

# mxtra

10/2014  
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THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE MAZDA MX-5 CLUB OF VICTORIA & TASMANIA

# Long live the Redster!



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**In this edition:**  
**Meet our Chapter Captains**  
**MX-5 world record attempt**  
**MX-5 racing at Laguna Seca**



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## Your Committee: 2014-2015

### President

> Don Nicoll | (03) 9437 2787 (ah)  
 e: [president@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:president@mx5vic.org.au)

### Vice President / Communications

> Murray Finlay | 0416 247 677  
 e: [editor@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:editor@mx5vic.org.au)

### Secretary / Public Officer

> Peter Dannock | 0408 522 093 (ah)  
 e: [secretary@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:secretary@mx5vic.org.au)

### Treasurer

> Dave Collins | (03) 9755 2167 (ah)  
 e: [treasurer@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:treasurer@mx5vic.org.au)

### Club Captain – Motor Sport

> Tim Emery | 0424 091 167 (ah)  
 e: [captain@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:captain@mx5vic.org.au)

### Assistant Club Captain – Motor Sport

> Randy Stagno Navarra | 0409 210 872  
 e: [captain2@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:captain2@mx5vic.org.au)

### Club Captain – Social

> Cary Warren | 0418 368 246 (ah)  
 e: [social@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:social@mx5vic.org.au)

### Assistant Club Captain – Social

> Alex Hailstone | 0414 155 383  
 e: [social2@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:social2@mx5vic.org.au)

### Social Media

> Ben Sale | 0434 906 673 (ah)  
 e: [facebook@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:facebook@mx5vic.org.au)

### Membership

> Will Campbell | (03) 5261 4816 (ah)  
 e: [membership@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:membership@mx5vic.org.au)

### Merchandise

> Bruce Gray | 0478 219 856 (ah)  
 e: [merchandise@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:merchandise@mx5vic.org.au)

### Points

> Coral Campbell | (03) 5261 4816 (ah)  
 e: [points@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:points@mx5vic.org.au)

### Chapter Captain - Central

> Geoff Roche | 0409 039 867 (ah)  
 e: [central@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:central@mx5vic.org.au)

### Chapter Captain - Eastern Victoria

> Alan Laine | (03) 5195 5375 (ah)  
 e: [eastern@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:eastern@mx5vic.org.au)

### Chapter Captain - North-Eastern Victoria

> Ron Gillick | (02) 6033 0253 (ah)  
 e: [north-eastern@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:north-eastern@mx5vic.org.au)

### Chapter Captain - Western Victoria

> Ian Bradshaw | 0407 556 135  
 e: [western@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:western@mx5vic.org.au)

### Chapter Captain - Northern Tasmania

> Bruce Harvey | 0438 562 224 (ah)  
 e: [northtas@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:northtas@mx5vic.org.au)

### Chapter Captain - Southern Tasmania

> John Waldock | 0409 658 716 (ah)  
 e: [southtas@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:southtas@mx5vic.org.au)

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### Cover image:

**Red mist in Northern Tassie:** Michael Nolan's NB SE (front), Keith & Sandra Tillack's NC and Kelly & Carl Berggren's NA add colour to the Rosarden slag pit moonscape.

Photo: Kelly Berggren



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

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

- e-mail: [editor@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:editor@mx5vic.org.au)
- post: **mxtra, Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria & Tasmania, PO Box 7438, Beaumaris VIC 3193**

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# Don's Drive(l) ...



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

Hi everyone, welcome to the October edition of *mxtra*.

We trust you all enjoyed the photos and descriptions of the ND launch and 25th anniversary celebrations that Ben Sale provided. Special thanks to Ben for a great effort, lucky bugger! Perhaps the most memorable comment, for me, was Ben's observation that it was hard to convey the appearance of the car in photos, you really have to see it in the flesh. We'll just have to be patient as we don't expect to see the car here for another 12 months.

During the month we heard that Ben Rounsefell of Mazda Australia is moving to the US. Ben has been looking after Mazda's loyalty program for some time and has been the primary point of contact between the Club and Mazda. Since Ben took over the role at Mazda, we have enjoyed an excellent relationship, which has led to some real benefits for the Club.

The current merchandise system that we operate, the funding of the Club's website maintenance and our participation in the 2013 and the 2014 Australian Grands Prix are just a few of the benefits our Club has enjoyed from the association. We wish Ben and his family all the best for their future in the US. Having dragged my family to Europe (twice) for work, I can well imagine the challenges he's facing right now on both the work and home fronts.

As a consequence of Ben Rounsefell's move to the US, our new communications partner at Mazda will be Steve Maciver. We are fortunate in already having worked with Steve on the Presidents' meeting held in conjunction with the 2013 release of the last NC upgrade as well as at the AGP. Consequently we are confident of a very smooth transition in our communications with Mazda. We look forward to working with him, especially as we put together plans for the 25th anniversary of our Club in 2015 and the 2016 NatMeet.

I would like to emphasise some comments made by Cary to the Chapter Captains about the need for care in handling email address lists, as this applies to *all* members of the Club.

The information that each of us puts into the membership database, when joining or renewing, is confidential between the member and those Committee members authorised to have access to the database. It has been made very clear to us that email addresses are just as confidential as other personal information. Therefore any emails you receive from the Committee or Chapter Captains should only show your address. Those of us sending out emails know that this can be achieved simply by placing email addresses in the "Bcc" (blind copy) section of the email rather than the "To" section. If anyone has any concerns please feel free to contact me.

Now for an admission of failing memory! At the Central Chapter run organised by Peter Dannock on 14 September I was asked about the availability of Club decals by one of our members at the Burvale Hotel meeting place. After returning home I found some of the decals but then realised that I'd forgotten who asked me. A bad case of a *maturing brain*, as a certain offspring of mine likes to call it. I think I know who it was but I don't want to embarrass the person if I have it wrong. If you were the one seeking a Club decal, please let me know and I'll get them in the post to you.

Finally, a quick plea for help. If you read this magazine each month you will no doubt have noticed that the names behind the "words" section of the articles tend to have a familiar ring about them. The reason is quite simple. In the absence of other volunteers, these Club scribes put up their hand time and time again. Writing a short article on your experiences of a Club run is not as onerous as perhaps people think. New ways of reporting on a run are always welcome, so please don't be shy. We're not looking for *War and Peace*, just some observations on what you enjoyed about your day out on a Club run. You don't have to be a great wordsmith; we always have Murray to knock it into shape if it's missing a few commas.

Enjoy the warmer weather folks, it's great to get the top down without having to wear a polar suit.

Remember ... *Safety first!*

Don

*For your diary ...*

See the full calendar for details

## October

- 18-19 2014 Winton 6 Hour
- 19 NE Vic: Not the Jingellic run
- 19 NTas: Mystery Tour II.5
- 19 STas: Rob's Southport Safari
- 26 Eastern: Leongatha run
- 26 Western: Brisbane Ranges run

## November

- 1 WV: Car display/show & shine
- 2 WV: Shannon's Springfest
- 15-16 NEV: Omeo Gold weekend run
- 16 Eastern: Mt Worth run
- 16 STas: Cavorting to Carrick run
- 16: NTas: Ken Beaton's Big Day Out
- 23: Central: 25 years of MX-5 Sport
- 23 Western: 25th anniversary run
- 23 Sprints 2014-15 Rd 5: Sandown

## December

- 7 NTas: Christmas gathering
- 13 Sprints 2014-15 Rd 6: Broadford
- 14 Central: Annual CFA run
- 14 Eastern: Social night
- 14 NE Vic: Christmas run
- 14 Western: Christmas run
- 20 STas: Christmas run



**More member benefits!**

Waxit Car Care in Tullamarine has come on board with a discount for members on their premium car care products.

Check out the new ad on page 6 for details.

# Scene about ...



■ Photos: Ron Gillick, Karen Bradshaw





# Membership

Current membership count:

486

and growing!

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

Hi folks!

