » 1 rasher of middle cut bacon
- » 1 600g egg

## Method:

Prepare your mushrooms by carefully removing the stalk. NEVER wash mushrooms – if you are concerned about any soil on them brush it off with a pastry brush or wipe over with a damp cloth.

In a medium frying pan pre-heat your egg ring (oil if desired), place your bacon and egg in the frying pan over a moderate heat, breaking the egg yolk with a fork to aid in the cooking. Pre-heat a very lightly-oiled grill pan (medium heat) then place the mushrooms face down and cook for two minutes, turn the mushrooms face up and cook for a further two minutes. Do not overcook the mushrooms; if you do you will end up with a soggy mess. When nearly cooked turn the egg over and finish cooking.

Place one mushroom on the plate, face up, cover with a slice of cheese followed by the bacon and the egg. Next add your second slice of cheese and top it with your other mushroom, face down.

**There you have it – the NA Breakfast Burger ... *bon appetit!***



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# Failure to launch ...



## The glitch that (almost) stole Christmas

■ Words & photo: Ron Diprose

As reported last month, the Western Victoria Chapter was gathering at Lake Wendouree in Ballarat for the “Springfest” Shannons Show and Shine.

Being a chance to show off our great cars, I spent some time the day before cleaning and polishing the car, in particular the beautiful new (for us) genuine Mazda wheels which I had refurbished (these are each 3kg lighter than the ones that were fitted). They stopped the car being so skittish on bumpy roads. *Thanks Jeff.*

Up early and ready to go on Sunday, I packed the car and jumped in, turned the key – the engine cranked over but would not fire. I suspected that there was some water in the engine wiring, so proceeded to open all the connectors I could find and give the contacts a clean and spray with WD40. No joy, so I tried resetting the alarm by locking and unlocking the doors then opening and closing them.

*Nothing ...*

Having spent the time that I should have been driving west, with no result, I called John in Ballarat to let him know my problem, then called the RACV. The mechanic pulled the same plugs that I had been checking and next thing you know he had a running car.

After a short time the car started to cough a little. No worries, said the RACV man ... “weak ignition, it should clear with a run”.

Well, it is a beautiful day ... Ballarat is only an hour away, that should be enough to evaporate any water lurking about.

With the Navigator’s words “You are crazy” to send me off, I headed west.

The trip was “interesting”. Being passed by pretty much everyone on the Pentland Hills out of Bacchus Marsh was getting embarrassing. After that things improved until I had to stop at some lights in Ballarat ... *Pop and Crackle*, but no *Snap*. Limped to Lake Wendouree to meet the crowd, who surprisingly had heard me approaching.

I had kind of parked when *Blue Maxx* decided enough was enough and stopped.

Some discussion followed with the assembled crowd. One possible cause was a faulty coil pack, and fortunately the supplier of the beautiful new wheels happened to have a spare in his nearby

Aladdin’s Cave. A few minutes later his family arrived with the part. *Thanks Jeff.*

I swapped the coils and, *Hey Presto*, the car started and ran like a dream.

A few hours later I found the dream had become a nightmare. Everyone had packed up and were saying their good-byes. I tried to start the car to return home. No joy again – cranking but no go. Tried a few things without a result so I made another call to the RACV.

As I had to wait for the mechanic to arrive, the Western Chapter people were extremely kind and insisted on waiting with me.

Eventually the man in the yellow ute turned up, listened to the story and immediately arranged a tow truck to get me and *Blue Maxx* home.

An ignominious trip home followed, fortunately with a very pleasant and helpful tow truck driver.

We arrived home to confirm the Navigator’s previous statement ... I don’t recall the phrase “I told you so” (the laughter said enough).

Then the fun started; with *Blue Maxx* safely in the shed I started to work my way through all the checks I could find. There was a small oil leak from the front crankshaft seal, which may have affected the lower crankshaft sensor.

Research on the internet and the *MX-5 cartalk* forum helped. I found how to use a LED to get any stored fault codes. There was none. I found one of the wires to the coils was not good, so I replaced that, but could only get the engine running for a few seconds.

Various distractions such as minding grandchildren, both well and sick, minding granddogs, building a deck for my son and his girlfriend, a few days enjoying the sights of Marong (great pub) which included a trip home to drive a V8 for a few laps around Calder Park, all meant that progress with the car was slow. There are simply not enough hours in the day for retired people.

After all that the ignition system was working properly, so the next thing was fuel.

I suspected the fuel filter or fuel pump, changed the filter after a small battle with the quick disconnect fittings – I found no tools are needed for the Mazda ones, just squeeze the white bits with

your fingers and the hoses will slide off. Stopping the fuel leaking out is another matter; golf tees don’t work!

