

CLUB TORQUE



A.G.M.-2009

**The Death of A Racetrack
Christmas in July**



Gran Turismo Coupe

Gold Coast Run

50 years for Brabham

regular articles and more



Brass Monkey Run - Blacktown to Bathurst

Is it Biggles or Rocky???



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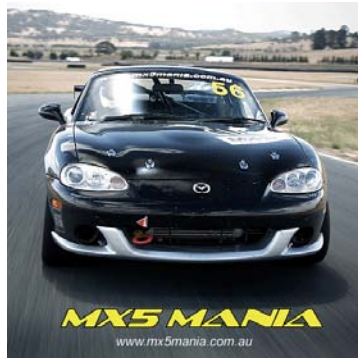
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El Presidente's Brief

The Club's AGM and Trophy Presentation will be held on 21st October at Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club. I invite all members to come along to vote in your new Committee and cheer for those members being presented with trophies for their feats behind the wheel at the Club's Wakefield Park Track Days.

We have a few Committee vacancies, being the President, Captain and Publications positions. Some fantastic members have already indicated their willingness to stand and I thank them for that, however, the Club would be more than grateful should anyone else want to put their name forward for a position or to help out the Committee through out the following Club year.

My Thanks

After 3½ years on the Committee I have decided that I will be one of those who won't be standing next year. My thanks go first and foremost to my wife Cheryl who has acted as my able assistant during this time, her ability to plan functions, source free "give-aways" from Mazda and put together the "Events" program has been appreciated by those who have attended various activities of the Club during this time.

To out-going Captains Pete & Kim, for leading us once a month all around the countryside and away to Dubbo, thank you! To Sandy & Paul in

Publications for their work in bringing us the Club Torque magazine, thank you too! Your contributions to the Club during your time on the Committee have been greatly appreciated.

Thanks also to all other Committee members and volunteers for giving of their time so generously during this period.

Last but not least a special thanks to Mike Hicks, who has been putting together the Club's Motor Sport events that have formed such a major part of the Club's activities for many years, a fantastic effort that almost goes by unnoticed because it is run so efficiently!

NatMeet 2012

As most will know, in Easter 2012 our NSW Club is hosting NatMeet in Canberra and MX-5s from every state in Australia will be in attendance. Please note this date in your diary as a must attend event. Our Canberra Chapter members are planning some "not to be missed" venues and drives for these celebrations.

**Cheers,
Phil Ashton
President
Winning Blue MX-5 NC**

AGM

THE 2009 AGM WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 21 OCTOBER 2009 AT RYDE-EASTWOOD LEAGUES CLUB, WEST RYDE.

A FORMAL NOTICE OF MEETING, TOGETHER WITH STATUTORY REPORTS AND NOMINATION FORMS TO THE COMMITTEE, WILL BE EMAILED TO MEMBERS AT LEAST 28 DAYS PRIOR TO THE AGM.

Positions available

President- Responsible for chairing the committee meetings, supporting club members and decision making

Vice president – supports the President and helps with the organization of Club events and decision making.

Club captain- Organization of the monthly runs

Events - responsible for updating the Events Calendar

Publications- Editing and publishing of the Club Torque Magazine.

Social secretary- Organizing functions throughout the year, Christmas in July, the end of year Christmas party and long weekend outings.

Each of these positions is supported by the committee and members.

Competition Report the Winter Edition of Club Torque.

Sunday 21st June was our final **Wakefield Park Track Day** for the Competition Year 2008/09. It also featured the **NSW & Victorian Interstate Challenge for 2009** with nine Victorians travelling up from Melbourne. I can report that NSW regained the Interstate Cup by a margin of 64 points to 40 points. Unfortunately the day was marred by frequent showers. For this event we had a record number of entries, 75 were accepted; considerably more than the 50 nominated in the Regulations. Unfortunately a few members were disappointed not to have a start, the message from this being get your entries for Track Days in early or risk disappointment. Fastest Time of the Day was recorded by Russell Battison with a time of 1.10.30 seconds. Class winners in the Interstate Challenge were Brad Carpenter, Tony Williams and Mark Hellmund from New South Wales and Darrin Morice from Victoria. Ian Vickers took home the "Old and Bold Trophy." Our next Track Day will be on Monday 19th October following a winter recess. Entry Forms and Regulations are up on the website.

Track Day Trophies and Officials Appreciation Gifts will be distributed at the Track Day Presentations following the **Club's Annual General Meeting in October.**

On the 28th June **Round 5 of the NSW Supersprint** was run at Wakefield Park under changeable conditions. Leigh Hemmings won class 4E and Ian Vickers won class 1B. Second in class went to Stewart Temesvary (1B), Lindsay Burke (3C) and Steven Pender (SVB), whilst third in class went to Mark Hellmund (2B) and Robert Kai (3C).

Round 6 was conducted by the NSWRRRC at Oran Park G P on the 12th July. Only three members competed on the day, Stewart Temesvary winning class 1B with Ian Vickers second whilst Mark Hellmund recorded a second in class 2B.

On the second of August club member representation in Round 7 at Eastern Creek was much stronger with eleven members competing. Stewart Temesvary was once again the victor over Ian Vickers in Class 1B. Our modified under 1600 cc champ Tony Williams entered his first supersprint and won class 2A. Mark Hellmund won class 2B with yours truly in second place. Leigh Hemmings ran his PRB Clubman on treaded tyres for this round and won the class SVA. Lindsay Burke was third in class 3C with Steven Pender taking third in SVB. Others to earn valuable points in the Club Championship included Brad Cecil, Kevin Addison and Robert Kai.

The MX-5 Club is second in the Club Championship with two rounds remaining, Oran Park G P in September and the Day/Night final round at Oran Park South in October.

