



Wheels in Motion

March 2022





Wheels in Motion

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<http://www.miataclubofsouthwestflorida.com/home.html>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1221394091665789>

Upcoming Events

March 13: Daylight Saving Time
March 17: St. Patrick's Day

Picnic & Club Elections, March 19th (Saturday)
At Lakes Park
Details on page 18

March 20: First Day of Spring

Babcock Ranch Swamp Buggy Echo
Tour, April 9th (Saturday)
Details on page 17

Contact Judy Western at justducky1414@comcast.net

Wheels Across the Pond, April 16th (Saturday)
Carlin Park in Jupiter, FL
No sign up or cost, just be there!
Details on page 12
or contact Ron at mrhandyrsl@hotmail.com

Track Days at Talladega Speedway
Details on page 17
March 19th or 26th (Only date they are finalizing)
June 18th, August 13th & December 2nd

Miata Reunion at Barber Motorsports Park
July 30th & 31st 2022 (Saturday & Sunday)
Details on page 19
or contact Ron at mrhandyrsl@hotmail.com

National Procrastination Week
(First two weeks in March...or whenever it's convenient...)

Miatas at the Gap
August 4th thru 7th at Fontana, NC
Details on page 20

Monthly Meeting

Thurs, March 10th...
PLEASE CHECK THAT THIS
IS STILL SCHEDULED. AS OF 3/1/22
IT MAY BE CANCELLED!!!

Sea-Craft Waterfront Tiki
3440 Marinatown Lane
North Fort Myers, FL 33903

Monthly meetings are
the 2nd Thursday of the month

Dinner at 5pm and meeting at 6pm.
Please RSVP to Kathy Engler by March 3rd
at kathy.engler@gmail.com

Cover Photo:

Submitted by Ross Clark (found on the internet).
Aren't you glad you are in SW Florida!

THE END back cover photo:

Taken by Ron Lindensmith at the Military Heritage Museum.

JUST FOR FUN

Breakfast Socializer March 22nd
Metro Dinner, 1720 Tamiami Trail Suite 100,
Port Charlotte, FL 33948.

RSVP to Judy at memmx5swf@yahoo.com by March 20th

From the Editor's Desk

By Ron Lindensmith

Welcome to the March issue of the Miata Club of Southwest Florida newsletter. It has been brought to my attention that I have made a few errors when putting dates to events. I really do appreciate those few of you who see those errors and bring them to my attention. I promise to try and do a better job of getting the dates right on our events page! In case you were unaware, I got some dates wrong both here and on the Face-Book page as well.

I haven't received any 'Front & Back' Miata photos, or any 'Other Hobbies' articles so I'm just going to fill space as I see fit. I do appreciate the leads to internet articles related to Miatas as well as some of the humor that gets sent my way. I love the 'Snow Car' photo that Ross Clark sent in. It reminds us all why we are here in Florida... at least for the winter!

The back cover is just a photo of our Miatas from the Military Heritage Museum visit. I wasn't thinking about this being a 'back cover' or 'The End' photo or I would have moved to the back of the line and taken it!

There are two events that are being promoted here because of my interest. The 'Wheels Across the Pond' car show in Jupiter, Florida on April 10th and the Miata Reunion being held July 30th & 31st at Barber Motorsports Park just outside of Birmingham, Alabama. I have every expectation that I will be attending both events and I'm quite sure that I'm not the only member going.

If you have any interest in either of these events, get in touch with me and we'll see if we can work out travel arrangements.

The 'Wheels Across the Pond' would be an early morning caravan to the show. Whether you drive home after the show or stay on the East Coast is up to you.

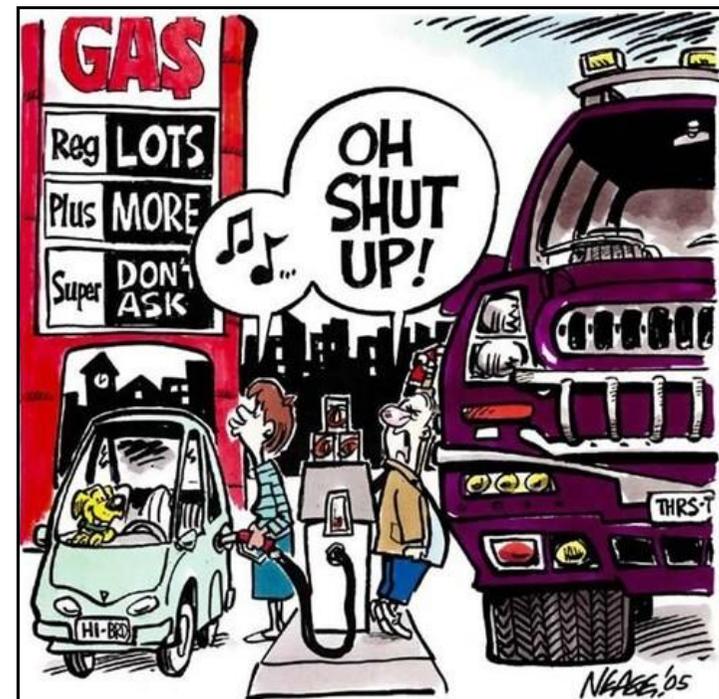
The Miata Reunion being a 2 day event and MUCH further away from SW Florida, bigger arrangements will need to be made. Is it a 1 day or 2 day drive to Birmingham, AL? It's an 11 hour, 675 mile trip. I can do it in a day, but I think I'd rather take 2 days and get 2/3rds or even 3/4th of the way to Birmingham on the first day. And where will you stay while there?

I will be making motel reservations somewhere near the site of the Reunion in the next week or two.

