

# mxtra

7/2013

mx5vic.org.au

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

# Standing the test of time



**In this edition:**

**Aussies vs Russians - we get one back**

**Motorkhana - what's involved?**

**Getting your HANS on motor sport safety**



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# MX-5

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of Victoria & Tasmania

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7/2013

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Cover image: The MX-5 continues to inspire ... and to lead. Photo: GoAuto.com.au



Find us at:  
MX-5 Club of  
Victoria

mxtra is the monthly newsletter of the Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria Inc (#A0021659A)  
PO Box 7438, Beaumaris VIC 3193. Registered for Print Post: PP381712/2306

All contributions welcome: please send articles and photos to the editor, Murray Finlay:

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## Don's Drive(l) ...

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

*Hi everyone!*

### The membership year is fast coming to an end.

Once again I have to ask where the last 12 months have gone! It has been quite a year with many highlights. I have to say that, as President, I didn't get to everything on my self-imposed "to-do" list.

But this has been a good reminder that this is a Club run by volunteers and each has many commitments and responsibilities outside the Club. Nevertheless I am constantly amazed at the time the Committee, together with the Chapter Captains and their Assistants, find to put into their tasks. I'm sure you'll join me in thanking them for their efforts over the last year.

**Will Campbell has updated the membership portal so that we can pay our 2013-14 membership fees.** This is particularly important for our motor sport folk who have to be financial members when they start Round 1 of the 2013-14 Championship at Phillip Island on Saturday, 6 July. However we also encourage all members to renew as soon as possible so that we have the financial resources to support our Chapter and motor sport activities.

**I would like to applaud our motor sport team** for the way they have approached the resolution of some issues which came to light during the 2012-13 Championship series. The championship rules have stood us in good stead for several seasons now but the enforcement of the rules and how we deal with transgressions has not kept pace with the amazing increase in participant numbers. While our Championship is a "Sprints" series (ie, you are racing against yourself and not others on the track) we need to keep a level playing field for everyone. A sub-committee of motor sport enthusiasts has been formed under the Chairmanship of Craig Healy which will make recommendations to the Club Committee on how we should operate in the coming season.

**In May Ron Macdonald, Alan Bennet and Wendy Clark organised a new members' night with a difference.** We used the Shannons venue in Moorabbin for the first time. Besides a good-sized meeting room there were also a few cars being assembled for one of Shannons'

regular auctions. The location provided an excellent opportunity for the Club to present itself to an audience which, unlike some of our more recent events, actually contained quite a few new and potential members. Ron and Alan are to be congratulated for taking a different approach to the evening which resulted in a healthy turnout despite absolutely foul weather.

**For the observant amongst us, you will have noticed that the Club's new website has been operating since the beginning of June.** The Club has made quite a substantial investment in the fresh-looking site and we owe a huge thanks to Murray and Alyssa Finlay for their great efforts to create an attractive and easy-to-use website. There is still some work to do but we now have the basis for future development of the site. Our next step is to create a "Club Room" which will be exclusive to financial members, followed by an in-house payment system which will allow us to have a simple process for members to pay their membership fees as well as for events carrying a fee.

**At the time of writing this report we are about to send out the second survey.** I encourage you to take the time to complete the questionnaire. Your responses are very important in determining the future direction of the Club. There are plenty of opportunities to add comments to many of the responses. Please use them to let us know what you would like to see.

I'll finish where I started by thanking the Committee and Chapter Captains for their efforts this year. A special mention is deserved for the departing Committee members: **Robert Downes** and **John Todd**. Both have played a major role in the direction of the Club over recent years and both have invested an enormous amount of time in the Club. My sincere thanks to both gentlemen.

Once again we have a full magazine this month, enjoy the read.

Must go ... the driver's seat is getting cold!  
**Remember ... Safety first!**

*Don*



*For your diary ...*

**See the full calendar for details**

### June

- 23 Eastern Vic: Licola run
- 23 North-east Vic: Happy Valley run
- 23 Motorkhana – DECA, Sandown

### July

- 6 Sprints: Rd 1 – Phillip Island
- 20 Motorkhana – Bendigo
- 21 Sprints: Rd 2 – Broadford
- 28 Central: Run to the awards lunch
- 28 Club: Annual awards lunch, Mazda Australia, Mt Waverley

### August

- 4 North-east Vic: "No Idea" run
- 4 Sprints: Rd 3 – Winton
- 11 Sprints: Sandown
- 17 Sprints: Sandown
- 18 Central: Trafalgar run
- 24-25 Western Vic: Eildon overnight

### September

- 21 Sprints: Rd 4 – Calder

### October

- 5-6 Australian Motorkhana Championship, Mt Gambier
- 18-20 NSW Club 3-day weekend
- 19-20 Motor Sport: Winton 6 Hour

### November

- 2-3 Sprints: NSW/Vic Interstate Challenge – Wakefield Park
- 3 Central: annual CFA run
- 9-10 Eastern Vic: Bright overnighter
- 9-10 NSW Club Canberra Chapter weekend
- 17 Sprints: Rd 5 – Phillip Island
- 30 Sprints: Rd 6 – Broadford

### December

- 15 Western Vic: Christmas run

### 2014

### April

- 12-15 NatMeet XI – Caloundra, Qld



# Full Throttle!

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

## It sure has been a busy month behind the scenes for the Motor Sport Team.

Great work by everyone for contributing to the annual motor sport meeting agenda and for the required follow up. With Club and "Sprint Championship" sponsorship opportunities and the continued interest and growth of motor sport within our club, it is essential that we provide the best and most professional platform we can to our members and sponsors. We are fortunate to be supported by many people in our Club prepared to volunteer their time and energy.

So this month I will give you a brief overview of what we have all been up to.

### Motor Sport Meeting

This was my first annual motor sport meeting, as Club Captain Motor sport and I would like to thank everyone who attended and contributed to a very constructive meeting.

The meeting was held at City Mazda on Friday, 3 May. A special thank you goes to Greg McPherson, from City Mazda,

for allowing the use of the boardroom, and for providing light refreshments and snacks for the 20 Club Members present.

There were a number of agenda items put forward for discussion by the group with some great outcomes achieved. In brief, the main items covered were:

- » Motor Sport Championship name changed to *Sprint Championship*
- » Reminder to members to abide by and uphold the Club's Code of Conduct
- » Sponsorship announcement and opportunities
- » Succession planning and growth – Captain will run with two Assistant until the Club's AGM. Tim Emery was welcomed as Assistant Captain
- » Classification compliance
- » 2013-14 Championship Rules amendments and improvements
- » Addition of new class – "Super Modified" and changes to "Restricted Open"
- » Safety – CAMS mandatory roll bar padding and HANS devices

- » 18 names taken (three teams) as expression of interest for the *Winton 6 Hour*

### Compliance Sub-Committee

An agreed outcome from one of the agenda items, was that a sub-committee was to be formed to review and provide recommendations to the Motor Sport Captain, on a simple and clear process of handling vehicle classification and compliance issues and enforcement, and grievances. The role of the sub-committee is to establish a simple and clear process of how these situations should be dealt with, giving consideration to both the competitor and those involved in any rule or compliance enforcement.

The sub-committee's final recommendations were to be forwarded by 5 June to the Club Captain - Motor Sport, and I will then take these to the Club's full Committee on 12 June for consideration. Pending approval, the process will be



Top: Paul Ledwith (left) leads and (right) chases down a Porsche or two at Sandown. Bottom: Mark Fitzgerald (green NB) and Daniel White (Blue 10AE) in pursuit of Alfa Club member, James Pickard.



## Urgent notice: helmet recall

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has found that two motorcycle helmets do not comply with Australian/ New Zealand Standard - AS1698.

- » **Kylin XR 205** open face skull cap-style helmet (all sizes)
- » **KBC VR-1X** full face helmet

Effective immediately, these helmets are **not valid** for use in CAMS competition. For your personal safety please check your helmet **now**. If yours is one of these, please see the link below for information on refunds or replacements.

Please see: [acc.gov.au/media-release/acc-testing-reveals-unsafe-motorcycle-helmets](http://acc.gov.au/media-release/acc-testing-reveals-unsafe-motorcycle-helmets).

in place and take effect from the new 2013-14 Sprint Championship season ongoing.

Thank you to Craig Healy, Teruo Delacroix, Noel Heritage, David Wilken and Max Lloyd for their time and efforts on this sub-committee.

Stay tuned for updates. These will be included into the 2013-14 Rules to be released later in June.

