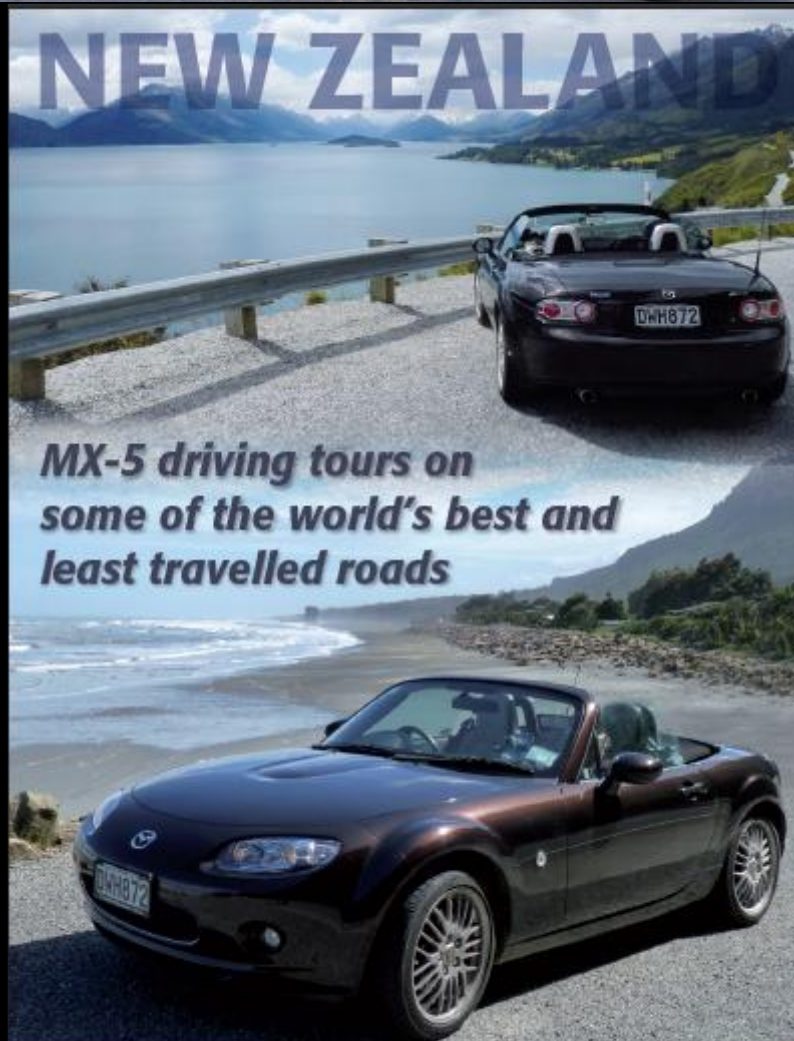




20th Anniversary Edition 4, 2010





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The President's Brief

A REVIEW OF THE CLUB YEAR . The year has been significant in terms of the Committee's achievements, much of which goes unnoticed by the membership. There have been changes to increase the efficiency of the Committee's administrative procedures and restructure of some Committee duties to achieve a better distribution of workloads. The year was also remarkable for the abundance of major events noted below;

20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MX5 & CHRISTMAS PARTY. In a variation from normal practice, this event was conducted as a dinner dance with entertainment at St. George the Motor Boat Club on the shores of Kogarah Bay. Although bookings were slow coming in, the late surge ensured that the evening was an overwhelming success.

NATMEET IX – McLAREN VALE, SOUTH AUSTRALIA, EASTER 2010. Around 30 of our members travelled to South Australia to participate in this event which is hosted at Easter in alternate years on a rotating basis by the State MX5 Car Clubs. We really enjoyed the camaraderie, the great MX5 driving, the Willunga Hill Climb, the Funkhana as well as the wining and dining in one of Australia's premier wine regions. New South Wales did not win the State trophy this year, but shone in the hill climb with particular reference to Phil Ashton's achievements. Full results were published in Club Torque.

NATMEET 10 –EASTER 2012 - CANBERRA

We will host the next national event in the National Capital. A sub-committee under the chairmanship of Vice President Peter Feutrill and comprising a group of Sydney and Canberra based members who attended the McLaren Vale event are heavily engaged in planning. The size of the task should not be underestimated and certainly not taken for granted. As time passes more assistance will be needed and if you are asked to assist in any way, be prepared to help. This is a national event and the Club's reputation depends on its success.

20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CLUB CELEBRATION, JUNE 2010. Another milestone in the Club's history was celebrated in high style in a three day event beginning with a morning run on Saturday June 19 concluding with a celebratory lunch at the Centennial Winery in Bowral. On Sunday a Southern Highlands mountain passes drive culminated at a Burrawang Pub lunch and a Wakefield Park track day followed on the Monday. Special thanks go to Cheryl Ashton who initiated the arrangements for the event and to Lesa Bunn who took over the responsibilities on accession to the position of Social Secretary. There is no question that this proved to be a resounding success on all accounts. This occasion will linger in memory and will be a challenge to replicate in coming years.

ON-LINE MEMBERSHIP AND EVENTS REGISTRATION. After researching a number of options and discussions with the MX5 Club of Victoria and MG Car Club of NSW who were using the system, the Committee contracted IMG Sports Technology Group to provide a new membership and events program facility. The Concours/BBQ event in October tested multiple aspects of the system and it performed to expectations and will facilitate membership renewals this year.

Stephen Carter and Cathie Curran devoted a huge amount of time and effort to bring the concept to a reality and having been closer to the action than others and conscious of the extent of their dedication in integrating with the IMG system, I take the opportunity to which I express my sincere personal thanks to them both.