On the **Queen's Birthday Weekend** twelve New South Wales competitors made their way to Morgan Park in Warwick Queensland to compete in the first **MX-5 National Race Meeting**. Nine competed in the races with a further three in Regularities plus Dennis Brady who doubled up in the Regularities as well as racing. In addition MX5 Racing had two cars entered for two Queensland residents, one being NSW member and former Competition Secretary, Ed Chivers. All experienced plenty of track time although the regularity competitors were short changed a little when compared to the racers. In the racers Lou lezzi was second in class 2A in the rebuilt "Kermit" Chris Tonna won class 2B with Brian Anderson second. The class 2F races and the Regularities honours all going to the Queenslanders. The weekend was a great success and next year we would hope to host the National's at a New South Wales circuit.

The following **MX-5 Challenge** round was run at Wakefield Park on the 2nd August. Over the four races Shane Otten driving the ex Renny Roden car and Greg Tasker shared the wins with two each.

.Greg also scored two seconds the other two being shared between Chris Gough and David Raddatz. David also scored three thirds with third in the final race going to Dennis Brady.

Next round of the MX-5 Challenge is at Oran Park on the 14th and 15th August.

Rounds 3 and 4 of the Production Sports Car Championship was at Eastern Creek at the end of May and early July. MX-5 competitors have this year been conspicuous with their absence from these events preferring to concentrate on the Nationals, Festival of Sporting Cars and MX-5 Challenge events.

On the same weekend in June as the Club Track Day the **Production Sports Cars** ran their first **one-hour race** for the year at Eastern Creek. Because of earlier program delays the race was reduced to 45 minutes. In a field of 20 starters, Nick and Matilda finished 9th with Michael Hall and Daniel Deckers 11th.

The following round of the **one-hour series** was held at **Morgan Park in Queensland** on the 8th and 9th of August. Nine club members competed although not all were driving Mx-5s. Nick and Matilda had the best result with fourth, followed by Brian Anderson in his BMW M Coupe for 7th. Ed Chivers share Chris Stannard's Porsche RSCS for eighth. Michael Hall and Daniel Deckers shared the Hydawash MX-5 for ninth. Val Stewart shared another of Chris Stannard's Porsches this time a 944S2 for thirteenth and in fifteenth was the Redback Racing NC of Adam Spence and Steven Head.

The third **Festival of Sporting Cars** race meeting for the year was held at Oran Park G P on the 25th

and 26th July. The event was well supported by members in both races and regularities. In the Marque and Production Sports Car races Matilda Mravicic recorded a second and three thirds, husband Nick Martinenko scored a third, two fifth places and a sixth whilst Steven Head scored a seventh, a ninth and two tenths. In the Regularities Kevin Addison managed two fourths and a tenth whilst yours truly's results improved from sixteenth

Mike Hicks.

in the first to a fifth in the final wet event. The final Festival of Sporting Cars event for 2009 will be at Wakefield Park on the 31st October and 1st of November.

Until the next Wakefield Park Track Day in October, safe and enjoyable MX-5 driving

Wakefield Park Track Dates for 2010.

Sunday 14th February.

Sunday 2nd May - NSW Supersprint Round 2.

Monday 3rd May.

Monday 21st June - Club's 20th Anniversary Track Day.

Sunday 5th September.

Sunday 24th October.

Sunday 5th December.

HUNTER VALLEY CHAPTER

As I look back over the last 12 months, I can't help but reflect on what the Hunter Chapter really means – great cars, great roads, and great friends.

Our monthly Runs have typically taken in the best roads the Hunter has to offer. These included the Putty Road to Wiseman's Ferry, Old Pacific Hwy to the Central Coast, and Thundersbolts Hwy to Walcha. Runs through the Hunter Valley and to Port Stephens were also a highlight.

Last August saw a combined Run with a few members of the Canberra Chapter. We spent all Saturday sampling the best that the Vineyards have to offer before enjoying a BBQ on Saturday night. On Sunday we enjoyed the roads and sights of the Central Coast before racing back to the Vineyards to Blue Tongue Brewery. That Canberra mob obviously likes to drink!

Easter this year saw a combined Run with a few members of the Brisbane Chapter. Superbly organised by Stephen Carter, we spent four days driving around roads that were made for the MX-5. And the camaraderie that grew between the Chapters had everyone wanting to make this a regular event.

Our Christmas in July saw us return to Nightingale Winery. If you want to sample the best food and

wine that our region has to offer, then you can't go past this Winery!



And in September, we have a combined Run with a few of the Sydney mob as they cruise up the Putty Road to have breakfast at Tatler Winery. This should be a great event!

At our recent AGM, Phil Mayo was elected the new Hunter Chapter Representative for 2009/2010. As well as being involved in the social side of the Club, Phil is actively involved in motorsport as well. He brings a lot of enthusiasm and commitment to the role!

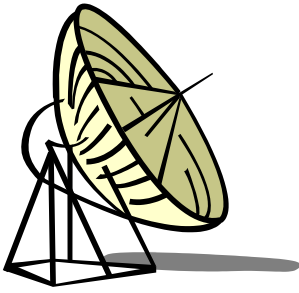
When you own an MX-5 you soon appreciate its charismatic appeal. It could even have its own motto, "MX-5: helping strangers become friends!" The people you meet, the new roads you jointly explore, and the fun you have; this is why it's so great to be a member of the Hunter Chapter as it goes from strength to strength.

Tom Wilde

www.mx5.com.au/hunter

Canberra Chapter and Verse

Jill' CBCWCB Run – May 2009



The morning dawned to a beautiful sunrise at Murrumbateman. We left early to be sure that we arrived at the Hume petrol

station before 8:00 am only to find, Wayne Northey had already arrived from Batemans Bay. Perspective members Rob and Jill Dawes, also from Batemans Bay had hit a kangaroo and were unable to do the run.

