

*club*

THE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE OF THE MAZDA MX-5 CLUB OF NSW INC.

# TORQUE

***LONG LIVE THE ROADSTER***



**25TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL EDITION**

**VICTORIAN 6 HOUR RELAY - PHILLIP ISLAND**

**CHRISTMAS IN JULY**

WINTER 2014

Print Post Publication: I00006993



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# club TORQUE

THE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE OF THE MAZDA MX-5 CLUB OF NSW INC.

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### EDITORIAL

Had Lewis Carroll written "Alice in Wonderland" today, I imagine it could have gone something like this.

Alice is wandering the laneways of Sydney, looking for the secret doorway to the latest hidden bar. Her Facebook friend, Hipster Rabbit, pulls his smart phone from the pocket of his plaid, skinny jeans.

"Oh my eyes and whiskers, how late it's getting," says Hipster Rabbit.

Alice removes her earbuds and is like all, you know, "Whatevs".

Finally, they see it. Not a rabbit hole but a door. A door marked "Club Torque". Inside, they find a wonderland. Peopled with fascinating characters and the promise of many adventures, there is so much to explore. How easy it is to lose track of the time.

"I'm late, I'm late, for a very important ... deadline" cried the Rabbit.

You may well say, "Well, it sounds uncommon nonsense." And you would of course, be right. But before you yell "my 'Club Torque' is two weeks late. Off with her head", let me explain.

You see, it wasn't me. Mazda did it.

"Imagine, just one birthday every year", but this year, all your birthdays come at once and you receive not one present, but two. Not content with giving us the MX-5 25th Anniversary Edition, Mazda have now released details of the 2015 ND. The only difficulty lay in the ND's release being two weeks after the "Club Torque" winter issue deadline. And so I asked Mazda, very politely, if they would be so kind as to take their simultaneous, worldwide release with hundreds of fans, Laguna Seca and Duran Duran and

maybe perhaps, just bring it forward a little. And they said;

"You're utterly bonkers".

We then said farewell to Timothy Heppell, who leaves "Club Torque" to spend more time with his MX-5 - all the best Timothy.

How then were we to squeeze three months of amazing events, exciting motorsports and all the MX-5 news into 48 pages? Simple. "Begin at the beginning and go on until you come to then end; then stop."

So here it is at last. My apologies for its lateness and thank you for your patience. Apologies also to Mr. Carroll.

Mel Keller

### Contributions

At Club Torque, we welcome your comments and contributions. Articles and event reports of around 300 words and individual photos can be submitted to the Editor at [publications@mx5.com.au](mailto:publications@mx5.com.au). Please include your name and contact details. Photo files to accompany articles and reports can be uploaded to hosting website such as Flickr, Imageshack, Photobucket, SmugMug. Please ensure setting for full size photos is "public" and email the web address to the Editor. And remember, contributors to Club Torque earn points towards the Member of the Year Award. Deadline for the Spring Edition is Friday 31 October.

# NSW MEMBERSHIP REPORT

## CURRENT MEMBERSHIP



## NEW MEMBERS

*Welcome!*

George Astudillo	Kristy Herring
Jesse Attwell	Bradley Herring
Ken Barnard	Timmy Herring
Jhonette Badger	Adam Hughes
Daniel Blyton	Tom Irvine
David Boyes	Kim Jacobs
David Booth	Linton Jones
Alexandra	Rod Jonusas
Breitsameter	Sally Keogh
Wulff Breitsameter	Peter Launt
John Chapuis	Mitchum Le
Samantha Clark	Aaron Lewis
David Clark	Andrew Macarthur
Kerry Coulson	Mila Markovic
Robert Coulson	Anthony Mitsos
Declan Czajkowski	Carmen Morgan
Rachel Daniels	Robert Pearce
Lyn Davis	Jeanine Pickford
Peter Downes	David Pickford
Eddie Fong	Colin Piper
Karen Fotheringham	Michael Portwine
Malcolm	Elizabeth Quennell
Fotheringham	Robert Shea
Colin Glazier	Caecilia Soetanto
Wendy Gurry	David Staples
Hugh Gurry	Rainer Sutton
Michael Guina	Brian Wye
Cameron Hallam	
Joan Helliker	
Terence Helliker	

## COMMITTEE

President: Bryan Shedden  
president@mx5.com.au 0422 340 010

Vice President: Glenn Thomas  
vicepres@mx5.com.au

Treasurer: Julie Sando  
treasurer@mx5.com.au

Secretary: Wesley Hill  
secretary@mx5.com.au

Club Captain: Michael Soulos  
captain@mx5.com.au 0413 113 399

Membership Database: Keith Monaghan  
membership@mx5.com.au 0418 976 279

Membership: Ken & Maggie Liston  
02 9872 1639

Competition: David Lawler  
competition@mx5.com.au 0403 070 644

Publications: Rod Carter  
publications@mx5.com.au 0418 442 328

Website Coordinator: Greg Perry  
web@mx5.com.au 0414 431 055

Regalia: Pam Estreich  
regalia@mx5.com.au 0459 253 272

BreakFast Club Coordinator:  
Adam Walker  
breakfast@mx5.com.au 0403 161 544

Canberra Convenor:  
Bricet Klören & Bob Judd  
canberra@mx5.com.au 0422 386 660

Hunter Convenor: Mark Gray  
hunter@mx5.com.au 0477 090 538

Illawarra Convenor: Phil & Sandra Reid  
illawarra@mx5.com.au 0417 260 766

RPM Convenor: Lesa Bunn  
rpm@mx5.com.au 0423 276 152

Mid North Coast Convenor: Peter Rodgers  
midnorthcoast@mx5.com.au 0422 237 588

Sydney Convenor: Guy Coles  
sydney@mx5.com.au 0419 914 443

**EX-OFFICIO REPRESENTATIVES**

Competition/Event Secretary:  
Zan Menzel compsec@mx5.com.au  
Ph/Fax 02 6558 4190

Track Day Coordinator: Mike Hicks  
competition@mx5.com.au 0419 202 588

Club Torque Editor: Mel Keller  
publications@mx5.com.au 0421069 019

Club Historian: Elaine Caldwell  
02 9451 1432

Mazda MX-5 Club of NSW Inc.  
PO Box 402, Beecroft NSW 2119  
nsw.mx5.com.au



# PRESIDENT'S BRIEF

BY BRYAN SHEDDEN

25 years ago, the Mazda MX-5 arrived in Australia to an audience craving for the untapped experience of a light weight sports car at an affordable price with Japanese reliability. 25 years! Just stop and think about that for a minute. About 50 of our current club members were not even born then. In 1989, we witnessed the destruction of the Berlin Wall, the World Wide Web concept was announced, the ACT elected it's first self-government, and a magnitude 5.6 earthquake struck Newcastle. Very different times!

Fast forward to today and three generations of that brilliant little sports car is the reason why we have 700 club members sharing friendships and fun times across NSW and ACT. We have just celebrated the 25th Anniversary of the Mazda MX-5 with a fabulous series of events in the Hunter Valley over the weekend of 16/17 August.

Mazda has given us a very special send off for the NC generation, with the release of the 25th Anniversary Edition MX-5. You will find a detailed road test on page 7 – it's a stunning car. Australia has received 40 of the world-wide production of 500 cars, and one club member has already taken delivery from our sponsor Blue Mountains Mazda. If you're keen to buy one for yourself and cannot find a dealer with stock, please contact me and I'll arrange for Mazda Australia to steer you in the right direction.

As I write this report, the global reveal of the fourth generation Mazda MX-5 is only three weeks away on 4 September and you should have now seen it. I have a small confession to make: yes, I have already seen photos and specifications of the new model! Way back on 3 March 2014, I attended a market research focus



group evening, the purpose of which was to seek impressions on the new MX-5.

This opportunity arose from an email I received from the company running the event. At first I thought the

message was spam and almost deleted it, but I'm so glad I decided to give it a try because it was the real deal. I signed a confidentiality agreement, so I'm unable to reveal what I saw and was told.

Suffice to say that the ND was extremely impressive, and I'm anxiously awaiting my chance to place an order.

In the last edition of Club Torque, I called for help to fill some Committee vacancies. The response was truly inspirational and we have a full house once again. Welcome aboard to Glenn Thomas (Vice President), Wesley Hill (Secretary), Julie Sando (Treasurer), Rod Carter (Publications Officer) and Melissa Keller (Club Torque Editor). Pam Estreich has done a great job as Vice President and will return to her old role of Regalia Officer, allowing Lesa to focus on RPM Convenor. Sincere thanks to Brad Robinson for taking the Treasurer reins in the transition period over the last few months.



# DRIVER TORQUE

<i>Name</i>	Mel Keller
<i>Occupation</i>	Writer
<i>Chapter</i>	Sydney
<i>Member Since</i>	2012
<i>My MX-5</i>	1999 NB 10AE, 6 speed manual in Sapphire Blue Mica



## Personal Touches

AVO Turbo kit, Yellowspeed big brake kit, Yellowspeed shocks, custom 17" wheels wearing Toyo R888's, Adaptronic ECU, Brown Davis rollbar, Monza Harness, Sparco seat

## Why did you choose an MX-5?

After 20 years on the road (oh alright, 30) I wanted to improve and update my skills so attended a CAMS Come and Try Day. I had a blast piloting the family car through the motorkhana and hill-climb but it was during the 6 hot laps of Eastern Creek that I found my bliss. I immediately set about looking for an active, friendly club and after talking to a variety of clubs and spectating at the odd track day, I knew I'd found everything I was looking for in the MX-5 Club of NSW. I just needed an MX-5. It took six months of research and phone calls before I found her, hiding under a tarpaulin, and a further 3 months to get her in the road. My MX-5 is the perfect beginner's track car; determined, forgiving and heaps of fun.

## What was your previous car?

I've always been a Mazda fan. Having L-plated a Capella around Adelaide, I graduated to a 626 and later a 323. I now have a 2010 Mazda RX8 GT for Monday to Friday with the MX-5 taking care of weekends. The only exception to the Mazda rule was a Toyota 'Kijang' which had a short life providing a comfy chair for the average three hours a day spent in Jakarta's dodgem-car gridlock. 'Kijang' is Indonesian for deer which is apt for

sadly, we all know what can happen to a deer in traffic.

## What's your favourite MX-5 NSW event?

I love the track days, they are so well organised, fun and friendly and a great opportunity to learn. So far I've been learning how to heel-toe, find the apex and to always, always pack race tape. The Sydney Chapter Trivia Nights at the Commodore Hotel are always great fun and the "We Go Topless" team often finish on the podium.

<i>Name</i>	Rod Carter
<i>Occupation</i>	Consultant
<i>Chapter</i>	Sydney
<i>Member Since</i>	2004
<i>My MX-5</i>	1998 NB Red

## What is your favourite modification?

The Sparco seat. I seem to have the children's size so it's too small for just about anyone else, especially my husband. Consequently, the only person who can drive my car is me! As for the future, I wonder if I can upgrade the horn? Mine sounds like an overly polite kitten and in Sydney traffic, especially on the Harbour Bridge, I'd like a bit more lion.



**Personal Touches** Koni shocks, custom 17" wheels wearing Federal EVO, NB8A Full exhaust system with stainless steel headers

## Why did you choose an MX-5?

After owning a variety of roadsters (MGs, Stag, Spider) I needed a street car with performance and no lid.

## What was your previous car?

Austin Healy Sprite Mk 2A.

## What's your favourite MX-5 NSW event?

The early morning Breakfast Club runs are always a great drive. The Sydney Chapter Tuesday Trivia Nights at the Commodore Hotel are always interesting.

## What is your favourite modification?

New leather seats provide a comfortable and enjoyable way to experience driving with the lid off.

25 YEARS

## 25TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

### A Tall Order

*by Mel Keller*

This year, my husband Andrew and I mark our 25th anniversary. Last week, the MX-5 also turned 25 with the release of the MX-5 25th Anniversary Special Edition. It's a significant occasion for all of us and we knew we just had to get together and celebrate. With a test drive. And cake.



The MX-5 25AE is an easy choice of new car for me. At its heart, this is the car I know and love. The model has a 2.0L, four-cylinder petrol engine, available with six-speed manual or automatic transmission. Reliable and compact (yet with 150 litres of boot space), it is perfect for the daily drive. But it also has the goods for the weekend; 118kW of power and the 50:50 weight distribution and low centre of gravity combine to make the most of a winding, country road. In addition to

MAIDAS (Mazda's Advanced Impact Distribution and Absorption System), the 25AE has DSC, TCS and four-wheel ABS, seat-back roll bars and four airbags.

