

club

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

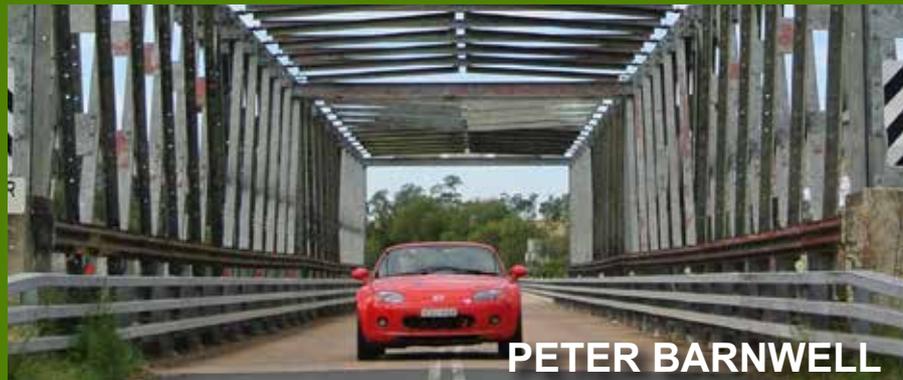
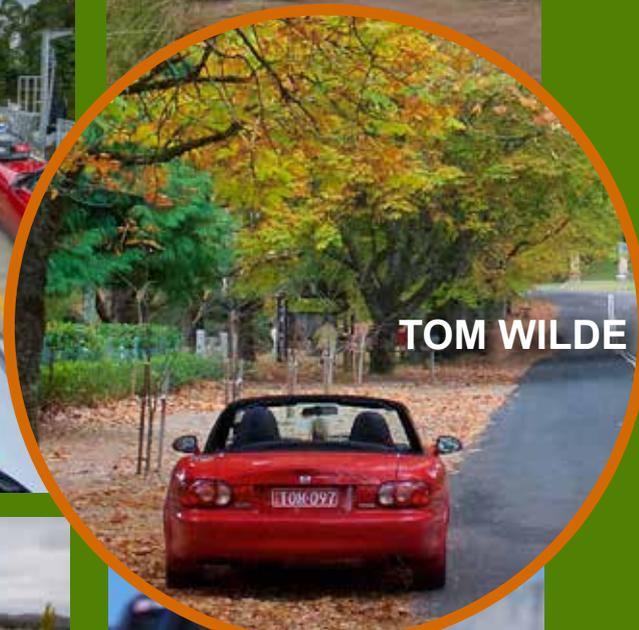
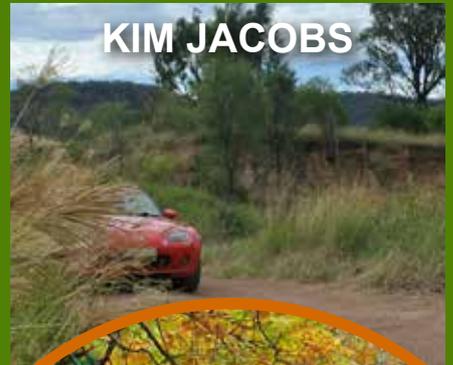
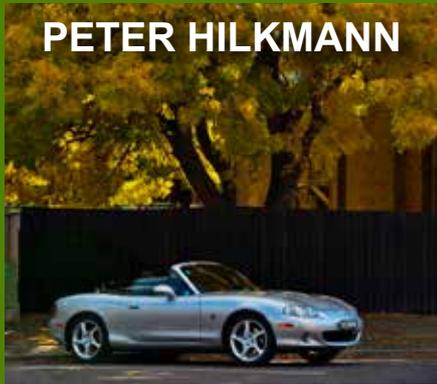
TORQUE

MIATALAND | 100TH ANNIVERSARY | TECH TALK TYRES | WYANGALLA WANDERING



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President's Report

Keith Monaghan

Autumn 2020 - prep' in time

I must apologise for the delay in the production of the Club Torque magazine. This magazine is produced by volunteers and these people also run their own businesses. Finding someone with the time available and the skills to produce this magazine has been difficult. I would like to thank Kim and Peter for their offer to produce this magazine.

COVID-19. As per the government's regulations we have had to cancel all club activities until further notice. It is critical at this time that we keep in contact with each other. Please use our Facebook pages to let us know what MX-5 activities you are doing over this period of self-isolation. This could be a chance to do those minor mods or updates to you pride and joy. Please let us know and post the photos.

The convenors conference was held in December and a great year of events was developed and was running well but until this COVID-19 situation is sorted these events have been put on hold. I would like to thank all the people who attend the conference for their time and input.

This year is the 30th anniversary of the club and the 100th anniversary of Mazda. The plan is to combine the Presidents Picnic with this celebration in October. We hope this current situation is over by then and the event will be the club coming out of lockdown party.

NatMeet 2020 has been postponed and I would like to thank the NatMeet committee for all the work they have done in the development of the event and the work they have done in organising the postponement of the event. This will allow us the enjoyment and the interaction with the members of our club and the clubs from the other states later in the year.

Since the last Club Torque magazine, the club has run a large number of events. This included the President's Picnic and the Australia Day Picnic. These have been well attended and enjoyed by all those that participated. I would like to thank all the volunteers for their help in running the events for the club.

The Historic and Classic registration systems is up and running. I would like to thank all the people that were involved with the development of our scheme and the people that are now running the scheme for their time and effort.

Please keep yourselves well and we will get together when allowed at the end of this event.

Keith Monaghan
President

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MEMBERSHIP

We've had 201 new members join since the last magazine was published in June 2019.
As at 18 May 2020...

CURRENT
MEMBERSHIP
1060

A warm welcome to the MX-5 Club of NSW.
New members are encouraged to contact their Chapter Convenors for local events and to visit our website - nsw.mx5.com.au for the full range of social, technical and sporting events.

Sydney Welcomes 120 New Members

Sam Abdallah	Damon Gardner	Derek Mock
Michelle Aginsky	Natalie Gardner	Anne Moffat
Gary Akehurst	Andrew Gee	William Moffat
Chris Allison	Stewart Gilmour	Craig Morrison
Luigi Badolato	James Gilray	Louise Morrison
Zack Bailey	Fraser Granville	Bill Newling
Thomas Beasley	Christine Hamilton	Tom Newsham
Adam Bennett	Nas Hanafi	Chi Ho Ng
Marie Berroa	Peter Harris	Mitchell Noy
Anthony Bevern	Ariel Heilpern	Ben Oldfield
Sam Borg	Geoff Hemsall	Grant Paisley
Matthew Botros	Nathaniel Henderson	Rick Paratschek
Adel Boudib	Neil Henderson	Rosanna Paratschek
Joseph Boudib	Cameron Hines	Nash Parton
Dale Bourke	Patrick Hines	David Pashley
Portia Brown	Matt Hinley	Julian Pitt
Andrew Brunskill	Max Hodges	Tom Place
Christina Campbell	Daniel Holohan	Elisabeth Pohl
Kejin Cao	Sue Hood	David Porter
Babelio Castillo Jr	Craig Hunt	Andreas Purnomo
Alessio Cerrone	Ted Johnson	Eamon Quirk
Scott Collins	Tyler Johnson	Paul Rinaldo
Barry Courtney	Simone Kirkman	Ryan Ruiz
Maurice Curach	Vivek Krishna	Robyn Scott
Tony Davis	Prasad	Gretel Shanahan
Emily Doherty	Dennis Loh	Kevin Shanahan
Kim Downton	Louie Loo	Mark Simpson
John Drummond	Petra Lowen	Basil Smith
Calvin Drury	Jai Lynch	Chuck Sorg
Cameron Dunbar	John Makhoul	Julie Sorg
Jordan Farr	John Makris	Ruslan Sovinsky
Lachlan Farrell	Michael Malgo	Andrie Tan
Ray Fedeli	Anthony Mancini	Julie Tan
Terri Ferreira	Imraan Matthews	Michael Tan
Kelly Fulcher	Barton Mawer	Alex Wallner
Anthony Gale	Robert Mc Martin	Helen Wallner
Ken Gale	Irene McIntosh	Sean Walsh
Rodney Gallagher	Nicholas McIntosh	Patrick Wilcox
Danny Gamwalla	Nichole McKenzie	Guy Winslow
Roy Gamwalla	Bruce McPherson	Rick Wong
Charlie Gardner		

Mid North Coast Welcomes 4 New Members

Gayle Adamson	Jill Opie
Michael Adamson	Mike Opie

South Coast Welcomes 6 New Members

Dace Abolins	Janet Mann	Geoff Smith
Peter Diven	Malcolm Mann	Rose Smith

Illawarra Welcomes 10 New Members

Tod Adams	Barry Kilborn	Susan Taylor
Robyn Blood	Scott Lanham	Cathy Tribe
John Ettenhofer	David Long	
Rob Hunt	Heather Long	

RPM Welcomes 14 New Members

Annette Andersen	Virginia Ellis	Maureen Norris
Bruce Andersen	Richard Evans	Steve Norris
Andrew Ballard	Craig Hubbard	Jean-Luc Stevens
Deborah Dempsey	Marcia Hummel	Penny Williamson
Robert Dempsey	James Manion	

Hunter Welcomes 22 New Members

Andrew Abrams	Mulcahy	Jordan Pascoe
Kevin Andrews	Judith Cornish	Steven Pryor
Luke Andrews	Chris Farragher	Jane Schmalder
Denise Birrell	Eva Farragher	Rick Schmalder
Bobbi Church	Roger Fortune	Richard Stow-Smith
Chris Church	Glenn Hawkins	Peter Truscott
Craig Clendinning	Brad Kark	Ruth Truscott
Lorraine Cobeanou-	Aaron Loosemore	

Canberra Welcomes 25 New Members

Aston Barnes	Steve Hinton	Diane Prattley
Chris Barnes	David Horne	Gary Prattley
Louise Blessington	Ashley Howse	Christopher Roberts
Anna de Feo	Rhys Howse	Judy Roberts
Valerio de Feo	Michael Keating	Vaidehi Sargeant
Bernie Figge	Anthea Kerrison	Rozalie Sherwood
Kylie Figge	James Larkey	Ted Sherwood
Zena Finn	Simon McKern	
Brett Goyne	Matthew O'Regan	

Membership Renewals - if you are having any difficulties logging into the Membership portal to process your renewal, please contact Bryan Shedden on 0422 340 010 and he will happily assist in resolving any issues. It rarely takes more than a few minutes and then you are good to go for another year.

MEMBER NEWS

GETTING TO THE OTHER SIDE...



READY AND WAITING...

We sat at home in COVID-19 lockdown getting fatter by the minute while, at the same time, developing a drinking problem. We watched what seemed like hundreds of movies but can't come at that ridiculous Supercars ERacing "game." Don't see the point of it...not real.

The grass was mowed to within a millimetre of its life, the edges were trimmed, gardens weeded and the gutters cleaned. The house never looked so good.

Out in the garage, our MX-5s were fully serviced and polished sitting there with forlorn looks on their faces burning rego.

It's a scenario we are sure was repeated hundreds of thousands of times around Australia but in the case of MX-5 owners, the deprivation of wheel time in our favourite form of transport was perhaps a fair bit sharper.

Pretty much everything stopped around here which is ironic given that petrol prices are at their lowest level in, oh, about a two decades.....

Thankfully there is light at the end of the COVID tunnel and we can resume a semblance of normalcy that includes driving our cars on the road and at the track.

Australia has flattened the curve enough to allow us to take on some curves of our own.

Anyway, it was better to play it safe than the alternative that doesn't bear thinking about.

This is our first Club Torque and it's only caused a couple of disagreements between Kim and I. We sat side by side for hours preparing it and the COVID-19 lockdown was actually beneficial to the process.

