

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

And a happy new year!

MX-5
Mazda MX-5 Club
of Victoria & Tasmania

www.mx5vic.org.au



MX-5 Club of Victoria

Tasmania Chapter

In this edition:
Club calendar for 2015 - call for your photos
Christmas in the Chapters
2009 NC - used car review



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1/2014

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Cover Christmas, northern Tassie style.
image: Photo: Kelly Berggren



Find us at:
**MX-5 Club of
Victoria**

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Don's Drive(l) ...

■ Don Nicoll – President president@mx5vic.org.au

Welcome to our first edition of *mxtra* for 2014. We hope everyone had a safe and enjoyable break over Christmas and New Year.

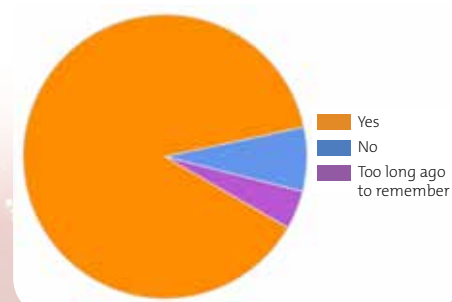
This month I would like to spend some time on the results of the second survey that we conducted in the second half of last year. As we have reported previously, nearly one third of the membership responded to the survey and as a consequence we can be reasonably sure that the information we have gathered is representative.

How long have you been a Club member?



Our first question in the survey asked how long you had been a member of the Club. We have a remarkably even spread of people with less than one year's membership, 1-3 years, 4-6 years and more than six years of membership, although the latter group does have the edge over the other groups. For a healthy Club, I believe we need a good mix of new blood and wise experience. The survey would suggest that this is very much a feature of our Club and one which we should seek to maintain.

When you first attended a Club event were you made welcome?

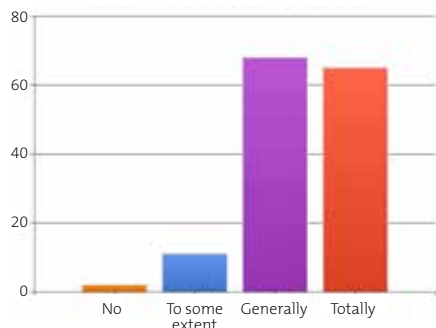


The second and third questions addressed the issue of meeting the expectations of new members. The first of these questions asked if you were made to feel welcome when you attended your first Club event. As you can see from the pie chart the overwhelming majority felt that they were made welcome. However

we do have a group of roughly 10% of respondents who said that they *did not* feel they were made welcome. This is clearly something that the Committee needs to work on as first impressions are important, no matter how many times we are told not to judge a book by its cover. On a less serious note, about 5% of respondents claimed that they had joined too long ago to remember their first impressions. I hope these people belong to the group with more than six years' membership!

The third question asked if the Club had met members' expectations. From the bar graph you will see that we either totally or generally met expectations of the majority of members but we also had a small number who thought that we had only met their expectations to some extent or not at all. I'll come back to this in a later article when we look at some of the comments we gathered during the survey. For now it is probably sufficient to say that we must be careful to try to articulate exactly what the Club has to offer without either overselling or indeed, underselling exactly what we have to offer members.

Has the Club met the expectations you had when you joined?



Next month I'll summarise the answers to the next questions in the survey which concerned the levels of interest in different Club activities. There isn't space this month to do the data justice.

On 27 December we had a visit from Paul and Sandy Clifton from the Northamptonshire group of the UK MX-5 Owners Club. There will be an article about the day in a forthcoming edition of *mxtra*. However, I had the pleasure of taking Sandy on the run we organised, to show them a little of the countryside north-east of Melbourne. It is always interesting to hear the opinions and experiences of MX-5 owners from other countries. Sandy was no exception and was quick to demonstrate that

the people who appreciate the MX-5 share a common interest which is not influenced by country, climate or culture. One thing that we probably do not appreciate as much as we should is the relative quiet of our roads once out of the city – something which can be quite a challenge for UK Club members.

One thing that did leave me a little puzzled was the number of cars we had on an informal, unofficial Club run. When making a rough plan, Murray and I had expected maybe six or seven cars. We had 22!! Perhaps we have to think about a social run between Christmas and New Year, at least for the Central Chapter.

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

Remember ... **Safety first!**

Don

For your diary ...

See the full calendar for details

January

25 North Tassie: World record attempt

26: Western: Turtons Track run

February

2 Sprints Rd 7 - Sandown

8-9 South Tas: Overnight to Launceston Festival

9 Eastern: Chip run to Port Albert

16 Central: Picnic at Hanging Rock

19 Central: Short & Sweet evening run

26 Central: weekday lunch cruise

March

2 Central: Clean Up Australia

8 Central: Chapter 2nd birthday run

8-9 NE Vic: Snowy Mountains run

20 Central: Weekday breakfast run

22 Driver training, Winton

23 Eastern: Neerim run

23 Sprints Rd 8 - Winton

April

12-15 NatMeet XI – Caloundra, Qld



Full Throttle!

■ Daniel White – Club Captain - Motor Sport captain@mx5vic.org.au

New Year's Resolution ... ???

Happy New Year everyone! If one of your New Year's resolutions for 2014 is to get involved in motor sport with your MX-5, and to join us at one of our sprint rounds, then here are some things to consider before you get on circuit.

Firstly, I encourage you to come along as a spectator to one of our rounds, talk to our drivers and fellow members and see how the day is run. We have many competitors with years of motor sport competition experience and they enter every sprint round of our Championship. With such a strong core group, there is a wealth of experience, knowledge and assistance for any newcomers to draw on. All of our regular MX-5 competitors are more than happy to help newcomers.

You should also take the time to check out the information within our club website at mx5vic.org.au. Click on the "Motor Sport" tab – there you will find all of the detailed information you need to get you started, as well as important information regarding safety requirements to compete. A copy of our current Sprint Championship Rules and Competitor Declaration forms can also be found here.

Whilst not a mandated requirement by CAMS for speed events (Sprints), some event organisers choose to demand roll bars for open cars, four-point safety harnesses, or metal valve caps on the wheels. Certainly these are highly recommended accessories for the regular participant, and can be obtained fairly cheaply from a range of suppliers. Read the event's supplementary regulations carefully before turning up unprepared! Contact the event organiser, or Club Captain for further clarification if you are not sure.

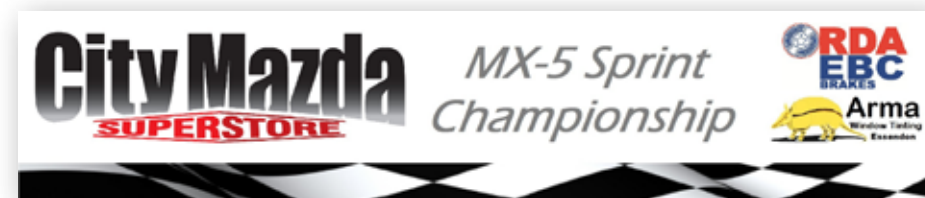
You will need a helmet meeting AS1698 (or equivalent) standard, and this is a minimum requirement.

Safety is paramount in motor sport and I encourage drivers to invest in a quality car helmet with a HANS device and a harness.

Whilst a HANS device is not mandated by CAMS for sprint events it is certainly a wise investment that you should consider and can now be purchased for a reasonable price, with many helmet and HANS package deals available. Check out *Revolution Racegear*, for example.

To compete in most (non-race) track events you need a CAMS Level 2S (S for speed) licence or higher. For an L2S licence you aren't required to pass a written or practical test. To obtain this licence you must also be a current financial member of a car club. Go to www.cams.com.au and apply online.

If you don't normally carry out the mechanical work on your MX-5, or you are unsure about its condition, then it would be a good idea to have your vehicle serviced or inspected, by a professional, prior to a track day. Your car needs to be in sound mechanical condition. As a minimum it must have good tyres, brake pads with plenty of pad material, good steering, a good wheel alignment, coolant, fresh engine oil, no leaks, drive belts and hoses in good condition.



The right attitude is the most important thing you can bring to the track. Staying relaxed, open minded and willing to learn is the best way to improve your driving and your lap times.

We look forward to seeing you on track soon.

Round 7 City Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship – Sunday 2 February

The final three rounds of the 2013-14 Championship kick off at Sandown Raceway on Sunday, 2 February and should see a strong entry list of MX-5s.

Spectators are welcome and there is no charge, so grab a coffee and come along for a look. It would be great to see you there!!

Daniel #146

"Racing – converting money into noise!"

Troy's a winner!

As Bob de Bont reported last edition, Troy Heasley won Category J in the 2013 Victorian Motorkhana Championship.

He received his award from CAMS CEO Eugene Arocca at the annual motorkhana awards presentation.



Congratulations, Troy!



Membership

Will Campbell – Membership Officer membership@mx5vic.org.au

Current membership count:

528

and growing!

The Christmas-New Year season is usually fairly quiet as far as membership is concerned, but we can boast 18 new members for the period!

