

Wheels in Motion

April 2022

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Wheels in Motion

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Website:

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

Facebook:

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

Upcoming Events

Miata Club Board of Directors Meeting

Noon lunch, 1pm meeting, Tuesday, April 5th
at the Olympia Restaurant
3245 Tamiami Trail, Port Charlotte, FL 33952

Babcock Ranch Swamp Buggy Echo

Tour, April 9th (Saturday)
Details on page 35
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 34
or contact Ron at mrhandyrsl@hotmail.com

April Fools Day, Friday April 1st
Full moon, Saturday April 16th
Easter, Sunday April 17th
Tax Day, Monday April 18th

Track Days at Talladega Speedway

June 18th, August 13th & December 2nd
Details on page 35

Miata Reunion at Barber Motorsports Park

July 30th & 31st 2022 (Saturday & Sunday)
Details on page 36
or contact Ron at mrhandyrsl@hotmail.com

Miatas at the Gap

August 4th thru 7th at Fontana, NC
Details on page 37

Monthly Meeting

Thurs, April 14th

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 April, 7th
at kathy.engler@gmail.com

Cover Photo & THE END back cover photo:

Photos by Ron Lindensmith
This is at the March 6th autocross event
at Buckingham air field.
The red #294 Miata is Glenn Beccue's
and the white #86 Miata behind is Ron Lindensmith's.

JUST FOR FUN

Breakfast Socializer April 26th
Metro Dinner, 1720 Tamiami Trail Suite 100,
Port Charlotte, FL 33948.
RSVP to Judy at memmx5swf@yahoo.com by April 24th

From the Editor's Desk

By Ron Lindensmith

Welcome to the April edition of the Miata Club of Southwest Florida newsletter. I keep playing with the format and design in an attempt to make it look better, read easier and look a bit more professional (if that's possible). I hope you all enjoy the way this one looks. I don't even want to begin telling you about how much time it takes to download an article from the internet and reformat it so it works here. Lets just say that it's a good thing I enjoy working out the puzzle parts to make it all fit together.

To that end, there are 2 really nice articles in this issue. [Comparing Miata Race Cars](#) was found online by Allan Engler and [Celebrating 32 Years of Miata](#) was found by Sandy Dunham. Thanks for passing along the links to these articles. You guys make this newsletter the best!

I decided to write up a story about autocross this month. I've been doing it here in SW Florida for 5 years. Glenn Beccue has moved here from the Midwest and has a significant amount of autocross experience and expertise. This month Janet Keller came out and did the Saturday Novice Training. If anybody is interested in trying autocross or even just coming out as a spectator, feel free to call or email me with questions. The rules to get into the site have finally eased so spectators are again welcome.

In case anybody is considering the Miata Reunion in July, up in Birmingham, AL, I'm definitely going. I just plopped down \$325 to run the Sunday Track Day sessions. Regular admission to the Reunion is only \$25. and I think there will be close to 2000 Miatas there. And parade laps of Barber Motorsports Park are free. And one of the very best motorcycle museums in the world is there as well.

I expect that after doing fast laps on the track, I'll be able to curb my enthusiasm the following weekend in Fontana, NC for the Miatas at the Gap event. I really don't think I need to do anything foolish on a twisty mountain road just a week after spending a day on n incredible race track! And after all, if you've already driven 11 to 12 hours to Birmingham for the Reunion, what's another 5 hours to get to Fontana for another huge Miata event! It's almost a two for the price of one!

One final note: Next months newsletter will either be quite early or a bit late. I usually do a fair amount of the work to final assembly during the last 10 to 14 days of the month. But in April I'll be out of town and/or very busy the last 10 days of the month.

Taking the Moon!



For those of you who don't know, I'm an avid photographer, and sky watcher. I'm also willing to play 'artist' with photographs using Photoshop. Kathy Engler, one of our Membership Team knew my interest and sent me this series of 'artistic photos' from the internet.

Everyone Needs a Little Sunshine

By Sandy Cole

Dear Miata Club Family:

As I was growing up in the mid-west (a few years back) I remember the saying: "April Showers, Bring May Flowers!" I realize now how limited my experience had been, because in Florida, as in other states, the saying definitely does not apply. The flowers grow here all year long and the rainy season is during the summer. But, it is still a positive and happy saying. And, we have been able to enjoy 'Springlike' weather long before now in SW Florida. I doubt our snowbirds are ready to head out too soon either. However, with Easter and Passover celebrations are just around the corner, there will be a mass exodus to share the holidays with Family.

This past month, we have had a couple requests for extra SUNSHINE. We sent cards to Charlene Hayman, who broke her foot playing pickle ball. She is recovering, but it has definitely limited her activities. And, we just heard that Guy Waggy was hospitalized with a heart condition and is now in a Cape Coral rehab facility. Ron Lindensmith is also undergoing some tests and a biopsy. Please send your thoughts and prayers to these long time members. We also ask that you will continue to remember all of those members who may still be recovering or struggling with previous issues. Hopefully, they will all be 'out and about' in the near future.

Birthday always bring a smile. There are twenty one April Birthdays. Please join me in wishing the following members a very HAPPY BIRTHDAY. Bill Avarez, Bob Cockrum, Susan Cox, Jerry Davis, Sandy Dunham, Rick Edwards, David Erickson, Dick Fischer, Ed Hara, Sally Hara, Rick Hayman, Sue Kindelan, Bernice Latteiri, Ron Lindensmith, Joanne Mainberger, Jan Myles-Brunelle, Russ Oleksyszyn, Susan O'Connor, Marge Powell, Gary Robinson and, David Saemisch. We trust they will have a safe and healthy year ahead.

We look forward to seeing you all soon. Stay well. And, if you are traveling for the holidays, PLEASE be safe.

Blessings, Sunshine Sandy

Membership Notes

By Judy Western

Blessed Easter to all our Miata friends. This article is going to be very short this month.

In the newsletter Ron has published some of our pictures from our breakfast at Metro Diner. We had a lot of fun just socializing and comparing car notes, our next meeting will be April 26th, Tuesday, 9am at Metro Diner in Port Charlotte.

We are also going to Babcock Eco tour April 9th, we still have a couple of spots left. If you are interested I will need to know by the 5th of April.

Also we need to finish up our membership Drive as of April 14th at our general meeting. After that we will presume that you are no interested in renewal.

