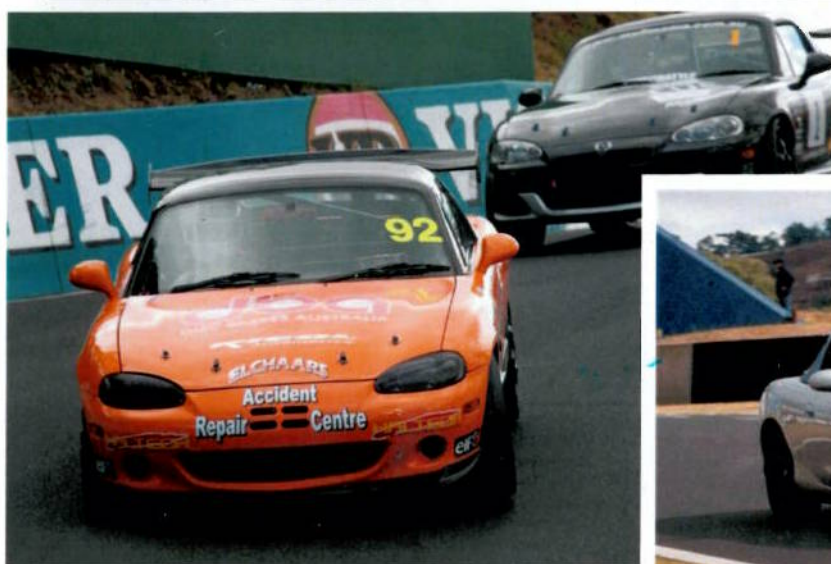
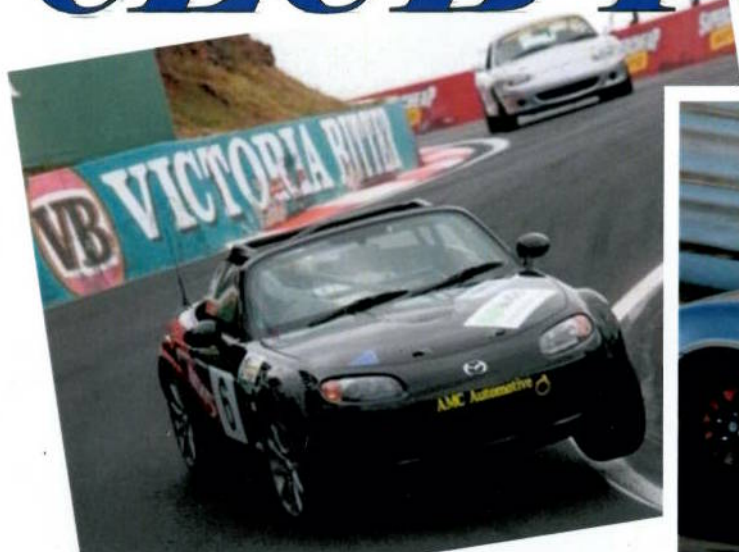




March - April 2008



CLUB TORQUE



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BATHURST WEEKEND OF THRILLS AND MORE THRILLS



From left, Stewart, Russell, John, Greg, Pat, Renny, and Ed sharing the 'high' after a run.



Mike Hicks shows Ed Cory and an Elan the way through the Dipper.

Welcome to the March-April edition of Club Torque Magazine.

This edition has heaps of interesting reading for racing fans, history buffs, plus all the regular reports.....

Ken Liston has an interest in the history of racing in Australia, so who better to ask to head the history of racing section.

Stories from The Panorama Experience from Chriss Tonna and Ed Cory, with Mike Hicks's own day on the track, great reading and you really feel the excitement that they felt on the day.

For those who heard that Natmeet was on and didn't think it was their cup of tea, Peter Feutrill's article will make you wish you had gone.....

Our thanks go to Keith Monahan, Peter Feutrill, Mike Hicks, Paul Beerworth and Ken Liston. Captains Report, Social Report and an enjoyable story from Cheryl Ashton on a very wet run, Natmeet photos and more.

No crossword this edition ran out of room.

We had a couple of requests for additions to Club Torque and hopefully we have achieved this, thank you and hope you continue to enjoy !!!!!!!!!!!!!

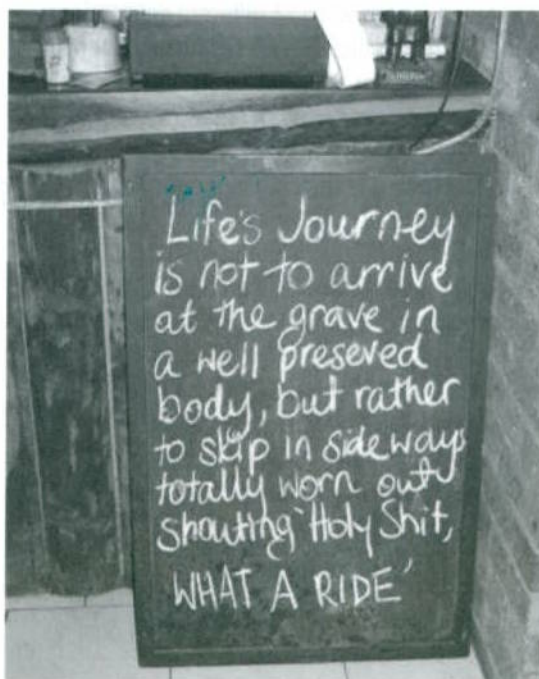
Sandra & Paul Williams
Publications

President's Report.