I would like to welcome the following motoring connoisseurs and wish them all the best for a long and happy association with the Club:

Central Chapter

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Jason and Regina Blyth | 1997 Neo Green NA |
| Margaret and Jessica de Bont | 2001 Crystal Blue NB |
| Chris Chan | 1990 White NA |
| Walter Medenbach | 1990 Classic Red NA |
| Chris & Lydia Roberts | 2005 Silver NC |
| Murray Toogood | 2004 Titanium Silver NB |

North-Eastern Victoria Chapter

| | |
|-------------|---------------|
| Roger Cowie | 2006 White NC |
|-------------|---------------|

Eastern Victoria Chapter

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| John and Nicholas Bodey | 1989 Classic Red NA |
| David Ford | 1999 Blue NB |

Northern Tasmania Chapter

| | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| Tony, Linda and Mieke van Rooyen | 1999 Evolution Gold NB |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|

Southern Tasmania Chapter

| | |
|--------------------|---------------|
| Graeme Johnson | 1990 White NA |
| Christopher Vernon | 2007 Green NC |

See you out and about *Will*

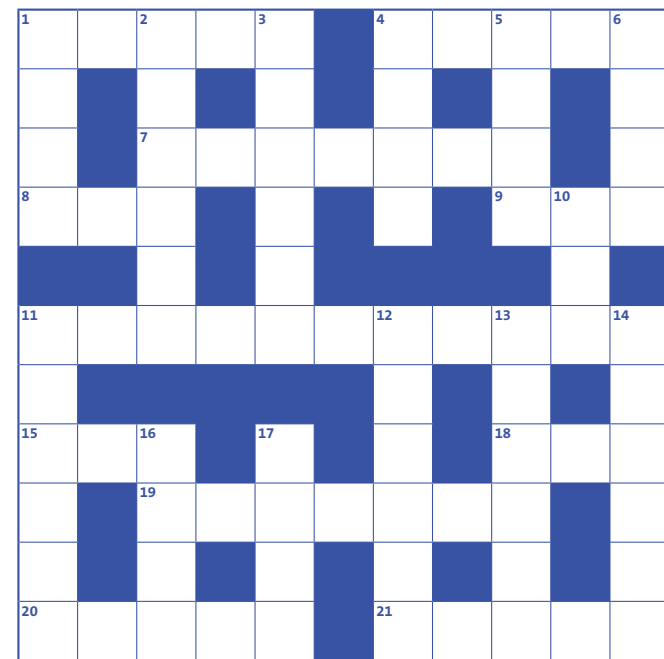
Scene about ...

Photos: Wendy Clark, Ron Macdonald, Karen Bradshaw, Marg Gillick, Kelly Berggren, Murray Finlay



Alan Bennett's MX-5 crossword #16

Theme = Mazda



Across

- 1 Zoomable car company (5)
- 4 1 across home country (5)
- 7 An oral pup gets lots of sales, eg Mazda3 (anag.) (7)
- 8 Extra sensory parking (abbrev.) (3)
- 9 Need this to enter by hand (3)
- 11 Rattle meets roll to form a road of iron? (anag.) (6,5)
- 15 This colour goes faster (3)
- 16 Roll stability control (abbrev.) (3)
- 19 A ten zoo resonates with unwanted gas (anag.) (7)
- 20 The MX-5 SP has one to make it go faster (5)
- 21 Suspended, even upended and mended when finished? (5)

Down

- 1 Automaker shows it can create (4)
- 2 Remote control (colloquial) (6)
- 3 Shocking measure of current equal to 2 x 10⁻⁷ newtons per metre length (6)
- 4 Touch both battery terminals to receive this, like a bunch of volts in units of 3 down? (4)
- 5 On par Kevin puts himself between other cars? (4)
- 6 A blue, all at sea (4)
- 10 Electronic break assist (abbrev.) (3)
- 11 Prints photos and goes very fast (anag.) (6)
- 12 A draught or semi lager has an old measure of distance inside? (6)
- 13 Cross this and your wheel nuts won't do up! (6)
- 14 Using 2 down or 9 across and your MX-5 is secured! (6)
- 16 Two on a real car, four on most, it opens to provide opportunity (4)
- 17 1 across design principal that's not just OK, it's a language! (4)

Answers next month ...

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S | A | N | T | A | C | L | A | U | S | |
| N | I | D | O | F | E | | | | | |
| O | M | A | D | O | N | N | A | N | | |
| W | E | B | I | E | R | E | D | | | |
| | L | C | | | | | | | | |
| G | R | E | A | T | S | T | R | I | F | E |
| I | | | | | H | | N | | N | |
| V | O | W | G | R | T | A | G | | | |
| I | I | D | O | L | I | S | E | I | | |
| N | S | L | L | N | N | | | | | |
| G | R | E | E | D | L | I | T | R | E | |

MX-5 crossword #15

December 2013 – Answers

Stretching it?

Words: Will Campbell PhD

Driving in convoy: the "elastic band effect"

We first published this article back in 2009, but it's worth revisiting to explain to newer members why those at the rear of a convoy sometimes feel that those at the front "must be speeding" ...

There are many facets to our great Club, but social drives continue to be popular with a majority of members.

I still thrill at the prospect of being one of a group of MX-5s driving snake-like through our State's many scenic regions and love seeing our little cars stretching out into the distance, both in front and behind me.

However, driving with a group of vehicles can be daunting, particularly for new-comers, as they try to keep up with the leader. Over the 14 years I have been in the Club, I have participated in well over 100 such events and have often heard the comment that *because a car toward the back of the pack has had to exceed the speed limit to keep up, then the lead car must also be breaking the law.*

It would be naive to suggest that this doesn't occasionally happen but, in the main, group leaders adhere to the Club's strict set of convoy rules.

So, what is going on? And why is there this perception that, because you need to speed to catch up, then the leader is driving too fast ... ?

It's a question that a number of us have pondered and for, obvious reasons, the situation has been dubbed the "elastic band" effect.



The "herd" instinct is very strong ... so the tendency is for trailing drivers to catch up and rejoin the group ...

Let's consider a common scenario of a group of cars travelling through the open country side at 100km/h.

If we allow the required two- to three-second gap suggested in the convoy rules, then a group of 20 cars will stretch out approximately 1.25 kilometres. If the group is as large as 30, then the convoy will cover around two kilometres in length.

Of course, in any group, not all cars maintain a constant 100km/h and this often allows slower traffic to enter the convoy.

When this happens, the result is that whilst the front group continues at 100km/h, those behind the slower vehicle can be travelling at a considerably reduced rate.

However, let's simplify the situation so that our convoy consists of only two vehicles, with both initially travelling at 100km/h (see scenario tables, below).

If the second car is forced to reduce its speed to 80km/h for three minutes, then the distance between the cars grows to approximately one kilometre.

If the lead car continues at 100km/h, then for the second car to catch up, again say in three minutes, it would need to travel at an average speed of slightly more than 120km/h.

Of course, if the second car decides to accelerate only to 100km/h, then it would not catch up until the first vehicle either slowed down or stopped.

The "herd" instinct is very strong, even amongst MX-5 drivers, so the tendency is for the driver of the second car to catch up and rejoin the group.

These figures have been simplified and rounded, and some assumptions made. However, the fact remains that, in order to catch up even short time delays, speeds above the posted limit would be required.

It isn't practical for safety reasons for the lead car to constantly vary its speed so that everyone stays in convoy and retains the two- to three-second gap. However, reasonably regular stops in appropriate areas do overcome the problem.

For those new to convoy driving, it is important that you drive to the conditions and at a speed you find comfortable. If you do get behind, be patient and wait till the convoy regroups.

The Club has an excellent safety record, and it's one that we want to maintain.

Our regular runs are meant to be fun and you should finish the day relaxed! ●

| Lead car speed (km/h) | Trailing car speed during delay (km/h) | Delay (minute/s) | km apart | Distance lead car has travelled in next 3 minutes (km) | Distance trailing car has to travel in next 3 minutes (km) | Average speed required for trailing car to catch up (km/h) |
|-----------------------|--|------------------|----------|--|--|--|
| Scenario 1: | | | | | | |
| 100 | 80 | 1 | 0.3 | 5.0 | 5.3 | 106 |
| | | 2 | 0.7 | 5.0 | 5.7 | 114 |
| | | 3 | 1.0 | 5.0 | 6.0 | 120 |
| | | 4 | 1.3 | 5.0 | 6.3 | 126 |
| | | 5 | 1.7 | 5.0 | 6.7 | 134 |
| Scenario 2: | | | | | | |
| 100 | 90 | 1 | 0.2 | 5.0 | 5.2 | 104 |
| | | 2 | 0.3 | 5.0 | 5.3 | 106 |
| | | 3 | 0.5 | 5.0 | 5.5 | 110 |
| | | 4 | 0.7 | 5.0 | 5.7 | 114 |
| | | 5 | 0.8 | 5.0 | 5.8 | 116 |

Rob Diprose

Central Chapter

Name? Ron Diprose ... Ronald if in trouble

Age? 61

Born? Hobart, Tasmania

Current abode? Sunbury Victoria

Profession? Unemployed vagrant ... licenced aircraft maintenance engineer, retired

Partner? Debbie, No. 1 Navigator

Pets? Grey Fergie in the shed gets a pat now and then; have had all sorts of dogs and cats, but none at the moment

Fave food? Italian. A good Seafood Marinara tops the list

Can you cook? Water if pushed, but I do a mean vanilla slice

Favourite tippie? Coopers pale ale, occasional red

First drive? Refer to pets above ... learnt to drive my uncle's grey Ferguson at his Ulverstone (Tassie) farm, eight or nine years old

First car? 1951 Cyclops Eye Rover 75 (below), bought while still at school mostly because it was cheap. Introduction to a life-long battle with Lucas electrics ... on our first night out with the car, Debbie's job was to lean out the window and work the wipers by hand, while I drove and wiped the windscreen inside. Not a good way to impress a girl at night in the depths of a Tassie winter



First fender bender? Future father-in-law's Vanguard. Bent the driver's side guard, but demolished the Ford Escort that hit it

Everyday driver? Depends ... Percy the Toyota Prado for towing the mobile chicane or Black Bob, Debbie's Mitsubishi Colt shopping trolley

How many MX-5s have you owned? Only one so far

Current MX-5? BlueMaxx, 1998 Twilight Blue NB

MX-5 improvements?

Stock, except for later model 16" wheels, replacing much too heavy after-market items, additional very loud horn. Tired shockers are on the list to be replaced

MX-5 dislikes? What's to dislike?