The Miatas at the Gap Festival is the following weekend (August 4th thru 7th) in Fontana, NC (about 50 miles east of Athens, Georgia). I know we have 2 members considering this extension of the Reunion trip. I also think there are some members of the South Florida Miata Club (Miami) who are considering (or actively planning) this trip.

I'm not promoting Breakfast at Biggy's for 2 reasons. First we only had 5 members attend the last one, while the Breakfast in Port Charlotte had 18 members attend. I'll encourage those who used to go to Biggy's, to now go to Judy Western's breakfast in Port Charlotte. I'll probably be there next month. Second is that I'm cutting back my involvement and future schedule load due to a potential health issue. For the next couple of months I will continue to do the newsletter. But whether I continue beyond that depends on test and imaging results that my doctors and I will have by the middle of April; and what downstream life changes that may create for me.

I do not expect to be at the March Club Picnic/Election. I will hopefully be in Sebring watching the 12 Hour endurance sports car race... or at home recuperating from a biopsy procedure done earlier that week.



Everyone Needs a Little Sunshine

By Sandy Cole

Hi to all of you,

Is it March already? It reminds me of an old saying: Will Spring come "in like a lamb and out like a lion?" Or vice versa. "In like a lion and out like a lamb?" That is anyone's guess. We have certainly had a mix of weather everywhere of late. Hopefully, you have all been able to adjust and, despite the chilly mornings lately, appreciate being in SW Florida .

Our membership keeps growing, but fortunately there have very few who need for extra sunshine. I did hear from Jim Rosenthal that his wife, Ann, has terminal cancer. That is definitely not good news. Please keep both of them in your thoughts and prayers. And, be thankful for your own blessings.

Birthdays are always special!!!! And March has 21 members who will celebrate this month. Please wish the following a VERY HAPPY AND HEALTHY BIRTHDAY: Jean Blessing, Debbie Conrad, Gary Dailey, Bonnie Friedman, Eleanor Gosse, Marilyn Herman, Robert Jauch, David Jossi, John Keane, Judy Keane, Janet Keller, Todd Kubas, Dennis Laslo, John Lopez, Feliza Lymburner, Greg Ocfemia, Lisa Pape, Deanna Rocco, John Rooney, Susan Semple and, Judy Yando.

Please continue to stay healthy, safe and count your blessings. It is wonderful to know we have several events scheduled. I am really looking forward to seeing you all soon.

Happy Spring!!!!!! Sunshine Sandy



The newest thing in Miata specialty gauges.



Membership Notes

By Judy Western

Hi Members,

I just have a couple of things to write about.

First and foremost..don't forget to renew your membership. Fill out the form,there is a copy on the next page, and send a check for \$25.00. It's due by the 1st of April.

Please don't wait till the week before, my mail person will not be happy to deliver 100+ envelopes.

We have alot of fun trips coming up , including Babcock Echo tour on April 9th. There are a couple of spaces left. Details of where we meet and eat to follow. And we will have 2 caravans one from the south and one from the north plus our Annual Picnic. Etc

For my last item, just wanted to remind everyone that we meet for breakfast the 4th Tuesday of every month. This month we had 18 people and had alot of fun.

Take care and Blessings,
Judy



Time to Renew Your Membership and Volunteer for a Job on the BOD

In March of 2022 we will start a new year for the Club. That means after a year, 2021, where we didn't ask current members to pay for their renewed Club membership; we will now be collecting dues again. There is a Membership Renewal Form on the next page that you can print out, fill in the info, and send it along with your check for \$25 to Judy Western, our Membership Chairperson.

There will be an election at the Club Picnic in March of 2022 and any member can run for any position on the Board of Directors (although that almost never happens, no matter how much we wish members would try).

It looks like we have an openings for a Club Secretary. That job involves doing the agenda for and the minutes from just 4 Board Meetings over the year.

The job as Liaison to the Mazda of Ft Myers dealership has just opened up as well. The is a bit more involved, but there really isn't any fixed time frames, so you can easily schedule your time.

Volunteering for either of these positions means you are on the Board of Directors, have a say in the direction of the Club, get to socialize more with members and not have to commit to tons of work!

We occasionally have a few regular members show up at the Board meetings, which we encourage. The next one is **Tuesday, April 5th at 1:00pm at the Olympia Restaurant at 3245 Tamiami Trail, Port Charlotte, FL 33952.** Show up, enjoy lunch and even have a chance to have a say about what's going on inside the Club.

The Miata Club of Southwest Florida

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL

Name: _____ Spouse/Significant Other: _____

Birth Date: (Mon. /Day) _____ Birth Date: (Mon. /Day) _____

Florida Address: _____

Northern Address (If applicable): _____

If Seasonal, what months are you typically in SWFL? _____

Telephone Number: _____ Other Phone: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Miata Year: _____ Color: _____

First Name(s) you would like on name badges (new members only): _____

Please indicate an area of interest that you are willing to help out with as a member of MCSWF during the coming year:

Newsletter, Stories: _____ Dealer Liaison, Advertising, etc.: _____

Event Planning and Implementation: _____ Club Officer, Board Member: _____

Other (explain): _____

IMPORTANT: PLEASE READ CAREFULLY AND SIGN. WITH YOUR SIGNATURE, YOU AGREE AND ACCEPT THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS AND CONDITIONS:

As a Member of the Miata Club of Southwest Florida, I agree to obey all traffic laws, including speed limits, and set a positive example for other drivers. I acknowledge that any driving event, whether on a public road or on a track, involves danger and risk. I will not hold the Miata Club of Southwest Florida, its Officers, Members or assigns responsible for any accident, mishap or injury that may occur during any activity or event, or during travel preceding or following such activity or event.