The past few months have just flown by, now we are well in to autumn and the cooler weather. In February I had a quick trip to Perth at short notice. While I was there I happened to have a free evening and met up with some members of the WA Club. We had a lovely drive followed by a pleasant dinner with about 30 or 40 members. They were welcoming some new members to the Club. It was good to catch up with some friends from previous Natmeets and the trip to Seattle 2 years ago and meet some of the group that were coming to Natmeet in Victoria over Easter. We spent Easter weekend in Beechworth. The weather was perfect, and the company was even better! We even managed to bring home a few trophies, with Stewart Clode, Stephen Cromer winning on the track and Phil Mayo and I managing a second in our respective classes. Stewart Clode managed to win \$1000 worth of tyres from Yokohama in the regularity. At Concours our winners were Peter & Jill Feutrill, in their NB8A. Dave (Speedy) and Amy Perin, won the Peoples Choice Award with their highly modified NA6A plus trailer, and Anthony and Jen Slater came home with the best NB8B. In 2 years time, South Australia will be the hosts, so start planning now!

The next few months are filled with some great events and some interesting technical nights, so I look forward to meeting up with at one of these events!

Jean Cook



NEW M-X5 MEMBERS

Jacqui & Terry Widdicombe

Leigh Hemmings

Lyn Stewart

Jennifer Roman

Suzanne Pointon



Canberra Chapter and Verse

In my last Chapter and Verse I promised you photos and story of the Canberra Chapter BBQ Trailer build for this edition. So many things have been happening that progress has been delayed but I can report that all the bits have been assembled. Thanks to MX5 Mania for the half cut. Getting that down from the big smoke was a story in itself, best left to an occasion where a bottle or two of red is shared amongst friends! Thanks to Jill and Dennis for fetching it.

Part of the reason for the slow progress has been that Dave Battisson of Carco Exhaust and Automotive, one of our three fine sponsors and who is building the trailer, was busy with the preparation of the Carco Race Team Cars, the Turbo Twins, driven by Pat Rooke and Russell Battisson, for the Festival of Sports Cars FOSC at bathurst over the Easter Weekend.

The story is best told by those who were there:

6th gear, shift-lights ablaze, turning into the chase....priceless!

I had the best Easter weekend ever.

I was invited to enter the FOSC at Mt Panorama. It was the first time in 40 years that anyone with less than an National Level (NL) license was allowed on the mountain. There were 500 cars entered of all makes and types. There were all different categories of racing for those with their NL and regularity events for those on PC or L2S. Out of the 500 cars sadly only 15 or so had female drivers and of those, 4 were driving MX5s.

There was great racing and dicing in the regularity events. Several times across the weekend Russell, Chris and I were pretty much locked together working our way though the traffic and some of those guys got quite a shock to have us come through so quickly. Down Conrod Straight they were all good as they kept to the left. Across the top there'd be 3 or 4 using different lines thereby covering just about the whole track. By the end of the weekend the slower guys were more used to looking in their mirrors and we all had our headlights on so it was a lot of fun.

The highlight of the weekend for me was controlling the car after my power steering broke and still posting a fast time.

All the other race and regularity people had a great time and improved their times each run as they became familiar with the track. Based on the times we all did next year should be even bigger!!!

I want to give a big thank you to all the officials and organizers of the event, great work!

Also I want to thank the entire Canberra supporter group for making the weekend so much fun - Ed, Angela, John, Ron, Wes, Mel, Toni, Peter, and especially the CARCO boys Russell and Dave, but most of all my team manager and best friend Greg.

Team CARCO rules!

Turbo Girl (Pat Rooke)

Turbo Boy (Russell Battisson) has his story to tell.

The lead up to FOSC was very busy with Turbo Girl's engine and gearbox build to be completed.

After a quick retune on Wednesday night it was time to pack the car and load the trailers for the trip to the Mountain.

Thursday morning and we were off to Bathurst. Not so fast. About 4km south of Goulburn the Volvo tow car and trailer had a BIG MOMENT with the trailer desiding to run things for a while and use BOTH lanes and then some.

After a quick re pack of the car to change the weight distribution we were able to continue on our way.

The Volvo was not done yet. 14km after leaving Goulburn it breaks down. On a great big hill with blind corners, one option was to burn the bl**dy thing. We hooked the trailer up to Dave's Magna V6 and away it went. Russell sits on the side of the road for 3 hours while Peter Browning returns to Canberra to pick up his Falcon. They continue on towards Bathurst expecting to see the Magna on the side of the road (Editors note: go easy on the Mitsu!). We arrive at the Bathurst Goldfields where we were staying and find that the Magna had made it.

Friday rolls around and at scrutineering I find that the front upper inner control arm bolt is loose. A simple fix and it's all go for the weekend. Friday was a slow day so I checked out the Play Station 2 V8Supercars Game to get the corners right. Later I got in four laps of the circuit and felt that the rear end was not right.

So on Saturday morning I reset the rear toe in. The first qualifying session I find myself in 40th place on

the grid. Anyway I get on and attack the Mountain regardless.

We are limited to only 20 minutes for this run so I work at trying to get in a clean lap. Getting a clean lap is almost impossible. Overtaking across the top of the mountain is not for the faint-hearted. After 4 laps I catch up to Ed Cory and overtake him up Mountain Straight only to be held up across the top. On the run down to Forest Elbow Ed is still behind me and I am pushing the car in front to get out of the way on entering Conrod Straight and go WOT on Turbo Boy. Wow! Ed is lost behind me and the cars in front seem to have stopped.

"Hitting the Rev Limiter in 6th gear down Conrod Straight has to be the biggest buzz ever."

Sunday comes round and our group is first on the track. Having qualified 1st, I lead the group out behind the safety car for one lap. With no time to warm tyres it is a mad scramble up Mountain Straight and across the top then a casual drive down Conrod Straight to start a flying lap. The trick was to get clear track all the way, not easy with slow cars car lapping in 4+ mins and me lapping in 2:36!