Why an MX-5? So good to drive, always fun, none of the "character" of older sports cars (ie, they don't break down ... well, very rarely)

Fluffy dice? Too staid and boring for such frivolity

Passions besides the MX-5? Hooked on motor sport: F1 and MotoGP, Bathurst. Would love to do MX-5 motor sport, only more folding stuff needed. Otherwise, anything with an engine, a motor, wheels or a sail

Favourite TV show / movie / book? Get Smart / Blues Brothers or Flying High / any of Patrick O'Brian or Tom Sharpe's books

Dream wheels (money no object)? Mazda Furai, if one still exists. Ferrari 250LM (memories of Longford, Tasmania ... Spencer Martin in the car just clipping the hay bales every lap at the pub corner; great circuit, great sounding car, great driver)

Would you drive a Daewoo or SsangYong? Blindfolded at midnight

Favourite other Mazda? Trusty E2200 van, was looking to go to 500,000km, but sold at 350,000km to antique dealer (furniture, not cars) ...

If not a Mazda (gasp!), then what? GT40 replica

How long in the Club? Three terrific years

How many MX-5 Club runs or track events? All the runs I can do when retiree tasks don't interfere ... no track events yet

Favourite Club run/track? They have all been great, all different, all fun. The standout so far is the North-eastern Victoria Chapter two-day run through the Snowy Mountains. Would love to do a Tassie trip (last one on the boat was with the E2200 Van and Oscar the dog; we had fun exploring what remains of the old Longford circuit before heading south)

The MX-5 Club Grill



Funniest thing seen at a Club event?

The run leader getting lost, if only for a short time, on a run starting about an hour west of Melbourne. Oh! and Lockie Story's hat

Have you been to DECA or NatMeet?

DECA twice – fantastic. Great way to learn car and driver limits safely. Big thanks to the motor sport organisers and helpers. NatMeet, not yet ...

Ford vs Holden? Mis-spent youth in both, no real preference. Great to see more makes in the V8s. How about a Mazda 6 V8 too?

What's playing in your MX-5? Debbie says horrible old music, I say great Rock and Blues. Nothing on Club runs except the CB ... so we don't get too lost

Footy team (AFL / NRL / A-League)?

AFL: St Kilda because I remember 1966; NRL: Easts/Sydney City Roosters or whatever they call themselves now; A-League: no idea

Final comments? We have been made very welcome from day one in this Club ... don't be shy about attending any of the Club activities, motor sport or runs with other Chapters.

Enjoy the variety – the welcome is always genuine and, as the old motorbike ad said, "you meet the nicest people".

My favourite MX-5 road ...

Words & photo: Cary Warren, Club Captain - Social

Boneo Road, Mornington Peninsula

A shortie but a goodie ...

Whether you are rugged up with your favourite scarf and gloves or loving the sun's summer rays, immerse yourself in one of my favourite roads to blow out the webs and lap up views from the bay to ocean and beyond.

Where? Boneo Road – Rosebud to Flinders, starting from the Nepean Hwy end (Melway map 170).

Set yourself a cruisey 60km/h to warm the engine through Rosebud as you leave Port Phillip Bay behind and head to the backblocks where you can lift your speed to 100km/h.

From here the road opens up through the Fingal market gardens before the views of Bass Strait hit you head on. The straight road soon starts to hug the rugged Cape Schanck coastline before heading inland past Bushrangers Bay and through the steep declines and tight corners of the Mornington Peninsula National Park. Your MX-5 will love the multiple gear changes before you pop out the other end with sea winds and waves crashing on the coastal rocks of Cairns Bay. From here the coastal town of Flinders awaits.



Turn right from Boneo Road into Cook Street, Flinders' main drag, then take a right into The Esplanade and then Golf Links Road through the links of the famous Flinders Golf Course, to take in views of Bass Strait, Flinders Rock and Seal Rock (listening out for any calls on "fore"!).

From Flinders you can head back along Boneo Road to do it all again in reverse or head back to the bay via the scenic but challenging Mornington-Flinders Road through the wine country and the famous views from Arthurs Seat (not to mention the great descent!). Good old zoom zoom ... enjoy! ●

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> and share it around!

The Central Chapter is getting behind the "Movember" men's health initiative for 2014.

Ron Macdonald, Central Chapter Captain



This has two main goals: the first is to raise the profile of men's health issues and get people talking about it and the second is to raise money to go towards men's health research.

For many years now women's health issues have been (rightly) very high profile and supported by many organisations including major sporting codes; this is of course a good thing.

However, did you know that while the ladies have a one in eight chance of being diagnosed with breast cancer, the boys have a one in five chance of being diagnosed with prostate cancer?

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in Australian men and is the second largest cause of male cancer deaths in Australia. Each year around 20,000 new cases are diagnosed in Australia and close to 3,300 Aussie men will die from the disease every year, which exceeds the number of women who die from breast cancer annually.

OK, what can we do to help prevent this?

Guys, it's time to start talking about your dangly bits with your wives, girlfriends (both if you have them), doctor and other



blokes – especially those who may have already experienced issues.

Next thing is to go to the Central Chapter's "Mo space" page – MoBro.co/mx5vic – and donate. We will be culminating our year's promotion of men's health with a Movember run in November 2014, but don't wait until then to become involved. It would be fantastic if everyone could promote the cause and put a link to our page on your own Facebook or Twitter account.

This, however is not just for the guys. Ladies, we also need your support in this endeavour, without the support of the *Mo Sistas* this will be a much harder slog. ●

Chapter chatter ...

19.12.13 | Eastern Victoria ■ Words & photos: Alan Laine ■ Organiser: Travis McInnes



A Gippsland Christmas ...



After a 40° day it was nice to get to our air-conditioned rendezvous at Cafe Aura to meet up with our group of 18

and welcome new members Kevin Parry, who has now met all of us, and David and Lesla Ford.

David has a lot of motoring and technical knowledge to share, and this combined with his infectious enthusiasm are great ingredients for our chapter.

As expected most of the conversation was MX-5-related, lots of chit chat, eating, drinking, eating some more followed by more chit chat.

After three hours of this it was time to cruise around and check out some of the Christmas lights on display, some amazing effort has gone into these, I suspect a few months planning. I'm sure they must enjoy the queues of traffic banked up to appreciate they're efforts, but unlike last year no-one was there with a hose in their front yard waiting for some unsuspecting sports cars with their rooves down to target when they drove past!

On behalf of all those who attended I'd like to thank Travis for putting on such a great social night. ●



Christmas lights in Traralgon



2014 AGP parade



You will have read that the "Celebrity Race" at this year's Formula 1™ Australian Grand Prix will feature the all-new Mazda3.

As with 2013 (left), Mazda Australia has asked the Club to provide 20 MX-5s to take the "celebrity" drivers on a parade lap of the Albert Park circuit prior to the race on Sunday, 16 March.

So we're looking for 20 Club members to volunteer! There will be 20 celebrity drivers, and all 20 MX-5 Club cars will do the lap. Hopefully this year's event won't be weather-affected, which caused the cancellation of the 2013 parade lap.

Spots will be allocated strictly first-in-best-dressed, with volunteers #21 onwards added to a reserve list.

Successful "applicants" will have a decal across their windscreen with their celebrity's name (removable static vinyl). Each participant in the *Auto Avenue* will receive two "Motor Sport Credentials" (equivalent to general admission tickets that allow you to drive your car on to the circuit – one for the car owner and one for a guest) for the four days of the Grand Prix, and a boxed lunch and a drink each day. We will have access to a private Mazda seating area adjacent to the "celebrity lounge" for shelter from the madding crowds. There will also be a special Mazda T-shirt and/or a cap to commemorate the event.



TV presenter Lauren Phillips will be among the new Mazda3-driving celebrities racing in 2014

So, what's the catch? Our cars will need to be "bumped in" to the Albert Park precinct on the Wednesday before the race (12 March), and stay there until after the parade lap. If your MX-5 is your daily-drive, that might be difficult.

On the Sunday we'll be free to leave as soon as we have delivered the celebrity drivers safely back to base (to beat the crush exiting after the Grand Prix).

In the intervening time, our cars will be on public display in a cordoned-off area. Mazda will provide overnight security for all cars, as well as cleaners to get rid of the daily dust (with each owner's permission, of course).

The celebrities will be sitting in the passenger seats, so there's no concern that the celebrity drivers will sit up on the back ledge.

Interested? Please e-mail VP Murray Finlay (editor@mx5vic.org.au) to add your name to the list. We'll also need your car details, and the shirt size for you and your guest. **Remember, it's first-in-best-dressed.** ●

Chapter chatter ...



8.12.13 | North-eastern Victoria ■ Words & photos: Marg Gillick ■ Organisers: Maree Connell & Brian Raine

Brian & Maree's North-East Christmas Run



We were greeted by "Clara the Red Nosed Mazdeer" along with Pam and Tyrone at the Yakandandah meeting point.

By 9:30 we had nine cars for the run, but Ian and Val had come just to wish everyone a merry Christmas and had to go back to Albury.

The hills had turned to summer brown as we headed along the Indigo Valley to Howlong then to Jindera. A large herd of cattle made things very interesting for a couple of kilometres especially when the drover was nowhere to be seen and the animals seemed determined to wander across the road just as we approached.

Next: **disaster!** Our morning tea stop, the bakery at Jindera, was closed (it had been open when Maree and Brian checked out the run the previous weekend) so the little takeaway across the road enjoyed our business. We continued on to Table Top and up the "new" Hume Highway and across to Wymah where we were ferried across the Hume Dam back into Victoria. The ferryman allowed us to squeeze four cars on for each crossing – lucky that MX-5s are small as they usually take only three cars at a time. Granya Gap provided the twists and turns for the day then to Tallangatta alongside the Hume Dam for lunch.