CONCLUSION. The year has been exceptional in every way, not the least in the amount of work contributed by each member of the Committee in their sphere of particular responsibility. Appreciation is also due to the Canberra and Hunter Chapter Conveners, in particular Pat Rooke who stood down this year after a noteworthy period in the role. For myself, having seen some major projects brought to fruition, I intend to stand down from the presidency and step back into retirement mode to make the most of my time exploring some of those great MX5 roads in places like Tassie. As it says in my caption on the Forum; *"when you're racing against Father Time, drive a Five!"*



Sean MacCormaic

MX500

ONE DAY CLASSIC

I have only been a member of the MX-5 Club since February 2009, and joined primarily for the club's motorsport activities. I've only missed one club trackday since then, and have been a dedicated participant in the State Supersprints in 2010. I can confidently say that Mike Hicks, Zan Menzel and their helpers do a fantastic job organising these events. It's the best place to safely experience the superb handling of your MX-5. You will have a ball and improve your driving skills at the same time.

I get so much enjoyment from the club, that I felt it was time I put something back in. So I approached Michael Soulos with the idea of something a bit different for the Breakfast Club. These club runs suit those hardy souls who enjoy an early morning spirited drive, and the drives are normally finished by breakfast. This time around we wouldn't be back in town until late afternoon. Welcome to the MX500 One Day Classic – 500km of great driving roads.

MX-5s (and an MR2!) departed at 8am over Bells Line of Road, across Darling Causeway, and then down the twisty descent of Victoria Pass. At the bottom, we stopped for an alfresco breakfast at the **Ambermere Rose Inn** (6355-2266), a restored Cobb & Co staging post opened in 1845. Fiona and her staff were great

hosts, and the grassed car park was perfect for our group, which had swelled to 27 with a couple additions from Bathurst.

With the option of hot or cold

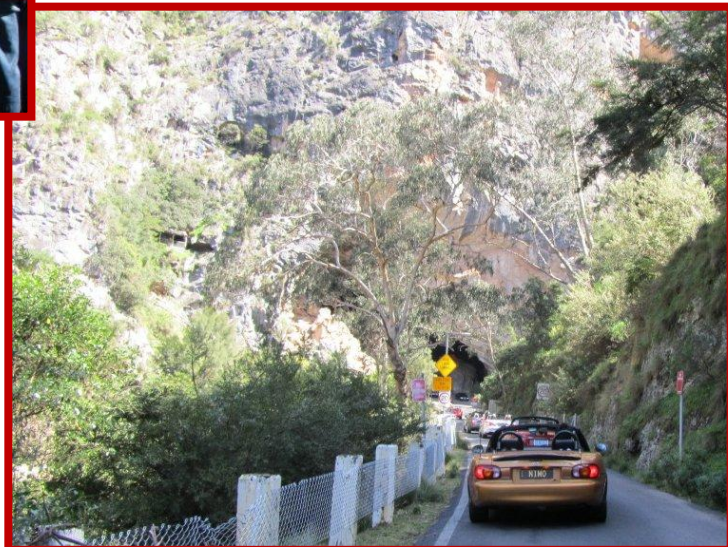


buffet breakfast, our "tanks" were filled in preparation for the fun drive ahead. Our route detoured to Jenolan Caves, through the Grand Arch, and up the tight, twisty road to Oberon. At a quick regroup stop, we discovered that one MX-5 had broken down on the climb out of Jenolan. I thought that only happened to British roadsters?! A few people



My day dawned earlier than most since I left home in the Illawarra at 5:45am in order to arrive at our Richmond starting point by 7:30am. The weather was perfect for topless motoring, with only the odd cloud and a welcome chill in the air. A broad range of people turned up, with both genders well represented, from teenagers to grandparents with all stops in between. And everyone was there to enjoy an enthusiastic drive in the country.

After a sign-on and driver briefing, a conga line of 25





stopped to lend a hand and they were quickly on the go again. Such solidarity is typical of these drives.

At Oberon, we joined Abercrombie Road which forms the central part of “*The Tablelands Way*”. This road is now fully sealed (except for a very short section of council roadwork’s), and connects Oberon to Goulburn via quaint localities such as Norway, Black Springs, Porters Retreat, and Paling Yards. The surface is delightfully smooth (for the most part), and features countless sweeping corners with 65km/hr and 75km/hr advisory signs, that were disdainfully but safely treated by our MX-5s. It was pure driving nirvana!



Our next stop was in the historic town of Taralga (est.c.1840). We filled the dining room at the **Taralga Hotel** (4840 2007), and the kitchen did brilliantly to



efficiently serve our horde with delicious country fair. As you can guess by now, nobody goes hungry on my drives!

After levering our bloated bodies from the pub, we departed for Goulburn for a refueling stop and regrouped at the McDonalds. The drive home was sedately taken via the Hume Freeway, with most continuing on the motorways home, but some hardy souls opting for the delights of Macquarie Pass and the Royal National Park.

I thoroughly enjoyed being given the opportunity to lead a club run and I strongly recommend others get involved. You will receive plenty of help with organising the details, and it’s easy to manage. Believe me, it is a rewarding site looking in your mirrors and seeing a string of MX-5s stretching for a kilometre or so behind you!

Lastly, thanks to Michael Soulos for all his guidance and help with planning this run. I thought I knew a lot about doing these things, but definitely learnt some new tricks.

Visit the [mx5cartalk forum](http://mx5cartalk.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=63&t=43006) for more photos and discussion of this run:

<http://mx5cartalk.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=63&t=43006>

Bryan Shedden (aka Guran)



How Sway Bars Work

Normally, without a sway bar when the car corners the weight of the chassis shifts toward the outside of the turn compressing the springs on that side. The springs on the inside generally extend a little, or do nothing. Relative to the chassis itself, it appears that the outside suspension compresses and the inside doesn't.

A sway bar couples the suspension on each side to each other, *AND* relative to the chassis. If you could put the car up on a lift and actually compress the suspension on one side by hand, then a sway bar makes the compression of one side also try to compress the suspension on the other. Ok. it's still not really obvious why that's useful so I'll say the same thing a different way.

A sway bar effectively increases the spring rate on whichever side is compressed the MOST. If the sway bar were absolutely solid with no twist so there's a 100% coupling between each side. An attempt to compress one spring actually becomes an attempt to compress both springs; it doubles the spring rate. If the bar has some twist, then it may only increase the spring rate by say 50% on whichever side is compressed the most.

