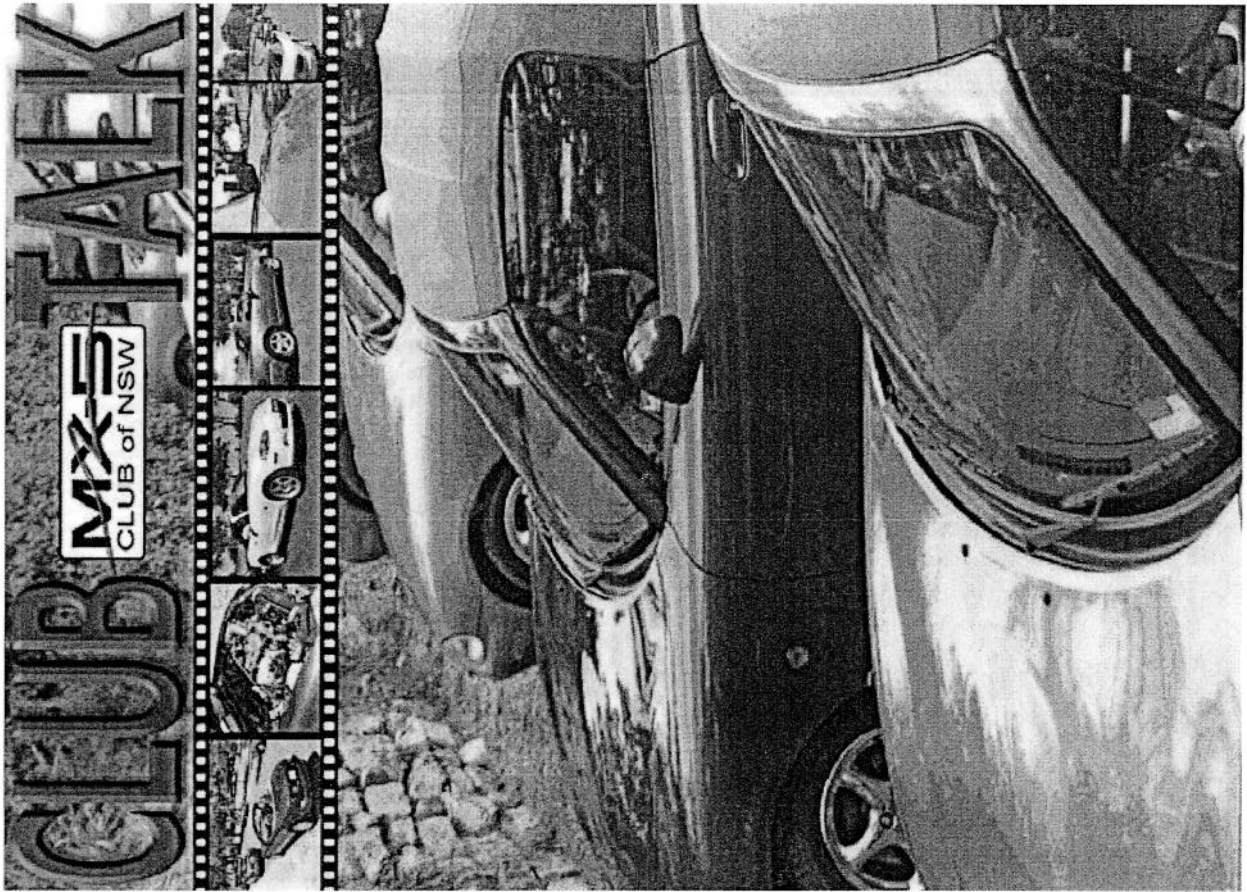




December 2004

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President's Address

I'd like to welcome you all to our new Club Talk and to thank the members for having the faith in me to appoint me as your new president.

We have some exciting events coming up soon, and I sincerely hope that you come along and attend every single one of them!

As I write this, our annual Concours D'Elegance has just finished and the turnout and quality of the cars was absolutely outstanding.