The local tree felling team were in full swing with chainsaws and bobcat at the usually peaceful park in Tallangatta where the run ended for lunch ... thank goodness they finished up as we set up our picnic. Maree could not believe that we had had cattle, a closed bakery and finished with chainsaws! The North-east weather was beautiful as always and there was plenty of Christmas cheer.

Maree presented Pam and Tyrone a basket of homemade Christmas goodies for the best-dressed car and riders (right).

A big thank you to everyone who donated presents for the *Giving Tree* appeal. Our boot was full to overflowing when we delivered the gifts to the ABC radio studio in Wodonga the next day. And a bigger thank you to Brian and Maree for giving us such an enjoyable run. ●



Left to right, standing: Brian, Peter, Tyrone, Ron, Pam, Gerry, Bill and Elaine. Sitting: Dee, Marge, Andrew, Stuart, Ellen and Maree.

^ Christmas, Aussie style ...



Christmas convoy rules for beginners ...



^ Bear left



^ Bear right





Ahoy me Hearties!

Where are my buccaneers?

... gathering in Ferntree Gully for a morning raid on the Dandenong Ranges.

Approximately 30 hearty buccaneers (some in full pirate gear) gathered under the pirate flag for a pre-Christmas bounty hunting adventure around the high seas of the Dandenong Ranges.

The splendidly-attired pirate King and Queen, Ron and Wendy, issued each vessel with a bounty list before the MX-5 flotilla headed off on the Central Chapter's pirate-themed navigation run.

Instructions were written sea-faring style with enough port and starboard turns to satisfy any MX-5 buccaneer. In true pirate style, bribery was encouraged.

Not only did the flotilla successfully navigate up, over and around the Dandenong Ranges on a Sunday, we crossed swords (paths) with Puffing Billy, sailed through the U-pick cherry-berry frenzy, and skirted round the tidal wave of scouts selling freshly cut Christmas trees – cherries and berries maybe, but that MX-5 boot does not accommodate the picnic hamper and a Christmas tree!

We tacked starboard from the base of Mt Dandenong into the Sherbrooke forest among a sea of mighty mountain ash, pillaging all towns on our way. The only jams made in Monbulk and Seville that day were the traffic jams caused by overshot turns and indecisive roundabout exits. Captains steered their vessels whilst navigators searched the horizon for beacons, bounty and ... 'whoops we should have turned left, ... er ... port, back there ...'

As we tacked back and forth across the mountain searching for treasure we pondered the following mysteries:

- » Why do so many oak trees not have acorns?
 - » Why are there never any suitable pull over areas underneath a pine tree?
 - » Exactly how much did those proteas cost?
- and
- » Why is there an elephant in Emerald?

Under full sail we left the tight winding hillclimbs for the open road, sweeping bends and beautiful vistas before finding safe harbor at Sylvan reservoir.

Treasures were shared, bounty distributed and the threat of scurvy was avoided thanks to some fine picnic fare.

Bounty winners were:

- » Best dressed male pirate: Rob Eastwood (runner-up: Jeff Searl)
- » Best dressed female pirate: Judy Searl (runner-up: Ros Eastwood)
- » Best decorated car: 'ZOOMY' - Rob and Ros Eastwood
- » Navigation/treasure hunt winners: Arthur Howie and Helene McAlpine (runners-up: Geoff and Bronwyn Roche)

With cutlasses and swords safely back in scabbards we set sail for home, thankful that the pirate king and queen had done such a grand job of organising the Central navigation run ... and grateful that no-one had to walk the plank!

Also a note of thanks to all the run participants who brought along a child's toy to be donated to the St Vincent de Paul charity for Christmas. ●



^ Rob & Ros Eastwood



^ Jeff & Judy Searl (with Jenny Bennett)



^ From the top: Jenny & Bruce, Ric Wignmore and Arthur & Helene get into the spirit



◀ Wendy Clark presents donated children's gifts to Sandra Patterson (left) from the Seaford conference of the St Vincent de Paul Society.



The winners with their booty: from left, Ros & Rob, Jeff & Judy, Helene & Arthur and Geoff & Bronwyn

Chapter chatter ...

15.12.13 | Northern Tasmania ■ Photos: Kelly Berggren ■ Organiser: Bruce Harvey

North Tassie's Chris-Khana!



The 2013 Northern Tassie Chapter's Christmas party was at Robert and Veronica Atkins' place at Wesley Vale - great food, great company ... and a funkhana!



^ Go! Go! Go! Karen sends them off



^ Kelly in battle with Keith



^ Michael goes hard



^ Carl's cool



^ Michael has the edge on Cheryl



^ Scott & Belinda in a "controlled" slide



^ Veronica (left) vs Scott



^ Hands-free driving!



^ Michael vs Michael



^ Cheryl (front) vs Sandra



^ Belinda ... what cones??



^ Bruce shows how it's done

^ Ray goes for gold!



^ Go on ... impress us!



^ Scott takes this finish



^ Michael's SE vs Carl's NA

Chapter chatter ...

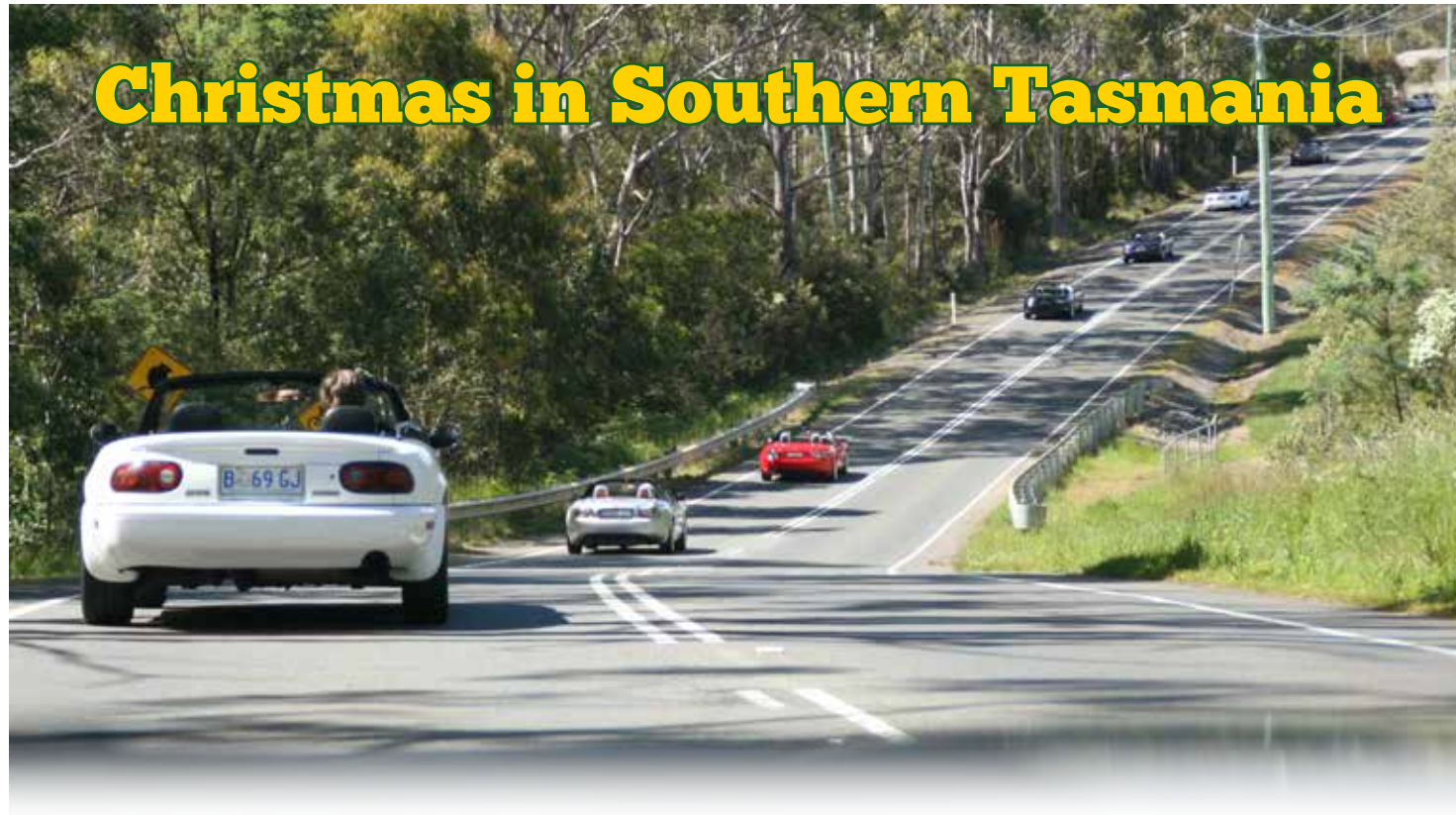
15.12.13 | Southern Tasmania

Words: John Waldock Photos: Rob Tanner Organisers: John Waldock



Stand back, girls ... this is men's work!

Christmas in Southern Tasmania



This year we all agreed a simple and relaxing day would be a good way to finish what has been an interesting and busy year for the Chapter.

So we decided on a simple drive through the hills, ending back in Glenorchy for a BBQ and a chat.

The run took us up to Fern Tree and south to Lower Longley, across to Margate and back to Hobart via Kingston and the Old Channel Highway. A short, enjoyable run that was uneventful by our standards – we didn't get lost or lose anyone ... or any keys!

We arrived on time to the BBQ area at Tolosa Park and all manner of fancy picnic baskets and equipment were quickly extracted from car boots as we set up for lunch. We all shared a smallish hotplate and cooked our steaks, sausages, kebabs and what nots while sharing a glass of wine or cold beer.

It was about this time that Allan and Stacey arrived in *CW the Sprite*, making a grand and throaty entrance.