### Sandown Round 8 – Mother's Day

We had another great sprint round and the weather held off just nicely for us. Given that it was Mother's Day, some drivers went to the track and scored points for the round, then opted for an early finish to the day to go home and score points with their mums.

We had 24 MX-5s entered as well as Graham Wilson in his "MX 2.5" which, for those who don't know, is a Mazda 121 bubble, big block 1.3 litre. Another fantastic drive by Graham to put in a best lap time of the day of 1:45.1032 which was quicker than a couple of our MX-5s and a few Alfas. Well done!!!

See the results block opposite for the details, and Jordan Shields' (non-member) photos below for some of the action.

### "Save the Date"

A reminder to all motor sport competitors – our Club's **annual awards lunch** is on Sunday, 28 July, at the Mazda Australia showroom in Notting Hill. Special guest speaker at the function will be Eugene Arocca, the new CEO of CAMS.

### "Did you know?"

During the last month I have added 16 new Club members names to my Motor Sport Team group email list. These are new members who have indicated they are interested in motor sport within our Club. In many cases when I have spoken to them they are preparing, or modifying, their MX-5 to join us on track soon.

### Last round for 2012/13 Season

The final round of our 2012-13 Championship is at being held Broadford, on Sunday, 16 June, we are looking forward to a great finish to the 2012-13 season.

### Daniel #146

"Racing – converting money into noise!"

## 2012-13 Championship | Round 8 Sandown Sprints - 12.5.13

Results - Round 8	1st	2nd	3rd
Standard NA	Noel Heritage » 1:37.455**	Robert Downes » 1:38.272	---
Standard NB	Stephen Downes » 1:35.612	Murray Seymour » 1:41.642	Jacob Seymour » 1:50.336
Standard NC	Robert Hart » 1:32.356	Colin Denman-Jones » 1:33.489	Alan Conrad » 1:33.706
Clubman	Max Lloyd » 1:38.533	Fabian Mastronardi » 1:39.067	Leon Bogers » 1:41.055
Modified	Russell Garner » 1:30.366	Dean Monik » 1:32.110	Ray Monik » 1:34.374
Restricted Open	Daniel White » 1:36.030	---	---
Open	Paul Ledwith » 1:27.247	Steven Cook » 1:31.095	Mark Fitzgerald » 1:37.154

\*\* New Club motor sport team lap record

## Championship standings after Rd 8 – Sandown Sprints, 12 May, 2013

(corrected points)	1st	2nd	3rd
<b>Overall Champion</b>	=Robert Hart / Stephen Downes » 70		Noel Heritage » 67
Standard NA	Noel Heritage » 67	Robert Downes » 55	John Stone » 24
Standard NB	Stephen Downes » 70	John Downes » 45	Murray Seymour » 44
Standard NC	Robert Hart » 70	Colin Denman-Jones » 46	Alan Conrad » 40
Clubman	Max Lloyd » 58	Peter Phillips » 50	Fabian Mastronardi » 44
Modified	Russell Garner » 64	Dean Monik » 43	Robert Parr » 42
Restricted Open	Paul Murphy » 37	Daniel White » 27	Charlie Tickler » 17
Open	Mark Fitzgerald » 35	Paul Ledwith » 31	David Wilken » 30



## Full Throttle! (continued)



**We have a winner!**

Teruo Delacroix managed to fend off solid competition from the MG and Mitsubishi camps at the 45th running of the Queensland Hillclimb Championships at the historic Mount Cotton circuit to win the title of Queensland Hillclimb Champion in the 2F production sports car class 1601-2000 in his stock NB8B.

Teruo offers his deepest thanks to the MG Car Club of Queensland, event sponsors Coates Hire and Whites Diesels, his supporters John Reece from Reece Motorsport, Ethan Woolley, his crew chief, best friend and fellow Club member Anastasia Giannakas and the volunteer officials who made the weekend a spectacular success.

His special thanks also go to the legion of fellow MX-5 Vic/Tas Club mates who offered their support and good wishes for the weekend. ■

## Safety is paramount!

I recently circulated an email to the regular Motor Sport Team regarding a (now-passed) special pricing offer on HANS devices for anyone considering an upgrade to their personal safety gear.

A HANS (*head and neck support*) device is designed to stop your head from whipping forward in a crash, without otherwise restricting movement of the neck. In a crash, an unprotected body is decelerated by the seatbelt with the head maintaining velocity until it is decelerated by the neck (... ouch!). The HANS device maintains the relative position of the head to the body, transferring energy to the much stronger chest, torso, shoulder, seatbelts and seat as the head is decelerated.

I ended up taking my own advice and bought a HANS device and new Bell racing helmet. I also had to buy a new helmet that was HANS-compatible, so for anyone thinking about what kind of helmet to buy, get a HANS-compatible one; it will save you money in the long run if you upgrade to a HANS device later.

I got a great deal from James at Revolution Racegear in Stubbs Rd, Kensington. James is happy to answer any questions you might have, so please give him a call on 9376 5330. James is a former Club member, so make sure you tell him you are a member and he will look after you on pricing.

Some things to consider for completing the package:

- » you will need a HANS-compatible helmet with posts fitted
- » you will need a race seat fitted to your car
- » you will need a race harness fitted to your car
- » if you are about to begin motor sport, buy a HANS-compatible helmet in the first place, in case you want to upgrade later.

Although not mandatory, I urge anyone currently participating, or thinking about participating, in various forms of motor sport or our Club's Sprint Championship to consider this information. ■



For full details visit [www.hansdevice.com](http://www.hansdevice.com)

## Aussies get one back ...

Words & photos: Mazda Australia



*It's said that you've never truly taken a corner until you've experienced the exhilaration of doing it in an MX-5.*

A select group of motoring media took a corner of a different kind and again realised why the MX-5 is the world's most popular open-top sports car.

With its striking styling, light-weight chassis and perfect balance, 22 motoring journalists – 18 representing Australia's most popular automotive newspapers, magazines and websites and four from Russia's best motoring publications – enjoyed the thrill of the year when they raced the MX-5 in the inaugural MX-5 Media Challenge.

Set in the beautiful surrounds of Canberra's Kowen State Forest, the MX-5 Media Challenge comprised four exciting driving competitions, including an 80 metre gymkhana slalom, a challenging skid-pan test, a run on one of the country's best hillclimbs and a special gravel rally stage on a piece of road used by the professionals in the renowned National Capital Rally – part of the Australian Rally Championship.

After eight hours of non-stop competition, in which the MX-5 was steered every which way and never ceased to impress, the MX-5 Media Challenge was won by James Stanford representing *Top Gear* magazine, followed by Glenn Butler from *Wheels* – which is celebrating its 60th anniversary – and *Drive.com.au* editor Toby Hagon rounded out the podium.

The competitors were set many challenges on the day, all of which pushed them to the limit, but the MX-5 was up to the task and never missed a beat. It was the perfect event to highlight the strength, speed and agility of a car that continues to excite all who get to drive it. ■

Further reading:

**Drive:** <http://news.drive.com.au/photogallery/drive/australia-beats-russia--finally-20130506-2j2b4.html>

**Wheels:** <http://motoring.ninemsn.com.au/cars/news/8655852/mazda-media-challenge>

**Mazda:** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1h1Vfo0lbm8>





# Membership

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

*Hello everyone ...*

With the end of the Club year almost here, membership numbers have again ended in healthy territory.

Slightly up on last year's count, there hasn't been a year where an increase hasn't occurred. The number of members who continue their association from one year to the next has also shown a steady increase over the years ... another measure of our Club's healthy state!