With nearly 50 cars of all models and colours, it was a spectacular way for the club to get into the public eye, and we certainly got a lot of attention. Seeing the faces on the children that were allowed to sit in the driver's seat of the race cars was a joy to behold.

As you know, the club usually has 2 runs a month, and these are great fun. Again, if you have never been on a club run, try them, they are great fun. It doesn't matter if you like to drive fast or slow, we will have a group for you to join, but however you like to drive, you will meet up with a lot of friendly people and share some great stories, as well as a great days driving on fantastic MX-5 roads. And isn't this what owning an MX5 is all about!! Driving them for fun!! There is nothing as exciting as driving in a convoy of 20-30 other MX-5's and having people standing and waving at us as we drive by.

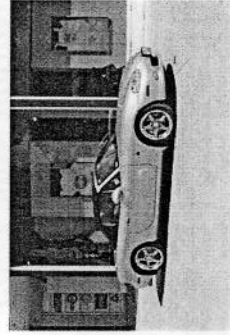
Our runs are usually on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month. Check out our website for further details. You are most welcome to come along!

With Christmas fast approaching, I would like to wish all our members and their families all the best over the holiday season.

Remember, there are a lot of drunks on the road at this time of year, so keep your speeds down and your attention up. Remember, the best safety devices ever invented are air and attention. Attention to see what's going on around you and air space between you and other cars and objects.

Once again, thanks for the confidence shown in me, and I know the entire committee is committed to make this coming year, the best MX-5 year ever.

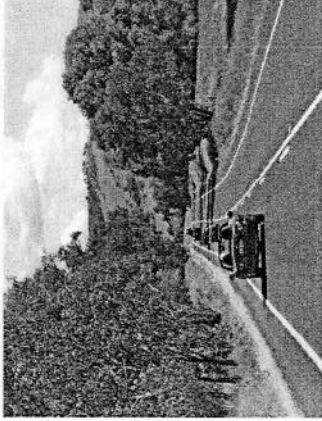
George Benedek



Targa De-Alpine

The making of the adventure

I was in Melbourne last January and I decided to return home via Healesville rather than following the Hume Hwy. I got lost and left Melbourne late so ended up getting to Albury late in the afternoon. I stayed there overnight and had a look on the map and found the wiggle lines to Cooma. That would be my route home. The day dawned cloudless and warm and I headed off on what was to become one of my favourite stretches of road. It's filled with lots of sweeping curves following the Murray River through farmlands with the Snowy Mountains in the background. I thought this would make an excellent weekend club run. The seeds of an idea were planted.



I talked to Captain Craig about the idea in February for the run to be held in October, the necessary approvals were granted from the committee and I started planning the run.

The main problem was finding an interesting route to Albury to bypass a drone all the way down the Hume. About the same time I read a story in Wheels about driving down the Hume Hwy via all the old roads that had been bypassed by the freeway and I remembered a stretch of the old Hume Hwy from Breadalbane to Gunning that I used to enjoy.

The first "reccy" run was organised one damp Sunday in late February. Just a short run to Yass and back via a piece of bypassed Hume Hwy to check the road conditions and travel times. Everything worked out OK for Special Stage 1 and timing wise Yass was a good spot for morning tea. It was also handy to the ACT if anyone from Canberra wanted to join us.

Next problem was finding a lunch stop. My usual Ballast Richard suggested Tumut. Once again the squiggly line on the map trick worked. I found a nice road in to Tumut and an even better road out which ended up being Special Stage 2.

The first full on "reccy" run was organised in March with my 2 partners in crime Richard and Robert. Richard offered to drive us in the Astra while Robert came along to add the comic relief. We set off from Pheasants Nest on our big adventure. Once again it was a cloudless warm day. It was relatively hard work remembering to note all the turns and distance readings as well as checking the map to make sure we were on the right track and also watching the travel times. But everything went well till we got to Special Stage 2. Richard started hooking into the hill climb and the low fuel light came on! Next town was 50km away. We made it, but the servo shut an hour before we got there. We headed off to Batlow, another 20kms away, found a servo and

refilled, with only 1 litre left in the tank. That was close. We eventually got to Albury and started the search for somewhere for us to stay. One of the problems organising a weekend away is knowing how many people to cater for. We eventually found somewhere and gave it a test run as our accommodation for the "recy" run. It was OK but I thought I could find better. I could use this place as backup if I couldn't find anything else.