Will is still away, thoroughly enjoying himself I bet. He will be back next month to take back the Membership reins.

We had eight new members and nine renewals in the last month – a bit slower this month but I'm sure we can expect the numbers to grow as the winter cobwebs blow off.

Please join me in welcoming:

## Central Chapter

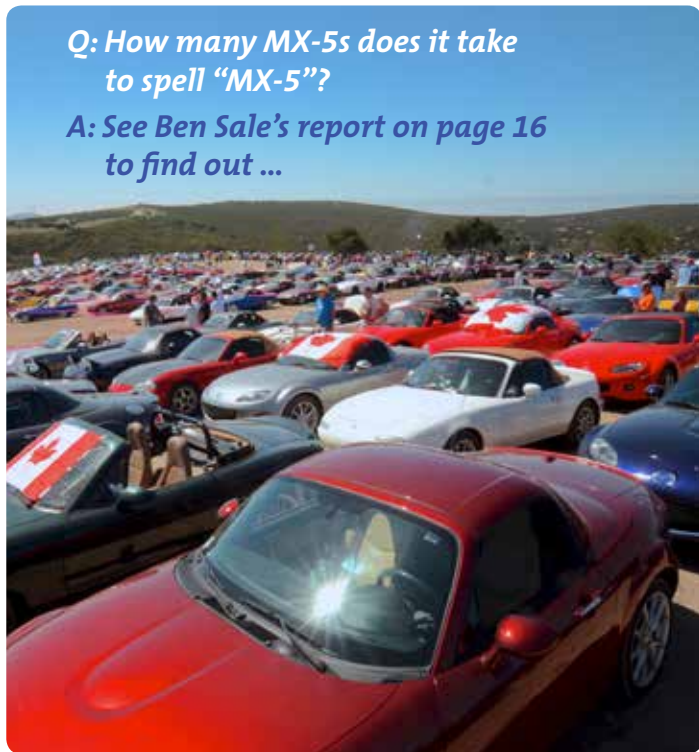
Matt Davies	1990 Classic Red NA
Daryl Dixon	1992 Classic Red NA
Ibrahim & Allison Rafei	2004 Silver NB

## Southern Tasmania Chapter

Heather, Damian, Isobel & Portia Memeo	1994 White, NA
--	----------------

Enjoy the ride, be safe, be well ...

Dave



**Q: How many MX-5s does it take to spell "MX-5"?**

**A: See Ben Sale's report on page 16 to find out ...**

## Trading Post



**For Sale** 2005 Velocity Red NB SE

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](http://mx5vic.org.au)

## Burson automotive products at trade prices



Current financial Club members can purchase automotive parts, tools, accessories and car care products at trade prices from **Burson Auto Parts** stores.

Simply ask for your discount when you purchase, present your current membership card and quote account number **112558**.

Burson Auto Parts have more than 100 outlets on the east coast. Check out the range at [www.burson.com.au](http://www.burson.com.au)

## Repco VIP Club retail discount



Financial MX-5 Club members may join the **Repco VIP Club** for 10% off full retail at any time, and up to another 30% off full retail with advertised offers.

Enter your details at <http://vip.repco.com.au/registration/register/1160>.

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

Repco will e-mail you online catalogues and offers.

## AutObarn Eltham 9/256 Bolton St, Eltham



... is proud to offer all Club members a big discount (up to 15%) off their full range of merchandise.

For info or orders, contact Peter Rutherford\* at [autobarn-enquiries@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:autobarn-enquiries@mx5vic.org.au) or phone 0414 630 024 or 9439 1466.

*This offer is exclusive to AutObarn Eltham.*

Please identify yourself as a Club member to obtain your discount.

\*Note: only Peter Rutherford or w Dally are authorised to offer Club discounts in-store.



## Car care products - member discounts

**Waxit Car Care** in Tullamarine is offering Club members 12.5% off all products, **excluding** already-discounted kits and the following brands/products: Polishangel, Vikan, Flex and Concours 900 Polisher.

Check out the Waxit range and order online at [www.waxit.com.au](http://www.waxit.com.au). Our Club coupon code is **mx5club**.

Please add your Club membership number to the "comments" section of your order.



# Track Torque

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

*25 years of MX-5s in Motor Sport – Parade Laps, Sandown*

We will have all seen the hype and events around the world celebrating the 25th anniversary of the MX-5.

This combined with the recent launch of the ND being held at Laguna Seca circuit and the inclusion in the event of motor sport and track sessions again demonstrates the MX-5's link with motor sport. Motor sport has been part of the MX-5's history even before the first owners had a chance to take theirs to the track. During the development of the car the product team took into account that these cars would almost certainly used on the track and included small details like tow hooks.

And now, *the MX-5 is the world's most-raced sports car!*

In our own small way our Club is going to mark the 25th anniversary of MX-5s hitting the track by getting as many of our members along to Round 5 of the **City Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship** at Sandown on 23 November to check out our Motor Sport Team in action and then a chance for everyone to do some parade laps around the circuit. Stay tuned for the details, as it would great to see as many members along as possible!



## *Round 4 – City Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship*

There is no doubt spring welcomes the arrival of ideal MX-5 weather.

Whether it's a social run or a track day it doesn't matter – any excuse to get out and have some fun in our cars!

The **City Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship** was back at Sandown raceway for Round 4 with another great field of 24 cars including two or three first-timers. It was a perfect spring day and again we saw some lap records broken. (Read our full report on page 26.)

## *Winton 6 Hour*

With only a week or so now before the Winton 6 Hour, we are in final preparation for the big event. We're in the process of finalising some sponsors

that are supporting us with funding and products for the event.

As I have mentioned before, we are lucky to receive this support for what is basically an amateur sport and it goes a long way towards making sure the Club's teams are well represented.

*Tim*

*"The older I get, the better I was!"*



## *Are you making the most of your car?*



# Peter Shinn

### Eastern Victoria Chapter

**Name?** Peter Shinn

**Age?** 64

**Born?** October 1949

**Current abode?** Newborough

**Profession?** Retired panel-beater and spray-painter

**Partner?** Leonne

**Pets?** Two cats, Pumba and Skatz

**Fave food?** Pasta

**Can you cook?** Sometimes

**Favourite tippie?** Bulmers Original Cider

**First drive?** Valiant AP6 Wagon

**First car?** Triumph Herald Coupe

**First fender bender?** I hit a massive rock in my Mini Cooper S

**Everyday driver?** Hyundai Tucson V6 AWD

**How many MX-5s have you owned?** Two

**Current MX-5?** I currently have two Classic Red Eunos NA6s

**MX-5 improvements?** Red wheels, Koni dampers, Whiteline sway bars, MX-5 Plus Twin Hoop roll bar, OEM front lip spoiler and a K&N panel filter

**MX-5 dislikes?** Lack of oomph

**Why an MX-5?** More comfortable and more reliable than Sprites, Midgets and MGBs

**Fluffy dice?** No!

**Passions besides the MX-5?** Hovercraft, Jetskis, six-wheel ATVs, and tearing up the grass in the back paddock on my snow-mobile



^ Peter (right) with son Andrew, daughter Jo McInnes (wife of Travis) and wife Leonne

**Favourite TV show / movie / book?** Heartbeat, New Tricks, Doc Martin

**Dream wheels (money no object)?** Lamborghini Miura

**Would you drive a Daewoo or SsangYong?** No

**Favourite other Mazda?** Mazda Cosmo

**If not a Mazda (gasp!), then what?** Lotus Super 7

**How long in the Club?** Five years

**How many MX-5 Club runs or track events?** A dozen-odd club runs and three track days

**Favourite Club run/track?** Broadford Circuit

**Funniest thing seen at a Club event?** Steve doing doughnuts at Bryant Park.

**Have you been to DECA or NatMeet?** No

**Ford vs Holden?** Ford (I have owned a few Capris)

**What's playing in your MX-5?** Engine noise

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

**Final comments?** I love the MX-5 Club for the good people and the good times behind the wheel ●



^ Peter at a khanacross in Gippsland (the bloke on the postie bike is counting the number of cones hit!)



