

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



And the winners are ...



In this edition:

Next MX-5 ... now a Fiat?

2013-14 Motor Sport Champions

Top down under the midnight sun



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MX-5

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6/2014

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City Mazda DP Greg McPherson (left) with Noel Heritage and Randy Stagno Navarra, joint 2013-14 City Mazda Sprint Championship winners. Photo: Ben Sale



Find us at:
MX-5 Club of
Victoria

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Don's Drive(l) ...

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

Hi everyone, welcome to the June *mxtra*.

In the past month there has been a lot on. In addition to the numerous Chapter runs we have also had the first General Meeting of the Club (it might even be the first ever!) and the inaugural Motor Sports Award evening.

The General Meeting was held on 21 May at City Mazda. It was convened to propose and discuss some changes to the Club's constitution (the *Statement of Purposes and Rules* to give it the correct title). The agenda included two motions:

- » That the incorporated name of the Club be changed from 'Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria Inc.' to 'Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria and Tasmania Inc.'. The General Meeting passed the motion unanimously.
- » That version 2014/1 of the Club's *Statement of Purposes and Rules* be adopted as the *Statement of Purposes and Rules for the Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria and Tasmania Inc.* The General Meeting also passed this motion unanimously.

The change to the Club's incorporated name reflects that this Club really is a Club for both Victoria and Tasmania. The second motion contained several changes to the constitution as I have written previously but, in summary, it was to simplify the Club Membership categories back to four, to include modifications resulting from the Victorian Government's Association Incorporation Reform Act of 2012 and to remove rule 9 (which was a duplication).

The General Meeting comprised all 12 members of the Committee plus several Club members as well as quite a few proxy votes. I would like to thank the members who attended or voted by proxy for their contribution. Considering that the subject matter was pretty dry, your input to the discussion was very welcome and much appreciated.

The next step is for the Club Secretary, Peter Dannock, to get a tick of approval for the changes from the Department of Justice which, we understand, is more a formality than a test.

Moving on to the Motor Sport Awards night held on 16 May, more of which is included in this edition of *mxtra* (see

pages 8-9). Perhaps a little background would be in order for those of wondering why this awards presentation was held separately from the annual Club Awards event. Most motor sport in Australia is conducted on a calendar year basis. Our Motor Sport Group has traditionally operated on a Club membership year basis (July-June) to fit in with the rest of the Club. However, our Motor Sport Group have evolved into a very important part of the Alfa Romeo Owners Club of Australia's (AROCA) motor sport events.

AROCA operates a calendar year program which has meant that our season has been the latter part of one AROCA season and the earlier part of their subsequent season. It would clearly be much more efficient to organise our season if it overlapped with the AROCA (and any other Club's) season.

The plan, therefore, over a couple of seasons, is to realign our motor sport season to a calendar year program. The first step was taken this 2013-14 season with the last event on 5 April and the first event of the 2014-15 season on 10 May. Eventually the plan is to finish the season in December and to have the motor sport awards evening at that time.

The 16 May awards evening was the first step in the gradual change to December. As a participant, I think it fair to say that the evening was a huge success. It was good to see that a few Club members decided to attend even though they were not participating in the motor sport events – which underlines that this evening was never intended to be exclusive to motor sport participants. It was open to everyone to come along and congratulate the winners and I hope more Club members will take the opportunity to participate next year.

The change to the motor sport awards event does present some challenges for the Committee as we still have the other Club awards to distribute at the end of the current Club year. A proposal was tabled at the last Committee meeting to hold an awards breakfast in Apollo Bay at the end of the Great Ocean Road event in October, but this does present some challenges for aspiring participants from the NE Victoria Chapter and the Eastern Chapter (not to mention the Tasmanians). At the moment it is a work in progress

For your diary ...

See the full calendar for details

June

- 19 Central: New members' night
- 22 NE Vic: Tastes of the North-east
- 22 NTas: Magical Mystery Tour Part 2

July

- 12 Sprints 2014-15 Rd 2: Phillip Island
- 18 Eastern: Social night, Morwell

August

- 3 NE Vic: Mitta Mitta/Dartmouth
- 3 Sprints 2014-15 Rd 3: Winton
- 10 Central: Lancefield run

September

- 7 Eastern: Licola run
- 14 Central: Healesville Sanctuary run
- 14 NE Vic: Mt Buffalo run
- 21 Sprints 2014-15 Rd 4: Sandown
- 26 Central: Chapter dinner [TBC]

October

- 12 Central: Great Ocean Road run
- 18-19 2014 Winton 6 Hour
- 19 NE Vic: Jingellic run
- 26 Eastern: Leongatha lunch run
- TBA Central: High country run

November

- 15-16 Summit to Sea run
- 16 Eastern: Mt Worth run
- 23 Sprints 2014-15 Rd 5: Sandown

December

- 13 Sprints 2014-15 Rd 6: Broadford
- 14 Central: Annual CFA run
- 14 Eastern: Social night
- 14 NE Vic: Christmas run

and we are seeking input from the Chapter Captains – and indeed, any Club member – on how we can organise an event which is attractive to all members of the Club. More on that in the next edition of *mxtra*.

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

Remember ... **Safety first!**

Don

Scene about ...

■ Photos: Karen Bradshaw, Jenna Perks, Bruce Harvey, John Waldock, Ron Gillick





Membership

Current membership count:

593

and growing!

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

Hi all!

With the end of the Club year almost here, membership numbers are again in record territory.

Up almost 50 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 eight newcomers to our ranks:

Central Chapter

Gordon Cox	2001 Classic Red NB
Sandra and Phillip Davies	1989 Silver NA
Gavin Newman	1998 Black NB
Geoffrey Sanders	2001 Silver NB
Rohan Smyth	2000 Silver NB
Shane Sumpter	2004 Titanium NB

Southern Tasmania Chapter

Quentin Jones	1991 Sunburst Yellow NA
---------------	-------------------------

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

All members will soon receive either an email or a letter concerning the process for membership renewal. As mentioned in this month's President's Report, the Club's new Statement of Purposes and Rules was accepted at a General Meeting in May. There are many changes in the document, including changes to our membership categories. In an attempt to simplify this aspect of Club life, and apart from Honorary Life Membership,

we now have only three categories – Full, Family and Friend. Associate, Country and Junior categories have been dropped. Full and Family members will automatically receive a link to the online version of *mxtra*, but those requiring a printed *mxtra* will pay an additional \$40 for the 12 editions. The new membership rates for 2014-15 are as follows:

	Printed <i>mxtra</i> magazine (one per household)	PDF <i>mxtra</i> magazine
Full member	\$100.00 (\$96 in 2013/14)	\$60.00 (\$58 in 2013/14)
Family Member	\$132.00 (\$140 in 2013/14)	\$92.00 (no change)
Friend Member	\$36.00	Note: Friend members do not receive <i>mxtra</i> magazine

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, please call me or Vice President Murray. Our numbers are listed on page 3 of *mxtra*.

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 or intend 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 Club year!

Enjoy your MX-5, and see you out and about ...

Will



Things you see ...

... a falcon nesting in a tree

Nature is truly breath-taking! We've received many remarkable nature photographs over the years but this photo of a nesting falcon is perhaps the most remarkable nature shot we've ever seen.

Younger readers probably have never seen a falcon in the wild and may not recognise it.

We hope you enjoy it as much as we did. We've sent this to most of our older friends.

Source: <http://i.imgur.com/YW6Fufm.jpg>



Full Throttle!

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

Round 1 – Sandown, 10 May

Round 1 kicked off at Sandown in very wet and slippery conditions. Many drivers were seen heading back to the pits for some "brave pills" after their first practice session, as the conditions certainly provided some challenges.

Despite the poor weather, everyone had a great day, and the wet weather did provide a good opportunity for everyone to practice their car handling skills. Sandown is a very unforgiving circuit in the wet, as there is little to no runoff between the edge of the track and the Armco fencing.

Let's hope the sun is shining next time!

Check out Peter Dannock's report on page 24.

Motor Sport Awards Night

Our Annual Motor Sport Meeting and Awards Night was held at the Kent Hotel in Carlton North on 16 May and it was a great success.

I would like to thank everyone for their attendance. Special thanks to Tim Emery for his efforts and assistance with organising the event.

Tim's report on the night is on page 8.

Helmet / HANS Pricing

Those who attended the Motor Sport Meeting were told about the possibility of the Club confirming some special "group buy" pricing for a helmet/HANS device package.

After checking with both major retailers of HANS devices and helmets in Australia, Revolution Racegear and Racer Industries in Queensland, it appears that – due to the increased competition and ability to buy these products overseas – these retailers have slashed their prices to stay competitive. As a result of this and based



on their current special pricing, there are no further discounts available for group or club purchases.

Revolution currently has a HANS-compatible Bell R1 Helmet and HANS Sport 2 package (including HANS posts) for \$899.

For those of you who already have a HANS-compatible helmet, a HANS Sport 2 device is now priced at \$450 (not including posts).

If you are considering purchasing a new helmet or HANS device, it is definitely a great time to buy!