Day 2, warm and sunny again and we head off on my favourite road, The River Road. It was just as majestic as I remembered from my trip there in January. We stopped for endless photos and Richard was having so much fun hooking into it that my travel times meant nothing. There's no way a large group of MX5er's would be able to keep up with his cracking pace. At least I managed to get distances and directions.

We stopped at Khancoban for morning tea then headed up into the Alpine region, planned a break at Cabramurra and a regroup stop at Adaminaby then a late lunch at Cooma. We got back to Sydney after a great weekend away and we all knew this was going to be a cracker of a run.

Next problem was finding somewhere to stay. Another venue was selected outside of town but that was way to complicated seeing as I had no ideas of final numbers or the mix of rooms required. Negotiations continued in the background until I decided to look somewhere else.

I really wanted to do another "recy" run to check everything out and to finalise somewhere to stay. It was also an awesome run so what the heck, I'd do it for fun anyway. The long weekend in June was chosen as it was the last weekend all the roads would be open before the snow closed them till October. Unfortunately the SP was in for a lengthy warranty repair so I was forced to head off in "Spicy Orange", a Mazda 2 auto loaner car generously supplied by the club sponsors AMR Mazda.



Everything went to plan, albeit at a lot more leisurely pace than the first run in the Astra. I was very impressed with the handling prowess of the Mazda2. If only it had a proper gearbox instead of the stupid auto transmission that was nearly always in the wrong gear.

I got to Albury in good time but it was booked out! I tried lots of motels but couldn't find a room anywhere. I stumbled across the Seaton Arms Motor Inn on one of the back streets of Albury. It had no vacancies but was perfect for accommodating the run. It was fairly small, 21 rooms so we could book the whole place, had its own function room and bar so we could eat on the premises, reasonable rates, looked presentable and was an easy stroll to town for the late night revellers. I made a tentative booking and felt a sense of accomplishment. The only problem was that I had nowhere to stay that night.

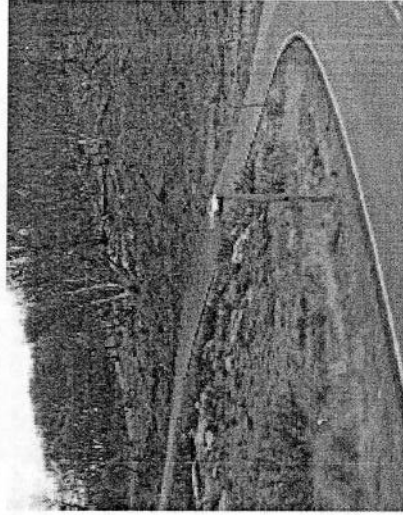
I decided to press on to do the whole run. It was a long way but if I got too tired I thought I could get a room in Cooma or Canberra. I was a bit stressed about going up over the mountain in the dark. It's an isolated piece of road and if something happened no one would find me till the next day, if at all! And to make things worse as I headed up into the mountains it got foggy and started to mist. I had nothing to worry about. The high beam lights on Spicy Orange are the best lights I've ever used. They shone for miles in front with excellent side penetration. I made it back to Sydney in one piece, with only a slight problem, a little roadside chat to one of the local boys in blue. Who's ever heard of being booked for speeding in a Mazda 2, double points and all! I really missed the cruise control in the SP.