The record membership number for the year has been reached with the help of the following MX-5 newcomers to our ranks:

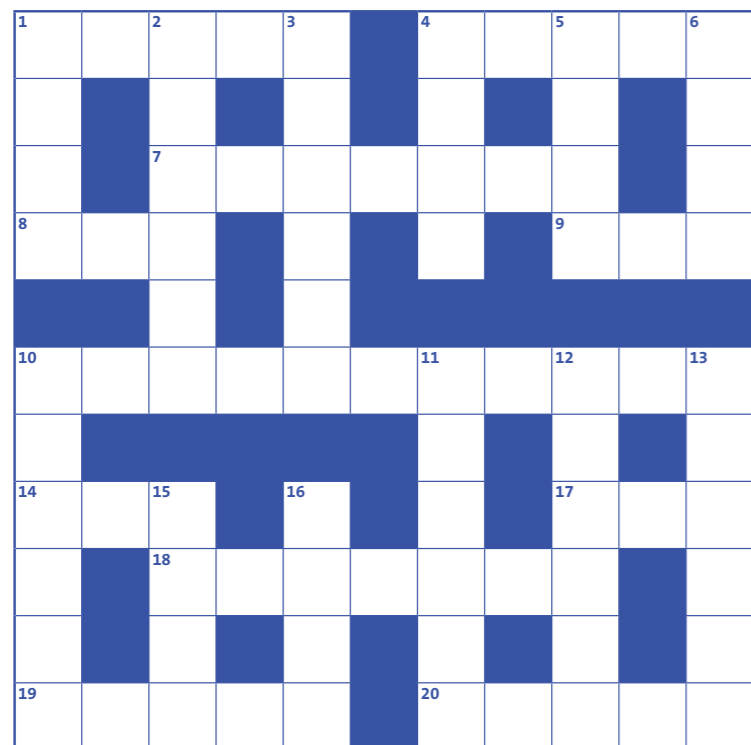
## Central Chapter

Ashley Gamble	1999 Grace Green NB
Nathan Jones	2001 Black NB
Bruce Marshall	2005 Black NC
Simeon Ouzas	1998 GraceGreen NB
Brodie Sims	1993 Black NA
Craig, Michelle, Lara and Tea Stackpoole	2003 Black NB
James West	1989 Classic Red NA
Peter Zoch	1990 White NA

A big welcome to these folk and I trust that you will enjoy your involvement in our Club.

## Alan Bennett's MX-5 crossword #9

Theme: fuel



### Membership renewal:

All members will soon receive either an email or a letter concerning the process for membership renewal. As in the past, you have the choice of paying by cheque or money order, although we encourage you to use our secure online payment system where you have the option of paying by Visa or MasterCard. The process is relatively simple and will only take you a minute or so. Of course, if you have any difficulties in navigating the system, a quick phone call to me or to Vice-President Murray should set things right.

Whilst preparing for the new membership year, I noticed that a number of Online members have elected not to receive emailed information from the Club. This may have happened accidentally by hitting the "unsubscribe" button on a previous Club email or it may be a glitch in our system. If at any stage you are not receiving emails from the Club and this is something you did not elect to do, please let me know immediately and I'll remedy the situation.

On that note, that's it for another month – indeed, for another year!

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

*Will*

### Across

- Oneness between horse and something drier (5)
- Keep oil between the min and max marks to stay balanced (5)
- Dug out of an ant hole to mix with petrol to produce E85 (7)
- And 9 across. Oiled to move within a cylinder block (6)
- See 8 across
- Get your vitals oiled and change from a liquid to a vapour (11)
- A garland of flowers left to lie (3)
- Aus in 50 different states (abbrev) (3)
- Red and I removed all the oil (7)
- Prevent a big occasion like the Grand Prix? (5)
- Stinks, giving off smoke or fumes (5)

### Down

- Heading up? Take a ride in a pram (4)
- A lower cost fuel used with torquier engines (6)
- A disorganised heater warms again (6)
- It carries the fuel like an African river (4)
- Holden with electric potential (4)
- Weakened fuel mixture taking care not to lose balance (4)
- Mitsubishi EVO and Mercedes CLE sing duet with great speed? (6)
- Even the cleaner wanted the mixture more 6 down! (6)
- Water in the oil creates a damaging problem for engines (6)
- Sir and a lady takes waste away (6)
- Still and doing nothing! (4)
- Has horsepower but only 2 wheels providing transport back on track (4)

Answers next month ...

# Scene about

## ... Central Chapter new members' night

Photos: Ron Macdonald & Wendy Clark



# The MX-5 Club Grill



## Introducing ... Kelly Berggren

~ Northern Tasmania Chapter - Assistant Chapter Captain

**Name?** Kelly Berggren

**Age?** 35

**Born?** Devonport, Tasmania

**Current abode?** On top of Buster Road Targa stage in Tassie

**Profession?** Graphic designer / programmer / Director: Web Seven

**Partner?** Carl Berggren

**Pets?** Cats x 3: a Devon rex, Sphinx (hairless) and moggy; goldfish; chickens

**Fave food?** Mum's roast lamb ...

**Can you cook?** Yes, especially sweet stuff

**Favourite tippie?** Raspberry lemonade

**First drive?** Torana

**First car?** A red one ... lol! Actually a Toyota Celica 1975 TA22

**First fender bender?** Only bender: reversed the Celica into a pole and tore a gash in the rear fender in my second year driving

**Everyday driver?** Renault Megane sport cup - love my everyday road too!

**How many MX-5s have you owned?** Three since 2006: NA, NB, NA

**Current MX-5?** Red NA, "Mixie"

**MX-5 improvements?** Flyin' Miata intake, custom s/s exhaust, SSR magnesium wheels with 15" Toyos, underbody bracing, cross ventilated grooved brakes, up-rated springs / shocks - VERY FIRM!

**MX-5 dislikes?** Knots in my hair vs wearing the "sexy" red beanie!

**Why an MX-5?** It's a proper sports car that you can push yet still be within the speed limit. You can really enjoy every corner, with the wind in your hair and the sun on your back!

**Fluffy dice?** NEVER!

**Passions besides the MX-5?** My hubby and kids, needlework crafts, reading, bush walking, baking

**Favourite TV show / movie / book?** Dr Who / The 5th Element & Grosse Pointe Blank / Pride & Prejudice

**Dream wheels (money no object)?** Hmm ... honestly I couldn't choose between the big guns, and really, I think I'd have just as much fun - if not more - in "Mixie"! [Carl: Or a F430!]

**Would you drive a Daewoo or SsangYong?** Nope. I'd have to be really desperate

**Favourite other Mazda?** RX-8

**If not a Mazda (gasp!) what?** Renault, probably!

**How long in the Club?** Since 2010

**How many MX-5 Club runs?** A couple short of all of them



**Favourite Club run?** There have been so many good ones. My favourite roads are easier to pick: anywhere around Mt Roland / Mole Creek / Wilmot

**Funniest thing seen on a Club run?** » Debbie being a '40s movie star at Stanley lookout, slipping off the back into the seat! » Trevor wearing a wombat beanie last run. » Deer bouncing across the road inches in front of us. » 3-yo Charlie saying "go faster!" every time she rides in Mixie.

**Done DECA?** Not yet. Want to do Targa Tas one day too

**Ford vs Holden?** Neither!

**What's playing in your MX-5?** Just engine noise. Last month it was a bit scary though ... Aqua's "Barbie Girl" ~ lol!

**Footy team (AFL/NRL/Soccer)?** Webber F1 - everyone loves an underdog! West Coast Eagles was my team when I was a kid. [Carl: What is footy?]

**Final comments?** I really enjoy our Club, not only because we drive a fantastic car over excellent roads, but for the people in it and like-minded friends we have made. Slightly strange friends, maybe - just like me! 😊

# Chapter chatter ...



5.5.13 | North-Eastern Victoria ■ Words & photos: Ron & Marg Gillick ■ Organiser: Andrew & Marge Johns

## Hunting scavengers ...



From left, Elaine, Gerry, Mrs. Engwerda (Gerry's mum), Andrew, Marge, Tom, Fran, Ron, Jan and Marg

*Well, if you want to drive on some roads on which you have never driven on before and in areas in which you have never been before, have a Scavenger Hunt Run.*

In fact some of the participants ended up on roads they were not even supposed to be on!

On another beautiful sunny North-East morning six cars with drivers and navigators met in Wangaratta for a coffee. Along with a relatively small turn out of locals we had two couples as guests, one couple (Ron and Jan) from Myrtleford and another (Tom and Fran) from Sunbury.

With Andrew and Marge in charge we were sent off at five minute intervals armed with our list of instructions and questions to be answered.

We headed out through the Warby Ranges and around the back of the former Lake Mokoan, following the directions and answering questions along the way. By the time we arrived in Glenrowan I had only had a relatively small number of arguments with my navigator ... in fact, no more than usual really.

After a slight hiccup in Glenrowan (navigator's error of course) we crossed under the Hume Highway and headed out through Greta West towards our final destination, Tatong. Having never before been to Tatong I discovered that there is not much there, but there is a great little pub where Andrew and Marge had arranged for us to have lunch.

As well as much talking and eating, the results were collated and prizes awarded to the winners. Thanks to Steve and the Committee for supplying some Club merchandise for the prizes.