Many of the Chapter had heard about the travails of his restoration, so it was nice to be able to show off the finished product (see page 23).

After eating, we all sampled a few choice wines, with such exotics as a French Burgundy (not favoured by many) and a Californian Pinot Noir (which compared well with a Tassie Pinot we also tasted).

Once we finished the wine, it was time to draw a few names out of the hat for a few donated giveaways (thanks Gary Whittle and Rob Tanner). Congratulations to the winners ... I think most members went home with something, whether it be a tyre pressure gauge or a nice bottle of wine.

I would also like to thank our new Chapter members – too many to list – who have come along this year and added so much to the group. I hope you have felt welcomed and have enjoyed the activities we have organised this year. ●



Clockwise from second row: Yari, Liam and Cassie; Gary and Maureen; Gaye and Royce; the cars' table at Tolosa Park; Captain Santa spreads some Christmas cheer; long-time members Mike and Liz.



Chapter chatter ...

15.12.13 | Western Victoria ■ Words: Lockie Story ■ Photos: Lockie Story & Karen Bradshaw
 ■ Organisers: Noellene & John Gleeson

Christmas out west ...



It is so good to be writing this as this is the first run I have been on since my ill-fated attempt to go on a run on 13 July which ended up with my back broken and my new NB SE a statutory write off.

I have since bought an identical SE (Vin number is just 12 numbers different) as I had loved the previous car and was so impressed with the way it held up under so much punishment.

I still cannot drive long distances due to fatigue so Tracey drove me to Ballarat, I drove the run and Tracey drove me home. Cool!

We had a leisurely start at about 10.45am as Tracey and I were running late from Horsham and everyone was waiting for us. As we drove in we received



a resounding welcome. In the rush to hug everybody I forgot to get any run notes – but everyone stops at turns for the next car, don't they ... ? The best-dressed for the day had to go to Karen and Ian Bradshaw. The photo below tells it all.

So off we went, driving from the Gleesons' residence via a circuitous route to Daylesford and surrounds, and then via someone's front gate (we won't mention names, will we, Tyrone?). We stopped at Daylesford Lake for a toilet break and to purchase a cold drink. I have always loved Daylesford and have stayed there often.

Then on again, turning off toward the Lavender Farm. Except we didn't turn off. There was no one at the corner and I had forgotten to get the run notes. I received a phone call from Noellene who was asking where I was. Hepburn Springs, I said. All 17 cars had to wait while Ian and Karen came back for the dummy without the notes.

Once again part of the convoy, we had a bit of a play then worked our way round to Creswick. The day was simply perfect – not too hot, sun, no wind ... what can I say? We sailed back to the Gleesons'

residence for lunch. We brought our own meat but everything else was supplied. There is no end to the generosity of John and Noels. We spent the afternoon under the leafy canopy of their back yard and ate and drank wine (or whatever).

The run was relaxed and fun without being overly long (good for me at the moment) and well thought out. Much fun! The afternoon was even better with the relaxed company and a perfect day weatherwise. In fact the day couldn't have been better.

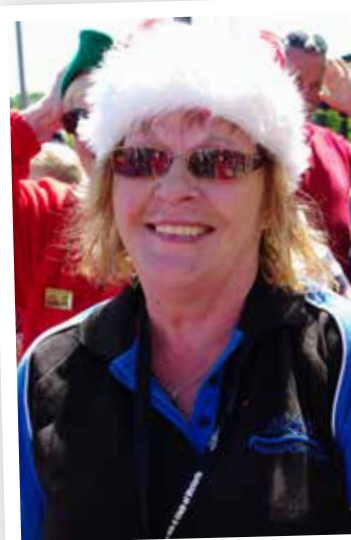
After some hours, people started to drift off. Everyone had a great time and it was so exciting to catch up with my Ballarat friends again and actually drive in a run.

A HUGE thanks to John and Noellene for their tremendous efforts. What more can I say? ●

**As we go to press, Lockie is back in hospital recovering from more surgery resulting from his July accident. He reports all is going well.*



Three wise monkeys? Jeff, Lockie & Ian



◀ Dawn Everett

Tyrone Dark ▶



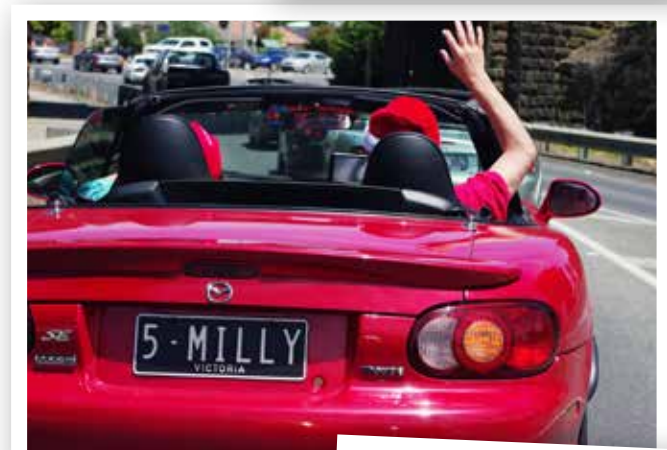
◀ Will, Pam, Tyrone, Lockie & Tracey

Noellene Gleeson ▶



Lockie & Tracey heading back into Ballarat

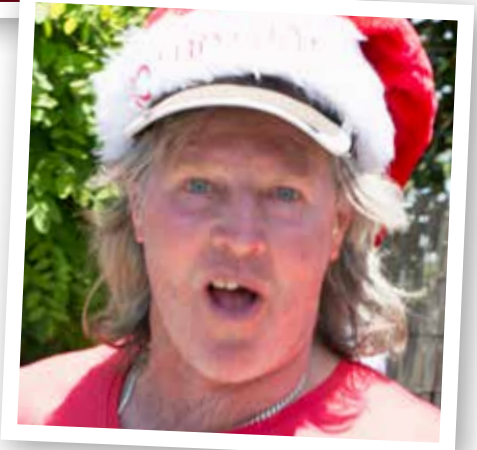
Three wise monkeys? Lester, Gwenda & Neil



Noellene and I would like to thank all who joined us for the Western Chapter Christmas break-up, and Karen, Dawn, Anne and Jan for bringing the salads, Julie for the bread sticks and Virgie for the beautiful sweets.

Thank you all for your support throughout 2013. We're looking forward to a zoom zoom 2014!

~ John Gleeson, Western Victoria Chapter Captain



Ian Bradshaw ▶ mxtra 21

Trading Post



For Sale

- » 2007 Stormy Blue NC
- » 1993 White NA Clubman
- » MX-5 rego plates

For details of these and other items to buy, swap, sell and borrow, see our "Trading Post" page in the "Clubroom" section of the Club's website, mx5vic.org.au



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

'CW' ... on the road again

Words & photos: John Waldock, Southern Tasmania Chapter Captain



So it's the new year and happily I can report that "CW" the Sprite is back on the road.

Since the last update, we finally got the engine and gear box back from the guys (it only took 18 months to sort!!). Over a day this was put back in, and generally it was a straight forward job.

Lots of fiddly little things to re-attach and, like Santa we made a list and checked it twice ... but we still managed to forget to earth the motor, which was done later after we discovered he was earthing through one of the fluid lines.

At the end of the day, we prepared ourselves and turned the key on and pulled the starter. Lots of cranking, chugging and then CW's motor caught and started to idle, being carefully controlled by Allan. After 20 seconds the motor stopped, and after a little tweaking of carburettors we started him again, this time able to get a sustained idle for about 10 minutes. We repeated the idle time, making sure oil pressure and water temperature were good, then we changed the oil and stopped for the day, pretty chuffed that he actually was running. Allan repeated idling over the next week, to begin the process of bedding the rings and rest of the motor.

Now for the final two things: the interior and painting of CW. We eventually found a local spray painter called Phil, who was happy to prep and respray the outside of CW and sort out any issues in that area. We also had to make some decisions about the interior ... the seats were eventually re-covered and look great, we replaced the carpets and otherwise cleaned the interior vinyl and replaced the standard black steering wheel with a Moto-Lita wooden and aluminium one.

The spraying went well, though magnifying glasses were used to go over the surface and a few things had to be re-done due to fussiness on the part of Allan and myself (Phil did say we should be very particular, but I'm not sure he understood who he was talking to).

After painting, the interior was set up, steering wheel, bumpers went on as well as 101 other little jobs that had to be done. Almost finished, after three years of work.

We decided we were ready to brave the open road, and gingerly Allan drove CW out of his garage, and then up and down the road. Feeling all was well, we took him further, and generally he behaved well, though engine temperature was a little high and a few drops of oil were evident.

In the two months since CW was first driven, we have slowly extended the distances we have driven, and with some tweaking of the carburettors (thanks Mike) he is running well, not overheating and generally not losing too much oil. There are still a few things to do and I suspect being an old car we will be tinkering with CW endlessly – but that's the challenge and joy of owning an older car.

Now on to the next one! ●

In February 2011 John reported that he and his best mate – fellow Southern Tassie Chapter member Allan Pryer – had "gone halves" in a Sprite in need of a complete restoration, which they named "CW" after Allan's late father. They've been updating us regularly on their journey back to the road, and now all the hard work has paid off ...



^ Allan takes CW for a spin



^ Picky, picky ... checking the paint job



^ John, rightly proud of his and Allan's handiwork

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The Island ... still magic!

Words: Tim Meaden

Super weather and a big attendance meant it was going to be a busy and fantastic day.

Of course, the only way to start the day was with the iconic egg and bacon roll ... and a big coffee.

It was great to see so many club members and even some wives came along. The MX-5 Club motor sport group was very well represented with 36 cars ready to hit the track.