Call Brett at Revolution Racegear (03 9873 8700) for more information.

Round 2 – Phillip Island, 12 July

Phillip Island here we come!

Round 2 is shaping up to be a big one. We have had lots of enquiries coming through recently from new members who have bought an MX-5 for the purpose of motor sport and are ready to hit the track.

It's really great to see enthusiastic new talent coming through and it's great to see them enjoying themselves and their motor sport. If you are at a loose end and looking for somewhere to go for a day trip, drive down to the Island for the day ... you would be most welcome to call in and say hi to our Motor Sport Group and check out some on-track MX-5 action!

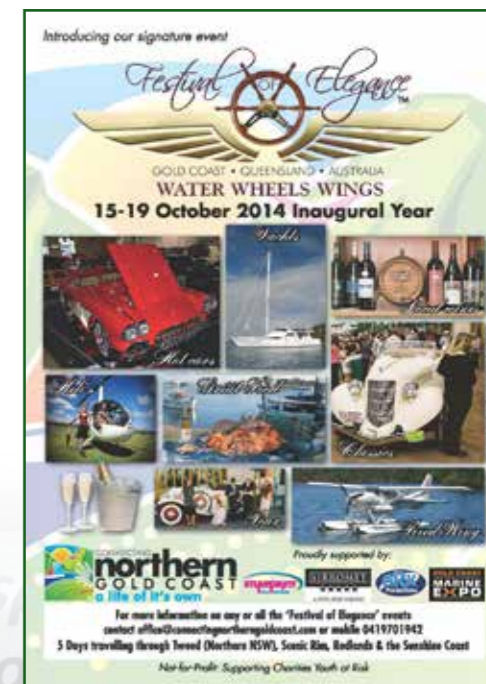
Best wishes Princey!!

On behalf of all of the Motor Sport Group, I would like to wish Pam and Peter "Princey" Phillips all the very best. We look forward to seeing you back on track soon, Peter!

Daniel #146

"Racing – converting money into noise!"

From life member and former Club President, David Henry:



For more information, see connectingnortherngoldcoast.com

MX-5 Motor Sport's night of nights

Words: Tim Emery Photos: Ben Sale



The 2013-14 City Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship season was capped off with the inaugural motor sport awards night on Friday, 16 May.

In previous years, trophies for Class winners and overall Motor Sport Champions have been awarded at the Club's annual awards lunch but as the Motor Sport Group grows and the Sprint Championship attracts more competitors it was decided to run a separate dedicated function. Based on the number of attendees and the atmosphere of the night it seems it was the right decision!

Attendees included Don Nicoll (Club President) Murray Finlay (Vice President) as always showing their support of the Motor Sport Group, Sprint Championship sponsors Greg McPherson (City Mazda) and Prem and Ajay from Arma Tinting. It was also great to see six-time Club Motor Sport Champion, Sam Gumina, and also so many of our long suffering motor sport 'WAGS' and extended family in attendance.

It wouldn't have been a MX-5 Motor Sport event without a little 'healthy competition' in the form of the 'Pro-Am MX-5 Simulator Challenge'. Thanks to my good mates Damian and Adrian, who kindly supplied a race simulator, the challenge was set. A current Sprint Championship competitor was teamed with a 'non-competitor', both of whom set their fastest time around Phillip Island in a 'Spec Miata' MX-5 for a combined total time. After some strong performances from the 'Lloyd Girls', including an impressive debut from Amanda teamed with Rob Parr, Vanessa in 'Team Heritage/Lloyd' ended up topping the time charts.

The event was hailed a great success so look out for next year's event and get in early for tickets! Special thanks to Damian and Adrian for the simulator and Craig Healy from Angove Wine for the special prize gift packs.

The highlight had to be Noel Heritage's gift to Max Lloyd of a framed photo of the front of Noel's previous car, the Classic Red NA he shared with Robert Downes, with instructions to Max to place it among his other motor sport trophies. "Ah yes," said Max, "it'll be a constant reminder of how I remember you best – in my rear vision mirror!" ●



2013-14 Sprint Championship Winners

Overall Champions	=	Noel Heritage Randy Stagno Navarra	
Standard NA	1	Noel Heritage	
	2	Daryl Ervine	
Standard NB	1	Peter Dannock	
	2	John Downes	
	3	Leon Bogers	
Standard NC	1	Randy Stagno Navarra	
	2	Alan Conrad	
	3	Peter Marks	
Clubman	1	Max Lloyd	
	2	Tim Emery	
	3	Peter Phillips	
Modified	1	Gary Prescott	
	2	Dean Monik David Wilken Tim Meaden	
		5	Ray Monik Daniel White
		1	Russell Garner
	Super Modified	2	Robert Parr
1		Paul Ledwith	
Restricted Open	2	Brendan Beavis	
	3	Mark Fitzgerald	
	Open	1	Mike Kirby
2		David Bruce	
3		Mark Fitzgerald	
Rookie of the Year		Peter Dannock	
Motor Sport Captain's Award		Russell Garner	



Next MX-5 ... now a Fiat?

Words: John Mellor's "GoAuto News", 7/5/14 Photos: www.roadandtrack.com

Despite initial indications that the next generation MX-5 would be a joint effort between Mazda and Alfa Romeo, it's now apparent that it will be a hybrid between Mazda and Alfa's parent, Fiat Chrysler ...

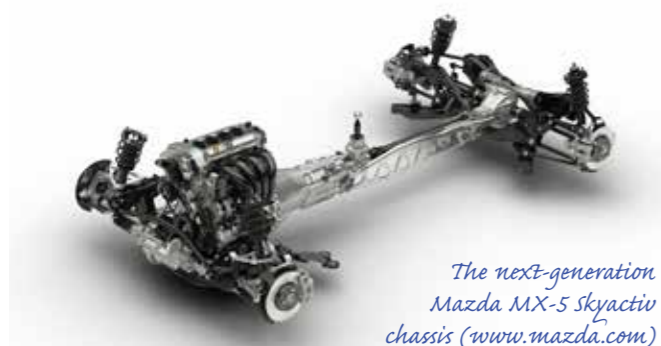
By Ron Hammerton

FIAT appears set to gain the Mazda-MX-5-based sportscar originally earmarked for Alfa Romeo under a model-sharing agreement between Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA) and the Japanese company.

A five-year product plan outlined by FCA executives in Detroit today indicates that a new "specialty" model will be launched by Fiat at the end of 2015 in North America and Europe.

Although FCA made no mention of the "specialty" car going on sale in the Asia-Pacific region – which includes Australia – GoAuto understands that Fiat Chrysler Group Australia has been assured it will get the vehicle as part of its premium car line-up at some point.

The new Mazda MX-5 is due in Australia some time in 2015, but the Fiat version is unlikely to arrive before 2016 – perhaps a year or more after the Mazda – if time lags on other right-hand-drive Fiat products are any guide.



The next-generation Mazda MX-5 Skyactiv chassis (www.mazda.com)

Alfa also has a mystery "specialty" car for launch between 2016 and 2018, but European speculation is that this vehicle is a higher-performance *Quadrifoglio* – cloverleaf – version of the new 4C roadster, perhaps featuring one of Alfa's new high-performance four-cylinder engines being developed with Ferrari.

In the case of the Fiat, it most likely will get a more mainstream Fiat-Chrysler four-cylinder engine. Nevertheless, the car has been mooted as the flagship of the range, sitting above the 500X and 500 Arbarth.

The joint-venture Mazda-Fiat sportscar will share the new Mazda-developed SkyActiv underpinnings shown at the recent New York motor show, but with separate powertrains and body styling.

The car is to be built for both brands in Mazda's Hiroshima plant – another indication that the car will be going to Fiat, because FCA executives were at pains to point out that all Alfa Romeos within the five-year plan will be made exclusively in Italy.

The timing of the Fiat car is also in line with the 2015 timing originally announced by FCA in 2012, when it said it had signed a non-binding memorandum of understanding for a joint Mazda-Alfa roadster to be built at Hiroshima.

FCA CEO Sergio Marchionne hinted at the recent Geneva motor show that the sportscar would not necessarily be built under Alfa badges – a hint that most observers took to mean that a new Fiat Barchetta was in the wings.

Neither Mr Marchionne nor Fiat CEO Olivier Francois threw any direct light on the sports car's future, beyond showing a graphic indicating the new specialty model emerging in 2015. ●



My favourite MX-5 road ...

Words & photo: Ken Beaton, Northern Tasmania Chapter

Ulverstone to Preston Falls

This circuit drive was first run during "Not the NatMeet" in Tassie in 2003.

It's a relatively short drive but covers driving river roads, a toilet and BBQ stop, a winding scenic hill climb and a visually spectacular hill top drive back again to your start.

It's an ideal drive for learning all the different road types and challenges, and hones your driving skills – great for someone new to sports car driving. At 39km, you'll want to do the circuit more than once.