Our thanks also to Marge and Andrew for the work they did in putting together this very well organised run and a most enjoyable day. ■



Clockwise from left: Elaine, Tom, Bill, Andrew and Gerry



# Chapter chatter ...

5.5.13 | Central ■ Words: Fiona Greaves ■ Photos: Ron Macdonald & Wendy Clark ■ Organisers: Dave & Gail Collins



## ANZAC run



**To set the scene, a massive thank you goes to David and Gail (and family) for their dedicated efforts and seamless realisation of this event.**

*At the eleventh hour – ie, the Sunday before the run – Gail and Dave made a dramatic discovery: Puffing Billy.*

Yes, that some of the route they had originally planned was overlaid with road closures for the Puffing Billy race the same day! This sparked a series of events in the Collins' household that saw the frantic poring over the Melways and hurried 'trial runs', eventually delivering us the run we had today.

A further thank you to Ron Macdonald for setting the dress code, in army cams and naval accoutrements, and for assisting with the questions. Thanks Ron.

Eventually our contingent was made up of 15 cars and five new members (welcome) lined up on St Kilda Road in a crisp 10°C.

The ANZAC-inspired run started in the spirit of the ANZAC in the early hours of the morning, but this time with a strong coffee in hand.

We met at the foot of the majestic Melbourne Shrine opposite Vic Barracks on St Kilda Road. It was a cold May morning, as we started to arrive at 0830h. The forward team headed by David and Gail, welcomed the troops as they arrived in teams of two.

We lined up in single file, a sight to behold, as the early morning runners and eager tourists passed us by.

With all assembled, we were given orders for staged and staggered departure from 0900h at 2min intervals and headed up St Kilda Road.

Roof down, check! Heater on, check!

With autumnal leaves blanketing the wide boulevard we headed on our way. We carried on up Dandenong Road, and the morning traffic was light.

As we navigated our route it was tempting to stop in at Chaddy

– for a change, there were plenty of vacant parking places (it was tempting...) – but we carried on.

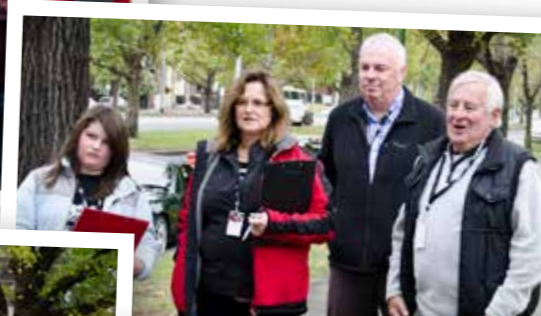
We ambled up toward the small village of Upwey, where we took a toot break and recalibrated our odometers. As per our orders, we stopped by the Upwey RSL, the car park full of locals meeting, no doubt, for an early opener. My husband, still in the Army and an actual former tank commander, had little trouble recognising the Leopard Tank, Number 27665 (44) (his was 27744...seriously) that helped us answer questions 30 and 31.

From there we took the winding roads through beautiful rainforest, past large family estates and quaint cafés. We passed the Sennits Road turn off and beautiful green rolling hills presented themselves, far from the barren cliffs that met our forefathers in Gallipoli. The giant tree ferns continued to greet us as we wound our way toward our next way point at Monbulk. The Monbulk RSL, gated 'lest we forget', still bore the remnants of an early morning commemoration of their own ANZAC day. Here we found some answers to our questions. From there we headed toward the picturesque town of Sassafras.

As we navigated our path, we came across two little rouges. Two knockabout blue heelers, trying to break into someone's wheelie bin, disturbed by us, stopped almost at attention to admire the passing parade of MX-5s ... well, two of us anyway!

From here we turned into the impressive vista of 'The Crescent', beautiful homes and immaculately groomed gardens, the autumn foliage vivid against the lush rainforest that formed the backdrop.

Just after Sassafras, at Sherbrooke, we stopped at a local



memorial that honoured the local fallen, including three nurses, part of the 2300+ who volunteered to serve their country during the Great War.

From here it was a short hike to the top of the "1000 Steps", a local representation of the muddy tracks of the Kokoda Trail. We did at this point thank David and Gail for not planning the picnic at the bottom of the stairs ... From here we made our way to the forward camp, already secured by Dave, Gail and family and Ron and Wendy.

The first of us started to roll in to camp at around 1220h with the stragglers bringing up the rear at 1325h. We did report an MIA with one car failing to check in, we suspect, lured by the seemingly limitless parking at Chaddy!

With all the questionnaires submitted, and the points tallied we had three winners:

- » Mark and Fiona Greaves
- » Cary and Col Warren
- » Geoff and Bronwyn Roche

In closing, what a great day! The observation runs are held approximately every 18 months, and they are both fun and challenging.

*LEST WE FORGET*

*PS from Dave ...*

**MIA arrived safely at 14.35. Cold and frustrated trying to answer a question at the wrong RSL, which just happened to have hundreds of plaques to search, rather than just the four. A coffee and a chat and all was well.**

**Thanks to all for coming along. We can have observation runs more frequently – we just need folks to organise ...**

**YOUR CLUB NEEDS YOU! ■**



# The Mazda MX-5 – standing the test of time ...

Words: Mike Costello, "GoAutoNews" #677 Photos: GoAuto.com.au



Each week the respected automotive industry online magazine, "John Mellor's GoAutoNews", presents a review for its readers.

Recently it was the turn of the current version Mazda MX-5 Roadster Coupe Sports.

The review is reproduced here in part ... the full review can be found at GoAuto.com.au



SINCE it premiered in 1989, the Mazda MX-5 has been as synonymous with the concept of a budget roadster as Coke is to cola.

Mazda didn't re-invent the wheel, but sure gave it a new coat of gloss – and in doing so created the biggest-selling sports car of all time.

But with the current generation now eight years old, and fellow Japanese brand Toyota soon to launch a topless version of its wonderful 86, we wonder if the Mazda's recent late-life facelift is enough to keep it top of the pops until a successor arrives in 2014.

Our week behind the wheel reminded us that, even still, few cars have the purity of the MX-5, and few handle a twisting mountain road with such aplomb and dexterity.

But – and there's a big but – the flagship Coupe Sports version tested here costs more than \$50k, meaning the Mazda is no longer the budget bargain it once was.



## We like

Such sweet balance, torsional stiffness, communicative hydraulic steering, mechanical gearshift feel, comfy Recaro seats



## Room for improvement

Getting pricey, tight cabin space, not particularly well-equipped, engine is sweet but lacks low-end torque, no more soft-top option!



## Price and equipment

HERE we test the flagship Coupe Sports variant, which retails for a smidgen under \$50,000 before on-road costs (\$49,885).

The list of standard equipment is a little sparse, here the MX-5 shows its age – the lack of Bluetooth connectivity and a USB input rankles especially.

Standard features on all variants include 17-inch alloy wheels, body-coloured power mirrors, a chrome exhaust tip, cruise control, drilled aluminium pedals and footrest, silver seat-back bars and leather seats, steering wheel, gearshift knob and handbrake handle.

Also included is a 200-Watt premium seven-speaker Bose sound system (no touchscreen) with a six-disc CD stacker, auxiliary input (3.5mm MP3 player-compatible) and steering wheel with audio and cruise control switches.

The flagship Coupe Sports variant we've driven adds Recaro seats and aftermarket BBS alloy wheels.

## Interior

IN SHORT, rather snug and sparse, but with wonderful Recaro seats and spot-on ergonomics.

It almost seems remiss to commence this review writing about the cabin and equipment, because the MX-5 is unequivocally about the drive.

Yet here we are. The instrument panel is largely unchanged since 2005, and while everything is within easy reach and a cinch to operate, it's starting to look a little dated. Large friendly dials and buttons are a boon on bumpy or twisting terrain.

Being taller than most, your correspondent had to contort and squeeze into the tight two-seater cabin. Once ensconced, we found a distinct lack of kneeroom and headroom. There's no steering wheel adjustment, but we still found a comfortable driving position.

Still, those compact interior dimensions make for a slightly claustrophobic cabin, and the tiny side mirrors don't help external visibility

Storage is in short supply, with a small cubby between the seats and a tiny boot, but handy touches like the decent centre console and door-mounted cup-holders add some relief.

The steel folding roof is only semi-automated, with the driver required to release a latch above the rear-view mirror.

## Engine and transmission

UNDER the bonnet is a rev-happy 2.0-litre normally aspirated petrol engine, producing 118kW at 7000rpm and 188Nm of torque from a high 5000rpm.

A recent facelift saw Mazda adjust the throttle management in manual models, supposedly rendering the car more responsive when accelerating out of corners – though engine outputs are unchanged.

With small turbo engines fast becoming ubiquitous, it's almost refreshing to experience the linearity of an engine such as this. Good thing the six-speed manual gearbox is a delight, because you'll be working it.