There hasn't been a Club Torque for a year so there was plenty of subject matter to choose from. We decided to cut off anything pre-September last year because it's stale. Hope that doesn't rub too many of you the wrong way. We will need your help in the future for the magazine.

We have chosen a mix of general interest, motor sport and social content to make the magazine as interesting as possible to the widest audience.

A couple of momentous events deserved special attention including Mazda's 100th Anniversary. Can't believe it started out as a cork manufacturer.

And of course we can't forget Joe Kovacic, the heart and soul of our club's motorsport activities and also 2019 Member of the Year. You are a legend Joe.

Former Club Torque Editor Mel Keller deserves accolades for her efforts in bringing this specialised publication to life for years. Thank you Mel and promise, we won't annoy you much more once we get this edition out of the way and get more organised.

Speaking of which.

For future editions, Kim and I would like as many reports and pics of MX-5 related activities as you can provide to make our lives easier and give us more time to enjoy our cars.

Don't hold back, post it on the website or on Facebook and if we need more, we'll get in touch.

Drive safe. See you on the road.

Cheers, Kim and Barney

2019 PRESIDENT'S AWARD

The President's Award this year has been awarded to long time member Michael Soulos for his work in not only being the club's captain but also his efforts organising a number of popular events including the Brass Monkey, The Presidents Picnic and the 30th anniversary run.

Michael has also put his support behind the board in some of the difficult situations they have faced in previous years.

Michael is a committed MX-5 owner who enjoys driving his car in many events and is a worthy recipient of this prestigious award.



Congratulations Michael.

MOTORSPORT VOLUNTEERS

The NSW MX-5 Club successfully hosts a wide range of motorsport events, each one requiring an army of volunteers. We will publish a volunteers roster for track days, motorkhanas and hillclimbs and encourage members and friends to join us.

For regular motorsport competitors; volunteering at one round is now a requirement for scoring championship points.

Further information on volunteering at our motorsport events can be found on the Motorsport page of our website nsw.mx5.com.au/motorsport.

No previous experience is necessary and all volunteer roles accrue points towards the Club's Member of the Year award.

Ian Combes

Competition Secretary.



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Run With It

Social runs are at the very heart of our Club. But how do you choose which run is right for you? We have considered our run distances and times, the technical challenges of the roads involved and the posted speed limits along the way and developed this grading system for all Club runs. Now you can just sit back and enjoy the drive.

EASY

Runs are casual runs of around 100kms to a breakfast or lunch venue and back. The route avoids 100km - 110km/hr roads as much as possible. Recommended for all drivers.

CRUISER

Runs are around 100 - 200kms to a lunch venue and back with at least one stop. The drive is mostly on 80km - 100km/hr roads and are suitable for all drivers.

LONG

Runs are between 150 - 250kms and feature a variety of terrains and road conditions with a meal and regular stops along the way. We recommend that you do at least 1 "C" run before a long run.

HARD

Runs are between 150 - 400kms with a mix of highways and some challenging roads. Hard runs are social with regular convenience, refreshment and sightseeing stops. Suited to confident MX-5 drivers.

CHALLENGING

Runs are technical runs of up to 600kms or more per day with few, if any, stops. Featuring early starts and twisty, demanding back country roads, challenging runs are for experienced drivers.

At all times, run participants must accept sole responsibility for safe and courteous conduct on the roads. Drivers must hold a current driver's license and vehicle registration, obey all road rules and drive with respect for the prevailing conditions.

Club Track Day Round 3 Pheasant Wood

Words • Ian Combes
Pics • Rob Wilko
Sunday March 22, 2020

Round 3 of the 2020 competition track day championship was held on March 22 at the new Pheasant Wood circuit at Marulan (was the Marulan Driver Training Centre).

The club had been running driver training days on the new circuit layout for some time, and we ran a regularity at the tail end of 2019, but this was the first competition day that the club had run at Pheasant Wood.

The Pheasant Wood circuit is a tight track, and as everyone knows, is lined with many very intimidating-looking concrete walls.

However the track is very wide, with good grip, so is actually safer than the Amaroo Circuit at SMSP.

The COVID-19 restrictions had started to tighten in the leadup to this event, and some though

was given to whether we should run the event or not.

In the end, the club went ahead with the event, but took every conceivable precaution to keep everyone safe.

In hindsight, that was a good move as the club will not be running another event for some time...

The conditions for the event were excellent - fine, and mild. Forty two entrants on the day clocked up a lot of track time, with everyone who wanted them getting 7 eight-minute sessions in.

Spins were rare, and there were no incidents of any kind.

The day was a great success – everyone had a great time, and the track day was easy to run, so the club will be running more events at this venue in the future.

Hopefully the NEAR future



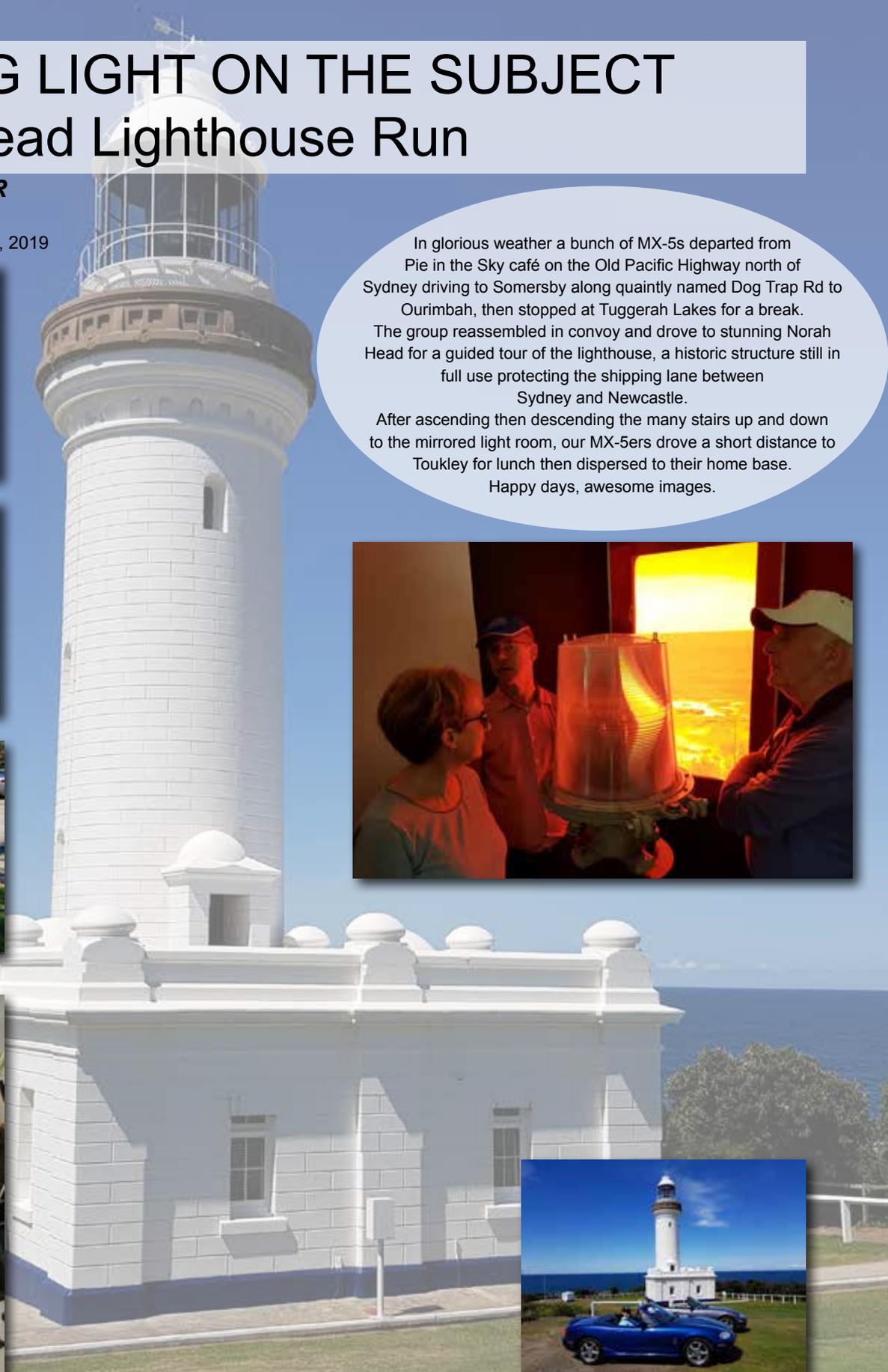
PUTTING LIGHT ON THE SUBJECT

Norah Head Lighthouse Run

SYDNEY CHAPTER

Pics • Rob Wilko

Wednesday September 25, 2019



In glorious weather a bunch of MX-5s departed from Pie in the Sky café on the Old Pacific Highway north of Sydney driving to Somersby along quaintly named Dog Trap Rd to Ourimbah, then stopped at Tuggerah Lakes for a break. The group reassembled in convoy and drove to stunning Norah Head for a guided tour of the lighthouse, a historic structure still in full use protecting the shipping lane between Sydney and Newcastle. After ascending then descending the many stairs up and down to the mirrored light room, our MX-5ers drove a short distance to Toukley for lunch then dispersed to their home base. Happy days, awesome images.



MARSHALLING THE TROOPS

Member of the Year - Joe Kovacic

Words • Peter Barnwell
Pics • Rob Wilko



Joe Kovacic would have to be one of the best grid marshalls on the planet. If you are fortunate enough to see him in action, it's a revelation.

Want to see quick thinking, a clear head, diplomacy, not taking any prisoners and compassion all rolled into one, well Joe's your man.

He makes a race grid run like clockwork and if you don't like it, bad luck.

I met Joe about six years ago at my first MX-5 Club track day at Amaroo and instantly found him engaging.

His ability to quickly assimilate information about a driver's performance and then rank them on the grid without getting flustered is a rare skill. Better yet is the way he laughs at you if you tell porkies about your performance. How could you argue with that?

It all comes naturally to Joe who was identified early in his membership days just over 10 years ago as someone who could make a handy grid marshall.

In action he's like perpetual motion with one hand holding a mic and the other clutching a fistful of print outs, walking around the dummy grid barking orders and at the same

time having a chat with the various competitors about mostly their car or the weather.

He calls track day groups to the grid over the PA, gives some people the hurry up and then sorts them out before despatching them on their six or seven laps.

All while getting the next group organised on the dummy grid.

Joe likes to get behind the wheel too and often takes his son or daughter's car, sometimes his own car, for a session and he's not a bad steerer though nowhere near as good as either of his kids.

Pity about that eh Joe?



He likes social drives too particularly if there's an element of motor sport involved... some driving challenge or to visit new places.

Member of the Year is a prestigious award in the MX-5 Club of NSW as it's decided on a point score over a 12 month period with points allocated for a member's attendance or participation in club events.

Comptroller of the club's awards, our resident mathematician



Bryan Shedden, says the last MOTY spread sheet was the size of War and Peace.

From a purely points awarded perspective, Joe Kovacic is a worthy MOTY winner, but that doesn't take into account the fact that he's a really good bloke into the bargain.

Go Joe.

DAM GOOD FUN

Words and pics • Rod Nicholas

'We have to get up early' I said to my navigator (aka Mrs Run Leader). 'The run leader has to be there to welcome everybody.'

Up before the crack of dawn.

Mad scramble to gulp down coffee.

Rush to get to the meet point before anyone else.

Arrive moments before the first car.

Chat amiably for a few minutes and watch, out of the corner of my eye, as car after car after car rolls up.

It was an imposing sight—twenty MX-5s of various hues all standing ready to run. And in the middle ... a non-descript Toyota something-or-other.

The driver quickly realised he was in the wrong place at the wrong

time and scurried away with his wishy-washy grey whatever.