The filter had been doing its job well as some nasty stuff emerged from the old one. Did not fix the problem though.

I found an easy way to test the fuel pump. A jumper wire in the diagnostic box, open the fuel filler, turn on the ignition and listen at the filler. There was no noise.

Moving aside the carpet on the parcel shelf revealed a nasty surprise. *Hydrous ferric oxide* I believe the chemists say ... just plain old rust to you and me. Not too bad but another thing to fix. I love driving with the top down, even in the rain. Which is fine if you are going fast enough. People stay dry (ish) but it seems the parcel shelf carpet does not. The combination of damp carpet and underfelt sitting on steel is a great recipe for rust. So I will be careful to dry everything off in future. I will need to check the floor panels for the same thing.

Having removed the rusty access panel, I checked the power to the connector which was fine. Bought and fitted a new fuel pump and all was well ... very happy to have the car running again.

Only a couple of little jobs to finish. Changed the crankshaft oil seal which is a bit complicated as you have to move the timing belt aside and take off the crankshaft pulley.

All went well until I was putting the accessory drive pulley back on. One of the bolts, naturally the last one being fitted, snapped. The air turned the same colour as the car – *blue!*

Half a day later the recalcitrant bolt had been removed, four new ones fitted. Following a test run on a nearby twisty back road I had a grin from ear to ear and everything was good with the world.

Luckily all this happened in time for one of the Club’s Christmas runs ... the only one left was the Western Victoria Chapter run from Ballarat.

I loaded the car with Christmas present, barbeque supplies, jumper and coats (just in case, it is summer in Victoria) and headed off with fingers crossed.

**No need to be concerned as, apart from a minor navigation error in the lead car, everything went well, everybody had a great day, the car ran like a dream and there was a bunch of happy children on Christmas day. ■**

# Wow! What a blast!!

■ Words: Kerry Fitzgerald ■ Photos: Jess Murphy, [mx5pics.zenfolio.com](http://mx5pics.zenfolio.com)

*Final day on the calendar for the AROCA Sprint Series 2012 and debut for Dale and me on the race track.*

The day was run particularly well thanks to the many people who contributed their time and effort. There were lots of newbies and we were lucky enough not only to have our own run group but a fantastic crew of instructors to accompany us, most of whom were also competing on the day as well – *a very, very big ask!* Really appreciated!!!

Special thanks must go to my instructor Daniel White who clearly drew the short straw. Much to his credit – or insanity, thinking the latter – he fronted. First he suggested that I go with him in his run group to get a feel for the track.

Jumping into Daniel's new car with borrowed helmet in hand, thanks to Chris Boak, off we go!!!!

Well, in next to no time I was feeling very ordinary – passenger I am not! Nearly christening the new car and helmet, very quickly Daniel had me back in the pits.

Bit of a rough start to the day.

However, in no time at all I was out on my first session, legs shaking so badly I'm still wondering how I managed to change gears (sometimes I didn't, but that's our little secret Daniel, poor Green Machine). First session down ... and I managed to stay on the track. Clearly not trying hard enough! Dale came in with a grin from ear to ear.

Session by session our confidence grew and our times improved. It was wonderful to have so many other first-timers to share our experience with, not to mention some GIRL POWER! Many of the seasoned drivers were offering advice and encouragement too, making the day a very friendly and inviting one.

I don't know where the time went but before I knew it we were on our last session for the day. Dale rolled out first, no instructor, and I followed with Mark (hubby) alongside, determined to stick right behind Dale, as he had clocked much better times all day. Well, determination wasn't enough he disappeared in no time and a quick glance in the rear vision mirror found Anastasia right on my tail.

Mark was very animated and hollered directions, pushing me way beyond my comfort zone, showing me just how hard I could push the car ... amazing!!!

I finished the day on a real high, clocking my best time of 2:03 for the day – an improvement of 16 seconds for the day and six seconds from my previous best session.

Congratulations to Dale who, 12 months ago, couldn't work, drive or walk pain free with his arthritis. I thought I would never see him race!

Thank you to Robert Downes who nurtured him to a 1:54 on his very first track day – sensational work, both of you.

I dare say I'll be hearing about this day for a long, long time to come.

