

MX-ACTION

MAZDA MX5 CLUB - VICTORIA

AUGUST, 1994

The shortest distance between two points is ...



Rag-Top Motorkhana (The new meets the old)

The next club event will be a joint motorkhana with the Austin Healey Sprite Drivers' Club at BP Oasis in Somerton, north of Melbourne, on Sunday, 28 August.

This will be a great opportunity to pit the glamour of the MX-5 against the tradition of another great rag-top, the Austin Healey Sprite.

Club member Tony Scanlon says the Sprite drivers have a very strong club and always turn up in numbers, so we need to be sure we get as many of our members along as possible to make a great show.

There will be five classes for competition on the day - "A" (up to 1300cc), "B" (1301cc - 1600cc), "C" (1601cc and over), "Ladies" and "Junior", with trophies awarded for First Outright, First in Class, First Lady and First Junior. The competitor with the lowest aggregate score from the total number of tests will be deemed the outright

Above: Olivier Pomie, David Henry, Jenny Bell, David Burgess, Robert Arnold, David Purvis, Brenton Steele and David Gee among the trophies at the end of the navigation run at Barwon Heads. No sign of that rampant surfer ... but is that David Burgess' car on its roof in the background?!? (Report: Page 2)

winner in each class and overall.

The day will be run according to CAMS rules and the national motorkhana code. Unsafe cars will be excluded.

The day's details:

Date: Sunday, 28 August

Location: BP Oasis, corner Cooper St and Hume Hwy, Somerton

9.30 am: Arrival time for scrutineering & for entry on the day

10 am: Driver's Briefing

10.15 am: Start of competition

Cost: \$10.00 per driver (cheques payable to Austin Healey Sprite Drivers' Club).

Entries are open now. Contact Murray Finlay on 830 4150 to reserve your spot, or turn up on the day. Be there ... represent the club *and* have a ball!

The MX-5 is a "one of a kind" automobile and it also has a "one of a kind" battery. This battery is made differently from any other automotive battery and has different operating characteristics.

The downside to all this uniqueness is that MX-5 owners often pay to have discharged batteries replaced unnecessarily.

This happens because most of the people servicing batteries are not aware of the differences between the MX-5 battery and conventional units. Do not let anyone condemn your battery to the recycle heap unless they follow the procedure for testing and charging in the workshop manual (given here).

The usual methods for testing and charging batteries do not work for the MX-5. Specific gravity tests cannot be made with a hydrometer because there is no liquid electrolyte in the battery.

Typical load tests do not work either. The factory procedure does work, and requires that battery voltage be checked and the battery charged at a very specific rate according to the reading. Depending on battery condition, voltage may have to be checked several times and the charge rate adjusted according to the appropriate graphs and tables included in the manual.

Admittedly, the test and charging procedure looks like weight-and-balance calculations for a Boeing 747, and it may be difficult to convince the guy at the corner petrol station to follow them. But if he tests your battery the same way he tests non-MX-5s then it will show "bad" when all it might need is a charge. Adding insult to injury, it might be difficult or even impossible to find a replacement battery you didn't really need to replace in the first place.

Keeping with the MX-5 theme, the battery is compact and lightweight. Conventional batteries are filled with electrolyte (battery acid). This fluid is heavy and takes up a lot of space. The MX-5 battery keeps a much smaller quantity of concentrated electrolyte absorbed in wafer-like separators between the battery plates

Recharge that FLAT BATTERY carefully!

– the only place it really needs to be. This makes the MX-5 battery smaller and lighter than anything else on the market.

The MX-5 designers decided to locate the battery in the boot for weight distribution, and to free up space in the engine compartment. This location has some special