At the appointed time we made a break for it. Have you ever tried to get a convoy of twenty cars to head off together?

Don't bother, it is impossible.

Regardless, we all made it on to the Barton Highway and headed off to Boorowa for a coffee/tea/whatever break.

By the time we reached the Lachlan Valley Way we were all pretty much together and marvelled at how green the countryside looked after the recent rains.

Interrupted only by a lone car that leap-frogged along our long line, only to turn off unexpectedly just before Boorowa, it was a nice

drive.

From Boorowa to Cowra for lunch was a short and peaceful trip. At least, it was peaceful for me out in front of everybody (which is a bonus for the run leader).

The folks at the Rose Garden Coffee House in Cowra did a fantastic job feeding us all. No one went away hungry, especially those game souls who ordered the 'Bad Boy Burger' (it was bigger than my head!).



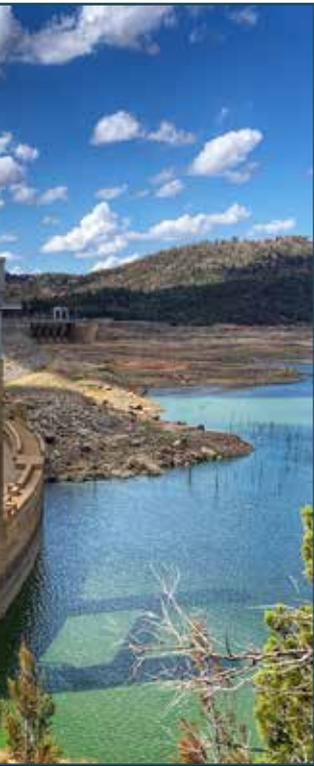
WYANGALLA



March 9, 2020
CANBERRA CHAPTER



WANDERING



The short blatt from Cowra to Wyangala Dam was a hoot. It's a great bit of road and from my recollection we had it to ourselves. The sight of a kilometre and half of MX-5s must be a treat for anyone with a heart.

Wyangala Dam is not quite the lake it used to be. At only 12.8 per cent full, it is looking somewhat forlorn, and there was no sign of the water-sports activity that features in many of the photos on the 'net. Still, it is an impressive sight—the original (1935) mass concrete gravity dam of 58.8 metres is dwarfed by the newer (1971) rock-fill embankment dam that reaches a further 23.5 metres, complete with a road bridge over the spillway (now closed to the public, unfortunately).

Wyangala Dam's storage

capacity of 1,217,000 mega litres is more than twice the volume of Sydney Harbour, and at its best covers 54 square kilometres—it wasn't quite so impressive when we visited.

The original dam wall can only be seen when the water level falls below 30 per cent. It has a catchment of 8,300sqkm, but the recent rains certainly haven't flooded the place.

After an extended photo shoot, we headed back to Boorowa along the Frogmore Road. It was a very nice drive, with generally sound road surface (the roadworks at Frogmore were recent, and decidedly unexpected), and the culverts that appeared along the way made for an interesting stomach lurch.

This may have been the best

leg of the run (there's a mixed metaphor or pun or something cleverish in there) a charming country road, almost no traffic for 70 kilometres bar MX-5s, an ideal top-down day ... oh yeah! It was homeward bound from Boorowa following the same route we used to get there, although a few took the opportunity to re-caffeinate.

The outcome? A 400-kilometre trip, fantastic weather, good open roads, good tucker, great company.

A thoroughly successful day out, and a whole lotta fun.

(PS If you haven't put your hand up to lead a run, I urge you to give it a go. The organisational aspects are not onerous, and the opportunity to be at the pointy end of a convoy is well worth the effort.

And twenty cars! OMG!)

ROUND 10 TRACK DAY

Wakefield Park

Words • Joe Kovacic

Monday September 23, 2019

A cool Spring day greeted a small field of 64 enthusiastic motorsport competitors for our tenth round of club track days at Wakefield Park.

Our Clerk of Course Ian Combes refined his drivers briefing allowing drivers to get out on track by 9.00am.

We had a total of five run groups including four first timers incorporated into group five.

As clouds rolled in from the south and we were hit by a rainstorm at 11.45am.

As Grid Marshall, Joe Kovacic, did not

want to stand out in the rain, the track was declared wet and too dangerous to race on, so an early lunch break was taken.

With the track drying out over lunch, race proceedings recommenced at 12.30pm.

One hour into the afternoon session another storm front hit us this time with some small hail and rain.

Race proceedings were suspended temporarily for about 15 minutes allowing the sun to come out again for an uninterrupted afternoon session.

By the end of the day some drivers managed to get seven sessions with some drivers getting 46 timed laps.

Fastest lap of the day went to Peter Barnwell with a time of 1.08.09..

Jie Ren and Jamie Martin set new class records.

Racing in classes 2, 5, 9 and 10 is very competitive with less than 0.5sec difference between P1 and P2.

Thank you to all our motorsport officials and congratulations to all the other drivers on their results.

CLASS	1ST PLACE	TIME	2ND PLACE	TIME
1	Gregory Unger	1.17.58	Peter Hilkmann	1.19.89
2	James Burke	1.15.18	Bryan Hicks	1.15.42
3	Jie Ren	1.10.18	Eu Foong Loh	1.26.84
4	Jamie Martin	1.13.87	Michael Tarrant	1.16.52
5	Gerardo Martin	1.14.29	Matt Tarrant	1.14.74
6	Gus Elias	1.11.86	John Karayannis	1.12.70
7	Peter Feutrill	1.11.71	Keith Monaghan	1.12.87
8	Ray Estreich	1.11.83	Alan Gibson	1.14.49
9	David Lawler	1.09.31	Malcolm Steel	1.09.72
10	Russ Maxwell	1.08.81	Alan Townsley	1.08.82
11	Peter Barnwell	1.08.09	Keith Bridgement	1.10.52

HOOROO KEITH



Words • Joe Kovacic & Peter Barnwell
Pic • Rob Wilko

Congratulations and well done to Keith Bridgement who had his last day in club motorsport track days at Wakefield Park on September 23, 2019, and has retired from the sport.

Keith and his blue meticulously maintained Subaru WRX have been a regular feature at our MX-5 trackdays, he is a highly skilled driver who

always exhibited the epitome of sportsmanship behind the wheel.

Keith found it increasingly difficult to indulge in both his love of travel and motorsport - something had to give, and travel took pole position.

We wish him all the best in his retirement and travels.

PLENTY OF BRAGGIN AT LAGGAN PUB LUNCH

CANBERRA CHAPTER

Words • Ron Tollenaar

Pics • Ron Tollenaar • Rob Wilko • Rod Nicholas

Friday February 7, 2020

In another life and a previous social setting my nickname was Rainman, so it was not without a little trepidation that I peeked out of the curtains on the morning of my first organised run with the Canberra Chapter and scanned the sky for any tell-tale signs. A few clouds about but nothing threatening so we're off to a good start.

A quick run to the rendezvous point at Queanbeyan and the "early birds" are already gathered. Over the course of the next twenty minutes the rest of the group arrived, and 13 assembled cars set off at 9.20 headed for Bungendore and on to Tarago where indeed the rain started to fall.

Ah well, we really couldn't complain too loudly as we hadn't had decent rains in Canberra for well over two months and with fires still burning

it was not going to ruin our day.

On to Goulburn and the iconic Paragon Cafe where we joined by another four members, two of whom, looking at you Rob and Tony, had come from Sydney to join us.

The cafe staff and service at the Paragon cannot be recommended highly enough, getting out coffee, scones, cakes and other yummy things for 25 people in record time.

The word was soon passed around the group that Dimmey's department store next door, which has been around almost as long as Goulburn itself, was closing its doors for the last time and many of our members were tempted inside to snap up a bargain or three.

So, we regathered in the central square and threaded our way slowly through the Goulburn traffic and

onto the bustling town of Crookwell.

Along the route we took in the amazing views of the wind turbines placed on either side of the road, some only fifty metres away, what an impressive sight they were too.

Passing through Crookwell it was only a short sprint to our final destination, the historic Laggan pub, where we enjoyed a hearty country meal, some refreshments and the telling of the usual tall stories.

Much fun was had by all and by about 2.30 we were ready to return to Canberra by various routes and the roofs were down again - no more rain for the run home.

A big thank you to everyone who turned out for my first run in challenging weather conditions, and remember to pack an umbrella next time I'm leading the run.



MAZDA MARKS IT'S 100

Words • Peter Barnwell

Mazda Motor Corporation (which began as Toyo Cork Kogyo making cork, later moving into machine tools) celebrated the 100th anniversary of its founding on January 30, 2020.

Though here in Australia we have known the name "Mazda" for perhaps 60 years, the company made its first motor vehicle, a three wheel motorcycle utility sold through Mitsubishi dealers, back in 1931.

The company has come a long way since then and is seen as one of Japan's premium auto makers with a range of popular, strikingly styled models including our favourite MX-5.

Speaking at a recent centenary function in Japan,

Mazda President and CEO, Akira Marumoto said, "Mazda originated as a company producing cork and then took the path to manufacturing automobiles.

"Now, our cars have found friends with many customers from over 130 countries and regions. We would like to express our sincere appreciation to the customers, dealers, suppliers, business partners and the local community, who have supported us over the years through good and bad times, to whom we owe our 100 years of existence."

"As we look ahead to the next 100 years, we will continue to put people first and cherish our 'uniqueness of co-creating with others.'"



SPECIAL EDITIONS MARK MAZDA'S CENTENARY

Words • Peter Barnwell

Celebrating 100 years since its foundation, Mazda Corporation is about to introduce a 100th Anniversary Special Edition series of its major models including the MX-5.

The special edition models pay homage to Mazda's history drawing inspiration from the company's first passenger car, the R360 Coupe.

Designed to make car ownership desirable and accessible to all, the R360 Coupe pushed boundaries - even in the design-liberal 1960s.

Powered by a four-cylinder engine mated to an automatic transmission and a lightweight body,

R360 Coupe was easy to drive and handle while also boasting impressive reliability, a strength best demonstrated on a 1,500km Perth to Esperance and back endurance drive in 1961.

Unprecedented at the time, the R360 defined what would become Mazda's guiding principles; to challenge the norm and celebrate the joy of driving. Today, Mazda's goal remains unchanged and traces of the innovative thinking that characterised this early model abound today.

As a nod to the company's roots, the 100th Anniversary Special Edition series borrows the

100TH ANNIVERSARY

“As we strengthen co-creation and cooperation with all those connected with the company, we will continue to challenge ourselves to create unique products, technologies, and experiences that our customers love.”

Mazda was to have marked its centenary at the 2020 Geneva International Motor Show in March but that was cancelled due to COVID-19.

Unfortunately further plans for centenary anniversary themed exhibits and a Mazda Open Day 2020 - an open house event at Mazda's headquarters from May 22 through 24, 2020 seem unlikely at this stage.

A ceremony to commemorate the 100th anniversary

of its foundation took place on January 30th at an auditorium in the company's headquarters in Hiroshima.

There, company representatives expressed appreciation to all stakeholders who supported the company and reaffirmed resolution for the next one hundred years. Approximately 500 lucky people including executives, employees and representatives of workers' union and affiliated companies attended the ceremony.

Perhaps Mazda may be able to belatedly mark its centenary later this year.



distinctive burgundy and white of the high grade R360's two-tone design.

All special edition models are finished in Snowflake White Pearl Mica, with a rich burgundy interior. The same Burgundy leather introduced on Mazda3 adorns the seats, and the colour scheme is repeated on the floor mats and floor carpet.

Models are also distinguished by 100th Anniversary Special Edition badging, which combines the current Mazda brand mark with the round logo created when Toyo Kogyo was first formed. The logo features on the front fender, key fob, wheel caps, head rests and

floor mats.