Group 1 again had some of our quickest cars in it with Paul Ledwith and great to see Owen Boak back at a Sprint Championship round. They both gave the Porsches and Nissans something to think about with some impressive runs. Dean Monik was flying in Dad's lovely black NB and nearly everyone improved their times. Alex Hailstone was again in the mix as a part-sponsored drive sharing Ben Sale's NA and reeling out some great times for what I think was her first time at the Island.

Russell Garner won the award for the dirtiest car and the unhappiest pilot. The car had the engine rebuilt again (for second time) and still had less power than before it was rebuilt! Not happy Jan, but lucky he is the only MX-5 in his category!

Murph had the new beast flying. First session he had the big rear spoiler attached to the car, but it disappeared later in the day ... wasn't sure whether it fell off (*déjà vu* Winton 6 hour) or it was slowing the car on the main straight so much that he took it off. Pretty sure it was the latter!

"Captain2" made a cameo appearance on during the day. That's all he was allowed apparently ... Sally said he has had enough motor sport days for his health lately. We also missed *Captain1* and his incredible wit, excitement and his technical and driving advice.

I was in the pits and mentally preparing for the next session with a cup of coffee when Princey and Pam cruised past ... on foot! They stopped for a chat and I couldn't help but notice the way Princey was eyeing off my impressive-looking 10AE. "Do you have any body panels for sale," Peter asked? Fitzy was another of the crew in the "DNS" (*did not start*) category after blowing another turbo at the Wakefield Park Interstate Challenge.

2013-14 City Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship Round 6 - 17.11.13

I was speaking with Peter Marks (from Echuca) and he was having a top day in his NC. To quote Peter: "No worries for 200km/hr around turn 1". He loves the NC as he can drive it around during the week, change the seat and add a harness and away you go. I was watching the V8 Supercars on the next weekend and Craig Lowndes went around Turn 1 at about 210+km/hr.

The *Flyin' Miatas* were out in force minus one. I couldn't help but notice that Max is still very fast ... Robert and John Downes, Noel Heritage and John Reid were all very impressed with Max's great times.

Lowlight of the day was a 30-minute interruption to the event when the superfast Radical hit the wall. It was a very expensive looking heap of fibreglass and bits in the trailer when we walked past. It is very reassuring to know how strong the MX-5 is, both mechanically and structurally.

There were no mishaps for the MX-5 members for the day that I can recall. However, there was plenty of camaraderie, great driving and fast times, with everyone really looking forward to driving PI again in 2014. ●

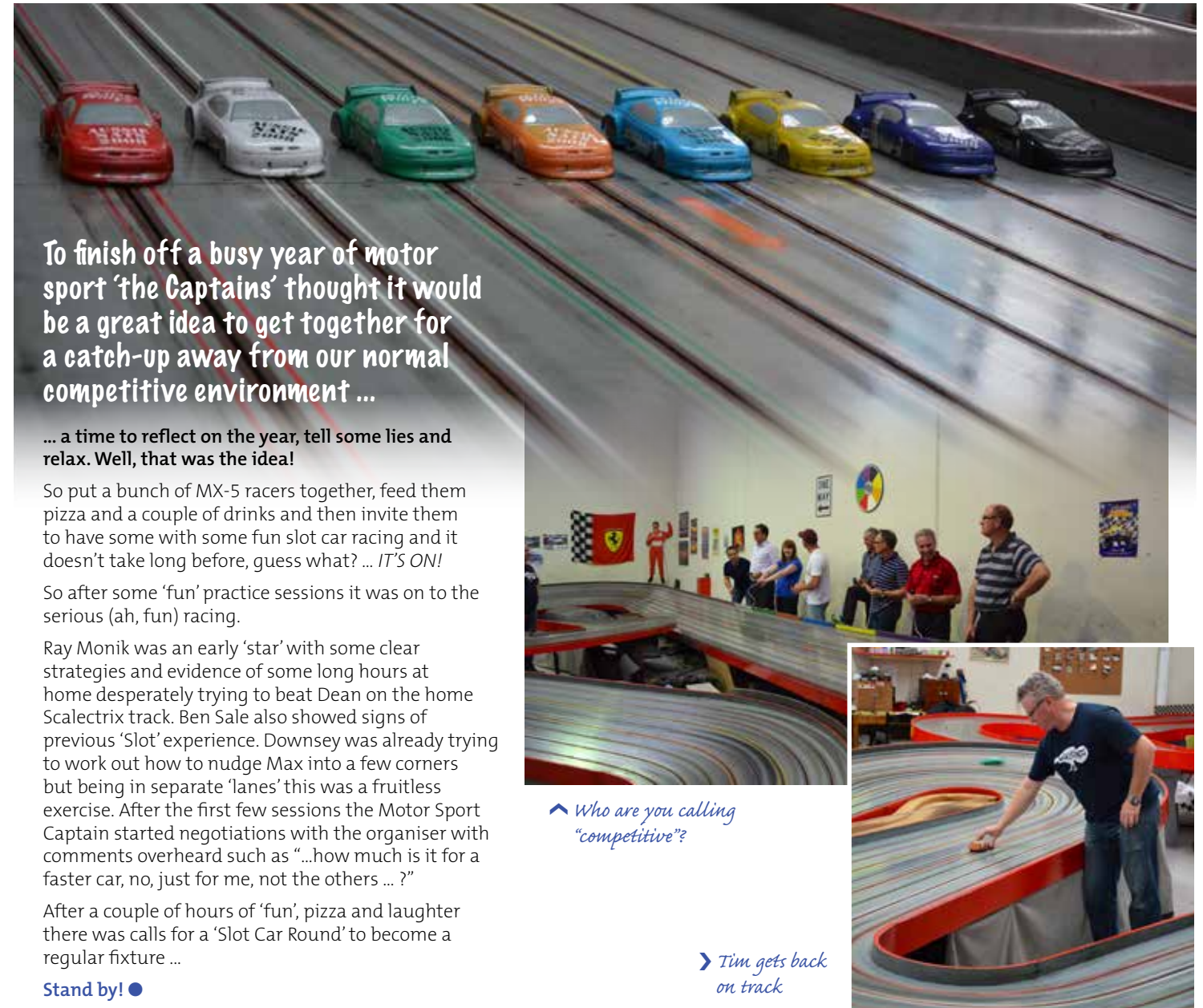
File pic (Jess Murphy)



"Wildcard" Sprint Championship Round

Slot car night!

Words: Tim Emery Photos: Daniel White Organisers: Daniel White & Tim Emery



To finish off a busy year of motor sport 'the Captains' thought it would be a great idea to get together for a catch-up away from our normal competitive environment ...

... a time to reflect on the year, tell some lies and relax. Well, that was the idea!

So put a bunch of MX-5 racers together, feed them pizza and a couple of drinks and then invite them to have some with some fun slot car racing and it doesn't take long before, guess what? ... *IT'S ON!*

So after some 'fun' practice sessions it was on to the serious (ah, fun) racing.

Ray Monik was an early 'star' with some clear strategies and evidence of some long hours at home desperately trying to beat Dean on the home Scaletrix track. Ben Sale also showed signs of previous 'Slot' experience. Downsey was already trying to work out how to nudge Max into a few corners but being in separate 'lanes' this was a fruitless exercise. After the first few sessions the Motor Sport Captain started negotiations with the organiser with comments overheard such as "...how much is it for a faster car, no, just for me, not the others ...?"

After a couple of hours of 'fun', pizza and laughter there was calls for a 'Slot Car Round' to become a regular fixture ...

Stand by! ●

Who are you calling "competitive"?

Tim gets back on track

City Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship - Round 6: Phillip Island - 17.11.13

| Results - Round 2 | 1st | 2nd | 3rd |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Standard NA | Noel Heritage » 2:03.7493** | --- | --- |
| Standard NB | John Downes » 2:08.3471 | Peter Dannock » 2:08.5913 | --- |
| Standard NC | Randy Stagno Navarra » 1:59.7091 | Alan Conrad » 2:01.6462 | Brian Mutton » 2:24.6060 |
| Clubman | Max Lloyd » 2:03.6661 | Nick Cannizzo » 2:05.2498 | Leon Bogers » 2:06.3140 |
| Modified | Dean Monik » 1:57.2969 | Ben Sale » 1:58.1704 | Ray Monik » 1:59.5486 |
| Super Modified | Russell Garner » 1:53.5830** | --- | --- |
| Restricted Open | Paul Ledwith » 1:52.0266** | --- | --- |
| Open | Owen Boak » 1:47.0112** | David Bruce » 1:58.6865 | Mike Kirby » 2:58.4497 |

** New Club lap record

Championship standings after Rd 6 - Phillip Island, 17 November, 2013

| (corrected points) | 1st | 2nd | 3rd |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Overall Champion | Noel Heritage » 50 | Leon Bogers » 49 | Randy Stagno Navarra » 46 |
| Standard NA | Noel Heritage » 50 | Daryl Irvine » 7 | --- |
| Standard NB | Leon Bogers » 37 | John Downes » 34 | Peter Dannock » 23 |
| Standard NC | Randy Stagno Navarra » 46 | Alan Conrad » 33 | Robert Hart » 20 |
| Clubman | Max Lloyd » 45 | Peter Phillips » 40 | Tim Emery » 27 |
| Modified | David Wilken » 40 | Dean Monik » 30 | Gary Prescott » 27 |
| Super Modified | Russell Garner » 60 | --- | --- |
| Restricted Open | Brendan Beavis » 44 | Paul Ledwith » 37 | --- |
| Open | Mark Fitzgerald » 20 | Mike Kirby » 16 | David Bruce » 14 |

2009 Mazda MX-5 ... used car review

Words: David Morley, freelance motoring writer Photo: theage/drive.com.au/used-car-reviews 26/10/13



Drive's rating: 4.5 / 5

Mazda hasn't swayed from the formula for its compact roadster, and newer versions are now more affordable.