From Ulverstone take the B17 south through North Motton to the sharp right turn 10km south (at the junction of C125) and you're at the start. Keep on the B17 for 4km as it winds down

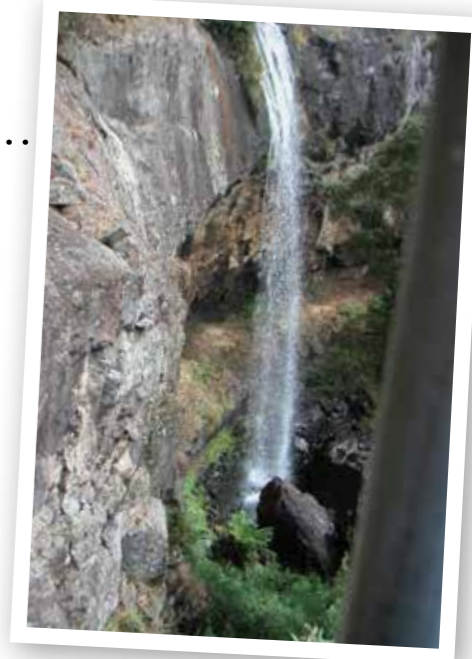


to the Leven River to Bannon Park toilet and rest area. This is also the turn off to the Wings Wildlife Park where you can visit native animals. Continue along the Leven River 5.1km to Gunns Plains Village,

turn left at Goodies general store to the scenic Raymond Road (C127) hillclimb past Leven Valley Vineyard and Gallery at the 1.9km mark. Continue another 2.5km to Preston Falls. These falls are very close to the road and a suitable car parking area is available. Continue on to the turn off less than 1km and turn left again, north on to Preston Rd (C125) and enjoy the scenic hill top winding drive back 9.3km to the turn off to continue on another lap.

This little drive has you experiencing all your exciting car was designed to do with the added bonus of some great scenery and fantastic traffic free roads. But remember your driving ability and experience – as well as the speed limits and other road users – and enjoy yourself and your car sensibly. ●

Left: Circuit Drive. Above: Preston Falls



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!

Mazda to compete in the 24 Hours Nürburgring

Commemorating the model's 25th anniversary, Mazda Motor Corporation will enter a Mazda MX-5 in the 2014 24 Hours Nürburgring amateur endurance race taking place in Germany on 21-22 June.

Mazda has commissioned UK's JOTA Sport to prepare the vehicle and manage the race team.

The team of four drivers includes Stefan Johansson, who knows endurance racing inside out and has an outstanding track record as a driver for *Mazdaspeed* at 24 Hours of Le Mans; Wolfgang Kaufmann, who has an intimate knowledge of the Nürburgring circuit; Owen Mildenhall, a journalist who has raced the Mazda MX-5 in a variety of competitions throughout England, and Teruaki Kato, winner of Japan's Roadster Party Race.

The iconic Mazda MX-5 symbolises

Mazda's car-making philosophy and tireless pursuit of driving pleasure. Over 940,000 units have been produced since the start of sales in 1989, and the model is recognised by Guinness World Records as the world's best-selling two-seater open-top sports car.

Mazda is sponsoring driving schools and participatory motor sport events, in the hope that more and more customers will be able to enjoy sporty driving. Through such activities Mazda aims to enrich the lives of its customers, and help to build a special bond between them and the Mazda brand. ●

The Mazda-JOTA Sport MX-5 in 24 Hours Nürburgring race spec. (www.mazda.com)



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Noel Ferri

North-Eastern Victoria

Name? Noel Ferri
Age? 75 (born 1938)
Born? Bright, north-eastern Victoria
Current abode? Burrumbuttock, southern NSW (north-west of Albury)
Profession? Retired 10 years (but 15 years a builder and 30 years a farmer before that)
Partner? Maria (five years)
Pets? Black cat
Fave food? Scotch fillet steak with egg salad ... or bangers and mash with onions
Can you cook? Do BBQ's count? I also make great party-size sausage rolls
Favourite tippie? Sparkling Shiraz from Anderson of Rutherglen
First drive? 1951 Vanguard ute
First car? The same Vanguard ute
First fender bender? 1950 Holden ute ... I failed to give way to the right at Porepunkah hotel!
Everyday driver? Subaru Forester and Maria's Iveco camper van
How many MX-5s have you owned? One, purchased in 2008
Current MX-5? 1992 Classic Red NA
MX-5 improvements? None – stock standard. But I have a long carry bag on the shelf behind the seats

MX-5 dislikes? I should have got one earlier!
Why an MX-5? I bought it for my 18-year-old daughter, Sarah, to learn to drive in ... now Dad is still learning to drive it!
Fluffy dice? N.O.
Passions besides the MX-5? For the last four years Maria and I have been "grey nomads" ... we spent 12 months looking at this great country we call home
Favourite TV show / movie / book? Top Gear
Dream wheels (money no object)? I would keep the money and still drive an MX-5
Would you drive a Daewoo or SsangYong? I wouldn't buy one ... but they would beat walking home
Favourite other Mazda? RX-8
If not a Mazda (gasp!), then what? Ferrari
How long in the Club? Six years – joined when I bought the car in 2008
How many MX-5 Club runs or track events? Six ... one with Central and five with the North-Eastern Victoria Chapter
Favourite Club run/track? The Bright-Mt Hotham loop - Bright to Falls Creek, Omeo, Mt Hotham and back to Bright



^ Noel with his pride and joy

The MX-5 Club Grill



^ Noel with Maria

Fun thing seen at a Club event? On a North-Eastern Victoria Chapter run on the Bright loop – on the way to Falls Creek we passed a group of bikies on a break, only to be passed by them again shortly after. They stopped a bit further down the road to let us go past. And soon after, they passed us again ... good fun!

Have you been to DECA or NatMeet? Once to DECA, to help as a steward and to have a look

Ford vs Holden? No preference – I've owned six Fords and two Holdens

What's playing in your MX-5? Sounds of the countryside when the top is down

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

Final comments? This is a great club to be a member of, and we've enjoyed the friendship (and food) on the Club runs we've been on in our great little cars. We hope to be able to go on for many more years yet!

Chapter chatter ...

10.5.14 | Central ■ Words & organiser: Cary Warren ■ Photos ... well, it rained all day!



As we all arose to a sunny brisk autumn Sunday morning, the weather god and all its rays were shining down on us ...

Well, that lasted a few seconds ... and then came the dark grey clouds. From that point on the rain never stopped.

What *did* stop was the morning entrainment of keen fit go-getters doing their Sunday morning personal training session at our meeting point Woodland Park. However, 12 brave Club members, including two new members, pushed on to conquer Mt Macedon and Hanging Rock ... *PT trainers or not!*

After a quick briefing in the rain, I was fortunate to be the trusty leader whilst John and Janette Todd took up the rear ...

The minute I put my wipers on for that first "ahhhh, let's start the drive with a clean windscreen" ... groan and some, er, colourful words then took over the silence of my cabin (roof on, windows up) as I realised that my wiper rubber had split and I only had half the window to look through!

As we headed off down the Tulla freeway and curved our way round the back of the airport, dozens of late-morning feasting kangaroos bounced passed us, setting the scene of what would be a very picturesque run. We wove our way through the fun Wildwood Road with all its tight, MX-5-perfect corners, hairpin turns and one lane bridges – this road would have to be one of my favourites with its natural landscape and gorges.



Hanging Rock? (photo: hangingrocktower.org)

Pushing on through the constant rain and cresting the undulating hillsides (plus nearly being blown off once we had reached the top peaks), and with a check-in from Tailend Charlie that we were "all good", we curved our way through Diggers Rest, onward bound to Mt Gisborne Road. Although the roads were wet and slippery in areas, we all kept a nice safe pace as we made our way past the great livery racing stables of Lord William himself before we started the ascent of Mt Macedon.

Once we made a right-hand turn to head up the mountain we were welcomed with a rainbow of beautifully-coloured trees and historic gardens, looking amazing in their full autumn best. All cars slowed to walking pace to take in this iconic view.

Zoom Zoom – we were off again! The rain had eased, giving us a chance to open the windows and take in the great mountain smells the countryside had to offer. As we climbed higher the rain turned to a nice mountain mist but, by the time we had reached the turn off to the Mt Macedon Cross, driving lights were switched on and the mountain cloud turned to pea soup and took over the ever-so-colourful landscape.

Never fear – our little cars didn't care one bit ... the tighter the corners, the more the fun!

Reaching the lookout at the top, the view was non-existent – there was only white cloud. But what went up must come down, so hello descent ... a driver's delight. We were fortunate to have the road to ourselves on the way down, allowing us to take in the magical illusion of Straws Lane where the road appears to be sloping up, when in fact it is slopping down ... If you are ever in the area, it's a must-do thing.

Then came more rain, rain, rain (I was still on one wiper) ... this however didn't dampen our Club's spirit as we found a great undercover picnic shelter at Hanging Rock that we shared with the local wildlife and other visitors trying to find out how to actually exit the park's gate.

Unlike Miranda, we found our way out of Hanging Rock National Park to the open road home.