We also found the pedal box a bit crowded, with the clutch pedal



too close to the brake pedal, something we imagine could cause accidental left-foot braking when preparing to reach for another ratio.

To get the best from this little port injected engine, you need to grab it by the metaphorical scruff of the neck, but doing so rewards you with a sweet little howl. It's simple and rather basic, but a lot of fun.

The MX-5 has never been a firebrand, but as purists will tell you, this has never been the point. At 1167kg, the Mazda is still relatively lithe (even though there is no longer a lighter fabric roof available – which we reckon is a crying shame).

Because of its rev-happy ways, the claimed combined fuel consumption figure of 8.1 litres per 100km proved hard to attain.

### Ride and handling

HERE we go.

THE ageing MX-5 may have fallen behind in cabin presentation, but there's almost nothing at this price point – or any, for that matter – that can match the purity and joy the little Mazda gives on a twisty road.

With top down, wind in hair, and sporty steering wheel in hand, it's almost fun enough to forget the sparse equipment list, tight knee-room and lack of outright pace.

As ever, the little MX-5 combines a rigid body with a perfectly balanced rear-drive/front-engine configuration.

Hydraulic steering systems are rare as hen's teeth these days, as manufacturers ditch them for frugal electric versions. But the upside of the old-school version still used in the MX-5 is the communication between the wheels at the front and the one in your hand.

Always a highlight of the Mazda, the steering remains razor sharp off-centre and full of feel, while remaining averse to kickback over mid-corner bumps and ruts. It almost feels alive.

The rigid body remains free of scuttle shake over corrugations, helping body control, and it's a breeze the tail kick out mid-corner with some lift-off oversteer – not that you'll want to lift off the throttle in a car so dependent on maintaining momentum.

We also found the ride from the all-round independent suspensions to be on the right side of harsh, and the road noise more subdued than usual for this sort of vehicle.

We don't discount the possibility that the road noise is merely drowned out by the large amount of wind noise entering through the metal roof, however.

### Safety and servicing

ONLY four airbags are fitted (two front and side) because there isn't room for curtain bags overhead. There is no ANCAP or Euro NCAP score for the current generation.

ABS brakes, stability control and Limited Slip Diff are standard (LSD on manuals only), while good roadholding makes it easier to avoid a collision in the first place.

Mazda Australia has ditched the slow-selling fabric roof, and while we reckon this takes away some of the purity and character of the car, it's safer from the prying fingers of crims.

Service intervals are every six months or 10,000km, which is fairly regular for the modern age. Unlike most volume brands in Australia, Mazda does not offer capped-price servicing, meaning service costs may vary from dealer to dealer or state to state.

Mazda provides a three-year/100,000km warranty, and a 24-hour roadside assistance scheme is available.

### Verdict

NO LONGER an absolute bargain, but the MX-5 remains an utter joy to hurl around a twisty road.

Until the topless Toyota 86 emerges, the Mazda is still the car of choice for regular, wind-in-the-hair diehards.

### Rivals

#### Toyota 86 coupe

From \$29,990 plus on-road costs.

Yes, it's not a roadster, but like the MX-5 offers superb dynamics courtesy of its light weight, rear-drive layout and balance – all for \$20k less than the Mazda. If you don't mind a fixed roof, it's hard to look past (same goes for its Subaru BRZ identical twin).

#### Mini Cooper Roadster

From \$37,500 plus on-roads.

Front-drive, but still a hoot. Not to mention uber-chic Mini styling. The ride is hard as nails, though, and ultimately not as rewarding as the more pure MX-5. ■

### More reviews? Try these, online:



**2013 Mazda MX-5 'Club'**  
– a car to be toyed with!  
[youtube.com/watch?v=HH3JqomBrA8](http://youtube.com/watch?v=HH3JqomBrA8)

*"The world would be a better place if everyone drove an MX-5 ..."*



**Toyota 86 vs Mazda MX-5**  
[youtube.com/watch?v=vDYaSwd4mmk](http://youtube.com/watch?v=vDYaSwd4mmk)

*"The 86 is for a generation who spent so much on their haircut they don't want it messed up by the wind ..."*  
*"... the MX-5 is not about limits."*

*"The 86 is a violin with one string – nice sound and tone ... [but] the MX-5 can play Vivaldi, and the 86 can't."*

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\*All listed prices are per seat.

# Picnic at Ross

## 19.5.13 | Southern Tasmania

■ Words: John Waldock ■ Photos: John Waldock & Rob Tanner ■ Organiser: John Waldock

*It's that time of year again in Tassie, where car enthusiasts gather to share a BBQ and talk rubbish about their cars.*

The Southern Tassie Chapter gathered early on Sunday morning, more than one complaining about the earlier than usual timing (I'm speaking to you, Jo Hirst!).

After the usual drivers' briefing we headed off, driving north via Mud Walls Road and on to Ross via a stop at St Peters Pass. The drive is a pleasant one – some really lovely winding sections where the car is saying "go harder" and the lady brake (my lovely wife) is stamping on the imaginary brake pedal on her side of the car.

We arrived on time in Ross and were greeted by the sight of a number of very nice old cars. The event has been running for five years and has been constantly growing, to the stage where an attendance of over 1000 cars was achieved.

Upon parking, we all set off to walk around, chat with other enthusiasts, meet up with the Northern Tas Chapter and generally discuss the merits and other opinions of the cars we were looking at.

Most memorable for myself was a Morris Minor 1100 with a Mazda rotary (13B) motor installed. I later heard it drive past – quite the wolf in sheep's clothing. I will finish by saying photos don't do justice to this event and it's a highlight of the year for the Chapter to attend and mix with a wide variety of car enthusiasts. ■



## 19.5.13 | Northern Tasmania

■ Words: Bruce Harvey ■ Photos: Bruce Harvey & Kelly Berggren ■ Organiser: Bruce Harvey

*No entry forms, no charge, the PVCC's annual Picnic at Ross is firmly fixed on the Tasmanian motoring calendar.*

Clear skies and golden autumn colours saw well in excess of 1000 cars arrive at Ross, a picturesque Georgian village with a wealth of convict history.

To accommodate all the cars and keep the local businesses happy, the display was held on the sports ground, a couple of blocks from the town centre ... but even this was not big enough for all the cars that turned up on the day.

Emails had been swapped with the Southern Chapter in the days leading up to the picnic, attempting to ensure a massed display. However the only way to ensure this happens in the future will be to meet outside the venue and enter as a single group.

It was not long before jackets were removed, picnics unpacked and rugs and chairs set up to take advantage of the perfect conditions.

A continuous stream of interested people with cameras circulated up and down the rows of cars, adding to the family friendly atmosphere. ■



# My favourite MX-5 road ...

Words & photo: John Waldock, Southern Tassie Chapter Captain

## Southern Tassie's 'Mudwalls Road' ...

I could write a book about the great drives in Tasmania. I have chosen this drive, from Richmond to the Midlands Hwy, variously known as the B31, Mudwalls Road, Richmond Road or Colebrook Rd (see: <http://goo.gl/maps/5Hlbn>).

This drive begins in the lovely colonial village of Richmond, north-east of Hobart, and runs north through the terrific wine growing area, the Coal River Valley. After driving through Campania, the road becomes more interesting – more bends to challenge the driver while still giving some nice views of rolling hills and farmland. Then it becomes a real joy, with about 5km of winding uphill corners (some quite sharp) ... perfect for a spiritedly-driven MX-5.

After Colebrook, some very straight road leads to a terrific uphill winding section. The corners are fast but sharp, the car doesn't have much time to settle after one corner before another is encountered. We eventually reach the top of the hill and enter a valley, where the road is again a little more open but still a pleasure to drive as we head towards the Midlands Hwy and the end of the road.

This road is an underrated gem, in my opinion. It's a short cut for eastern coast travellers (and avoids the caravans!) and provides more excitement than the Midlands Hwy. ■



If you have a favourite MX-5 road, you're welcome to submit a short description (150 words) and a photo to [editor@mx5vic.org.au](mailto: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 \$16 + postage from our online shop. See the merchandise page on our website. Perfect for a glove box near you!

# A suspenseful afternoon ...



2.6.13 | Eastern Victoria ■ Words: Alan Laine ■ Photo: Alan's dad! ■ Organiser: Travis McInnes

A very comprehensive insight into what makes a car perform was on the menu at the Bryant Park Hillclimb from Travis McInnes with his talk on MX-5 suspension.