We have a lot going g on this month so great ready to ZOOM ZOOM through the month





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2022 MX-5

LOOP-DE-LOOP Road Rally

February 26, 2022

By Jess & Sandy Dunham

Saturday morning, 20 Miata's met at the Merchants Crossing Shopping Mall in N. Fort Myers, Fl. There was a short drivers meeting. At 10:30 am Sandy Dunham started the cars out at 30 second intervals with

one Miata getting route "A" and the next Miata getting route "B". Group "A" exited the mall in one direction while group



"B" exited the mall in the opposite direction. The "A" and "B" groups would eventually turn north onto US-41. From there all the questions would be the same until they arrived in Punta Gorda. Then the routes changed again. That would lead them to our restaurant for lunch at Nino's Bakery and Restaurant.

The reason this rally was called Loop-De-Loop was we had them going in many loops. The first loop went around Island Coast High School in Cape Coral. The next loop had them going down Zemel

Road and then back around to US-41. Did someone go the wrong way on Jones Loop Road! They then turned right onto Washington Loop Road, onto Kissimmee Road for another loop, then back to Punta Gorda. Did someone stop at Dunkin Donuts! Overall each Miata traveled about 75 miles and answered 82 questions.

Nino's provided a gift certificate (\$25) for the winner of the "A" route and another certificate (\$25) for the winner of the "B" route. Our winners were John & Colette Handke for the "A" route and Rayanna & Rick Edwards for the "B" route. From all of the chatter we could hear at the restaurant, it appeared everyone had a good time doing the rally.

We would like to thank all of you who attended the rally because without you this couldn't happen. Those who made it happen are Sharon

& Ron Basil,
George &
Judy Bishko,
Steve &
Sandy Bow-
ers, Jeff &



Jan Brunelle, Sandy Cole & Guest, Jess & Sandy Dunham, Rayanna & Rick Edwards, Allan & Kathy Engler, Lisa & Larry Hammond, John & Colette Handke, Rick & Charlene Hayman, David & Janet Kel-

ler, Dennis & Martha Laslo, Larry & Feliza Lymburner, Jack & DeAnna May, Gene & Carol McCoy, Mike & Katrina McIntosh, Glen & Yvette Washburn, Judy Western & Guest and Carl & Dottie Yost. Participants made for a fun day.





The Rally crowd gathers at Nino's Bakery and Restaurant.



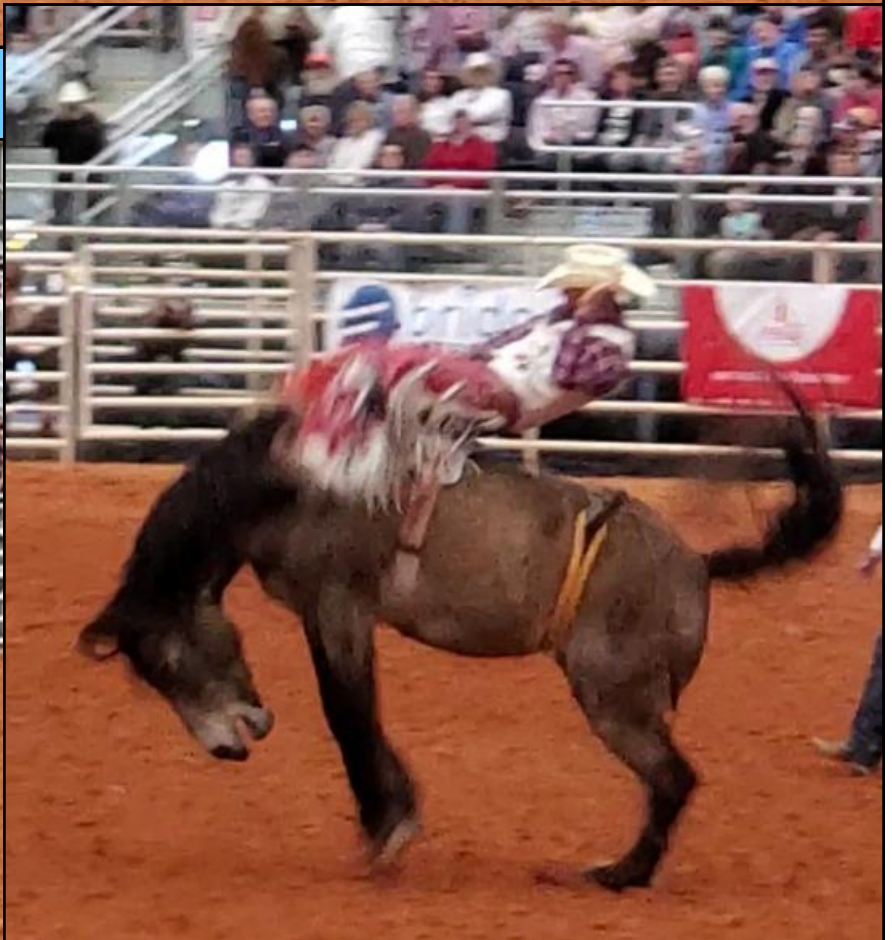
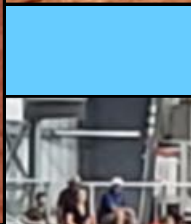
Miata Club Visits the Rodeo

By David Keller

“Pick yourself up, dust yourself off...”, that’s the rodeo’s mantra. On Sunday, March 13, seven Miatas, containing thirteen Miata club members, went to Arcadia to spend a day at the rodeo. Icy-cold morning temperatures (well, by Florida standards) forced a tops-up drive for all but the most intrepid northerners! After a pleasant 40-minute ride from Punta Gorda, we arrived at the Mosaic Rodeo Arena in Arcadia.

After eating “health foods”, we settled in our seats and watched pre-game festivities. Then it was onto bronc riding (both bareback and saddle), steer wrestling, tie-down roping, team roping, barrel racing, and bull riding. (Imagine earning a living bronc riding or bull riding – talk about whiplash, broken bones, and hospital bills!) All club members who made the trip can now go to another rodeo and say, “Hey pal, this ain’t my first rodeo!”







Miata Club Members at Play

By Ron Lindensmith

On March 6th the Gulfcoast Autocrossers held their monthly autocross at Buckingham Airfield. Glenn Beccue and I enjoyed a fun day of playing race car driver (in a 99.99% safe manner) and got to visit with about 100 of our best friends and fellow drivers. Actually, I only really know about 20+ of the drivers. LOL!

If you are unaware of what autocross (also known as auto-x) is, it's the opportunity to drive as fast as you can, or dare, through a mile long course of cones (or pylons). It's done 1 car at a time, more or less, and on a course nobody has seen until the morning of the event. Most cars never go fast enough to get out of 2nd gear, but that can be as much as 50 to 60 mph at times.



If you look REALLY close, there is a car on the left side of the course about 1/2 a mile away.