# Meet our Chapter Captains ..

## Geoff Roche

Central  
2006 True Red NC



When Bronwyn and I moved to Melbourne I soon discovered that, after years of fun on motor bikes, being a city motorbike rider was not for me. It was time to swap my two wheels for four. The MX-5 was a logical choice to continue that sense of fun and freedom.

We bought our first MX-5 – a 2003 Stratos Blue NB – in February 2010 and I joined the MX-5 Club the same month. We replaced the NB in June 2011 with a folding hardtop 2006 True Red NC, purchased sight unseen in Adelaide; our first drive in it was back home!

We've been on many runs with all the Chapters (except Southern Tassie, but that will happen I'm sure), and have met some wonderful people and travelled some fantastic roads.

Come and enjoy this fabulous MX-5 Club experience – with the top down, of course! ❖

## Ron Gillick

North-eastern Victoria  
2002 Sunlight Silver NB



Marg and I bought our MX-5 in December 2004 and joined the Club a month later (after discovering it on the internet!). Buying the car was the best decision we ever made, and joining the Club was a very close second.

Despite the fact that we live a long way from Melbourne and our only contact with the Club early on was through the monthly magazine, I could see that this was a brilliantly organised club.

Figuring that you only get out of a club what you are prepared to put in, and wanting more direct involvement, I suggested to President Murray that we set up a Chapter in the north-east.

Apart from the sheer enjoyment of driving our MX-5 on Club runs, we value the many friendships we have made. Being now in my eighth year as Chapter Captain I haven't regretted one minute of it and I would encourage everyone to "put their hand up" at some stage and share the load. ❖

## Ian Bradshaw

Western Victoria  
2000 Black NB



Karen and I purchased our black NB Series 2 MX-5 in November 2009 and joined the Club after our good neighbours, the Everetts, convinced us that the Club was very social and friendly and that we would have a ball of fun.

It has surpassed our expectations!

Since we have joined, we have travelled on many roads and visited many places that we would not have done had we not had the "MX". We have made many firm friends from across the state and enjoy the camaraderie of each run that showcases the MX-5's virtues.

Since purchasing the "MX" we have added a hot dog exhaust (so it now sounds grown up!), cold air intake and a spoiler kit. As the new Western Victorian Chapter Captain, I hope to continue with John Gleeson's good work and provide great MX-5 runs and events that are sociable and fun. ❖

## Alan Laine

Eastern Victoria  
2008 Silver NC



After moving from two wheels to four (BMW 1100 morphing into a BRG NA) the fun factor without a helmet started.

The NA was updated to an NC. It was conditional that it had to be an auto so Trish could drive it ... why can't women drive manuals? So after hiding my head in shame at the thought it's turned out the auto is fabulous – I would not go back to a manual.

The NC's jinba attai was disappointing compared with the NA, so after some mods of lowering, coilovers and swaybars changes with some mild aggressive alignment it returned again.

I always liked the idea of joining a car club, but spending an extra four hours' road time to get to Melbourne to join their runs was crazy when Gippsland has some great curves, so I was pleased when the Eastern Chapter came about.

The Club has provided friendships, common interests and the opportunity to share some of those Gippsland curves. ❖

## Bruce Harvey

Northern Tasmania  
2009 Sunlight Yellow NC  
(faster than red!)



Cheryl and I are on our second MX-5 with both having been yellow. We have been Club members for close to eight years and have attended two NatMeets.

I am pleased to have been the Northern Tassie Chapter Captain at a time when the Chapter membership has grown and continues to grow with the members able to bring a diverse range of skills into the mix and everyone makes a valuable contribution.

Whenever I get an opportunity I always talk up the roads that Tasmania has that just suit the MX-5 perfectly. I guess the biggest advantages are the accessibility of these roads and the sheer number of "B" roads means that you can traverse the entire state without going near a main highway.

I am proud to have had a small input in the final decision to hold NatMeet 2016 in Tasmxnia and urge everyone to get personally organised to attend what will be the event of a life time. ❖

## John Waldock

Southern Tasmania  
1990 Classic Red NA &  
2004 Velocity Red NB SE



I joined the Club because I was keen to find out more about the MX-5 and meet like-minded people who were also passionate about their car.

I most enjoy the feeling of the car, through acceleration, the balance and poise through corners. I love having the top down and the rush of air, smelling the countryside and hearing the exhaust note as I motor along.

I have had such a ball meeting others in the Chapter and more widely within the Club. I have made many friends, and learned so much about the mechanicals of the MX-5. It's been great to watch the Chapter in Southern Tasmania grow and become more successful. There are quite a few of us who have been members since the Chapter kicked off and it's terrific to see how friendships have developed while still keeping the relaxed and friendly tone that has always been a part of our social runs. ❖

# My favourite MX-5 road ...

■ Words, photos: Ron Gillick, North-Eastern Victoria Chapter Captain

*I have previously written about my favourite road, but I'm sure, like most of you, I have more than one favourite.*

## Granya to Jingellic (70km)

The road starts just east of Old Tallangatta. Turning left off the Murray Valley Highway towards Granya, the fun soon begins with the ascent over a small range of hills with a tight, twisting road of about six kilometres to the summit and another six kilometres down to the small town of Granya.

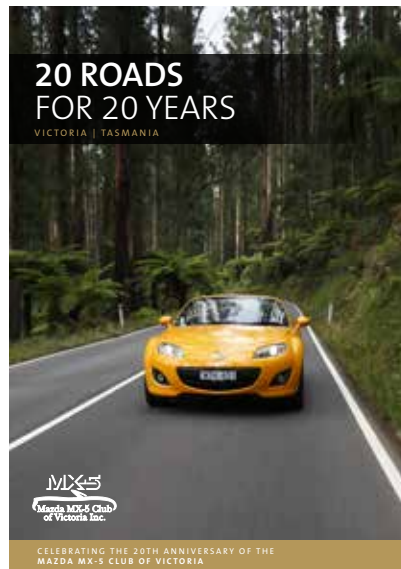
After passing through Granya the road turns to the east and follows the edge of the Murray Arm of Lake Hume. When the

lake is full there are spectacular views to the left, with the range of hills we have just crossed off to the right. There are very few tight corners but you are rewarded with 55km of almost constant sweeping bends.

As we go further east, the upper reaches of the lake transform into the Murray River which we follow until just before Walwa, where we turn left over the Murray into the small hamlet of Jingellic to enjoy a lunch at the hotel along with a glass of red. ●



*Christmas is early!*



**Great news!** Our merchandise people have found a stash of the last 24 copies of our much sought-after 20th anniversary publication, *20 Roads for 20 Years*.

They're just \$16 + postage, available through the merchandise page on the Club website.

But these are definitely the last. Once they're gone, they're gone!

If you have a favourite MX-5 road, you're welcome to submit a short description (150 words) and a photo to [editor@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:editor@mx5vic.org.au) and share it around!



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# Chapter chatter ...

14.9.14 | Central ■ Words: Cary Warren ■ Photos: Randy Stagno Navarra ■ Organiser: Peter Dannock

*As some of us dusted off our little gems from their winter stables, Sunday, 14 September certainly delivered good old traditional spring weather to Melbourne. The sun was shining and I believe every member that arrived at our meeting place did so with their car's top down.*

The early morning sun lured 30 cars in total, with a mixture of all models represented and, of course, only days old the new addition to the MX-5 family, the ND, was certainly the talk of the morning – well, *all day* really ...

The drive had a mixture of social enthusiast members through to traditional motor sport members, along with what is always rewarding to have, a representation of new members – all of whom were eager for Pete's briefing and then to hit the road for a piece of *Zoom Zoom* action.

As we made our way up Burwood Highway the buzzing sound of our cars set the tone for the morning as we headed for the hills, passing the **Thousand Steps** (*what a parking inspector's delight that must be on a sunny Sunday morning ...*).