SIGNED: _____ DATE: _____

SIGNED: _____ DATE: _____

Membership fees for the Miata Club of Southwest Florida are \$25 per year per car (April 1 – March 31). All memberships expire on March 31 of each year. New members who join for the first time after Oct. 1 of the current membership year will pay \$15 for the remainder of the membership year. Please send this completed form, along with your check payable to The Miata Club of Southwest Florida, c/o Judy Western, 3006 Caring Way #306, Port Charlotte, FL 33952.

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Military Heritage Museum Visit

By David Saemisch & Ron Lindensmith

The Club visited the Military Heritage Museum in Punta Gorda. We had roughly 20 cars attend. The museum was interesting with information and artifacts from every war the US was involved in throughout it's history. Some of us later went to Fisherman's Village and the Village Brewhouse for lunch. To say that Fisherman's Village was packed is a HUGE understatement! I know some people who drove over were having an awful time trying to find a parking place. I was among the fortunate



that decided to walk from the museum to Fisherman's Village.

David Saemisch submitted this personal history about the museum and the property it sits on:

Went there today, largely to see what Impact University was like. A double whammy. Museum was quantum leap from prior at Fishville. Start outdoors...helicopter, Willis Jeep, ambulance. Indoors, greatly expanded, could spend all day...two floors of exhibits.

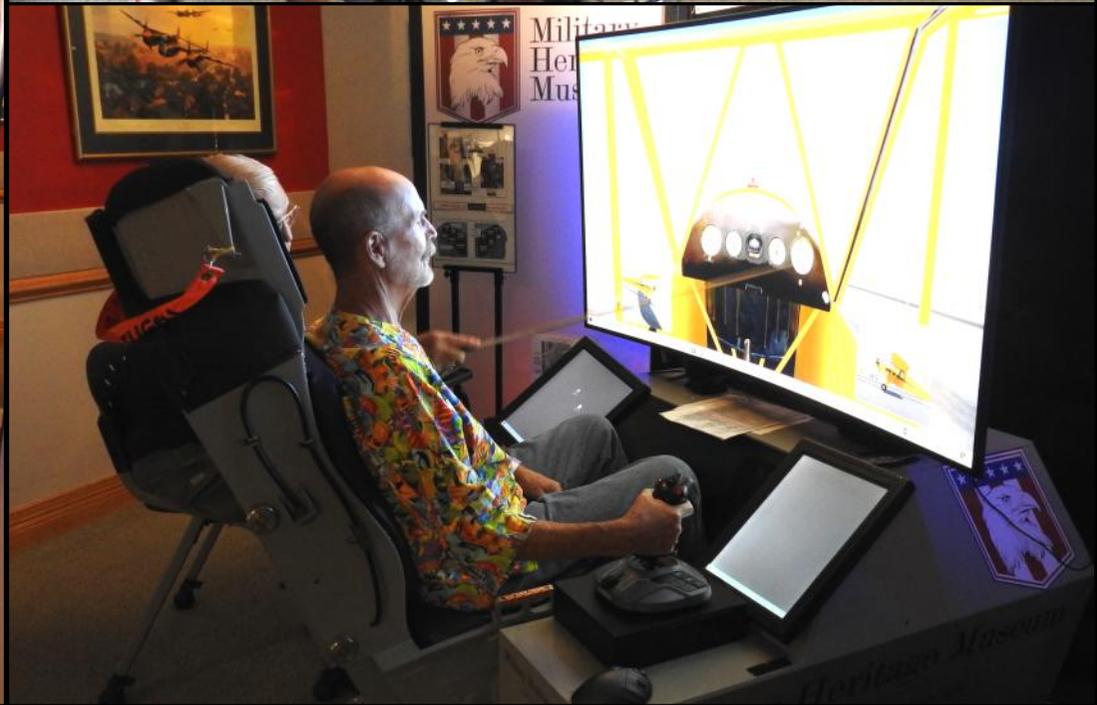
There are 4 virtual piloting devices, each with an instructor, some virtual flying experiences. Several TV screens here and there with stories. A beautiful lecture auditorium.

The building exceeded what I was expecting for prior use as a schooling facility. Owner at that time lived at EP where I do. His student base apparently drifted to an Asian clientele as this facility was basically closed down. Skip Mansfield (a PGSC member providing all year committee boat for races) was captain for the huge boat used as a floating classroom, replacing this facility, docked in the Taiwan area. This all was directed and owned by Steve Irwin. My introduction to him was an encounter here just prior to Hurricane Charlie.....a story for another time. We wondered of the disposal of all his properties, boats, the university. Well turns out owners of Fishville bought the University where Museum is located. Behind the museum is a nearly completed monster, new Condo.



Behind the museum is a nearly completed monster, new Condo.

You have to go see this facility. Rates are \$12 and \$10 for Vets. I will go again and spend a day. Do it, guarantee not to be disappointed.



The Resilient Roadster: How The Mazda Miata Continues To Dominate Its Class For Over 30 years

By Victor Troia Published 2/12/2022



It's tiny, it has less than 200 horsepower, and most of its owners are going through a midlife crisis; so why are Miata's always the answer?