In 'snowbird season' they get 100+ drivers, late Spring and early Fall it's more like 60 – 80 drivers. They don't run in July or August due to heat and the more serious potential for rain and lightning. Although we do still run in the rain as long as there is no lightning in the area.

All most anybody can do it. All you need a drivers license and a vehicle that can meet minimum safety requirements and a helmet (loaners may be available). It costs \$35 for the day. You show up early, like 8:30am and sign the wavier to get into Buckingham Airfield. You get

90 minutes to prep your car, as in empty everything out of it, usually including the spare tire put numbers on it and get it through Tech. Then



Cars on the Grid getting ready to make their runs.

you can walk or ride your bike through the actual course to see where it goes. I used to ride a bike when I had my Toyota (it fit in the back). But with the new Miata, I walk the course twice (almost 1 mile each time). Then at 9:45 they have a drivers meeting, but it's really for everybody at the site so they can go over all the rules because it's a government facility.

Then at 10:00am the fun starts. We all get divided up into 2, 3 or 4



Glenn Beccue about to launch into a timed run at the auto-x.

groups based on car class. Yes, there are all kinds of classes based mostly on the car and the modifications that have been made to it. Glenn and I run in the 'Street' category. His red 1999 NB is in E Street and my 2021 ND2 is in C Street. Thus the ES and CS on our cars. Each group



That's me, Ron Lindensmith, staged for the start of one of my timed runs.

will get a chance to do their runs (4 to 6 is the norm) and each driver will get the 'opportunity' (i.e. requirement) to go out on the course and help set up cones that cars in one of the other groups is knocking over while doing their runs. This is a very democratic program as drivers in \$180,000. Porsche GT3 cars get to work with drivers who are driving \$6,000 Toyota MR2 cars or even an old Pick up truck!



It's an all day affair. In March Glen's class and my class were in the same group. We got session 1 off so we

could watch, we worked session 2, that was about 90 minutes of mostly standing around with an occasional dash to set up a cone between cars being released at roughly 30 second intervals. Then we were off for another session and finally got to drive during the last session. BTW, the club provides bottled water out on course for the workers. It can get hot out there standing on the asphalt in the noonday sun! Of course in January or February it can be cold out there on a wide open runway with the wind blowing and it being just 50 degrees at 10am!

ES - 'E Street'					Run 1	Run 2	Run 3	Run 4	Total	Diff.
Total Entries: 3										
1T	ES	294	Glenn B	1999 Mazda Miata Red	78.444	75.097	73.948	74.277	73.948	[-]1.272
2T	ES	899	Taylor S	1999 Mazda Miata Red	81.130	75.220	82.887	85.049+OC	75.220	+1.272
3	ES	258	Jonathon L.	2000 Mazda Miata Silver	85.590	80.975	97.989+1	80.581	80.581	+5.361

This month Glenn won his class with a 73.948 second run. Glenn is a very good auto-x driver and is currently 3rd in a field of 6 different drivers who have run in E Street so far this year.

CS - 'C Street'					Run 1	Run 2	Run 3	Run 4	Total	Diff.
Total Entries: 7										
1T	CS	164	Kevin B	2017 Mazda MX-5 Red	70.637	69.831	68.803	69.195	68.803	[-]1.195
2T	CS	125	ted b	2005 Honda S2000 Red	70.191	69.998	71.042	70.293	69.998	+1.195
3T	CS	204	Jonathan M	2019 Miata MX5 Black	70.849	70.116	70.205	69.260+1	70.116	+0.118
4	CS	131	Vivek K	2015 Mazda Miata Red	71.049	70.426	70.013+2	70.140	70.140	+0.024
5	CS	86	Ron L	2021 Mazda Miata white	78.088	77.282	76.165	76.920+1	76.165	+6.025
6	CS	588	Jim C	2003 Honda S2000 Blue	79.389+1	77.271	95.399+OC	76.790	76.790	+0.625
7	CS	486	Honey V	2017 Toyota 86 ORANGE	100.007	89.856	87.613	85.038	85.038	+8.248

I, on the other hand, I finished 5th out of 7 cars in my class. And I'll admit it, that there were 4 other drivers who were all 6 to 7 seconds faster than me. However I am 4th out of 13 in my class for the season so far.

Back in 2018 & 2019 I won the season championship in my class. But 2 factors weigh into that. First, in order to qualify for a class championship, you have to have run at least 8 of the 10 events over the year. Some guys just can't make that commitment. Secondly, we were mostly a 'local' group from SW Florida. But over the past couple of years, drivers have started showing up from as far away as Tampa, Miami, Orlando and even Daytona.

Then the ND2 Miata was so dominate in the E Street class that the SCCA (Sports Car Club of America) moved several cars down from the B Street class to compete in C Street. This included the awesome Honda S2000 (made from 1999 thru 2009) which has always been thought of as a 'faster/better' car than the Miata. Even the NC Miata wasn't quite up to the Honda S2000 level. But the ND is; and the ND2 is probably better than the S2000. The SCCA also dropped some of the BMW Z3 and Z4

cars into C Street along with a couple oldies but goodies, the Pontiac Solstice and the Saturn Sky.

But all that said, my being 6 seconds slower than the 4th place car ahead of me is a bit embarrassing! However, there is still fun to be had. I've made friends with a few drivers who are in the same ballpark time wise, even though we are in different classes. So we compare times just for fun.

Then there is an SCCA handicap formula called PAX that gives each class handicap percentage and allows us better ability to compare ourselves to everybody else who is running at each event (remember, each even is a different course and different weather conditions). Genn's ES class handicap is 0.786. So the most competitive ES driver/car should be on par with the fastest class time when the ES time is multiplied by 0.786. My CS handicap is 0.810. So multiply my time by 0.810 and we can compare Glenn's time with mine, even though we are in different classes driving different cars. BTW, Glenn's PAX time is 58.566 seconds and was 47th fastest of the 104 cars that competed. I, on the other hand had a PAX time of 61.693 which left me at 74th of the 104 drivers. As a matter of comparison, the best PAX time of the day was Mike, a friend of mine who drives a Scion FRS. His PAX time was 53.889 and 1st of 104 drivers. The slowest PAX time of the day was a 2010 Camaro with a 76.569.

Out of 104 entries last month, 27 of them were Miatas, only 12 were Corvettes, 11 were 'Twins' (i.e. Toyota 86, Scion FRS or Subaru BRZ), 10 were Porsches, 6 were Camaros, 6 were Hondas, 5 Mustangs and there were a handful of other makes including 2 shifter karts, Chevy pick up and a couple of Alfa Romeos. The 27 Miatas were spread out over 8 of the 29 classes that ran and they won 6 of those 8.