While Pat and Russell and the Carco groupies were at Bathurst, three Canberra cars headed to Beechworth for Natmneet 2008. Great roads, great company and a terrific weekend. Our chapter run in March took us

out to Crookwell to visit the Sock Factory and enjoy lunch at the world famous Crookwell Bistro. The run took in the newly sealed Gunning to Crookwell road, a must for MX5 drivers, and we saw how electricity was generated from the wind at the Crookwell Wind Farm. The only complaint was that it was a bit blowy out there!

Treasures galore for members who participated in the first Chapter Treasure Hunt in April. Attracting club members from afar, well Wollongong is a bit away, the treasure hunt was deemed a success with only one member getting lost. His 14 year old grand daughter's navigation was cited as a reason! All the other hunters successfully negotiated the deliberate msitake in the final clue. Thanks to ian and barbara for putting this event together.

When you read this, the Canberra Chapter will have just completed "Targa Trail", 16 cars spending two weeks in tremendous Tasmania following the Targa Tasmania Route, trying to emulate our sponsor Barry Faux of Fox Antiques and Imports, who won the Shannons Late Classic Competition in Targa Tasmania 2008. Congratulations Barry and Therezial!

Zoom, Zoom

Paul Beerworth

CAPTAIN'S REPORT

In our first year as Club Captains we have done a lot of driving to bring members a different and hopefully enjoyable club runs each month.

First up was our February run where we led a group of cars on a pleasant run via the back roads to Wakefield Park to spend a day watching the racing side of our Club, showing us how it is done on the track. Mike Hicks took time out to give the group a talk on what is done on a track day and he even escorted us on two controlled of laps around the track, which has encouraged a few to put their hands up for a track day.

Our March run was to the Central Coast, leaving from Rolfe Park and heading up the old highway through Peats Ridge stopping at Yarramalong for morning tea before heading through Wyong, Toukley and The Entrance arriving at the Diggers Club Tuggerah for lunch. It was great to see a few new members along

for this run and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves.

Upcoming runs are in May from Parramatta to the Mountains to visit some of the old race tracks which will be led by Ken and Maggie Liston.

Our June long weekend will be in Dubbo which is filling very fast.

July will be our traditional Christmas in July.

Look forward to seeing new and old members on a run real soon.

Zoom Zoom Zoom

Kim & Pete Ranger



The Social Scene with Phil

We have a few big months coming up for members who like to meet, have fun and sometimes learn a bit more about their car.

Starting on 4th May we have a **Show & Shine event and bowls** at **Hawks** on Second Avenue Eastwood. Bowls should be a fun time given that on my one previous attempt at this "sport" I managed to have the bias wrong and sent a bowl across two adjacent games. I'm sure those who attend won't make the same mistake. Then a couple of days later on the 7th we have a **Tech night** at **Meguiar's** where they will show us how to make our cars gleam. For one lucky member, their car will be used to demonstrate what can be achieved. We will also receive a sample of one of their products and get a 20% discount off everything they sell. Not bad for just turning up.

In June there is a trip to **Dubbo** on the long weekend, organised by our Captain. MX-5 trips away are very popular and tend to be quickly booked out, so to avoid disappointment, get your applications in early. Those who like to get out with the roof down in the cool weather can head off on the **Brass Monkey** run on 15th with the Austin Healy Club. This is a prepaid event so check out the Club web site for details. On the 17th we have a **Tech night** at **Heasman's**, one of the longest running suspension specialists in Sydney. If you want to find out how to make your MX-5 a bit

more stable on the road or a bit quicker through the corners, come along and see what can be accomplished with a little tweak of your alignment.

Onto July and on the 22nd another **Tech night** is to be held at **Peninsular Sports Cars** where we will learn about race car preparation and car servicing. Peninsular has for many years raced British sports cars but finally has seen the light and is now adding MX-5s to their inventory. So if you would like to see how far the development of the sports car has come over the last 50 years come along.

Also this month, when the cold weather has really set in, we have our **Christmas in July** lunch. This year we are heading for the mountains and the historic **Carrington Hotel** at Katoomba for a delicious hot meal. Bookings need to be made so again see our web site for the form as bookings close on 11th July. For those that want to plan well in advance, the October long weekend away is heading south to Bateman's Bay. Details will be released in the next few months, so mark it on your calendar now.

Finally if you have any social activity that you think would be good for us, please let me know and we will try and hold it.

Phil Ashton

Whats coming up on the Mx-5 social calendar

Christmas in July

When: Sunday 27th July

Meeting: MacDonald's Car Park at the Star Service Station, Eastern Creek, on the F4 heading west.

Time: 10:30am for 11:00am departure

Details: Our Christmas in July this year is the Blue Mountains.

Come along and join us at the historic nice hot three course Christmas dinner.

Cost is \$28 for members and \$48 for non members attending as a guest.

RSVP: Is required with payment for dinner by 11th July 2008. Further details and application form will be up on the Club site shortly.



heading for the crisp, clean air of

Carrington Hotel, Katoomba for a

Mt Panorama? -

Been there, done that, got the timesheet

Wait a minute, what am I saying? I have actually raced on Mt Panorama?! It must have been a dream; I am getting carried away with my fantasies...

Well, no. It really happened. I do have the timesheet, and the photos, and the memories. Three whole days of memories! Not just me, around about 500 of us spent three days thrashing around Mt Panorama, probably the best-known racetrack in Australia, and also the hardest to actually get to drive on. Thanks to the Festival of Sporting Cars, who in conjunction with Mercedes-Benz Australia organized the first club race meeting at Bathurst in something like 30 years.