It shouldn't come as any surprise to learn that the 2009 facelift for the Mazda MX-5 didn't really amount to much in the way of actual change.

After all, when you're on a good thing, and all that ...

In fact, Mazda has, over the decades the MX-5 has been on sale, not only resisted change, but actively pursued a continuation of the theme, even refusing to add more horsepower as engine design evolved.

The danger was, of course, that any wholesale changes to the way the little roadster worked might have upset the car's inherent balance.

And when it comes to the subject of balance, very few cars throughout history have had such a mortgage on the concept as the diminutive Mazda.

For the purists out there, the very first model with its pop-up headlights was the real deal but now, almost 25 years on, most of the ones still running around have covered big distances.

That's not necessarily a problem as the original MX-5 driveline has proven itself good for 400,000km or more if serviced properly, but for peace of mind, many buyers are now looking at newer versions.

Either way, they're still buying the essence of the original, thanks to Mazda's

determination never to sell out.

Within the context of newer MX-5 models, the post-2009 examples are now starting to come down in price to the point where they're conscionable purchases even for somebody looking for a weekend toy.

So what are you buying? Essentially, the MX-5 is a strict two-seater with a folding cloth roof, rear-wheel-drive and a four-cylinder engine.

By 2009, you could also opt for a folding metal roof and there was a choice of six-speed manual or six-speed automatic.

The manual was, of course, the choice of the real enthusiast driver, but it should also be said that the automatic was a darn good gearbox. In any vehicle other than the MX-5, that is.

The engine had by now grown to a full two litres yet Mazda pegged the power output at 118kW, mindful of overpowering the chassis and upsetting that all-important balance.

Despite its fun factor, there are not really too many concerns with a used MX-5, either, as they seem to be made of particularly stern stuff.

Even though they'll all have been driven hard at some point in their lives (that's the point, after all) but this sort of treatment doesn't seem to reduce their

ability to keep on keeping on.

So what are the things to check?

Since the design has been more or less unchanged for so long, the same checks generally apply regardless of how old the car in question is.

The first thing is to make sure that the engine has had a new timing belt fitted by the time it's covered 100,000km.

Most mechanics recommend replacing the water pump and idler pulleys at the same time and this is also a good time to fit a new rocker cover gasket as these have been known to leak a little oil as the car ages.

Speaking of oil leaks, the other problem area is the crank-angle sensor at the rear of the cylinder head which can drop some oil on to the rubber heater hoses that continue on into the car's cabin.

Some owners replace the rubber heater hoses with silicon versions, but fixing the oil leak itself is a better idea.

To be perfectly fair, these oil leaks were vastly more common on earlier versions of the engine than the post-2008 model, but since they're such easy checks to make, we'd recommend them anyway.

The same goes for the bottom pulley on the front of the crankshaft.

If there's any shimmying as the bottom pulley spins, it could be loose on the end of the crank and moving around. If that happens, it will quickly damage the snout of the crankshaft, and a full rebuild (with a new crank) is the only solution.

Again, this was more prevalent on early cars, but the problem is usually caused by a lazy mechanic who has removed the pulley and not tightened it properly.

The correct procedure is to tighten the pulley with an air-gun, but that requires removing the radiator. In order to get around that chore, a lazy tradesman will attempt to tighten the pulley with a normal spanner, but it rarely gets the thing tight enough to prevent the problem some time down the track.

While the Mazda has an enviable reputation for being a drop-top that doesn't leak, it's still worth checking as the actual material of the roof can deteriorate over time, even if the design is still sound.

Early cars had plastic rear windows which could crack and discolour over time, but

later models had a glass window which was much better.

In either case, take a close look at the roof material and the seams and make sure there's no fraying or discolouring or brittleness in the plastic rear window.

A garden hose sprayed on the roof is a pretty good way to gauge the leak situation, but be aware that some water will enter the car when you open the door after a rain shower.

But there shouldn't be any dampness inside the car nor any musty smells or mouldiness from the carpets.

If there is, you're probably looking at a car with a leak and that means the roof has either deteriorated, been poorly fitted or the car has been in a crash big enough to twist the body or roof out of alignment.

Don't forget to check for water leaks in the boot, too.

While you're there, check under the boot trim and then under the bonnet for signs that the metal has been repainted.

The factory finish was a dull version of the body colour, and any overspray or shiny paint suggests the car has been hit and repaired.

It's not the end of the world, but it needs to have been fixed properly.

Make sure you know what you're buying, too: many older MX-5s now on the market were private imports from Japan and other parts of Asia. Any example with a Eunos, rather than a Mazda, badge is a grey import and will be worth slightly less to buy. Or should be.

By far the biggest issue with MX-5

ownership is a car that has binding brakes or dry seals purely through not being driven regularly enough.

Many owners keep their MX-5s for sunny days only, and some simply don't get the regular gallop they need.

At least that's one thing that's easy – and a lot of fun – to rectify. ●

Likes:

- » A proper driver's car in every sense of the term.
- » Brilliant handling and great balance thanks to rear-wheel-drive.
- » Looks fantastic and popular within the trade.
- » Snickety manual gearshift the best in the business.
- » More than the sum of its parts.

Safety rating: 4 stars

25th anniversary

2015 Club calendar : call for photos

Next year will be a big year for the Club – we celebrate our 25th anniversary – and we would like to help you mark every day of the year with a fantastic Club wall calendar.

It will be sent free to all financial members in December ...

But before we get to that, we have to put it together, and that's where you come in.

We're calling on all members to submit your best MX-5 photos ... whether they be something spontaneous from a Club event, something staged with a scenic backdrop, or even something shot in your back yard. It could be at sunrise or sunset, or with storm clouds or a rainbow in the background. It's up to you.

If you think it's worth consideration for the calendar, then we would like to see it.

All photos are welcome, no matter what your level of skill as a photographer or quality of your equipment. The shots don't need to be new – you might have an all-time favourite in your archive.

There are just three pre-requisites:

- » the car must belong to a Club member
- » the format must be "landscape" (ie, wider than high) to suit the layout, and
- » your image should be the highest resolution you can make it. The higher the resolution, the better for printing. As the calendar will be A4 size, a picture size of 3600 pixels wide x 2600 pixels deep would be ideal (about 8 to 10MB)

Some hints:

- » when taking your photograph, please take a moment to think about the composition of the shot ...
- is anything obscuring part of the car or other elements you want in the photo?
- is there anything in view that you *don't* want in the shot?
- is there anything reflecting in the glass or paintwork that you don't want to see?
- is the lens cap off (... sorry!)
- » try to get the best shot you can without too much in the foreground or background
- » make sure the car is in focus!

Overly altered, composite or edited images will *not* be used. We want the photos to reflect the purity of our great little sports cars.

We're only looking for 12 great MX-5 photos – so please just send your best images for consideration ...

All images will be credited, so please include as much detail as you can with your submission:



your name, Chapter, when and where the photo was taken, including (if applicable) the name of the run or event. Please re-name your image something that identifies you as the photographer (eg, *fred-nerk-1.jpg*).

Please e-mail your entry to editor@mx5vic.org.au, with "2015 Calendar" as the subject. The deadline for submissions is 30 September, 2014.

The entries to be published will be decided by a panel that includes a graphic designer. There's no prize for the selected images, other than seeing your work in print on over 500 walls!

As they say, "no correspondence ..." etc

Oh, and this is a labour of love. The Club won't be paying for the artwork, and can't pay for any photographs. ●

Alan Bennett's MX-5 jokes ...

I was driving my MX-5 down the Monash Freeway on the way to a Club event when my phone rang.

Answering, I heard my wife's voice urgently warning me, "Alan, I just heard on the news that there's a car going the wrong way on Monash. Please be careful!" "It's not just one car," I said. "It's hundreds of them!"

Did you hear about the guy who went into Repco and said to the shop assistant, "Can I get a new petrol tank cap for an Alfa?"

The shop assistant thought for a second and said, "That seems like a fair trade."

Five Englishmen in an Audi Quattro arrive at the Italian border.

The Italian Customs agent stops them and says, "It's illegal to put five people in a Quattro."

"What do you mean it's illegal?" ask the Englishmen.

"Quattro means four," replies the Italian official.

"Quattro is just the name of the automobile," the Englishmen retort disbelievingly. "This car is designed to carry five people."

"You can't pull that one on me," replies the Italian customs agent. "Quattro means four. You have five people in your car and you are therefore breaking the law."

The Englishmen replies angrily, "You idiot! Call your supervisor over—I want to speak to someone with more intelligence!"

"Sorry," responds the Italian official, "he can't come. He's busy with two guys in a Fiat Uno."

The police came to my front door last night holding a picture of my wife and asked, "Is this your wife, sir?"

Shocked, I answered, "Yes it is."

They said, "I'm afraid it looks like she's been hit by a bus."

I said, "I know, but she has a lovely personality and she's good with the kids."

Q: Why do chicken coops have two doors?

A: Because if they had four, they'd be chicken sedans!

A middle-aged guy had just been dumped by his wife. So, he decides to go out and buy a shiny, new red MX-5 convertible. He's driving along at 150km/h, when he sees a flashing light on a cop car in the rear-view mirror.

"What the hell, he can't keep up with an MX-5," he thinks to himself. So he floors it.

A few minutes later, he's overcome with guilt. "Hey! What am I doing," he thinks? And he slows down and pulls over.

The cop asks him for his licence, and walks around the car while he examines both. When the cop gets back to the driver's door, he says, "It's Friday the thirteenth. My shift is just about over. I'm tired and I want to go home. If you can give me a good excuse, I'll let you go."

The guy thinks for a split second and says ...

"My wife just ran away with a cop. I thought you were trying to give her back."

A blonde was trying to sell her MX-5 but was having a lot of problems because the odometer had 450,000km on it. One day she told her problem to a brunette that she worked with. The brunette told her: "There is a possibility to make the car easier to sell, but it's not legal."