Going to an auto-x can be fun as a spectator as well. Some of the cars competing are quite interesting. We had a classic old Mini that was a crew members car, a souped up old Mazda RX7, and a crazy nice souped up Miata. And just watching the shifter karts run is crazy. I think they spend way



more time sliding than they do going straight. But they do set the FTD (Fast Time of the Day) but were down on the PAX list as their PAX handicap is

0.931. At past events we've had an pre-crash bumper MGB, a very old MGA, a few open wheel formula cars from road racing.



Before the Picnic

Photographs by Elaine Weissborn & Ron Lindensmith

It was about 9am when Elaine and I got to Lakes Park. We wanted to do some bird 'hunting' photography before the Miata Club picnic. As you can see, the parking lot was pretty much empty when we arrived. And the morning fog was just starting to lift, but the top of the nearby buildings were still in the clouds.

We spent 2 hours walking around the lake and taking photos of anything that caught our fancy. It's probably a bit less than a mile walk if you use the



bridge to cross the lake. We both took mostly bird photos, but Elaine did a few landscapes (waterscapes) that she might use as inspiration for future paintings. I did a few flowers, a marsh rabbit and a squirrel just for fun.

I was a very pleasant warm up to the picnic and I hope you enjoy the photos.





Miata Club Picnic and Elections

By Donna Notes



2023. By a unanimous voice vote, the following members were elected:

PRESIDENT: Feliza Lymburner
WEBMASTER: Dana Breda
VICE PRESIDENT: Allan Engler
NEWLETTER EDITOR: Ron Lindensmith
SECRETARY: Pat LaPointe
AWARDS OFFICER: Ed Conrad
TREASURER: Sandy Butler
EVENT COORDINATOR: Donna Noyes
CO-MEMBERSHIP: Judy Western/Kathy Engler
COX LIAISON: Bill Watts
ED HOWARD LIAISON: Dennis Laslo
MAZDA OF FT. MYERS LIAISON: Jerry Davis
SUNSHINE LADY: Sandy Cole

Our previous Treasurer, Noni Cockrum, decided it was time to retire from her Officer position. In recognition and thanks for her 12 years of excellent service as our club Treasurer, President Lymburner presented her with an Amazon gift card and an engraved paperweight. Also resigning from the Board was Rayanna Edwards who served as our Secretary for several years – she not only provided the minutes from our quarterly board meetings but she was able to set up Zoom Meetings for us when we weren't able to meet in person during the "lockdown" years (and getting us all on the computer screens at the same time, and being able to speak, was no easy task!!).

(continued on page 18)

Miata Club Annual Picnic and

Election of Officers and Board of Directors - March 19, 2022

Finally, after two previous Annual Picnics and Election of Officers had to be cancelled due to COVID (2020 and 2021), we finally got back to almost normal. Our attendance was down slightly from previous Annual Picnics (64 members this year) but we all seemed to enjoy our roomy pavilion overlooking the water in Lakes Regional Park in Ft. Myers. Thankfully, our weather was fine – a nice sunny day, light breezes, not too humid. And not a raindrop in sight!

Smoke 'n Pit BBQ of North Fort Myers catered again this year. The two servers that set up and served the food were excellent and efficient, and the food was very good and plentiful. After everyone had a chance to make a second trip through the buffet line, take-out containers were filled with the leftovers for members to take home. The Club provided cupcakes for dessert and the various shades of icing (blue, green, purple and pink) were certainly colorful!

Besides enjoying each other's company and getting to know some of the newer members, the major event of the day was the election of our new **Officers and Board of Directors** for Membership Year 2022 –





One other matter of business was the approval of the revised Club Bylaws which had been previously sent out to all club members. By a unanimous voice count of members present, the revised Bylaws have been passed. This document is available on the club's website.

My huge THANK YOU to all of the new and returning Officers and Board Members that have volunteered to lead our organization over the next term. A very special Thank You to the members that arrived early to help with set up, and also to those of you that helped with the clean-up afterward.

I think our club has the most wonderful members! I hope to see you all at a future meeting or event.

Event Coordinator: Donna Noyes





New Club Secretary, Pat La Point
and new Club Treasurer, Sandy Butler



Miata Club of Southwest Florida - New and Old Board of Directors

From left to right: MAZDA OF FT. MYERS LIAISON: Jerry Davis ED HOWARD LIAISON: Dennis Laslo
Retiring Treasurer: Noni Cockrum CO-MEMBERSHIP: Kathy Engler NEWLETTER EDITOR: Ron Lindensmith
Retiring Secretary: Rayanna Edwards CO-MEMBERSHIP: Judy Western PRESIDENT: Feliza Lymburner
WEBMASTER: Dana Breda New TREASURER: Sandy Butler New SECRETARY: Pat LaPointe
EVENT COORDINATOR: Donna Noyes AWARDS OFFICER: Ed Conrad
Not pictured are: VICE PRESIDENT: Allan Engler SUNSHINE LADY: Sandy Cole COX LIAISON: Bill Watts

Say hello to our new Club Secretary!