After everyone had filled up and chatted for a while, we led the members (8 cars in all) on the first leg down to Cooma. It was a bit cool at the start as every one had their tops up except for Paul and Jack. Greg was tyre levered out of bed to give Paul some company. He did a great job of advising that all of the members had made the correct turns.

Morning tea was held at the Nimmitabel bakery. A large group of bikies were partaking of the delights outside while we chose the warm indoors with coffee and cakes. Malcolm was given the all clear from the doctor after his hip operation and gave the bakery his thumbs up. Tony pointed out to me a large car that cruised past the window. It was a beautiful 68 Cadillac. Alas it had disappeared before I could get a photo of it. Much to Jill's relief I am sure.

We then headed off towards Candelo. We stopped at Piper's lookout for a few minutes to admire the view. The scenery was breathtaking and the road was a delight for the MX5 enthusiast. We paused at Candelo for everyone to catch up and lower the roofs as the sun was warming everyone up.

It was then off to Wyndham for lunch. This stretch of road was really awesome. Jill was having a ball. I was trying to take photos, when I was game to open my eyes and my knuckles were no longer white. We had confirmed with the hotel, twice, of the numbers coming for lunch. The manager of the hotel, an excentric old lady, had forgotten to tell her staff that we were coming. Anyway, the group played pool until lunch arrived. The meals were basic but very good and I think that everyone enjoyed the quaint surroundings and the manager's hospitality.

After lunch we headed off to Cooma via Bombala. Again the road, scenery and weather was excellent. By the time we arrived at Cooma it was

getting cold. We had booked a table at the Lott coffee shop. They served up some awesome coffee and cakes. Malcolm was even impressed.



The coffee shop was about to close so everyone decided to make their own way home. I think that everyone enjoyed themselves. Again, we would like to thank everyone who helped on the day and the support from the club as a whole. Jill and Dennis

Roger's Ramble – June 2009

Despite dreadful rainy weather amazingly there were no drop-outs or last minute cancellations. 13 MX5's and 23 people met at the Hall lay-off and after a short briefing departed for Gunning at 10.00 am.

It rained all the way there.

We had a 45 minute coffee break and were joined there by a couple in their MX5 from the Southern Highlands.

They then traveled with us to Crookwell where we all had a 1 1/4 hour lunch break.

By the time we finished lunch the rain had eased and we had a good drive from Crookwell to Borowa, except for an elderly driver who sat in the middle of the road, used his left and right turn indicators on every slight turn to the left or right. By the time we reached Borowa the clouds were clearing and blue sky started to appear.

Two MX5's left the group at Borowa and 11 went on through Galong to Binalong for Coffee.

From this point on all went there own way home.

Bob will tell you of the problem he had with an aggressive 4x4 driver on the Barton Highway.

The last of the group would have reached the return point at Hall Lay-Off at about 4.30pm - a run distance of 322.Kms.

Roger

The **Canberra Chapter's Christmas in July** for 2009 was held at Shepherds Run winery Sunday the 26th July.

It was a cold winter's day with, a touch of snow in the air, a prefect day to sit around a fire to eat, drink and be merry.

Thanks to Rachael and Damon for organising for 42 members to enjoy the warm atmosphere and beautiful views of Shepard's Run winery. Thanks to Bricet and Mum for making the decorations and treats and thanks to Shepherds Winery for making us so welcome.



Upcoming events

'BBQ at Nerriga' run in August, 'Fish and Chips on the Coast' in September and 'Jugiong Juggernaut' in October.

Our Coffee & Lies is always well patronised at Santa Lucia, 84 Ainsworth Street, Mawson. Our Chapter Meetings have moved venue to the Southern Cross Club Jamison. For all the latest update see the Chapter Website on

<http://www.carco.com.au/mx5forum/index.html>

A smile from 'Gear to Gear'

Pat

Paul's Meandering in Macarthur

Thirty cars turned up for Paul Byers first run as our el' Capitaine, and true to his word we did meander our way around to eventually end up at the Campbelltown Catholic Club for a much deserved meal.

We had the best weather and a few new faces, which was great as we were sure no one could be unhappy about this great run.

Paul has set a high bar for himself (and Di) so if anyone out there has some ideas on places or great roads that they think that we would enjoy just drop Paul a line.





MX-5 NC **Gran Turismo Coupe?**

There's a question for you to consider! It occurred to me after experiencing successive days of solo long distance driving on the recent run to the Gold Coast and that led me to look back and compare cars of the past that bore the GT label.

Our car is the Mk 1 NC coupe that replaced our NB. It is a vastly different vehicle to the NA and another level of sophistication above the NB. I have to admit that it took some time to make the adjustment to the lower seating, view over the wider bonnet and the general feel of the car. However, it proved its all round abilities on our recent round trip on mountain roads to the Gold Coast.

The seating is comfortable, the windscreen angle and seating position minimise wind buffeting and long distance travel with a solo driver does not produce driver fatigue. The car handles every road condition superbly; stable in rough road conditions and clings to corners. Power delivery is smooth, acceleration responsive on steep inclines and when overtaking and the torque will take you much further than you expect before you need to change down. With the two litre engine the sixth gear is much more useful in this car and surprisingly flexible – maybe too flexible – there are fewer gear changes so you have to work the gears to get the stimulation. When you are faced with humdrum highway driving, the cruise control is there and the system is much better than the one on our previous Mazda 6.

Boot space is adequate with intelligent selection of clothing and packing, but it can be an issue. My motto is 'travel light – travel fast' and if you ladies need any tips, talks to the expert, Pam Estreich, who has got it down to a fine art.

Despite low profile tyres on 17 inch wheels, the ride is excellent in all conditions, but tyre noise with the top up is quite intrusive and obviously worse on rough textured road surfaces where it drowns the sounds of the engine and buzz of the exhaust. This car came with Bridgestone Potenza, but Michelin P.Ps have excellent road holding and should give a quieter ride. I was told recently that the price differential between the Potenza and the Michels is marginal, but haven't checked that out, I still have plenty of rubber.