And it was not just a race meeting, the organizers were able to convince CAMS that they could run a regularity event for non-racing drivers, that is to say drivers who are licensed for speed events (for example, Supersprints and club track days). These events are run along the same lines as the regularity events at our club track days. At Bathurst there were over 120 entries for the regularities, split into two events of 60 or so. The Club regularity competitors included Mike Hicks, Stewart Temesvary, John Burgess, Renny and David Rodan, Chris Gough, Joe Macare, Aaron Giltrow, Dennis Brady, Kevin Addison, Pat Rooke, Russell Battisson and Ed Cory.

We MX-5ers acquitted ourselves well, running at or near the front of all our events. Incidents were few, the regularity cars emerging pretty well unscathed and vindicating the opportunity given by showing that it was feasible to run regularity events at Mt Panorama.

Fastest of the regularity cars was Russell Battisson, with a 2:38.4963 lap, Russell hitting the rev limiter into the Chase at around 275 kmh – no surprise his disks are glowing red...

But Bathurst is more than a quick lap – it is the heart stopper of going over Skyline ... the Dipper lined with concrete (no mistakes allowed!) ... the blind and oh so fast Reid Park and McPhillamy Park sweepers... It is exiting Hell Corner in a gaggle of cars and jockeying for position all the way up Mountain Straight ... exiting Forrest Elbow and lining up the Healeys, Zeds and MGs down Conrod ...

Most of all, it is about the buzz of running competitive speeds at this, one of the 'icon' circuits of Australian motorsport.

Roll on Easter 2009! I'll be back – who's coming with me?

ED CORY

The Harley versus Gods best Invention

Arthur Davidson, the inventor of the Harley-Davidson motorcycle, Died and went to heaven.

At the gates, St. Peter told Arthur, "Since you've been such a

Good man and your motorcycles have changed the world, your

Reward is; you can hang out with anyone you want to in Heaven."

Arthur thought about it for a minute, and then said, "I want to hang out with God."

St. Peter took Arthur to the Throne Room and introduced him to God.

God recognized Arthur and commented, "Okay, so you were the one who invented the Harley Davidson Motorcycle?" God said, "Yes"

"Well," said Arthur, "professional to professional you have some major design flaws in your invention:

1. There is too much inconsistency in the front-end protrusions;
2. It chatters constantly at high speeds;
3. Most of the rear ends are too soft and wobble too much;
4. The intake is placed way too close to the exhaust;
5. And the maintenance costs are enormous!

"Hmmmmmm, you have some good points there," replied God, "hold on." God went to the Celestial super computer, typed in a few words and waited for the results. The computer printed out a slip of paper and God read it. "Well, it may be true that my invention is flawed," God said to Arthur, "but according to these numbers, more men are riding my invention than yours."

Gotta love it!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Competition Report

Competition in 2008 commenced on Sunday 17th February at our club track day at Wakefield Park. Scheduled to be our "Triple Treat" these plans were upset by the recent track resurfacing work that prevented us from using the "hillclimb", so we reverted to our normal supersprint & regularity format. Fifty-seven competitors, including forty-eight club members contributed to a successful day. Thank you to Rod Menzel for taking on the Clerk of Course duties thus allowing me the enjoyable task of sampling both the MX-5 Racing "NCs". It was great fun chasing the Aston Martin Vantage in Joe Marcare's red car and even better breaking into the 12s in Chris Gough's white car. Thanks Chris and Joe for the opportunity to drive both cars.

Visitor Ashley Slavkovic driving Russell Battisson's "Turbo Boy" recorded fastest time of the day. His time of 1.07.33 just shaded Val Stewart's 1.07.48 in her RX 7. Third was Karl Battisson in his clubman closely followed by the third "Carco" car of "Turbo Girl" with Pat Rooke at the helm. In the regularity John Burgess was the winner from Matthew Guyder and Ian Miller. **Full results from the day are on the motorsport page of the club's website.**

Easter was a busy weekend with club members having the choice of Natmeet at Beechworth in Victoria that incorporated a track day at Winton on the Sunday or the Festival of Sporting Cars Race and Regularity meeting at Mount Panorama at Bathurst. No prizes for guessing that I chose Bathurst, the opportunity to drive competitively on one of the greatest test of driving skills in the world was just too

great, but more of that later and elsewhere.

At Natmeet five of the New South Wales attendees competed on the short circuit in the morning and the longer circuit in the afternoon. They were Stewart Clode (1st) and Phil Mayo (2nd) in the Clubman class, Stephen Cromer (1st) in the NB class; Jean Cook (2nd) in the Standard NC class and Paul Beerworth in the Modified NC class. Stewart Clode took out the Natmeet Motorsport Championship Award.

Andrew Irwin and Mark Hellmund drove down to just compete at the track day. Andrew Irwin ran second in his class with Mark only a fraction of a second behind on both tracks.

Bathurst, what a daunting track with its climb up the mountain, the flowing corners across the top between Reid Park and Skyline, the drop over Skyline down through the Esses and the Dipper and down to Forrest Elbow followed by the run down Con-rod Straight to the kink before Caltex Chase sheer exhilaration all the way. It's like no other track in Australia with its blind corners and concrete walls on both side of the track with little room for mistakes anywhere.

Twenty-three New South Wales club members competed over the Easter Weekend. Ten raced with the balance running in regularity events. Reports from Ed Cory on the regularities and Chris Tonna on the races appear elsewhere. I just have to compliment two of our young members, Arron Giltrow and David Roden on their great performances over the weekend. **Congratulations on a job well done.**

The following weekend saw the commencement of the nine round State Supersprint Championship at Oran Park G P, thirteen members competed helping the club into second place on the club point-score table only 8 points behind last year's champions the New South Wales Road Racing Club. The gap this year has narrowed considerably and we should really be breathing down their neck after round 2 at Wakefield Park on the 27th April. Class winners on the day were Stewart Temesvary in 1B and David Roden in 2B. It was great to see a number of new supersprinters joining the ranks of Teamx5 at the State Championship; they included Phil Ashton, Robert Gage, Andrew Irwin, Mark Hellmund, Robert Kai and David Roden. It was also good to see the return of an old face that of Lindsay Burke back in Robert Kai's RX-7.