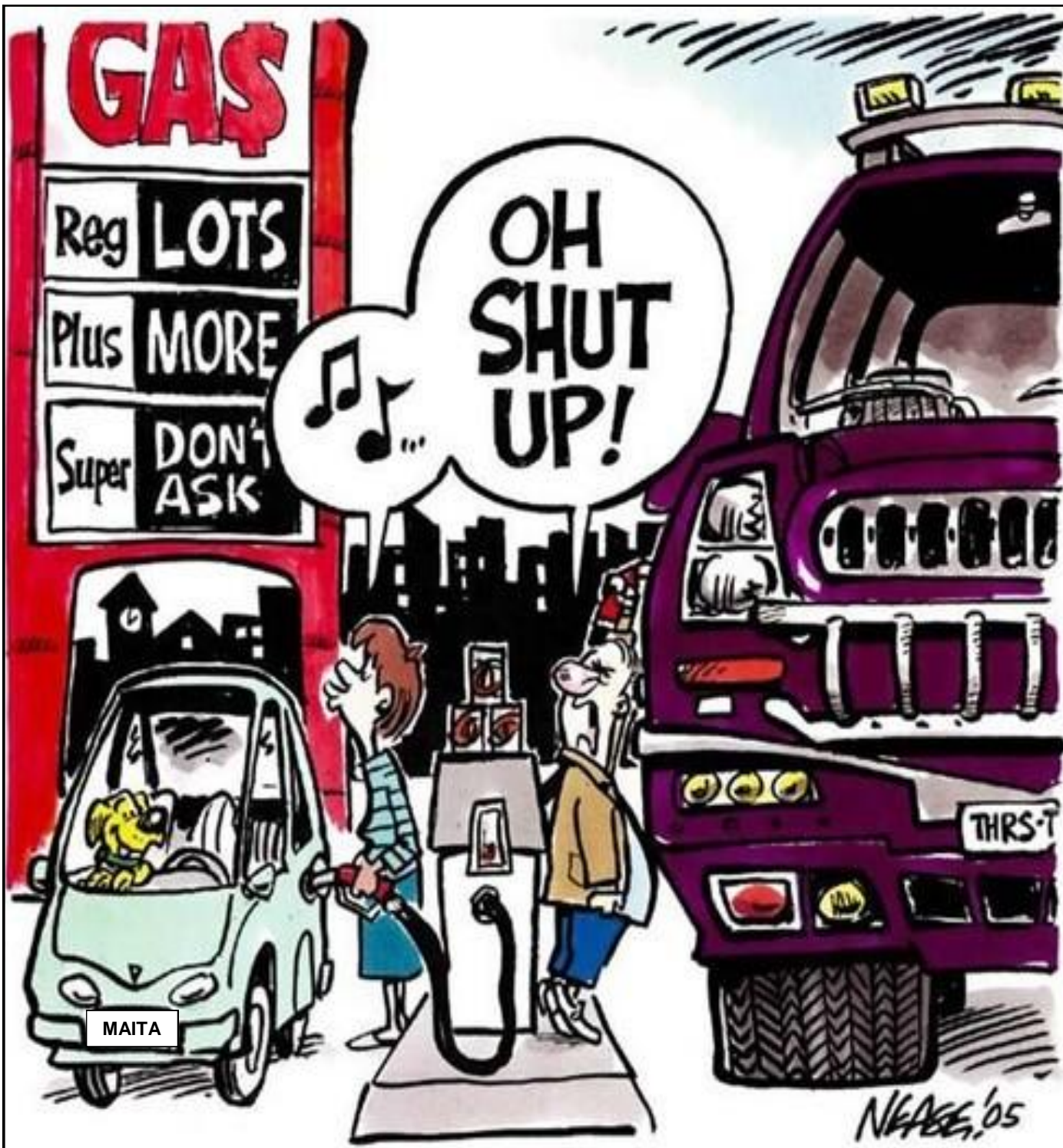
By Pat La Pointe

Hello club members, it looks like I will be your new club secretary. My name is Pat LaPointe, I joined the club in 2018 after purchasing my 2017 red Miata. I'm originally from Michigan but now I am a full-time resident of North Port, Florida. My significant other, Dan Nixon, and I have lived here since 2015. We are both retired and sometimes very tired but loving this Florida way of life. Looking forward to joining the Miata Club Board, the pay isn't that great but the benefits are fantastic: meeting nice people, with great taste in cars and having fun times. A special shout out to Rayanna Edwards, our previous secretary, for all her work on the board!



Breakfast with Judy





Comparing Miata Race Cars From All Four Generations

By Steven Cole Smith - Jan 11, 2022

The Mazda MX-5 Miata: It's really the gift that keeps on giving, isn't it?

Those of us who were around in 1989 knew that Mazda had delivered something truly special in the 1990 Miata—and yes, we know Mazda might prefer that we call them MX-5s, but “Miata” is just too easy to type.

At the time, we were less than a decade removed from the last production MGB, and while that little Brit had grown a bit grim in its later years, at least it was a proper, affordable sports car.

What did we have between 1980 and 1990 that belonged under the “affordable” umbrella? The Chevrolet Cavalier Z24 convertible? The Ford Mustang V6 convertible? The Volkswagen GTI?

Of course, we now know there was a light at the end of that '80s-spanning tunnel. And if any publication were to ring in this bright new era of sports cars, it would be *Motor Trend*. After all, their Car of the Year award has always had one finger on the pulse of enthusiasts. That's why, for 1990, they picked—yes—the Lincoln Town Car!

Wait, what?

The Lincoln Town Car. Followed in 1991 by the Chevrolet Caprice Classic LTZ. Followed in 1992 by the Cadillac Seville Touring Sedan.

Rumor has it, this was a period when *Motor Trend's* ad sales team expected to receive a loaner fleet of the winning model for the duration. If true, this didn't bode well for the Miata, which wouldn't have seated many sales clients comfortably.

To this day, the Miata has never won *Motor Trend* Car of the Year—this despite the fact that the little Mazda has taken on multiple challengers, from the Australian-built Mercury Capri to the Honda S2000 to two generations of Toyota MR2s, and sent them all to the sidelines. (For what it's worth, though, *GRM* editors named the Miata the most significant car of the past 25 years in 2009.)

Even more remarkable: Name another model that has been in production for 25 years that doesn't have a substandard offering in the mix.

Which Miata you buy is governed by the price you're willing to pay. That can range from \$1000 for a beater first-gen to more than \$32,000 for a new Club model fitted with the optional Brembo brakes and BBS wheels. No one says “Avoid the (whatever) models, they weren't any good.” No, they were all good.

And that goes for the Miata race cars, too: every generation, starting with the 1990-'97 NA and on to the 1999-2005 NB, 2006-'15 NC and all-new ND. We know because Mazda's race-minded public relations staff—notably Dean Case and his boss, Jeremy Barnes—assembled examples of all four chassis, rented out the Streets of Willow track north of Los Angeles, and turned a handful of journalists loose.

Nearly a million Miatas have been sold, and about 3000 have been turned into race cars. Here's the story of four.

So you can chart progress, we listed the fastest time of the day for all four cars. Pro racer Randy Pobst, now a journalist for *Motor Trend*, logged the best laps for the NA, NB and ND. Fastest time in the NC was set by Philip Royle, editor of the SCCA's *SportsCar* magazine and himself a busy racer.

As far as prep, all four cars followed a similar formula: stiffer suspension parts, sticky yet street-legal race tires, free-flowing exhaust and the necessary safety equipment. The engines and gearboxes were factory-spec pieces.

Miata NA

FAST TIME: 1:14.154



When we said “Mazda’s race-minded public relations staff,” we meant it, as the aforementioned Jeremy Barnes owns and regularly races the cute (sorry, but it was) yellow NA racer. He competes in the Spec Miata class, which allows NA and NB cars.

With just 115 horsepower from the 1.6-liter four-cylinder, Barnes’s No. 14 showed all the characteristics that make the Miata a perfect car for both beginners and experienced racers. Steering was light but not twitchy, and the nominal horsepower made it vitally important to maintain momentum. Instead of seeking the fastest line through the corners, we looked for the line that allowed for the most exit speed.