Finally the road was ours as it opened up to the beautiful scenery of Mount Dandenong across to Montrose. All were travelling fine as we admired the blue bird skies, the amazing fauna and flora full of vibrant spring colours as we peaked and then spiralled to our descent of Mount Evelyn.

**Run notes:** Next turn – left at the roundabout and head towards Silvan Reservoir ... indicated left, entered the roundabout – oops, too late, as I caught Pete standing waving on the side the road: *detour detour detour!* Several of us had a great merry-go-round ride as we went around and around the roundabout, quite comically, really ... ROAD CLOSED to Silvan! Police and SES were blocking the

road, so a secondary route quickly had to be determined.

Jumped on the radio – which I may add was going flat as tack. Don, our president, had made a plan B as he guided everyone to our morning tea meeting place. Thanks to Arthur and Helena who assisted me with the mid-round up, we all managed to make our way to the Silvan Reservoir for a morning cuppa. *Or did we?*

Pete, our trusty run leader, fortunately was a great shepherd and didn't leave his flock, bringing in the rear of the group taking, what I believe was the very scenic long route from Montrose to Silvan Reservoir.

Pete was proud to add that amongst all the excitement we never lost a car ... we may have all hit morning tea at different intervals, nevertheless we all got there safely in the end. The car park was an array of colours and chit chat of our morning adventures, – oh, and of course ND was still talk of the town.

Cuppas finished, Pete gave us all a second briefing, making it very clear that, once we have turned right out from Silvan Reservoir national park, we were to take the first left-hand turn towards Monbulk, as in his planning for this run he missed this turn. Well, it wasn't long until I too was rounding up a few strays further up the road who missed the turnoff and, before we knew it, we were part of the Spring Tulip Festival parade! *What a classic!*

After a quick chuckle we made a beeline outta there – radio well and truly flat, spare battery flat, but thanks to detailed

run notes and Telstra coverage we were back on course as we hugged some lovely curling corners across to Monbulk and through to Woori Yallock where the fleet was awaiting for us in true Club courtesy.

From Worri Yallock we took one of my favourite back roads that leads into Healesville. Bang on 12.30pm we had hit the thriving uber township. Cafés and shops were buzzing as we paraded ourselves through the main stretch before making our way to our picnic site for lunch.

Over lunch we caught the glorious spring sun rays as we laughed about our adventurous morning. Onlookers admired our gleaming cars ... and, yes, there was still chatter about the – you guessed it – the ND (all constructive of course!).

Don, Randy and I couldn't stop with what was perfect MX-5 touring weather, so we seized the opportunity for an extended run home via the back hills of Healesville for a little more *Zoom Zoom*, zipping our way to the top of Kinglake, through to Yarra Glen and Christmas Hills before making our way home for a well-deserved beverage.

What a great start to spring and a great start to a season of warm top-down weather. This = MX5 fun!

Thanks to all members who attended; it was great to see so many of you on the day. ●

*Remember to look at our Club's events calendar for more exciting events that are scheduled for our great car club for the remainder of the year.*





# A run to Healesville



# Chapter chatter ...

14.9.14 | Western Victoria ■ Words & photos: Karen Bradshaw ■ Organisers: Ian & Karen Bradshaw

*So what do we do to say thank you to our retiring Chapter Captain, John Gleeson, and his wife Noellene?*



^ Noellene and her flowers

We gather as many members as we can and have a car run of course! Where to start? ... at the Gleesons', of course, at 10am for a 10.30 start.

After much chit chat and introductions to our prospective members, Mary and Brian Carroll, Ian gathered us up for our "pep" talk and to welcome our visiting friends from the Central Chapter as well as some faces we hadn't seen for a while. Patrice was kind enough to grab some flowers on our behalf to give to Noellene; unfortunately they looked like they would wilt in the boot so a quick decision was made to present them to Noellene – then and there.

"Here Noellene, these are yours," was the presentation speech given by our new Captain – Ian "Little Sh\*t" Bradshaw – short and to the point! It was then "start your engines" and 20 impressive shiny MX-5s and one – *oh dear* – Landcruiser bringing up the rear. The Todds' MX-5 wasn't feeling well – probably dejected from being left home alone recently.

We headed out towards Yendon, around Mt Buninyong, through Buninyong then on to Napoleons, Ross Creek and into Smythesdale for our 10-minute toilet stop – and it was only 10 minutes – Chris had to do the coffee shuffle back to his car. Then it was on to Snake Valley, into Linton, Happy Valley and the ripper short

uphill and downhill corners of Devils Kitchen before heading back to Linton to get on to the road to Mannibadar. *Lost yet?*

We headed along the Geelong road to Skipton and our destination, the *Skipton Golf and Bowls Club* for lunch. Here we met Doug and Wendy Gill who couldn't join us for the morning run (visitors!). We had our obligatory group photo taken on the golf course before gathering inside where we were made very welcome by the golf ladies and the barman, who was kept very busy.

After our main meal of roast beef and vegies, it was time for the important business. Ian delegated to our Vice President, Murray Finlay, to give a thank you speech to John and Noellene. He thanked them for their very important contribution of being the inaugural Chapter leaders and getting our Chapter up and running. They have worked tirelessly for our Chapter and the MX-5 club for over six years and their effort is much appreciated by everyone in our Chapter and the Club.

Ian then once again delegated; this time it was me who was assigned to present the Gleesons with their *thank you* gift. Remembering that Noellene received her flowers in the morning it was John's turn – two packets of his favourite indulgence, *Tim Tams!* I also presented them both



^ John & Noellene ... now in the middle of the pack

Western Victoria's

# "Thank You" run



with a photo book, which was a collection of photos from most of the runs that they had organised or participated in. I hope it rekindles the memories of the runs and what fun was had by us all as it did for me while I was putting it all together.

Both John and Noellene responded with their own speeches. After the important stuff was over, we went back to chit chat and reminiscing and dessert – pav or sticky date pudding, *yum yum!*

The day slowly closed on one era and welcomed a new era with Ian and myself taking over from the Gleasons.

There were 19 apologies from members who couldn't attend on the day. Acceptable excuses were: overseas, grey nomading, another Chapter run, family commitments and a sore back. The number of people who attended or expressed their regrets at not being able to take part on the day just goes to show how well respected and appreciated John and Noellene are, and how much their friendship is valued. Ian and I have a big act to follow but are reassured by the fact that John and Noellene are still "in the middle of the pack" ... just in case we need them.

I would like to thank Vice President Murray and wife Alyssa and the new Central Chapter Captain, Geoff Roche, and his wife Bronwyn for joining us for the day; it was very much appreciated. I would also like to thank the ladies of the Skipton Golf and Bowls Club for a fantastic meal and venue (it's a great little nine-hole course too - no bunkers!).

**Zoom Zoom ... can't wait for the next outing! ●**



^ At Skipton golf course ... with a few of their closest friends!

# THE RECORD ATTEMPT (AKA, THE

Words & photos: Ben Sale

On a normal Australian club run a turnout of 30 cars is considered a success and creates quite a sight wherever the run may lead.

Pause for a moment to consider that at Laguna Seca I saw 40 times as many MX-5s in the same place at the same time.

To put it simply, it was an astonishing sight!



Ben Sale

25<sup>TH</sup>  
ANNIVERSARY



As part of the MX-5's 25th anniversary celebrations world record for the most MX-5s in the same place

This was held on Friday afternoon, 7 September, the day before the weekend's on-track activities commenced. The cars would be positioned so that from the air they would create the text "MX-5 25". The variety of cars assembled was astonishing and some owners had driven from across the country (over 40 hours according to one person I spoke to had travelled from Detroit), and even from as far as Canada.

The only local space large enough to accommodate so many cars was the dusty overflow carpark at Laguna Seca, so in photos some of the cars look less pristine than they could have. Walking around there was always something to look at and someone to talk to, making the event a thoroughly enjoyable experience.