So you're driving down the road and you go over a bump that goes across the entire lane. The sway bar does nothing. Both sides compress normally. You go around a corner and the chassis starts to lean and compress the outside suspension and now it's as though you have a bigger spring out there, so the car remains more level. That's the good part. Here's the bad part. You hit a bump with only one side, and it behaves the same way, as though you have a stiffer spring, so you feel uneven bumps more. You feel it crossing anything diagonally as well, such as coming into or out of a parking lot or driveway curb.

That's all the simple part of how a sway bar works. The tricky question is "What does a sway bar do?"

1. We know it keeps the car more level. So what? Limiting the lean of the body is good because it means that when you take a quick set into a turn, that the body isn't still moving sideways after the tires reach their limits. Otherwise you turn in quickly, the tires grip, then the body finally finishes leaning, when it stops, the tires lose grip. This is especially noticeable in most cars in the slalom where you lean one way then the other.

2. It limits camber changes. The camber is the angle that the tire leans in or out at the top relative to the chassis of the car. The camber directly impacts the angle at which the tire cross section meets the road and thus controls lateral grip. As the suspension compresses the camber angle generally changes relative to the chassis. With a normal Macpherson strut that hasn't been lowered, the camber goes from positive to more negative as the lower A arm swings out straight, and then back to positive as it swings up. That swing up into positive camber is BAD. At that point the chassis is already leaning over so the tire may be starting to roll onto its sidewall and increasing the camber so that it is even more positive is just nasty. A big sway bar will prevent the body roll in the first place, and prevent the suspension compression on the outside which causes the positive camber change relative to the chassis.

3. Transfer lateral grip from one end of the car to the other. This one is a real trick to understand, but racers exploit this EVERY time they go on the track. Their spring rates are often so high, the cars so low, and their suspension travel so little, that the whole camber and body lean problem is already a non-issue. The car doesn't lean much with 500 lb springs. They use their bars to change the balance of the car. Here's the simple rules first.

(a) A big bar on the front, increases rear lateral and motive traction.

(b) A big bar on the rear, increases front lateral and motive traction.

The applications. If the car is understeering, decrease front bar size, or increase rear bar size. This increases front lateral grip and decreases rear lateral grip giving the car a more neutral to oversteer feel. Reverse the process for too much oversteer. I mentioned motive grip. That's the neat one. Let's say your RWD car is handling ok, but every time you get into a corner hard and get on the gas the rear inside tire breaks loose and spins. You can't accelerate out of the turn. You can go around the turn quite quickly, but you can't accelerate out, and the guy with traction hooks up and passes you halfway down the next straight because he came out of the turn going 3-4mph faster. The reason you're losing the traction at the inside rear, is usually because the rear bar is too big. As the rear outside suspension compresses, it's actually causing the rear inside suspension to compress as well (because the bar couples the sides.. remember where we started), and that decreases the weight on the rear inside tire.

First thing. Decrease size of rear bar. That decouples the sides a bit, let's the inside tire press down on the road more and thus not spin when you're on the gas.

Here's where it gets really tricky.

If decreasing the size of the rear bar doesn't help enough the next thing you do is increase the size of the front bar. When the outside front compresses in a corner, it causes the inside front to compress and may actually lift that tire completely off the ground. The car is now sitting on 3 tires and guess where the weight that was on the inside front goes? Outside front? Some of it. The rest goes to the inside rear where we need more grip. The total weight of the car hasn't changed. It's just been redistributed, and a sway bar at one end, actually transferred weight to the other end of the car.

Here it is in action on a RWD car.



See the inside front tire off the ground. That translates into more motive grip at the rear, and thus more acceleration, and believe me, that car rockets out of corners.

All of this trickery applies to a FWD car too, and since the front tires share all of the motive AND most of lateral traction (because most of the weight is in front), all the things that happen with big

bars at either end are even more extreme. A big front bar stabilizes the body lean more but also creates a lot more understeer, and may make the inside front tire spin madly under power in a corner. A big rear bar can't give you back much lateral grip up front, but it can give you back some motive traction, basically letting you accelerate out of the turn, even when the front end is sliding pretty badly.



Here's a big rear bar in action on a FWD car. So that's it. How they work, and what they do. *Miata.net*

Riddle Me This

What am I? I am taken from a mine, and shut up in a wooden case, from which I am never released, and yet I am used by almost everybody.

Answer is on the 3rd last page.

And for our older members



The Mid-Week Run

Camden Valley August Midweek Run

A turnout of 15 cars with a mix of regular and new faces was an encouraging response after a night of heavy downpours and morning rain that prompted quite a few early phone calls to see whether the run would be cancelled. No way!

Maccas at Eastern Creek was the starting point and we headed west on the M4 – and on dry roads – until taking the slip road for Mulgoa and begin the drive through the virtual foothills of the Blue mountains towards our lunch destination, the popular Camden Valley Inn. Irrespective of whatever weather was happening down on the coast, we were having a very pleasant top-down driving day and enjoying virtually traffic free country roads. The last time we did this run there were road works on one of the best winding sections so the leader was a bit apprehensive after the rain, but the work had been completed and this time we got our short surge of adrenaline as we zoomed up the hill.

Facilities at Warragamba Dam Oval came in handy as a comfort stop for some while others made a closer inspection of the latest additions to cars before the run continued, but not without interruption. On reaching The Oaks we came up behind a horse float and on the restricted roads there was little opportunity to pass. Every time we wanted to take a planned diversion, the horse float did the same. It soon became apparent that these were not race horses! You would think the driver must have seen the string of MX5s in his rear view mirror and could have given them a chance to pass, but there is little doubt that like draft horses, this guy wore blinkers too. However, at one of the few open stretches five Fives burst past, startling the horses or the driver to such an extent that he pulled off into a paddock and we were able to continue on our merry way and at a good clip.

The good thing about country roads and midweek driving is the lack of traffic. Up to a point. In the next section an apparent MX5 enthusiast driving a bus decided to join the run – midway along the convoy. They do have right of way when pulling out from a stop and we had to live with that for a time hoping that the next stop on a country road would not be too many kilometres ahead, which proved to be the case and we were back on track making the most of the clear road with some good winding sections all the way to Picton.