As with any race car, you can get into trouble with this one. In this case, that might be from the modest brakes, which no one would confuse with carbon. But keeping costs down was and is critical, and if you decide you want to spend enough to make an NA into a killer track day car, you might as well just buy something that’s already faster.

Sadly, we didn’t get to see Barnes’s car in the optimum light, as several of the journalists before us had leaned way too hard on its already-taxed clutch. We had to be even more patient leaving corners than usual as we waited for the clutch to catch up.

Barnes told us to go for it anyway, but true grassroots racers who have actually had to pay for their own repairs are reluctant to thrash a hurting car, especially when it belongs to a friend.

Miata NB
FAST TIME: 1:13.736



Owned by Mazda designer Ken Saward, No. 16 was a happy little car that we found very comfortable, both ergonomically and at speed. The extra power from the 1.8-liter engine didn’t mean we could now ignore momentum, only that a bad corner might lose us just one position instead of two or three. Like the NA, this one was also prepared for the extremely popular Spec Miata ranks.

The NB carried more than a hundred extra pounds over the NA, but we didn’t really notice it, perhaps due to an unfortunate life experience that had us carrying a few extra pounds, too. The NB still seemed very light on its feet, and we were surprised that it was only a half-second faster than the NA—although we wondered how the NA did so well with a wonky clutch.

Miata NC
FAST TIME: 1:12.882



Tom Long, who pilots the Mazda SkyActiv Prototype in the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship series, may be the world’s best Miata driver. That’s appropriate, since he and his father, Glenn—owner of Long Road Racing in North Carolina—are building several dozen MX-5 Cup cars for the 2016 season. Like, all of the cars in the Battery Tender Mazda MX-5 Cup Presented by BFGoodrich will come from their shop. So Long is a good one to ask when it comes to these cars.

When he didn’t seem to like the NC as much as the other chassis, we wanted to know why. Like the rest, this car was also prepped to a spec, more or less—it was basically an outgoing MX-5 Cup car fitted with a passenger seat. Long said that he preferred a little bit of body roll, and this

particular NC didn't have any, set up as it was for duty as a pace car at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca.

Yeah, maybe that was part of it. But you had to add in a particularly uncomfortable driving position, along with a front alignment that allowed for a very fast turn-in but zero natural unwinding. Say we went into a right-hand corner; unless we decisively steered back to the left, we'd be doing right-hand doughnuts until we ran out of gas. It was okay when we got used to it, but it wasn't that much fun.

Still, the 170 horsepower and very planted rear end finally delivered the Miata from the strict momentum requirement, allowing for a little point-and-shoot action. Had it been the only Miata race car we drove all day, we would have liked it a lot better. Under the circumstances, though, it was the only one we weren't wishing to take for more laps.

Miata ND

FAST TIME: 1:10.562



Yes, of course you'd assume that the newest car was the best one. Still, we were a little surprised by how *much* better the ND felt, especially since it's down 15 horses over the NC. But it's up on torque—to 148 ft.-lbs.—and lighter by about 150 pounds. And we're pretty sure every journalist at Streets of Willow that day logged the fastest laps in the ND. We certainly did.

The engine, as you'd suspect, was silky smooth, though by the end of the day there was some evidence of a head gasket issue. This was the example, and the engine, that had been thrashed mercilessly as Mazda's main development mule.

The six-speed transmission was as close to telepathic as it gets—we

could think "fourth gear" and magically it was there. On the very low-mileage 2016 street cars we'd driven, the shifter was a bit stiffer. If more relaxed shifts are what owners have to look forward to after logging some miles, bring them on. Clutch engagement was light and sure, too. Miata manual transmissions have been textbook-good since the first 1990 model rolled off the boat, but you just couldn't ask for more than this ND delivered.

The Brembo brakes were right there, linear all the way into the near-perfect, unobtrusive ABS. Mazda isn't quite ready to announce the brands of the suspension bits, brake pads or eventual tires, but trust us, "lowest bidder" is not a factor unless it happens to describe the best option.

There was some surprising understeer in two corners, but we were told that was more a function of setup than anything inherent. We would have liked to play with the tire pressures, but there wasn't time.

Tom and Glenn Long aren't really doing anything to the ND that you couldn't do yourself. In fact, they'll be happy to point out what they've done, but much of it, like the beautifully welded cage, is pretty evident.

The Longs start out with a Brembo-clad, Club-package street car that costs just under \$33,000, so pricing the turnkey race car at \$53,000 seems reasonable—especially since the engine, transmission and computer are sealed, reducing opportunities to cheat.

And it is worth noting that the MX-5 Cup is an actual, professional series, where the champion wins a \$200,000 scholarship to move to a higher-level series with Mazda the following year.

Also, this is the car (in left- and right-hand drive) that Mazda plans to race globally for years, and they're working toward a major world championship. In 2016, the fledgling global finale will be at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca. The winner gets a one-day test in the SkyActiv Prototype race car—which will, thankfully, be powered in 2016 by a gasoline engine.

This is the point in the story where, if we were the *Motor Trend* of 1990, we'd say, "We'd like to pick a winner, but they are all so good! And have you driven the new Lincoln Town Car?"

But this is the *Grassroots Motorsports* of 2016, and we're calling it: While there has never been a bad Miata or a resulting bad Miata race car, the new ND model is an improvement in every area, both on the street and on the track. Did we expect anything less?

Celebrating 32 Years Of Mazda Miata Brilliance

by Roger Biermann - Feb 10, 2021

Happy birthday Mazda Miata!

You don't become the best-selling convertible sports car overnight. No, in the case of the Mazda MX-5 Miata, it took nearly three decades. To be precise, in 2016, Mazda MX-5 production reached number 1 million.



But that same feat took the Porsche 911 more than 50 years, and that was including all body styles for the German. The MX-5, or Miata as many Americans may still know it, has transcended to the ranks of true sports car elite, but what is its secret, and why is the MX-5 still one of the

greatest sports cars money can buy? To figure that out, we have to go back 32 years ago from this day, when the world first met the Miata...

On February 10, 1989, the Mazda stand at the Chicago Auto Show became a hive of attention. While many were trying to see what the next decade of motoring might look like for in-car technology, the Japanese brand took a refreshingly different approach, looking back to sports cars of yesteryear to pioneer an open-top roadster for the future. This was the day that Mazda introduced the world to the first MX-5 Miata. 32 years on since that day and the Miata is still stealing the attention of automotive enthusiasts the world over. From NA to ND, four generations have become smash hits, automotive icons, and sought after collector's classics. The Miata has grown and then shrunk again, but there are some things that have never changed: rear-wheel drive, a low curb weight, and a sense of purity that even the most hallowed of marques can't hold a candle to.