I initially gravitated to the line up of *Flyin' Miata* cars. Their modified versions of the MX-5 are the stuff of legend, so to see them in the flesh was something pretty special. Especially

noteworthy was the LS3 V8 powered Targa car – which so nearly won the Targa Newfoundland event – and *Atomia Betty*, an NC fitted with a street legal (in the US) V8 conversion kit. I did ask, the kit will fit a RHD car but unfortunately a V8 is not legal in Australia. According to *Flyin' Miata*'s Ben Cardell, the kit only adds minimal weight and as most of the increase is due to a stronger gearbox and diff it does not dramatically affect the weight distribution or handling of the car. *Flyin' Miata* also had their *Exocet* on display, the first I've seen in the flesh. If you haven't heard of this MX-5 based kit car it's well worth having a look into, it's an amazing adaptation; *imagine your MX-5 but with half the weight*. Another MX-5 adaption on display was the *Catfish*, a beautiful MX-5-based kitcar taking design inspiration from classic sports cars from Aston Martin and Jaguar.

Walking around the area almost every car was something special or unique. I particularly liked seeing some of the original cars such as an immaculate Classic Red NA Miata fitted with the steel wheels the base model in the US car





# THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH!)



Aerial photo: courtesy Mazda

The “Miatas at Mazda Raceway” organisers decided to attempt the at the same time.

with. This car was the only US model to be fitted with the non-powered steering we originally got in Australia, although it still had the un-attractive NA airbag wheel the US cars were fitted with. I was also impressed that someone had the full-length Miata tonneau cover fitted to an original blue NA6. Various options we didn't get in Australia were also on display including a few beautiful black NAs with standard fit red interior and BBS mesh wheels.

A number of race cars ready for action over the weekend were

dispersed among the road cars and featured a number of very creative ways to reduce weight, improve aerodynamics and add power. There were also a number of other V8-powered cars (both Ford and Chevrolet) around, and turbocharging/supercharging road-going MX-5s seems a lot more popular in the US than it is in Australia. Perhaps it has something to do with their more relaxed attitude towards speeding ...

Around 3pm

everyone started to gather on the road outside the parking area to catch a glimpse of the ND. This was the first time the car would be seen both by the public and in motion on the road. The car, one of three fully-operational NDs in the world couldn't hang around as it was scheduled to be on display at the New York Motor Show on Monday.

The timing was very tight so incredibly it was slowly driven past the crowd of onlookers, in a train showing the four generations *and then straight on to the truck.*

By now all of the cars had arrived so it was time for a final walk around while the aerial photos were taken before everyone began to head off.

In the end over 1,200 cars were present, but at the time of writing it is not clear if this is a new record or not. *(As far as we can tell, they needed over 1,600 cars to set a new record ~ Ed.)*

**Regardless, it was an amazing display and a fitting tribute to passionate people who over the last 25 years have helped build the MX-5 legacy. □**



# THE RECORD ATTEMPT



^ The new ND ... first time on the road



*Flyin' Miata's  
V8 MX-5*



*The Exocet*



^ Atomic Betty, the street-legal V8 NC

# Chapter chatter ...

## 14.9.14 | North-eastern Victoria

■ Words: Brian Raine ■ Photos: Loz Thomas, Ron Gillick ■ Organisers: Loz & Shane Thomas

*It all started at Yackandandah at 9:30 for a 10am start. Six cars were ready to go ... but wait, a seventh car! Peter and Emily rolled up (potential future members).*

We all agreed that the new ND MX-5 looked like a Z4 from the back. Most loved the side view.

The weather was gorgeous, all rooves down and away we went. We headed off to, *hmmm* ... well, Shane and Loz knew the way.

We stopped at the Kiewa River for scones and drinks. Some of us sat enjoying the view, the sun, some simply ate the scones and some had a chat when fellow bikers wheeled by, then off again over the Tawonga Gap; brilliant run up and only held up a bit by a Camry coming down. The scenery was absolutely spectacular with snow-covered mountains in the background – something for the passengers and drivers.

Then up Mt. Buffalo, seldom out of third gear, rarely below 3000 rpm. A lunch stop at the chalet, seated and chatting and drinking ... Roger's homemade salami went down a treat, and a photo with the entire group prepared to walk 40 metres for the glorious view – yep, a whole 40 metres. *Ah, what are the non-MX-5 drivers doing?*

If you don't smile at least once when you drive the MX-5 you're not driving it

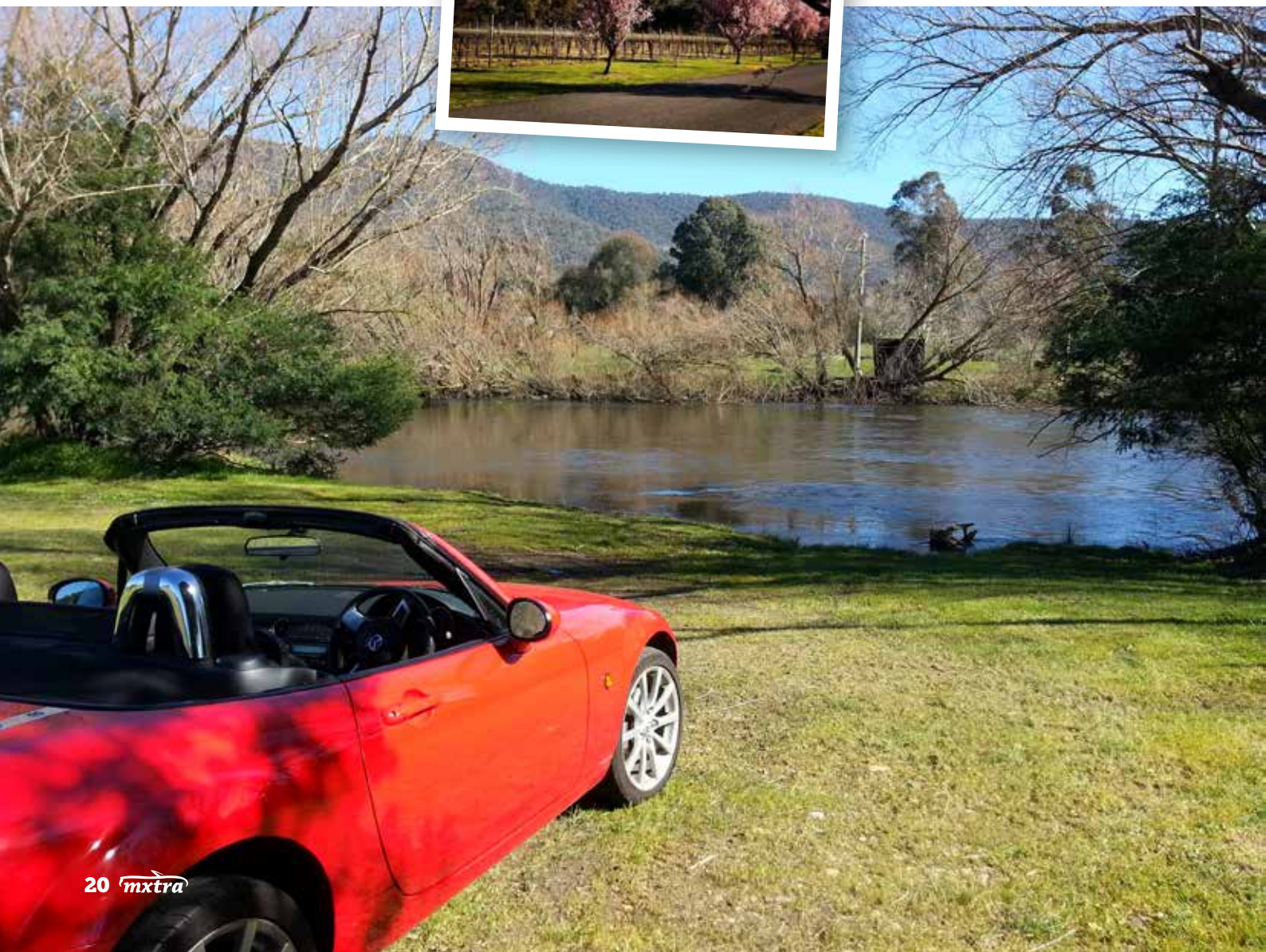
properly. If you don't smile when in the convoy ... shame! We headed back down the Mt. Buffalo road and on to another fantastic run ... the Happy Valley road and on to the Stanley road. We were only slowed a bit by a Camry (*no kidding, Gerry!*).