A recent *Evo* car magazine article judged the NC to be a logical development which enhanced the basic characteristics of the NA. I am not making any such comparisons here, just focusing solely on the NC coupe and evaluating it as a car worthy of the GT description.

As I see it, the third generation car was designed to meet the challenges of the times. It had to satisfy long

trime MX-5 aficionados, but more than that, it had to retain its share of the market it created 20 years ago, a market which had been invaded by copycat vehicle manufacturers.



In NC coupe guise the MX-5 became more refined, put on some weight and, in the process, added another dimension to the marque. Did that dimension extend to

GT status? When you review cars of the past such as the *Ferrari GT* series, *Aston Martin DB7 GT*, *Maserati 3500 GTi* or *Lamborghini Espada 400 GT*, you may think that the MX-5 is outclassed by these exotics and does not justify inclusion in the type. On the other hand there are compact category cars like the *MGB* and *MGC* in GT configuration.



There was also the *Triumph GT6*, *Ford Capri GT XLR* and the *Peugeot 205 GTi*. The MX-5 is also superior in every respect to my former classic and highly

acclaimed GT car, the *105 Alfa Romeo GTV*. That comparison alone makes it legitimate to classify the NC Coupe as a genuine gran turismo car.

Mazda conceived the MX-5 as a revival of the lightweight sports roadster of the sixties, but it has grown up since and when Mazda introduced the NC electronic hardtop version, that changed the original configuration, but it may have done more - it may have changed the entire concept.

So, if the NC coupe measures up as a gran turismo car, here's how it looks in print;

MX-5 NC GT SS

Sorry, I couldn't resist. I borrowed the SS tag from cars like the vintage '30s *Jaguars*, the '77 *Maserati Merak SS* and other SS label cars, but in my case it means *Sunlight Silver* - of course!

I've stirred the pot, so what about some comment on this notion? Hold on, don't tell me what you think if you see me, and get your fingers humming on the keyboard instead. I'm sure the editor would love to see some stimulating letters for publication!

Seán MacCormaic



A keen group of MX-5ers gathered for another long weekend journey winding up Bells Line Road heading for our first pit stop at Lithgow where we were joined by Dennis and Judy Weatherly in their brand spanking new blue NC, after a lot of admiring we again headed west, bound for Orange, where we gathered at the Oriph pub for lunch, this is where we start to see the tone of the weekend ahead, as everyone starts to warm up some old friendships and add a few new ones as well.

We all arrived at the hotel and rushed to get our rooms and put the kettles on, or for some to whiz up to the local to get supplies for a gathering around the pool. With music, wine, food and good humoured friends the evening got a swing on. Everyone organized their dinner preferences with some going to the local restaurant and some heading for Kentucky and pizzas.

The next morning we split into three groups with some heading off to the Wellington caves and others following Peter Feutrill to Gulgong and others making their own day of it with antique shopping or just wandering around checking out the local food.

Paul & I went to Gulgong but made a detour to Dunedoo and had morning tea where Paul took some photos of a cute Italian Fiat Tomilino?????? We headed off to Gulgong to join our MXers at the local for a great lunch. The town was abuzz as it was the celebration of Henry Lawson birthday, there were market stalls lining the street and in the hotel people were dressed in their very best day at the races finery.



Dubbo Longweekend



We hung around after lunch, to visit some friends of Paul's that had run away to Gulgong to escape the rat race, the rest of the group headed to Dunedoo for afternoon tea, by their account their stop wasn't as pleasant as ours, sorry guys, bum steer.

The group that headed to Wellington Caves had a tour of the Caves and even a black out once they reached the bottom and had to be escorted out by torch light, this scared off most that had booked the mine tour thinking it would be in total darkness also so the MX5 club got its own personal tour of the mines which was fantastic.

That night we all piled into the mini buses that were to take us to the bowling club for our Chinese buffet dinner. We missed Elaine, as last year she showed us her talent for playing the spoons, we reminisced about the day we had all had and decided that Kim & Pete had done it again.

Maggie and Ken Listons room was nominated as the party room and the rowdiness began, our two Dubbo members Rohan & Michelle Matthews arrived with port and glasses, and with the wine and left over nibbles from the night before, we all relaxed and had a great time.



The Strange Death of Mount Druitt Motor Racing Circuit and the Almost Unknown Circuit that Saved Sydney Motor Racing Fans from the Famine

The way things went I did not get a chance to race a sports car at Mount Druitt or to watch the car racing there again. Later that year (1957) the lease on the land adjoining the airstrip, formerly leased by Belford Jones (where he had laid down the tarred circuit which joined each end of the old airstrip straight) expired. The lease of the land this time was awarded to The ARDC. From what I could gather a financial agreement between the parties could not be achieved. Following this Belford Jones was alleged to have attacked the track with a mechanical digger. So extensive was the damage to the track's surface it rendered the main circuit unsafe for further motor racing. I can only assume the ARDC could not afford to repair it. Sprint racing on the airstrip continued the following year but eventually ceased.

Terry Walker wrote in his book, "Fast Tracks": "On 17 March, 1960 Belford Jones was acquitted at the Parramatta Court of Petty Sessions of a charge of Malicious Damage." He further wrote "It was I think a sad, but perhaps a fittingly dramatic end to a dramatic racing circuit". I can only assume that Belford Jones must have demonstrated to the court he was the owner of the circuit and therefore was legally entitled to damage it if he so wished. It also appeared that his alleged actions which caused so much disappointment and upset to participants and the large crowds of spectators was not an issue in which the court had any jurisdiction.

Belford Jones's alleged actions in reality only accelerated the circuit's closure. It was doomed anyway due to the prohibitive cost of major upgrades to the fences surrounding the track as required in the new Speed Ways Act of the time and the eventual approval for massive development of the Mount Druitt area for public and war service housing.