We started off with the basics and went into more detail talking on the hows and whys and the many mods you can do to make the MX, or any other car suit your driving style. Of course there's always a compromise one way or the other – unfortunately we can't have the perfect car for all occasions.

A lot of information came from a spreadsheet provided by Fat Cat Motorsports that gave precise details on how various rollbars and spring rates interact to give bounce rates up to a point where it would be uncomfortable for the road, the importance of matching shocks to spring rates, and also final percentages where the car would sit in relation to neutral/ understeer/ oversteer characteristics.

David, a Central Chapter member who frequents this track, mentioned his oversteer problem – even though it puts a smile on his face his lap times suffer. After looking at his setup on the chart it was clear what was happening; hopefully the info that came out will help him on his next track run.

After two hours of input from everyone the track is where we ended up, doing some laps to end a great afternoon. ■



From left: Travis McInnes leads the discussion with David Crouch, Peter Shinn, Rob Krygsman, James Lang, Peter Ferguson and Eastern Vic Chapter Captain Alan Laine

Bruce Harvey's

## Music to Drive By »

ISE, or Induction Sound Enhancer (right) – a clever piece of what for all the world looks exactly like a vacuum cleaner pipe – is a through-bulkhead tube that, to use Mazda's words, "gives the engine an even more exciting sound."

It works too, especially when the needle on the rev counter is approaching the red line.

However, there are times when one is just cruising and cannot hear the inbuilt orchestra under the bonnet. This is when my seven factory-fitted speakers, driven by a premium 200-watt Bose amplifier, need exercise.

So here is my Top 10 Play List for those times when you are just cruising to the next stop.

- |     |                              |                        |                                |
|-----|------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1.  | BULLAMAKANKA                 | Orange Blossom Special | seven minutes of pure energy   |
| 2.  | DIRE STRAITS                 | Sultans of Swing       | Classic Rock                   |
| 3.  | JETHRO TULL                  | Thick as a Brick       | Epic album from the early '70s |
| 4.  | HEADBAND                     | Headband Grooving      | '70s prog rock                 |
| 5.  | DOOBIE BROTHERS              | Long Train Runnin'     | 43 years still rocking         |
| 6.  | CREEDENCE CLEARWATER REVIVAL | Sweet Hitchhiker       | Country crossover rock         |
| 7.  | DAVE DOBBIN                  | Slice of Heaven        | Kiwi export winner             |
| 8.  | J GEILS BAND                 | Centerfold             | Harmonica heaven               |
| 9.  | WARRATAHS                    | St Peter's Rendezvous  | Country rock with a big sound  |
| 10. | MEN AT WORK                  | Down Under             | Love vegemite!                 |

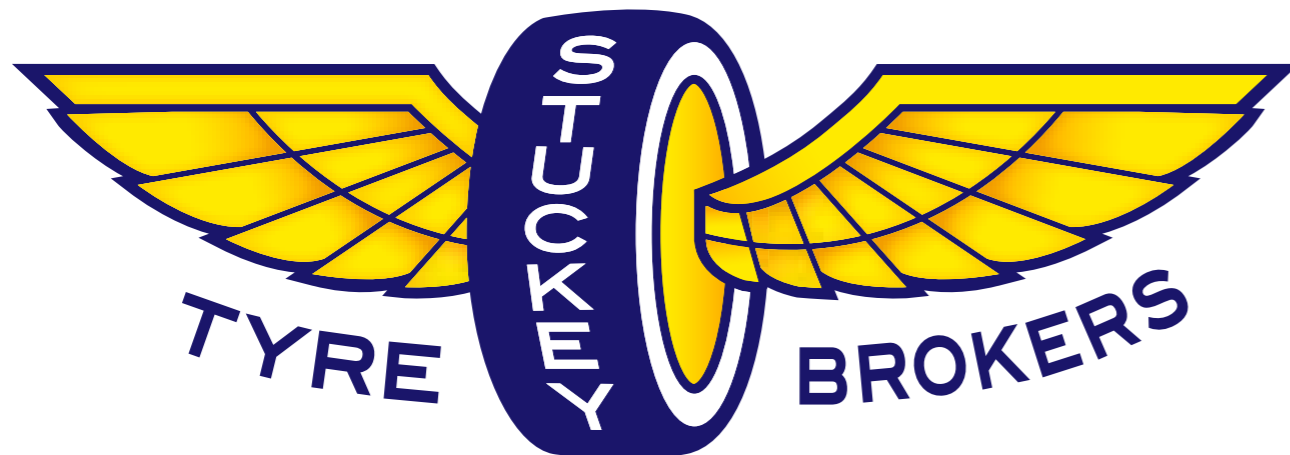


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# NatMeet 2014 - bookings open now!



Every two years, the Mazda MX-5 clubs of Australia get together for "NatMeet" - our national gathering.

The next one, the eleventh to be held since the inaugural event in South Australia in 1994, will be in Caloundra on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland in 2014.

It's planned for 12-15 April - which means that, for the first time it, will *not* be held over the Easter weekend. And that means less-congested roads, better access to accommodation and venues and a more cost-effective event.

NatMeet is five days of fun and frivolity, and a perfect chance to spend time with like-minded enthusiasts who share your love of

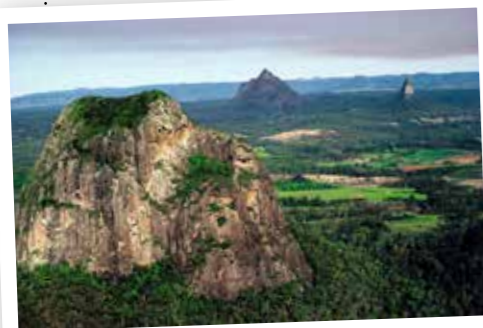


the wonderful Mazda MX-5. Being involved is an experience you will never forget.

If you have been to a NatMeet before, you'll know how much fun it is and will be keen to get along to this one.

And if you haven't, please consider this one. There's the full gamut of favourite MX-5 activities, from social to motor sport. You should get to at least one NatMeet in your life ... it's a great chance to get together with MX-5 friends, old and new.

**Registration, accommodation booking and other details are on the Queensland Club website now, [mx5clubqld.com.au](http://mx5clubqld.com.au)**



# Favourite recipe: Oss O'Bucco



■ Recipe: Ron Macdonald

This original recipe is an *Irish* look at an old Italian favourite.

In choosing your Osso Bucco remember to get centre cut. This is a "rustic" country-style stew so cut all the veggies into good-sized chunks (or they will cook away). This recipe will serve 2 - 4 people depending on the size of the Osso Bucco and how big you like your portions.

## Method:

Roughly slice the onions and sweat with a little olive oil in a frying pan over a low heat until translucent (don't brown the onions). Adding a good pinch of salt will assist the onions in releasing their sugars. Place sweated onions into a large saucepan or dutch oven.

The osso bucco (shin beef) has connective tissue around it; "nick" this in three or four places to stop the meat curling up. Place plain flour, a pinch of salt and a good amount of freshly ground pepper into a freezer bag, place Osso Bucco (one piece at a time) into the bag and shake well until meat is well coated, repeat with the second piece of meat. Using the same frying pan as the onions, add a little more oil and brown meat on all sides (even the edges) over a medium heat. Place meat into your saucepan on top of the onions.

Next roughly chop the carrots (don't peel them) and place them in the saucepan on top of the meat. Depending on the size of your potatoes (don't peel them either) either put them in whole or cut in half. Finally chop celery and place this on top of other ingredients with three bay leaves. Empty can of Guinness in to your saucepan and top up with beef stock until contents are just covered.

Season well then cook over a LOW heat (just simmering) for 2 - 2½ hours until meat is tender. When nearly ready, add corn starch (corn flour mixed with a few ml of water), mix well and cook off the flour for five minutes.

Garnish stew with freshly chopped parsley and serve with THICK cut slices of crusty bread. Oh and don't forget to eat the marrow in the centre of the bone, that is the best part! ■



## Ingredients:

- » 2 large brown onions
- » 2 cloves of finely chopped garlic (or 2 teaspoons of minced)
- » 2 centre cut pieces of Osso Bucco
- » 1 cup of plain flour
- » 1 x 400ml can of Guinness
- » 4 medium carrots
- » 4 baby potatoes
- » 3 stalks of celery
- » beef stock
- » 3 bay leaves
- » 2 teaspoons of corn flour
- » olive oil
- » salt & pepper
- » unsliced crusty bread
- » chopped parsley



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# Motorkhana – more than a simple form of motor sport

■ Words & photos: Bob de Bont » [debounce60-mx5@yahoo.com.au](mailto:debounce60-mx5@yahoo.com.au) | 0402 345 562

## What is Motorkhana?

Officially it is a motor sport event designed to test the acceleration, braking and handling of a car and the skill and judgment of the driver.