Next day was overcast. I don't think most people minded though. The cooler temperature was a nice change after the heat and sun from Saturday. After a hearty breakfast everyone was in their car at exactly 9:30 as scheduled and ready to head out to the Hume Weir for the group photos. After the piccies we jumped in the cars ready to start on the river road, the catalyst for the whole

In late September, I wanted to do a final shake down to make sure everything was as it should, to try out the accommodation and because it's a fun trip. I asked for volunteers. I would go ballast with Robert. He had so much fun the first time he wanted to try out his RS Clio on some fun roads. Richard was in again in his Astra and Cameron from Tamworth in the Integra Type-R joined the crew with his mate Justin. So we head off. Everything went to plan, except that the road up the mountain from Khancoban was still closed. No problems, it gave me a chance to "recy" the all weather road to Cabramurra via Elliotts Way. Big smiles again all round when we got home so I knew this run was going to be worth the effort.

After the breaking of the drought in the week leading up to the run, Saturday 23rd October dawned bright and sunny. This was the big day. I was so nervous, hoping everything would go well, trying to take care of everything that could possibly go wrong in my head. I got to the starting point at Pheasants Nest with Ballast Richard to find pretty much everyone else there already. We had 20 cars eager to start on the adventure. A few familiar faces but a lot of new faces too. By the 8:30 kick off everyone was in their cars, engines running, ready to go, talk about being more organised than the organiser.

Everything went to plan apart from an unscheduled comfort stop in Gunning. I had sort of factored this in but for some reason my run timing was way out, we were running around 45 minutes late by the time we got to Yass. The ACT contingent was already there. We had our morning tea stop and headed off. The recent rain had transformed all the browns that had been so predominant in my previous "recy" runs to lush green. Everywhere! I really couldn't have asked for better. After an inefficient fuel stop at Gundagai we arrived at Tumut for lunch. Close to an hour late now! I have no idea why my times were so far out. We wondered back to the car after lunch and most of the group was already there lined up ready to head off. More efficiency! Except that they were pointing the wrong way. We got everyone facing the right way and headed off for Special Stage 2, the driving highlight of the first day for me. It is 50km of little used forestry road that starts off with a tight windy hill climb that goes up through a pine forest then turns into lots of very fast sweepers as it heads down the other side to Rosewood. That road just loves force fed power and the scenery is amazing, even more so when it's lush green as it was then. I'd already seen the scenery a few times so I concentrated more on the road so had a bit of fun with Steve Carter from Tamworth in the poo brown MX5 and Robert in the ring-in Clio. Some others understandably preferred the scenery. So we had a fairly lengthy wait at the end for everyone to regroup.



We headed off on the final run into Albury arriving there exactly on time! Lots of big grins and happy faces everywhere so it looked like everyone had fun. After a quick freshen up everyone headed off to the bar to "re-hydrate" and then dinner.

Next day was overcast. I don't think most people minded though. The cooler temperature was a nice change after the heat and sun from Saturday. After a hearty breakfast everyone was in their car at exactly 9:30 as scheduled and ready to head out to the Hume Weir for the group photos. After the piccies we jumped in the cars ready to start on the river road, the catalyst for the whole

run, and it started to drizzle. But the roof stayed down for most people. The melting snow had boosted the water levels in the river and there was a lot more water there than any of my previous trips. The grass was if anything even more lush than anywhere else so far. The roads were damp so people drove accordingly so we had another lengthy regroup stop at Walwa. This gave Tim a chance to extract a suicidal



bird from the front of my car. We all arrived together at Khancoban for morning tea then headed up the mountain to Cabramurra. We were lucky because the road had only just been reopened after the ski season, though not so lucky in that the higher we went the mistier it got blocking out the alpine vista. Though it did add another dimension to the drive. We regrouped at Cabramurra then headed back down the mountain to Cooma and the official end of the run.

From the feedback everyone enjoyed themselves, which is terrific. I would like to thank the 36 hardy souls that joined the run. A great bunch of people who were so easy to get organised and got along very well together. It was really good to see some of our ACT cousins joining in with us too. If anyone has a favourite road they'd like to share with the rest of the club members then I can't recommend organising a run highly enough. The enthusiasm and smiles on everyone's faces at the end really makes it all worthwhile.