I'm pleased to say that no MX-5s were harmed or lost in the Hanging Rock run. Saturated, yes – so I didn't even get the opportunity to get my camera out of the boot, let alone out of its case to take pictures of the morning's events.

Rain hail or shine, it just proves that whenever we are behind the wheel of our magical little cars, every road is a great road!

Thanks to all who braved the miserable weather. We must all revisit the run with tops off soon! ●

Miranda? Is that you? > (photo: sensesofcinema.com)



< A wet MX-5 (Ben Sale)

Trading Post



For Sale 1998 Grace Green NB \$10,000

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

Chapter chatter ...



4.5.14 | Western Victoria ■ Words: Jan Janetski ■ Photos: Karen Bradshaw ■ Organisers: John & Noellene Gleeson

After meeting in Ballarat for our Sunday run to Queenscliff, 12 MX-5s turned towards Eureka Street, where we came across cyclists on the "B.A.D." ride.

They kept well to the side of the road, except for a few that thought they were cars, and the very large group was strung out for about 8km.

On through Lal Lal the well-treed countryside was quite spectacular. Turning from the Geelong Road at Meredith, towards Steiglitz, we enjoyed lovely winding roads. Crossing the Moorabool River and heading into Steiglitz, we passed the historic court house.

The countryside revealed open green fields as we approached Maude, a very small but busy little town that had a market on near the CFA. About 10km along the road were two lovely new tennis courts and clubrooms on their own.

We stopped for a morning tea break at Fyansford and were joined by another three cars ... it was *even colder than Ballarat*, but it was great to have a friendly chat and a hot cuppa under the large rotunda there.

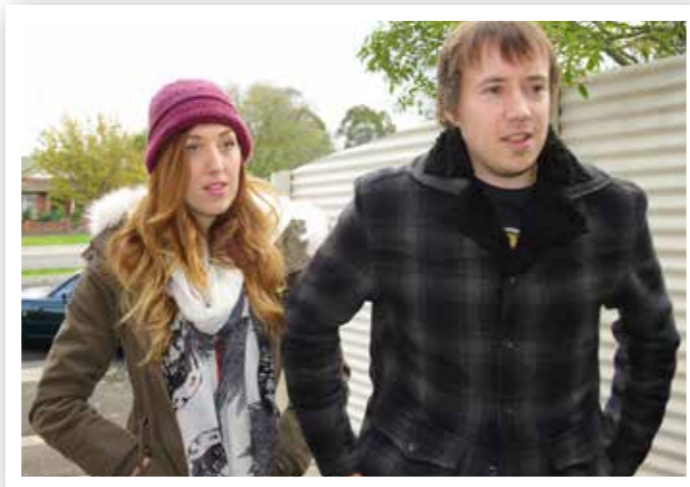
We headed through Geelong and on to Portarlington. The inclement weather left most of us with our roofs up, but Tyrone decided he would drive fast enough – keeping within the speed limit – to stay dry! The rain won though, where a quick stop at Leopold saw his roof back up.

We then passed through Drysdale at the same time as a steam train. When we arrived at Portarlington the rain had eased a little and we were able to stretch our legs and a few members bought fresh mussels. Then it was on to St Leonards; the sun shone briefly while we had a lovely drive along the esplanade. From St Leonards we headed to Queenscliff for lunch, where we passed *another* steam train.

Once in Queenscliff we all parked together; some of us headed off for fish and chips while others headed off to the bakeries etc, and those who brought their own lunch headed to the rotunda. We enjoyed lunch together, and then the Club members from different areas headed home while the members from the Western Vic. Chapter departed for Ballarat, via the Esplanade in Geelong. A great day was had by all. Thanks to John and Noellene for their organisation of the day. ●



^ Warm mugs on cold hands! Morning tea at Fyansford



^ New members Natalie & Michael

^ Queenscliff seascape



... and then it rained! >



Coral, Tyrone & Pam



Grand Vue Hotel, Queenscliff



^ Jeff, Lester & Lois

Chapter chatter ...

17-19.5.14 | Eastern Victoria ■ Words & photos: Jenna Perks ■ Organiser: Rob Krygsman

Well of course it's an MX-5 Club Eastern Victoria Chapter run - the weather is perfect!

9.30am start at Traralgon on a Saturday... OK, that's a bit weird; we normally travel on a Sunday!! So I'm happily surprised to see Mel is with us again after her horrible 'car roll' experience on the previous run. Seven cars to start, a very impressive turnout for a three-day run, then another joined us in Sale and one in Bairnsdale.

A nice calm highway cruise for most of the morning then the fun began on the Bairnsdale-Omeo Road around 12.30pm and my thoughts went straight to Mel's poor stomach. Turns out Rob behaved himself and she went quite well but used the situation to justify a little 'retail therapy' when we stopped in Omeo for lunch! A beautiful sunny day and a light breeze loaded with a smell that only the Australian bush can provide, a Dad that is elated with his new NC2 - all was perfect ...until we got a chip in the windscreen from a rogue stone - the first of three rogue stones for the weekend!

Heading up to the absolutely freezing Mt Hotham, Allan had a bit of excitement with a much larger falling rock! While there was no immediately apparent damage, it was bad enough that the underside of the car will need a thorough check back home. (The result was a bent X-frame brace under the transmission.)

Going down Mt Hotham into the Ovens Valley, we came across an annoying Mazda3. How can a car be so right but have a driver so bad!!! Pull over 'JENS61' and let us past - such a waste of what was probably the best 10km of winding road for the day. Well, I'll admit I'm not the most patient of passengers at times and I couldn't ignore the opportunity to give Allan schtick on the radio about getting past him - nothing like a little UHF banter and entertainment for the rest of the pack! Unfortunately only two of us were able to pass, leaving the others rather frustrated. Totally oblivious to the disruption caused, the crazy Mazda3 driver tooted cheerfully and waved when passing us as we waited for the others to re-group at the base of the hill - some people!!

4.30ish we arrived at Bright. Motel rooms - check, petrol - check, wine - check, river



^ Top: iconic cars on an iconic road; Above: Nic's MX-5 (complete with L-plates); at the Mt Buffalo carpark



views with an awesome mix of people - check check. The rear of the motel opened straight on to the Ovens River. *Beautiful!*

Off to the pub for dinner to find out that we may not have a table due to them booking us in earlier than arranged and assuming we were no shows, despite the distance travelled! Aside from the sook greeter, the rest of the staff were fantastic and made it work. Pity Ferg and Rob were in playful moods and wanted to stir things up. Rob stirred up a nice blonde by suggesting she had jumped the queue while Ferg argued with a guy with a Pontiac Trans-am and three Harleys discussing which (them or an MX-5) would be quicker up the Mt Hotham road.

Back up over the Mt Hotham road in the morning. By the time we reached Omeo it was becoming evident that we had a few *Where's Wallies* in our group. Time to go ... oh, where are Ed, Phil and/or John! Thank goodness for mobile phones - we'd *still* be searching otherwise!

The back road to Falls Creek would have to be the longest, steepest, weirdest coloured and nicest road surface I have ever experienced within the Victorian border - an absolute must for all MX-5s indeed. When leaving Falls Creek (after finding our *Where's Wallies!*) we bade farewell to Dave, Keith, Pam and Tyrone who unfortunately were unable to get the Monday off. Heading back down the hill we passed 'JENS61' going the other way! Small world!! Mary and Neil experienced a 'one in a million' when a rock was thrown from their back tyre and landed in Mary's lap - the 'Rogue Rocks' strike again!!

Now this may not mean much to a lot of you but those who frequent the Eastern Victoria Chapter runs will know how newsworthy this next piece of information is: Alan had a *seafood basket* for dinner that night, **not** a parma! It's OK, I have notified the Herald Sun and expect front page coverage any day now. 😊

Our final day: Bright-Mt Buffalo-Black Spur-Healesville-Traralgon. A little misty rain to start but only enough to make the road a little greasy for an hour or so and Mel understandably uneasy again. Visiting the Mt Buffalo chalet, the *Old Lady* was beautiful. The \$7 million refurbishment grant is wonderful for the history of the local area and a fantastic

future destination for MX-5 enthusiasts, have to keep an eye on that one!

Notes of interest:

- » Hats off and a big applause to Nic and John Bodey! Nic (16 years old!) researched, fell in love, saved up and bought his MX-5 before getting his learner's in November 2013. Together Nic and his Dad, John, found *The Miata King* on YouTube and worked their way through a full major service including a timing belt change. It's so refreshing to see up-and-coming interest in how things work under the bonnet, not just how loud and fast it will go in a straight line! It is also wonderful to see a father and son taking on such projects together. Six months on and Nic has already clocked up over 100 hours of the 120 hours required in the two years!! With the strong support of his Dad and an undeniable feel for the car, Nic had no problems keeping up with the pack at all times and talking shop with the boys! Looking forward to seeing a lot more of you guys!
- » The three days consisted of around 1,000km and it was amazing to find that the oldest car (1989) through to the newest car (2010) ran almost identical fuel mileage. At approximately 36 miles to the gallon or 8L/100km, the whole weekend fuel cost was around the \$100-\$120 mark! I tried to work out the cost if I had taken my Mitsubishi Pajero and gave up when I realised that it would have been over \$300, slow and absolutely NO fun!!
- » We had two attendees over 80 years of age (Ed and Keith) and Keith was there in his own MX-5 with his son Dave. Great to see.
- » Of the nine cars, there were three father-son combos and one father-daughter.