All great curvy roads made such a great day:

- » the weather = perfect
- » the cars = perfect
- » the company = perfect
- » and I must say more curves than ... (*sexist comment deleted*).

A truly great day, the best run so far, ending at Beechworth for coffee and a chat at about 3.30pm.

**Impressive, thanks to Loz and Shane. ●**





✓ At the Mt Buffalo lookout ... L-R, Peter, Brian, Ellen, Gerry, Emily, Gerald, Loz, Shane and Roger



# Two Valleys Run



# Chapter chatter ...

## 14.9.14 | Southern Tasmania

■ Words: Michelle Waldock ■ Photos: Rob Tanner ■ Organisers: John & Michelle Waldock

*Longer days, blossom bursting on branches ...*

... it's Springtime on everyone's favourite island and what better way to celebrate than to combine a Club Run with a destination that focuses on flowers?

We were headed for Inverawe, a 22-hectare native garden planted by Margaret and Bill Chestnut.

Inverawe is tucked away behind the famous Margate Train on the Huon Valley touring route that everyone in the Chapter knows well. Which posed a bit of a problem, because the Chapter had already travelled to the Huon Valley the previous month. *What to do?*

Simple ... *make the trip into a Quiz Run!*

Not just any quiz run – only half the questions concerned the route to be travelled while the other half focussed on guessing movie titles. That sounds a bit easy, I hear you say. Well, not really, due to an intriguing little book called “Movies in Five Seconds” that outlines the whole plot of various movies using only picture icons. The book had already caused much hilarity in the Waldock household and we

were keen to share it.

So, with 12 movies carefully selected, based on popularity (we had discovered that a person had to have seen the movie before, otherwise it was nearly impossible to guess), we assembled the quiz, handed it out and the group set off.

Our little convoy of eight cars headed through Hobart on a mild September day with glimpses of blue sky visible between fluffy patches of scudding white clouds. The Waldock car, for once, brought up the rear of the convoy to act as ‘sweeper’, making sure everyone was on the right track. We had to drive quite slowly in some places (making the *ladybrake* very pleased) as it wasn't long before we passed some of the group motoring in the opposite direction to hunt for a missed clue. However, the movie clues were more rapidly completed and the group converged again outside the gate to Inverawe Gardens.

Margaret and Bill gave us a warm welcome and a brief history of *Inverawe*

*Gardens*, which they have single-handedly transformed from a gorse-covered hillside into a sympathetically landscaped showcase for native plants.

Over a picnic lunch, the quizzes were marked and clear winners emerged, as well as merriment due to unusual interpretations of the movie plotline pictures (for example, *Bambi* being misinterpreted as *The Deer Hunter* and *Fatal Attraction* as *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?*).

After lunch, it was time for a leisurely stroll around the Garden, but not before Margaret had a surprise for us – she had given us tickets on our arrival that were put in a hat and the winner received a large bunch of flowers from the Garden. John Hadrill was the lucky winner and Bill's photograph of him proudly holding his bouquet appeared in a local suburban newspaper the following week.

**A fitting finale to our Spring Fling Run. ●**

✓ *At the Margate Train*





# Michelle's Spring Fling run



Free online at [www.kingboroughchronicle.com.au](http://www.kingboroughchronicle.com.au)

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TUESDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER 2014



## Blooming

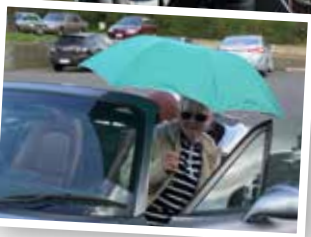
Inverawe Native Gardens, located behind the Margate Train, is now open to the public, with visitors coming from all over Australia to see the wonderful fauna and flora.

Recently the MX-5 Car Club of Victoria and Tasmania visited Inverawe, with one lucky member of the club taking home a bunch of flowers from the garden.

For further information contact Inverawe, Tasmania's largest landscaped native garden, on 6267 2020.



Members of the MX-5 Car Club of Victoria and Tasmania recently visited Inverawe Native Gardens. John was the lucky winner of the bunch of flowers on the day. PS



^ From the top: Stacey & Allan; some of Allan's conversation partners; Mike & Liz; Lawrence and Allan; top-down, southern Tassie-style!

^ The view from the Inverawe native gardens across North West Bay

# Chapter chatter ...

## 20-21.9.14 | Northern Tasmania

■ Words: Chapter collaboration ■ Photos: Kelly Berggren ■ Organisers: Bruce Harvey

*Our annual East Coast Overnighter was another roaring hit this year, with perfect clear weather, a great turn out of cars (including some first runners, Kathy and Alice) and good company.*

Add to the mix some of our all-time favourite Tassie roads and we had a recipe for *zooming fun*!

Heading out of Launie, we took *The Sideling* at full steam ahead. I took it in reverse, so I could snap shots of Trev tailing us – which wasn't a good idea in retrospect ...

Next was Scottsdale, Derby (lunch by the river!), Weldborough Pass (*swweettt!*) and through St Helens to Scamander Beach Resort, where we stayed for the night.

The boys got stuck into the snooker (and beer) which was hilarious to watch. What with no more driving, they were so sozzled that the single game ended up great value for money – and entertaining for the entire bar to boot!

I love overnighters because you get more time to chat with everyone – we had a lovely dinner and evening.

Next morning it was off again to another favourite: Elephant's Pass – a very fun hillclimb with a razorback in the middle. Then on to Fingal and the Rossarden turnoff. We made a pit stop (excuse the pun) at the slag pit for photos and the boys had more fun playing with the rusted old wrecks the locals had kindly left for contrast (*'There's a perfectly good washer pump! I need one of those!'*).

With a last bit of curvy fun we headed down the gorge, through Avoca and ended up in Campbell Town for lunch. Munching burgers while listening to the local bagpipes version of *Battle of the Bands* was a relaxing finish to a wonderful weekend.

Thanks Bruce for the run, and everyone else for the company!

*~ Kelly*

*"Changes direction quicker than a panicking mouse" and "more nimble than a teenager on a skateboard" are two descriptions I have read at various times to relay to a reader the attributes of the MX-5.*

Our annual weekend trip to the east coast of Tasmania gave us plenty of opportunity to test and prove the above.

Famous stretches of road included *The Sideling, Ledgerwood Lane, Weldborough Pass, Elephant Pass* and *Rossarden* all traversed in just one weekend and with the company of 20 other like-minded friends is a panacea for any ailment.

*~ Bruce*





# East Coast Overnighter

*If there is such a thing as global warming, I'm loving it!*

Whoever would have thought we'd be *zoom zooming* around Tasmania wearing light T-shirts in the middle of September?

Blue skies, azure seas topped with foaming surf, winding roads through picture-perfect scenery, we must be the luckiest group in Oz.

Fabulous weekend with good mates ... what better way to celebrate good times with a bunch of crazy friends singing *Happy Birthday* to me at the top of their lungs (except it wasn't my birthday!). *Thanks for the memories guys!*

*~ Sandra & Keith*

*Great weather ... great roads ...  
good company ... great cars ...  
good organisation ... so many  
thanks to all.*

*~ Rob*

One of the best parts of my trip to the east coast was when my better half [*hand brake*] decided to travel with one of the other ladies to keep her company.