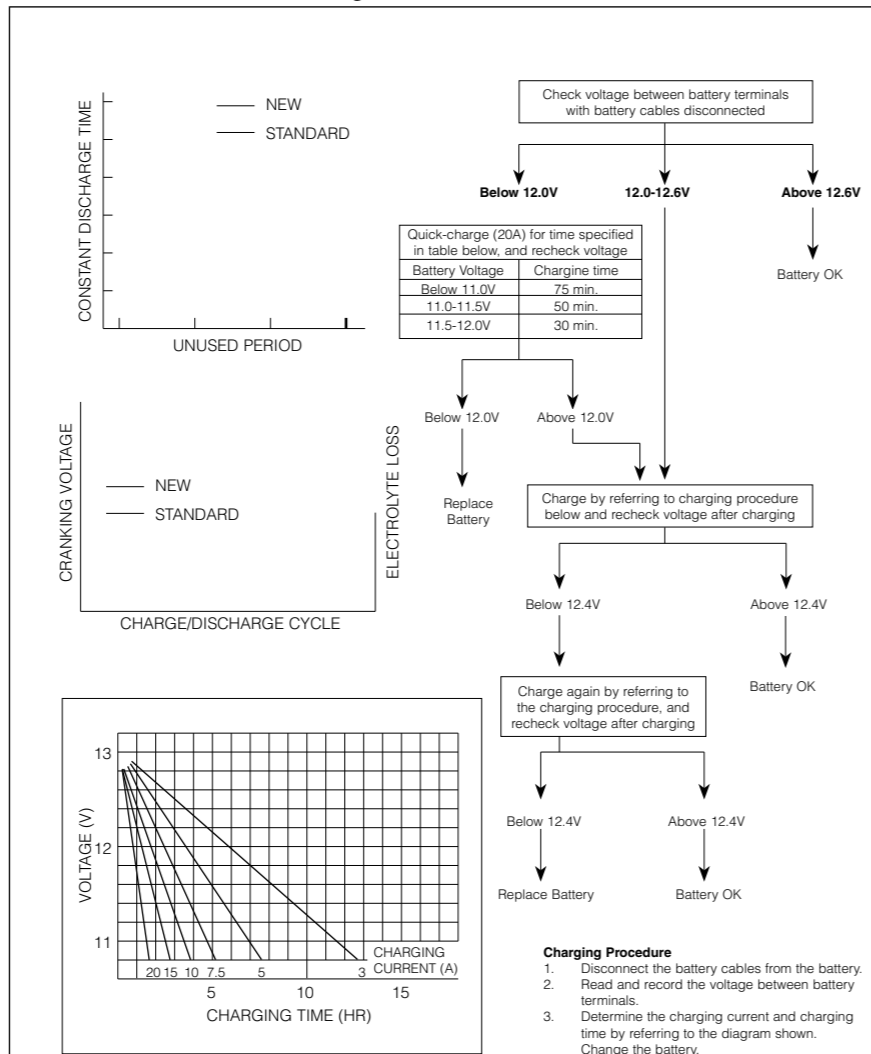
requirements.

The battery must be well secured by a special hold-down bracket. Also, the toxic gases formed when the battery charges and discharges are vented to the outside via special battery caps and hoses.

The net result of all this is that you cannot use typical automotive replacement batteries in your MX-5. They won't fit into the hold-down bracket and they may not vent properly. In a collision, a conventional battery might rupture and spew battery acid or – worse yet – explode. Trying to jury-rig a conventional battery into your MX-5's boot could be hazardous to your health and to your car.

The relatively small number of MX-5s on the road almost guarantees that you will have to see you Mazda dealer for a replacement, but be sure you really need one first.

– Miata Magazine, USA



GO KARTS

vs HDT

The annual MX-5 vs HDT Go-kart Challenge took place at the newly-built Auskarts indoor track, over the road from the old track in Port Melbourne. The new track is much longer ... and some say easier, some say more difficult.

Despite some crazy driving from our competitors, we battled through some hotly-contested heats, tumultuous semi-finals and a final which saw Peter Bolton run out as outright winner, David Burgess outright second and Greg Allen outright fourth. David Henry, Tony Scanlon, Jon Brown, Sue Ransom and Ian Morris also finished well up in the field, showing that skills outdoes the rough & tumble aggressive driving any time.

– David Henry

THE MEX'S MEET THE MISTERS

It seems everyone wants to challenge the Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria for supremacy on the go-kart track! This time it's the MR2 Club, whom we'll meet at the new Auskarts track.

Date: Thursday, 29 September.
Location: Auskarts, Salmon Street, Port Melb.
6.00 pm: Practice starts
6.30-9.00pm: Race time
Cost: \$35.00/person, payable on the night.

We need a team of 16 financial club members to take on the "Misters" – definitely first in, best dressed.

RSVP to Murray Finlay (830 4150) or Daniel Sadique (591 0101) to reserve your spot.

WESTWARD HO!