On the weekend of the 12th and 13th of April we saw the running of Round 1 of the Production Sports Car Championship at Wakefield Park. Highlight of the weekend was Chris Tonna's race win in Race 2 the first on Sunday morning. Chris finished sixth in races 1 and 3. David Raddatz came away with two fourths and a fifth and Nick Martinenko back in the turbo car had a good weekend. Matilda Mravicic drove the old naturally aspirated car for the last time, the car finding a new home at the conclusion of race 3. It is believed that the new owners intend to run it at club track days and at Supersprints. Patricia Rooke completed the line up of MX-5s. Rumours have it that Pat was given a tough initiation into Prod

Sports, although 8th in race 2 was a good result. Next round of Production Sports will be at Eastern Creek on the weekend of the 24th and 25th May.

A date has now been set with the Victorian club for this-years New South Wales/ Victoria Interstate Challenge; it will be Sunday 21st September. This year it's the Victorians turn to host the event. Having previously competed at Winton and Phillip Island we thought it would be good to compete at Sandown Park this year. So all you club track day competitors, supersprinters and racers here is your chance to

compete at Sandown Park. A CAMS L2S licence will be required which I can easily arrange for you. So mark Sunday 21st September in your diaries.

We have a busy six weeks or so coming up with round 2 of the supersprints at Wakefield Park on Sunday the 27th April. Our next Wakefield Track Day is on the following day Monday the 28th April; at the time of writing this report a few days before the closing date we have forty-three entries. Sunday 18th May is round 3 of the supersprints at Eastern Creek followed by the second round of the Production Sports Car races at Eastern

Creek on 24th and 25th May. 1st of June is round 4 of the supersprints at Oran Park GP.

Don't forget that we will be hosting round 5 of the Supersprint Championship on Sunday 20th July at Wakefield Park. We will need club members to assist as officials on this occasion so if you can help out it would be greatly appreciated. Just drop me an email at

compition@mx5.com.au **Safe and enjoyable MX-5 motoring till next we meet.**

Mike Hicks

FESTIVAL OF SPORTING CARS-

BATHURST-EASTER WEEKEND-2008

A few years ago, if someone even suggested the thought of me driving a race car, which I had built in my own shed, around a race track called Mt Panorama, I would have called for the white jacket and padded cell myself. Thankfully a group of guys known as the FOSC (Festival of Sporting Cars) pushed ahead with that dream and over the Easter weekend in March 2008, almost 500 cars including many, many MX5s descended on the most famous piece of road in Australia, Mt Panorama, Bathurst.

We had cars competing in both racing and regularity events. My focus is on the racing events, which I competed in and this report is obviously focused that way. Kudos to the guys and gals that competed in the Regularity events, the trouble with regularity is that you are grouped amongst cars with differing potential and drivers with differing ability. This makes it hard to get a decent lap

around a track that is notorious for biting very hard. The regularity competitors did very well and showed yet again, how great the MX-5 is for competition. Worthy of note too are the three NC's the MX-5 Racing gang had circulating quickly all weekend. **Excellent work guys!**

Friday was supposed to be a day of familiarisation participating in what they call "masters" sessions. These sessions were following a pace car around the track to be shown the lines from the experienced guys in the lovely Mercedes Benz sponsored saloons. Sadly for me, that meant going way to slow to really learn the lines meaningfully and mostly, not even being able to see the pace car. By the end of Friday, I have completed 2 full dry laps and 3 full wet laps of the track. I would have preferred some open practice sessions of fixed time duration but I'm sure the FOSC guys will improve this aspect for the next event.

Saturday morning greeted us with sunny skies and cool air, which was good news for the turbo cars including mine. I was in the first sports car group (there was 2 groups split by speed with over 100 marque sports cars in total). Qualifying is usually pretty helter skelter with a good grid position key to having a good weekend. Unfortunately for me, I sensed some smoke in the cabin around lap 4 and stopped at McPhillamy Park at the top of the mountain to ensure the cars vital signs were OK. Luckily they were fine (with a new race motor, one is best to be safer rather than sorry ...and poorer!) but the fire marshals saw water dripping from my car and wouldn't allow me to enter back onto the track. I had managed to qualify 15th out of 50 cars. The water was most likely a leftover from driving in the wet on Friday.

Race 1 was later on Saturday and I was lucky enough to get a

great start. Racing is quite unique in that you can usually only go as fast as the guys and gals around you, so if you get a good start, your times will often reduce, but with a poor start, your times will suffer and you can be caught behind cars that are very much slower than you. Mistakes also have this affect. It was a pretty uneventful race with all of us coming to terms with the track and having to race around it. I finished 9th and was simply happy to have survived and been at the right end of the results. At the end of the race, all of the drivers in our area (about 20 MX-5s) were running around like children full of adrenaline and excitement. This track is so special it has that affect on you.

Race 2 was another repeat of race 1 with similar cars and a similar result. On Sunday, there were another 3 races and for the MX-5 crew and for me they were very enjoyable, as I had found another 5 seconds a lap in speed, which helped me finish further up the field. The highlight was the Mazda only race. It was the first time we had been grouped together with Improved Production cars (RX-7s, RX-3s, etc) and about 30 MX-5s in Marque sports specification - over 50 in total. The cars are quite different in modification level but the performance of the cars is fairly evenly spread. I had a great battle with four of the

improved production RX7's which was a definite highlight of my race weekend. I have some excellent in car footage of some "close" racing without a scratch on either car being found. The racing was competitive but fair - as it should be.