Set to come to Australia later in 2020, Mazda's 100th Anniversary Special Editions will be available in limited numbers across the Mazda range.

Customers can register their interest to be the first to know more. Numbers, pricing and on sale dates will be release in due course.

100th Anniversary Special Edition models:

Mazda MX-5	Mazda2	Mazda3
Mazda6	Mazda CX-3	Mazda CX-30
Mazda CX-5	Mazda CX-8	Mazda CX-9

WINTON RACEWAY INTERSTATE CHALLENGE 2020 TRACK DAY ROUND 2

Words • Ian Combes

Saturday March 7, 2020



Following the less than wonderful 2018 Interstate Challenge at Winton which was run by another club, the NSW Club decided to organise and run the 2020 event. Running an event in another state is a challenge, but the effort was worth it.

After some furious promotion on both sides of the border, we ended up with 32 entrants from NSW and 31 from Victoria/Tasmania.

The weather for the event was great – sunny, but not too hot. Also, no rain, which was a relief after 2018.

For this event, we decided to stick to the long track to minimise disruption. With 4 run groups and minimise disruptions during the day, most entrants got 7 x 8 minute runs on the day.

Since this was the Victorian event, (even though the NSW Club ran the day), we were using the Victorian vehicle classes, which mean that most NSW cars ended up in modified or open.

The NSW and Victorian vehicle classes don't line up very well, so the matchups are getting more difficult every year.

Victoria won the Open and NAC Classes with a 1st (1 car each), SMOD Class with a 1st (1 car each), CDMOD and ABMOD

Classes with a 1st, 2nd and a 3rd (3 cars each).

NSW won the restricted Class with a 2nd and a 3rd (2 cars each) and the standard NB Class with a 1st.

The full results are on the webpage.

The Victorian/Tasmanian club was far too strong on the day winning with 990 points from NSW with 640 points.

The home track advantage was obvious too and our team suffered a number of niggling mechanical failures such as a failed clutch, possible gearbox failure and a harmonic balancer detachment.

In fairness, the Mexicans also copped a bit of mad luck on the mechanical side but watching them at Winton is quite a revelation as they know the track intimately and just how deep you can go under brakes and how soon you can get on the throttle – everywhere.

By contrast, many in the NSW contingent were still in the learning stage.

Next year may be a different story as it will be held in NSW, possibly on the (hopefully) extended 5.2 km Pheasant Wood full circuit, the second longest track in Australia to The Bend in SA. Bathurst is a closed street circuit.

BAY AID ESCAPADE

ILLAWARRA CHAPTER

Words • Tony Heathwood

Pics • Tony Heathwood • Brendan Barr

Saturday/Sunday February 22-23, 2020



On a bright warm Saturday morning 14 members (from Illawarra, RPM and Sydney in 7 vehicles) left from Haywards Bay heading south via Jamberoo, Kiama and Gerringong towards Milton.

First stop was morning tea at Annabel's Cafe, Milton where we were joined by Brendan and Anna and four members from the South Coast Chapter.

The women unanimously voted to do some shopping in Milton before heading to "The Bay". Shopping went well until Jenny Heathwood caused a small furore by misplacing her Mastercard. The onset of panic was overcome with the realisation that it had likely been left at home in her car (this proved to be the case upon return home).



Eight vehicles set off via a scenic tour of downtown Mollismook, followed by a beautiful but confronting drive south passing kilometre after kilometre of burnt out forest almost all the way from Nowra to "The Bay".

It was also inspiring at the same time with clear signs of the trees and undergrowth starting to re-grow.

Once in the Bay we were greeted by the wonderful folks at Zorbas Motel and the fabulous view that this venue provides. We separated for lunch and shopping and came back together at around 4 p.m. for the traditional drinks and nibbles on the back lawn of the motel overlooking the water.

Dinner and more drinks at the Bay Soldiers Club was enjoyed by all.

Sunday return trip contained only six vehicles with a short stop at Bewong for honey and coffee, through heavy traffic to Coolangatta Estate winery at Shoalhaven Heads for lunch where we were joined by nine more members.



Jeffrey presented Tony and Johnny Badger with their five year member badges. The winery treated us to a fantastic tasting of great Coolangatta wines before to lunch.

Lunch seemed to be enjoyed by all.



Tony and Jenny would like to thank all who attended the events of the weekend for making it such a success and injecting much needed funds into the South Coast communities.



THE GOLD STANDARD Mid Week Copeland Gold Mine Run

Sixteen members and their cars met at Thornton McDonalds for a scenic run through the back roads of the Lower Hunter Valley to the historic gold mine at Copeland.

Complying with Government regulations we all maintained our 1.5 metre distance and no physical hand shaking etc. With perfect weather and light traffic, we travelled through lush green farmland, a real contrast to the burnt landscape of our previous runs.

Arriving at historic Clarence Town one car suffered a flat tyre, so the remainder of the group continued onto Stroud for an extended morning tea while waiting for the tyre to be repaired.

Joined by the repaired car, we travelled through Gloucester and into the foot hills of the Barrington Ranges arriving at the Copeland Gold Mine ruins. A short bush walk provided an overview of the area which had been mined for gold from 1876 for about 60 years.

Leaving the mine site we travelled back to Gloucester for lunch at the Roundabout Inn Hotel where we were provided with a private room and chairs spaced at least 1.5 metres apart where we all enjoyed well-presented meals. After lunch we made our own way home completing the last Hunter Chapter activity for some time due to Corona Virus issues.

HUNTER CHAPTER

Words • Barry & Jenny Luttrell

Thursday March 19, 2020

Many thanks to all members who contributed to making the run a great day.



FOUR DAY BLAST TO E

Words • Steve Wakeling
Pics • Rod Nicholas • Anda Clayton

On a sunny Friday morning, February 14, at the respectable hour of 11.00am, seven MX-5s set off from Bungendore for a four-day run down to Bermagui and environs. I had nominated Bermagui as the destination in October, well before the bushfires so it was pleasing to be able to travel to a bushfire affected area and be part of the 'return of the tourists'.

We were in for a treat going down the Clyde Mountain as it had rained the day before creating numerous waterfalls.

We drove through kilometres of burnt-out forest so it was amazing to encounter waterfalls just a metre to our left.

We bypassed Batemans Bay and headed to Mogo for lunch where we met up with Brian and Anda from the South Coast club with two more MX-5s.

After a noisy lunch (compulsory with large numbers of MX-5 people) we proceeded to visit all the shops still functioning in Mogo. The eastern side of the town was still reasonably intact, so we did our bit to help with their recovery.

After lunch we headed south to Bermagui arriving about 4.00pm. Although there were large areas of burnt out forest along the way there had also been recent heavy rain, in some places flooding, so there were now large expanses of green fields. It was amazing country to drive through.

After booking in at the Bermagui Motel, we all headed off to check the place out. Bermagui still has one

trawler operating so it is possible to buy fresh fish at the trawler owner's fish and chip shop adjacent to the wharf. We headed to the pub (the only one in town).

Saturday morning saw us head down the back way to Tathra for morning tea at the wharf.

This is a great drive for MX-5s. Don't leave too early as the cow manure on the road will still be fresh (we were still too darn early).

We headed to Bega and then on to Central Tilba for lunch.

The drive from Tathra to Central Tilba is magnificent. Lots of fast sweeping curves and distant views of mountains.

Tilba Tilba and Central Tilba were not physically impacted by fire but were without power for days/weeks at a time. My trial run there on a previous Saturday saw the town without power and deserted. Even the pub was closed.

Luckily this time around the town was open for business so we spread out for a long lunch and shopping.

After lunch several of us departed together and we headed back to Bermagui via Wallaga Lake and



stopped at the Camel Rock Brewery to again participate in the 'return of the



BEAUTIFUL BERMAGUI

CANBERRA CHAPTER

Tuesday 14 - Friday 17 February, 2020

tourist'. Well worth a visit.

Dinner that evening was at the wharf upstairs at the Sundeck Restaurant overlooking Bermagui Harbour within walking distance from the motel. It was pretty darn good.

Sunday was morning tea at the Bermagui Mudworks, just out of town. This is not a place where you can get a mud bath and spa. A couple of potters do their thing there. Although they sell coffee and tea, it's best to let them know groups are coming and bring your own nibbles.



We had arranged something special for lunch. Mimosa Winery and Restaurant is in the middle of nowhere, on the back road from Bermagui to Tathra, about 20 minutes from Bermagui. One end of the restaurant is open to the views over the vineyards and to the mountains beyond. It made news a few years ago when a very large goanna entered the restaurant and was chased out by a young waitress. Lunch was long and excellent.

One the way back to Bermagui we stopped at 'Blue Pools' at the far eastern end of town. Worth a swim on a hot day. It looks like a large natural formation, but I'm told dynamite helped a bit

Dinner that evening was local pizza and really fresh fish and chips in the motel's covered BBQ area. Lots of laughs and a disorganized exit when the lights when out at 9:30pm.

Monday morning saw us depart and head back up the Clyde for lunch at Braidwood. We had planned to visit Cobargo

over the weekend but on our drive through on Saturday it was packed with people and cars.

Maybe another time.

We did a quick visit on Sunday arvo.

The town—apart from the pub—was quiet. The burnt out buildings and scarred hillsides cast a sad pall over the place, but the recent rains had painted the fields bright green with fresh grass, and there is an air of hopefulness around.

We had planned to go back home via the Brown Mountain and Cooma, but two very large boulders had blocked the mountain road. Although they had been removed (blown up) by Monday morning, the authorities had asked tourists to take another route, so we did.

Although many parts of the South Coast have been ravaged by bushfires it is still a beautiful place and well worth a visit, just watch out for bushfires, floods and huge boulders. We managed to miss them all and still had lots of laughs, a great drive and a magnificent time.



MX-5 CUP ROUND 1

Words • Ian Combes

Pics • Rob Wilko

Saturday February 1, 2020

Round 1

was held at Wakefield Park in challenging conditions on February 9. Originally, we had 17 entries but we lost 2 due to storm problems at home - this was the weekend of the big wet in Sydney.

Fifteen cars went out to set some slow qualifying times on a wet and slippery track with the rain still falling. Those drivers with wet weather tyres had a huge advantage.

Just to make things interesting, for race 1 the track was drying and

lap times were a few seconds off those expected on a fully dry track.

Another storm front was approaching but didn't reach Wakefield Park for race 1. The winners were those that switched to dry track tyres for the race. The storm did arrive for race 2, which was wet and did a lot to mix up the order. Race 3 was again (very) wet.

Fastest lap of the day for an MX-5 was in race 1 with Paul Nudd recording a 1:09.2868 followed by Curran Brennan with 1:09.4571 then Stuart McFadyen with 1:09.9616

Overall points winner on the day was Graham Withers with two wins and a second in class B.

Second was Peter MacDonald with a win and two second places in class B. Third was Stuart McFadyen with a win, a second and a third in the open class

Class results were:

Open: Stuart McFadyen, Paul Nudd, Curran Brennan, Steven Head, Ben Cathcart, Lou Iezzi, David Lawler.

Class A: Stewart Floresta, Stephen Brennan, Ian Combes, Ben Oldfield.

Class B: Graham Withers, Peter MacDonald, Jeff Parsons, Terry Johnson.



MX-5 CUP ROUND 2

Words • Ian Combes

Pics • Rob Wilko

Saturday March 14, 2020

Round 2

was held in very challenging conditions on March 14 at SMSP GP Circuit.

Rain plagued racing as it did in the first round of the series at Wakefield though some competitors reckon conditions at SMSP were worse.

Originally, there were 22 entries but one dropped out before racing started.

Due to wet, slippery conditions wheel changes were a constant chore and visibility was a real

concern, so it was a credit to the drivers participating that there were no incidents, even with some close racing.