We joined the old Hume Highway and turned north climbing Razorback and sweeping down the curves on the other side to reach the Camden Valley Inn. They were well prepared for our arrival with tables already set up and a special deal or menu choice option. Considering the overnight weather, this turned out to be a very successful day.



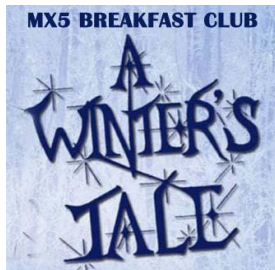
Next year? That's up to you. The current leader will be away travelling much of next year and we are looking for someone to take over the midweek runs. We recycle the four runs a year between the north, north west, south west and south and all of the planning has been done and the run sheets are on disc. No leader will equate to no runs and if you enjoy the midweek events, then you actually have something to lose - so give it serious thought. Talk to the President or email president@mx5.com.au.

Sean MacCormaic

What word, phrase or saying.
Is depicted by this Rebus?

Answer is on the 3rd last page.

T M C
A U O
H S M
W T E



Some people like the Summer for its long hot days (and nights). For others the Spring and Autumn is the time of the year they enjoy most. Yet a few with a sense of humour and adventure in their hearts wearing thermal underwear, windstopper jackets, scarves and beanies relish the Winter in their MX-5s.

There was no winter of discontent in 2010 though some thought it was a little colder than most. The MX5 BreakFast Club offered not one but two dawn buster runs in July and August for the intrepid enthusiasts. If you have lost the spirit of adventure or do not appreciate getting up at sparrows fart to be somewhere at the edge of the urban sprawl by 5.30 am for a drive in the country with roof down, then these runs are probably not do it for you — move on to the next report.



The largest participator run for roadsters in NSW is the Austin Healey Owners Club's annual open invitation charity run usually held on the third Sunday of July. This year the Brass Monkey run was off to beautiful subzero Goulburn. We headed off from Casula at 6.00 am sharp so as not to miss the frosts, which is important with these mandatory "roof down" runs. The route was no challenge, a quick drive down the Hume Highway on a morning that made radar guns freeze if exposed to the chilly air. The temperature was a balmy 3° at Bunning's car park where seventy roadsters had assembled for the start. More interesting times were to come passing Berrima where the temperature was more acceptable -4° for a Brass Monkey Run, discounting the wind chill factor in an open MX-5, at 110 kph as we came across Rico Ruben driving with his roof up sheltering in a group of Healeys.



Don't kid yourself as it is freezing charging down the highway with subzero winds hammering your head, shoulders and thighs. Beanies, windproof jackets and gloves helped but the cold still penetrates everything;

though this can be strangely invigorating. Somehow the exposure to mild hyperthermia makes you feel more alive, the air seems fresher and everything you see looks crisp and clean.

For the second year in succession the MX-5s were the first cars into town at around 7.30 am and the most numerous marque. Twenty Six MX-5s, including Dennis Wheatherly who came down through Oberon in his new NC with chromed rear suspension, were parked outside the Goulburn Soldiers Club where the temperature was a pleasant -1°. Not all MX-5s stayed for the Return Run choosing to head for the warmth of the coast.



After breakfast the temperature had soared to 2° and fifteen MX-5s headed off under clear blue sky and a sun without warmth on the MX5 Return Run. The drive back opened with a 30km spirited run through forest and farms to Bungonia before heading to the highway at Marulan on quiet country roads. After a pleasant run down the Southern Highlands Way to Moss Vale following a Camry we headed to Berrima for refreshments.

After the break some drove home down Macquarie Pass with its newly sealed surface that makes it a five star MX-5 experience if you can get a clear run. Others followed Paul Byers a little later on along the Old Hume Highway meandering through Picton via Razorback to the outskirts of the city and home in time to watch the afternoon footie.

Special thanks to Franco, Anran & Zorak for the photos and to Jimi for the Iceberg Run



The Brass Monkey is a signature event but the best dawn buster run on the MX-5 calendar is James Manion's Iceberg Run. The number of cars on the Brass Monkey dictate that the route is not complicated by technical and winding roads. The opposite is true for the Iceberg Run for MX-5s. In 2010 the Club organised an Iceberg Run to merge with the James' run and 15 club members joined up with 9 drivers from the Forum to have some fun.



The Galston Gorge was open for the run across to Dural and the Sackville Ferry then onto the Putty Road. Never miss an opportunity to run the Putty Road, the best 100 kilometre drive in a MX-5 from the city. If you think the twisting road across the ridges and valleys to the Garland Valley are a blast then running the gorges north of Howes Valley is the master blaster.

Without dismissing all of the motor cycle suppression signs you can have a blast through the gorges on four wheels a stay around the speed limit of 80 kph. If you have never driven this section or would like to relive the experience then visit page 6 of the thread to the MX5 Mania Run at

<http://mx5cartalk.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=63&t=40028&start=75> to view Broady's video of a MX-5 doing what it was designed to do.



Apart from the gorges there is another highlight on the route to Pokolbin coming out of the bush into the Lower Hunter Valley just past Milbrodale. You are greeted with an open valley dissected by a wide sealed road servicing a few farms and vineyards with their rows of vines and fenced paddocks bordered in by wooded hills. You have unobstructed vision down the road to Broke as you open up onto long sweeping bends and straights on about 10 kilometres of great driving road.



From Broke the route wound its way into the heart of the Lower Hunter past McGuigans, Tyrells and the vineyards of all the old family names that appear on some of our most popular wines.

Nobody was disappointed with the route in the company of a cross section of MX-5s from Bill Adams (Member No.85) with his original white 1990 NA6 to Robert Forsyth (Member No.2101) with his new 2010 NC2. Robert's hot coffee before the start at a chilly Rofe Park was sensational.



A hearty breakfast at Hunter Valley Gardens was enjoyed by all before everyone went their own ways home, some visiting friends or wineries, others taking the F3 or choosing the long winding road home through Wollombi and Wisemans Ferry back to the city to continue the fun run all the way home.