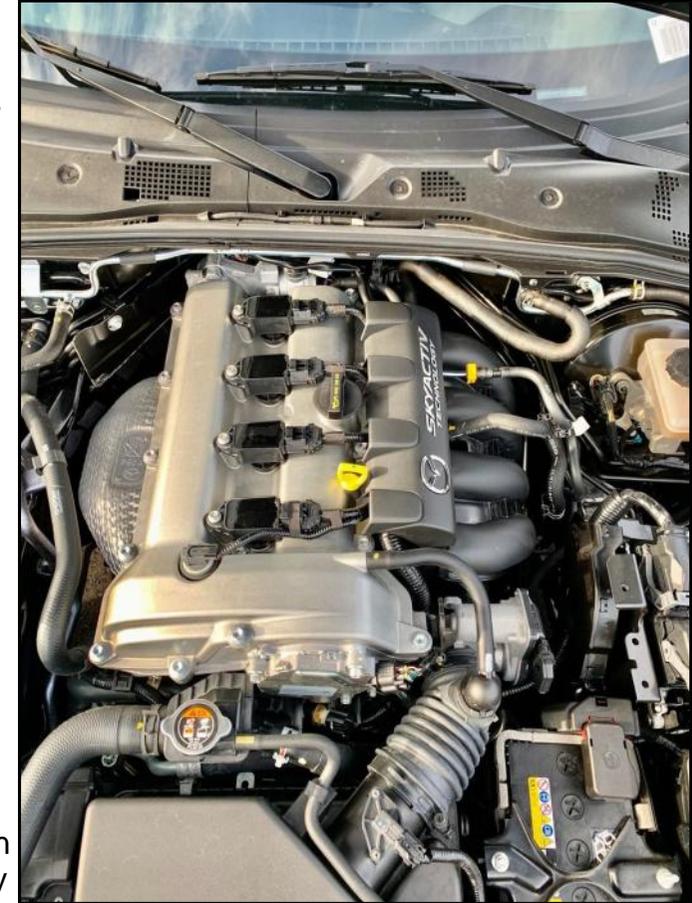
The Mazda MX-5, known in the States as the Miata, was first introduced in 1989. Since then, Mazda has blessed us with four generations of the MX-5. The NA, NB, NC and the current ND models. Back in the nineties, it was the nimble roadster we all got to choose when playing Gran Turismo. It wasn't flashy, but it was always a sports car.

The Miata appeals to everyone; From the Hairdresser heading to the salon to the middle-aged man driving through the canyons. Ask any enthusiast what they prefer to take to the track, and the answer always is

Miata. Thirty years and counting and the MX-5 continues to dominate its class.

An Engine You Can Turn Wrenches On

In 2019, the Miata increased its engine's output to 181 horsepower, up from 155 the previous year. The 2.0 naturally aspirated inline 4-cylinder engine boasts 151 lb-ft of torque with a curb weight less than 2,500 pounds. It now has plenty of power to pull its featherweight frame into corners, providing a thrill unmatched in its class. It comes standard with a 6 speed manual gearbox with its redline at 7500 RPMs. Combine all that linear power with its already infamous handling, and it's enough to make you feel like you're in a Formula 1 race car. The throttle feels extremely responsive, the gearbox shifts like butter and urges you to rev it all the way up to its redline. The Miata is certainly the most fun you can have on a budget in a modern day roadster. It's so light that you can just throw it into turns and still trust that it will remain in control.



The dual overhead cam engine is refined and appeals to many car enthusiasts for its simplistic design. The engine doesn't have any plastic covers over it, rather it's simply and easily accessible under the hood. Nowadays, engines come completely covered and sometimes require special tools to access. Automakers are discouraging people to work on their own cars. Not Mazda, just look at that engine, it looks like something

straight from the past. As clichè as it may sound, Mazda understands, if it ain't broke, don't fix it.

The Manual Transmission Is Still Standard

There is nothing in this world that is more exciting than going through the gears in a sports car. Unlike Toyota with their Supra, Mazda will never offer their Miata without a standard transmission. They understand that the car is designed to operate with a manual. Going through the gears and hitting the perfect shift is what brings out the fun in an open-top roadster. When BMW introduced the new Z4, it did not offer a manual transmission. Same goes for Porsche with their 911. Dedicated fans were appalled when they found out a manual was not an option. Porsche and

BMW listened to their consumers and eventually released a manual transmission for the 911 and for European spec Z4's.

These auto-makers

paid attention to the feedback and understood that there is still a large enough market for manual transmission buyers.

Now automakers don't want to make the same mistake. Look at Ford with their new Bronco, they offer a stick shift for the 4 cylinder model with a crawling gear! These stories are a true testament to the value car enthusiasts bring to the table. Car companies are beginning to listen. Mazda however has been listening for decades and the latest Miata is the perfect example. A new and improved engine, handling that you can trust and of course the buttery smooth six speed. Everything you want in a high revving sports car.



DON'T MISS... Wheels Across The Pond Car Show
Saturday of Easter Weekend

Carlin Park - Jupiter, Florida

www.WheelsAcrossThePond.com  

After a couple of extremely challenging years, we are thrilled to let you know that Wheels Across The Pond is BACK ON for 2022!

Our 14th annual show will take place on **Saturday April 16th 2022** at our regular venue, the beautiful [Carlin Park](#) in Jupiter.

Very Important for 2022

Due to the growth of the show in recent years, 2022 will require you to be pre-registered in order to be included in the public voting on the day. We lay out the show field in classes based on what cars and bikes we know are attending and in recent events adding large numbers of vehicles to these classes on the day is becoming a logistical nightmare as we run out of room pretty quickly.

We will still accept 'on the day' arrivals but this year, those arrivals will be 'display only' and will be in one group on the show field and will not be part of the voting.

To have a chance of an award, it is essential that you pre-register ahead of the show and remember, if you're pre-registered by Friday March 25th, you'll get an event shirt, dash plaque and goody bag. Additional shirts can be added as you register online or by mail / check.

Could the 86 Coupes Replace the Miata as the Answer?

By David S. Wallens published online January 30, 2022
Grassroots Motorsports

Perhaps this could be the next Spec Miata, muses longtime pro racer Robb Holland. The car is easy to build, easy to drive and easy to race. The chassis is already popular among enthusiasts, whether the decklid reads Subaru BRZ, Scion FR-S or Toyota 86.