Race 1 was 90 per cent dry and several drivers set PBs during the race.

Todd Herring put on a show for us carving through the field from the back to get to the front in two laps.

Race 2 was WET.

Those with wet tyres had a significant advantage in grip and those behind them had a significant disadvantage compounded with zero visibility through the wall of water thrown up by cars in front with full wets.

Race 3 also was WET with the same problem for those without wet tyres. Paul Nudd ran off on turn 1 last lap because he could

not see the edge of the track.

Overall it was a great day of racing despite the weather.

Class C was won by David Johnson with three wins, followed by Ian Combes, Kerry Smith, Rob Herrick, Peter MacDonald and Rob Withers.

Class B was won by Steven Head with two seconds and a win, followed by Mitchell Hall, Jason Russell and Craig Thornton.

Class A was won by Stuart McFadyen with three wins, followed by Ben Oldfield, Mathew Fraser and Paul Nudd.

The Open Class was won by Todd Herring with three wins, followed by Andy Harris, Verne Johnson, Tim Herring, Richard Herring, Ian Caldwell and Terry Johnson.

Overall winner on the day was Todd Herring with Stuart McFadyen second and David Johnson third.



Black Cat/ White Cat Run

ILLAWARRA CHAPTER

Words • Adele Weatherall • Pics • Bill Short

Thursday November 28, 2019

Waiting, waiting. Eighteen members met at Mt Keira Summit Park and watched the group from RPM enjoy their morning tea while the Illawarra group waited patiently for the kiosk to open. Waiting, waiting. For a member who shall not be named. After a phone call to said member we found out he had forgotten and was doing a job on the roof of his house. Not good enough BB.

Wes then gave us a bit of a history lesson about John Macarthur before 11 cars (including a Porsche, whose driver wore matching red shoes) snaked further up Mt Keira and out onto the Picton Road turning off at Wilton and going down through Douglas Park. We then crossed the causeway over the Nepean River and drove under the rocky overhang of the small gorge. To our right we marvelled at the gigantic stanchions of

the F5 Freeway Twin Bridges opened in 1980.

Further on to Menangle and past the ruin of the old Rotolactor. Those of us old enough will remember the exciting sight of cows going round and round in circles while being milked. The traffic lights, trucks and left hand turns kept us on our toes traversing Campbelltown where we only (temporarily) lost one car. They weren't 'lost' just followed directions and stopped along the way. Then across through Narellan towards Bringelly. Who cleans all those mansions? If Macarthur was alive today he would be leading the Housing Rebellion instead of the Rum Rebellion. Nancy Bird Walton would also have trouble finding her new Airport at Badgerys Creek.

Lena and Wes told us they picked the 'Black and White Cat' on the strength of a terrific

Devonshire Tea. We were not disappointed in the meals. The food was terrific. Some of the best and more innovative that we have had in a while. The cooks are two young women one of whom took over the Café 18 months ago. They use herbs, flowers and some vegetables from their garden and honey comes from the bee hives on site. Everything is cooked to order which leaves plenty of time to chat. We all said we would like to return to try the other choices on the menu.

Feeling happy after his fabulous breakfast, Tony sent Jenny across the road to buy herself a pair of lovely earrings from La Petite Maison.

So.... plenty to do and see on a run from Wollongong to Mulgoa. Another tick for the MX-5 Club. Thank you Hill's for your organisation.



Daylight Saving Feast 2020

ILLAWARRA CHAPTER

Words • Jeff Rowe • Pics • Jan Gibson
Saturday March 7, 2020

When we thought about a Daylight Saving run the first thing that came to our minds was 'Fish-n-Chips'. Then we thought let's be different and do something in Wollongong's northern suburbs.

Do you know how hard it is to get a fish and chip shop that is open after 4.00pm? in March? Well after some asking around and a few phone calls we decided on the Bulli Beach Café. Certainly not a fish and chip shop but the view of the beach is as good as you can get and it did come with glowing recommendations. This turned out to be our first good decision. A great venue, fabulous food, fish and chips if you want them, and very helpful staff. We will visit again and recommend to others.

Our second good decision was to start our run from the Mount Keira Lookout. Such a great view north and south to remind ourselves of how lucky we are to live where we do.

From there our group headed north along the Old Princes Highway. With the 'SatNav' keeping the driver under strict control we were on our way to Helensburgh and Stanwell Tops. Our group was joined by more members in Helensburgh for the run to Bulli.

The view south from Stanwell Tops is one of the most spectacular in the world.

From Stanwell Tops we turned south to travel down the hill and across an engineering marvel, 'The Sea Cliff Bridge'. Our route then was along the coast past some great beaches until we arrived at Bulli.

The third, and best, decision we made was to spend the afternoon/evening with a top group

of people who just want to enjoy life with members of this great car club we have the pleasure of belonging to. You are always assured of a good laugh and more to eat than you need and as much to drink as you should. The view of Bulli Beach was great, it was windy but not too cold and the lights from ships at anchor and Wollongong City in the distance looked peaceful. There were still a few people

out enjoying what was left of the sunshine from a nice day. We do enjoy Daylight Saving. With the shadows getting much longer we all said our good byes and closed another enjoyable Daylight Saving event until we hopefully do it again next year.



FAWLTY TOWERS REVISITED

ILLAWARRA CHAPTER

Words • Senia Gaunson • Pics • Senia Gaunson • Brendan Barr

Friday December 6, 2019

While it wasn't strictly an MX-5 Run, more of an MX-5 Illawarra outing, with many of our group

leaving their little cars in the garage to avoid the soot in the air, off we ventured to Centro

Wollongong to meet up with our MX-5 family and the Fawlty Towers group for dinner.

We started the evening with



cocktails and laughs, setting up the mood for a fun night of comedy.

Basil never disappoints, poor little Manuel was bashed, bullied and made to kill his hamster (rat), with lots of squeals in the audience when

he hid him and a rodent chase ensued.

Dinner was a bit of a hit and miss. Bread rolls flying around the room, we were depending on

Brendan's cricket skills to make sure we got one. Pumpkin soup was quite yummy (provided you didn't get the bowl with chef's false teeth in it), chicken a little raw in the middle and



dessert (not sure what it was) quite delicious.

Our honorary member, Jean had Happy Birthday sung to her by Sybil and when she was asked her age, she responded "50", to which Manuel interjected "you're lying, she told you to say that", all in fun.

Basil, Sybil and Manuel have been our family favourites for years, although we did miss Polly this time around, having enjoyed the show almost 10 years ago in the Blue Mountains, also with the MX-5 Club.

NEW MOTORSPORT TECHNICAL RULES

Words • Ian Combes

Pics • Rob Wilko

The 2020 motorsport technical rules are on the Club website!

They have been a long time coming, but the Motorsport technical rules for the 2020 competition year have now been published on the Club's web page under Club Track Days.

These rules have been very extensively discussed and debated within a technical working group convened for the purpose..

The rules came into effect on the 1st January.

The first year will probably be a learning exercise. The technical rules are pretty solid.

The benchmark times (which the new rules use) have also been carefully worked out, but many are theoretical, so it will take some time to get practical experience with some of these benchmarks.



The 2020 technical rules are defined here:

<http://nsw.mx5.com.au/motorsport/club-track-days/vehicle-classes-2020>

The regularity was the club's first competitive event at the newly revamped Pheasant Wood Circuit, and was a practice run for a planned 2020 club track day at the circuit.

After some considerable interest in a track day at Pheasant Wood, there was a disappointing turnout of 29 competitors on the day.

After a familiarisation session for those who wanted it, there were two 10 minute practice sessions for everyone, after which drivers needed to nominate a target time for the afternoon regularity sessions.

It was hoped to run five regularity sessions, but a sharp thunderstorm forced an early close to the event a bit after 3pm, with competitors completing 4 7-lap sessions.



PHEASANT WOOD REGULARITY

Sunday November 3, 2019

For most of the day, conditions were very good for motorsport. The level of grip on the circuit surprised many people. The day was completely incident free, with no-one even having a spin.

The winner on the day was Ralph Thompson, who took out a remarkable double, also settings the fastest lap – a sensational 58.6 second lap. President Keith Monaghan followed up his 2016 win with a second place in this event. Matthew Tarrant rounded out the top three.

The event was a great learning experience for 2020 track days but let's hope we have a few more competitors this year. Everyone there on November 3 thoroughly enjoyed themselves.



HI FIVES

Five Hills Run

CANBERRA CHAPTER

Words • Norm Barker • Pics • Rob Wilko

Sunday January 12, 2020

This was the first run for 2020, our annual Five Hills Run, on a very smoky but warm day. Not great conditions for the tops down but a very quiet day for a cruise around Canberra's Lake Burley Griffin, going up and down five of the hills.

There were 17 MX-5s lined up in front of the Russell offices. To help with the run this year we divided the group into two and ran one anticlockwise (led by Stephen Wakeling) and the other clockwise (led by Norm Barker).

This year's run tackled Mt Pleasant, Mt Ainslie, Black Mountain, Dairy Farmers Hill and Red Hill.

After a briefing, Stephen's group headed to the first hill, Mt Pleasant which is in the grounds of Duntroon/ADFA. The second group went to Red Hill and stopped for photos of the group.

Group 1 continued to Mt Ainslie, which involved a steep climb on a winding road. Another short stop but they couldn't see much due to the smoke. Group 2 went to Dairy Hill in the National Arboretum stopping briefly to take in the hazy view.

Group 1 then drove past the Australian War Memorial and down Anzac Parade. At the bottom of Anzac Parade, the group turned right and followed the lake along to Black Mountain. This is another steep and winding road but didn't stop, just circled the car park, and headed back down only to encounter Group 2 as they were going up.

The warm, smoky Sunday evening meant the roads were very quiet and everyone was able to keep together, which made a spectacular sight going around the lake.

At the bottom of Black Mountain Group 1 made its way west to the National Arboretum and up to the top of Dairy Farmers Hill. Group two headed around the Lake and along to Anzac Parade, up to the War Memorial and then to Mt Ainslie. The group stopped at the top for a photo or two, but the smoke was so thick we were not able to see anything.

Group 1 left the National Arboretum, followed the route us past the Canberra Zoo and across the top of Scrivener Dam, through Curtin and Deakin and up Red Hill. At the top the convoy formed up in the car park for some photos. Group 2 drove down from Mt Ainslie and through Duntroon and ADFA to Mt Pleasant but did not stop.

Both groups then descended on Lennox Gardens for a picnic. People spread out on the lawns and chatted. We were joined by a mob of kangaroos who thought the green grass was just great. Everyone had an enjoyable drive and time together over the picnic, getting to know some new members. And even with the smoke, it was a successful run

More of Rob's photos can be seen on our Chapter Facebook page.



FORSTER VIA BLACK HEAD RUN

MID NORTH COAST CHAPTER

Words • John Hansen

Tuesday February 11, 2020



It was a fine summer day for our midweek run to Black Head Beach for a morning tea picnic and then down to Forster for lunch. Our group met up at 'Olivers' at the Port Macquarie Service Centre a.k.a the 'donut'.

Eager participants were members, Peter (Heritage Burgundy NB), Cathy and Wayne (burgundy NB), Peter (black NB), Karla and Michael (blue NB), Judith and John (Galaxy Grey NC) and Allen (dazzling red ND).

Roofs were lowered and Peter led us down the Pacific Highway to the Forster turn off where we would meet up with our run leaders Susan and John in their green NB.

It was good to see green shoots emerging from blackened tree trunks and ironic to see fields that had been a sea of burnt brown now under water due to the recent torrential rain. Soon we were at the Rainbow Flat turn off onto the Lakes Way road and then to the turn off to Blackhead Road where Susan and John were waiting for us. Most of us hadn't driven that road before. The name Hallidays Point was familiar as it had been mentioned many times in bushfire reports.