Michael Soulos (Midori)

Club Days at Wakefield

Sunday the 5th September was the first round of the club's **2010 -2011 competition year at Wakefield Park**. 63 starters faced the prospect of another wet track day, fortunately the wet weather of the previous few days moved on and although the track was wet early in the morning it quickly dried out with the exception of a few points at turn 2 where water seeped across the track for the entire day. Thus most members were a second or two off their best times.



It was particularly pleasing to see seven ladies enter for this event, Dominique Spoelder, Michelle Matthews, Dianne Byers, Lesa Bunn, Letitia Caldwell, Olympia Erskine and Lea Farrell. All acquitted themselves well with Dianne taking the honours on the day as the fastest lady with a time of 1.24.53 that was very close to her previous best.

Mark Hellmund recorded the best time for a member with a time of 1.12.61 to win class 6 also, Lance McGrath was second quickest also winning class 10 for non MX-5s with a time of 1.13.75 in his Mazda RX 7, hence was followed by relative new comer Patrick Bramston in his supercharged MX-5 with a time of



1.14.00 to win class 7. Other class winners were Bryan Shedden (1.18.94) in class 1, Brad Carpenter (1.17.97) class 2 and Cameron Macarthur (1.17.08) class 3. Ian Vickers won the newly created class 4 with a time of 1.17.95. Class 5 went to Tony Williams (1.14.89) and class 8 went to Don Battisson (1.14.28) in Cousin Russell's car "Turbo Boy".

The Phil Roberts "Old and Bold Award" went to Novocastrian Phil Mayo for a second time. Not to be outdone by the oldies the Battisson's have created a new award titled "The Young and Dumb Award", the trophy



consists of an MX-5 piston and con-rod mounted on a timber shield. The inaugural winner was Mark Hellmund, well done Mark and thank you to Russell and Don for contributing the trophy. Unfortunately Mark didn't think about turning up for the Photo!

Our next track day is on Sunday 24th October, entry forms are on the motorsport page of the club website. It will be followed by round 3 on Sunday 5th December and round 4 which is the NSW/Vic Challenge which this year is being held at Phillip Island on 12th December. Supp Regs and Entry Forms for this event are also on the club website. A minimum of a CAMS L2S licence is required for this event, it is expected that up to 20 NSW members will enter.

And finally on the club scene a reminder that the Presentation Night for the Competition Year 2009/2010 will be held at Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 20th October preceding the club's Annual General Meeting. Trophies and officials appreciation gifts will be awarded; I hope to see you all there.

Mike Hicks

State Supersprint Championship

The ninth and final round of the **State Supersprint Championship** was conducted at Wakefield Park on Sunday the 26th September by the Mini Car Club.

At the end of the day the Mazda MX-5 Club of NSW had won the Club Championship for a seventh time, not a bad result considering the club has only been competing in the Championship since 1999. Our final points tally was 970 with NSWRRRC second on 904 and ARDC third on 670.



It was a great team effort and congratulations go to Mark Hellmund, Bradley Cecil, Tony Williams, Leigh Hemmings, Stewart Temmesvary, Phil Abraham, Bryan Shedden, Steve Green, Steven Pender, Mike Hicks, Glenn Thomas, Ian Vickers, Scott McGarry, Kevin Addison, Phil Ashton, Phil Munnings, Allan Bugh, Keith Monaghan, Lindsay Burke, Faye Diven, Robert Gage, Peter Feutrill, Robert Kai, Mark Palmer, Matt and Robert Guyder and Stewart Clode who all contributed to our win.

The club will be presented with the Shield at the NSW CAMS Presentation Dinner on Saturday the 27th November.

Highlighting the individual performances in the Championship were Class winners Stewart Temmesvary (1b), Tony Williams (2a), Mark Hellmund (2b) Bradley Cecil (2d) and Leigh Hemmings (sva), in addition Stewart won the Type 1 award and Bradley won the Type 2 award with Mark Hellmund second. Phil



Abraham was second in class (3b). Trophies for the 2010 Championship will be distributed at the Supersprint Presentation Day to be held at Eastern Creek on Sunday 21st November.

Morgan Park at Warwick in the Darling Downs of Queensland will host the single round **2010 Australian Supersprint Championship** on the weekend of the 13th and 14th November. Regulations and entry forms are on the supersprint website at www.supersprints.com.au

Finally the **MX-5 National Race Championships** for Type 2B and 2F Production Sports Cars and Regularities also for MX-5s will be held at Wakefield Park on 29th, 30th and 31st of October 2010. This event follows on from the inaugural MX-5 Nations held at Morgan Park on the Queen's Birth Day Weekend in 2009. Regulations and entry forms for this event are on the motorsport page of the Club's website.



*Safe and enjoyable MX-5 motoring –
Mike Hicks, Competition Secretary.*

THE LOW-DOWN ON NC SUSPENSION MOD

After experiencing the significant changes in handling of my NC as a result of the Club's Alignment Day at Spinning Wheel tyres back in April, and although I realised that the improvement was due to Maestro Stu's magical touch, I decided to go the extra mile and replace the stock springs with the Eibach sports set which lower the car by 30mm.

I am not alone in thinking that the standard set up looks ungainly with too great a gap above the tyres, front and back (as the front wheel photo shows) and I talked to people like Peter Feutrill who had previously fitted the Eibach springs. There were a few rumours around that these springs dropped the car by as much as 45mm, but my checks proved that if you import these springs, you have to stipulate the correct Eibach set to achieve the desired result. So if you decide to go this road, ensure that you order the Eibach Sports Spring set which is yellow and not the Eibach 45mm set which is red.



I organised this work with Spinning Wheel because the car was going in for a makeover, tyres, springs and a re-alignment. It was a one shop stop and the alignment had to be reset from scratch, so given that necessity, I wouldn't have anyone but Stu touch my car!

Getting the new Michelin Pilot Sport 3 tyres delayed the work as they are in high demand and short supply. However, the call came that stock was available and it was an early start to beat the traffic and arrive at the workshop to go on the hoist as the first job of the day. The car was soon being stripped of its underwear, although it was reluctant to give it up without a certain amount of gentle persuasion.