The Search for a new motor racing venue

Barry Collerson in his book "Mount Druitt to Monza" wrote "with the demise of Mount Druitt in 1957 New South Wales enthusiasts were starved of motor racing venues, having only Gnoo Blas at Orange (one or two meetings per year) and Bathurst's Mount Panorama (two meetings per year)". These circuits were a long way from Sydney and as a lot of families did not have a car in those days and relied on public transport, the situation was most unsatisfactory. Circuits such as Katoomba's Catalina Park, Warwick Farm, Oran Park and Amaroo Park were still a couple of years away in the future.

Enter Schofields

A few kilometres north of Mount Druitt at Schofields is another World War II airstrip which became HMAS Nirimba for a brief period in the late 1950s. A window of opportunity opened when the base was temporarily de-commissioned. Barry Collerson who raced on this circuit a number of times, wrote: "a group of enthusiasts, led by Bruce Polain from the Manly Warringah Sporting Car Club, successfully negotiated with a sympathetic Commanding Officer and the result was an interesting 3.7 kilometre motor racing circuit that combined the main airstrip with the various perimeter and service roads of the base. The first meeting was a closed meeting jointly organised by the Manly Warringah and North Shore Sporting Car Clubs. The MG Car Club was also invited to compete." The first meeting was held on 6 July, 1958. The programme featured scratch races for touring cars of varying capacities, open wheeled racing cars and sports cars. One race of a difference was the Inter-Club team Relay Race where each club had to provide a three car team of one racing car a sports car and a sedan car. In this event the Manly Warringah team of Barry Collerson (MG Special), Frank Gardner ("D" Type Jaguar) and Bill Thompson (twin cam FJ Holden) were successful.

Terry Walker in his book "Fast Tracks" wrote: "A number of still famous names competed although their cars may be unfamiliar today: Ian and Pete Geoghan (supercharged Standard 10), Brian Foley (Austin Lancer), Frank Matich (Austin Healey), Frank Gardner (D Type Jaguar), Robin Orlando and Barry Collerson (MG Specials) to name a few.

Schofields lacked facilities such as grandstands, covered pits and timing towers and had to be set up, raced on, dismantled and cleaned up all on the same day which made a very long day for the volunteer officials.

Schofields was short lived and hosted only a handful of meetings but it provided a very important stop gap to keep motor racing going in Sydney. It closed by the end of 1959 when the Royal Australian Navy restored the base to full operation.

The air strip was used for a number of years by commercial light aircraft and I can remember taking my family there to see an air display in the early 1980s. The airstrip is still there HMAS Nirimba has been taken over by The University of Western Sydney and is clearly marked on Street directories if you want to see the old circuit.

Ken Liston

XMAS IN JULY

The success of the repeat setting at the historic Carrington at Katoomba endorsed the choice of venue by Annette and Gary Moss for this event. Some people may like a change of scenery, but when the location is



ideal, and the friendly management and staff provide a delightful table service three course meal plus coffee and mince pies to finish up for a mere \$35 a head (the Club subsidized the

meal!), there really were no second choices.

The weather was much kinder to us this year too, we were spared the strong winds although the light snowfall



from last year did add that seasonal touch and was missed. However, the economy being the

way it is at the moment, the management could not extend to snowfalls, not for a measly \$35 a head.

The day began with early showers and overcast at sea level, but improved dramatically on the run up the mountain from Eastern Creek. Perfect weather for top down driving and, surprise, surprise, the higher we got up the slopes, the warmer the temperature. Someone (no names or the colour of the car!) took the advantage of a stop at traffic lights to demonstrate the speed of the NC's electronic hard top conversion to open touring. A real Santa arrived this year too (instead of Gary in disguise) with a sing along routine with piano



accompaniment and everyone joining in with memories refreshed by the music sheets supplied to every table. With that – and a few drinks - people soon got into the mood of the event. It is about making (or getting?) merry, so we did.

Every picture tells a story and here are Brad and Carmen making the most of the day, and everyone else was in the same mode as this shot of

occasion and has to be awarded the Concours prize for



best turned out male of the day.

Innovative lucky door prizes were provided by Pam and Ray from excess regalia stock, giving winners a choice of garments according to their size requirements. Pam also issued a regalia catalogue to each table listing Spring specials and this was so popular it almost overtook the event. Well, Xmas is a time for presents isn't it? So, why not spend on a little something for yourself. Garments in the hall went onto people's backs so quickly that Ray had to resort to opening a second shop out in the car park to sell from the back of the four wheel drive. Just as well he did not try to cram all the goodies into his MX-5 because he ran out of sizes in some items of apparel. Never mind folks, there is always next time or. Better still; make a phone call to be sure you will get just what you're after. The only downside to the outdoor shop was described by one satisfied customer. "It was pretty cold in the change room!" he said.



If you missed this event, don't miss the next.

There will be a celebration of the 20th anniversary of the MX-5 - a sort of MX-5 Oktoberfest - so keep your eyes open for details of the series of events throughout that month.

Seán MacCormaic



Maggie and Ken shows – Ken even sported a tie for the

Gold Coast Run

Via Thunderbolt's Way & Bruxner Highway

It was the Saturday of the Brass Monkey run when everyone was on the road early for Bathurst. Lettie and I were on the road early too, but we went north to warmer climates – the Gold Coast – but instead of highway driving, we took the longer mountainous route to get the most out of our MX-5.

The run on the Pacific Highway freeway to beyond Raymond Terrace was pretty dull going and we were relieved to turn onto Buckett's Way to reach the mountain and cross country roads to head up to New England. The Buckett's Road surface is in reasonable condition, but subject to spasmodic rough patches where the perennial road works are either complete, in progress or overdue.