Soon we were at Black Head Beach reserve which had a well-appointed amenities block and sheltered picnic tables for morning tea. Our club does

many things well and picnic meals is one of them. Soon the tables were covered with delectable foodstuffs which were devoured as Susan and John gave us a potted history of the area:

"Blackhead Beach is known for clear water and the headland is thought to hold treasure that the famous pirate Black Beard hid when he visited the area, but that is another story..."

The word 'treasure' really picks up the interest and soon Susan and John had us acting like fellow pirates and scouring the area for treasure trove.

A treasure box was found on a table, prised open and the treasure greedily shared. The contents of which will remain secret to avoid the risk of an ambush from rival car clubs.

Our pirate run leaders then took us up to the headland park with a magnificent view of the beaches to the north.

Susan and John were now in full tour guide mode and we followed them back along the road into Forster to have a look at the historic waterfront and ended up at John Wright Park where we could see the whole of the Forster Tuncurry Bridge. It was opened on the 18 of July 1959 ending 69 years of ferry service across the bay.

We crossed the bridge connecting the twin towns and turned left passing the main

beach, the Bullring outdoor ocean pool and eventually along Head Road to Bonnet Head lookout.

There were stunning views of the coastline and for those who were willing to "walk the plank" to the end of lookout for dizzying views to a dolphin nursery.

Photographers Wayne and Peter nonchalantly held cameras over the drop to take shots while others firmly held onto the handrails. Our pirate captains insisted that we walked a short way along a walking track before proceeding to the Bowling Club for lunch.

The day had become extremely hot and we found that it was relaxing to eat in air conditioned comfort. Good food and conversation, the hallmark of our club topped off a very enjoyable day.

Thanks go to our coordinators Allan and Peter for organising the run, Peter for being the first run leader and Susan and John for providing us with a very interesting run, treasure hunt, potted local history and site seeing guide tours of their local area.

Once again our club members were able to enjoy not only our cars but had the opportunity to see new places and explore the scenic local area. Thanks also to Wayne for photographing our antics.

“There was movement at the station for the word had passed around...” (Banjo Patterson)

JINDABYNE JOYRIDE

CANBERRA CHAPTER

Words • Rod Nicholas

Sunday November 17, 2019

Maybe it was the promise of great high-country roads. Maybe it was the lure of lunch at the Wildbrumby Distillery. Maybe it was the weather. Whatever it was, it certainly got a crowd of MX-5 enthusiasts excited.

As a novice run leader, I thought turning up early for the pre-run briefing would be sensible, but as I pulled into the carpark (five minutes early) I could see there were a dozen people waiting already.

By the time I started the briefing I had 31 eager faces staring at me, waiting for the starter's orders, and 18 cars ready to roar into life.

The run to Cooma from Hume was uneventful (with hardly a patrol car in sight), and I was more than surprised to find the convoy very much intact as we rolled to our first stop at the Snowy Hydro Discovery Centre.

We flooded in, dispensing orders for coffee, tea and cakes, and settled down to a good chat as we waited our turn to view a presentation in their new 'Immersion Theatre'. It was worth the wait.

Our introduction to the Snowy Hydro Scheme wet the whistle for further research on this immense project and demonstrated the ingenuity and strength of character of the many people involved.

And I must add, the folks at the Discovery Centre are great - very accommodating and wonderful to 'do business' with.

Onwards, then, to Jindabyne and the Wildbrumby Distillery. Kosciuszko Road is a beautiful piece of rural highway that winds gently through open country to join the Alpine Way up into snow country.

Wildbrumby is set in beautifully maintained grounds, and although it was doing good weekend trade, they had enough room for our noisy mob.

According to the Wildbrumby story, it was skiing and schnapps that brought Wildbrumby founder, Brad Spalding and his wife Monika to the region.

Inspired by Monika's grandfather, Stephen Hagleitner, Brad had a dream to one day introduce authentic schnapps to Australia's Snowy region. And a good dream it was too.

Using a still imported from Germany, they have been making award-winning schnapps, gins and vodkas since 2005.

There were no complaints about the hospitality, food, coffee or refreshments offered here, and judging by the number of carry bags being discretely placed in the boots of the cars, there were no complaints about the schnapps either. If you haven't visited Wildbrumby, it is well worth the drive.

It was a short trip back into Jindabyne to meet up with the Snowy River Way and a short but enthusiastic run into Dalgety, once a short-priced favourite for the location of our nation's

capital, and now a quiet rural town lazing along the Snowy River.

Our group started to go their own way here; a few strolled along the quiet riverbank, others were keen to get to the Christmas Barn in Bredbo before it closed, and others decided to just head for home.

I hope that whichever way they went they enjoyed the drive. I know the smallish group I led to Cooma via the Maffra Road relished the empty road as it gently curled back and forth along the ridgeline, the sweeping turns, the long views, and—most of all—the feel of the wind as we zoom zoomed, topless, through the countryside.

Reaching the outskirts of Cooma, we took the shortcut through Polo Flat, turned onto the Monaro Highway and headed back to Canberra.

The Christmas Barn mob were still at it as we cruised through Bredbo (implausibly, they told me later they spent 'almost nothing' there, although how they defined 'almost nothing' is anybody's guess).

We clocked up a touch short of 400 km from our Hume start point and back on a lovely late spring day.

Thank you to everyone who came along for the run. I had a hoot being out in front with such a well-behaved mob.

HISTORIC AVIATION MUSEUM

CANBERRA CHAPTER

Words • Jennifer Keenahan

Pics • Phil Belcher

Sunday March 22, 2020



Our MX-5 Club run for this week started at the HARS Museum in Albion Park south of Wollongong. The members who supported the event were not deterred by COVID-19 but we all followed the recommended guidelines and maintained social distancing. We were fortunate that Phil had a personal connection at HARS and we were given permission to park our MX-5 cars in a row under the wingspan of the

Qantas 747. This was a fabulous photo opportunity for all. We enjoyed morning tea in the café after which we split into two groups for our allocated tour. Pete, a retired pilot, was one of the guides and he certainly made the tour interesting with his wealth of information and knowledge. At about 1 p.m. we headed off for the run to Killalea National Park. We were so fortunate to have such perfect

weather, brilliant sunshine, and blue skies enabled us to thoroughly enjoy the lovely views this park has to offer. We sat in a circle under the shade of a tree where we enjoyed a picnic lunch and exchanged our supermarket and toilet roll stories. After a good laugh about these difficult times we knocked elbows and headed off home.



NSW SUPER

Round 4

SMSP Amaroo (South) Circuit
 Words • Joe Kovacic
 Pics • Rob Wilko
 Saturday August 10, 2019



Hosted by NSW Road Racing Club on a beautiful but windy winter's day. We usually see a whole group of MX5s on the starting grid which did not occur this time. A full field of 88 cars contested in six run groups over six, timed seven minute sessions giving plenty of track time. Run Group 6 was dedicated to Women in Motorsport with 15 competitors. After lunch run Group 1 only had one car on the grid. Group 1 cars cannot be combined with any other groups so Luke Kovacic had the whole track and session to himself and managed to set a short lived

class record for Class 6B in a blistering time of 61.13 secs. We had the pleasure to see an ex-F3 car, a Dallara, competing in Group 1. The Dallara has a nineties F1 Judd 3.9L V8 engine producing 650hp and a weight of 450kgs. The Dallara driver, Dean Tighe, managed to set an impressive all time track record time of 52.13 secs. Thanks to all seven MX5 Club drivers who represented our club gallantly against a barrage of ARDC drivers. Congratulations to Luke Kovacic on having the fastest MX5 on the day and to Jamie Martin on his win in Class 2A.

Our seven driver's results are as follows

Jamie Martin	1st Place	Class 2A	1.07.00
Malcolm Steel	2nd Place	Class 2B	1.04.52
Ken Hardy	4th Place	Class 2B	1.06.65
Mark Kavanagh	5th Place	Class 2B	1.06.99
Luke Kovacic	2nd Place	Class 6B	1.01.13
Ralph Thompson	3rd Place	Class 6B	1.02.81
Russ Maxwell	4th Place	Class 6B	1.03.40



Round 5

Wakefield Park
 Words • Joe Kovacic
 Pics • Rob Wilko
 Sunday September 22, 2019

Pics CT140, CT141, CT142, CT143, CT145, CT146
 It was a fresh and cool start to Round 2 hosted by MX5 Car Club of NSW at Wakefield Park. As the day warmed up, some hot times and lap records were set by some of the drivers. Some competitors managed to get six runs if they wanted them due to the efficient running of

Our ten driver's results are as follows

Keith Monaghan	1st Place
Jamie Martin	1st Place
Andrew Digney	2nd Place
Ken Hardy	2nd Place
Jamie Collins	3rd Place
Marty Voormeulen	3rd Place
Luke Kovacic	1st Place
Russ Maxwell	3rd Place
Ed Cory	4th Place
Jason Russell	3rd Place



ERSPRINTS



the dummy grid. We had our largest field of the year with 17 MX5s on the starting grid. Thanks to all 10 registered MX5 Club drivers who represented the club brilliantly against a barrage of ARDC drivers. Luke Kovacic clocked the fastest MX5 time on the day. Keith Monahan, Jamie Martin and Luke Kovacic all chalked up 1st Places in their classes.

Round 6

SMSM Gardner (GP) Circuit
 Words • Joe Kovacic
 Pics • Rob Wilko
 Sunday October 20, 2019



The final Round 6 of the 2019 NSW Supersprint Championship was hosted by the ARDC Club at Sydney Motorsport Park Gardner GP Circuit on Sunday October 20, 2019.

A sunny and warm spring day greeted all 85 competitors of which only five drivers

represented the MX5 Club of NSW. This is our lowest ever number of competitors for a NSW CAMS Supersprint round. Thanks to our five drivers who competed against a horde of ARDC Club drivers.

Our five driver's results are as follows

Luke Kovacic	1st Place	Class 6B	1.44.61
Ralph Thompson	2nd Place	Class 6B	1.48.27
Ken Hardy	3rd Place	Class 2B	1.57.26
Marty Voormeulen	4th Place	Class 5C	1.53.64
Ian Combes	5th Place	Class 5C	1.55.62

Class 1B	1.13.02
Class 2A	1.13.85
Class 2A	1.16.25
Class 2B	1.13.02
Class 2C	1.14.76
Class 5C	1.10.81
Class 6B	1.05.94
Class 6B	1.08.84
Class 6B	1.13.06
Class 6C	1.08.68



KANGAROO VALLEY RUN

ILLAWARRA CHAPTER

Words • Senia Gauson • Pics • Keith Monaghan

Saturday February 1, 2020

Bryan Shedden's twilight drive and dinner at Kangaroo Valley Friendly Inn, planned for January 4, was postponed due to fires, so 16 cars headed off in 38 degree temperatures from Haywards Bay on Saturday afternoon, roofs up, air-con on, along some beautiful country roads and the favoured Macquarie Pass (which some of us navigators are known to cringe through, while the drivers put their foot down with glee and madness in their eyes). We came out of it so fast, trying to catch up to the lead group, that we over-shot the turn on Tourist

Drive and maintaining our "Navigationally challenged tag", ended up dropping from car 8 to car 16 after a quick U turn.

Fortunately no one followed us. We were all keen to call into Fran Pritchard's place and check out her labyrinth, however, a bit of a navigation issue (not us this time) resulted in a trip directly to Kangaroo Valley and a cold ale, but hopefully we'll catch up with Fran another time.

Kangaroo Valley greeted us with 43 degree heat, even the toilet seats were hot. The air-conditioning in the pub was on but struggling, so a few

cold brews (some even non-alcoholic) were most appreciated.