**Watch out Dad ... Dale's coming! ■**



^ Son ... Dale Fitzgerald



v ... and mum, Kerry

**2012-13 Championship | Round 5  
Winton Sprints ~ 2 December, 2012**



*Championship standings after Rd 5 - Winton Sprints, 2 December, 2012*

<i>(corrected points)</i>	1st	2nd	3rd
<b>Overall Champion</b>	= Stephen Downes / Robert Hart » 50		Russell Garner » 44
Standard NA	Noel Heritage » 43	Robert Downes » 39	John Stone » 24
Standard NB	Stephen Downes » 50	John Downes » 28	Murray Seymour » 24
Standard NC	Robert Hart » 50	Colin Denman-Jones » 31	Alan Conrad » 28
Clubman	Max Lloyd » 39	Fabian Mastronardi » 31	Peter Phillips » 30
Modified	Russell Garner » 44	Robert Parr » 29	David Wilken » 20
Restricted Open	Paul Murphy » 20	Charlie Tickler » 17	David Bruce » 7
Open	David Wilken » 20	Brendan Beavis » 18	Mark Fitzgerald » 17

# Winton - what a blast!

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# Done and dusted ...



## ■ Bob de Bont wrap up the 2012 NGK Victorian Motorkhana Championship

The 2012 NGK Victorian Motorkhana Championship finished with its presentation night held on 12 December. Here is a quick recap of the year focusing on our Club members and their achievement.

**Round 1 – Pakenham, 12 February:** four cars, six competitors and a couple of spectators. After a slow start we had two tests in excellent conditions before the rain arrived transforming the hard, dusty surface into something which resembled an ice skating rink. Four tests on the day.

**Results:** Bob de Bont won class B, Ben Sale and Dale Fitzgerald were 2nd and 3rd in novice and Pam Collom was 2nd in ladies. The team started a strong 3rd in the Club Championship.

**Round 2 – Deniliquin 15 April:** Bob was joined by Mark Szutta, son Alex and father-in-law Tony; unfortunately only Bob nominated to represent the Club. The Sunday motorkhana was preceded by an Autocross on Saturday which makes for an enjoyable weekend away. Seven tests on the day.

**Results:** For the Autocross, Bob finished 12th outright and 2nd in class. In the motorkhana, Bob finished 7th outright, 1st on handicap and won class B. Mark was 4th in class and Alex was 1st in juniors. The team dropped to 4th in the Club Championship.

**Round 3 – Pakenham, 13 May:** two cars and three competitors – the first motorkhana for Troy and Tony Heasly. Rain on the Saturday night returned the Pakenham ground to its typical muddy surface. The rain continued on Sunday and the surface was consistently bad all day. There were six tests for the day.

**Results:** Bob, Tony and Troy finished 1st, 2nd and 3rd in class B. Tony was 2nd in novice and Troy was 2nd in juniors. The team consolidated its 4th position in the Club Championship.

**Round 4 – Pakenham Council Offices car park, 17 June:** three cars and five competitors, Alex Hailstone entering her first motorkhana along with Ben, Dale, Troy and Bob. Wet and cold, the venue being very tight and bordered by kerbs was not ideal for novices. Eight tests.

**Results:** Bob finished 8th outright, 6th on handicap and won class B, Mark Szutta was 2nd with Ben in 3rd also claiming 2nd in novice. Alex was 2nd in ladies. Dale was 6th in juniors and Troy was 7th. The

team dropped to 5th overall.

**Round 5 – Bendigo Saleyards, 5 July:** two cars and Bob, Tony and Troy representing the Club. The weather cycled between sunshine and fairly heavy rain to keep us on our toes. 12 tests for the day.

**Results:** Bob finished 10th outright, 7th on handicap and won class B, Tony was 5th in class and won novice with Troy 2nd in juniors. The team retained its 5th position in the Club Championship.

**Round 6 – Mt Gambier Saleyards, 5 August:** Bob alone represented the Club. Sunday was cold and wet with a fairly stiff wind and the occasional torrential downpour. Six individual tests run twice.

**Results:** Bob finished 8th outright, 6th on handicap and won class B. The team regained 4th position in the Club Championship.

**Round 7 – Leongatha Livestock Exchange, 1 Sept:** three cars and four competitors. Bruce Telfer entered his first motorkhana with Bob, Tony and Troy. Our first dry motorkhana since Deniliquin – great to compete with the top down and have some fun. 10 tests in total.

**Results:** Bob finished 14th outright, 13th on handicap and was 2nd in class B, followed by Bruce, Tony and Troy. Bruce won novice with Tony in 2nd and Troy won juniors. The team strengthened its hold on 4th position in the Club Championship.

**Round 8 – Bendigo Saleyards, 22 Sept:** three cars and four competitors. Mark Szutta had entered as an MX-5 Club member joining Bob, Tony and Troy. Sunshine and clear skies – perfect weather for top down fun.