The car is finished in Mazda's exclusive Soul Red metallic paint. The front pillars, mirrors and folding hard-top convertible roof offer a contrast in gloss black. 17" aluminium alloy wheels are fitted with Bridgestone Potenza performance tyres and the manual version has an aluminium sports pedal set and Bilstein shocks.

The point of difference is the interior. The 25AE is styled along luxurious lines that still give the nod to the MX-5s sporting pedigree. The white leather seats are finished with contrast red stitching and stamped with a 25th anniversary motif. The instrument panel is hand-painted in piano black and the steering wheel is housed in black leather. Following Mazda's anniversary model tradition, each car has a 25 year badge with individual build number. There is a Bose sound system with six CD stacker although I would personally have preferred more advanced connectivity

such as Mazda's 'MZD Connect' which features on board navigation, Pandora and Stitcher. There is an MP3 auxiliary jack but no hands-free smart phone bracket.

I was first on the road for a test drive and the car at once felt familiar yet fresh. After a blast down the freeway, a quick reverse park and as many corners as I could find, my mind was made up. Andrew then presented us with a problem. Whilst he could sit comfortably in the car with the top down, he is simply too tall to drive with the roof up. I attempted to adjust the seat, the steering wheel and, quite desperately, his head but there was no solution. My husband would only be able to drive the MX-5 on a sunny day.

Greatly disappointed, we went home without a beautiful, new car. But at least, we still had cake.



25 YEARS

## DEALER DELIVERY

*Cameron Macarthur of Blue Mountains Mazda spends every day with our favourite car and leaves us with a serious case of job envy.*

When Mazda Australia announced that there would be a 25th Anniversary MX-5 released and in such limited number, we became very excited. We were the only rural dealer in Australia to be allocated one of the 40 cars in Australia and 1000 worldwide based on our prior MX-5 sales. We managed to secure a second car in a stroke of luck and, at time of writing, that car is still available. Andrew and myself are long term MX-5 fans and club members and currently have 3 of our own MX-5s.

Our family has owned Blue Mountains Mazda for over 22 years and in that time we have been lucky enough to get a number of limited edition models but the two that stand out to me are the 10AE (one resides in our collection) and now the 25AE. The exclusive colours and interiors of those cars are what make them so appealing. Soul Red has been very popular across other Mazda models and combined with the black roof and white leather the car looks stunning in the flesh and for me will be the NC to have in the future.

Selling and delivering the car to Chris and Marie was a very fun experience. Chris contacted me saying he was interested in getting one but was having no luck chasing one in South Australia. After a few emails and photos back and forth we struck a deal which included me trucking the car to Adelaide, picking it up and driving it to him in Hallett at the Wildongoleeche Hotel and returning in Chris' 2010 NC2. Chris added a couple of extras such as tint, mats and auto lights but we also fitted mudflaps colour-matched to the roof which ended up looking amazing. Picking up a customer's brand new car with only 7km on it and driving 200 odd km is a bit daunting. But as we left Adelaide the quality of the roads was excellent and the weather good and the trip in the 25AE went far too quickly. The car felt fantastic but I wasn't willing to push it hard on its maiden voyage, I thought that should be left to Chris. The car certainly got plenty of attention as we drove up and a few knowing looks from people who knew exactly what it was. We knew we were in the right place when we saw a white

MX-5 with bright orange wheels outside a historic pub in a town with a population of 70. Chris was pretty excited to finally have the car in his possession and was off driving it around straight away. We got a tour of the 146 year old Wildongoleeche Hotel and the loads of work they have put in to the place. My wife and I then spent the next couple of days driving back in Chris' mildly modified NC which was a heap of fun. The bright orange wheels certainly got some attention from the B- Doubles and caravans on the never ending Hay Plain and it took us more than 1400km to see another MX-5 on the road.



42 Great Western Hwy  
Medlow Bath NSW  
(02) 4788 1018





25 YEARS

# A BIT FANCY FOR A TOWN CALLED HALLETT

By Chris Flak

A few weeks ago I pulled in to the local Foodlands for supplies. My white NC, apparently well-noticed in the district, due to the orange wheels and the fact an MX-5 is a rare car in these parts, attracted comment from a couple of locals lounging outside the shop.

"It's a bit fancy for Hallett", the man remarked. To which my reply was a grin, a shrug of the shoulders and an acknowledging wave of the hand.

This being farming country, vehicles around here are of the practical type, namely the ute. Not the Tradies Ferrari kind, but robust workhorses from Toyota, Nissan to Mitsubishi, able to carry anything from a chook-pen to fuel, tools and sheep. Family transport tends to be of the sedan or SUV variety. So it's no country for sports cars; no one has the time. But there are country roads hereabouts that suit sports cars and when the weather is good, the roads and scenery combine to make top-down motoring a pleasure.

But dear reader, I digress. This isn't an article about Hallett, S.A., although I happen to live here. It is a story of how I acquired a 25th Anniversary NC.

My white NC was very much loved and the rewards were given on the road. Drive to Brisbane top-down? No problem. An early morning blast with the BreakFast Club? OK! Or a leisurely trip to a President's Picnic! Holiday? Let's drive to South Australia!

Maybe the new, much-anticipated and debated, MX-5 ND would be the next purchase. Then along came the news that Mazda would be releasing a run of 1000 MX-5s featuring custom interior trim, more or less a blue-printed motor and an awesome exterior colour. Only 40 coming to Australia! The USA sold its allocation of 100 vehicles in about 20 minutes!

Now by this time I had left the Blue



Mountains and executed a right turn off the M4 and onto the M7 motorway, preceding a removalist truck. Destination: South Australia and a new home.

Moving house is a busy time for everyone and it took a few weeks to sort out an internet connection. I had cause to visit a more or less local (75km distant) Mazda dealer, as I was after a second-hand runabout in the cheap-as-chips price bracket. While sorting out paperwork with the salesman, the conversation was like, uh, can you get a new MX-5 in if I ordered it, and can it be the 25th Anniversary Edition? (Well I thought I might have a chance, there was a picture of an MX-5 on the desk).

Blank looks ensued. I wanted what? An MX-5. Here, it's in the brochure....

"Well we've heard of them...only sold one..."

Deflated, I travelled home and forgot about 25th Anniversary anything for a few days.

One morning I experienced an epiphany and rang our RPM Chapter sponsor, Cameron Macarthur of Blue Mountains

Mazda...yes we are getting one....we had to punch above our weight...dealers hanging on to them...might want to put this one in the shed...

There was only one response to that sort of talk.

"I'll take it", I replied.....but the logistics are unusual.

Now it is early Wednesday afternoon in the late August winter, the weather is cloudy but OK as this glamorous machine pulls into the car park outside my new home. It's mine. It's flashy. Let's see what the mob down the road think about that...

My special thanks to Cameron and Andrew Macarthur of Blue Mountains Mazda who went above, beyond and over the average car dealer to have Cameron personally deliver the car. Cameron had the car freighted to Adelaide and he flew over to pick it up. I have never before experienced such a level of dealer service. Many thanks.

Cameron drove my old NC back to the mountains....the long way.

# 25th ANNIVERSARY BRUNCH

17 August 2014

*By Bryan Shedden Photos Peter Hilkmann*

Our Club's celebration of the 25th Anniversary of the Mazda MX-5 was an elaborate affair focused in the Hunter Valley, with a wide variety of options to get involved one way or another. The events commenced on Saturday 17 August with Paul & Margaret making the long trip from Canberra to Pie in the Sky at Cowan. This was the meeting point for another seven MX-5s from the Illawarra Chapter, two from RPM Chapter and nine from Sydney Chapter. We were met there by another six MX-5s from Hunter Chapter who would be our run leaders for the drive north to Newcastle.

We hit the road in several groups and twisted our way along the Old Pacific Highway with tops down all the way. Due to the late start, we jumped onto the M1 freeway and zipped up to the Pacific Highway past Lake Munmorah and Lake Macquarie for a regrouping stop at Belmont. Back on the road, we climbed the hills of Charlestown, and descended to the spectacular coastal views of Merewether and Bar Beach. Mark then led us on a scenic tour of Newcastle via the Hunter River and Nobby's Beach before looping around Flagstaff Hill to our destination at King Edward Park. Peter & Maureen snapped wonderful photos of each of the 31 MX-5s overlooking Shortland Park and the Ocean Baths which feature in the 'Club Torque' Member's Wall this issue. Check out the back cover. Then it was afternoon tea in the park with cakes, slices, biscuits, dips, fruit kebabs and hot tea, generously supplied and served by

various members of the Hunter Chapter from the back of a camper van supplied by Ian Nunn & Carmen Morgan. By now it had started drizzling, but it didn't dampen our enthusiasm.

Our final trip for the day was a short run through town to our overnight digs at Adamstown. This included a walking pace cruise down the Hunter Street Mall, which attracted plenty of attention from shoppers. Finally we arrived at our very comfortable and roomy accommodation at Adamstown Motor Inn, which is managed by new club members Joan & Terry.

Now it was time for the traditional pre-dinner cheese and dips, washed down with a glass or two of aged red or crisp white. No worries about drinking & driving because it was only a five minute stroll to dinner at The Nags Head Hotel. All 50 or so club members crowded in and enjoyed delicious pub meals with plenty of fun & frivolity. An excellent night! And it didn't end there. After returning to the motel, several partied on late enough for the arrival of Stephen from Tamworth, and then Dave & Amy ... in a Volvo! At least they had company, as Fiona & Alex also made the trip in our Volvo. Sunday morning, with the rain bucketing down, we filed out of the motel and convoyed our way to Beresfield to meet up with a huge contingent of Hunter Chapter members.

The carpark was chock full of MX-5s. Morning coffee was a very rowdy affair in

the servo cafe. A scenic drive through the Hunter Valley had been carefully planned, but due to the dreary wet weather, Mark settled for a quick run up the Hunter Expressway to our Lovedale brunch venue at Tatler Wines. As we pulled into the winery, the clouds parted and the sun shone on the growing collection of MX-5s lining the front entrance.

Brunch was a plentiful buffet served in the winery's cafe. There was even time to sample Tatler's viniferous offerings and stow a case or two in the boot. Outside, the morning travellers from the Sydney Chapter, RPM Chapter and BreakFast Club arrived and completed the team. They had taken early morning wet drives up either the Putty Road or M1 freeway. By now there were an impressive 70 MX-5s and 120 people on site. Amazing! Once everyone had filled their bellies with brunch and gathered around to take in the spectacle, Michael extracted charity donations from everyone with an impromptu round of 'heads & tails'. A total donation of over \$800 was raised for the Rural Fire Service at Salt Ash / Medowie. Prizes were handed out, (short) speeches made, and I presented Mark with the NatMeet shield so that the Hunter Chapter can appreciate it for a while. Complimentary '25th Anniversary' stickers were left on the seat of each MX-5 - thanks Reggie!

With the festivities over, many stayed on for the afternoon while I led a small group of nine MX-5s on a "return run" out to Broke and then along the Putty Road before filing down the Northern Road and home to the Illawarra. Later in the day, Lesa & Greg led another group of eight people / four MX-5s for a clear run down the Putty Road to the Blue Mountains. What a fabulous weekend!

Thanks to Michael for coordinating things, and especially to Mark and the entire Hunter Chapter for hosting us all. The organisation was top notch. Team Hunter really knows how to put on a good show!









# BRUNCH AT MULGOA

25 May 2014

*Report By Jonnie Badger and Jan Gibson*

*Photos by Keith Monaghan and Bryan Shedden*

Over \$2000 was raised for the Rural Fire Service at the MX-5 Club of NSW Annual Charity Brunch, hosted by RPM.