Food was good, company and banter was fun, so none of us really minded the heat too much. Congratulations to Bob Downing, who was presented with the Runner Up New Member of the Year 2019 award by Keith Monaghan.

Well done Bob.

It appears we are set to remember every January/February run to Kangaroo Valley with extreme temperatures, last year torrential storm, this year 43 degrees, as Bryan said, "crikey it was hot".



MOGO MUNCHIES

SOUTH COAST CHAPTER

Words • Brian Clayton

Pics • Anda Clayton

Friday February 14, 2020

Valentine's Day dawned sunny. We were joined at Heritage Bakery by Anne, Graeme, Geoff and Rose.

Four of us had time for coffee and then the six of us set off in convoy to Mogo. We had a pleasant and uneventful drive to Mogo, however, the evidence of the terrible bush fires was all around us as we drove along the highway.

It was heartening to see the first signs of regrowth and the

recent rain had turned the paddocks from black to green. Unfortunately, the many houses and buildings which have been destroyed will take a little more than rain to restore.

We arrived in Mogo and parked our cars, just minutes after the Canberra crew. There was a period of introductions and catch up with a few old friends.

Then it was time to address the menu and sit for lunch. Hearty meals were soon arriving and

we all enjoyed a nice lunch and some pleasant chit chat.

Then it was time for some retail therapy, efforts being made to boost the local economy after the impact of the fires on their normal holiday tourist trade. Some made bigger contributions than others.

When it was time to leave four of the South Coast chapter made their way back home while Anda and I joined Canberra for their Bermagui weekend.

RPM Does Kelso

RPM CHAPTER

Words and Pics • John and Sharon Cassidy

Thursday June 2, 2019

A patchy grey sky greeted us as the garage door opened at 8 am on a rather cool Sunday morning as we were Kelso bound, via the first meeting spot at Glenbrook with our run leaders.

A throaty roar passed us en-route. As we neared the foot of the mountains, it was the unmistakable "Devil's car" of Jason and Amanda, waving as they left us in their dust.

Smiling faces were waiting as we slid into the slip road and parked along the waiting 6 cars at the Glenbrook Information centre car park.

Hot soup would have been a perfect accompaniment as we waited for the departure time while being entertained by Graham's gregarious stories; alas we only had Graham's stories to warm us.

The clock ticked over to 09:30 and Graham and Gillian led us

away, only to be stopped at 09:31 by Senior Constable Kendall and the rest of the Blue Mountains Boys in Blue, as they conducted a booze bus operation. One by one we filed through the breath analysis test with the thumbs up. Senior Constable Kendall was very accommodating and even posed for pics.

With no arrests issued, we continued through the mountains.

At Medlow Bath we gave a cheery wave and toot or two to one of our sponsors (Blue Mountains Mazda) and then on to the winding tarmac of Victoria's Pass, a little later, our first stop was the delightful hamlet of Little Hartley, meeting with more RPMers.

We took the opportunity for a stretch of the legs, good coffee



and a quick glance around town before heading off in a convoy that had increased from seven to twelve.

Our entourage was complete when we were joined by Steve and Kathy Jordan and co who organised the event at the very popular Kelso Pub.

The food was hearty and varied, the company was wonderful, and the drive was terrific. A heartfelt thank you to Graham and Gillian, as well as Steve and Kathy.

NSW SUPERSPRINTS

2019 SEASON CLASS RESULTS

Class 1B	Keith Monaghan	1st Place	25 points		
Class 2A	Jamie Martin	1st Place	125 points	Andrew Digney	2nd Place 22 points
Class 2B	Ken Hardy	2nd Place	102 points	Malcolm Steel	5th Place 69 points
Class 2B	Mark Kavanagh	6th Place	34 points		
Class 2C	Jamie Collins	9th Place	20 points		
Class 5C	Marty Voormeulen	2nd Place	85 points	Mike Kelsey	6th Place 20 points
Class 5C	Ian Combes	8th Place	16 points		
Class 6A	Greg Bunn	5th Place	20 points		
Class 6B	Luke Kovacic	2nd Place	116 points	Ralph Thompson	3rd Place 96 points
Class 6B	Russ Maxwell	4th Place	84 points	Dave Alland	6th Place 36 points
Class 6B	Ed Cory	9th Place	18 points		
Class 6C	Jason Russell	4th Place	64 points		

SLIQ RUN UP THE PUTTY ROAD

BREAKFAST CHAPTER

Words and Pics • John and Sharon Cassidy

Sunday January 19, 2020

Sunday January 19 saw a hardy group of Breakfast Clubbers take on the Putty Rd in some welcome January rain. Typically the bane of a roadster enthusiast's existence, the precipitation was happy relief from the oppressive heat of January and the constant fire threat around Sydney and NSW. Indeed, all participants in the run were able to witness firsthand the devastation these fires have wreaked on communities along the Putty and into the Hunter. Drivers saw plenty of scorched flora and melted road signs and barriers. The evidence of the sheer ferocity of the fires was obvious to all and made for a solemn journey through certain sections.

While fire may have decimated the natural environment here, it seems to have left the road surface relatively unscathed apart from a short section through the canyon that was restricted to 60km/h due to some risk of rock fall

The rest of this great road was open for business as usual. And business as usual is exactly what the BreakFast Club did, taking great delight in the deserted road and the variety of corners. Some caution was required due to the slippery conditions, however this only added to the mystique and adventure the Putty road supplies time after time.



Oscars was the breakfast venue of choice upon arrival at the Hunter Valley Gardens. Although it's been some time since the BreakFast Club has visited Oscars, it's easy to remember why this has been a firm favourite.

The staff here is warm and love nothing more than to connect with their guests on a personal level.

The breakfast fare is spot on here too, with a good variety of dishes to suit all tastes. After some hearty conversation (a BreakFast Club staple) some of the crew headed back to Sydney the scenic way – via Wisemans and the riverside hamlets of Spencer and Mangrove.

This is yet another part of NSW that has been touched by the bushfire crisis, with the scorched leaves providing a great contrast to the gently rippling water's edge.

Finally, a big shout out to some special participants who joined

us on the run. Gerardo and Maria's company is always cherished at BreakFast Club runs with Gerardo's superb driver craft a welcome sight to behold from fore or aft. Artur came along during his Sydney holiday which was a big effort considering he's living in Hobart these days. Brett came along as a guest and had such a good time he's promised to join up and join us again. Lastly, it was great to have Ted and Tyler along in their red "works" NA. Ted tells us a lot of work has gone into it and it's a work in progress, we look forward to following the developments. Tyler did a sterling job of leading the group into the Hunter Valley amidst some tricky conditions with excessive sun glare and an unseasonal plethora of roadkill providing some challenge at times.

Great drive Tyler!

MOTORKHANA

Motorkhana is the ideal introduction to motorsport as it is conducted at low speed (1st gear), with no requirement for helmets, and with lots of help and support.

The Mazda MX-5 Club of NSW arranges motorkhanas at Sydney Motorsport Park skidpan. Our motorkhana days are designed to cater for drivers who are inexperienced in car control and

to provide them with a fun set of motorkhana style challenges to test and develop their skills, as well as offering some tricky bits for more experienced drivers. We accept entries from drivers as young as 12 years under parental supervision - these events are a great option for kids learning to drive.

The Sydney Motorsport Park skidpan is a large flat concrete area

which provides plenty of space for any mistakes, and the surface is watered throughout the day to ensure a low grip surface and so minimise wear and tear on cars and tyres.

A number of experienced club members are on hand to provide one-on-one support to the participants.

Motorkhana Point Score 2019

OPEN	COMPETITOR	ROUND 1	ROUND 2	ROUND 3	TOTAL
		10/3/2019	14/7/2019	23/11/2019	
1	John Karayannis	7	10	15	32
2	James Russell-Cook	15	15	-	30
3	Gus Elias	10	7	10	27
4	Graham Fletcher	39	4	-	7
5	Michael Phan	3	4	-	7
6	Paul Fraser	5	-	-	5
7	Kenneth Frost	2	3	-	5
8	Mark Kavanagh	-	5	-	5
9	Jason Atkins	-	-	5	5
10	Jason Harvey	4	-	-	4
11	Bryan Shedden	-	-	4	4
12	John Dohnt	-	-	3	3
13	Craig Bishop	-	2	-	2
14	Benjamin Funayama	-	-	2	2
15	Simon Stewart	1	-	-	1
16	Glenn Thomas	-	1	-	1
17	Sean Byers	-	-	1	1
LADIES	COMPETITOR	ROUND 1	ROUND 2	ROUND 3	TOTAL
		10/3/2019	14/7/2019	23/11/2019	
1	Francesca Meliton	7	10	15	32
2	Kareene Kavanagh	15	15	-	30
3	Lindsay Green	10	-	-	10
4	Yuki Chau Kam Yu	10	-	-	10
5	Karina Parris-Stephens	-	7	-	7
6	Terri-Lee Ferreira	-	-	7	7
7	Rochelle Prattley	5	-	-	5
8	Keiran Taylor	-	5	-	5
JUNIOR	COMPETITOR	ROUND 1	ROUND 2	ROUND 3	TOTAL
1	Alex Shedden	15	15	15	45
2	Logan Tomczynski	-	10	-	10



TIE ME KANGAROO DOWN SPORT

SOUTH COAST CHAPTER

Words • Brian Clayton • Pics • Anda Clayton

Sunday January 26, 2020

Australia Day dawned fine and warm but with the threat of bad weather in the afternoon. This caused a couple of chapter members to withdraw from the run.

Nonetheless we set off from Milton bright and early planning to arrive at the dam at the appointed hour.

We had planned to meet Mark Mansell at the Log Cabin along the way. Together we drove off through Nowra, Berry, Kiama all the while watching our speed on a double demerits weekend. Surprisingly we were among the first to arrive and set up our provisions in the shade of the shed. Soon enough larger convoys started to arrive and greetings exchanged with old friends.

Then it was time to put the snags on the BBQ and settle down for some lunch. Just as some of us were thinking an afternoon nap was in

order, someone else found a couple of sets of thongs (flip flops to the uninitiated).

These were considered an ideal piece of equipment for a sporting contest and before long some people were hurling them out of sight while others were simply providing amusement to the crowd.

As interest waned in the thong throwing Phil Belcher placed his lovely NA in the middle of the car park exhibiting a boot full of goodies.

Challenges were issued to unload that lot from Phil's boot into your own boot. Only one person attempted the challenge and was successful, before the threatened thunder storm arrived. This brought a hasty retreat.

Thank you, Jeff and Pam and the Illawarra chapter, for organising a great day out, and Phil Belcher for the boot stuffing competition.



South Coast Run to Australia Day



TEA GARDENS RUN VIA MYALL SHORES

MID NORTH COAST CHAPTER

Words • John Hansen

Tuesday November 5, 2019

Tuesday 5 November found a group of three intrepid MX-5 cars with their owners assemble outside 'Olivers' at the Port Macquarie Service Centre under a very inauspicious rain flecked sky for the Mid-Week Run. Greg Cox was run leader in his grey GT RF Limited Edition MX-5. Also on board was coordinator Allen in his gleaming red ND and Judith and John in their grey MX-5 NC. The flecks of rain developed into light drizzle accompanied by a fairly stiff wind.

Little did we know that this was going to be last of the rain that we would see for some time.

Our small convoy set off down the well-worn track to the 'Flow Bar' at Old Bar for morning tea and a regroup to consider our options for the rest of the day.

Due to the weather it was tops up all the way to Old Bar.

The food at the Flow Bar lived up to our expectations and those of us who are searching for the perfect egg and bacon roll still kept the Flow Bar's version in the top five.

We had hoped to meet up with other members however the worsening weather conditions kept them away. Due to the deteriorating weather conditions we decided to proceed straight down the highway to Bulahdelah instead of detouring along the old Pacific Highway.