Gloucester was the first coffee stop and the town was like Pie in the Sky on any Saturday with the number of bikies stopping over before taking on the mountain run. We left to get ahead of them on the drive up Thunderbolt's Way, expecting to be overtaken at any time, but apparently the NC was too good for them. We never saw them again. We were also lucky to get past a loaded truck just before we began the climb.

We had reports that Thunderbolt's needed maintenance, but the condition on the whole was very good, except for surface deterioration and collapsed edges, always on the tight left hand corners. The road was also wet, heavily shaded, and drying off was slow. However, there was no loss of traction on any of the unexpected rough spots.

As everyone knows, this is a great MX-5 run and we had a fast and unobstructed ascent. We resisted the temptation to stop at the Carson's Pioneer lookout because a number of tourists were there and we were not going to let them get in front! Besides, a lot of fog in the valley interfered with the distant view and we had our share of fog earlier that morning.

The descent to the west, winding down the mountainside, was fast and over far too soon. The road flattened out beyond Nowendoc and we drove across the plain towards Walcha at top speed on an indifferently surfaced road, the repairs being patchwork rather than remedial, but it was virtually traffic free. Driving this section of the road is pedestrian and ideal for auto transmission vehicles (*no offence to you paddle wheelers!*) the only excitement was dodging the rough surfaces and potholes.

Walcha was memorable as a place to stop – but for the wrong reasons. Don't pause for a bite to eat, a cuppa, or anything else (*unless you're desperate*) - you would be well advised to give it a miss and hold out until you make Uralla.

There we joined up with the New England Highway and by-passed Armidale to stop at Glen Innes to stretch legs, check McDonald's facilities and refuel ourselves and the car.

Advice that the New England Highway is bad for stone chips proved to be incorrect, at least in this area. The surface was excellent and well maintained. Traffic was also light in both directions because so many



people going north favour the coastal route. Driving was fast and uninspiring, *but we knew that was going to change.*

We stopped the night at Tenterfield and were off early the next morning on the Bruxner Highway to cross back to the coast. The car was iced up when we packed our gear into it, but the top went down regardless – the only way to travel where we were going!

Early birds catch the worm, we had a traffic free start and after a short run over the high plains we reached the mountain range. The warning sign read "*Winding Road – 25 kms*". It should have read "*This is MX-5 country!!*" But they were right about the winding roads; they went on and on, uphill and down dale. You reach a blind crest and, as soon as you get to the top, a tight corner comes right at you without warning. A flick of the stick and you are round and through. And never mind the speed advisory signs, your MX-5 can't read and just goes around those corners as if they don't exist. Torturous twists and turns serpentine and hairpins; this road has got the lot.



As you come off the mountain's steep descent onto the slopes, a lot of roadwork has been done and this section

is very smooth with sweeping downhill curves. After Drake the road rises again with another uphill run to give your car a workout. You push it through plenty of bends to the peak and down the other side until you reach the bottom and find more new road works smoothing out the path.

After Tabulam you get another piece of action with more winding roads, but this is pleasant top down MX-5 driving with great scenery and plenty of bends but these curves are better engineered, so less satisfying. The road takes on the image of a highway with well a maintained surface and no evidence of loose stones.

We drove into Casino for a routine coffee stop before moving on to Lismore and diverted there, taking the turnoff just out of town onto the Bangalow Road.

This road has the potential for good MX-5 driving, but it is marred by the volume of traffic and speed reduction down to 50k as you go through the hamlets. It doesn't help if you get caught behind caravans either – or even worse – slow drivers, because chances to overtake are limited by few passing lanes, the winding conditions and oncoming traffic in the straight sections. Next time we might try the winding Tourist Road 32 from Lismore via Dunoon which brings you onto the Pacific Highway north of Ocean Shores.

However, we avoided the highway road works north of Ballina and joined the new section at Bangalow. Our MX-5 style drive was over, but not forgotten and we would certainly do it again.

We did a number of great drives around the Gold Coast hinterland while we were there, including the back road to Muswellbrook from Nerang and return to Currumbin as well as a round trip from Oxenford, criss-crossing Mt. Tambourine on the steep winding access roads with a loop through Canungra.

There is also a very good run from Nerang up steep and narrow winding roads to Beechmont, the lower section being the best – plenty of gear work and even more fun, but go early to avoid getting caught behind trucks grinding their way up. You can do a loop through Canungra on this road too, but have to take care as the descent to the west, although winding, is narrow with insufficient room to pass comfortably on the tarmac in many parts. Great MX-5 country though!

The return trip was pretty routine; we drove the Pacific Highway south instead of going cross country through the mountains again because we were running out of time to attend a club committee meeting.

Now thats commitment for you!

Seán MacCormaic

MX5 BREAKFAST CLUB REPORTS-FAST BRECKIE AND SPIN RUN - Saturday, 2 May 2009

Twenty four MX5's set off at 7:30 am from Maccas at Dural for a run down to Wiseman's Ferry followed by an exhilarating special section along the northern bank of the river to Spenser testing the car's suspension stops and driver. As arranged the Spencer General Store had everyone's pre-ordered breakfasts ready for 8:30 am.

The weather on the day was idyllic and after a 45 minute stop it was time to leave with a few more MX5s arriving during breakfast. The second special section ran alongside Mangrove Creek twisting its way up to Mangrove Mountain with a combination of sweeping and tight 2nd and 3rd gear corners. After regrouping for everyone to catch up, some cars chose to cut back to arrive at Coffee & Lies on time whilst the remainder took a more casual cruise up to and then along the beautiful Yarramalong Valley with its bumpy road, Toyota utes and cyclists back to the F3 ensuring a restrained run.

From Tuggerah we motored down the freeway to the Hawkesbury River Bridge turnoff that saw the end of the official Club run but not the fun. With only the Hawkesbury Hill standing between a line of MX5s and nice cup of coffee the final special stage took a hiding with everybody taking the opportunity of making the most of a fast drive up the esses to the Pie in the Sky arriving at 11.00 am to meet with other Club members socialising over Coffee and Lies.