“The BRZ feels like a bigger, more powerful Miata,” Robb says. “It still has the same nimbleness that a Miata has but is a bit more stable at the limit. It’s easy enough to drive for beginners but still a lot of fun for even the way more experienced drivers.”

While racing this chassis is nothing new, this particular car, built by Colorado’s NRG Motorsports, represents a glimpse at a potential future series. Call it a look at what’s possible—a simple, DIY-friendly build, all thanks to a seed planted in Europe.

Easy to Build

One of my friends over at the Nürburgring was Oliver Kröll, who worked for TMG,” Robb recalls. The year was 2015, he thinks, and TMG stands for Toyota Motorsports Group, the brand’s factory-backed, German-based motorsports department.

TMG, now known as Toyota Gazoo Racing Europe, ran Toyota’s Formula 1 effort and currently operates the brand’s World Endurance Championship program—you know, the team that finished 1-2 overall at Le Mans last year.

“TMG was starting the new Toyota GT86 Cup series at the Nürburgring and wanted a bunch of team owners and drivers to come out and test the car and give feedback,” Robb continues. “I could tell right away that it was an amazing package and that it would do incredibly well in the U.S.

“Even though it didn’t have the power that a lot of other cars racing in the VLN had, its handling was simply amazing. Through the fast, flowing section of the Nordschleife, between the Karussell and Brunnchen, the 86 would leave every other car in its class—and many faster cars—in the dust. It wasn’t the power of the car; it was the handling. You could just

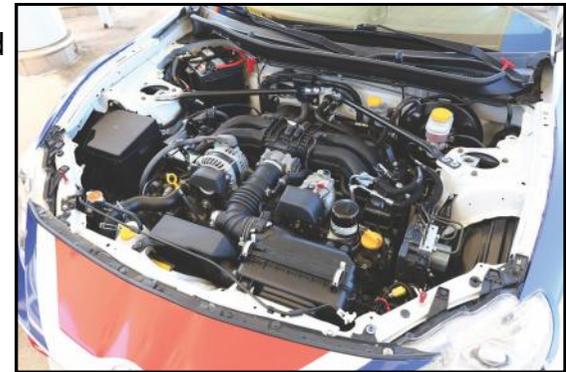
float the car into the corners at such high speed for a production car on skinny tires.”

Toyota Gazoo Racing Europe continues to offer GT86 turnkey race cars, with the current lineup featuring one rally-spec machine and a pair of road racers. The CS-Cup car, the quicker of the two track models, has become a staple in Europe’s VLN series—the group that calls the Nürburgring home.

While the SCCA now offers a successful spec autocross series for the Toyota 86 chassis and a group called 86Cup sanctions a one-make West Coast time trial program, the U.S. never got a spec road race series for the car. Robb reports that he nosed around but just couldn’t find the right corporate partner to make the concept a reality—even though Toyota displayed a CS-Cup car in its 2016 SEMA booth and fielded it in Pirelli World Challenge competition the following year for just two races. (Craig Stanton drove that car to third- and fourth-place finishes.)

Eight years after the car’s launch, however, Robb argues that it’s still a strong candidate for a spec series. Take those benign track manners and add in the fact that more than 116,000 units have been sold to date in the U.S.

Aside from the small horsepower and gearing tweaks introduced for the 2017 model year—which, as even our own testing showed, didn’t significantly impact performance—this model has been relatively unchanged since its unveiling for 2012. The only real option has been the transmission: six-speed manual or six-speed automatic.



“It’s been the same car for eight years now,” Robb stresses. “All the parts are stocked by the dealer.”

And the high production number means there are lots of cars out there that would make perfect starting points for track car builds. “The great thing about these is that they’re coming up on the salvage market for five grand,” Robb adds.

Alex Nelsen, owner of NRG Motorsports, built this one—perhaps that future spec racer—from two such salvage cars. “I bought this car and a ’14 BRZ,” Alex recalls. “\$8300 delivered for both.”

The pair had been caught in a flood. The 2016 Scion FR-S, the car shown here, saw the water rise halfway up its doors. The engine wasn’t running at the time, though, so it didn’t ingest any water. That wasn’t the case with the Subaru, though, so it donated the parts needed to convert the FR-S from an automatic transmission to a manual.

“Mechanically, it’s not a big thing at all,” Alex says of the swap. “Or electronically.”

The conversion involves transplanting the major hard parts—transmission, clutch, pedals, driveshaft—plus the engine and dash harnesses. All of the control modules also need to be swapped. “You can switch one module, but if swapping more than one, then you need to start from scratch,” Alex says, as the immobilizer starts to become an issue at that point.

Since both cars had been flooded, Alex replaced all of the modules. “There’s a pretty solid aftermarket of guys dismantling these cars,” he explains. For about \$450, Alex purchased a matching set of control modules with keys. Problem fixed.

One thing Alex learned during the swap: Keeping it Subaru to Subaru or Scion to Scion makes the process easier. The Subaru starts with a push button, while the Scion uses an old-school key. The harnesses are similar but not identical.

The actual race prep was fairly simple, with the biggest upgrade being the suspension package found on those Euro-spec 86 Cup series cars: a set of two-way-adjustable Bilstein dampers fitted with threaded body coil-overs and camber plates. That’s about a \$6000 setup, Alex notes.

The brakes, engine, gearbox and differential are all still stock. Even the bushings remain original, and the stock anti-roll bars are perfect, Alex

says. A 6x18-inch Setrab oil cooler can be found in front of the radiator.

“We haven’t even tuned our motor,” Robb notes, calling this one of perhaps a few modern cars that can be easily converted from road to track use because its stock electronics don’t get in the way.

The header was developed in Europe and helps eliminate the torque dip found around 3500 rpm. Alex is looking to having something similar built stateside.