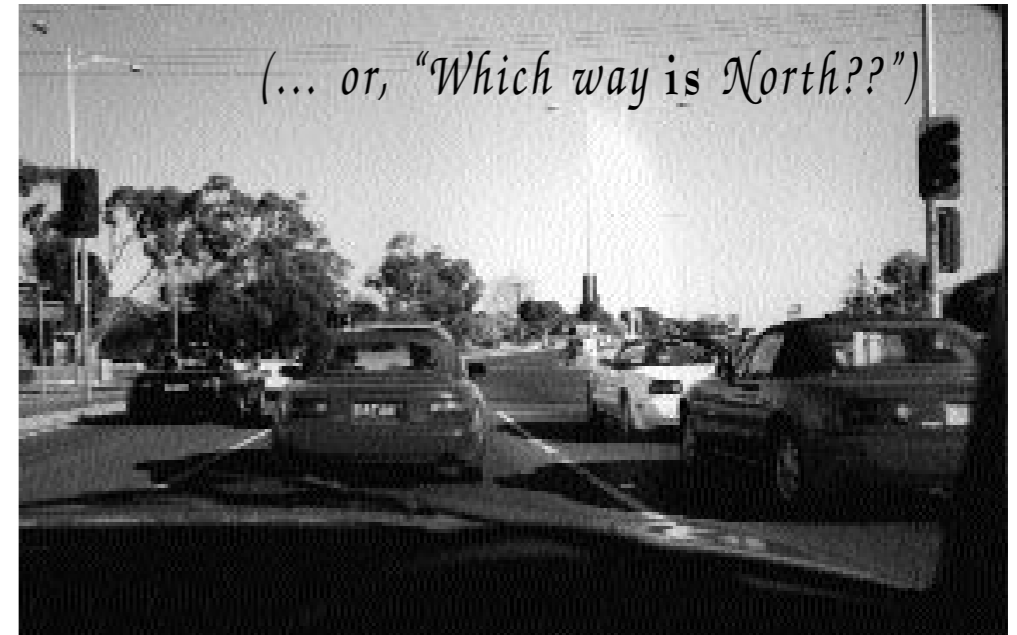
Our intrepid club members, friends and navigators gathered at the Shell Westgate in the cool of the morning on Sunday, 17 July.

Our challenge for the day was to complete a navigation exercise which took us from Geelong to Ceres to Bells Beach and Torquay, and finished up at the Barwon Heads Hotel for lunch.

Each control had to be entered in the correct direction within a set time limit ... it all looked so easy!

But as the results indicate, not all navigators are perfect. Ironically Ted Loakes, who took out the prize for the shortest distance in the economy run to Marysville in June, this time won the trophy for "Least Abusive Driver" ... meaning his navigator, David Atkinson, took him on the longest Cook's tour of all cars on the day (and lived to tell the tale!).

On the other hand, David Henry's navigator, Jenny Bell – a complete novice – won the day by just 200 metres from David



The dream machines make their presence felt through Belmont in Geelong on the way to the start of the first navigation section. "Dream 3" belongs to David Gee, a member of the other Victorian MX-5 club who joined us for the day.

Burgess, travelling on his own. Tony Scanlon and Jon Brown teamed up to take third sport, ahead of David Purvis and Robert Arnold, David Gee and Brenton Steele, and Ted and David. Stephen Lakkis and his navigator, Craig Sarkies, and Murray Finlay and his navigator Olivier Pomie, were all disqualified for taking wrong turns!

However, Murray and Olivier made up for that

disappointment by winning the quiz/jumbled words challenge by a small street.

All agreed it was a great day, and we have no hesitation in organising another navigation exercise on Saturday, 15 October, to make it an entire MX-5 weekend with the motorkhana at the Anglesea Proving Ground on Sunday, 16 October.

We must also give special thanks to the "club surfié"

for his help on the day in looking after the controls. (Ask David Burgess about the surfboard-shaped stamp on the side of his cockpit!)

Overall results: Navigator of the day – Jenny Bell (with David Henry); Least Abusive Driver – Ted Loakes; General Knowledge/Jumbled Words – Murray Finlay/Olivier Pomie.

– David Henry

What's On??

SUNDAY, 28 AUGUST:

AUSTIN HEALEY SPRITE MOTORKHANA

At BP Oasis in Somerton. Scrutineering starts 9.30am, competition starts 10.15 am. See page 1 for details.

SUNDAY, 18 SEPTEMBER:

MORNINGTON PENINSULA WINERY TOUR

Start: 10.00am, Ikea carpark, Nepean Highway, Moorabbin. More details in the next newsletter.

RSVP: Murray: 830 4150.

WEDNESDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER: CLUB MEETING

From 7pm in the back room at the Anchor & Hope Tavern, Church Street, Richmond.

THURSDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER: GO-KARTS VS MR2s

At the new Auskarts track in Port Melbourne. 6-9pm. \$35.00 per person. **First-in-best-dressed ... first 16 financial members only!** See page 3 for details. RSVP: Daniel - 591 0101 or Murray - 830 4150.

SATURDAY & SUNDAY, 15 & 16

OCTOBER: NAVIGATION RUN & MOTORKHANA

Navigation run around the Geelong region on the Saturday, and a fantastic motorkhana at the Anglesea Proving Ground on the Sunday. Stay overnight at Barwon Heads. Details in next newsletter.

WEDNESDAY, 19 OCTOBER: CLUB MEETING

From 7pm in the back room at the Anchor & Hope Tavern, Church Street, Richmond.

NOVEMBER: PRESENTATION NIGHT

Date and venue to be set ... details to come.

Following the publication of the progressive club points list in the last newsletter, there have been several requests from members for an explanation of the points system. As this explanation last appeared in the December, 1992, edition of this newsletter, it's high time we saw it again.

There are four outright trophies, presented at the end of the year:

- **Club Champion** – covering all events
- **Social Champion** – covering navigation events, winery tours, golf, tennis, horseriding, etc.
- **Competition Champion** – covering speed events such as sprint days, motorkhanas, economy runs, and
- **Teams Champion** – ideally suited to the couple who attend and compete in events together and/or in the same car (not necessarily an MX-5).

Devised by Club Captain Daniel Sadique and endorsed by the Committee, the points system ensures that, whether your preference is for all social or all competition-style events, no-one is disadvantaged.

Attendance Points

- 5 points for attending the event at the published meeting point on time (ie: before departure of the first car or published event commencement time)
- 3 points for late attendance – at the discretion of event organisers
- 5 points for attendance at a special or general meeting

Points Calculation

- 1st place earns 10 points, or the number of entrants, whichever is greater
- 2nd place earns one point less than first, and so on

Example 1: Tennis day (Social) – 11am Flinders T.C.
Total entries: 7

1st place: 10 + 5 (punctual attendance) = 15 points
2nd place: 14 points, etc ...

Example 2: Sprint day (Competition) – 9am at Calder
Total entries: 12

1st place: 12 + 3 (very few get to these events on time!) = 15 points
2nd place: 14 points, etc ...

CLUB POINTS – the explanation

* If the event organiser's knowledge prevents him/her from entering that event (because they drew up the questions or set the route, for example), they will be awarded the average points they have earned from competing in another similar event during the same year. That is, if the organiser of a navigation event earned second place in another navigation event in that year, their average points would see them awarded the equivalent of 2nd place in the event they organised.

Conditions

- All cars are welcome, regardless of breed, colour, creed
- Events can be won by any entrant in any vehicle
- Outright trophies can only be won by Club members
- Points will only apply to the member and car combination.

This is to prevent car swapping to gain some advantage for particular events (except when the member sells their vehicle)

• Team points will follow the above ruling, but clarification will be required for the selling, replacement, trade-in or substitution of the regular team member. *See David Henry for details!!*

• At least three entrants are required for competition points to be awarded for an event.

Disqualification

• Any entrant can be disqualified if, in the opinion of the event organiser and one other Committee member, they have behaved in a dangerous manner while attending an event. *For example: when off the racetrack and not in competition, a member drives a vehicle at high speed through the pit area, creating a hazardous condition for other members.*

Hope that clarifies the confusion. If you have any other questions, please raise them with Daniel at a monthly club meeting.

We was well-and-truly "Rob-bed"!



The Rob Roy Hill Climb on 10 July was a fantastic day for competitors and spectators alike.

There was a good turnout of MX-5s both from our club and from the other Victorian MX-5 club, one of the first times representatives from both clubs graced the same event. Hopefully it will be only the first joint event, and both clubs can share many more events in the future to show Victoria the very best of this great little car in the numbers it deserves.

Aside from the social side of the day, we also acquitted ourselves well on the track.

Sue Ransom, in her comeback to motor sport, finished top of the standard class in a time of 28.54 seconds. David Henry, sharing Sue's car and her spirit of rivalry, was second with 29.83 seconds, ahead of Jon Brown, Dallas Johnson and Simon Gerraty.

Sue Ransom rubs in her comeback win over David Henry, celebrating with (from left) Ian Morris, Greg Allen, Jo Anne Seberry, Daniel Sadique, Stephen Lakkis and Simon Gerraty. "Bolts" was still in orbit!