First Generation (NA) Miata: An Icon is Born

The NA-generation Miata may have debuted in 1989, but the story of the icon began sometime before then when seven engineers decided to pioneer a sports car for a new era of motor-



ing. A number of concepts were developed, various engine layouts considered, including mid-mounting the engine, and several styling languages pored over. Every detail needed to be perfect, and once the front-engine rear-wheel-drive layout was decided upon for purity and balance, the concept took shape. An early concept was shown to a focus group in April 1987, and the response was overwhelming. The Miata was a go.

Inspired by classic post-war British roadsters like the Lotus Elan, Triumph Spitfire, and MG B, the first-generation Mazda Miata became an icon in no time at all. It forewent the ever-growing proportions of the

1990s and instead pared everything back. A compact wheelbase, less than 2,200 lbs of weight to carry around, and free of luxuries like a power-operated roof, the Miata was a car wholly focused on one thing - driving; an ethos embodied in the motto of 'Jinba Ittai', the Japanese phrase for "horse and rider as one unit."



It didn't have much power - with only 116 horsepower and 100 lb-ft of torque eked from a 1.6-liter naturally aspirated four-pot - but it was more about how it felt, something Mazda called "Kansei Engineering".

That was an area where the Miata flourished. The five-speed manual transmission was joyfully quick to flip between the gears with (throws were just 1.8 inches between gears), the steering was beautifully weighted and supremely transparent, and the chassis could dance as well as it could carve cor-



ners with efficiency. With 0-60 mph rung up in 8.3 seconds and a 126 mph top speed, it wasn't fast - not by any stretch of the imagination - but it was a car that could be enjoyed at ten-tenths within the legal limits of the law, a car that could be used to its limit and toyed with, a car that was so unashamedly fun-oriented that nothing of the 90s could come close.

In the pursuit of perfection, more than 100 tape recordings of the exhaust note alone were analyzed to ensure the Miata sounded perfect. It rapidly built up a reputation of being the best sports car you could buy, and at just \$14,000 in the US, it was actually affordable.

Later model years brought a larger 1.8-liter engine with more power - up to 133 hp and 114 lb-ft - and the body was reinforced to make it safer. The chassis was reinforced, making it even more joyful to exploit with less flex, and limited-slip differentials found their way onto the rear axle. But the core recipe remained the same and the Miata was more than the sum of its parts, it was joy in automotive form. It was discontinued after the 1997 model year and after a number of special editions had been produced.

The Miata couldn't have been a more perfect first attempt if it tried, with iconic styling and pop-up headlights being the ultimate cherries on top of a perfect sports car sundae.

Second Generation (NB): Refining A Legend

How do you improve on a sports car that started off perfect? When it came to engineering the second-generation Miata, codenamed the NB, Mazda's engineers didn't try to reinvent the wheel. Despite tightening restrictions resulting in the pop-up headlights being culled, the styling was evolutionary, and the proportions remained true to the original. That's because, under the sheet metal, the NB utilized the same basic components as the NA. Mazda didn't reinvent the



Miata, they simply honed it.

Slightly wider than the NA, the NB retained the four-wheel independent suspension of its forebear but employed all the structural enhancements made to later year model NAs with beefed-up anti-roll bars front and rear, and bigger, more potent brakes. In the US, the 1.8-liter engine was retained, but with compression raised from 9.0:1 to 9.5:1 and changes made to the intake cam, power outputs increased marginally to 140 hp and 116 lb-ft mated to a five-speed manual gearbox.

The enhancements were small but meaningful, refining the recipe of the Miata and making it a little more livable on a daily basis but without removing the joy of driving that had made the original so special. It worked, and in May of 2000, the Miata was recognized by Guinness World Records as the best-selling two-seater sports car in the world at 531,890 units.



Despite being the only genuine affordable sports car around, the Japanese manufacturer refused to rest on its laurels, enhancing the NB even further for the 2001 model year. Visual tweaks were noticeable on the outside, but beneath the skin, Mazda had worked its magic. Further strengthening of the chassis yielded a 16% enhancement in bending ri-

gidity and a 22% gain in torsional rigidity, while top-tier models benefitted from larger brakes and limited-slip rear differentials.

Variable valve timing was added to the four-pot to lift power to 142 hp and 125 lb-ft and buyers could opt for either a standard five-speed manual, a six-speed manual, or a four-speed automatic gearbox. The new six-speed 'box lacked the crispness of the original five-speed but aided daily drivability and reduced fuel consumption without too much of a negative influence on the drive itself.

Still, this was not enough for Mazda. The brand answered the calls of enthusiasts and tinkerers and finally gave the Miata a turbo. For the 2004 model year, the Mazdaspeed Miata strapped on an IHI turbo running at 8.5 psi of boost. It turned the Miata into a speed demon, with 178 hp on tap and 166 lb-ft. The gearbox was upgraded, as were the driveshafts, clutch, LSD, and exhaust.



A lowered suspension system was strapped in with Bilstein shocks and the 17-inch Racing Hart alloy wheels were wrapped in W-rated Toyo Proxes high-performance rubber. 0-60 mph came up in 6.7 seconds, a top speed of 127 mph was in the cards, and the suspension and tire upgrades resulted in up to 0.98g of lateral grip.

The Mazdaspeed Miata became a halo for the Miata nameplate, especially in the US, and ranked as one of the most powerful Miatas for years - only bested by the Australia-only MX-5 SP from 2002, a limited-run model that had 200 hp from its own turbocharged 1.8-liter, and the most recently updated ND.

Mazda did it. Against all odds, they took the Miata successfully through a second generation, making it better than ever without losing out on the hallmarks that had made it so special to begin with. Production ended in 2005, but this wasn't the end of the Miata's story, as a third-generation was waiting in the wings, ready to inherit the baton.

Third Generation (NC): The Ugly Duckling

There are two types of Miata owners in the world - those that love the NC, and everyone else. To the purists who adored the sports car from its early days, the NC was an imitator, lacking the purity of purpose that had been a trademark of the Miata since day one. The thing is, they weren't exactly wrong.



Due to budget constraints and a short leash on Mazda's development team by then-parent company, Ford, the third-generation Miata was the first to share a platform with another vehicle - in this case, the Mazda RX-8. That meant it was bigger, heavier, and to many, far too overengineered for a vehicle that was supposed to buy into the 'slow car fast' philosophy. It became a more mainstream model for the brand, seen by many as a lifestyle vehicle. This was particularly apparent when the NC became the first-ever Miata to feature a retractable hardtop roof.