I was able to finish the last part of our favourite drive – *The Sidling* lookout to Scottsdale – by myself. They all said I had a grin from ear to ear after the run but I was happy when Jill re-joined me for the rest of the trip.

We all had a very good weekend – thanks again, Bruce and Cheryl.

*~ Peter*

*"I never waste an opportunity to pick up spare parts!"*

*~ Carl*



*Thought it was pennies from heaven hitting me on the head but, no – it was only a rock compliment from Kochie.*

*~ Trevor*

## *Recipe for perfection:*

Warm sunny day, great bunch of friends, a few drinks, good food, lots of laughs. Mix these ingredients with an MX-5 and Tasmania's best roads.

This recipe is best used often to keep the smile on your face.

*~ Alana*

# Memoirs of a track day novice

■ Words: Siddique Fisher, on his second Club track day ■ Photos: Ben Sale & Siddique Fisher

*Being a car enthusiast can take on many meanings when it comes to MX-5s.*

Having obsessed over my silver NB8B (right), modifying it and involving myself in as many Club activities as I can, the one that I have been most waiting for is motor sport.

The Sandown round on 21 September was my second sprint event, preceded by Phillip Island earlier in the year. I am not new to motor sport in general – I have done flag marshalling and helped out with other car clubs and friends over the years. But experiencing motor sport first hand with my own car had somewhat eluded me ... until I bought my MX-5.

It was always, "... One day, one day I'll do it ..."

It seems like many Club members I speak to have an interest in trying but seem to think it's only for professional motor sport racers and highly modified cars etc ...

**I can tell you, it's not.** If you want to enjoy your MX-5 to its *and your* full potential in a safe and controlled environment, join us! Everyone at the track is welcoming and friendly. All you need is a well-maintained car, CAMS licence, a helmet and a fire extinguisher. This level of motor sport is not some dark art practiced by a select few. It's open to anyone ... all you need do is observe some basic track rules and have fun.

Sandown is the closest track to my home and I actually drive past it each day on the way to work. Having readied the car during the week (taking out anything unnecessary), I arrived at 7am. *Here's what happens ...*

You sign in, take your car to scrutineering and attend the driver's briefing. All the cars are divided into categories and run groups. Everything on the day is run from the point of view of maximum safety for you and for all at the track. New track users are given



the opportunity of a practice session with an experienced driver/passenger to familiarise themselves with the track.

With every session, I found myself getting more and more confident with the car and my own ability. I think, towards the end of the day, I was almost the last car on the track. I kept doing laps for about 45 minutes until they waved the chequered flag. I can't say I am a *no fear* or *gung-ho* driver ... I have a very strong self preservation mode and don't wish to damage mine or anyone else's car.

*Remember, it's not a race.* Sprints are about you against the clock, bettering yourself and seeing your times go down as the day progresses.

So if you're looking for a fun day out with your MX-5 come down and check out a Sprint event. You can have a go, too! ●

## City Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship standings after Round 4 | Winton ~ 21.9.14

(corrected points)	1st	2nd	3rd
Overall Champion	= Russell Garner, Ray Monik » 40		Dean Hasnat » 32
Standard NA	Robert Downes » 30	---	---
Standard NB	Dean Hasnat » 32	Peter Dannock » 28	Jeremy Fredersdorff » 24
Standard NC	Alan Conrad » 30	---	---
Clubman	Max Lloyd » 25	Peter Phillips » 29	Noel Heritage » 24
Modified	Ray Monik » 40	Gavin Newman » 19	Daniel White » 14
Super Modified	Russell Garner » 40	Robert Parr » 28	---
Restricted Open	Paul Ledwith » 37	Brendan Beavis » 17	---
Open	Dave Moore » 20	Mike Kirby » 10	---

## 2014-15 City Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship | Round 4 ~ 21.9.14



### City Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship - Round 4, Sandown

One of the great things about the tracks we visit in our MX-5 Sprint Championship is the fact that all of them are currently used by the 'other' Championship, V8 Supercars.

Whether it's Sandown, Winton or Phillip Island it gives you a real buzz sitting at home watching the V8SC telecast knowing each corner, where you hit the apex or a bump in the track.

Round 4 of the City Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship was back at Sandown Raceway, the track that just the weekend before had hosted the V8SC Sandown 500. Again we had a great MX-5 team of 24 cars and again great weather and ideal track conditions. What seems to be a growing trend and great to see we had two or three first-timers at the track and again some of regular competitors stepped up to sit in with the newcomers for their first session, so thanks guys!

With almost two full run groups of MX-5s and great track conditions the day saw some great results with new lap records in Super Modified for **Russell Garner** (1:29.3) and Restricted Open for **Paul Ledwith** (1:25.7) proving the competition is still fierce. Paul's day was almost spoilt by a sound level warning requiring some further clarification from the organisers but thankfully a combination of *re-calibrating of the engine mapping* and some skilful gear changes meant Paul didn't have to load the car on the trailer and go home. *All this and still a lap record!*

The hotly contested Clubman class saw **Max Lloyd** and **Princey** separated by just one 1/100th of a second and then Noel Heritage only 1/10th of a second behind at the end of the day, lucky those boys aren't competitive! Standard NB again saw **Dean Hasnat** take out the day with **Simeon** and **John D** close behind.

The Sprint Championship now has a break until November due to the **Winton 6 Hour** and our three teams all focussed on Top 10 finishes – something that has never been achieved. *Good luck guys!*

*~ Tim Emery*

### City Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship - Round 4 | Winton - 21.9.14

Results - Round 3	1st		2nd		3rd	
Standard NA	Robert Downes	» 1:37.8586	---	---	---	---
Standard NB	Dean Hasnat	» 1:37.1507	Simeon Ouzas	» 1:37.9648	John Downes	» 1:38.7137
Standard NC	---	---	---	---	---	---
Clubman	Peter Phillips	» 1:35.8270	Max Lloyd	» 1:35.9201	Noel Heritage	» 1:36.3635
Modified	Ray Monik	» 1:32.7403	Gavin Newman	» 1:35.7894	Tim Meaden	» 1:39.2124
Super Modified	Russell Garner	» 1:29.3077**	Robert Parr	» 1:42.6249	---	---
Restricted Open	Paul Ledwith	» 1:25.7539**	Brendan Beavis	» 1:27.5786	---	---
Open	Dave Moore	» 1:29.6902	---	---	---	---

\*\* New Club lap record

LAGUNA SECA

# MIATAS AT MAZDA RACEWAY LAGUNA SECA

**An amazing total of 1,934 Mazda MX-5s gathered on 6 September, 2014, for the Miatas at Mazda Raceway event.**

Collectively these cars and their owners celebrated the 25th anniversary of the MX-5's launch in 1989 by taking part in a range of activities. To give context to the scale of this phenomenal event, in the strongest sales year in Australia a total of 1,468 MX-5s were sold across the country ...

After seeing 1,208 cars gather on Friday afternoon to create MX-5 aerial art I wasn't quite sure what to expect from this event; was it merely going to be a hyped-up track day or something more special than that? I assumed the latter, but in reality the event far exceeded all expectations!

I arrived early on Saturday morning and was immediately drawn to the *Skyactive zone* set up by Mazda. The cars on display here were a good introduction of what to expect from the weekend in terms of history. As the owner of a track-driven NA6, seeing the first MX-5 to compete in a motor sport event was pretty special. Looking at that mildly-modified NA I can't imagine that the original racers would have known the humble car they were competing in would go on to be the world's most-raced car – and revered worldwide.



Words & photos: Ben Sale

While checking out the track-prepped NCs and Mazda's new Le Mans prototype (a technologically-impressive diesel design) parked alongside, a Mazda representative asked if I would like a go on the simulator? *Now we're talking!* Mazda had set up two full-motion (hydraulic rams to move the 'cockpit') iRacing simulators programmed with an NC MX-5 and the Laguna Seca circuit – a great introduction to the weekend and the track!