"That doesn't matter," replied the blonde, "if I only can sell the car."

"Okay," said the brunette. "Here is the address of a friend of mine. He owns a car repair shop. Tell him I sent you and he'll turn the odometer in your car back to 50,000km. Then it shouldn't be a problem to sell your car." The next weekend, the blonde made the trip to the mechanic. and, the following week, the brunette asked the blonde if she'd sold her MX-5? "No," replied the blonde, "why should I? It only has 50,000km on it."

Working people often ask retired people what they do to make their days interesting. Well, for example, the other day I went to the CBD and went into a shop. I was only in there for about 10 minutes and when I came out, there was a cop writing out a ticket. I went up to him and said, "Come on – how about giving a retired person a break?"

He ignored me and continued writing the ticket. I called him an "idiot".

He glared at me and started writing another ticket for having worn tyres. So I called him a "communication retard".

He finished the second ticket and put it on the windscreen with the first.

Then he started writing a third ticket. This went on for about 20 minutes. The more I talked to him, the more tickets he wrote.

I didn't care ... I went to the city on the tram!

A mechanic was removing a cylinder head from the motor of a MX-5 when he spotted a well-known heart surgeon in his shop.

The surgeon was there waiting for the service manager to have a look at his car when the mechanic shouted across the garage, "Hey, Doc, can I ask you a question?"

The surgeon, a bit surprised, walked over to where the mechanic was working on the motorcycle. The mechanic straightened up, wiped his hands on a rag. "So Doc, look at this engine. I open its heart, take the valves out, repair any damage, and then put them back in, and when I finish, it works just like new. So how come I get such a small salary and you get the really big bucks, when you and I are doing basically the same work?" The surgeon paused, smiled, leaned over, and said, "Try doing it with the engine running."

Crusty's nephew, Bazza, applied for a position as mechanic at Ray's garage. It just so happened that a young woman had walked in that day also looking for a job. There was only one position to be filled, and since both applicants seemed to have the same qualifications, Ray asked them both to take a written test.

Upon completion of the test, both had missed only one of the questions. Ray went to Bazza and said, "Thank you for your interest, but we've decided to give the job to the young lady."

Bazza asked, "Why? We both got nine questions correct. Since my uncle Crusty works here, I should get the job!"

Ray said, "We have made our decision not on the correct answers, but rather on the question you missed."

Bazza then asked, "And just how would one incorrect answer be better than the other?"

Ray replied, "Simple – for question #10, the young woman put down, 'I don't know.'"

You put down, "Neither do I." ●

Things you see when you haven't got a ...



Contributor: Ron Macdonald

1993 replica/kit makes 1972 Ferrari Dino 246 GTS

Ferrari Dino 246 GTS Replica kit car

Source: www.carscoops.com

For sale on eBay ... location: East Elmhurst, New York, United States

Both the Ferrari Dino (well, actually, it was aptly called Dino as it was envisioned as a sub-brand for Ferrari's lesser models) and the original Mazda MX-5 or Miata are special, unique cars that have secured a place in automotive history.

So, a car that combines the two should be pretty awesome ride, ticking plenty of boxes, right?

Well, let's just say that it all depends on your definition of "awesome".

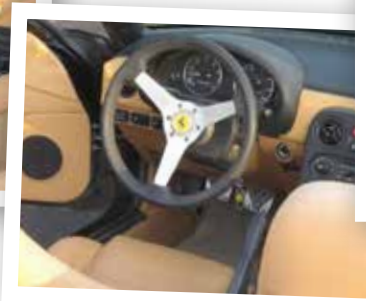
Let's see what the current owner of this Ferrari Dino GT replica – built around a 1993 Mazda MX-5 – has to say about it:

"Unbelievable build, must see! Turns heads, pictures taken, horns honk, thumbs go up. What an attention getter it is! You will feel like you hit the Lotto when driving this car!!! You will get the Supercar looks and reliability of a Mazda and great gas mileage of almost a hybrid ..."

Still not convinced?

The *Diniata* is said to have only "88K original certified miles (although the working speedometer shows 39K)". It might be a Mazda at heart, but the eBay asking price has a faint Ferrari scent to it at US\$29,000 (A\$32,500). ○

PS: this one won't be in our 2015 calendar!



Wonderful English from around the world

Contributor: Alan Laine

In a Bangkok temple:

It is forbidden to enter a woman, even a foreigner, if dressed as a man.

Norwegian cocktail lounge:

Ladies are requested not to have children in the bar.

Doctor's office, Rome:

Specialist in women and other diseases.

Dry cleaners, Bangkok:

Drop your trousers here for the best results.

In a Nairobi restaurant:

Customers who find our waitresses rude ought to see the manager.

On the main road to Mombasa, leaving Nairobi:

Take notice: When this sign is under water, this road is impassable.

On a poster at Kencom:

Are you an adult that cannot read? If so, we can help.

In a City restaurant:

Open seven days a week and weekends.

In a cemetery:

Persons are prohibited from picking flowers from any but their own graves.

Tokyo hotel's rules and regulations:

Guests are requested not to smoke, or do other disgusting behaviours in bed.

On the menu of a Swiss restaurant:

Our wines leave you nothing to hope for.

In a Tokyo bar:

Special cocktails for the ladies with nuts.

In the lobby of a Moscow hotel, across from a Russian Orthodox monastery:

You are welcome to visit the cemetery, where famous Russian and Soviet composers, artists and writers are buried daily, except Thursday.

A sign posted in Germany's Black Forest:

It is strictly forbidden on our Black Forest camping site, that people of different sex, for instance, men and women, live together in one tent, unless they are married with each other for this purpose.

Advertisement for donkey rides in Thailand:

Would you like to ride on your own ass?

Airline ticket office, Copenhagen:

We take your bags and send them in all directions.

A laundry in Rome:

Ladies, leave your clothes here and then spend the afternoon having a good time.

And finally, the all-time classic:

Seen in an Abu Dhabi Souk shop window:

If the front is closed please enter through my backside.

Aircraft repairs ...

Contributor: Ian Ternet

Remember it takes a college degree to fly a plane, but only a high school diploma to fix one; that's reassurance to those of us who fly routinely.

After every flight, UPS pilots fill out a form, called a 'gripe sheet,' which tells mechanics about problems with the aircraft.

The mechanics correct the problems, document their repairs on the form, and then pilots review the gripe sheets before the next flight.

Never let it be said that ground crews lack a sense of humor. Here are some actual maintenance complaints submitted by UPS pilots (marked with a "P") and the solutions recorded (marked with an "S") by maintenance engineers.

By the way, UPS is the only major airline that has never, ever, had an accident

P: Left inside main tire almost needs replacement.

S: Almost replaced left inside main tire.

P: Test flight OK, except auto-land very rough.

S: Auto-land not installed on this aircraft.

P: Something loose in cockpit.

S: Something tightened in cockpit.

P: Dead bugs on windshield.

S: Live bugs on back-order.

P: Autopilot in altitude-hold mode produces a 200 feet/minute descent.

S: Cannot reproduce problem on ground.

P: Evidence of leak on right main landing gear.

S: Evidence removed.

P: DME volume unbelievably loud.

S: DME volume set to more believable level.

P: Friction locks cause throttle levers to stick.

S: That's what friction locks are for.

P: IFF inoperative in OFF mode.

S: IFF always inoperative in OFF mode.

P: Suspected crack in windshield.

S: Suspect you're right.

P: Number 3 engine missing.

S: Engine found on right wing after brief search.

P: Aircraft handles funny.

S: Aircraft warned to straighten up, fly right and be serious.

P: Target radar hums.

S: Reprogrammed target radar with lyrics.

P: Mouse in cockpit.

S: Cat installed.

And the best one for last ...

P: Noise coming from under instrument panel. Sounds like a midget pounding on something with a hammer.

S: Hammer taken away from the midget.

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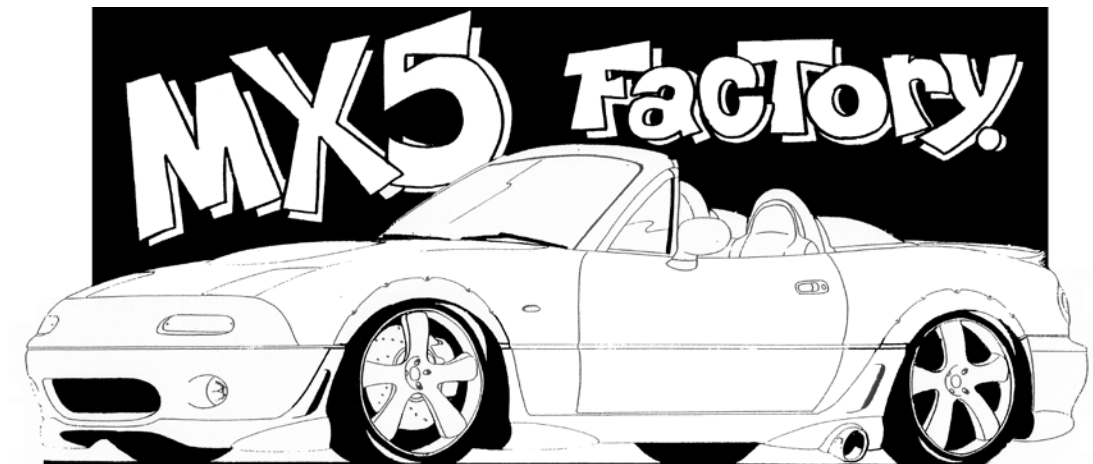
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| 9am - 10am | You can pop in straight after you drop the kids off to school | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 10.30am - 11.30pm | Catch up on the daily headlines while we work on your car | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 11.30am - 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"/> |
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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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