Sadly not all contact can be light and some racing lowlights including Lou lezzi's debut meeting for his turbo "Shreck" MX5 being sideswiped by a taxi (Commodore). It caused substantial panel damage but Lou raced on with the aid of race tape. Matilda Mravacic also tangled with the same taxi in an earlier race. Special mentions go to our Qld MX-5 racing counterparts, whom descended on mass to the mountain. Nick Leontsinis driving a silver SP spec turbo set the pace for most of the weekend lap times wise until the final race on Sunday when David Raddatz and the black MX-5 Mania car claimed the fastest MX-5 racing lap time during a race of 2:32.3659. In the regularity events, Russell Battison in the Carco SP replica lapped in 2:35.712. I was personally very happy with a 2:37:5153 with plenty more left to achieve next year.

As for highlights, the following should explain why it was amazing (for me anyway):

- The entry speed into Caltex Chase in my car was around 250kph in 6th gear with the shift light ablaze.
- Top speed up mountain straight was in excess of 220kph in 6th gear
- The top of the mountain is simply awesome!!
- You wipe off around 180kph in the braking zone after entering the Chase
- The cars get so light and floaty on top of the hills on Conrod and Mountain Straights that they physically move across the road without any steering.

Finally, I have been watching racing at Bathurst since I was 3 years old. You always hear the professional drivers talk about how amazing a race track it is to race on. They often compare it to tracks like Spa-Francochamps in Belgium and the Nurburgring in Germany. Having now raced there, I can only imagine how amazing those other tracks are. Bathurst is one amazing piece of bitumen and I and the other runners are privileged to add it to our racing resumes.

Chriss Tonna

Photo on the Night Stand

After a long night of love making, the guy notices a photo of another man, on the woman's nightstand by the bed. He begins to worry.
 "Is this your husband" he nervously asks.
 "No, silly," she replies, snuggling up to him.
 "Your boyfriend, then? *He continues.*

"No, not at all," she says, nibbling away at his ear.
 "Is it your dad or your brother?" he inquires, hoping to be reassured.
 "No, no, no! You are so hot when you're jealous!" she answers.
 "Well, who in the heck is he, then?" He demands.
 She whispers in his ear
"That's me before the surgery"

NATMEET NATTERS

Many of our fellow NSW MX-5ers had decided to drive to Natmeet on the Wednesday before Easter to avoid the traffic. But because we had to work up until Thursday we decided to drive to Wagga on Thursday night then to cruise to Beechworth on Friday.

Good Friday dawned fine and I went out to give Kermit a breakfast wash. After all you wouldn't want to turn up at Natmeet in a dirty car. We had arranged to meet a small convoy at the submarine at Holbrook from the Canberra chapter (Paul & Margaret NC), Stewart & Leona (NB8A) and Stephen and Carol from NSW (NB 8B – classic). I decided to take the back roads from Wagga to Holbrook which is actually the area where I grew up, so it was a real trip down memory lane in more ways than one. I was a bit of legend when I was 18 in that did the 32 miles to our farm in 28 minutes in dad's HR Holden. Whilst I am now much older and wiser I can tell you that even without trying I could have bettered that time. What a hoot!

We met our little group at Holbrook and coffees were arranged and we all discussed how much we were looking forward to Natmeet and how we had or had not managed to get 5 days of clothes into the cars. Those with helmets for the track days had special challenges as they take up a lot of space. Stewart, who it is rumoured never takes his roof down, was making good use of the 'parcel shelf'.

So off we went and I must say with such a beautiful day and the roof down (except for Stewart) even just 4 MX-5's turned heads in convoy. We followed Paul and Margaret for two reasons, one

because they said they knew which roads to take and two because they have a woman in the dash telling them which roads to take. Worked fine until we got to Beechworth and then Paul tried to turn around and take us back to Wodonga. But we were on to his trick and soon found ourselves at the Beechworth Bakery for lunch. It was great to start seeing lots and lots of MX-5's parked in the streets. The first group we spoke to were from Tasmania. Apparently they had fitted enormous snorkels for the run across Bass straight and kept their roofs up. It was here that I discovered that the run from Wagga to Holbrook had attracted every low flying locust in the Riverina into the front of the car. Not only that but a swarm of bees had formed to take away the remains and that made things just a little tricky. So much for washing it this morning!

Up the hill to our destination for the next 4 nights, La Trobe at Beechworth really did live up to the pictures in the flyers. A tree lined drive in with massive English oaks on both sides and buildings dating back to the 1800's, when it operated as the May Day Hills Mental Asylum.

Registration was a very friendly and welcoming encounter with our Victorian hosts. We were given a pack of information and then we found our accommodation and unpacked. I think I should have taken a photograph of how it was packed so I could reproduce the packing on Tuesday. When we got to our room we were pleasantly surprised to find a welcome pack including Natmeet jackets, shirts, coffee cups, key rings and bottled vintage Natmeet water.

Notice lots of packs and packing happening.

Time was available to wash cars, but because of the water restrictions it was much more labour intensive than usual, but with the help of the plastic waste bin from our room and considerable elbow grease I managed to get rid of the bugs. Not before the Natmeet photographer took a couple of shots. I think I could have won some sort of prize for smuggling livestock across the border. Even though it wasn't actually live by the time we got to the border.....

So off to the dinner which was a barbeque and we could see just how big the event was. About 70 cars and 120 people so a fantastic turnout. All weekend I was saying "look there's an MX-5". We were introduced to the organising committee and given a rundown of events for tomorrow. After dinner we decided to take the ghost tour of the old buildings. This was a little spine tingling especially in the old hospital wards where the patients had the electric shock treatments.