Then add in the usual race car setup, meaning a gutted interior, full cage and all the safety equipment. The tires are the long-wearing Hankook Ventus R-S4 wrapped around 17x9-inch Enkei wheels—a model found on the Tire Rack website.

The cost of duplicating this car depends on who’s doing the labor, Alex notes. He figures \$30,000 to \$35,000 to deliver one to a customer; budget less if you do the work yourself.

In this trim, the car’s power-to-weight ratio lands it in the World Racing League’s GP3 class. “The WRL format, I think, is great for motorsports in general,” Robb says. “It’s some of the most accessible, inexpensive racing that you can do.

“Their endurance format, with a lower bar to entry, has the ability to draw in people who might not otherwise have an interest in the sport. Additionally, it’s just good, fun racing that mixes some top pros in with the amateurs and gives everyone a ton of seat time.”



Easy to Race

The build was simple, but there's still one question we haven't answered: Is it fast? At this June's World Racing League 14-hour enduro at Daytona International Speedway, Robb qualified with a 2:21.

Toward the end of the race, while taking it easy to secure a second-place class finish, he ran about a second or so off that pace. "There's at least a 19 in it," he says of the car.

Compare those times to the Miata benchmark: The top SCCA Spec Miatas—which run on the faster, stickier Hoosier SM7.5 tire—can turn a 2:19 at Daytona. Budget at least \$30,000 for a turnkey build from a known shop.

The beauty, both Robb and Alex note, is in the 86's reliability and undemanding maintenance. During the 14-hour Daytona race, the car suffered just one issue: An axle failed as the nearby exhaust pipe got it just a little too hot.

"It basically burns the grease off," Robb notes. "You have to run motorsport grease and motorsport boots." Alex is having some race-spec axles built. He figures they'll last a season or two.

"The cars are light, so they don't eat up brakes," Robb continues. "They don't eat up tires." The Daytona tally: 14 hours on one set of Hankooks and just a single set of brake pads.

Alex's shop has long campaigned Spec Miatas, and last September he entered the World Racing League's 24-hour contest at High Plains Raceway with two cars: one of the two 86 coupes in his stable and a 1994 Miata. After the race, he spent just one day servicing the 86. "The Miata, on the other hand, for the same level of prep took five days," he recalls. "Everything on that car is, for us, 26 years old."

As Miatas get older, he continues, finding good parts for them becomes tougher. He cites alternators as an example: Today he can only get them from aftermarket suppliers, and they only last for one enduro. In fact, Alex's data shows them slowly petering out even before that single competition is over. And that lifetime warranty doesn't help if the unit burns out mid-race, he notes. "We were getting very frustrated with the Miata with the level of maintenance in order to keep the car reliable."

He compares that to the coupe. "The 86 has been stellar," he reports. When Alex purchased the Scion, it had about 11,000 miles on the odometer. After four major endurance races to date covering about 4000 miles to-

tal, the engine still puts down the same dyno figures—about 165 horsepower at the wheels. Over-revs haven't hurt the engine, either, he notes. "All we've done is change the oil."

"They're very elegantly put together," he continues. "This is like an Asian Porsche as far as its simplicity and elegance."

Easy to Organize?

In addition to the Pirelli World Challenge held here in the States—the series now known as SRO Motorsports Group America—Robb has raced around the world thanks to time in the British Touring Car Championship, World Touring Car Championship and TCR International Series. He also makes regular appearances at the Nürburgring.

Get a pack of 30 or 40 of these spec coupes together, he says, and it should be exciting. Plus, it's a current car still supported by both Subaru and Toyota dealer networks. "It makes too much sense to me"

The trick, he says, is finding someone to apply the necessary muscle to develop and support a series. Robb envisions something like the original Spec Miata, where multiple sanctioning bodies adopted a single ruleset.

He muses that the formula could even be expanded into multiple classes based on prep level: mild, medium and radical. The parts and technical support already exist.

Robb's part in this plan, he says, is to simply get the idea off the ground. "I'm just into seeing good racing," he says.

"This could be the next Spec Miata," he continues. "The cars are newer, quicker, better-looking."

*Editor's note: As a person who owned a 2017 Toyota 86 for 3+ years, I feel obligated to add my 2 cents here. The Toyota 86, Scion FRS & Subaru BRZ are very nice cars. Maybe even better everyday drivers than a new MX5 Miata. However, they are **NOT** newer since the MX5 ND came out in 2016. They are **NOT** quicker since the ND2 wins the C Street class at auto-cross making up the majority of the top finishers at the SCCA National Championships. And "...better looking..." is certainly in the eye of the beholder. I like the looks of the Toyota/Subaru twins, but I want a small 2 seat sports car. That is what the ND MX5 Miata is. The Toyota/Subaru twins will have to go quite a long way to become 'The Answer!' To me, **MIATA... Miata Is Always The Answer** still holds true. But the twins do come close and make a fine daily drivers with more interior and storage space.*

Miata Club Trip Ideas

SUGGESTIONS FOR POSSIBLE DAY OR OVERNIGHT TRIPS

(* = Trips we have done before but would do again)