With an increase in size and weight, Mazda did compensate with more power, giving the NC a 2.0-liter four-pot with 167 hp and 140 lb-ft - although automatic-equipped variants only had 158 hp. The performance was on par for what was expected from the Miata, but the NC was largely regarded as a softer model, with plusher suspension, nicer interior finishes, and more sound deadening, turning it into a more relaxed vehicle than its predecessors with a clear bias towards comfort.

The US was a major market for the Miata, and with a history of Spec Miata racing, the NC benefited the most from the involvement in motorsports. Throughout its time on the market, the NC was updated regularly, with Mazda USA being heavily involved in the updates.

One of the benefits of sharing a platform with the RX-8 was that the NC's mechanical components were robust and ideal for increased performance. Later model years benefited from this and the NC became better and more focused to drive nearer the end of its lifespan. Importantly, for those who bought into the brand for the ability to spend time on the race track, the NC was an ideal platform for performance upgrades, and many components from the more potent RX-8 could be swapped straight into the Miata, making it an ideal platform for performance enthusiasts.

The NC may have deviated from the original Miata recipe, but it came to market in an era where rivals were stopping sports car production altogether, and it saw the marque surpass 900,000 sales of the Miata worldwide. Mazda's commitment to the sports car paved the way for the fourth generation, a return to form for the brand.

Fourth Generation (ND): The Milestone Miata

Despite the NC getting better as time went on, many fans were concerned that the Miata's time in the limelight was fading. Fresh from its emergence out from under Ford's thumb, Mazda committed to the future of the sports car when it launched an all-new, fourth-generation Miata for 2016. The ND-generation returned to the Miata's roots, despite being rechristened the [Mazda MX-5 Miata](#). Not only was it the smallest and lightest Miata since the original, shedding up to 220 lbs compared to the NC, but like the very first one, the MX-5 was unveiled in the US.

Foreign markets received a 1.5-liter naturally aspirated four-cylinder engine, but the US-spec models received a 2.0-liter developing 155 hp

and 148 lb-ft. As always, drive was sent to the rear, and a six-speed manual was at the heart of the whole operation, although an automatic could also be equipped.



Gone was the folding hard-top, and in its place was the good old manual soft-top roof. Mazda employed a 'gram strategy', shaving off tiny bits of unnecessary material wherever possible to reduce weight. At 2,332 lbs, the MX-5 Miata was only 182 lbs heavier than the original, despite having more safety features, a stronger body, and modcons like a large color infotainment screen and available features like a Bose sound system. Instantly, the ND was a hit,



praised by all as a return to form and a true revival of what the Miata was all about. Sure, the suspension may have had too much roll engineered in, which made the ND an eight-tenths kind of car, but the purity was back.

It was in this generation when Mazda hit a momentous milestone with the Miata. In 2016, the 1 millionth Miata rolled off the production line, achieving a remarkable feat that would cement it in the pantheon of sports car greats.



But while the ND once again catered to the purists, a whole lot of NC fans wanted something more 'grand tourer'. This resulted in Mazda diversifying with the MX-5 Miata RF - a retractable fastback Miata that had a targa-top design. It gave buyers the coupe styling they wanted and added the diversity needed to keep conquering the market. Despite the fact that there were newcomers in the sports cars segment including the Subaru BRZ and Toyota 86 twins, and even the MX-5 in drag - the Fiat 124 Spider - the MX-5 Miata still shone brightly.

The evolution of the icon continued, and for 2019, Mazda updated the ND and stiffened the suspension a little. More than this, power received a bump that took outputs to 181 hp and 151 lb-ft while the redline was raised to 7,500 rpm. By the turn of the decade, Fiat had decided to cull the 124 Spider, and Toyota and Subaru had started phasing out the BRZ/86 - albeit in preparation for another generation. And still, the MX-5 Miata persisted, excelled, dominated.

The Best-Seller For A Reason

Over a little more than three decades, four generations of Miata have dominated the market. Traits may have changed, and the Miata may have ebbed in and out of favor with enthusiasts, but in a world that has turned to SUVs and crossovers as a way of life, the Miata has somehow managed to outlast any other attempt at an affordable sports car from rival manufacturers. Why?



Maybe it's the fact that Mazda has stuck to its guns for so long, refusing to back down on keeping a Miata in circulation. Maybe it's the fact that the Miata was a junior sports car to the RX-7 and RX-8 for years - spurring buyers into action to 'settle' for the little sports car because the big one was unattainable. Maybe it's some combination of both. But no, the real reason is that Mazda has avoided complexity - NC aside - and focused on keeping the recipe more or less the same for three whole decades.

It doesn't matter if you're 18 or 80, the Miata is simply the best way to learn how to drive a car properly. It thrills at speeds that won't kill, it communicates simply and deftly, but above all else, it's the embodiment of joy. You can't drive a Miata down a snaking backroad without smiling, without giggling like a kid experiencing the rush of riding a bike for the first time. It really is that simple: in a world full of dull, anesthetized crossovers, the Miata is an antidote to all that. It turns every drive into a pleasurable one. It makes you feel.

The Miata is well-engineered, reliable, and technically brilliant. But on top of that, Mazda's engineers have imbued a collection of parts made from metal, plastic, glass, and leather with a soul, not just once, but four times, and more than a million times over. Just how they've done that is a recipe I'm sure they'll never quite divulge.

Happy birthday Mazda Miata, and thanks for being special.



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.

**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.

WAS THAT A SPEED BUMP?



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:

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 SW Florida:

Editors note: As far as I know only 3 of our members are planning to go to this event. I plan to leave for Birmingham, AL. on the morning of Thursday, July 28th and drive 2/3rds to 3/4ths of the way there. I already have reservations for Fri, Sat & Sun nights at the Hampton Inn listed at the end of this ad. There are less expensive motels in the area.

I'm already scheduled to do the Track Day on Sunday and I know one other member has signed up for the Car Control Clinic on Saturday. I believe I will be leaving Birmingham on Monday and driving to North Carolina, somewhere near Fontana, which is where they will be doing Miatas at the Gap on August 4th thru the 7th (see page 36). It's my intention to drive the Tail of the Dragon and maybe 1 or 2 other mountain roads on Tuesday and Wednesday, hopefully before too many other Miatas show up. I'll visit Fontana on Thursday and/or Friday to visit the vendor displays, see some sites, buy a T-shirt or two and then leave for SW Florida Friday afternoon or Saturday morning. That's a 750 mile, 11.5 hour trip and probably over 2 days... but it could be a 1 day marathon. Or I might even stop just 90 minutes down the road to visit my younger brother for a day or two in Cashiers, NC.

The Miata Reunion website is officially live!

www.miatareunion.com



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 trophies 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.

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.

Registration is open

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).



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 BACK END