Saturday dawned fine, cool but beautiful and after breakfast there was a flurry of cleaning, polishing, plucking and preening as we got our cars ready for concourse. They all looked sensational on the lawns. The NSW members also looked sensational decked out in our red shirts. After judging and morning tea we headed off in convoys for Mount Beauty and we had the chance to take some very MX-5 type roads, but all too soon we were at our lunch stop at Annapurna Winery at Mount Beauty for a very nice antipasto plate a wine and much chatting. After lunch some went up the hill

to Falls Creek and some went down the hill to Yackandandah. We went down the hill and it was a very nice run alongside a river and then through the hills. At Yackandandah there was an opportunity to look at the shops and for once I was very happy for Jill to browse knowing that there was no way we could fit another thing into the car for the trip home, especially seeing as we now had more clothes than we came with because of the Natmeet pack.

Dinner on Saturday night was a masked event and you were required to bring a bushranger theme item. People had really given this some effort and we all had a fun time. There was a spot question & answer time and lots of people got items donated by Mazda. Locals entertained us with stories of Ned Kelly and his gang.

Sunday was again a beautiful day and we headed off the Winton racetrack. Our more sporting members had been up since about 5 equipped with breakfast in a box. At the track we did the funkhana. It was very

unusual to drive whilst blindfolded and being directed by your passenger! We watched the 'racers' and then did a few 'parade laps'. Excellent although the term parade was a very loose one! Had lunch, then we headed off to the wineries and back to Beechworth. That night there was another dinner with band and much dancing was had by all.

Our trip on Monday was to Mount Hotham for lunch. We stopped at Bright for morning tea and all the cars were assembled for photos. The first part of the drive was great, but then we got stuck behind a caravan and this was very frustrating. Eventually he pulled over but it was close to the top of the mountain. Let's just say when he finally came past after we had parked up top he got a few raspberries!

Monday dinner was the glitzy night with presentations for concourse, motor sport and overall winners and State winners. Jill and I were very surprised but wrapped to win the concourse for best NB8A. I guess those locusts got me

cleaning just that bit harder. From our original convoy of 4 we did very well with Stephen taking out his category in track day and Stewart winning the Yokahama award for the track day - \$1,000 in tyres for his regularity, pretty good for a bloke who probably has about 4 sets of wheels and tyres in his shed. South Australia won the State prize.

Tuesday after breakfast we said our farewells and 5 cars headed back via the Snowy Mountains. Unfortunately it rained the entire way, but it was still a great drive. In fact one of our group said that it was better than the great ocean road because that drive now has too many (slow) tourists on it. Kangaroos are something to watch out for, however – even in the middle of the day

So that's it - our first Natmeet, but not our last. It was wonderfully organised by the Victorian club and the next one will be in 2010 in South Australia somewhere, so I encourage lots of NSW members to take the trip, it will be great!

Peter & Jill Feutrill (NB8A)

Club Regalia

So you have bought the car, joined the Club, gone on the runs as well as the great weekend trips away and attended Club events, **now** it's time to wear the great MX-5 merchandise. It ranges from men's or ladies' shirts, caps and shirts. The range of merchandise changes will change from time to time depending on the season, and the availability of sizes, styles and colours will vary with demand.

Winter stock is now in. Be sure to come to this Club event and check them out! **The famous three way winter jackets are back in stock** and beanies.

Come on a Club Run or Club Event – details are in the Monthly Events Calendar OR Regalia ORDER FORM is now on the WEB for postal orders.

Ray and Pam

Run to Cataract Dam - An action packed day filled with Fog, Free Style "Skating", Fun and a few new Friends.



After being warmed by a caffeine hit at McDonalds Heathcote we headed south down Princes Highway under a very grey and threatening sky.

We started with 16 cars - 14 with "lids" up and two brave (stupid?) cars who decided to shoot the breeze. Phil and Cheryl only lasted until the Waterfall turn off, however, Stefan decided to multi-task and have a shower and shampoo while driving between Heathcote and Sublime Point.

The drive through Lady Wakehurst Drive gave real meaning to "rain forest". The rain on the leaves made the foliage along the "s-es" sparkle and even more beautiful.

Sublime Point provided us with a picturesque "white out" of fog and intermittent glimpses of Austinmer and the ocean. We continued south and our intrepid leaders came through the CB radio warning us of water across the road just before the Picton turn-off. Unfortunately this was not heard by the drivers of the Silver Falcon Station Wagon and Red Monaro who thought they were auditioning for "Dancing with the Stars" as they did a less

than elegant "360" across the road smashing from barrier to barrier just in front of Maggie & Ken and Pam & Ray. Quite obviously not the precision drivers in performance cars like our MX-5's. Three cheers for our members who stopped and offered assistance to the smashed cars and shaken drivers.

Three cheers also to Geoff's parents Bob and June for arriving at the picnic site early and reserving a very welcome waterproof area for us to picnic in.

The BBQs were fired up as were the conversations about suspension, brakes, and bla-bla-bla etc. etc. Some people were quick to note Paul Williams has had cosmetic enhancement to the front of his car (perhaps a botox or collagen treatment??) - He can now be called "Hot Lips Williams" - check it out next time you see the car. (Must be a new pair of shoes in it for you Sandy!)

A big welcome to Glen who joined us for his first run and Carmen & Brad on their second run. A special welcome also to Gail and Graham (new owners of Karen's Crystal Blue NB-8B) who

were not able to make the 10 o'clock departure but caught up with the "always last to leave group" in the picnic area.

Gail and Graham joined our convoy to Picton for a warming coffee, making our initial group of 16 become 17.....but wait, there is more.....(no steak knives though). En-route to Picton for coffee our convoy grew again - we drove into the car park thinking "who is that in the True Red NC coupe???" Sue and Phil from Bilgola were heading home after the wedding of Sue's niece, saw our little MX-5 convoy and decided to follow us to see where we were going! So, a big welcome to Sue and Phil too - they joined us for coffee and are also keen to become members. With a little rain everything grows, even our MX-5 convoys and hopefully our membership!