That done, the old springs were stripped from the



shocks under tension - one of the Bilsteins taking a trip across the floor to try and get back onto the car of its own accord. That's loyalty for you!

The comparison between the two spring sizes is indicated in the photograph on the right and the second shot depicts the reassembled spring and shock ready to be refitted.



Meanwhile, the old Bridgestone Potenza tyres joined the stack of discarded racing treads waiting for shipment out to the retirement village and the new Michelins were fitted and balanced.

Refitting the suspension system at the front end was more time consuming than the rear as the steering linkages also needed to be reconnected. This shot gives a good view of the new offside rear Eibach in situ with Stu tensioning up the suspension bolts to complete the work on the hoist. Next the wheels were replaced and the car dropped back to compress the springs in normal



mode. That was the moment of truth. The first view of the car after the modification was complete.



The final phase of the operation was the re-alignment, but the car did not go from the hoist to the alignment platform. Stu took it for a long run to get the feel of the car, and I watched it shooting down the road and returning. It did look much better with the lower profile and from the little I could see, the car sat much better in the sharp turns. It was only then that it went up for realignment. Stu called up my previous settings on the computer and set about restoring them, this taking a considerable amount of time - which shows just how far out they can get when you disturb the suspension. It was a great advantage to be able to set up the car to the configuration in which it was presented for the work.

Then the tweaking began. If Stu has been doing the alignment on your NC you may not be aware that he has devised another little castor and steering combination to improve the handling of the NC. He has had a few enthusiastic reports, but not often enough. He definitely wants people to take the time to give him their feedback so he can further explore and develop his techniques. I was happy to have the latest innovative adjustment applied and certainly pleased that I did.

Stu took the car for a further road test and returned for yet another adjustment to the steering. Then it went for a final burn before he was satisfied. He was wearing a huge grin as he parked the car. "Jeez," he said, "they are a real fun car aren't they!"

I drove from the workshop into the car park and couldn't believe the improved feel of the steering in a mere 50 metres. There was more to come. I had considerable difficulty restraining the car on the way home as it kept wanting to exceed the speed limit. I had to pull off the road to phone Stu and Fulvio and tell them how well it performed. It couldn't wait until I got home. Wow!

Why does anyone do this work on their car? I began by talking about the appearance, and yes it does make a

difference. The car no longer looks like a preying mantis perched over the wheels (Glenn Thomas described it as purposeful which I thought very apt), but that is incidental to the purpose. Appearance was not the primary design criterion for NC – otherwise I think they might have done a better styling job for one thing. The MX5 intended to be about handling and I wanted to enhance that characteristic of the car because Mazda missed out there in the original configuration.

This set of springs lowers the centre of gravity and has improved the feel of my car dramatically. I was impressed with the enhanced performance the first time that Stu did an alignment for me. At that time I thought my NC had come to life, but I could not believe the difference this combination of lowering the car and further tweaking the alignment and steering made. This has totally transformed the NC into a vibrant machine, eager to go anywhere at the touch of the more precise steering, lively and yet firmer in the corners and positively glued to the road. The shorter travel in the springs actually improves the overall ride quality too – which surprised me – but the tail springs are firmer on severe bumps over which both are activated simultaneously. Ground clearance at the front over speed humps and gutters has not been a problem unless the hump or gutter is excessive.

This Eibach spring set was a Mazda sport kit option and it should have been fitted to all of the cars as standard. It is too early to comment on the Michelins which need more wear time, but I have done a few runs down to Berowra Waters and they feel good on the dry road and are certainly quieter on rough surfaces than the Bridgestone Potenzas.

One word describes the performance of my car. Rejuvenated!



Sean MacCormaic

Concours & the President's Picnic



ELEGANCE, SHINE AND FOOD APLENTY

A perfect morning that defied all predictions saw around thirty five cars gather at Heathcote for the run down the coast to the Australian Motorlife Museum at Kembla Grange, the location for this year's combined Concours, Show & Shine and President's BBQ.



Once on the road, the motorcade veered off at Waterfall to take a detour through the National Park, passing Bald Hill to rejoin the old Princes Highway south of Helensburgh to Bulli Tops where we picked up the freeway for a fast run downhill to reach the Kanahooka exit and cross the freeway to reach the Integral Energy Recreation Park where Peter and Chris Feutrill and Mark Underwood organized the parking.

The location is very popular with car clubs. The MG club arrived for a morning tea break before continuing their event and the South Coast Vintage car club conducted an all day event at the far end of the park.

Flooding rains the week before had thrown doubts on our ability to use the grassed areas, but once again the weather favoured us and we were able to arrange the display cars in proper order and park non competitors on the adjoining area. Quite a number of members drove directly to the venue so that the total number of vehicles in attendance to compete or enjoy the day was in the vicinity of 45 – proof that the idea of combining the events was a success.

There was quite a flurry of activity among owners of cars in the Concours and Show & Shine for last minute dusting off from the drive before judging commenced in earnest, but once that was under way, the gallery began their own inspections and assessments of the appearance, mechanical and custom innovations of the display vehicles. As you can imagine, this was accompanied by a considerable amount of technical discussion, question and even minor arguments on the advantage or otherwise of particular modifications. People were having a really great time!

For many, the big attraction on the day was Dianne Byers' new yellow NC – it was certainly eye catching – but would it win a prize? Like Dianne and





The BBQ style lunch was served by staff from a buffet of chicken satays, steaks, sausages, potato bake, cold slaw and fresh salads according to choice with desert tea and coffee following. The food must have been good because people backed up for seconds.

People lingered over the dining tables, chatting and socializing and it took some effort to get the judging back on track and prize some owners out of the cafeteria to unlock their cars so that it could proceed.