And need we say it? In the modified class, Peter Bolton again showed his supremacy with a blistering time of 25.9 seconds, ahead of Daniel Sadique. Many other club members, including Adrienne and Robin Shaw, Julie and Frank Inwald, David McCarthy and Rod Pollard, among others, were there to cheer on the competitors.

There are bound to be other hill climbs on the calendar in 1995. Club captain Daniel Sadique recommends the hill climb to everyone ... you're on the track on your own, racing only against the clock. You don't need any experience, and – just ask any of the first-timers from Rob Roy – it's a real hoot!

PETER BOLTON BLITZES WINTON!

Not content with beating all-comers at the HDT Go-kart Challenge, Peter Bolton again took on the HDT Owners' Club and others including the Scuderia Ballarat Car Club at Winton on 31 July ... and showed it was no fluke!

Peter, in his turbo MX-5, blitzed the 44-car field that included some very hot machines including a turbo-powered Mini and a red-hot XU1 Torana. The highest that any HDT club driver finished was fourth, behind Peter, the turbo Mini and another car from Scuderia Ballarat.

It was a lousy, rainy day, especially early, when all drivers set relatively slow times. However Peter, with his special tyres and his flying machine, made better of the conditions to set a best lap time of 1:10.8.

Our only other club representative on the day was James Florence, who recorded a creditable 1:28.0.

Fantastic effort, guys! Congratulations all round!

IT MUST BE THAT TIME OF YEAR!

When we sent out member information update sheets with the last newsletter, each member was asked to note "changes/adjustments" to the information shown.

Mark Richardson reported: "The major change/adjustment has been getting used to our six-month-old twins! As you would imagine, MX-5'ing opportunities for Lisa and me are rather restricted at the moment."

David McCarthy has become the unchallenged master of fitting dozen-crates of wine into crevices in the MX-5 that no-one else can find. Perhaps Mark and Lisa can get some lessons on fitting in the baby carriage!

Another new arrival is Madison, a daughter born to Pie and Peter Bolton in July ... 7lb 12 oz, in perfect health ... and all with less than an hour's labour!!

Congratulations to all four proud new parents from all in the club.

1994 TOUR D'ADELAIDE

Here's an alternative to the Dutton Grand Prix Rally, which might interest some club members.

David Henry, David Burgess and Stephen Lakkis are old hands at the Dutton rally, but entries are limited and it's costly.

The Tour d'Adelaide, described as a "classic car rally in Gran Turismo style" takes entrants from Melbourne to the Adelaide GP via the Great Ocean Road, the Grampians, Coonawarra, Robe, Victor Harbour and McLaren Vale (site of some happy times at NatMeet 94 at Easter).

There are 14 "full on" competitive events, including sprints and timed laps at Calder, match race drags, a navigation trial, an economy run, two bitumen hill climbs, street stages and more.

This year's will be the fifth annual Tour d'Adelaide. It leaves Melbourne on 4 November and arrives in Adelaide on the 9th - six days of great fun. Entry fee is \$850, but only 100 entries are accepted ... and 52 have already been confirmed.

Direct your enquiries to Autopromos, PO Box 270 Moorabbin 3189, or telephone (03) 553 2290.

MX-5 JACKETS

At the July club meeting Tony Scanlon reported that he had found a clothing manufacturer who would make you a customised bomber jacket with leather sleeves and embroider it with the design of your choice - all for \$200 - \$220 (depending on the complexity of the embroidery).

Tony had his jacket made - black with white sleeves and trim coloured to match all the colours in which MX-5s are available - for \$200. If you're interested, contact Bruce McCausland at Jeanworks on phone or fax (03) 470 6084, or call in at 86 Albert Street, Preston.

He'll do one jacket at a time (that is, you don't need a bulk order), in the colours of your choice (within reason), and embroider the badge of your choice. All you need do is give Bruce a copy of the design you want and he'll do the rest. You'll have your new jacket in about two weeks.

WELCOME TO:
The Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria extends a very warm welcome to:

PETER SPALDING

JONATHAN MCGUIGAN

We look forward to seeing you along at future club meetings and club events.



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Murray Finlay

Contributions welcome by month-end on 3.5-inch disk (IBM or Apple), Microsoft Word 5.0 or on fax 888 6183

OUR ADDRESS

YOU CAN CONTACT THE CLUB C/-

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