What a beautiful day for the Illawarra Chapter run to the MX-5 Club Charity Brunch at the Peppercorn Café, Mulgoa. The brunch was organized by Lesa Bunn from RPM Chapter. Our Illawarra run leaders were Jan and Garry Gibson. We met as usual at Hungry Jacks, Yallah at 8am for an 8:30am start with nine cars and perfect weather. Jan and Garry chose a great route, once we got off the M1, of windy country roads through the picturesque country of Douglas Park, Camden, Cawdor, Cobbity, Grassmere and Greendale that MX-5 drivers love so much. From the passenger seat, the highlights for me were the beautiful county homes and the sweeping curves of Greendale Road. I just wish I had been driving

the car. The perfect autumn weather added to the pleasure. We pulled into Douglas Park Sports Ground for a comfort stop only to find all the toilets locked but Mark found a worksite toilet for us that was open. Thank goodness for those of us who needed it, and we were quickly on our way again. We arrived on time at Peppercorn Café, and were greeted by the RPM Chapter ready to enjoy a cooked breakfast together and raise money for the RFS. There was lots of laughter, happy faces and lots of noise. Illawarra was the loudest by far! We eventually settled down so raffle tickets could be sold and the auction could begin. Club sponsor Peter Battison from Automotive Computer Diagnostic Centre (ACDC) donated several sets of braided brake lines & fittings in a choice of colours. These were auctioned off to the highest bidders, and the winners had great discussions as to

what colour they would all like. There were several raffles of which Illawarra did very well. RestorFX donated a paint finish restoration, Blue Mountains Mazda donated a free service, Penrith Whitewater Rafting Centre donated a guided whitewater rafting experience via the Fletcher family. Lattouf Spa and Hair in Pitt Street gave gift vouchers and Adam "Reggie" Walker donated many bottles of wine

A great time was had by all and we still had those beautiful country roads to travel, on our way home. A big thank you to the RPM Chapter for hosting the brunch, and to Jan and Garry for a great run for the Illawarra contingent.





---

## MX-5 hire from \$95 a day!

Finding an affordable sports car to hire in Sydney can be difficult. There are plenty of car rental companies with people movers, hatchbacks, sedans and SUV's on offer, but what if you want something fun and affordable?

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Situated just 1 hours drive from the Sydney CBD, Windsor is the perfect starting point for your weekend away in the Blue Mountains, Hunter Valley or trip to the coast.

Why not explore and experience some of the best that New South Wales has to offer in the best way possible.. in an MX-5!

---



The advertisement is a vertical banner. At the top, a black section features a white line-art illustration of a sports car driving on a winding road, with blue wavy lines representing hills in the background. Below this, the text 'Windsor Sports Car Hire' is written in a bold, orange, sans-serif font. The middle section is a photograph of a red Mazda MX-5 sports car parked on a paved road next to a stone wall and greenery. Below the photo is an orange horizontal bar containing the website 'windsorsportscarhire.com.au' in white text. The bottom section is black with the text 'Book your DRIVE TODAY!' in large white letters, followed by the phone number '4579 7099' in large orange letters. At the very bottom is a small photograph of a mountain landscape with a lake reflecting the sky.

**Windsor Sports Car Hire**

[windsorsportscarhire.com.au](http://windsorsportscarhire.com.au)

**Book your  
DRIVE TODAY!**

**4579 7099**

# THROWING DOWN THE GAUNTLET

20 July 2014

*The Sydney Chapter declare it's going to be "gloves off" for the MX-5 Club NSW Jinba Ittai Challenge II.*

*By Guy Coles*

You know that the Chapter members take a Karting Day seriously when many of them bring their own helmets. When the racing suits, boots and gloves go on you know they take it VERY seriously. You know that it's going to be a gloves off battle to the death when some of those helmets are fitted with HANS posts.....

Earlier in the year the RPM Chapter had thrown the gauntlet out for an inter-chapter Go Kart Challenge and in true competitive form, the Sydney Chapter was not going to back down from that one for one minute.

14 potential wannabe F1 drivers arrived at the Indy 800 circuit at Wilberforce to settle, once and for all, who were the fastest Go Kart Drivers in the Sydney Chapter. After the initial driver's briefing we were separated into 2 groups due to our numbers with a 15 minute session for the first group followed by the same for the second group. Everyone came out of the blocks in sprint mode and the competitive nature of the drivers (both Male AND Female) was obviously apparent!

What became immediately clear was the disparity of the Karts, some were clearly faster than others, and some swapping and changing allowed a more even playing

field to find out who was the fastest punter on the day.

After four sessions, we had a number of standouts. We were proud to have 3 drivers in the top 10 fastest on the circuit for the month, with 2 of those in the top 5 - all posting sub 52 second laps. The ladies also posted extremely competitive times and were remarkably close to the boys.

So, who will be representing Sydney? You'll have to come along to the final

challenge to find that one out.....





# ILLAWARRA ELECTRIC KARTING CHALLENGE

4 June 2014

*The flags weren't the only things flying as the Illawarra Chapter test out a new breed of go karts.*

*Words and Photos by Bryan Shedden*

Last year, Peter Feutrill organised the Jinba Ittai Challenge, a fantastic karting day at Picton which turned out to be a hotly contested battle for regional supremacy between Illawarra, RPM and Sydney Chapters. You can read about it on page 26 of Club Torque Winter 2013.

Following the success of that day, and in frustration about getting a "slow kart" in the final race (excuses, excuses!), Graham Fletcher has taken it to another level for the Jinba Ittai Challenge II in 2014. His concept is that each Chapter will hold their own karting challenge to identify their fastest drivers, and then the champions from each Chapter will represent their region at the finals to be hosted by RPM Chapter at Indy 800 Karts in Wilberforce sometime later this year. Graham has a "cunning plan" involving a complicated spreadsheet (!) to ensure that the finalists are not disadvantaged by differences in individual kart speed.

The Illawarra Chapter was the first to hold its Chapter Karting Challenge, and chose the brand new indoor karting centre at Albion Park Rail. C1 Speed opened for business at Easter this year and is one of the first venues in Australia to offer electric karts. The electric motors powering these karts have several clear advantages over petrol-powered karts,

including a low environmental impact, absence of exhaust fumes, and superior performance with amazing acceleration out of tight corners.

Meeting at 6:30pm on Wednesday 4th June, our 13 drivers registered and were then split into two groups for three races each. After a safety briefing, we were sent out for our first race of 18 laps. The track is tight and twisty with one high speed section, and there is little room for overtaking. Hence, it's all about setting your fastest lap-time, rather than being the first across the finish line. Our drivers acquitted themselves extremely well, and there were no stoppages for crashed karts. The only incident of note was when the motor in my kart mysteriously overheated on the out-lap for the second race, and became shrouded in a cloud of smoke! I was swapped to another kart and off we went again. Boy were these karts FUN! With so much instantaneous torque on tap, you drive them totally on the throttle and with delicate adjustments of steering to counter understeer and oversteer. The racing was also very courteous, with the slower drivers regularly moving aside to let the faster ones through. Between the races, everyone poured over their timing sheets, and shared advice on how they could shave precious time off their laps. After all six races were complete, it was

time to announce the winners. Jan and her daughters Allyson & Emma claimed the podium places for the ladies, and embarrassed their dad Garry by all beating him too! For the gents, I thought I had first place all wrapped up ... until Tony leapt ahead of both Peter & I with an incredible final lap. Well driven Tony!

Thank you to everyone who participated in the karting night. We all had a great time and there's already plenty of chatter about doing it all again very soon!

Results can be found at our website: [nsw.MX-5.com.au/news/illawarra-karting-challenge](http://nsw.MX-5.com.au/news/illawarra-karting-challenge)



# HUNTER GO KART CHALLENGE

14 June 2014

*Grins, spins and an all time lap record. Watch out for Hunter during the Jinba Ittai Challenge II.*

*By Rachel Crawford*

It was with much joking and friendly rivalry that the Hunter Chapter gathered at Thornton Extreme Indoor Karts. With 12 racers booked, but only 2 ladies, both Julie Mittman and Lynda Gray were convinced to give the event a go too!

With the instructional video run and done and the safety gear assigned the group was broken up into two, the experienced drivers hitting the track to lead the way in quali. Looking a bit crash and bash rather than smooth and fast, there may have been a little too much enthusiasm and it was a crash interrupted session. Fastest time was set by Paul Fraser.

So with some trepidation the ladies, and novice men took to the track. Whist it was a slightly slower start to the second session, Mark Gray was determined to post a good time and the blue flags were getting plenty of work. The competitive nature may have come out in the author and I posted a reasonable 21 sec time and second place in the session.

Mark having achieved the second fastest quali time had no rest and was straight back out for the Group A race. Paul Fraser's lap, being significantly faster than the rest, had lapped the field before the half way point. Determination was the name of the game and many of our drivers clipped kerbs or went spinning from lack of grip, requiring a couple to be pushed back to the track. None of the drivers got much of a clear run and the laps times showed only minor improvement. Group B race 1 was less dramatic, Keith Harvey starting from the pole position and staying well in front for the majority of the race. I did manage a clear run and just made it into the 19's and did my fastest lap of 19:910 and the best of this race.

Group A race 2 took up from the end of race 1, with all competitors focused on lap time improvements. Mark Gray, having ousted the slow kart from race 1, got into the groove and just managed to pip Karl

Mittman and secure 2nd place for the day. Robert Crawford's retirement, due to a bruised rib, caused a bit of a stir. A timing anomaly gave him the Thornton Indoor Karts all time Lap Record! Much to his bemusement.



Group B seemed to have shaken off the nerves and a bit of red mist had taken over. Lynda, Wendy and Julie battling it out for both track position and quickest times. Tucking in behind Keith Harvey, allowed a couple of sneaky passes between the girls. Having been shown the red flag, I decided that I'd better settle down and put in some consistent laps to cruise to second place behind the long gone Keith. Michael Clark, showed consistent improvement in all three sessions and was awarded "The Stig" prize for his efforts.

Results can be found on our website [nsw.MX-5.com.au/news/hunter-go-kart-challenge](http://nsw.MX-5.com.au/news/hunter-go-kart-challenge)





# GO KART CHALLENGE

12 July 2014

*Article and photos by Graham Fletcher*

RPM recently ran its challenge at the Wilberforce Butterfly farm to establish who will contest the annual the finals of the Jinba Ittai Challenge II. The contenders gathered at the centre for the morning session and then onto a BBQ next to the RAAF base at Richmond.

Our ladies contingent was very strong with experienced racers joined by a couple of novices to make the event more fun. Don't be misled by the smiles, this was very competitive day out. Rumours have abounded that we have been very secretive about our race times even though the author of this article has been very busy at work. Well, all I can say is, "Ridiculous! And no, you don't get to know our times". Ha Ha



Drivers representing the RPM Chapter this year will be:

- 1st Jason Atkins and Tammie Holtz
- 2nd Graham Fletcher and Lesa Bunn
- 3rd Ray Legge and Sandra Duric

All RPM members enjoyed the day and we are very much looking forward to the main event to be held at Wilberforce Butterfly farm on 2nd November 2014.

## BREAKFAST CLUB

# DRIVING RAIN

26 July 2014

*'As we all know, you won't get wet while you're moving'. The BreakFast Club's Adam Walker explains.*

*Photos by newyn72*

In the ongoing series of BreakFast Club Saturday runs, it started off quite miserable weather wise. Four members and four potential members in eight cars managed to crawl out of bed and meet up at the Hornsby end of Galston Gorge in the pouring rain. We tried to keep up that pace all morning but on the downhill section into Wisemans Ferry, the weather god gave way and it was bucketing down! We had a quick stop to dry ourselves and raise the canvas just before the ferry crossing at Wisemans. On the boat, I could hear stomachs rumbling, and to our disappointment we found that the Wombat Cafe was closed for renovations. Looking through my phone history, I discovered that I had booked a table at the Wombat Cafe in Victoria instead of NSW ... my bad. We jumped back in the cars and drove towards Spencer. Luckily we found a place to park the cars by the water and order ourselves a Big Brekky (and I mean BIG). Thirty minutes later, the stomachs were satisfied and after a good chat, we jumped back in the roadsters and headed toward Mangrove Mountain. Along the way we picked up two more members on their way back to Sydney, and headed to Pie in the Sky for a refresher. It was an omen. We parked at PITS and out came the blue sky for the leisurely drive home. Great day and many laughs were had by all!



# THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT

27 July 2014

*A ghostly apparition makes its presence felt during Christmas in July festivities at Fountaindale.*

*by Kerry Evans*

On a very crisp Canberra Sunday morning on the 27th of July, an intrepid band of 8 MX-5ers met at 8am at the Northbourne Avenue McDonalds for our usual get together before setting off with tops down at 8:30am for Fountaindale Grand Manor at Robertson. Great to see new members John and Janet Jasinski with their silver NC join us for their first run. Some members had to go via other routes to pick up their partners and were to meet us at the Truck Stop at Marulan. The Weather Gods were very kind to us with clear and sunny skies for our departure.

Travelling up the Federal Highway we soon hit a large bank of fog, sometimes very thick. Not to be deterred, we turned off the highway onto Macs Reef Road and travelled a very scenic route via Bungendore (where the fog lifted), Tarago and onto the highway again at Goulburn for a run up to Marulan to the Truck Stop for a quick coffee and break. The other members joined us there and we set off on the final leg of our journey via some beautiful Southern Highlands roads and villages such as Tallong, Bundanoon, Moss Vale and on to Fountaindale Grand Manor at Robertson.

With the place bedecked with festive decorations and an open fireplace in the foyer to greet and warm us on arrival, we met up with the rest of the Canberra contingent who drove to Fountaindale on the Saturday and stayed the night. In the dining room there were two large open fireplaces at either end of the room which made the environment very cosy and congenial.

With around 30 fellow MX-5ers from Illawarra, Sydney and RPM and 27 members from the Canberra contingent, it was quite a large group for lunch in the dining room. After the lunch celebrations most of the revellers left for home and a few of us adjourned to the lounge area and sat around the fireplace enjoying a few more beverages of different kinds as we wiled away the afternoon.

After saying farewell to some of the others, there was a group of eight left who were staying the night. It was decided that after some of us took a walk around the grounds and around Robertson, we would meet at around 5:30pm in the lounge area and walk into Robertson to the Inn for dinner.

The meals at the Inn were excellent and a few more beverages were consumed before walking back to Fountaindale. The walk back was extremely dark and cold and on our return, we warmed ourselves by the open fire and were met by Carol the owner. After a while, someone (Dave I think), asked Carol if any ghosts had been seen at Fountaindale. Carol then went into many stories of sightings over the years of people seeing apparitions in various

areas of the building. With this in mind, we all retired to our rooms for the night.

Our little group met for breakfast the next morning. During conversation it came up that, after the talk of ghosts the previous night, one of our party had scared the daylights out of themselves after seeing an apparition in their room. After nearly having a heart attack, it was then realised that it was not a ghost, but a reflection of themselves in one of the full length mirrors in the room.

We then went our various ways back to Canberra. I hope that everyone who went to Fountaindale enjoyed themselves, Rhonda and I certainly did – zoom, zoom to all.





# CONVENOR'S BBQ

18 May 2014

By Bob Judd Photos by Tony McDonald

Once a year, you, our honoured Chapter members, surrender to us, your honoured Convenors, an entire hard earned day of leisure. Our job is to, hopefully, entertain you and to send you home after a satisfying lunch. We learnt that the best way to entertain you was to keep you busy by getting you to solve some puzzles and answer some questions.

Bricet started you off at Lennox Gardens near the City and I was to meet you at a secret location with lunch. Sounds easy so we decided to bring out your competitive nature with thirty questions about John Curtin and his eponymous suburb needing to be answered along the way.

If you followed the instructions, you would end up at the Cotter Reserve where I and the "Onion King" Ray Horne would meet you with lunch prepared. The usual BBQ fare of gourmet sausages, hot roasted potatoes, home-made salads and



coleslaw were quickly consumed, as were Bricet's home cooked muffins. The pre-arranged Coffee van arrived just in time to finish off the meal with a good brew.

After a great day, on a delightfully warm Canberra autumn day, everybody was home safely by late afternoon. Only one

couple could win the quiz and Norm and Roz Barker rightly won the bottle of Aussie sparkling white wine that pretended to be Champagne with their perfect score. Dave and Liz Burr are now the proud holders of the wooden spoon, at least until this time next year when the Convenors re-convene.

# BOWNING HOTEL RUN

15 June 2014

By Malcolm Bernhardt

It was a wet and chilly (Saturday) night..... So it was 29 hardy souls who rocked up at Hall layby on Sunday morning. This was the start of a 150km round run to Bowning via Yass and Binalong but the weather was cold and the roads were wet and slippery.

Hot beverages were the priority, and we all gladly pulled in to the Yass Kaffeine coffee shop. Well, we might have stayed there all day. But by the time the second coffee/tea and scones had disappeared, so had the winter clouds. The sun was out, the wind died down and one's whole perspective on life immediately improved.

So we mounted up, put down the tops in the warm sunshine and headed NW towards the village of Binalong. The area between Binalong and Boorowa has benefited from recent autumn rains and the rolling countryside is now a brilliant green. The Hughstonia road

out of Binalong winds lazily north towards Boorowa and if one can strike pleasant weather this time of the year, it makes for enjoyable weekend driving.

Turning south, the Lachlan Valley Way takes you back towards the Hume Highway and apart from a goods van which crested the hilltops at only 60-70kph, our run was unhindered. The Walls Junction road can be accessed just before you reach The

Hume and while it's not the greatest of road surfaces, it's only 4km to the town of Bowning.

The Bowning Hotel had upgraded its dining room some time back and it's a pleasant venue to dine in. The menu is pub food, naturally, but of good quality and plentiful.

The writer could think of a lot worse ways to spend a Sunday morning.



# GUNDAROO GOURMET GALLOP

27 April 2014

*Words and photo by Ken Keeling*

The Canberra Chapter's Gourmet Gallop Mk II to Gundaroo was held on Sunday 27 April, with 10 cars and 20 gourmands lined up at our Blamey Square rendezvous at Russell. Unusually, and for some reason as yet unfathomed, we departed on time at 10.30am for a meandering run to our luncheon venue at the Capital Wines Cellar Door & Café in Gundaroo. The weather was cool but benign and so it was mainly "tops down" for the run. The run itself was a gentle in-the-country tour of some 85 kms via Wamboin and the "by-ways of Bylong", (the "Meanders of Mac's Reef" and the "Tulip Farm Twisty-bits", and a "foray along the freeway" to Lake George) and thence by the Old Federal Highway back to and along the Shingle Hill Way to our destination in Gundaroo.

Clare, our hostess at Capital Wines Cellar Door & Café, seated us on the patio in the Autumn sun and the menu provided excellent options, ranging from excellent small and share platters and standard main courses to an Epicurean experience with matched wines. The majority of our "Gallopers" seemed to opt for a number of small plates or shared platters. It was noted that several cast caution to the winds, consuming dessert with their coffee!

Post-lunch there was a short transit run toward Murrumbateman to Tallagandra Hill Winery, noted for its excellent cool climate wines. They offered a guided tasting of selected wines (with matched cheeses) for some and/or coffee and cake for those who had shown sufficient restraint to resist the sweet treats at lunch.

The return run home included the opportunity to stop off at the Stripey Sundae in Nicholls for the dedicated gourmands to sample locally made artisan ice-cream and fair-trade coffee. The Frugii ice-cream really was different, with options of salted butter caramel, liquorice

and wattle seed as well as the usual favourites. I can personally vouch for the yumminess of both the liquorice and salted butter caramel offerings. It seemed that by then all those in the residual group were well-fed and satiated as, strange as it may seem, there were no takers for the option of a final stop-off at the George Harcourt Inn to round off the afternoon.

We arrived home "fatter and happy" with some 155 kms under my wheels – another pleasant MX-5-outing, having fun with friends.

Berry in Sunday traffic was a challenge yet we were able to drive into the finish at Coolangatta in a conga line of convertibles. The girls at the Mountain Ridge Wines restaurant were most impressed with our entrance.

For me the best part of the day was the food, wine and fellowship with all the MX-5ers following our journey.

Thank you to all the attendees for making this such a great day.





# BOB'S BRUNCH RUN

22 June 2014

*Report By Bob Pimm*

With the warm winter weather to greet us for the start of the day, seventeen cars assembled at the BP service station at Beresfield, ready to leave for Brunch. After greetings, signing on and distribution of run sheets, it was time to head outside for final run instructions and for our Convenor Mark Gray to make a belated presentation of the Hunter Chapter Member of the Year Perpetual Trophy to John Morgan.

Our convoy formed up for the short drive through the back blocks of Woodberry to the Junction Inn Hotel overlooking the Hunter River, at Raymond Terrace. Here we settled in for brunch.

A good while later..... back in our cars again and off to the new Hunter Freeway to Bulga and the start of the Putty Road. Here we split into smaller



groups for the run to the Grey Gum Café.

After a great drive along the Putty we took time to socialise at the Grey Gum until the warmth began to disappear from

the sun and it was time to head home. Some took the time to drop off at The Potter's Hotel in Cessnock for a ginger beer or pale ale to finish off a great day.

## HIT 'EM UP

25 May 2014

*The Hunter chapter saddles up for a "rodeo run"*

*by John Morgan Photos Peter Hilkman*

After consulting the weather forecasts for most of the week and noting that Sunday's weather was to be fine but cloudy it was a bit disappointing to wake on the day and see dark clouds out the window. We had a few light showers en route to the starting point but by the time we set off at 8:45am it had cleared and it was tops down for the seventeen cars at the start.

As this was a "rodeo" run each car was given a horse number and this number determined the position of the car in the convoy. Some negotiations were made by people wanting a position closer to the front and this required a bid of gold coins.

We proceeded along some good roads through Mulbring and Quorrobolong and on to Wollombi for our morning tea break. Out came all the home-made goodies and after about 45 minutes sampling and chatting, it was back into the cars for the next leg.

By now most of the clouds had cleared and it

was sunny and fairly warm. Paynes Crossing Road is always quite entertaining, even more so with very little traffic and we headed through Broke and Jerrys Plains on a variety of roads with some tight and some flowing corners to our lunch stop at the Denman Royal Hotel at Denman.

After an enjoyable lunch break at the pub we set off on our return journey heading towards Muswellbrook but detouring before we got there and heading out on to the New England Highway. Only a short time on the highway though and then turning left onto a road less



travelled which took us around the eastern side of Lake Liddell, joining the highway again further south. Then a less exciting run down the highway to Singleton to Maccas and a farewell for our participants, who then went their separate ways.

As this run was part of the overall Club's Charity Day each person contributed and an amount of \$140 was raised which will be donated to one of our local bush fire brigades. Once again a good day out with great company and the types of roads we all enjoy driving our MX-5s on.



# DAMN FINE DAMS

20 July 2014

*Words and photos by Bob Quinlan*

On 20 July, we arrived at Hungry Jacks, Haywards Bay at 8:35am for a 9:00am start on a cool and cloudy morning. Phil had everything prepared; sign-on and detailed runsheets. Right on time, eight shiny MX-5s departed; three with roofs down ... brave souls!

After arriving at Picton we were joined by another three MX-5s. By this time the clouds had disappeared and it was turning into a beautiful winter's day. The party of eleven MX-5s departed Picton, all with roofs down and wound their way to Warragamba on roads that thankfully had a lot less traffic on them than many of our previous runs. Arriving at Warragamba for morning tea, a group photo was taken and there was plenty of chat about what is good for MX-5s and what is not.

Suitably refreshed, we climbed back into our MX-5s and hit the road for Cataract Dam. This is where Phil's runsheet came in handy as the leading three or four cars got away and there were a few left and right turns to confuse us. Thankfully, when we got to Appin, the lead group were waiting for us. From Appin it was a ten minute drive to Cataract Dam where the barbecue and picnic sheds were utilised. After lunch Anne and I drove home while a few stayed and walked down to the dam.

Thanks Phil for a good day and excellent organisation.



# WINGS OVER ILLAWARRA

4 May 2014

*By Hella Underwood*

It was a very cold and windy day for the Wings Over Illawarra which was held on 4th May. Due to the very poor weather conditions, the only aircraft that braved the air were two F/A- Hornets, and the noise they produced upon arrival was incredible. Strong crosswinds prevented the majority of aerobatic displays, therefore most of the entertainment was

looking at the ground displays which of course included our MX-5s as well as cars from other clubs. Only 4 members attended, but they enjoyed the day, and we thank them for attending and displaying our favourite cars in difficult conditions.

Sadly, 'Connie' the Super Constellation

ended up being stranded on the tarmac for the day.

Hopefully next year the weather will be kind, and a much better day will be enjoyed by all who attend.