Motorkhana involves manoeuvring a car through tight tests as quickly as possible – one car at a time – on either dirt (NOT gravel) or bitumen surfaces. This usually requires sliding and spinning the car accurately while maintaining speed through the test course. Some reversing is usually included.

Each test takes from 15 to 60 seconds to complete and is defined by flags. Vehicle speed rarely exceeds 60 km/h but the tightness of the tests ensures the driver is kept very busy. A day's competition – an event – usually includes eight to 12 tests and the winner is the competitor with the fastest total time over all tests. Hitting flags or going the wrong way incurs time penalties which are added to the total time.

Most Australian motorkhanas are run to the National Motorkhana Code rules. Australian championship and state championship events use tests from the Motorkhana Test booklet which specifies test dimensions, required direction of travel and flag colours.

Motorkhanas come in various levels of fun and seriousness starting with Club fun days, Club and Multi-Club events and series, State Championships and ultimately the Australian Motorkhana Championship. The biggest differences between the various levels are the skill of the competition and the level of seriousness. Anyone starting out can enter any motorkhana event providing they possess the appropriate licence although the higher the level of competition, the less opportunity to receive help and guidance.

Most competitors use normal road cars to compete with most events providing classes to cater for all types of cars. There are no modifications or special equipment required for motorkhana in Victoria although the car will be scrutineered for basic safety requirements. Naturally you are free to fit additional safety equipment if you wish. Plastic poles and flat test surfaces are utilised to virtually eliminate any damage to the cars.

Motorkhana can be all things to a wide variety of people. For a young person starting at the age of 12 it is their first (legal) chance to drive a full size car and they can experience the various effects of oversteer and understeer, judging braking distances and appreciating how quickly things can get out of hand. That is just what can be experienced in the controlled test area, more can be learnt as they negotiate and park their cars in the pit area. The skills they learn at motorkhana will prepare them for advancement in motor sport and for everyday driving.

For middle-aged it provides a fun outlet which does not require a large commitment in time or finances and can be done in a family car or a small second car, removing the requirement to purchase or develop a dedicated "race" car.

For the more advanced (up to 70+ year-old) it provides the opportunity to participate in a fun event whilst keeping reactions and skills sharp. It also provides an opportunity to nurture the young and watch them develop their skills.

Next month covers vehicle preparation, the various surfaces and how to minimise the impact on the car. ■



## The other side of the fence at Sandown

The fourth round of the 2013 Victorian Motorkhana Championship on 12 May was hosted by the Nissan Car Club of Australia at the Jockey car park at Sandown.

Our club was represented by Mark and Alex Szutta in their NB8A, Bob de Bont in his NB8B and Troy and Tony Heasley in their Titanium NB8B. Troy and Tony had also entered their VN Commodore race car and were kept very busy swapping cars. We also had a couple of potential club members drop by as spectators. Brett Ramsey from "In Pit Lane" took some footage (<http://youtu.be/ZMeiHNkUsms>) and a couple of the sprint guys said hello.

Total entry was 42 with eight in Class B. After a slow start and the obligatory drivers' brief we commenced our first event on bitumen for the year. After eight fun tests and with the threat of rain, we packed up and headed home by 4pm.

### Results:

Bob returned to his winning ways in Class B, Tony placed 3rd followed by Mark and Troy with Alex a couple of places further back. Troy won the Junior Category with Alex placing 2nd.

### Next couple of rounds:

- 23 June at Sandown on bitumen (Peugeot Car Club)
- 20 July (Saturday) at Huntly Sale Yards, Bendigo on bitumen (Bendigo Car Club)
- Australian Motorkhana Championship, 5-6 October, Mount Gambier on bitumen (South Eastern Auto Club)



Last month Mazda Australia offered 50 tickets to the preview of the *Monet's Garden: The Musée Marmottan Monet* at the National Gallery. All who attended were grateful for the opportunity to see some of the world's great impressionist art at such close range.

Two members shared their thoughts ...

# Moments with Monet ...



■ NGV, 8 May – hosted by Mazda Australia and the Mazda Loyalty Team

## Thank you Mazda for this wonderful opportunity.

The works are truly beautiful to see, and to be able to wander in an uncrowded gallery with knowledgeable volunteer guides was an absolute delight.

Added to the joy of seeing and experiencing the exhibition, complete with the final amphitheatre was the excellent catering. To cap off the experience the musical trio of piano accordion, guitar and bass was exquisite.

And the exhibition catalogue to take home!

We look forward to owning another Mazda before too long. Just a few weeks back I had my 1998 Mazda MX-5 on the track at Phillip Island and it was great. Totally reliable handling through a challenging circuit – never a hint of wandering where it shouldn't.

What a contrast was the Monet experience to the Holden dealership that recently sent us a deck of playing cards!!

~ Peter Dibbs

I had the good fortune of attending the exclusive preview of the 'Monet's Garden' – 62 of Monet's works on loan from collections across the world. It is a joy to see.

Monet was the only impressionist of his time that painted in "plein air" or true light. His method was dramatic in that he did not draw and then paint – everything is 'dab and stroke' freehand, and in viewing his work I cannot help but feel that he must have painted a long way from the canvas. Brilliant!

All who attended received a beautiful catalogue of the exhibition and were entertained by the band Belle Musette whilst enjoying nibbles and drinks.

I would like to express my appreciation and thanks to Mazda Australia for the continuing support of the Club and particularly to Elly and Emily for their work and effort in organising the event.

Go and see this; some things only come around once!

~ Greg Brown



# Oils ain't oils ...

■ Words: Ron Macdonald » 1998 Grace Green NB

*Like the famous advertisement says oils ain't oils ... but services ain't services either!*

When I purchased "Gracie" I had decided to organise her routine servicing outside of the Mazda dealer network. However, I always made sure it was booked in for the Mazda recommended "book" service.

After the very informative garage day we had at club sponsor Dick Richey's 'MX5 Factory' I decided to send Gracie there for her 150,000k service, and I am so glad I did. As I live in Frankston and the MX5 Factory is in Ringwood I waited while the service was done; this turned out to be a major bonus as Freddie (the mechanic) had plenty of questions for me as he worked on the car.

The first issue came when Freddie checked the throttle body; it was full of carbon deposits which he dutifully cleaned out and advised a bottle of injector cleaner to flush out the rest of the system. The car was raised on the hoist, engine oil dropped and Freddie proceeded to do the under body inspection. His next question was "when was the gearbox oil last checked?" My (honest) response was "Bugged if I know" ... I tell the little man to do a book service and I assume he has done that.



The Mazda-recommended frequency to change the gearbox oil is every 100,000km – however, due to the hard life most of our little toys get Freddie recommends it be done every 50,000km. Gracie was now up to 150,000 so I requested he change both the gearbox and diff oils (just to be on the safe side). Thank Goodness I did. When the drain plug was removed a very thin jet black liquid began to flow from the gearbox; on inspection this liquid had the consistency and lubricating properties of water! It looked very much like this oil had been in the gearbox since Hiroshima 1998! The diff oil wasn't anywhere near as bad but still required changing and at least now I know where I am with both.

Having sorted out both the gearbox and diff, Freddie returned to the under body inspection and another question. "When was the fuel filter last changed?" as it did not appear to have ever been touched. The same reply ensued, the filter was removed and found to be full of dirt. A few more minor issues were also found and dealt with and Gracie was handed back to me. The difference in the car was noticeable on the drive home and as the new Suntrax gearbox oil and injector cleaner works its way through the car it just keeps getting better.

I recently discussed my service issue with a fellow Club member who advised he does get his car serviced through the dealer network and had the same fuel filter issues as I did.

The moral of this story is get your car serviced at a reputable establishment and MAKE SURE (watch if need be) they actually do the work you are paying for. My trip to the MX5 Factory has probably saved me a fortune as I doubt the gearbox would have lasted much longer being lubricated by what was effectively dirty water.