Photos thanks to Pierre Baldacchino, Richard Fay and Garry Morris
Story Garry Morris



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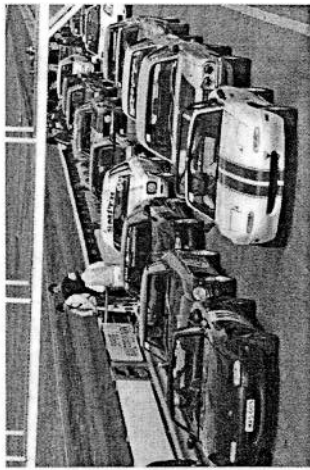
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Competition Report

As our new club competition year begins the open competition year is drawing to a close. The first round of the 2004-05 club championship commenced at Wakefield Park on Sunday 31st October. A record field of 52 entries including six Victorian club members and five members from the MG Car Club Canberra joined us for another enjoyable day. Jason Hay recorded the fastest time of the day, 1.08.77. David Raddatz, Matilda Mravivic, Zane Al-said and Nick Martinenko kept him very honest. Class winners were Michael Bowden, John Burgess, Steve Lamont, James Yu, Bill Dougall, Jason Hay and David Raddatz. Darren Wood in his 'SP' continues to improve his times, breaking into the 1.10s on this occasion.



Overall we were able to shade our "southern cousins" in all classes avenging our recent defeat at Winton in north eastern Victoria when three NSW members travelled south to take on the Mexicans on their home turf. On that day they managed to win the classes and take home the Interstate Challenge Cup for 2004. Next year it will be our turn to host the challenge that once again will be held over the Melbourne Cup weekend. On this occasion we should have the home track advantage.

The first regularity of this year saw visitors take out the top 3 places. First was Chris Gough from the Central Coast, with second and third places going to Victorian members Sam Gumina and Greg Savage. Chris enjoyed his day so much that he applied to join the club on the spot and will certainly be keeping "Slammer" honest at the next track day. First NSW club member in the regularity was "Life Member" and long time Wakefield competitor Jean Cook. A full set of results from the day are now on the "motor sport" page on the club website.



Club members competing in the seven round 2004 State Super Sprint Championship have once again performed with distinction. In class 1A, standard cars under 1600cc, Michael Bowden was first with Ken Horspool second. Steve Lamont was a worthy winner in class 2A, for modified road registered cars under 1600cc. Class 2B (1601 to 2000cc) Rodd Clarke was first, Mike Hicks was second and James Yu was third. In class 3A, race cars under 1600cc, Bill Dougall was third whilst in class 3B (1601 to 2000cc) Matilda Mravivic was first with Nick Martinenko second and Kevin Addison equal third. Ed Chivers won class 4B, race cars on slicks under 2000cc.

The capacity disadvantage of the MX-5 did not stop Rodd Clarke, Matilda Mravivic and Ed Chivers winning the third place trophies in their relative type categories. Great results guys! In the club point score we missed the hat trick finishing second on 139 points to the New South Wales Road Racing Club on 187 points.

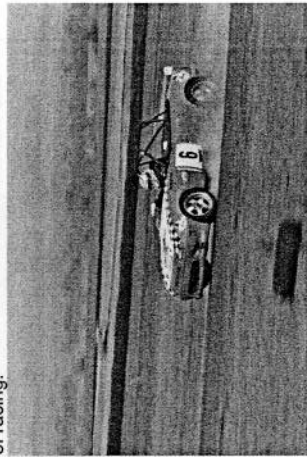
On 1st August 2004 our club in conjunction with the Z Car Club conduct Round 5 of the above Championship. It was a successful day both operationally and financially. Thank you to all the club members who acted as officials and contributed to the success of the day. We have again applied to conduct a round of next year's championship on 17th April 2005. A full report on Round 5 of the 2004 championship is on the club website.

In the CAMS and Production Sports Car Race Championships Chris Tonna was the only club member to compete in most rounds of both series. In the PSCRR Championship Chris finished third in Class D and eleventh outright, whilst in the CAMS Championship he finished tenth outright, a great result for his first year of racing.

Lou Iezzi, Brian Anderson, Matilda Mravivic, Nick Martinenko, Val Stewart and Ed Chivers competed in selected rounds.