# EVOLUTION NOT REVOLUTION

*Mazda faced a huge challenge with their latest MX-5. The design must honour the long-term passion of MX-5 owners around the world, yet capture the hearts and minds of new enthusiasts. Happily, the 2015 MX-5 promises to please everyone.*

*By Mel Keller*

For 25 years, the MX-5 has been the most raced, best loved and best-selling roadster in the world. At the worldwide launch of the 2015 model last week, MX-5 designer, Derek Jenkins said “the MX-5 is a fun to drive icon” and in designing the latest model, Mazda has focused on the “core DNA of the quintessential roadster.”

So how do you improve on an icon?

“We focused on the basics,” said Jenkins. After canvassing MX-5 enthusiasts, the ND had to be “simple, lightweight and affordable” whilst retaining its ‘jinba ittai’ driver orientation. The design team took on the challenge to produce a classic roadster with “totally modern styling and state-of-the-art technology”. And as always, the new MX-5 had to be beautiful to drive and beautiful to look at.

The ND sees an evolution of the Kodo or Soul in Motion design theme introduced with the striking 4 seater Shinari concept car. The ND retains these fluid, feline lines minus the chrome trim to enhance the classic MX-5 silhouette. A lower nose and higher rear deck give the impression this car is ready to pounce. The front grille interprets the classic MX-5 oval shape but with sharper lines with smaller LED headlights and fog lamps. The side panels feature minimal detailing for a cleaner, simpler feel with a low dip at the door line for good visibility. A hip line in the body work draws the eye towards the stern which features deep set, blade shaped tail lights with the classic round brake light.

The interior reflects an attention to detail with symmetrical and compact proportions and high quality finishes. A slim line dash describes the overall lightweight feel of the car. The placement of the pedals, displays and enhanced visibility show this car is all about the driver. Connectivity has been advanced with an infotainment unit (showerproof presumably) with pre-loaded apps and headrest speakers.

The cabin has been shifted further to the rear of the car to accommodate the more centrally located engine. Featuring the lowest centre of gravity yet, the ND retains its 50:50 front-rear weight distribution. Few technical details are available yet but the ND is to be powered by the high compression Skyactiv G direct injection petrol engine, available in a 1.5L or 2.0L capacity. The drive train features Skyactiv MT 6 speed manual or automatic transmission and, for the first time, electric power assisted rack and pinion steering.

Improvements in the manufacture of engine components, the chassis and body composition have led to a 100kg weight loss. The ND is also 95mm shorter and 20mm narrower than its predecessor. A major contributor is the fabric soft top which holds great appeal in also reducing the entry level pricing, speculated to be around \$40,000.











# 2014 BRASS MONKEY

6 July 2014

*"All members should chase the brass monkey at least once if the event is not on their perennial bucket list", says Club Captain Michael Soulos.*

On 6th July 2014 the Brass Monkey ran for the last time for the Austin Healey Owners Club and a very neat NA8. Terry Bancroft of the AHOC followed the successful format of the UK's Chilly Willy for the Brass Monkey Run and since its inception has overseen the expansion of the event from an Austin Healey club run to become the largest open invitation event for roadsters in NSW.

comfortable and cosy with heaters on "4", windows up and appropriately dressed for the run across the mountains then down Victoria Pass through Lithgow to turn off on to the Castlereagh Highway for the straight run up to Mudgee. MX-5s were again the first cars to reach the breakfast venue with congratulations going to Robert Forsyth who made all the right moves once we entered town.

In 2015 the destination will be Bathurst in accordance with the rotating schedule set up by AHOC 20 years ago with a 6:00am start from the Eastern Creek M4 West Service Centre. The event will continue as a top down, open invitation and point to point run with individuals determining their own pace, route and schedule as in the past. We will continue the tradition of the AHOC to actively seek the participation of other roadster and classic car clubs to ensure an inclusive event.

The 23 MX-5s chose to start the MX-5 Return Run and of the 22 cars that got back home, everybody enjoyed themselves on the back roads through Rylstone, Sofala, Rydal, O'Connell, Tarana and Lithgow. The writer will be back again next year to organise the event in another MX-5 for his eleventh running of the Brass Monkey and you will be invited to join the Club to chase the Brass Monkey in 2015.



At 6:00am Terry Bancroft started his engine to start the chase for the last time down the M4 heading for the Blue Mountains followed by gaggle of about 70 vehicles of which about half were MX-5s and almost exclusively members of our Club. This year the destination venue was Mudgee with the route following The Great Western Highway over the Blue Mountains. By the time the lead cars reached speed trap at Sun Valley only the brightest stars were visible overhead from open topped MX-5s as the heavens shifted hue through shades of black, purple, mauve, pink and blue as the sun climbed higher in the sky on a crisp winter's morning.

This year the event was run during a particularly cold snap with participants fortunate enough to be in an MX-5

To all our members who chased the brass monkey in 2014 your support was much appreciated especially the large number of newbies with their partners reflecting a growing trend over the last few years. As usual everybody, including passengers, reported having enjoyed this year's iconic dawn buster run in the middle of winter for adventurous enthusiasts.

At the breakfast Tony Bancroft announced that the running of the Brass Monkey was passing to the MX-5 Club of NSW. The offer was accepted and ratified by the Committee at our August meeting. The Brass Monkey will be a marquee event for our Club that will be scheduled to run on a Sunday either side of the winter solstice annually to avoid clashing with the Clubs Christmas in July events.









# A LONG AND WINDING ROAD

26- 27 June 2014

*A favourite destination and one of the best MX-5 roads in Australia. Frosty the Mid-Year Snowman celebrates Christmas In July.*

*Photos by Peter Hilkmann*

The concept of Christmas in July was introduced to give the people of the Southern Hemisphere the experience of celebrating Christmas in cooler weather like our Northern cousins do. For the Hunter Chapter that concept certainly was a reality as the mercury dipped below zero for the overnight stay in Walcha. A sea of white greeted everyone on Sunday morning; admittedly it wasn't snow but a heavy frost. Sixteen cars set off from a wet Beresfield on Saturday morning, heading up the Pacific Highway to a comfort stop at Bulahdelah. Picking up an extra car from Mid North Coast Chapter we set off on a tentative run along the "Nurbushring" (Wootton Way), exercising caution due to the slippery conditions. Following a morning tea stop at the Taree Service Centre we were able to get the roofs down and complete the customary drive by photo shoot en route to our lunch stop at the Wauchope RSL Club. Peter Hilkmann braved Kuntry Kuzzin's passenger seat and came up with some great photos of the MX-5s cruising up the highway.



After refuelling our stomachs we emerged from the club to a downpour. Scattered showers were to be the pattern for the afternoon as we headed up the Oxley Highway, now joined by another two cars from the Mid North Coast Chapter. The sight of the "47km of winding road" sign is enough to put a smile on the face of any driving enthusiast. Today was no different despite the varying conditions. Regardless of whether you are out for a fun drive or just wish to enjoy the scenery, the Oxley Highway is certainly one of the best MX-5 roads in Australia. Following afternoon tea at Ginger's Creek Café and a stop at

Apsley Falls, the group rolled into town to check in for our overnight stay at the Walcha Motel. Pre-dinner drinks at a local watering hole were topped off by a hearty Christmas roast dinner back at the motel's restaurant. In appreciation of how the motel has looked after the club on our many visits there, our Convenor Mark Gray presented a framed photo taken on our previous trip of the MX-5s parked in front of the motel.

In addition to our icy start on Sunday morning, we were greeted by a big country



breakfast in the restaurant. We set off for Kootingal, just north of Tamworth, to view Glassy's Petrol Museum. This private collection of petrol and oil memorabilia, mixed in with a few other things, was a fascinating trip down memory lane. Owner Ricky Glass kept us entertained for over an hour and a half with stories of the more unique items. Words fail to do justice for just how interesting this was. As one member said over the radio as we were leaving, "the best five dollars I have ever spent". Helen Mayo even managed to get away without receiving the big stick but that's another story. The weather was now glorious as we headed into the Hills

of Gold for our lunch stop at Nundle. Some members took advantage of a visit to the Nundle Wool Mill and stocked up on socks. A pleasant post-lunch drive following Dungowan Creek to Port Stephens Cutting ensued. At the top of the Cutting the local boys said their goodbyes and headed back down to Tamworth. The main group continued to Gloucester via Thunderbolt's Way and on to home. Another fabulous weekend of MX-5 motoring accentuated by great company.

A huge thank you to organisers; Mark Gray and Stephen Carter.







## WAY TO GO!

*Team MX-5 NSW take the lead in the CAMS NSW Supersprint Championship*

*By David Lawler*

*Photos by Rob Annesley, Brendan Clarke, Andrew Edgar, Mariano Loisso ([www.flatshifting.com](http://www.flatshifting.com)) and Bryan Shedden*

### Round 2

10 May 2014

Round 2 of the CAMS NSW Supersprint Championship was held at Sydney Motorsport Park's Grand Prix circuit on Sunday 10th May. Conditions were great all day, and although in the afternoon approaching dark clouds threatened rain, it did not eventuate. Drivers had the opportunity for 5 runs, each of 8 minutes after a warm-up lap, and with the good conditions the result was many PBs.

The MX-5 Club was represented by 21 drivers, after a few last minute withdrawals.

On ARDC's home turf, we outscored them by 40 points to bring our championship total to 814 points, only 15 behind the ARDC on 829 points.

- 1st Class 1B - Stewart and Bryan 1st and 2nd, Mitchell 4th
- Class 1D - Mike K 2nd
- Class 2A - Tony, Scott, Jim in 1st, 3rd and 4th
- Class 2B - Ralph and Russ demolished the Lotus for 1st and 2nd, Robert 4th, then a Honda and an MGB, followed by John and Adam. Way to go Ralph and Russ, but guys, an MGB!
- Class 2C - This was a bit of a Porche-fest, but Luke in his SE brought home 20 valuable points in 6th. Unfortunately Mel was a late withdrawal.
- Classes 3B & 3C - We missed Kevin in 3B and Neville in 3C, the upside was that ARDC scored no points there.
- Class 4B saw Ed and David take 1st and 2nd followed by 2 Manly Warringah MX-5s
- Class 5B - We missed Phil, but again

ARDC was not there to capitalise

- Class 6A - Tony and Glenn took 3rd and 4th
- Class SVB had Mike H and Gus 2nd and 3rd
- Class SVD saw Matt in his Skyline bring in 19 points.



### Round 3

15 June 2014

Round 3 of the Championship was held on the MX-5 unfriendly North Circuit at Sydney Motorsport Park on Sunday June 15th. Conditions were again fine but due to a couple of delays, including an hour lost to a 2.8km oil spill, only 4 runs were available.

The MX-5 Club was represented by 18 drivers who, although we were outscored by the ARDC on the day, have managed to take a 4 point lead in the championship.

- Class 1B - Stewart Temesvary and Bryan Shedden 1st and 2nd again, the same as the last round
- Class 1D - Mike Kelsey in 2nd
- Class 2A - Tony Williams, Scott McGarry and Jim Glissan in 1st, 2nd and 4th
- Class 2B - Ralph Thompson and Russ Maxwell again taking 1st and 2nd, with Derek Mock taking 7th on his first visit to the SMSP North Circuit

- Class 2C - Another Porche-fest, but Luke Kovacic did a great job to take 7th place, particularly as he had recently fitted coil-overs and needed to learn the new handling characteristics of his car
- Class 3B - Kevin Addison took 2nd
- Class 4B - Ed Cory took 1st and a North Circuit lap record, and David Lawler was 3rd
- Class 6A - Tony King took 2nd, an improvement from last round
- Class SVB - Gus Elias and Greg Bunn took 2nd and 3rd
- Class SVD - Matt and Greg Perry brought home 6th and 8th in their Skyline against some tough competition.



### Round 4

20 July 2014

Sydney Motorsport Park was again the venue with Round 4 being run on the Brabham Circuit on the 25th July. There were some minor drops of rain but conditions were mostly dry and drivers had four runs available.