All I can say is "caveat emptor" (buyer beware) ... and I know where Gracie is going when her 160,000 is due! ■

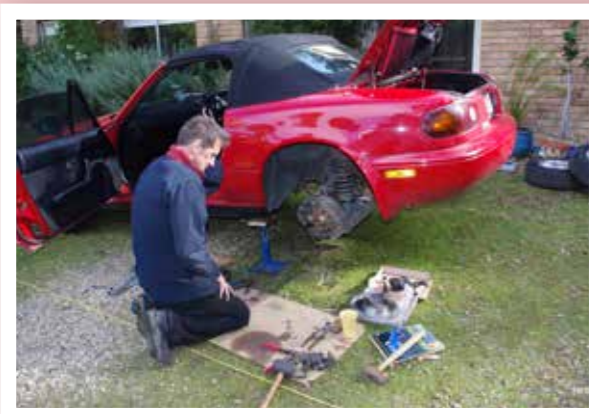
You may recall my earlier article about replacing the brake pads on an NA MX-5 (May 2013).

During that process, my partner in crime (and the lovely model in these photos), Allan Pryer and I discovered that one of the caliper sliding pins was pretty much locked in place and, despite some heroic efforts, seemed to be fixed right in there.

This being the case I looked at various options such as a new caliper (quite expensive), a second-hand caliper (none available at the time) and buying a set of second-hand NB brakes. By returning the pads I had purchased, I was able to get a second-hand set of front and rear calipers, with pads (used but in good condition), front disks (ditto) and new rear disks for quite a reasonable price.

Research on the net generally said the job is a pretty easy one, though one forum member reported brake lock-up after the upgrade. So, biting the bullet, I went ahead and ordered the brakes. They arrived and we set out to install them.

As per my last article, we used jack stands – I cannot over emphasise how important it is to use stands on a firm base. While we were not under the car I certainly didn't want the car to be unstable or to fall off of a poorly set-up jack.



Car on stands, disk off, looking at the new components ...

We began with the rear brakes. You will need to disconnect the brake line and hand brake cable and then it's a straight forward matter to unbolt the caliper bracket at its two attaching points. The caliper should lift away from the disk at this point. The disk is loose and should just lift away from the four wheel bolts.



Old caliper still in place, disk shield clearly visible. Some crimping of the shield can be seen.

We now come to the most difficult part of the upgrade.

We found that the larger NB disks don't fit inside the dust shield and this needs to be modified to allow the disk to rotate freely. We used pliers and tin snips to snip two small snips in the cover and then carefully bend the curve open so the disk isn't impeded. It does look a little ugly, but is unsighted once the wheel is back on. The front caliper pistons can be depressed using an appropriate clamp.



Disk, showing the adapted dust shield. Note the places where the shield is cut which allows it to be bent.

You can more carefully either remove the cover or trim it but the bending option seemed the best way to go about this. Once these shields are modified, it's a matter of sliding on the new disk, when sliding the NB caliper into place and bolting it to the car.

You may need to wind back the piston using the adjuster which is located under a 14mm bolt, roughly in line with the back of the piston and a 4mm Allen key.

**Note:** Do not use a vice to push back the brake caliper piston; doing so strips the thread on the adjuster and compromises the efficiency of the rear brakes.

The brake lines and hand brake cable are then reattached. Check the caliper is clear of the disk by rotating the hub. Some small adjustments might need to be made but generally this process was relatively trouble free for us.

Once fitted up the rear pads need to be adjusted by winding the adjuster until the pads drag against the disk, then back out 1/3 of a turn. Refit the 14mm bolt.

**Please note:** articles in the Tech Talk section are written by Club members and are presented for information only. The Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria Inc. recommends that readers use this information as a guide only, undertake their own research and consult professional advice before carry out repairs and maintenance on their vehicle.

The front brakes are done in the same way. The dust shield on the front doesn't need any major modifications, we found a small section on the front end of the shield needed just a small bending with pliers, otherwise the front process seemed to be easier to do.



Front caliper and disk, the shield allow more clearance.

Once the calipers are on, you will need to attach the front brake line.



Front caliper with brake line attached

We tensioned the nuts as per the workshop manual using a tension wrench (an essential thing to have). We then topped up the brake fluid, bled the brakes to remove any bubbles from the brake lines.

I have driven my NA twice since this upgrade. The brakes feel firmer and do require a small amount more pedal pressure. I have good pedal feel and the car does stop more confidently. I am waiting for the rear pads to bed properly with the new disk. I suspect there is a little more braking improvement to come once the whole system settles down.

Overall, the upgrade has been relatively easy to do and the improvement in braking performance is immediately evident. ■

Here's a little fact for car buffs, or just to dazzle your friends ...

The four Goldberg brothers -- Lowell, Norman, Hiram, and Maximillian -- invented and developed the first automobile air conditioner. On 17 July, 1946, the temperature in Detroit was 97 degrees.

The four brothers walked into Henry Ford's office and sweet-talked his secretary into telling him that four gentlemen were there with the most exciting innovation in the auto industry since the electric starter.

Old man Ford was curious, and invited them into his office. They refused and instead asked that he come out to their car in the car park.

They persuaded him to get into the car, which was about 130 degrees, turned on the air conditioner, and cooled the car off immediately.

The old man got very excited and invited them back to the office, where he offered them \$3 million for the patent.

The brothers said they would settle for \$2 million, but they wanted the recognition by having a label, 'The Goldberg Air Conditioner', on the dashboard of each car in which it was installed.

Now Mr Ford was more than just a little anti-Semitic, and there was no way he was going to put the Goldbergs' name on two million Fords.

They haggled back and forth for about two hours and finally agreed on \$4 million and that just their first names would be shown.

And so to this day, all Ford air conditioners show "Lo", "Norm", "Hi" and "Max" on the controls ...



## Trading Post ...

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

### For sale 1993 NA Clubman Hardtop with 6-speed gearbox & 4.1 torsen diff.

It's time to sell my much loved NA Clubman. It is an Australian-delivered Clubman. I have bought an NB 10AE and unfortunately I can't justify keeping both, so there is a good deal here for some lucky person. This would be a great car for someone looking to get started in club-level motor sport. The car is being sold without registration and without a roadworthy.

**Asking price: \$7,995 ono** Contact: Daniel (Club Captain) – 0400 304 006



### For sale 1989 NA – 167,000km

"Mixy" – driven with the respect she deserves, well maintained and comes with a service history. Needs a good home where she will be loved and enjoyed.

**Asking price: \$8,000 ono**

Contact: Kate (non-member), Tassie – 0419 153 453



### For sale

NA 1.6 reconditioned cylinder head



» chemically cleaned » crack & hardness tested, seats & valves refaced, face surfaced » includes gasket set and chemically cleaned manifolds, rocker cover etc.

**Asking price: \$500**

Contact: Paul (Club member) – 0438 722 464

### For sale 1990 NA – 64,000km

» Always garaged » hardtop » RWC

We bought it with less than 3,000km on the clock from original owner.

**Asking price: \$13,500**

Contact: Lucy (non-member) – 0420 301 785



### For sale 1992 NA – 146,000km

All repainted including a hard top roof with heated rear window, tonneau cover, Avanti racing alloy wheels, low profile tyres, custom steering wheel, gear shift and pedals, US-style rear lights, full alarm and immobiliser, Kenwood stereo with CD and iPod port, air con and power windows. Immaculate condition always garaged.

**Asking price: \$9,000 ono** Contact: Paul (non-member), Tassie – 0400 888 741 | 03 6383 2028 | paulbultitude@bigpond.com



### For sale

NA/NB carpet set



» 10 piece black carpet and boot set » good quality, made in UK » floor mats bound and with heel pad » would fit cars to 2005 and possibly later » unused.

**Price: modest offer will secure**

Contact: Tony (non-member), Mt Eliza – 0419 879 412

### For sale 2009 NC2 Touring Soft Top

» Aluminium Silver » 21,500km » RWC » one owner » manual » leather » new car warranty till September » full service history » immaculate condition » personalised plates: NCMX-5

**Asking price: \$25,800**

Contact: Andrew (Club member) – 0403 360 590



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9am - 10am	You can pop in straight after you drop the kids off to school	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10.30am - 11.30pm	Catch up on the daily headlines while we work on your car	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11.30am - 12.30pm	Book in now and have the car before lunch	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1pm - 2pm	Beat the traffic rush, this could be your spot	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2pm - 3pm	Get the car serviced and pick-up the kids in one go	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3pm - 4pm	Grab an afternoon coffee and relax in our lounge	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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\* One hour turnaround time is calculated from the time the customer approves the maintenance at reception to delivery of the serviced vehicle to the customer. The dealership is not liable for delays in vehicle maintenance if the customer does not adhere to their booked appointment time. Priority is given to on-time customers. Available for selected cars and scheduled services only. ^ Limited to 1,000km, 10,000km, 20,000km, 30,000km Scheduled Mazda Book Services. Additional repairs required above service are limited to minor items such as wiper blades and globe replacement.

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