All things considered the 200 kilometre run was fun with a combination of unrestricted and controlled sections over poor to near perfect road conditions with everything from six lane highways to narrow country lanes, flat straits to tight technical ascents. A near perfect way to start your the weekend.



Batemans Bay: October 3rd - 5th 2009

Well watch out south coast: the MX-5 club is coming to town again over the October long weekend!

We plan to arrive in Batemans Bay around 2pm on the Saturday after pre-organization of who has the club 'party room' for the weekend. This is normally designated to the people with a) the largest room and b) the most in-room garbage bins.

Dinner will be partaken at our Motel so a nice (quiet??) night in.

Sunday will see us convoy down the coast for some great roads and scenery. Our first stop will be at Narooma where we will do a bit of seal watching from dry land (unless it has been raining)

Then down further south for a luncheon stop at Bermagui. Bermagui is a very pretty little coastal town. Yet to be decided is whether to go for the fish and chips from the local shop to eat in the adjacent park overlooking the marina or whether to go a bit more up market at the Country Club overlooking the golf course. Decisions, Decisions!!

After lunch, a run up to the National Heritage town of Tilba. there are some gorgeous little shops here....everything for that shopping connoisseur: from antiques to candles.

While the girls go for retail therapy there is Devonshire teas (or maybe the local hotel) for the gents.

So, we look forward to catching up with everyone for a great weekend.

And remember:

Pack light but don't forget the esky and scrabble!

Annette & Gary - Social Secretary

AHOC BRASS MONKEY RETURN RUN

Sunday 19 July 2009

The Brass Monkey lived up to its reputation with sub zero weather forecasts for Lithgow and

and forest passing through The Lagoon, Wiseman's Creek and Oberon to Tarana for a refreshment break. From Tarana some cars chose independent routes home with 15 cars heading off through Hampden then back to the Blue Mountains. With the Bells line of Road closed the final destination of Toque Café at Kurrajong was no longer an option and everyone made their own way home

With clear skies and temperatures ranging from sub-zero to 20° C, the fast as you dare Brass Monkey Run out and Return Run on everything from bouncy narrow back roads to test suspension and skill to wide asphalt roads cambered for speed there was something for everyone. If you have never been adventurous enough to take on the

Brass Monkey Run then you should do it in 2010 and drive back with the MX5 Breakfast Club.



Bathurst. Over 100 assorted roadsters took off in the dark at 6.00 am. Assorted English, Japanese and European metal, the MX5 the most numerous marque, charged down the F4 in the free for all that is hallmark of this event, then up into the mountains to meet the dawn, roofs down, engines revving in low gears with drivers gloved in full thermal gear determined to preserve all their body parts.

The Brass Monkey 2009 turned it on with frost on the grass from the Hydro Majestic through to Bathurst where all the cars were blanketed in ice. Then long line thinned out in the dash across the Western Slopes with three MX5s first into town before 8.00 am chased by an Austin Healey 3000.

After a hearty buffet breakfast and lap or two of the Mountain, 23 MX5s cars and 4 Datsun 2000's set off back to the city. A quick 110 km run up hill and down dale on "B" roads snaking through farmland





DRIVE TO CELEBRATE THE MX-5 LAUNCH IN SEPT 1989

Breakfast \$25 with \$5 discount for pre-registration

☺ **OVER \$2500 IN PRIZES & GIVE AWAYS**

- **MAJOR PRIZES FOR PRE-REGISTERED PARTICIPANTS**
- **TATLER'S LOFT – 3 nights luxury vineyard accommodation for 6**
- **PLUS Lattouf Spa treatments for 2, Awaba Café long lunch for 2, Tatler Wines, MX5 Mania Gift Vouchers and negotiating more give aways for the event**

☺ **3 CLUB RUNS TO BREAKFAST**

- **7.00 am FOR THE EARLY BIRDS from McGrath's Hill , 200 kilometres**
- **7.30 AM HUNTER CHAPTER from BP Beresfield to meet up at Broke**
- **8.30 AM FOR LATE RISERS from Mt Colah up the F3, 130 kilometres**

FOR UPDATED INFORMATION VISIT THE FORUM
<http://mx5cartalk.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=63&t=3778>

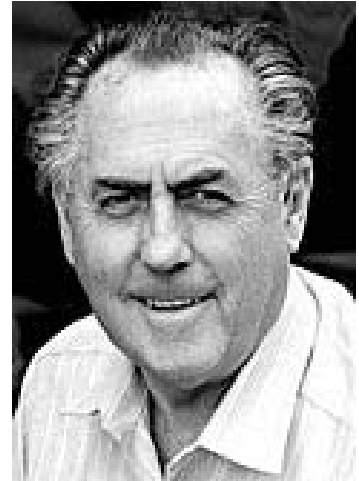
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**AND THE MX5 CLUB NSW SEPTEMBER EVENTS
CALENDAR**



Sir Jack Brabham's Racing Record

- Formula One World Drivers Champion 1959, 1960 and 1966
- Formula One World Constructors Champion 1966 and 1967
- Fourteen Grand Prix wins
- Thirteen Formula One Pole Positions
- Ten second and seven third place finishes
- Australian of the Year 1966
- Awarded the Order of the British Empire in 1967
- Knighted for his services to motor sport in 1979
- Only driver in Formula One history to win the championship in a car of his own construction
- Contested 126 Grand Prix from 1955 to 1970
- British Saloon Car Championship in 1965
- Won both the Australian and New Zealand Grand Prix three times
- Four-time winner of the European Formula Two Championship



Jack Brabham's three world championships were the product of both his engineering expertise and driving skill. His first two titles, in rear-engined Coopers he helped develop, confirmed the obsolescence of front-engined Formula One cars. His third title, in a Brabham, made him the only driver to become champion in a car of his own make. For his lifetime achievements, which also included nurturing the talents of other notable drivers and pioneering the business side of the sport, he became the first Formula One driver to receive a knighthood.