- Class 1B - Stewart Temesvary, Bryan Shedden, Mitchell Bennett & Keith Monaghan took out the top four places
- Class 2A - Scott McGarry & Tony Williams were 1st & 2nd



- Class 2B - Ralph Thompson was 1st by over 2 secs, with Russ Maxwell 3rd, John Metham and Dennis Chiswick in 5th & 6th, then Adam Callender and Derek Mock in 9th & 10th
- Class 2C - Luke Kovacic was 5th against a gaggle of Porsches and a very fast Datsun
- Class 3A - Drew Rodwell was there in his Charade, but unfortunately had a gearbox failure before he was able to complete a timed lap.
- Class 3B - Kevin Addison got 3rd
- Class 4B - David Lawler & Ed Cory, 1st & 2nd with a 0.07 second gap between them
- Class 5B - Phil Abraham got 3rd
- Class 6A - Tony King was 2nd
- Class SVB - Gus Elias, Mike Hicks & Greg Bunn were in 2nd to 4th
- Class SVD - Matt & Greg Perry in their Skyline were 6th & 7th against some very fast cars.

It was a great result for the MX-5 Club with our 25 members scoring 513 points, beating the ARDC with 361 points. The MX-5 Club now leads the championship with 1,739 points, leading the ARDC by 156 points.



# TRACK PRESENTATION

20 July 2014

*Words & photos by David Lawler Award lists by Mike Hicks*

With the last track day of the 2013/2014 competition year held in June, it was time to announce the winners of the various categories and award the trophies and prizes. 60 competitors and volunteer officials gathered at the Garage Cafe above the pits at Sydney Motorsport Park on July 20th to celebrate another successful competition year.

Our thanks go to Mike Hicks and Zan Menzel in particular for their efforts in organising and running the club track days, and to the many, many volunteers who make those events possible. Thank you all.



## ***Class Winners***

Class 1 Jonathon Fox  
Class 2 Keith Monaghan  
Class 3 Luke Kovacic  
Class 4 Gus Elias  
Class 5 Peter Browning  
Class 6 John Metham  
Class 7 Russ Maxwell  
Class 8 Cameron Macarthur  
Class 9 Ralph Thompson  
Class 10 Mark Hellmund  
Class 11 Keith Bridgement

## ***Best Lap Times***

Wakefield Park  
Class 1 Don Battisson 1:17.84  
Class 2 Anthony Tang 1:17.47  
Class 2L Tammie Hotz 1:25.23  
Class 3 Luke Kovacic 1:13.64  
Class 4 Gus Elias 1:14.95  
Class 5 Tony Williams 1:13.78  
Class 6 Phil Munnings 1:12.62  
Class 6L Lesa Bunn 1:20.60  
Class 7 Russ Maxwell 1:11.20  
Class 8 Cameron Macarthur 1:07.64  
Class 8L Mel Keller 1:16.29  
Class 9 Ralph Thompson 1:09.52  
Class 10 Patrick Bramston 1:06.80  
Class 11 Keith Bridgement 1:10.69

## ***SMP South***

Class 1 Jonathon Fox 1:12.99  
Class 2 Anthony Tang 1:10.49  
Class 2L Tammie Hotz 1:14.25  
Class 3 Luke Kovacic 1:06.95  
Class 4 Gus Elias 1:07.67  
Class 5 Bernie Tressider 1:07.34  
Class 6 John Metham 1:05.40  
Class 6L Lesa Bunn 1:14.34  
Class 7 Russ Maxwell 1:04.20  
Class 8 Cameron Macarthur 1:03.33  
Class 8L Mel Keller 1:12.10  
Class 9 Lou Iezzi 1:02.45  
Class 10 Daniel Deckers 1:00.11  
Class 11 Keith Bridgement 1:05.32

## ***Fastest Time of the Day***

6 July 2013 SMP South  
Daniel Deckers 1:00.11

19 Aug 2013 Wakefield Park  
Patrick Bramston 1:06.92  
3 Nov 2013 Wakefield Park  
Patrick Bramston 1:06.80  
2 Feb 2014 Wakefield Park  
Mark Hellmund 1:07.60  
27 Apr 2014 SMP South  
Patrick Bramston 1:02.63  
1 Jun 2014 Wakefield Park  
Cameron Macarthur 1:07.89

## ***Encouragement Awards***

Class 1 Mark Garven  
Class 3 Phillip Donnelley  
Class 4 John Karayannis  
Class 5 Rod Menzel  
Class 6 Greg Bunn  
Class 7 Guy Coles  
Class 8 Tony King





# CLUB TRACKDAYS

1 June 2014 Wakefield Park

*Things don't always go according to plan but, as David Lawler explains, you can always rely on a helping hand at an MX-5 Club track meet.*

*Photos by Greg Unger*

There are interesting track days, and then there are INTERESTING track days. We had rain, a very slippery track, enough mud for everyone, then a dry track, and then more rain. Despite the poor conditions, the dedicated officials worked to give club members and visitors the opportunity for up to seven runs. A special mention goes to Greg Perry, James Cook, Joe Kovacic, Kevin Tuckerman and Lindsay Burke who spent the day out in the weather on the dummy grid and at the start/finish line. Thanks guys.

The first few runs of the day were very slippery, particularly at turns 2 and 10, probably due to residue from truck racing the previous weekend. One experienced driver commented that it was more difficult than racing in torrential rain. Many drivers had off track excursions, with cars returning to their garages covered in muck. I wonder how many kilograms of mud got inadvertently carted away from Wakefield Park at the end of the day!

Fortunately the weather cleared somewhat by late morning allowing everyone a few runs on a dry track. Many drivers made good use of these runs to lay down some good times with Anthony Tang and Tammie Hotz setting class 2 records for the 2013/2014 competition year, and Gus Elias breaking into the 1:14s to set an outright class 4 "Clubman" record of 1:14.95.

Peter Barnwell and his partner Kim Jacobs brought their road registered turbo MX-5 to Wakefield. For Peter this was his second club track day, although he has experience at other track events. But for Kim, it was her first time on the track. At the driver briefing Kim met Ralph Thompson who would be her tutor during the first-timers session.

Peter took their car out first, but his run came to an early end with the car having problems. Despite efforts by a number of mechanically-minded club members, it was not fixed when Kim was called for

the first-timers group. So Ralph took Kim out in his own car, with Kim enjoying her 6 minutes in the driver's seat and Ralph advising from the passenger seat.

The problem with Peter and Kim's car took some time to diagnose and fix, and during that time Ralph allowed Kim to use his car for her runs. Ralph is known as a man of few words, but his actions spoke loudly.

Unfortunately the rain returned after lunch resulting in many people leaving early, with those who remained enjoying up to seven runs before the track was closed. Deekspeed again offered the chance to win a drive in one of their MX-5 Cup race cars. There were many entries, and the winner drawn from the box was Lesa Bunn. Daniel Deckers from Deekspeed was on hand to congratulate Lesa, and to give her the keys at the end of the day for a few laps of Wakefield in the NC race car she will be driving.



# FESTIVAL OF SPORTING CARS

8 June 2014

By Craig Durrant and David Lawler

Photos by Steve Green

In the middle of a bitter winter, Sydney Motorsport Park turned on a perfect day for racing on the South Circuit, which has no garages and carports. From a 1 degree start the day warmed up, the wind remained light and the sunshine switched on – magic conditions. There were three MX-5s racing in Historic & Invited Sports/Touring/Racing Cars (quite a mouthful), with another two in regularity.

David Stone – very fast despite being on old slicks he had borrowed, begged and possibly stolen with two of one type on the left and two of another on the right - led the MX-5s in qualifying to take 2nd place on the pre-grid for the rolling start of the first race.

Race 1 was won by a Formula Ford with a Caterham 7 second (this is FOSC, always a mixed bag), David third, Matilda fourth followed by another Caterham and then Craig sixth in a field of 22 cars. In Race 2, Matilda led the MX-5s in 3rd despite a tangle with the one of the Caterhams, behind the Formula Ford and another Caterham, with David 4th and Craig 5th. The Caterham took 1st in race 3, Matilda second and David third, with Craig's car back on the trailer by this time.

In the regularity events, club members Neil Tribe and Yemin Win were competing. Regularity races are harder than many people realise, and so it was great to see Neil taking two 2nds and a 4th, while Yemin had a 6th and 11th. Well done.

Once again FOSC put on a great day, with a wonderful mix of machinery and some beautifully presented cars. The South Circuit again proved too much for some of the vehicles with several blowing engines.





113 Fairford Road  
Padstow NSW  
1 300 669 620



# BREAKING THE ICE

13 July 2014

*A skills development day brings together novice and experienced track drivers at the Marulan Driver Training Centre*

*By David Lawler*

Cracking off the ice from my car to get the doors open is not something I have had to do previously, but after an overnight stay in Goulburn that is exactly what I had to do one Sunday morning. That, along with then avoiding the many ice patches on the Hume Hwy during the 20 min trip to Marulan gave me grave concerns about what the day would bring.

Fortunately, from that point on things looked up, and the day came up clear and bright, although still cold, for our Driver Training Day at the Marulan Driver Training Centre (MDTC).

We soon had 52 drivers arrive at the MDTC and proceed to the office to sign-on and if necessary hire a helmet for the day or purchase a MDTC track license. On hand were 12 club members with extensive on-track experience who were available for the day to act as in-car advisors, so the 20 track first-timers had a great opportunity to learn the basics of track driving and to work on developing their new skills through the day.

We all started with a walk of the track, with Jeff from MDTC pointing out some key



features and offering some advice on how to lap quickly. Michael Hall from Deckspeed then gave our first-timers a briefing on car preparation, while the first group of more experienced drivers "broke the ice" on the track, almost literally.

Drivers were allocated into "run groups" based on their previous experience, with 6 or 7 drivers in each group. Each run group had a 10 minute session before a chequered flag brought them in.

While most drivers found that 10 minutes went by in a flash, they still had plenty of time to work on their track driving, with 6 runs available over the day. There was a noticeable improvement in the quality of driving by the first-timers over the day, due no doubt to on track practice time and the guidance they

received from the advisors.

A special thanks to Bryan Shedden, Ed Cory, Glenn Thomas, Greg Bunn, Keith Monaghan, Lesa Bunn, Phil Ashton, Peter Feutrill, Russ Maxwell, Steve Green and Stewart Temesvary for giving up their time to come along and give the benefit of their advice.

Also, a special thanks to Deckspeed for their ongoing support of the MX-5 club, and particularly their donation to the club which helped to subsidise the entry fees for this event, particularly for first-timers. Michael Hall was at Marulan representing Deckspeed, and his wife and daughter drove a Deckspeed race car in the first-timer sessions. However they nearly had a very interesting day as Michael had almost forgotten to put a passenger seat in the race car before they left for Marulan.





# VICTORIAN 6 HOUR RELAY PHILLIP ISLAND

2-3 August 2014

*Twelve drivers, eleven crew and an award winning team manager negotiate the traffic at Phillip Island.*

*By Peter Feutrill*

Photos: Narra Photography, Tony King, Bryan Shedden

The Victorian 6 Hour Relay at Phillip Island has been run and won for 2014 on the weekend of 2- 3 August.

Planning for this event commenced early in 2014 and along with others I was contacted by Stewart Temesvary to see whether or not I was interested in participating. After a couple of days to digest the proposal, I was in! Stewart kept us in the loop and did a wonderful job organising our payments and submitting all the entry forms.

This year, 3 teams represented the MX-5 Club of NSW.

## **MX-5 Club NSW - Team S&C**

(Sydney & Canberra)

Manager: Graham Fletcher

41A Chris Ballard 2004 MX-5 SE

41B Ed Cory 1998 MX-5 NB8A

41C Mike Hicks 2000 MX-5 NB8A

41D David Lawler 1998 MX-5 NB8A

Pit Crew: David Hicks, Gaynor Lawler, Gillian Fletcher

## **MX-5 Club of NSW - Team Illawarra**

Manager: Bryan Shedden

42A Kevin Addison 1991 MX-5 NA

42B Tony Williams 1990 MX-5 NA

42C Peter Feutrill 2005 MX-5 NC (yes – where are all the other NCs?)