Finally I would like to announce that the official *Where's Wally Award* goes to Ed! Congratulations - at 80+ I believe you might have walked more kilometres than we drove!

We are counting the weeks until next year's run and hope that many more can join us. ●

» Time out!

Chapter chatter ...

18.5.14 | Northern Tasmania ■ Words & organiser: Bruce Harvey ■ Photos: Jill Steer & Bruce Harvey

Picnic at Ross



Beautiful one day ...



Sixteen cars were expected to meet at Longford ...

... but as the weather was more like Canberra's it was always going to be interesting to see how many did arrive. Can you believe it – 14 made it with only Kelly and Carl along with Michael and Karen electing to stay in bed.

Potential new members Cheryl driving a silver NB and Cheryl's son Matt in a red NA were made welcome and were soon chatting to one and all. At the end of the day Cheryl made a point of visiting everyone she could find and thanking them for making her so welcome promising we would see her again soon.



^ It's a Trevor Trove: Trevor (left), Trevor and, um, Robert at the Picnic at Ross

We had arranged to meet the Southern Chapter on the northern approach road to Ross and enter the display as one group so we set off and the further southeast we went the better the weather became. We would have been right on schedule to meet them but they had a minor issue with one of the cars making "a different noise" and stopped to make sure all was OK for the car to continue.

Picnic at Ross is an annual event with no entry fees or prizes – just an opportunity for owners and enthusiasts alike to meet once a year and enjoy the camaraderie that unique cars can provide. The event has been growing steadily with close to one thousand cars expected this year. The weather probably kept a couple of hundred away but the hundreds of cars that did turn out gave everyone something to look at.



^ Waiting for the Southerners ...

As well as the massed display of MX-5s several other one make clubs had well attended displays of the various models through their history. Of these, the MG club was well set up with a gazebo shelter, lots of chairs and a coffee urn. However, as one MX-5 member was wryly heard to remark, MX-5s are for driving and MGs are really only any good for show.

As the cars began leaving we decided to adjourn to the Banjo's Bakery in nearby Campbell Town for coffee and a sweet sugar bun fix. A damn good finish to a damn good day. ●

< Yeah, it's cool, but when I grow up I want an MX-5!



18.5.14 | Southern Tasmania ■ Words & organiser: John Waldock ■ Photos: Rob Tanner & John Waldock

The Ross picnic has become firmly established on the Tasmanian car scene after only a handful of years.

It's a casual event where car lovers and their cars assemble to show off their pride and joys and catch up with other enthusiasts.

It's quite a drive from Hobart to Ross, and so we assembled early on Sunday morning. We ended up going in two groups, a smaller group following CW (the rejuvenated Austin Healey Sprite) as he is an old guy and likes to go a little slower than those new-fangled MX-5s.

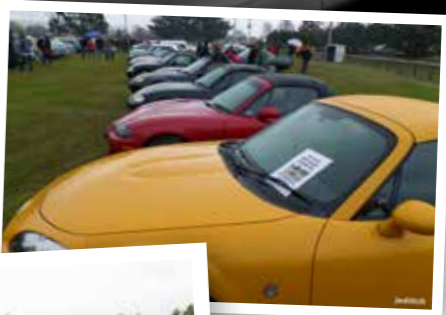
The trip up was uneventful – a steady and enjoyable run – with us all meeting up on time with the Northern Tasmanian Chapter to arrive and park together as one group. Unfortunately the weather was a little poor, and only about

700 cars of the expected 1,000 participants attended. But it still meant lots of cars to look at and discuss.

Our more than 20 MX-5s were the largest group of the one type at the show and, despite one gentleman asking me why the lovely Sprite was parked among those "bloody" MX-5s, we had lots of positive interest and chats about our fantastic cars.

It was great to hang out with the Northern Chapter, comparing cars and learning about new fixes and tweaks. The brave cooked and prepared their picnics, the lazy bought sausages and munched on those.

We ended up leaving a bit early, after the lucky gate prize was drawn, but it was as ever an enjoyable day and a great chance to meet other enthusiasts. ●



Chapter chatter ...

25.5.14 | North-Eastern Victoria ■ Words: Loz Thomas ■ Photos: Ron Gillick
 ■ Organisers: Marge & Andrew Johns

Sunday 25 May saw the North-Eastern Victoria Chapter hold their annual scavenger hunt.

Andrew and Marge put together a list of questions and clear directions that tested our navigation and observation skills, all whilst driving the most amazing roads with the most magnificent scenery.

The day started in Wodonga with a coffee and catch up. Not sure what was in Andrew's coffee but he had difficulty trying to unlock his car ... lucky his observation skills weren't under scrutiny as *it wasn't his car!* It was Gerry's, who was joined once again by his delightful mother, Marie.

One of the first stops was at the Bonegilla Migrant Centre. Over 300,000 migrants called Bonegilla their first Aussie home and it was interesting to hear that Marie continues to keep in contact with the children of some of the migrants honoured on the tribute wall.

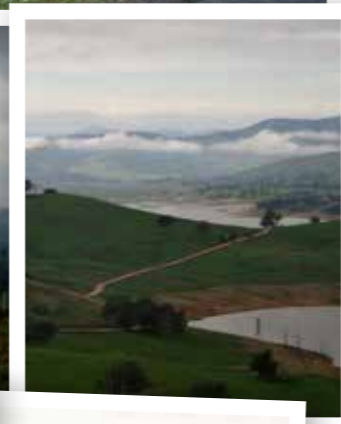
Continuing on alongside Lake Hume, crossing the historic Bells Bridge at Bethanga, driving past rolling green hills where fat happy cows momentarily paused from grazing to watch and wonder why every few minutes a great-looking sports car would stop and check out the name on a letter box.

You can't be in this area without driving over Lockhart Gap. It's 20km of twisty roads where the MX-5 feels right at home.

The lunch stop at Tangambalanga pub signalled the end of the scavenger hunt and it was time to mark each other's answers. After lots of laughs and discussion and taking into consideration odometer readings it was Tom and Fran (visiting from Sunbury) who took top honors. Gerry and Marie came in second and, in third place, Bill and Elaine.

After taking a wrong turn and going over 30km in the wrong direction (but on *magnificent* roads), Shane and Loz claimed the wooden spoon and a set of brake caliper covers!

Thanks to Andrew and Marge for your efforts in putting together the days agenda. It was fabulous! ●



^ The hunters (L-R): Bill, Elaine, Marge, Andrew, Fran, Tom, Loz, Shane, Marie, Marg and Gerry. Ron was behind the camera.

All roads lead to ... um >



Chapter chatter ...

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



Siddique Fisher

This event started earlier than usual, with us having to be at the Bryant Park Hill Climb track at 8am.

On arrival there was a problem ... where's the track? Everything was blanketed out by the fog (love that Gippsland weather!).

By the time our MX crew and other competitors (42 in total) got through the paperwork and scrutineering the cars, the fog had cleared and we were right to go.

The track was marked out with cones, a mixture of chicanes and slalom and, after a sighting lap, our instruction was to aim for accuracy over time, with time penalties for hitting cones or a wheel off the track. As expected, some got the instruction the other way around.

The five track layouts were very challenging, the combination of accuracy and speed is a real buzz, especially over blind crests and some of the slalom cones were not evenly spaced which caught a few out.

Each run was tailed by a marshal on a postie bike to check for accuracy. *It was amusing to see him trying to catch up, as a few were really quick leaving the old postie up to 200 metres behind.*

The course then moved to the top car park, setting up a Figure 8 then a slalom – now this bought out the “hoon factor” with some wild controlled and uncontrolled driving, handbrake turns, donuts and power slides, all the good stuff!

One of our group, who shall remain nameless, was great entertainment value, somehow losing his way half way through the run and deciding to do it his way. Didn't seem to worry him; the crowd just took a few steps back not knowing which cone he

was aiming for next! His excuse when we had a chat later was the “fun factor” ... the smile on his face said it all! Next time he shows up we'll put a track map with directions on his steering wheel.

Nothing got bent or broken and everybody went away with smiles all round. It was something different for our Chapter, now waiting for the next event. ●



Travis and his mean machine



Our crew:

Alan and Jason Laine, Siddique and Jerome Fisher, James Lang, Steve Banks, Rob Krygsman, Peter Shinn, Travis McInnes.

Our results:

15th	Travis McInnes (no penalties)
26th	Alan Laine (no penalties)
27th	Steve Banks (1 penalty)
31st	Rob Krygsman (no penalties)
35th	Siddique Fisher (4 penalties)
40th	James Lang (2 penalties)
42nd	Peter Shinn (3 penalties)



Steve Banks



Slipping and sliding at Sandown

Words: Peter Dannock Photos: Daniel White

It was strange to start the 2014-2015 Sprint Championship in May at Sandown – two months ahead of when it usually starts, due to the gradual shift of the Championship to run over a calendar year.