Travelling down the highway we had no idea that some of the places we passed through such as Rainbow Flat and Possum Bush and Nabiac would become almost household names in the coming weeks as bushfires swept through the surrounding areas.

In fact the town of Old Bar itself would become isolated due to the subsequent fires.

At Bulahdelah the wind picked up and became rather fierce and after meeting Jane we travelled down to Tea Gardens and then the Myall Lakes where we intended to drive up to the Bombah Point car ferry, then back to Tea Gardens for lunch at "Mumms On The Myall" restaurant.

However by the time we arrived at Tea Gardens the weather became more miserable. After a hurried conference we decided that in the circumstances we should abandon the rest of the run and head straight to the restaurant.

Initially the restaurant had indicated that it had very heavy bookings as the Tuesday was also Melbourne Cup Day. However many people had decided not to brave the weather and the venue wasn't full and we were able to secure almost a private table.

After a convivial lunch where we solved most of the world's problems

and discussed MX-5 cars, of course, we said our goodbyes and departed for home. I thought that if I had put a sail up, the wind would have scooted us along as it buffeted us, this was just on the way to the car park.

Thanks to run leader Greg and our club coordinators Allen and Peter for organizing the run and all who took part. It just shows that MX-5 members can still have an enjoyable time even if the weather doesn't cooperate.

In hindsight, it was a sobering thought that within a few weeks, the scenery that we had driven through would become blackened and charred, communities become isolated, houses destroyed, lives lost, animals killed, various club members would be involved in fighting bush fires with their local brigades and all of them would be hoping for rain.



getting the most

Words and pics • Andrew Digney

So you've got an MX-5 and want to try some motorsport. Your budget isn't as boundless as your enthusiasm, so where do you start?

Most would prefer to keep spending to a minimum and for your first driver training or track day that's the way it should be.

However, if motorsport does become a habit, a little expenditure is likely to be required.

For starters, we'll assume you have a reliable car. If that's a yes you need to sort out turning and stopping and if the budget allows, improved handling.

Tyres and brakes are the easiest two changes that can enhance your car's performance on the track.

For our club, larger groups of cars currently belong in the Stock and Clubman classes and that is where the focus of this story will be.

TYRES

The tyres fitted to the MX-5 from the factory offer decent wet and dry grip and are predictable but are not going to help you produce the best possible dry lap times.

That's where 200 tread wear tyres will help improve those lap times.

Tread wear is a manufacturer rating applied to the rubber of a tyre, the lower the number,

the softer the rubber and the better the dry grip.

Race tyres (R-Specs) are below 200 tread wear and 200 tread wear is considered the lowest number for a best dry grip road tyre with acceptable wet grip.

Generally, the higher the



number, the longer a tyre will last. As the tread wear number decreases, so does the amount of tread and subsequently the wet grip of the tyre.

You want good lap times but don't want to spend an arm and a leg doing it.

There are many good tyres such as the Bridgestone RE71R, Federal 595 RSRR, Yokohama AD08R etc to choose from.

The current bang for buck tyre (in limited sizes) is the Hankook RS4, it is producing record lap times in some of the lower Club classes/categories and at a price cheaper than many of its competitors.

Usual pricing is around

\$110ea for 195/50R15 and \$150ea for 215/45R17 fitted and balanced.

If you do regularly compete in track events, my personal experience has shown that most 200 tread wear tyres will generally heat cycle out (the rubber becomes hard and the tyre suddenly and noticeably loses dry track grip) before you reach the tread wear indicators and that's even with reasonable road kilometres in between events.

TYRE PRESSURE

As important as tyres are, so is tyre pressure.

Without getting into tyre temperatures which can also be a factor of alignment settings and probably more relevant to cars with modified suspension, experience has shown that usually a hot tyre pressure of 3 to 5 PSI higher than the factory recommended pressures will meet most people's requirements for better lap times.

BRAKES

For standard or lightly modified cars, all models of the MX-5 have acceptable brakes. However, to get the best possible braking out of your factory brakes, try using higher friction brake pads, in other words track pads or race pads.

All MX-5 models use around 66 per cent front brake for

from your MX-5

stopping, so the front brakes are twice as important as the rear brakes and generally just upgrading your front pads will give a dramatic improvement without spending too much money.

Hawk HP+ or Blue pads (mx5mania.com.au) or Carbotech R10 or R12 pads (carbotech.com.au) appear popular but there are many other brands available.

Allow \$150 to \$350 for front pads.

One disadvantage is that the higher the friction, the more low speed brake squeal you will get.

I will gladly accept brake squeal for improved brake performance any day of the week.

A decent brake fluid helps with the higher brake temperatures and reduces the chances of brake fade.

Replacing your fluid with a High Temperature DOT 4.1 Brake Fluid is the best insurance against brake fade.

For the DIY types allow for 2 bottles at around \$50-60 (Penrite Racing 600) for a full fluid flush and brake bleeding.

ALIGNMENT

The MX-5 comes with double wishbone suspension all round (NA, NB) or double wishbone front and multi-link rear suspension (NC, ND).

These suspension set-ups allow for fully adjustable suspension settings including toe, castor and camber.

As the models have progressed,

castor settings have changed across different models but camber and toe requirements are very similar across the whole range.

The factory alignment is sometimes not great and for best track times even an alignment to a stock car can make a difference.

As a rule, toe in will help a car hold a straight line (great for the road) but zero toe or toe out will improve a cars ability to change direction (great for the track).

Camber is again dependent on use but even on a stock car regularly used on a track will benefit from maximum available negative camber (particularly on the front wheels) to help get the best tyre contact patch for cornering grip.

Even with modern manufacturing processes, there are noticeable discrepancies between individual cars off the same production line, so a professional alignment can make a significant difference.

Differences from -0.5 up to -1.8 of maximum available front camber on the same model MX5 are proof of the variability of production line tolerances.

Allow around \$100-150 for a decent alignment.

SUSPENSION

There are a myriad of available components and a myriad of opinions on what are the best modifications.

See comparative photos of two NDs on the same hill climb corner with the only difference



being 15% stiffer springs.

Overall vehicle usage and your personal budget has a lot to do with individual set-ups.

However, what is generally accepted is that a set of coilovers is the quickest and easiest best single handling modification for a Clubman Class car.

Anything from BC, Yellowspeed and MCA Coilovers (reputable brands, \$1300 to \$3000) all the way to Who's your Daddy custom set-ups gives you the flexibility to adjust ride heights and subsequently camber settings, rebound and even damping rates (in more expensive coilovers) plus the ability to corner weight your car for best possible handling.

In summary, besides driver training (that's what our club motorsport events are for) tyres, front brake pads and an alignment are the quickest way of improving your stock vehicle.

When progressing to Clubman Class and beyond, suspension improvements should be your next consideration.

HUNTER'S MOUNTAINS TO COAST WEEKEND

HUNTER CHAPTER

Words • John Purcell • Pics • From Members

Saturday/Sunday October 26/27, 2019

"The best laid plans of mice and men often go awry," (Robbie Burns - 1785).

If nothing else, MX5 club run leaders - and those being led - need to be adaptable. This certainly became true on our Mountains to Coast weekend. Saturday was a great day for top-down touring, if just a little bit warm. Eleven cars left McDonald's Raymond Terrace for the run via Dungog and Stroud Hill Road then on to Gloucester for the morning tea stop.

Topping up our fuel it was back on the road and travelling along Thunderbolt's Way to Walcha. Along with the great scenery, the wind had started to blow and large dust willy-willys on the dry paddocks kept pace with our cars from time to time.

Lunch was enjoyed at the Royal Café Walcha. Pre-ordered from Gloucester it was fresh, ready and waiting when we arrived. Checking the Fire apps on our phones we noted a fire near the Oxley highway (which was the route to our final stop at Port Macquarie) but indications showed that it was under control and our route was open.

Recharged after lunch we settled in for a great run on the twisty sections of the Oxley Hwy towards Wauchope - and this is where our plans came to a halt. Stopping at Gingers Creek Roadhouse we were greeted by the news that the highway had just been closed due to the fire and could remain closed for anything between 1 - 4 hours. Ice creams in hand everyone participated in a discussion

around the big tree stump to decide on waiting, or returning to Gloucester and heading to Port Macquarie via the Pacific Highway - a trip of around 4.5 hours. We wisely chose the latter and retraced our run, arriving at our motel at 8:00pm, tired but in good spirits.

Needless to say, no-one complained about not sleeping after the previous 12-hour day. The new morning saw us at the Rivermark Café where we enjoyed a wonderful breakfast while overlooking the Hastings River. Three MX5s and a motor bike joined us from Mid North Coast Chapter, and led us on a partly impromptu tour of the area.

This was due to the fact that their organiser for the day was out fighting the nearby bush fires. Impromptu or not it was a great morning with a run down to the North Brother Lookout which has spectacular views over Laurieton and North Haven and out to sea. Then it was back up to the Oxley Highway taking Comboyne Road (and yes they had a 'road closed' sign at this end) to Comboyne for a brief stop before returning to Byabarra Café for lunch.

Refreshed and sated from our scrumptious lunch we returned to our MX-5s and headed home via the Pacific Highway checking out several new fires now burning along the coast.

Many thanks to Barry and Jenny for organising the run and special thanks to Allen and the crew from Mid North Coast for providing us with a wonderful day.

We look forward to returning their hospitality in the near future.



TAKE ME TO MIATALAND

Words • Peter Barnwell

“MX-5 `Heaven”
In Italian Province
And You Can Drive Them



Italy's amazing to visit at any time but there's a special appeal for MX-5 owners at a place in Umbria (near Tuscany) called Miataland.

At an 18th century stone farmhouse/resort near the hilltop town of Todi, owner Andrea Mancini has a collection of 40 plus MX-5s across all models in right and left hook. As his guest, you can choose any of them to take for a drive including day long explorations of the entire region.

It sounds unreal.

Mancini's cars are from the US, Japan and Europe in varied specification. All are maintained in top order. Mancini has more than passion for the MX-5.

It was love at first sight in 1990 that's developed into an obsession.

"I saw it (on the January 1990 issue of "Auto") in a pre-test together with the Lotus Elan."

"And saw it 'live' at the Rome Fair again in 1990."

"It was a passion at the time I couldn't turn into possession

since I was still going to university but the desire to have it and drive it didn't pass me by." "After a long wait until 1998, I took delivery of my first MX-5... a used NA black with beige top, a 1.6L, 90HP model imported from Germany."

After getting behind the wheel he said, "It was special for me, because it was my first top down driving experience and the confirmation of all the positive feelings I had initially had." Mancini said the MX-5 is a special car because it gives you driving sensations that few other



cars (regardless of price) can give you. "It's a light car, and even with not a lot of power, it gives you a great taste of sporty driving."

He spends a lot of time finding the right cars then picking them

up preferring Japanese models because most of the best limited editions were made for the domestic market there.

He ships them to the UK from Japan then drives them home to Italy after attending business meetings.

Every trip is full of emotion he says.

Mancini says he doesn't have a favourite because each one is "unique."

"Every now and then it's nice to take the time to rediscover them, to review the always different solutions of personalization, the colour combinations, the stereo systems and some refinements such as wooden steering wheels (Nardi) or alloy wheels (often BBS). Each of them is unique." Mancini says Miataland evolved over time because the collection became bigger and bigger, and it simply didn't fit in the garage and the garden anymore.

"It needed a new 'house', a suitable place, with plenty of space. Then there was the idea of somehow bringing the collection to life. After all, the cars would have liked to be driven more than just sitting in a garage gathering dust."

Miataland has six themed rooms, each characterized by a colour matched to that of one of the limited series.

Sounds pretty good to me.....



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