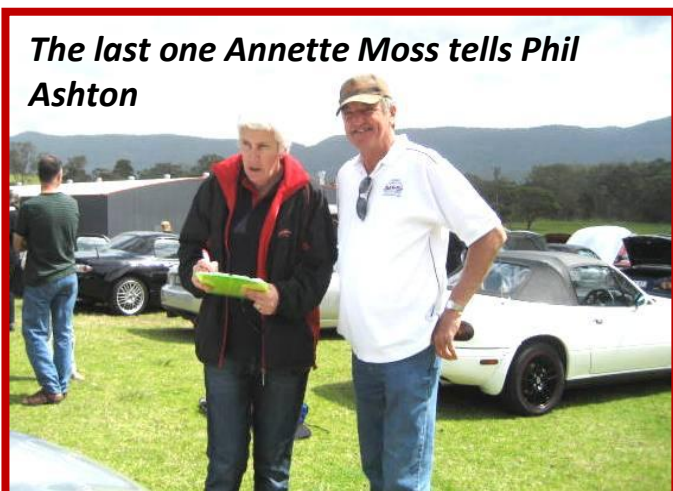


By three-thirty what looked like mist began to descend on the Southern Highlands suggesting that the weather people might have got their forecast right after all, but by that time it didn't matter. People were already packing up and getting ready to leave and the all the mountain mist did was to bring down the final curtain on what proved to be one of the best Concours events the Club has staged. We look forward to a repeat performance at next year's event.

A word of thanks to the judges who gave up the opportunity of enjoying a relaxing day to devote their time and expertise to ensure that every car had an equal chance of winning -

The Concours crew of Keith Monaghan; Paul Byers; Dennis Castellarin; Franck Verheyen and Show & Shine team of Phil Ashton; Annette and Gary Moss; Laurie Tesoriero and Mark Underwood. We could not have done without you!

The last one Annette Moss tells Phil Ashton



Keith Monaghan & Paul Byers in action



Nürburgring Holiday



Here is a little story I would like to share with all you “Speed freaks” out there — The Nürburgring.

I recently had a holiday in Europe with my family, (Maureen, my wife and two sons aged 22 & 24. And Maureen’s sister also came along). This was a trip, which was approximately 6 months in the planning. As we were planning this trip we discovered that we were going to be in the vicinity of the Nürburgring, and that for 22 Euro, you are able to drive your own car around the track.

The Nürburgring is a motorsport complex around the village of, Nürburg, Germany. It features a modern Grand Prix race track built in 1984, and a much longer old North loop track which was built in the 1920s around the village and medieval castle of Nürburg in the Eifel mountains.

The current 20.8 km Nordschleife course has 33 left and 40 right turns. The lower left yellow area in the diagram indicates the location of the Grand Prix course.

So our initial intention was to pay our 22 Euro, and drive the Camper around the Nürburgring. With a little more research we found out about the Nürburgring Taxi. So about a month or so before our departure I decided to send some emails to see if I could make a booking, only to be told that this is very popular and should be booked 12 months in advance. After more correspondence I managed to get them to put me on a waiting list in case there was a cancellation, to which they replied, “yes we



will let you know if there is a vacancy". Not expecting to hear from them again of course, we were ready to drive the campervan we had hired around the Nürburgring.

Then one day before we were due to fly out to Europe, I received an email saying that there was a vacancy available, and were we still interested? Well yes we WERE still interested, and fortunately for us we were able to book a "Taxi" to drive us around the track, because as you can see, there were some very serious sports cars and their driver trying to get around the Nürburgring as quickly as possible, and they certainly did not need a slow campervan on the circuit slowing everyone down.



When our "Taxi" pulled up for us, The "Lady" taxi driver stepped out to greet us. She was none other then the professional racing driver also featured on the famous TV show "Top Gear", Sabine Schmitz. We were assured that this would not be a casual drive around the park, and we weren't disappointed. With speeds of well over 200 km/h, drifting around corners at 150 km/h (and waving to the spectator at the same time), this was a full on adrenalin pumping ride, and all this was happening in what looks like a standard BMW M5 with leather seat etc. No fancy roll cages, helmets or fire suits, like a lot of the other fancy sports cars going around the track. I think Sabine has a phobia similar to

mine in that she does not like to see anyone in front of her while she is driving, and with all those drivers going for it in their Porsche's, Lamborghini's, Ferrari's and Audi R8's etc. There were even a couple of MX-5's going around. - We passed them all in the BMW M5. And there



was absolutely nobody fast enough to pass the M5.

So if you are thinking of having a holiday in Europe or



Germany, book the Nürburgring Taxi now, because it will be one of the best things you will ever do. - Make sure you request Sabine like we did, you never know... you could be lucky and have her as your Taxi driver.

Peter Hilkemann



Canberra Chapter

A Dam Superb Drive



August's run saw 12 cars meet at the Hall lay-by for a rather chilly start for our day out to Wyangala Dam and Cowra, led by Norm and Roz. It was tops up to begin with, as it started to rain, but otherwise the trip to Boorowa for morning tea at the Superb Bakery was a good MX 5 drive.

The weather brightened a bit so the next leg saw most of us put the roof down as we drove past encouragingly full creeks and splashed through water course dips. It was good to travel on a road most of us had not been on



before. On the way we passed an old coaching inn, some emus and a very bogged tractor and we did see the elusive Superb Parrot. After a photo stop at Wyangala Dam, we crossed the dam wall, from where we could see the old concrete dam form the 1930s on our return. Although the water level was certainly quite low, it was a big improvement from when we did the recce earlier in the year.



We continued through Darbys Falls (no waterfall, but named because a man called Darby fell over here!) to Cowra, where the Japanese Gardens Café served up a very enjoyable lunch.

Some of the group took a tour of the gardens then we drove up past the POW camp to the War Cemetery. After a walk around the Japanese and Australian war graves, we met up again at the Visitor's centre and headed for home through quite heavy rain.



Hunter Chapter

At Tom & Annette Wild's Xmas In July



Our annual Xmas in July Run had 12 cars complete with xmas decorations started at our usual end of F3 BP Servo then travelled to Tom & Annette Wild's house in Shortland to drop off our favorite food dishes.

The festive fleet then drove to the lower Hunter favorite roads and then returned via northern Lake Macquarie. There were lots of smiles and waves from passersby when they saw the decorated MX5s and their passengers. On returning to Tom and Annette's to the food and an afternoon of feasting and festive fun. Patrick & Merla Bramson won the best decorated car with his NC.