By the time I'd done a few laps, the real world on-track action was starting to kick off and it was time to see some of the cars and what they could do. Miatas at MRLS is an MX-5 only event, but that doesn't mean there is a lack of variety!

**NA's, NB's and NC's run alongside thundering V8-swapped monster Miatas and MX-5 adaptations such as the Exocet and Catfish. In addition to the on-track action the 25th anniversary event had a big heritage flavor thanks to Mazda. I was excited to learn that the three key people behind the NA – Bob Hall, Tom Matano and Mark Jordan – would all be in attendance.**

The huge marquee set up for the heritage presentations also housed a number of MX-5s from Mazda's collection. As an avid motoring enthusiast and reader of many books on the MX-5's history I was astonished by how much I got out of the heritage presentation. It gave me a great understanding of the odds the project overcame to get off the ground, the approach the team took to ensure they built a true sports car and some of the more humorous aspects to the story (most relating to the English cars used as benchmarks in the NA's development). Also, stories like driving the prototype NA into a Californian shopping centre *three years before its release just to see what the reaction would be* were pretty amusing!

One that astonished me was **Tom Matano** (head of the Mazda North America design team on the original MX-5 project) telling us about placing a full-sized clay design model of the new car on to the wall of Mazda's new US design studio 12 months before the car's release and telling people it was a reject from Japan and they just decided to put it on the wall "because we liked it"!



At the conclusion of this session I was lucky enough to have the opportunity to speak with both Tom Matano (with me, left) and Bob Hall, in person and at length. Tom and his lovely wife are the most genuinely nice people you could ever hope to meet and Tom seems to have found genuine fulfillment in teaching the next generation of car designers. The best way to describe **Bob Hall** is probably eccentric, incredibly witty and very genuine. He recently concluded work on a project with Proton which he says is equal to the NA in terms of execution of concept and personal satisfaction. I think I need to

look closer into the Proton Saga S16! According to Bob, its "*ride and handling is really good for what is effectively a sh\*tbox*". In the marquee Mazda's current designer Derek Jenkins was now giving a presentation on the ND's styling and development. At the conclusion, after a few questions I thought it was a good time to see more of the track!



Laguna Seca's *Corkscrew* (above) is one of the world's iconic corners. It is simply epic to drive, a high-speed uphill blind approach quickly drops almost six storeys as the road snakes left and right. Imagine Bathurst's Dipper except with a blind approach – and much, much faster. Laguna Seca is surprisingly accessible and an interesting venue to watch from the sidelines. Viewing options include right on the side of the track through to naturally-elevated viewing points where you can see much of the action. It's worth noting that there weren't 'media passes' to this event so all the photos were taken from vantage points accessible by any spectator. However, most are probably not quite as keen to climb through forests to get a shot ...

The most spectacular sight had to be the parade laps that were intended to give all MX-5 owners present the chance to take their cars out and experience the circuit. **In total 814 cars participated**, the sessions run in three groups filled by each generation. Even from the sidelines you could see the smiles on people's faces and in many cases hear the screams of joy as car after car dipped through the famous Corkscrew.

After shooting most of the track it was time to head back to the marquee to enjoy a discussion about Mazda in motor sport and to take a closer look at the amazing cars Mazda had gathered from its collection and put on display. NAs present included two of the launch cars as displayed at the 1989 Chicago Motor Show reveal, a speedster prototype and the 1989 Club Sport concept. This car was first look into the future modifications owners were likely to make to MX-5s.

**Considering this car was made by the original design team it points to the intent of the design as being a pure and genuine sports car. A similar ND will be also shown at the next SEMA show; Derek Jenkins told me a lot of the influence for the yet-to-be-revealed design came from modifications owners have made to NA and NB MX-5s.**

The M Coupe was also particularly notable; this car looks stunning in person and, as much as I admire the MX-5's convertible-only status, I couldn't help but feel they missed an opportunity by not producing this 1995 concept car.

NBs on display included a pre-production design model, the 500,000th MX-5 produced (an Evolution gold NB8A) and a Mazdaspeed NB (SE). NCs were also well represented with a number of very cool show cars, my favorite being a chopped, low-windscreen speedster version. On Sunday I was lucky enough to be around at the end of the day and spot the cars being moved outside to be loaded on to trucks. Seeing these amazing cars in daylight was even more impressive. The line-up was amazing, considering they're cars I'd only seen photos of before, and it is great to know that Mazda kept a number of the pieces that collectively make up the MX-5's history.

... continued



The following day I spent more of my time around the pit and paddock area to interview people for a video about the event. This gave me the chance to chat with some incredible MX-5 owners. Among the many people I met one couple had driven 10,000km in their low-mileage 1991 BRG NA from Newfoundland, Canada, all the way down to Monterey.



Another couple had flown in from Germany. For their interview and photo we arranged a yellow NA, red NB and black NC in the background to form a German flag.

I also interviewed Tom Matano, Mark Jordan and Bob Hall

– what a pleasure to talk about the car with these guys.

Lisa Pegg, Keith Tanner and his partner Janel were a great help also. Keith was kind enough to also take me a ride around the track in the *Flyin' Miata* 525hp, LS3 V8-equipped Targa car, but more on that in another article!

Sunday also included a Spec Miata race; a great demonstration of how close MX-5 racing is in America with great competition throughout the field. This kind of completion is highly popular in the US with various classes and series to suit many budget levels. If by watching this any owners became inspired to take up racing they could simply walk down to the pitlane and see the stands set up from all of the US's main Miata tuning and racing businesses.

To put it simply, *Miatas at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca* is an event all MX-5 lovers should add to their bucket list. It's an annual celebration of all things MX-5 and is run by a team of incredibly friendly, helpful and passionate MX-5 lovers.

*I would like to specifically thank Mazda Australia and Ben Rounsefell for making this trip a reality. Hopefully Mazda Australia and everyone reading likes the content enough that I get sent again next year!!*

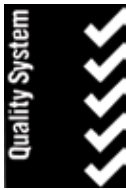
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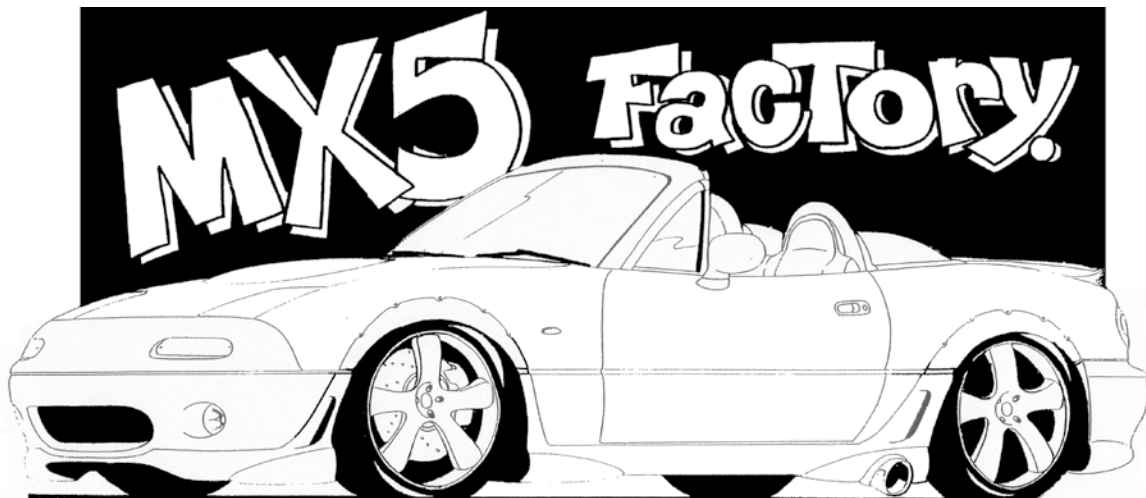
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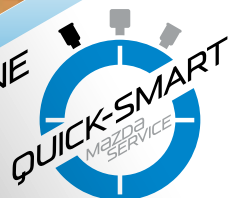
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