Quite a few new faces from the Club turned up for their first Sprint event.

The forecast for the day was showers. That was a stark contrast from the 41 degrees we experienced last time at Sandown in February! As soon as I arrived, it was obvious that I needed a garage. \$50 for the day wasn't a bad hit to stay dry ... even better when I could share the garage, and the cost, with another Club member.

Once the car was prepared, scrutineering done and drivers' briefing completed, it was time for the practice session. For me it was the first time I had driven on a wet track and I was a little apprehensive, as Sandown can be unforgiving if you slide off the track. Once on the track I got a clear idea of what it was like to drive in the wet – it was slippery as all hell! The most slippery parts of the track were Turns 2 and 3 and the corner on to the main straight; it was almost impossible *not* to slide the back of the car out. I felt relieved when I finished the practice session ... one session down, no damage.

Though I hoped the weather might clear, it remained quite wet throughout the day. Once I got into the timed runs it was clear how much slower I was in the wet and it often became just about "staying on the track". However, once I got into my second session I started to get a better feel for the car and worked out the areas where I could push. Though Turns 2 and 3 remained slippery all day, I found that I could push a little harder in Turn 1 and over the back towards Dandenong Road. My first laps in the wet had me braking at the 200 metre mark, but I gradually found myself braking later and later until I was braking closer to the 50 metre mark. Shaving 10 seconds or more off my early times was possible!

The wet track was a great leveller for the Standard and Clubman classes. For the guys in the Modified and Open classes, it was almost impossible to do any reasonable lap times, it being very hard to get the power down. In fact, a few of them packed up early due

to the weather.

The last corner coming on to the straight was slippery all day. It didn't matter how slowly I went, the tail always seemed to slide out. I got little bit ahead of myself on one lap, allowing the tail to hang out on to the ripple strip, where my car slide across it and on to the grass! Sliding towards the wall, I was just a passenger at this time and I just clipped the tyre wall with the mirror and rear guard. Fortunately it was only a flesh wound and I was able to buff off the black mark easily.

By the end of the day, with the number of people who had left early it was possible to get a few more runs in succession. The rain had stopped by then and the track was drying. Best times for the day!

Overall, it was a great day on the track and I continue to get a real buzz out of the Club's motor sport activities.

Thanks again to all those who help make it happen. ●



*It's stopped raining!
Lindy & Murray Anderson*

2014-15 City Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship | Round 1 - 10.5.14



*John Fredersdorff leads
John Downes and Brodie Sims*



John Reid



Dean Hasnat



*"Princey" Phillips and Leon Bogers
in pursuit of Max Lloyd*

City Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship - Round 1 | Sandown - 10.5.14

Results - Round 9	1st	2nd	3rd
Standard NA	Robert Downes » 1:52.7644	---	---
Standard NB	Jeremy Fredersdorff » 1:49.0335	Peter Dannock » 1:49.2862	Peter Hasnat » 1:50.4342
Standard NC	---	---	---
Clubman	Max Lloyd » 1:50.4406	Noel Heritage » 1:50.5089	Leon Bogers » 1:52.3277
Modified	Ray Monik » 1:48.8732	Daniel White » 1:57.5216	---
Super Modified	Russell Garner » 1:44.9257	Robert Parr » 1:49.6403	---
Restricted Open	Paul Ledwith » 2:05.4789	---	---
Open	---	---	---

City Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship standings after Round 1 | Sandown - 10.5.14

(corrected points)	1st	2nd	3rd
Overall Champion	<i>Too early!</i>		
Standard NA	Robert Downes » 10	---	---
Standard NB	Jeremy Fredersdorff » 10	Peter Dannock » 7	John Downes » 6
Standard NC	---	---	---
Clubman	Max Lloyd » 10	Noel Heritage » 7	Leon Bogers » 6
Modified	Ray Monik » 10	Daniel White » 7	---
Super Modified	Russell Garner » 10	Robert Parr » 7	---
Restricted Open	Paul Ledwith » 10	---	---
Open	---	---	---

Top down under the midnight sun

Words: Edited from Brett Berk, Road & Track, 25/3/14 Photos: Clark J Miller | www.roadandtrack.com/features/magazine

Last spring marked the Alaska Miata Club's (AKMC) 10th anniversary.

Because we're fascinated with quixotic automotive communities—especially ones consisting of tiny convertibles persevering in an arctic landscape—we flew up to Anchorage to join the festivities. And, to take part in their celebratory spring drive, we had Mazda loan us a very special Miata.

Waiting for me curbside at Ted Stevens airport was the Mazda Super20. Painted a smoldering shade of ochre called Hyper Orange Mica, it nicely mimicked the color of the Alaska license plate. It also resembled the spring Anchorage sun, still high in the sky and going strong near 8pm. Daylight wouldn't run out until well after 11 that night, which can be distracting if your body clock is set to Eastern Standard.

top down and a guttural boom sounding from the engine, I felt like a badass. And then, as I zoom-zoomed north, a jacked-up GMC Yukon pulled alongside, popped its transmission into neutral, and revved the hell out of its V8. In this world, the truck seemed to say, the Mazda and I were something akin to lunch.

Despite months of advance notice, ideal weather, the Super20's guest appearance, and an on-task venue, turnout at the kickoff event for the AKMC's anniversary weekend—a screening of *Fast & Furious 6* at the local cinema—was, well, slight.

Fast & Furious 6 featured exactly zero Miatas. The plot, meanwhile, hammered home the importance of maintaining community in the face of adversity; notably, none of the AKMC members seemed struck by this poignant parallel.

Later that evening—represented in this case by a sunny window of time around 90 minutes before midnight—we did get around to discussing the challenges of owning a diminutive Japanese roadster amid Alaska's environmental, and personal, hostilities. Having once hit a sheep five hours after hitting a deer, Fernandez brought up wildlife hazards. Bailey talked about the difficulties and benefits of using his Miata as a year-round daily driver.

"All the features that make it ideal on the track," he said, "even weight distribution, low centre of gravity, also make it an ideal winter vehicle. Of course, you need a set of studded tyres." Bailey and Mills both alluded to the derisive conflation of Miatas and homosexuality. (Later, Bailey laughingly showed us a T-shirt featuring a rainbow-shrouded MX-5 and the tag line, "I'm Not Gay, I Just Love Miatas.")

But Fernandez, in his guileless way, gave insight into another type of hazard altogether: the fellow Alaskan who just plain doesn't like Miatas.

On the morning of the 10th anniversary drive, sunrise arrived around 4:45,

"Trucks will pull up alongside you and rev their engines, or they'll purposely put one wheel off the road and shoot gravel up from the shoulder," he said. "I don't think they're trying to humiliate me. I think they think it's expensive. Which it's not."

less than six hours after sunset. I was thankful for the hotel's quality blackout curtains and the admonition of a former Anchorage resident: "Buy a sleep mask. They sell them in the gift shop." This same friend also explained that it's not the stygian winter that drives Alaskans crazy, but summer's eternal daylight. "People finish dinner and watch a movie, and at 10pm, they're like, 'Maybe I'll fix the roof.'" Denied its circadian snooze button, compulsion runs wild.

The clear, warm morning showed the fruits of Fernandez's Miata compulsion. By the time our caravan giddyapped, it contained 11 roadsters, including a handful of new recruits. Fernandez hustled from member to member, passing out swag, providing meticulous route directions, and delivering officious instructions like "drive at or above the speed limit, but not too fast."

I recalled my first conversation with him: "I've always liked to start things and follow through," he said. "The bottom line for this club is, without me, it wouldn't exist."

The drive began with a three-mile jaunt through Anchorage and a 25-mile stretch along the picturesque Glenn Highway, hitting its stride with an eight-mile bomb up Eklutna Lake Road. A narrow two-lane that wends into the Chugach Mountains east of town, Eklutna features blind turns, altitude changes, crisp drop-offs, and no guardrail. It ends at the eponymous lake, Anchorage's freshwater reservoir. Fernandez calls it "the best road in the whole state." (We're happy to share his enthusiasm but note the survey might be undermined by Alaska's notorious lack of pavement.)

By the time of our first pit stop our candy-colored parade had collected all manner of responses. Little kids had pointed, perplexed. A Hungarian motorcyclist had threatened to run away with us. A guy in a pickup had yelled, "You're all queer!"

Female AKMC members draw less ire. Karen Anderson, who bought *Mauda*, her Classic Red 1990, as a retirement gift in 2010, claimed she's more frequently

In Alaska, there are only a few days a year when you can put the top down and scan the mountains for Dall sheep. And on those days, other drivers are guaranteed to spew rocks and insults at you. They're the best days of the year.



cut off by trucks when driving her Subaru Baja. The regal 61-year-old artist Rosemary Redmond—who traded a Toyota pickup for her white '99 seven years ago, and who drives it year-round—confessed that men still flirt with her when she drives the car she calls *Gypsy*.