42D James West 1989 MX-5 NA

Pit Crew: Jean Cook, Di Williams, Jill Feutrill

## **MX-5 Club of NSW - Team RPM**

Manager: Pam Estreich

43A Ray Estreich 2004 MX-5 SE

43B Greg Bunn 1998 MX-5 NB8A

43C Stewart Temesvary 1998 MX-5 NB8A

43D Tony King 2004 MX-5 SE

Pit Crew: Lesa Bunn, Moira King

All eyes were on the weather forecasts in the week leading up to the event. But I had been to the Island before and I knew that it can be five seasons in one day, so we really didn't place much stock in what we were reading. To emphasise the point, many of us arrived on Friday having driven through a heavy hail storm at Pakenham, which turned the roads white! Friday evening we took the cars out to the track and this gave the opportunity to set them up for Saturday's practice and to get our paperwork completed by our team managers. Meanwhile our support crew of Jill Feutrill, Jean Cook, Di Williams, Lesa Bunn, Moira King, Gillian Fletcher, Gaynor Lawler, and

and drivers. We were reminded that this is a regularity not a race and it was made clear that the expectations were to drive in a sportsmanlike manner. A series of video clips of unacceptable overtaking manoeuvres from the previous year were somewhat entertaining and horrifying at the same time & reinforced the message from the Clerk of Course. A highlight at this stage for the NSW MX-5 teams was that Stewart was awarded a trophy for the excellent way in which our entries were submitted – without any errors and all neatly typed up! We felt like we were in front already and suggested he give back the trophy and ask for bonus laps!

So, into practice. Just as session 2 commenced, the skies opened up and



David Hicks started setting up including the important catering – not a small job. Saturday morning dawned cold (what else were we expecting?) but not raining. A magnificent breakfast was held in our three garages which were side by side. Briefings were held for team managers

turned the track into an ice rink. It even hailed. My R-specs did their best to act like galoshes but it was steady-steady to say the least. At least we got some experience in following a pace car. But remarkably soon that was it for rain and by the time my second practice session came around

there was a dry line, and we got into the business of setting some pretty good times and looking for our pit boards whilst negotiating traffic at upwards of 170km/hr. Many a PB was set in practice and then we had team meetings with our managers to determine our nominated times for Sunday's big event. This is the crux of the competition – the idea being that you try to go as close to your nominated time as you can without going faster. You can go a bit slower & still get bonus laps but as soon as you beat your time, penalty laps begin to accumulate. Penalties have the effect of dividing your lap score in half for each penalty lap. Given that there are 50 cars on track at any one time with huge differences in speeds & lap times, it always proves difficult to get a consistent lap time. Mind you, it also provides an experience as close to full on racing as you can get without actually racing. Perhaps the most daunting part I found



was merging from pit lane with traffic doing up to 250km/hr! After practice we attended another drivers briefing where the Clerk of Course berated many for not observing yellow flags. This resulted in some teams starting with penalties before the Sunday started – yes I am looking at you Ray and David. Team Illawarra was penalty free at this stage and feeling pretty confident. After some secret team strategy discussions it was early to bed.

Sunday morning dawned on an unbelievable Phillip Island day! Not a cloud in the sky. Another fabulous breakfast in the garages, including bacon and eggs cooked on a gas BBQ by Bryan. Cars were fettled, pressures checked, bars adjusted, suspensions tweaked and beanies pulled over ears.

And so the grid was formed up 2 by 2 and with their team signs proudly displayed but no Lycra in sight as each car was accompanied by the team manager or team member on the grid. Then from nowhere a person playing the bagpipes appeared and walked slowly down the grid – just to remind us what the sound would be like if we unfortunately ran over some of the Canada Geese that frequent the side of the track and are oblivious to cars going past at 250km/h. There was the singing of the National Anthem and the call to start engines, tension mounted and exhaust fumes rose. A gentle lap behind the pace car and then it was on!

Our pit crews were doing a wonderful job timing each lap and holding out pit information for drivers. Drivers were doing a wonderful job to negotiate their way through traffic that at times resembled the M5 – for example four cars into a corner at the end of the main straight each doing about 160-200km/h! Great stuff – no paint was rubbed. The competition between the three MX-5 teams was fierce, but alas Team Illawarra was out of contention within the first hour, because of a wad of penalties. Our manager Bryan conferred with the drivers and said that we should just go out and have fun for the rest of the day. Indeed we did just that and because we were regularly breaking our times we ensured that we gathered a heap more penalties and ended up in second last place. Oh well, I think we can improve next year. As for Team S & C and Team RPM a mighty battle ensued. With only

half an hour to go, it was 2677 points to 2674, with Team RPM holding a slender lead. Team RPM held on to finish 11th overall and Team S & C 12th. Fantastic efforts to all concerned. Sunday night we all got together for a mixture of boasting, sad tales of could-a-beens and a critique of my Go-Pro videos – thanks fellas!

Thanks again to Stewart for coordinating the entries, the team managers and support crew for keeping us informed and well fed all weekend. This weekend was all about the teams. This is a highly recommended event, well run and a fantastic experience. As they say in the classics “I’ll be baaack”.





# NULON NATIONALS

4 July 2014

*Team MX-5 NSW impress some high-powered rivals at Wakefield Park Raceway during Round 2 of the Nulon Nationals.*

*By Glenn Thomas*

The Nulon Nationals is a 3 round club-based event designed to bring together a huge range of cars and people who share a love of racing and building cars. The variance in the cars was huge as they ranged from dedicated highly developed track cars, through significantly modified road cars and the everyday unmodified drives.

Eight clubs from far and wide took part in the 2nd round of the Nulon Nationals held on Friday 4th July at Wakefield Park Raceway and wow what a day it was. The day really communicated the passion that lives within the motorsport community – particularly at the enthusiast level. This same passion is shared by the Nulon team, for both their products and motorsport, as displayed by their fantastic support of grass roots motorsport. Nulon's alignment to, and support of, the enthusiast level of motorsport reflects their confidence in the product range as they are willing place these products smack bang into the middle of one of the communities that are most likely to uncover whether this range can withstand the demanding requirements of the enthusiast. Great move, great results and well done Nulon!

Drivers of a number of more powerful cars were very surprised to see the MX-5s pass them in the corners and, while that may not sway them away from the cars that they are currently passionate about, I'm fairly confident that they gained a level of respect for what these little cars can offer.



While the temperature was reading -5.4c before sunrise, as the sun came up we knew it was going to be a good day of racing. People started scraping the ice off

their windscreens and, just after 9:00am the track came to life with Time Attack cars producing very quick times. As the day went on, these cars managed to get down to 1:00 though to 1:03 – that's fast!

The Nulon team had anticipated that there was scope for some rivalry between some specific clubs and thought that this would be where the real battles would take place. To this end many were looking forward to the expected close competition between the MX-5 Club of NSW the 86 Drivers clubs. The Nulon boys even made a point putting the two clubs in cabins next to each other - just so they could eye each other off from 10 paces. The Nulon team noted that "These cars are so different yet so similar, both have great weight distribution, balance and corner speed". When you look at the final standings you will see they upset a lot of cars that wrote them off.

Both David Stone (1:07) and Verne Johnson (1:08) performed exceptionally well finishing in the top third of the event, both scoring big points for the MX-5 team. This was a really impressive effort when we consider that this was far from being a level playing field. Steve Green (1:10) and Patrick Bramston (1:12) also regularly left many significantly modified high powered cars in their wake and again earned valuable team points. Glenn Thomas (1:13), Todd Herring (1:14) and Keith Monaghan (1:17) were all involved in some very interesting duals; again leaving many highly powered cars in their wake -well done Team MX-5!

Oh! The MX-5 and 86/BRZ show down? While Nulon's Tunehouse significantly modified BZR posted the fastest time (1:04), the rest of the MX-5/86 field competed closely, just as expected. Looking across the entire field, the MX-5 was ahead by a good nose!



# MX-5 CUP ROUND 3

17-18 May 2014

*By Craig Durrant Photos John Smith*

Round 3 of the MX-5 Cup was held at Wakefield Park as part of their NSW State Titles. 12 MX-5s took part in the Cup races.

Round 3 saw perfect racing weather with a brisk 2 degrees early on Saturday morning warming up to the high teens, no wind and plenty of sun. Not a drop of rain (thankfully for those of us without roofs). There seemed to be a lot of track cleanups with lots of oil spilt on the track by other categories providing challenging conditions at times.

All 5 races over the 2 days saw good dices across the field, big smiles in the pits after each race.



Winners of the 5 classes, from A through E were: Matilda Mravicic, David Stone, Steve Green, Bill Kinnane, and Jim Glissan!

In the Cup Championship points tally, the top 3 places are occupied by: David Stone, Steve Green and Daniel Deckers.

We have a few months until the next Cup round, time to work on the car, strategise and get sorted. Look forward to seeing you at the next round!

Full results and Scott Walker's video of the day can be found at [nsw.MX-5.com.au/news/mx-5-cup-round-3-wakefield-park](http://nsw.MX-5.com.au/news/mx-5-cup-round-3-wakefield-park)





# MRA MEETING

29 June 2014

*The latest round of MX-5 races were run in conjunction with the MRA "All British" meeting at Wakefield Park*

*By Luke Otten Photos by Scott Walker*

Anyone who has visited Goulburn would know that the weather can be less than ideal. On this occasion it was a balmy 2 degrees with a westerly wind blowing at about 50km/h ... oh and did I mention it was raining? I've never seen people unload their trailers so quickly. I know I wasn't the only one asking "what am I doing here?" It felt like we had a guest appearance in the movie "Frozen".

Qualifying was done in the rain with very slippery conditions. Numerous cars were struggling for grip and a couple taking a spin just to keep things interesting. Luke Otten took pole, followed closely by Chris White and David Lawler in third.

Race 1 was a six-lapper and saw the lights go out with a semi-dry racing line but still wet on the edges. Passing was difficult and I'm sure a few of us held our breath while trying to pull off a manoeuvre. The chequered flag was awarded to Stuart McFadyen (his first race win ... well done Stu!) with Luke Otten in second and David Stone close behind for third.

Race 2 gave us the best conditions of the day, a dry track but still very greasy and not a lot of grip on offer. After seven laps of good natured racing it was Luke Otten first to the flag, with David Stone and Stuart McFadyen battling it out for second and third in that order.

With the first two races now complete, it brings us to the business end of the day - the Trophy Race. With the weather again looking ominous, the question on everybody's lips was "wets or slicks." I'm sure I saw a couple of drivers doing the rain dance behind the pit garages! As the cars were waiting on the dummy grid and it started to rain again, I'd bet those of us without roofs were very jealous of those who do! The rain was getting heavier on the warm up lap and when the lights went out, windscreen wipers were ablaze. At the end of the nine lap trophy race, it was Chris White with a well-deserved win (taking the lead on the last lap) from

David Stone and David Lawler for third. Finally, a quick thank you to Wakefield

Park for once again hosting a well organised day.



# SUN RUN TO NOOSA MARK II

1 June 2014

*Words and photos by Ken Keeling*

On a clear Saturday, our group of four MX-5s departed early from Hall and then via Yass, Cowra, and Bathurst to Rylstone. After lunch we travelled through the picturesque Bylong Valley and took the Golden Way to Merriwa and then across to Scone for our first overnight stop. Despite going “tops up” through some heavy rain showers during the afternoon, we arrived safe, dry and warm. Another enjoyable day of touring with 610 kms under the wheels.

Day Two saw us on the New England Hwy to Wallabadah for an educational stopover at the First Fleet Memorial Gardens and then to Nundle, a quaint out of the way township, for the mandatory coffee fix. Then, we travelled northbound, past the Chaffey Dam and up Dungowan Valley before joining the Thunderbolt's Way to Walcha for lunch.

The afternoon drive via Armidale to Dorrigo was pleasant touring, with a diversion to the Dorrigo “Skywalk”. Leaving Dorrigo later than planned gave a convenient logic to some spirited driving down the Nymboida River Valley (now fully sealed road in good condition with some lovely twisty bits) to our planned overnight stop at the Nymboida Coaching Station Inn.

Day Three had us heading off to Grafton

then along rural roads on the Northern-most side of the Clarence River to Lawrence to take a ferry ride. A relaxed run along the riverbank to and through Maclean enabled us to join the Pacific Hwy as far as Woodburn, where we diverted north via the rural roads to Lismore. From Lismore it was on a main road to Clunes, then interesting back roads through Eureka and Federal to the nicely winding drop down to the lower land at Mullumbimby and, after a coffee break, on to our overnight accommodation at Brunswick Heads. Our checking in coincided with the arrival of Tony Haslam (Sunshine Coast Chapter), bringing our group up to 6 MX-5s and 10 persons. A fitting finale to the day was an excellent Mediterranean banquet at the uniquely named “fatbellyKaf”.