In August we met at the F3 BP and 10 cars travelled by the back roads to meet up with the NSW "Simone's Nostalgia Run" at Doyalson. The combined group drove north to stop at Myuna Bay on which is on the western side of Lake Macquarie directly opposite our destination at Rafferty's for lunch. The 30 plus cars continued around The Lake via Speers Point, Warners Bay then Belmont, Swansea and finished just before a building storm which arrived as we reached our destination. The strong winds whipping up the lake observed from the shelter of the panoramic windows of the restaurant.

The track day 5th September was attended by six Hunter members – Margaret & Col Stephenson (WRX)

Patrick Bramson (NA8 SC), Phil Abraham (Elise), Bob Pimm (NC) Phil Mayo (NA6). The Goulburn weather which saw a maximum of 11 deg C at lunch time with 30-40 knot winds, made it a challenging day with slow times and all agreed that a Hunter race track cannot come soon enough especially to avoid the 600km round trip.

The September Run to Lostock Dam started with an overcast tour through the Maitland area river flats, Paterson/Vacy farming area, to Gresford. On the way we stopped at the Gresford Markets held in the beautiful grounds of the ex Gresford Hospital which is now privately owned and incorporates a B&B. Also in the surrounding mowed paddock ("watch out for the cow pats") was a Show & Shine held by North Hunter Car clubs. There were over 120 cars of all types on display so after a walk around the markets, gardens and car display we continued onto Lostock dam for late morning tea.

There is a great 20kms of twisty MX5 road from Gresford to the Dam which is unfortunately badly potholed in places which takes extra concentration. After the dam we returned back to Gresford for lunch at the Beatty Hotel followed by a relaxing afternoon of blues, rock and roll while looking out over the paddocks and hills of that beautiful part of the Hunter.

Phil Mayo



MX5s parked at the Gresford Markets.



Hunter Girls and the Ladies at Lostock

From the Editor

Hi People,

I have been putting the publication together over the last year on behalf of the Club and have found it to be quite a rewarding activity. I was given the opportunity to build on a very sound platform that was provided by Sandy and Paul Williams who bought the Club Torque back from its “near death” experience to being a good regular band interesting read. They were also both incredibly tolerant and supportive in helping me to continue to nurture their baby and this provided an opportunity to further develop your Club magazine along a new path. There have been a number of policy and process improvements and I’ve also had the chance to put my own ideas into the magazine too.

I do apologise if my “take” on how the Club Torque looks did not align with your expectations but hey..., I was pleased with each issue. As you can probably guess from the tone of this article, I will be handing over the baton very soon as I am looking at performing in a new function as Club President. This may seem a little presumptuous given that my nomination will not be ratified until the AGM; however, I believe that nobody else has nominated for the position. Again continuing on my presumptuous way, I anticipate handing the publication of Club Torque to the very talented and capable Bryan Shedden (Aka Guran). Those of you who know Bryan will be assured to know that he will no doubt excel in making the magazine even more interesting and relevant; and this makes me really pleased given my vested interest in this department.

Bryan’s words in his recent “MX500 Run” article really struck a chord in that I too have got so much from this Club and its wide variety of activities and

incredible range of similarly minded people all bought together by a common interest and therefore have a desire to give something back. If you too have even the slightest inkling of “giving back” and have ideas about how our Club could be improved, please use the “Contact Us” info on the Web page to let either myself or Bryan know about your ideas. Similarly, should you like to provide some occasional assistance to the Committee members, please let us know. The more representative we can make the Club — the happier your Committee will be.



Enjoy Life!

Glenn Thomas (Alias: *The Blue Ant*)

Celebrity Anagram:

Manly Man? No Sir!

Answer is on the next page.

Groaner: Two Alaskans got cold while paddling the Yukon River. They decided to build a fire in their boat which naturally sank, proving that you can’t have your kayak and heat it too!



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Riddle Me This: I am a pencil.

Rebus? What goes up, Must come Down.

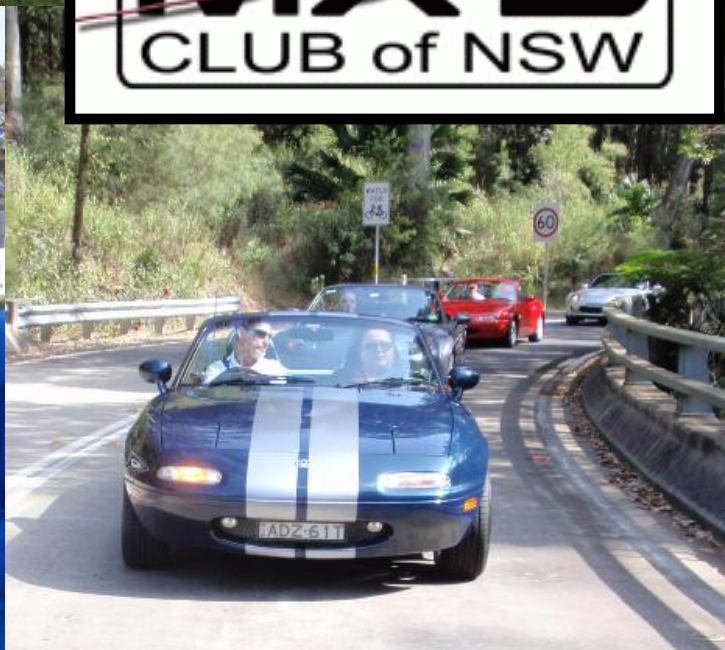
Celebrity Anagram: Marilyn Manson

Welcome to our New Members

Brendan Thomas
Bruce Chapman
Jenni Chapman
Andy Hemsall
William Cameron
Kieren Heikkinen
Lynn Cameron
Richard Harris
John Cassidy
Sharon Cassidy
Victor Lee

Carol Carpenter
Cameron Spencer
Matthew Johnston
Karl Battison
David Hilling
Mathew Hilling
Max Kelly
Shan Kelly
Suzanne Litt
Nemo Lwin
Stuart McFadyen
Graham Wakeham
Graham Wilson





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