**Results:** Bob finished 15th outright, 11th on handicap and won class B, Tony was 4th with Mark in 5th, Tony won novice with Troy 2nd in juniors. The team retained its 4th position in the Club Championship.



### Championship wrap

The 2012 Championship attracted over 300 competitors over eight rounds, of whom 21 entered Class B. The Club Championship represented 20 different clubs from Victoria, NSW and SA.

The top eight competitors in class B used an MX-5 at some time in the year. In all 12 of the 21 competitors in Class B used an MX-5. MX-5s also scored 2nd in Ladies, 2nd and 3rd in Novice and 2nd and 4th in Junior. **The MX-5 is fast becoming the weapon of choice for many novice and experienced competitors in motorkhana.** They are fast, nimble and strong with the only breakage or damage for the year being a number of tyres and an over exuberant competitor who hit a kerb.

Bob demonstrated what can be achieved with a standard MX-5 by finishing 11th outright, 7th on handicap and the 2nd production car, beating many faster cars along the way.

### Series Results

Congratulations go:

- » **Bob de Bont** (pictured above, right) – winner, Class B with a score of seven wins and a 2nd from 8 rounds.
- » **Tony Heasly** (above, centre) – finished 3rd in Class and also 2nd in Novice.
- » **Troy Heasly** (above, left) – 2nd in Juniors.

Thanks to all who participated during the year and to the spectators who came to watch the show and made for an enjoyable and successful year. ■

# Did you know this?

*A paraprosdokian is a figure of speech in which the latter part of a sentence or phrase is surprising or unexpected in a way that causes the reader or listener to reframe or reinterpret the first part.*

"Where there's a will, I want to be in it," is a paraprosdokian.

Winston Churchill loved them.

1. Do not argue with an idiot. He will drag you down to his level and beat you with experience.
2. The last thing I want to do is hurt you. But it's still on my list.
3. Light travels faster than sound. This is why some people appear bright until you hear them speak.
4. If I agreed with you, we'd both be wrong.
5. We never really grow up; we only learn how to act in public.
6. War does not determine who is right – only who is left.
7. Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit. Wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad.
8. Evening news is where they begin with "Good Evening", and then

proceed to tell you why it isn't.

9. To steal ideas from one person is plagiarism. To steal ideas from many is research.
10. A bus station is where a bus stops. A train station is where a train stops. *My desk is a work station.*
11. I thought I wanted a career. Turns out I just wanted pay cheques.
12. Whenever I fill out an application, in the part that says, "In case of emergency, notify ....." I put 'DOCTOR.'
13. I didn't say it was your fault, I said I was blaming you.
14. Behind every successful man is his woman. Behind the fall of a successful man is usually another woman.
15. A clear conscience is the sign of a fuzzy memory.
16. You do not need a parachute to skydive

... you only need a parachute to skydive *more than once.*

17. Money can't buy happiness, but it sure makes misery easier to live with.
18. There's a fine line between cuddling and holding someone down so they can't get away.
19. I used to be indecisive. Now I'm not so sure.
20. You're never too old to learn something stupid.
21. To be sure of hitting the target, shoot first and call whatever you hit the target.
22. Nostalgia isn't what it used to be.
23. Change is inevitable, except from a vending machine.
24. Going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than standing in a garage makes you a car.
25. Where there's a will, there are relatives.

## For sale *NA rollbar*

- » Brown Davis for NA, designation ROPS-MAMX5A.
- » All CAMS paper work attached with fitting instructions, and securing kit, but one bolt missing.
- » Only been in car six months, and never inverted!!
- » Car was hit while legally parked on a sunny day ... no damage to the roll bar, though.

**Asking price: \$650**

(new price around \$800)  
**Contact: Mike (Club member)**  
**0418 211 278**



## Burson automotive products at trade prices

Current financial Club members can now purchase automotive parts and accessories at trade prices from Burson Auto Parts stores.

Burson Auto Parts have generously extended their Club discount offer to all financial MX-5 Club members around Australia. Simply ask for your discount when you purchase, and present your current membership card. Quote account number 112558.

Burson Auto Parts have more than 100 outlets on the east coast, offering a complete range of tools, spare parts and car care products. Check out the range at [www.burson.com.au](http://www.burson.com.au)

## Yours to borrow ...

### Workshop manuals



» 1.6 NA    » 1.8 NA    » 1990-2009

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

### Tools



**Random orbital polisher**, ideal for machine polishing your car. Consumables available (at your own cost) through the Club.

Contact [merchandise@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:merchandise@mx5vic.org.au)

**Bushing tool**, for servicing or replacing your suspension bushes.

Contact [editor@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:editor@mx5vic.org.au)



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

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