There was no way we were going to let the rain spoil our parade - a great day thanks to Kimmie and Pete, made even greater for Kimmie when the Tigers won!

Join us next time for another fun filled adventure.

Cheryl Ashton

Members Discount- give them a call for a discount on your membership

Ammon Leather

Unit3/25 George Street
North Strathfield NSW
Frank Wang, proprietor
Phone: 02 9743 2999 / 012960428

Mx5 Mania

Unit 2, 8A Kookaburra Road
Hornsby Heights. NSW. 2007
Phone: 02 9482 3238

Longford Race Track

Last November, 10 members of the club took 5 MX-5s to Tasmania. During our Tasmanian MX-5 Motoring experience we stayed at Haspen approximately 6 KMS south west of Launceston. After a short leisurely drive we turned onto the Illawarra Road. We then headed east through quiet pretty farmland towards the sleepy little town of Longford. When you look at this place, it is hard to imagine that forty years ago this town and its surroundings were not always a so quiet.

Once a year from 1953 to 1968 the sounds of birds, mooing of cows and bleating of sheep were drowned out by the roar of formula 1s, sports cars, sedans and racing motor cycles. Longford and its the surrounding quiet narrow country roads like The Isle of Mann and Le Mans became transformed into a place where the worlds top international drivers and riders, like Sir Jack Brabham, Graham Hill, Bruce McLaren, Jackie Stewart, Chris Amon, Jim Clark, Phil Hill, Geoff Duke, Kel Carruthers and many other famous Australian drivers of note including Frank Gardener, Bib Stilwell, Spencer Martin, Lex Davison, Frank Matich, John Yule, Bob Jane, Jim McKeown, Leo and Pete Geoghegan and many more raced their machines at speeds on the narrow bumpy country roads which surround the township of Longford in excess of those currently being achieved by V8 Super Cars on Conrod Straight at Bathurst. Longford was the scene of a number of Australian GPs and was a regular venue for rounds of the Tasman Series. It was reported that it rivaled Bathurst as being Australia's top motor racing venue of the time.

Longford, was the fastest motor racing circuit in the Southern Hemisphere and possibly one of the most dangerous. Sir Jack Braham wrote in his book, "The Jack Braham Story", "Longford, Tasmania Australia the Tasman racing circuit we drivers always recall with pursed lips". "A fantastically fast public road course which was a little too narrow for comfort with cars of widely differing speed potential." On the end papers of this book there is a magnificent black and white photo of Sir Jack piloting his Repco Brabham Formula 1 car across The Long Bridge (one of the old wooden bridges on the Longford circuit). The caption is entitled "The Scary Bridge, Tasmania 1965- "Yes, you're right. We must have been nuts!" Sir Jack Braham, 2003.

There were hardly any Armco fences, no sand traps, or crash barriers in those dangerous days, just the occasional hay bail or a rabbit proof fence to keep the cars, sheep/cows and spectators away from each other. Yes two F1 drivers, a racing motor cyclist and

a photographer were killed within 3 years of each other.

A complete lap of the 9.87 km (4.5 mile) circuit is no longer possible as the two wooden bridges crossing The Esk river have long been pulled down and the updated. Illawarra Highway (approach road to the township of Longford), no longer swings under the railway viaduct on the outskirts of the town. However with a bit of back tracking we did drive about ¾ of the circuit and managed to see where the road once did go.

The Longford Country Club hotel or as it was better known "Pub Corner" is still operating and serves great meals and beer. Its walls are decorated with many old photos and news paper clippings of the races and cars which tore around the pub corner and up Tannery straight all those years ago. Where else in Australia can one sit in a pub and gaze at a red 1953, Tr2 Special/ Aston Martin bodied sports car (on loan from Diana Leighton the only female driver to compete at Longford), look at a large black and white photo of Len Lukey and Stan Jones (Alan's dad) in their formula 1s, going wheel for wheel both airborne over the railway crossing at 200 kph and then look out of the window next to the photo and see the exact spot they were photographed nearly 50 years ago. The place still has a great atmosphere and is a direct link to Australia's golden age of motor racing. Definitely worth a look next time you and perhaps your MX-5 are in Tassie.

Ken Liston

Did you know???

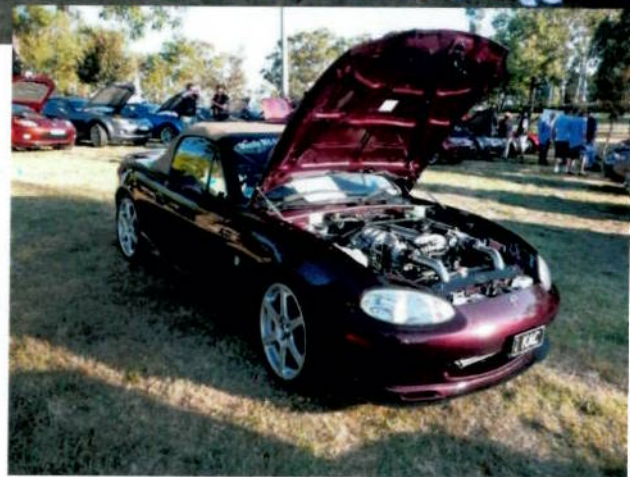
No piece of paper can be folded over more than 7 times.

It is physically impossible for pigs to look up to the sky.

A group of owls is called a parliament.

Arvind Pandya holds the record for the fastest backwards run from Los Angeles to New York, it took him 107 days.

NATMEET-2008



CENTRAL COAST- MARCH RUN



CATARACT DAM-THE WET APRIL RUN