John Arthur 'Jack' Brabham, was born on April 2, 1926, in Hurstville, an Australian town near Sydney where his father was a greengrocer. From an early age Jack was far less interested in fruit and vegetables than in the Brabham shop's delivery vehicles. He learned to drive them long before he was eligible for a licence and by his early teens he was equally adept at keeping them roadworthy. His mechanical aptitude led him to a technical college where he studied practical engineering. Not academically-inclined, he left school at 15 and went to work in an engineering shop, then a garage. At 18 he joined the Royal Australian Air Force in Adelaide, where he wanted to learn to fly but was instead trained to fill a wartime shortage of flight mechanics. Upon his discharge, in 1946, an uncle in the construction business built him a workshop in Sydney, where Jack opened his own engineering establishment.

In 1951 he married Betty, who became the mother of their three sons, Geoffrey, Gary and David, all of whom would race, though not nearly as successfully as their father. Jack's introduction to motorsport came through a friend who raced midgets on dirt track ovals. Jack helped him build a new car and when his friend decided to stop driving Jack took over and became a regular winner. In

self-prepared midgets he won four successive Australian championships and was the 1953 hillclimb champion in a British-built Cooper-Bristol. Two years later his growing ambition to expand his motorsport horizons brought Jack to England. A meeting with John and Charles Cooper, constructors of his successful Australian car, led to a friendship and partnership that would propel the tiny Cooper Car Company and 'Black Jack' Brabham into the forefront of Formula One history.

With Brabham providing the inspiration (he helped persuade the Coopers to take the rear-engine route into Formula One racing) and the perspiration (he built up his first chassis in Cooper's workshop) the tiny British cars with the engines in the back sped to the front in an era previously dominated by big, front-engined Italian and German roadsters. In the Brabham-led team's first full championship season of 1958 the debut win for a Cooper came courtesy of Stirling Moss, who drove Rob Walker's private entry to victory in Argentina. In 1959 Moss won twice, but Brabham's victories in Monaco and Britain together with his consistently high placings resulted in the Australian winning a drivers' title that some thought owed more to stealth than skill, an opinion at least partly based on Brabham's low-key presence.

Always a man of few words - his nickname 'Black Jack' referred to both his dark hair and his propensity for maintaining a shadowy silence - he avoided small talk and was undemonstrative in the extreme. But behind the wheel he was anything but shy and retiring. He put his head down and drove exceedingly forcefully, opposite-locking his car dirt-track style, and was not averse to deliberately showering gravel in the face of a too closely following pursuer. His aversion for the limelight became more of a problem in 1960, when he completely dominated the nine-race series, winning

consecutively in Holland, Belgium, France, Britain and Portugal, en route to his second successive championship.

Following an unproductive 1961 season, when the Ferraris were all powerful, Brabham left Cooper to form Motor Racing Developments, in partnership with the talented Australian designer Ron Tauranac. The MRD Brabhams were quickly successful in several categories of racing, particularly Formula Two where for several years they dominated, affording the opportunity for many drivers to advance their careers. The Brabham Formula One car, which first appeared late in 1962, became steadily more competitive as the team leader personally perfected the chassis set-up and fine-tuned the Climax engines. In 1964 Brabham had the satisfaction of seeing his team mate Dan Gurney win in France and Mexico.

For 1966, when the new 3-litre formula came into effect, Brabham persuaded an Australian company Repco (a manufacturer of automotive components) to produce a Formula One engine from a venerable Oldsmobile V8 design. Equally ancient was Brabham himself, or so it seemed to the media and his much younger rivals who used to kid him about his age. Prior to the 1966 Dutch Grand Prix, his first race after his 40th birthday, 'Geriatric Jack' Brabham hobbled onto the starting grid at Zandvoort, wearing a long false beard and leaning on a cane. Sportingly, several of his laughing opponents helped him into the cockpit of his Brabham-Repco, which happened to be on pole position. Tossing aside his beard and cane Brabham proceeded to win that race, a feat he also

accomplished in France, in Britain and in Germany - on the notoriously difficult and dangerous Nurburgring - a victory he felt was the most satisfying of his career. Thus in 1966 Brabham became the first (and still only) driver, to win the championship in a car of his own make.

Brabham also established the precedent for Formula One drivers to become pilots of their own planes. Though such transport at the time was exotic, Brabham's tastes remained simple. Distrustful of foreign fare, he flew his own steaks to the races. His passengers over the years included a succession of his Brabham team mates – Bruce McLaren, Dan Gurney, Denny Hulme, Jochen Rindt, Jacky Ickx – all of whom benefited from his tutelage and made their mark in Formula One racing.

Jack Brabham, whose final victory came in the 1970 South African Grand Prix when he was 44, chose that season to retire as a driver. The Brabham team was sold to Bernie Ecclestone and Jack returned home to Australia, where he busied himself running a farm, a car dealership and an aviation company, and helped his sons with their racing careers. His contribution to British motorsport was officially recognised in 1985 and he became Sir Jack Brabham.

Text - Gerald Donaldson

From the Official Formula 1 website



WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Philip Christie
Joe Craddy
Patrick & Merla Bramston
Peter Carpenter
Bill Shipton & Lisa Boes
Don Battisson
Lynda & Mark Gray
Matthew Shepherdson
Pamela M Connell
Mark Shannon

Sean Dunkley
Simeon Taylor
Rina & Dennis Castellarin
John & Carol Sullivan
Greg Cox
Neil & Eleanor Lacey
David Wells & Mary Cutler
Parin Tjandra
Peter Miller



WET WAKEFIELD





SLIP SLIDING AWAY