- FAKAHATCHEE STRAND STATE PRESERVE NATURE WALK
- ELEPHANT FARM – POSSIBLE OPTIONS –
 - TWO TAILS RANCH IN WILLISTON, FL. (NEAR GAINESVILLE)
 - ELEPHANT WALK FARMS, CHULUOTA, FL (NORTH OF ORLANDO)
- RINGLING BROS MUSEUM SARASOTA *
- RODEO IN ARCADIA (Scheduled on March 13, 2022)
- HORSE FARM, OCALA
- STATE CAPITAL, TALLAHASSEE
- NAPLES ZOO
- TRAIN MUSEUM, PARISH FL *
- TARPON SPRINGS OVERNIGHT
- LEE COUNTY RECYCLE / WASTE MANAGEMENT TOUR *
- MONKEY JUNGLE, MIAMI FL
- SWIM WITH THE MANATEES (OVERNIGHT?) CRYSTAL RIVER
- RIVER RANCH OFF ROUTE 60, LAKE WALES, FL
- ROAD TRIP ON CURVY ROADS, NO HIGHWAYS.
- OVERNIGHT TRIP TO MOUNT DORA
- TOUR OF RAYMOND JAMES STADIUM (TAMPA) –
POSSIBLE OVERNIGHT TRIP, INCLUDE VISITS TO OTHER
ATTRACTIONS.
- OVERNIGHT TRIP TO KENNEDY SPACE CENTER AND/OR
DAYTONA SPEEDWAY

- DAKIN FARM TOUR, MYAKKA CITY (THIS WAS A WRITE-IN)
- MARIE SELBY GARDENS *
- AH-TAH-THI-KI MUSEUM *
- NAPLES CRUISES (DOUBLE SUNSHINE OR NAPLES PRINCESS) *
- WICKED DOLPHIN DISTILLERY TOUR *
- OCTAGON WILDLIFE SANCTUARY *
- SIESTA KEY RUM DISTILLERY, DER DUTCHMAN, CAR MUSEUM *
- ECHO GLOBAL FARM TOUR *
- BIG CAT HABITAT, SARASOTA *
- GREAT APES CENTER, WACHULA *
- SOLOMON'S CASTLE, ONA *
- CLEWISTON TOUR, SUGAR FIELDS, ETC. *
- GUIDE DOG TRAINING CENTER *
- LIONS, TIGERS, AND BEARS REFUGE, ARCADIA *
- SARASOTA BREWING CO. *
- RACE DAY AT SEBRING RACE TRACK
- CRUISE UP THE CALOOSAHATCHEE RIVER, CAPT. J.P., TRIPLE
DECK PADDLE WHEELER *
- RANDALL RESEARCH CENTER/TASTE OF PINE ISLAND *
- CHILI COOKOFF *
- SOUP COOKOFF *
- MINIATURE GOLF TOURNAMENTS *
- SCAVENGER HUNTS
- MYSTERY DRIVES
- OVERNIGHT EVENTS – SUNRISE/SUNSET, TARPON SPRINGS,
ST. PETERSBURG *

Don't be shy

and please don't wait for somebody else to step up and do this.

We need you to give this a try and get involved!

Contact Donna Noyes or Ron Lindensmith and they will offer any help
you may want.

TRACK DAYS AT TALLADEGA SPEEDWAY

by Donna Noyes

Late in 2020, I received emails from a few organizers that were trying to set up a Miata Day at the Talladega Speedway in Lincoln, AL. Plans were made, Miata Clubs signed up, things were looking good until . . . COVID! Plans were rearranged, organizers set up different dates and events and . . . plans had to be cancelled again due to a lack of staff to man the events.

Now, it is back on the schedule in 2022! Well, almost. It's early in the planning process and four possible dates have been identified. I hope to get more information in a week or two. Here is what I know so far -

Possible dates are:

March 19th or 26th (Only date they are finalizing)

June 18th

August 13th

December 2nd

The event organizer says that Track days will include:

- Two laps around Talladega Superspeedway
- Opening up the garage area to have a large show 'n shine event, open to any makes and models
- We will have food and drink available to purchase
- Photo in victory lane
- Photo of each car before they roll out and do their laps (still working on the details of this)
- Initial plan is to create a folder that we can send to all attendees so they can go in and find their car and other photos that they want to keep
- Dash plaque
- This event is meant to be an all-day event

Also included is a race ticket to either the GEICO 500 on April 24th, 2022 or the YellaWood 500 on October 2nd, 2022. All attendees will sit together for the race, Sections have already been blocked off to keep everyone as close as possible.

Cost is \$35 per person + \$25 per car for the track days. The \$25 will support local charities in East Alabama.

Once we get final details and the actual date, we can find out if we have any interested members that would like to attend. We can caravan to the area - probably this will be a 3- or 4-night trip - and we might find other places to visit on the way or in the area. So, keep this in mind - it could be pretty incredible, I think. Imagine driving your beloved Miata on the Talladega Super Speedway, with a photo to prove it! In the meantime, if you are a fan of Will Ferrell, maybe check out the movie "Talladega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby".

Stay tuned for more details.

Swamp Buggy tour at Babcock Ranch

Hello Miata Club Members!

Be sure to put this one on your calendar. Judy Western has made arrangements for a 90-minute narrated Swamp Buggy tour at Babcock Ranch on **Saturday, April 9th, at 10:15 am.**

This tour is limited to the first 35 people that sign up (that's all the Swamp Buggy holds). **The cost is \$20.33 per person, paid in advance.** If you want to sign up now, send Judy a check made out to her. Her address is listed below.

Details for caravan meeting location, lunch or dinner will be provided later.

Contact Judy for information or to sign up -

Judy Western
3006 Caring Way #306
Port Charlotte, FL 33952

justducky1414@comcast.net
941-629-3534

REMINDER - Seats are filling up fast for this trip. The bus only holds 35 so if you want to join us, you need to sign up

MIATA CLUB OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

2022 ANNUAL PICNIC AND MEETING

MARCH 19

It is finally time to have our traditional **Annual Picnic and Business Meeting** to elect new officers. Both 2020 and 2021 Annual Picnics had to be cancelled due to the pandemic but we were able to have a successful Welcome Back Picnic in November. Now, it's time for some serious club business (but mostly fun and socializing) at the **Lakes Regional Park** on Saturday March 19. The club will provide a barbecue-style lunch catered by Smoke 'n Pit Barbecue. No beverages will be provided this year so please bring your own. There are vendors in the park that sell beverages and we will also have bottled water available.