"It's the only way I can get attention from a man anymore," she quipped. And 65-year-old energy lobbyist and former B-Mod SCCA autocrosser Marilyn Leland echoed this regarding *Kazoom*, her Titanium Grey '03. "If I've got the top down, people talk or wave at stoplights." But even these benign encounters can turn peculiar in Alaska. "Once," Leland said, "when I was driving in Spenard, a woman on the street nodded and smiled at me, and I smiled back, thinking she was just being friendly. Then I realised she was a hooker."

As we snaked back down Eklutna, I grew more adventurous with the gas pedal. We continued north along the Old Glenn Highway, whose gentle sweepers took us through the Matanuska Valley all the way to the base of the Talkeetna Mountains. En route, we traversed a narrow bridge over an alluvial plain, a grey wash of glacial sediment dissected by gentle rivulets. It would have been a beautiful sight if it weren't for the hundreds of RVs

parked along the shore and the hordes of buzzing ATVs. It was like a scene from the *Thunderdome*.

Soon, we began to switch back up Fishhook Road, heading toward an abandoned mountain gold mine. We passed pristine snow-mounded runs, stunning avalanched slides, and the occasional brave skier and winter camper. Surveying the rainbow of Miatas winding top-down through this imperturbably perfect landscape, I thought of something Redmond said at Rochelle's.

"Other people here have cabins, boats, and snowmobiles," she said. "But I have my car. It gives me such a sense of freedom. The way it drives and handles, I feel like I'm in a French movie, going down the Riviera." The sentiment held until, as we assembled for a group photo at the road's craggy terminus, a guy in a Pontiac Grand Prix GTP pulled past, revving his engine.

Counting the cars in the commemorative shot, our number now stood, curiously, at 12. We seemed to have picked up a new member, Martha, who told us about *Radika*, her Velocity Red '05 Mazdaspeed turbo she acquired following her husband's workers' comp settlement, and about how she drives it in winter when

the roads are ploughed, and about how she hit a 1000-pound moose the previous August. ("It bounced right off.") She then launched into an eloquent defence against Alaskan Miata haters, sarcastically clocking

their complaints. "No remote start, no four-wheel drive, a convertible, not jacked up 10 feet off the ground." She rolled her eyes. "I say, if more people had them up here, more people would be smiling."

One might wonder as to the point of a club for Miata owners in Anchorage. But consider instead how wondrous and heartening it is that this club exists here compared to, say, a similar community in California or Texas, where the weather, driving opportunities, and available vehicles make membership easy.

Speaking of his unyielding love for Mazda's tiny roadster, Fernandez said, "I know it's not practical. But that's the whole point." You could say the same thing about Alaska itself. □

Here, the Miata's allure seemed to fit into the same template. The car's obvious appeal is the joy it brings—but in Alaska, that joy is simultaneously tempered and enhanced.

Words & images: Ron Macdonald

Having looked at a few of the pitfalls to watch out for last month, now is the time to have a closer look at the three main options for digital photography.

Smartphones

The best way to take a really good photo with your smart phone is to grasp the phone firmly in your right hand, then in one smooth and swift movement throw it over your left shoulder and go and buy a camera!



All joking aside, smart phones are good for making phone calls, but many of the other features are a compromise. Phone cameras suffer from one inherent fault: size. Small sensor, small lens = crap photo (remember the light thing?).

While the photo might look OK on your phone, when you view it on your computer it will be severely degraded and if you try to use the file at full size or God forbid attempt to print it, the quality can be compared to what is usually found on the ground in a cow paddock (yes, I mean grass).

These devices do have a use however, if you are caught out without your camera and want to record something (better than nothing), or you are 15 years old and want to take one of those flattering (not) arm's-length "selfies", but that is about their limitation. Smart phones can be a handy addition to your photographic arsenal but definitely do not replace a decent camera.

Now I know some will now be screaming but I have an iPhone 5 and you only have a Samsung GII ... sorry, but EVERY brand suffers the same problems. In fact the iPhone 5 and GII have the exact same sensor in them which, interestingly, is manufactured by SONY!

Point and shoot (compact) cameras



If you purchase a reputable brand of "point and shoot" (the pocket-size cameras) you will get reasonable results; although they do still suffer from the same problems as the camera phones it is to a far lesser degree.

The sensor in a "point and shoot" is around the size of your little

finger nail – still not ideal but much better. This can be a good compromise in both price and portability compared with a DSLR; not exactly a replacement but it will do a pretty good job. Some of the compacts at the top end of the price range even allow you manually to set the exposure and shutter speed but they do not accept interchangeable lenses so you will be stuck with what is fitted to the camera.

When buying this type of camera you need to watch out for the "digital zoom" garbage which, as I said last month, is completely useless! Make sure any compact camera you buy has a good OPTICAL zoom lens.

DSLR (Digital Single Lens Reflex)



Digital SLR cameras come in two basic types – full format and 3/4 format (often called digital format). The full format cameras are usually in the manufacturers professional range and start at around the \$7,000 mark (with no lens) so we will concentrate on the more common 3/4 format cameras. "3/4 format" refers to the size of the sensor which is 3/4 the size of a piece of 35mm film and gigantic compared to the two former categories.

Personally I prefer Nikon cameras; I have been using them for more than 35 years and have never had an issue. In fairness however, the Canon EOS is also a nice camera, as are the offerings from many of the other major manufacturers.

I would however be very careful about buying an obscure brand of either camera body or lens from the internet. For example, one seller on eBay advertises a 500mm lens for only \$150, but on closer inspection you find this lens has three elements (probably plastic), in comparison the Nikon Digital format 18-105mm lens on my D7000 DSLR has 15 elements in 11 groups (and this is only a mid-price range lens!).

Unfortunately quality costs. If you wanted to save even more on a lens of this type, just use the bottom of a milk bottle; you would get a similar result to the eBay lens. One quick (though not by any means conclusive) way to gauge the quality of a lens is by its weight; if it is as light as a feather you can be assured it is either filled with plastic or has only a handful of elements.

A good entry-level camera for those new to the world of the DSLR is the Nikon D3200. This camera is small, light weight (compared to many other DSLRs) and has all the advantages of a "point and shoot" camera on its auto setting but with a better quality result. The big difference however is you are not stuck with what the camera thinks is the correct exposure as you can manually set the camera to produce the image you want.

Having decided on a camera model, the next thing to consider is the glass on the front. My suggestion for a good general purpose lens would be the Nikkor AFS 18-105mm VR – this will have you covered for most of your general photography. The salesman may offer you a kit which includes Nikon's 24-55mm lens; while this is not a bad lens (although bottom-of-the-range in quality) you will find the top end (55mm) too short for many general photographic needs. They also have a kit with a 24-55mm and 55-200mm lenses; again this would not be my choice as you will find yourself constantly swapping lenses as you jump back and forth across that 55mm barrier. I think it's better to go with the 105 and later, if you find you need a longer lens, add the Nikkor AFS 70-300mm VR.

The last thing to consider, now you have your camera, is the media your camera will write the files to. In digital terms this is your "film". When buying an SD card don't go for the cheap and obscure brand cards or for that matter even the basic offerings from the major manufacturers.

What you need is a quality high write-speed card. Remember you are likely to be dropping a 7-10 MB file to the card each time you hit that shutter button, so the last thing you want is to have to stand there waiting for the camera to write to the card so you can take your next shot. The SanDisk extreme III would be a good choice, but remember to buy a good size card; the latest versions of these cards write at 30 megabytes/second (m/s) which should have you well covered.

Be careful buying cards from the internet as there are many earlier (slower) model cards floating around and certain Chinese manufacturers have no regard for patents and will happily supply you with a cheap and nasty SD card with a SanDisk sticker on it!

Caveat Emptor ... Buyer Beware. What you see is not always what you get. ●

Next month: How to get that great calendar shot

25th anniversary

2015 Club calendar

So far we've received about 80 shots from 17 photographers, and there's some great work!

However, many of the shots received just arrive in the inbox with no label and no description at all ... just (for example) "DSC_1234" ... which tells us nothing!

Please remember the original request:

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).