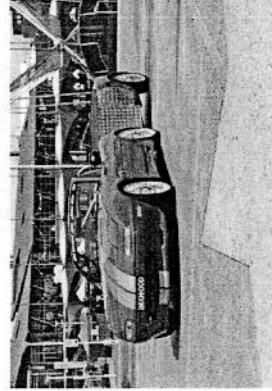
In addition to the NSW Championships the Prod Sports guys are conducting a tri state one-hour series with a race each in Queensland, NSW and Victoria. The NSW round was conducted at Eastern Creek in early November. Brian Anderson and his co driver won Class C finishing twelfth outright. In Class D, David Raddatz and Zane Al-said were second, Ed Chivers co drove a Porsche 968 to third and Nick and Matilda were fourth.

Photo's thanks to Oz Event Photos
Story - Mike Hicks, Competition Secretary



Concours or Concours de Elegance

Whatever way you see it, it is



The other competitive event in the calendar of the MX-5 Club of NSW, you don't need to be fast, just clean and well presented, you don't need flame proof clothing or a helmet but a big box of Meguiars does help.

This years Concours event was held at Sydney's Fox Studios. 49 cars in total battled Sydney's stifling heat conditions and turned Concours into a great event not only for the club but for Mazda in general.

Everyone arrived well before the allotted time of 9.30am. We had a brief rundown by Arno and John and then proceeded in convoy to our positions. As we arrived at our allotted area we were greeted by not 1 but 3 beautiful brand new MX-5 SE's. How lucky we are to have great sponsors like Mazda.

After a few final touch-ups all 49 cars were primed and ready for the judging to begin. While our club members went off viewing the various attractions, the Concours judges went to work.

Fox Studios offers a global smorgasbord of dining, housing over 16 of Sydney's favourite restaurants, cafe's and bars. A number of leading retailers bring you the newest lines in fashion and home wares, and the entertainment options are amazing. There are 4 live venues showcasing the hottest acts, 16 state of the art cinemas, bungee trampolining, bowling and mini golf.

Special thanks must go out to our judges.

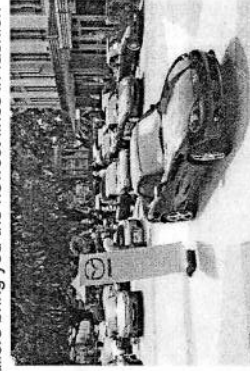
Especially John Burgess, who during the sweltering conditions was seen, while all the other judges were sipping on an ale and enjoying air conditioning, lying on the concrete doing a final check one of the 5's. This is true dedication for you. Concours was certainly very hotly contested, the winners had put a lot of effort into preparing and thoroughly deserve their awards.

It is a pleasure to recognise the judging panel without whose efforts Concours would not have been possible:

Thanks also go to our sponsors, in particular Mazda for supplying 3 brand new SE's, Shannon's and Fox Studios for allowing us the use of such a wonderful venue.

Once a year, you can make a real difference to your 5, it has rewarded you all year, and so you should give it a reward once a year.

Hope to see you next year!



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Australian Idol

Celebrities, musicians, red carpet and of course, MX-5's

Australian Idol, Channel 10 and Mazda Australia recently came to the Mazda MX-5 Club of NSW for help in assisting with the grand final of the second series of Australian Idol.

With Mazda Australia sponsoring the event, and providing the winner with the keys to a shiny new Mazda SE, organisers of the event decided that it would be both fun and fitting for the final 10 contestants and judges to be chauffeured to the red carpet in true "zoom zoom" fashion – in a series of MX-5's.

Although initial requests were for 10 red vehicles, due to conflicting sponsors at the Opera House, it was decided that only three vehicles would be chosen to participate in the event. The lucky 'chosen ones' included current president, George Benedek's Silver SP (driven by Captain Craig Berthold), my Crystal Blue beauty (obviously driven by myself) and a new SE provided by Mazda Australia.