For dessert, we haven't decided yet if we would like a few volunteers to bring something or if the club will provide the dessert. We will make that decision as we get closer to the picnic date.

Lakes Regional Park is located at 7330 Gladiolus Dr. Ft. Myers, FL. 33908. (Gladiolus Drive just West of U.S. 41). The picnic is scheduled from 11:00 to 3:00. **Lunch will be served beginning at 12:00.** We have reserved **Pavilion D-1** which provides covered seating around picnic tables for up to 120 people. You may also bring your own folding chairs if you'd like. In addition to the great company you'll be sharing, the park offers amenities such as fishing, bicycle and surrey rentals, paddle boat and kayak rentals, and many lovely walking paths to walk off your lunch. There is also a miniature train ride and train museum (extra cost)

and a lovely botanical garden. Check the park's website for an overview of the facilities: <http://www.lakesparkenrichmentfoundation.org/>

Parking is \$5.00 all day, or \$1.00 per hour, and the machines in the parking lot accept both dollar bills and credit cards. Parking will be in lot #1 which is to the left after you enter the park. Drive to the farthest end of lot #1. Pavilion D-1 is at the end of the lot. We will have Miata club signs and banners to direct you.

ALL MIATA CLUB MEMBERS ARE INVITED, **BUT YOU MUST SIGN UP BY MARCH 7 SO THAT WE HAVE AN ACCURATE HEADCOUNT FOR LUNCH. YOU WILL ALSO NEED TO PROVIDE A REFUNDABLE DEPOSIT OF \$10 PER PERSON WHEN YOU SIGN UP.** As in past years, this picnic is free for members so please note that the deposit will be refunded to you when you arrive at the picnic or if you cancel before March 7. You may pay this deposit with either cash or a check and you can give it to me at the February monthly meeting or you may mail it to me at the address below.

**THE DEPOSIT OR ANY CANCELLATIONS
MUST BE RECEIVED BY MARCH 7**

**If you have any questions,
contact me: Donna Noyes 239-454-5665**



The Miata Reunion website

is officially live!

www.miatareunion.com

We're pleased to welcome many sponsors back again, some of whom have been with us since our very first event, as well as with some new additions:

Mazda North American Operations

Flyin' Miata, Moss Miata

Miata.net, Exocet

KPower Industries

Haartz Corporation

Jzilla Track Days

We'll highlighting each of our sponsors during the coming weeks and introducing the vendors who will be cramming Vendor Alley this year.

We don't want to fill your in-box with multiple emails, so please make sure to follow via our [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#) pages for the upd

As far as activities, ***buckle up, baby!!***

- Miatas-only Track Days Saturday and Sunday for you track junkies.
- **Flyin' Miata G-Force Challenge** all day Saturday to test both your driving skills AND your Miata's grip on the Barber Skid Pad.
No roll bars are required.
- **Car Control Clinic by Jzilla Track Days** all day Saturday, offering professional instruction to improve those driving skills.
No roll bars are required.
- **Moss Miata Car Show** on Saturday afternoon. Winners receive tro-



phies and prizes, including seats at the Saturday Banquet, courtesy of Moss. Will display winning cars at the entrance of the Museum for the evening Banquet. ates.

- **Miata Reunion Formal Banquet** Saturday evening inside the Museum, with **special guest speakers Tom Matano and Norman Garrett.**

(Space limited to 400 people).

- **Vendor Alley** – the only time each year where all the top Miata parts and service folks are at the same event.

- **Saturday Parade Laps** on track, including Group Photo and aerial drone video. At our last event, we had 644 Miatas in the Parade Laps.

- **Moss Miata Sunday Cruise.** Limited to 50 cars, touring a pre-planned fun route through beautiful (and twisty) Alabama country roads.

Get ready..... Registration opens at 9am Pacific on March 5.

Miata Reunion 2022

Saturday and Sunday, July 30-31, 2022

Barber Motorsports Parks, Leeds, Alabama

On-site registration: Friday, July 29, 2022,
at Hampton Inn & Suites, Leeds (official Event Hotel)

The Miata Reunion Team



MATG XXVI

August 4-7, 2022

What is Miatas at the Gap? <https://www.gapmiatas.com/>

Simply put, MATG is THE longest running Miata gathering in the country. Located in the midst of some of the greatest driving roads in the country. We are one of the largest gatherings of Miatas and owners in the US.

Who?

Attendees range from Miata newbie to 20+ year veteran and their vehicles from stock to Excocet/track rat and all forms in between. They come from all walks of life and some even come from other countries to attend each year. The cars were meant for these roads and the area doesn't disappoint.

Where?

Ground Zero for the event is the Fontana Village Resort (link, map) located in the middle of Miata driving paradise. The main attraction for the Miata enthusiast is the legendary Tail of the Dragon. Being in close proximity to other options like Wayah Road, the Cherohala Skyway, Moonshiner 28, Devil's Triangle TN, Six Gap in Georgia, and Diamondback 226A means endless hours and days of driving bliss.

Why?

Miata, MX-5, Eunos Roadster, whatever you call it, the Mazda Miata is the most popular sports car ever made. With more than 1,000,000 built since 1989 and fans and enthusiasts the world over love to come together to enjoy great driving roads, make lasting friendships, and enjoy being a part of the greatest group of car enthusiasts around.

Other Details

We have vendors for all types of Miata upgrades, a tent with event t-shirts and commemorative dash plaques, a schedule of organized drives, and the infamous beer and wine swap on Saturday night. There is also a General Store nearby to keep you fed and hydrated for your driving adventures while providing a great meeting point.



THE END