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)

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

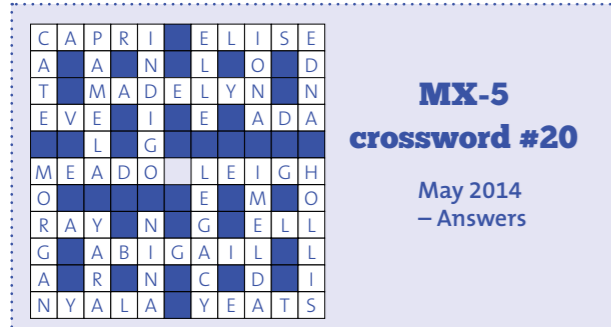
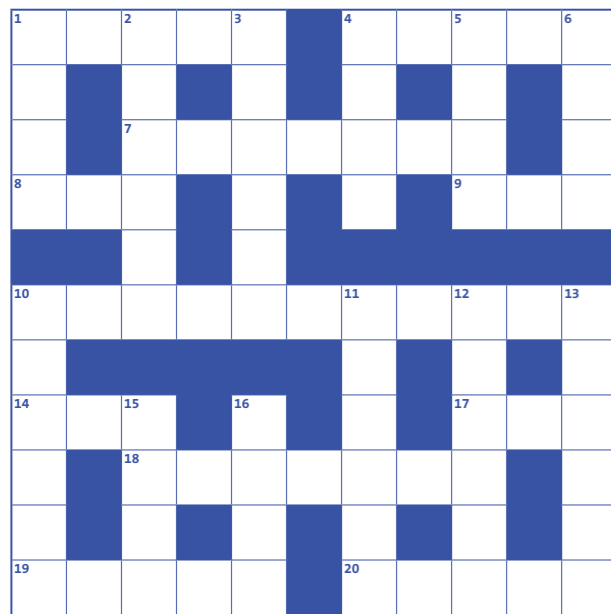
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Theme = Boys' names



MX-5 crossword #20

May 2014
- Answers

Across

- 1 German origin. First name of a Puerto Rican pop singer who lives in the Vida Loca? (5)
- 4 Hebrew. Faith, devotion, whole hearted. (5)
- 7 Italian. First or last name. Carries weight IMO. (7)
- 8 Society for Information Display sounds like a NSW city that's not Vicious (abbrev). (3)
- 9 A famous Kelly began this way. (3)
- 11 Blues eyes son Mia said Frankly? (5,6)
- 12 Marley, The Builder, Dylan - all in common. (3)
- 15 A Gibson of Mad max fame. (3)
- 18 Bloomed but also seen in Florida. (7)
- 19 Aka Edward or Theodore (even Edwina or Theodora). (5)
- 20 Stars in the sky as a member of the air force. (5)

Down

- 1 Welsh. Enthusiasm. Clearly in rhythms. (4)
- 2 Scottish. Winding valley. Mac end (anag). (6)
- 3 Welsh. Just. Clearly having eyestrains. (6)
- 4 Hebrew. Not able. (4)
- 5 Clearly an allegation that sings to the kings? (4)
- 6 A bard mixes up clearly branded before a pitt (anag). (4)
- 10 Builds on 14 across - clearly protuberantly. (6)
- 11 He drives his Ferrari hard in Spain. (6)
- 12 Hebrew. Pleasing, supreme. Combines a sheep in a tram with oil in a politician to make a card game. (3,3)
- 13 Olde English. Son of William? (6)
- 14 Celtic. Blond. A painter, an architect and a footballer in the boy division? (4)
- 16 Clayton comes up short pottering around in the in the mud! (4)

Answers next month ...

A new option for the MX-5 owner

Oven Baked Enamel Services have taken the next step forward in service for MX-5 Owners, Lovers and Club Members.

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

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

Burson Auto Parts have more than 100 outlets on the east coast, offering a complete range of tools, spare parts and car care products.

Check out the range at www.burson.com.au

RepcO VIP CLUB

Club VIP retail discount

The Club has signed up as a member of the **RepcO VIP Club**, which all financial MX-5 Club members are qualified to join.

To join, simply type this link into your browser:
<http://vip.repco.com.au/registration/register/1160>

and then enter your details.

You'll receive a temporary "VIP" card via e-mail, with a plastic barcoded card and key tag following within 14 days.

You're guaranteed of 10% off full retail at any time, and further offers of up to 30% off full retail at various times throughout the year. Repco will e-mail you with online catalogues, and advance advice of special VIP offers.

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Incorporated No. A0021659A

Minutes

General Meeting of the Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria Inc.

**Held on Wednesday 21st May 2014, at City Mazda,
14-28 Montague St, South Melbourne VIC 3205**

A Meeting opened: The meeting opened at 7.05 pm with a welcome from Club President, Don Nicoll.

Don thanked the following for their attendance:

Peter Dannock, Murray Finlay, William Campbell, Coral Campbell, Ben Sale, Daniel White, Tim Emery, Dave Collins, Cary Warren, Bruce Gray, Alex Hailstone, John Todd, Janette Todd, Max Lloyd, Bob de Bont, Roger Redston.

Apologies: Apologies received from:
Ash Almunsiri, Susan Pitcher-Kinnear, Dominique Moollan.

Proxies:

Member	Proxy
Rodney Tickler	Peter Dannock
Jason Blyth	Don Nicoll
David James	Murray Finlay
Jonathan Hutchinson	Don Nicoll (in lieu of Ron Macdonald)
Tim Meaden	Peter Dannock

B Adoption of change of incorporated name

Background: Tasmanians have been members of the Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria Inc. since the mid-1990s, and membership there has grown significantly in recent years. Since 2012 this membership has been recognised by the Club trading under the name of "Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria and Tasmania". The Committee has resolved that this change should also be reflected in the Club's official incorporated name.

Motion: To consider and, if thought fit, to pass the following resolution as an ordinary resolution:

That the incorporated name of the Club be changed from "Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria Inc." to "Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria & Tasmania Inc."

Moved: Murray Finlay
Seconded: David Collins
Carried unanimously

C Adoption of new Statement of Purposes and Rules (version 2014/1)

Background: The Victorian Government's *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012* has mandated that much of the Club's current Statement of Purposes & Rules be modified to comply with new

standard rules applying to incorporated associations. In modifying the Rules, the Committee has also taken the opportunity to:

- include the new incorporated name (subject to item B, above)
- include a simplified Club membership structure
- remove former Rule 9 (Expulsion of a Member) to avoid repetition

As there are too many updates and changes to specify in this motion, the revised Statement of Purposes & Rules (version 2014/1) is presented for adoption in its entirety.

Motion: To consider and, if thought fit, to pass the following resolution as an ordinary resolution:

That version 2014/1 of the Club's Statement of Purposes & Rules be adopted as the Statement of Purposes & Rules for the Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria & Tasmania Inc.

Discussion: Bob de Bont questioned why Family membership had been changed to limit "dependants" to the age of 18, instead of being open-ended as previously. WC advised that this was to bring the age into line with the generally-accepted definition of a dependant.

Moved: Murray Finlay
Seconded: Will Campbell
Carried unanimously

D Any other business that it may be proper for the Meeting to consider

Nil

E Close of meeting: The meeting closed at 7.32 pm.

Peter Dannock
Secretary
Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria Inc.

Tastes of the North-east run

North-Eastern Victoria Chapter



Sunday, 22 June, 2014

Join us as we visit some of the gourmet food and wine areas of the north-eastern Victorian region ... with a drive around some of the better driving roads thrown in for good measure.

- Meet:** Isaacs Park, Yackandandah
Time: 9.30am for a 10am start
RSVP: by 15 June for lunch booking
Contact: Ron Gillick: (02) 6033 0253 ah | northeast@mx5vic.org.au



Central Chapter

New members' night



Thursday, 19 June, 2014

Long-time Club sponsor Shannons have generously offered their premises in Cheltenham to host our next new members' night.

This is an informal get-together to give you the chance to learn a little bit more about your Club, meet some of the Committee, other organisers and longer-standing Club members, and ask any questions you care to think of!

All welcome. Please join us if you are a prospective, new, or even a seasoned Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria & Tasmania member.

Tea, coffee, a light supper and conversation provided.

-
- The place:** Shannons, 321 Warrigal Road, Cheltenham, 3192 | Melway: 78 C12
The time: 7pm - 9pm
RSVP: Not essential though it would be appreciated for catering purposes
Contact: Cary Warren - social@mx5vic.org.au | 0418 368 246



Eastern Victoria Chapter's

Dinner & bowling evening

Friday, 18 July 2014



A social night out in Morwell for the Eastern Victoria Chapter ...

Dinner at the 'Out of India' restaurant, followed by some 10-pin bowling at 9pm (after the food has settled!)

- Meeting place:** 'Out of India' restaurant, 109 Buckley Street, Morwell
- At:** 6.30pm sharp for dinner
- Followed by:** 10-pin bowling, 'Morwell Tenpins', Chickerell Street
- At:** 9pm for bowling
- RSVP:**
- essential for dinner bookings – RSVP Alan by 10 July;
 - if you're only coming for the bowling, please just show up at Morwell Tenpins for a 9pm start.
- Contact:** Alan Laine – eastern@mx5vic.org.au | 5195 5375



North-Eastern
Victoria Chapter

Mitta Mitta run



Sunday, 3 August, 2014

Meet at Isaacs Park, Yackandandah (opposite hospital).
Join us on a run through the beautiful Mitta Mitta Valley
with lunch at the Mitta Mitta Hotel.

- Meet:** Isaacs Park, Yackandandah (opposite hospital)
- Time:** 9.30am for a 10am start
- RSVP:** essential for lunch bookings – by 27/7/14 please
- Contact:** Ron: (02) 6033 0253 (ah) or north-eastern@mx5vic.org.au





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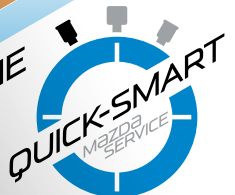
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