With Friday night spent at home, washing, polishing, detailing and buffing, all three cars and drivers arrived at the Opera House early on Sunday afternoon to be briefed by production staff as to our role on the night.

After displaying the cars at random locations around the forecourt Opera House – giving us the opportunity to take some memorable 'happy snaps' of our vehicles in front of both the Harbour Bridge and Opera House, we kicked into action at 5 pm and took refuge outside the 'celebrities' tent', awaiting for the stars to arrive.



able to chat with such wonderful people who will most definitely be making an impact on Australia's music scene. But it was an even greater thrill being able to drive my favourite toy through the grounds of the Opera House in front of screaming fans and well known celebrities.



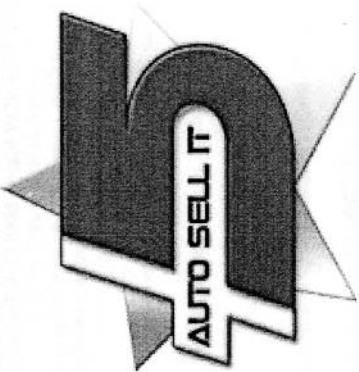
It was definitely an experience which I will remember, and has given me an unbelievable story to share with friends and colleagues.

Unfortunately, our coverage on TV was limited. However Craig did manage to get onto the opening clips, and I made a small appearance on Channel 9's 'Today'. There are also a few pictures which have made it onto the Idol website.

This was a great opportunity for the Club, and I encourage all members to keep an eye out for any further opportunities that they may come across, which will further assist in promoting the Club.

A small word of thanks must go out to Craig Berthold for providing his time in co-ordinating the event for the Club. I am slowly starting to realise how much time and pressure goes into organising such events. This was definitely a 'Touch Down' on your behalf!





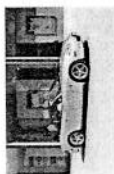
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2005 Committee Members

President



Hi, I'm George Benedek the NSW Mazda MX5 Club President.

On my third MX-5 now and previously I was your Vice President for 2 years. I look after any sponsorship or advertising that the club needs and other jobs that no-one else wants to do.

Vice President



Hi, I'm Geoff Slender the NSW Mazda MX5 Club Vice President.

I've been with the club for 4 years now, I was the club's secretary but now am the Vice President. I help out George with the sponsorship and advertising for the club.

Treasurer



Hi I'm Richard the NSW Mazda MX5 Club Treasurer.

After joining the Club, I wanted to do something in return for all my enjoyment in motor sport and I have been a volunteer time-keeper at Wakefield Track Days for 3 years.

I now hold the Club's purse strings, so to speak.

Club Captain



I'm Craig Berthold the NSW Mazda MX5 Club Captain.

I'm the one responsible for organising the 2 social drives/runs per month and the Technical Day/Night Talks. I occasionally plan the odd social event too and work hand in hand with Roger our Social Secretary, as sometimes our roles cross over depending on the event.

Competition Secretary



I'm Michael (Mike) Hicks the NSW Mazda MX5 Competition Secretary.

This is my fourth year as a committee member. I joined as a volunteer in March 2001, taking on the vacant role of Competition Secretary and was elected to the committee at the following AGM. The time has been really enjoyable thanks to the support of the committee and club members who have supported the Wakefield Park Track Days.

Publicity

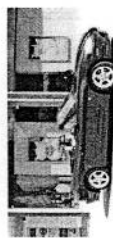


I'm Janine Piscopo the NSW Mazda MX5 Club Publicity person.

I'm the one responsible for getting your club events and club talk out on time.

You'll commonly hear me refer to my 5 as Tweety, and I've been in the club now for 2 years.

Membership



I'm Sherryn Gray the NSW Mazda MX5 Club Membership person.

My role is to administer all new applications, renewals and membership enquiries. This is probably the best role in the Committee, not that I'm biased, because I get to speak to all new members and talk up the Club! Do you want fries with that?

With special thanks to our wonderful volunteers

Event Secretary – Zan Menzel

Canberra Representative – Sandie Wilcock



Members Corner

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