Day Four of our Fun Run to the Sun, started relatively early with a run up and over the Burringbar Range on the Old Highway, turning off to Uki and thence through the Mt Warning caldera to Kyogle. The “Lion's Road” took us over the Border Ranges, with a stop at the Border Loop lookout, and on to Beaudesert for coffee.

From there we endured freeway traffic as we skirted to the east of Brisbane, departing the M1 at Murrumba Downs. We again resumed enjoyable driving,

taking the Mt Mee Road over the ranges towards Peachester, in the middle of the Glass House Mountains. Taking Bald Knob Rd enabled us to climb up the crater wall and join the Maleny road to drop down to Landsborough and on to Mooloolah. This gave us access to the Eudlo Rd and another enjoyable section of “driver's road” to Palmwoods. From there it was main roads and traffic through Nambour to Yandina before joining the Bruce Freeway up to the Noosa turnoff at Eumundi, where the rain showers commenced. The run into Noosaville after 455 kms was the formal end of our “Sun Run Mk II” – four days of generally good weather and enjoyable touring on the interesting “roads less travelled” with some 1830 kms under the wheels since leaving Canberra.

The Islander Resort staff provided their usual warm welcome to, as well as organising a good package for, our group of MX-5 visitors. Over the next four days, before the start of Natmeet, we continued to enjoy ourselves driving most of the Sunshine Coast's hinterland roads near the Three M's (Maleny, Montville and Mapleton), including a foray from Montville down and back up “The Hunchy”, a well-kept secret drivers treat (until now!).

After a week at Noosaville, the residual four cars of the Sun Run Mk II separated for their respective trips home. We again enjoyed a great two weeks driving holiday, including some 3750 kms of mostly interesting roads for MX-5 drivers.





# TWISTED ADDICTION

25-28 April 2014

Words and Photos by Irene Manion

What would you like for your birthday I asked him? He suggested that we go on a Victorian alpine tour with the Mazda MX-5 Club and I immediately agreed.

On the night before our departure, the weather forecast was promising continuous rain for most of the weekend. I had some misgivings as a wide blanket of cloud spread across most of Victoria. However, at around 4 am on the Friday morning, I was up and ready, excited at the prospect of an amazing weekend in the Victorian Alps. This would be my third visit to this beautiful location, the first with the Mazda MX-5 Club.

The Sydney contingent had mostly arrived at Pheasants Nest and were drinking hot coffee to keep warm as dawn broke. Soon we were on the road and heading down south to meet the Canberra crew at Bungendore. A striking line-up of 13 gleaming Mazda MX-5s took the twistiest course to Canberra then through the wide open countryside to Tumut. We then headed further south to the outskirts of the Kosciusko National Park and the eastern edge of the Victorian alpine region for 113kms of twisty, windy downhill roads on the Bonang.

Day 2 saw us split into two groups with the one managing to scale Mt Baw Baw in

wet, slippery, muddy conditions that tested the driving skills of all drivers. Meanwhile the slow group found an amazing road that took us to the foot of Mt Baw Baw and it really did have promise, however it suddenly turned to gravelly, wet mud after we crossed a rustic curved wooden



bridge. Don, who was taking up the tail end, was caught out with his roof down travelling at a slow 40 km an hour and getting very wet because he was not in a position to pull his roof up whilst driving. We managed to meet up again for a late lunch somewhere around Healesville. We continued to skirt around the Alps, touching the Hume Highway for a short distance, bypassing Wangaratta and then heading east up the Alpine Road towards Mt Beauty to our accommodation and a very hearty meal at the Flour + Water pizza restaurant, admirably booked up by Peter. Complimentary home brewed liqueurs for 'afters' added to the warmth and camaraderie of the evening.

Day 3 was a day of ever-changing, dramatic landscapes. We departed Mt Beauty at dawn and flew onward to Tawonga Gap where we stopped on a section of the road that provided us with bird's eye views down into an alpine river valley amidst a forest of green. From there we travelled on to the Great Alpine Road

and the winding climb to Mt Hotham. The steeply inclined road gave way at the edges to deep valleys with thick, white lakes of fog way below us. Soon the road turned from wet to icy. Scary! Thank goodness the experienced drivers knew how to drive in these difficult conditions and my breath was taken away when I saw a large chunk of ice break away from the back tyre of Michael's car as it gently skated forward. Fortunately the summit was just around the next corner and there we all stood, some of us shivering, in the -1 degree temperature, as we waited for the MX-5s behind us to arrive and fortunately; they all did.

We next departed from the Great Alpine Road and diverted to the Bogong High Plains near Falls Creek and Rocky Valley National Park. We then followed the fertile, tree studded Kiewa valley for miles. We enjoyed another exhilarating waltz as a prelude to our dusk arrival at Khancoban for the '5 hat' dinner Peter had so tirelessly organised for us at the local shopping centre. We were delighted to hoe into the hearty meal prepared so assiduously for us.

On Day 4, we had a wonderful breakfast at O'Shane's Café, we had a quick, foggy run out of the alpine region, and then on to the outskirts of Canberra where people started to head off in different directions and head for home.

It was a privilege to travel with these experienced drivers on one of the most exhilarating trips I have ever experienced. The variety of the beautiful landscapes that opened up in these wonderful out of the way places and this unique way of seeing them from the passenger seat of a roofless MX-5 will be with me forever.









# AVIATION ADVENTURE AND GARDEN GALLIVANT

17-18 May 2014

By Glenn Davies

Photos By Graham Fletcher, Jason Brown and Glenn Davies

It was an early 6:30am departure from the base at McDonalds Penrith for our Saturday morning flight to the Temora Military Aviation Museum. The skies dawned cloudy and cool but we hoped for minimum turbulence as we had a mission run of 420km to complete by the challenging ETA of 11:00am.

With such a tight schedule the flight leaders, Lesa and Greg Bunn, led the squadron of 4 NCs and a lone NB down the Hume towards our first refuelling point at The Bakehouse at Goulburn (tops down of course). Our rear gunners, Graham and Gillian Fletcher, covered our rear and ensured a tight formation was maintained.

Refuelling completed, we took off again down the Hume and then onto some nice flowing roads, with very little traffic for the final leg to Temora. On the way we passed through streets lined with trees in brilliant autumn colour and paved in fallen leaves.

A little after 11:00am we arrived in Temora and headed straight for the Aviation Museum, home of the "Warbirds Collection". Just before touchdown we were thanked by the flight leaders for flying "Mazda Air", which is a great way to fly as we all know.

Ron and Brigid Gallop, in their NA decided to make a longer weekend of the trip and met us at the Museum. The museum has great picnic facilities right next to the apron and runway, for a superb view of the action. We enjoyed a barbeque lunch whilst admiring flying displays by the beautifully restored WW2 Lockheed Hudson Bomber, the Gloster Meteor F8 Jet, the Vietnam era A37 Dragonfly and everyone's favourite, the Mark 8 Supermarine Spitfire with its glorious supercharged v12 Merlin engine.

After the flying show, some of us enjoyed close-up inspections of the 16 aircraft in

the warbird collection, all of which are in flying condition. There were numerous other related displays plus a canteen and gift shop. This really is a quality attraction but surprisingly the crowd was probably only two or three hundred and the comment made by one of the volunteer

Jason Brown, Graham Fletcher and I are planning on entering into the Club Track Days soon so we also had a great opportunity to talk about all things MX-5 Racing with Top Guns, Greg Bunn and Ray Estreich, giving us the do's and don'ts for beginners.



staff was that the entrance fees on the day wouldn't have covered the fuel bill.

Around 3:00pm we headed to our accommodation, The Koreela Park Motel, which was conveniently located next to a pub and also a close walk to our dinner destination, the Ex- Serviceman's Club. After spending some time removing bugs and road grime from our babies, we all headed to the pub for a refreshing ale or 3 before dinner; low and behold, we were just in time to watch the V8 Supercars, much to our ladies' indifference.

Dinner at the club was enjoyable, however the early start and busy day had taken their toll and so we all headed back to the motel for a fairly early night.

Next morning was also cloudy and cool however "Tops Down" was again the only option. After saying goodbye to Ron and Brigid we headed off to the Japanese Gardens at Cowra.

The gardens were a magnificent sight spread over many hectares of a rocky peak overlooking the town. Opened approximately 35 years ago, they are

now well established and considered the best Japanese Garden in Australia and the biggest in the Southern Hemisphere. Complete with manicured shrubs and trees in glorious autumn colour, authentic buildings and beautiful streams flowing into ponds filled with ornamental Koi. There were lots of oohs and ahhs and more than a few hints from some of the ladies in the direction of their respective husbands that it was about time something was done about their own landscaping plans.

A couple of hours were spent wandering through the landscape then we headed off to lunch at a local pub. After lunch it was time to head home, via Bathurst, which of course means the compulsory "blast" around Mount Panorama. Unfortunately, the track was closed from Skyline to Forest Elbow for a hill climb and we noticed a couple of stray MX-5s about the place as well. Greg made the observation that this was the track debut for "Princess and Snow White", so of course a photo stop was in order.

The sun was starting to sink, the temperature dropping fast so we all elected to say our goodbyes and make the nonstop run from Bathurst to home.

A most enjoyable 850km weekend run, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Thanks to those that attended and especially a very big thankyou to RPM's Convenor Lesa Bunn for once again organising a fabulous MX-5 experience.



SYDNEY

## THE SOUND OF MUSIC

18 May 2014

*Sheila Montgomery takes it down a gear for another spin along the Putty Road*

*By Sheila Montgomery*

Seven MX-5s gathered at McDonalds, McGrath Hill for the briefing from our run leader Guy Coles. Destination - Harrigan's Irish Pub via the Putty Road. A lovely day for the run, sunshine, a great road and good company what more could you ask for?

Personally this is my second time on the Putty Road and I really must remember to change gear before trying to overtake a trailer on the hill with a sharp bend just before our pit stop 80km in.

After a quick toilet stop and a wave to the silver MX-5 already there with a bunch of Subarus (turncoat!) we got back on the road. Driving through the Gorge was great fun although the black car in front of me refused to move over and was slowing me up a bit, but hey he was the run leader so what could I do? Haha! I

know he misses the sound of his Roadster sport mufflers so I got close enough for him to remember the sound of music from my tail end. Apparently the car behind me (the Toads) heard it quite well too!!

Once we arrived, we enjoyed some lively

banter and good pub grub at Harrigan's before we headed home and left Guy and Stephanie to the rest of their wine & spa weekend.





# AUBURN - CAMDEN RUN

22 June 2014

*A first timer's run from Auburn to Camden and a warm welcome to the MX-5 community for Rachel Daniels.*

*Photos by Stephanie Katz*

I had long wanted an MX-5 as a child, and I've finally achieved this goal. I recently purchased my first MX-5 and immediately joined the MX-5 Club Sydney chapter. I first saw the club from a distance at Mulgoa near my home town, and the second I saw it, I desperately wanted to join.

My first event with the MX-5 club was nothing short of my expectations, in fact it was better. I arrived on a chilly morning at Auburn McDonalds and warmed up with a hot chocolate and a nice introduction to some new friends. I first noticed that everyone was very friendly towards one another, I was not long introduced to many of them and I immediately felt encouraged by the kind remarks I was given about the "newbie" they saw in the car park.

I had painted my brake calipers the night before and was delighted to hear that someone had noticed. I had met the President of the Club, and did not yet know he was the President as he was very welcoming and humble.

We received a "run sheet" to follow along with for the prepared journey out to Camden. It was lucky I had a lovely passenger who was a great help following the run sheet and telling me where to go, I believe he enjoyed the day as well. The drive along the bush-land in the west was beautiful and well chosen. The re-groups along the drive were a great way

to have a quick stretch and get back in an awesome looking line of the classic looking convertibles.

Cruising over hills, down little valleys, and smoothly following the curves and around bends through a natural grading of land was a wonderful way to not only remind me that such lovely scenery exists in the not-so-admired 'western suburbs' (where I am from), but proved the power and agility of the MX-5!



My first experience as a new member of the club, I could not be more impressed with the organisation and, most of all, the friendliness that I noticed amongst the members, along with the warm welcome which I was given. All of this packaged with the world's most fun car just sweetened the deal. I have not come across a more cheerful group of car enthusiasts. I am excited for the next event, and can't wait to know the members of the club more.





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