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A MONTHLY PUBLICATION FOR THE MEMBERS & FRIENDS
OF THE FIRST COAST MIATA CLUB

8th Annual Jim Padgett Ice Cream Drive

It's time to beat the summer heat with an evening drive! This is our annual July drive to Powell's Dairy Freeze in Starke, FL. This drive was a favorite of late member Jim Padgett, which is why it's named in his memory.

MEET: Saturday, July 26 at 5PM. Depart at 5:30PM.

START LOCATION: Journeys Food Store/Mobil, 9206 County Rd 125, Glen St Mary, FL 32040 (same as last year)

The 8th Annual Jim Padgett Ice Cream Drive will take us from Glen St Mary to Powell's Dairy Freeze in Starke for a variety of cool summer treats as well as hot dogs, burgers, fries and other goodies.

After we leave Glen St Mary, we will meander thru farm and cattle country along scenic byways on roads *both familiar and new* with minimal traffic and few traffic lights. We will make a *pit stop* at Hardee's in Lake Butler (not to dine- that's why we're going to Powell's!). Powell's has a variety of food and ice cream treats! Our recommendation is the Chocolate Coke milkshake.

See you on the 26th!!!



Mazda Is Bringing Back The Rotary RX-7 And Building A New Miata

- Mazda is developing two sports cars, including an RX-7 successor and next-gen MX-5.
- The rotary-powered model may debut next year with a range-extender hybrid powertrain.
- The upcoming MX-5 is still years out and could feature Mazda's new Skyactiv Z engine.

It's been a long time since Mazda felt like it cared about building something fun other than the MX-5. For a brand that once gave us the RX-7 and the original Miata, the last couple of decades have been suspiciously quiet on the sports car front. That might be changing. The production version of the Iconic SP concept, a rotary-equipped sports car, could arrive as early as next year. If it does, it might just take up the mantle as a spiritual successor to the RX-7. Even better, it's expected to be sold alongside the next-generation MX-5 Miata roadster, although that one is still a few years out.



At first glance, the 2023 Iconic SP concept might seem like a hardtop evolution of the future MX-5. But it's actually a bit larger than it looks. At 4,180 mm long (164.6 inches), it stretches 265 mm (10.4 inches) more than the current ND-generation MX-5 and sits 105 mm (4.1 inches) shorter than the classic RX-7 FD. In other words, it neatly fills the space between Mazda's old and new sports car identities.

In an interview with Motor Trend, Mazda Chief Technical Officer Ryuichi Umeshita confirmed what many have been hoping to hear: "You can expect Iconic SP will be a good successor for RX-7." His comments echo earlier statements from Mazda President and CEO Masahiro Moro, who said he'd love to see the rotary sports car make a return. So, yes, the rotary dream isn't dead.

Interestingly, Umeshita told the magazine that "Initial talk was that it could go into production as early as 2026 but timing is also dependent on a viable business case". On the technical side, things are moving faster as he confirmed that the next generation of the brand's rotary engine is nearly ready.

The question of naming is still unresolved. When asked whether the new sports car might wear the RX-7 or RX-9 badge, Umeshita kept things ambiguous. He noted that the model isn't meant to directly succeed any existing nameplate, though it could revive something from the past or introduce a fresh identity altogether. One thing he's certain about is that it won't be called Cosmo, the name once used for Mazda's upscale coupes sold overseas.

The Iconic SP's hybrid powertrain was said to produce a combined output of 365 hp (272 kW / 370 PS). It features a dual-rotor rotary engine acting as a range extender, paired with a single electric motor and a battery pack. The production model is expected to use a similar setup. However, Mazda may also offer a second configuration, this time with the rotary engine serving as the main source of propulsion. Umeshita said that engineers are currently working on an evolution of the rotary range-extender found on the MX-30 crossover, which will be more powerful and also comply with the US emission regulations.

The coupe's development sounds like a priority for the brand, so hopefully, executives will soon be able to deliver their promises. As for sales targets, the RX-7 successor will be a low-volume model, with Umeshita stating it will "complement" rather than cannibalize MX-5 sales.

The current ND-generation MX-5 has been on the road since 2014, which makes it about a hundred in car

years. Naturally, people are wondering when the next version is coming. The answer: not just yet. While development is underway, the launch is still a few years off. That means the current model, with its timeless proportions and

sharp handling, will hang around a bit longer.



Design chief Masashi Nakayama told Motor Trend that the new roadster will keep the compact footprint, lightweight feel, and affordability that have defined previous MX-5 generations, while reworking "everything else." Visually, the next Miata is expected to borrow heavily from the Iconic SP concept's design language, just scaled down to fit the smaller proportions.

Unlike the RX-7 successor, which will be a 2+2 coupe, the MX-5 will remain a two-seater roadster. More importantly, it will be fitted with a four-cylinder gasoline engine, helping it further differentiate from the rotary-powered hybrid sports car and retain an affordable price tag.

Classic Cars





Mazda's Next Miata Hides A Big Surprise Under The Hood

For 35 years, Mazda's MX-5 has shown us that you don't need tons of power to have fun. But Miata power outputs have still grown through the last three decades and tough new emissions rules threatened to make the next-generation car less powerful and slower. Mazda's response was to give the upcoming sports car an engine almost a full liter bigger than the 1989 original's – and yes, it'll still be bolted to a manual transmission.

The 2027 MX-5 will arrive packing a 2.5-liter version of Mazda's SkyActiv Z engine, the automaker's CTO, Ryuichi Umeshita, told Road & Track. That compares with the 2.0-liter capacity of America's 2025 Miata and dwarfs the 1.5 liters of swept volume of the only model now available in Europe as well as the 1.6-liter capacity of the very first NA car.

Before we all get too excited at the idea of a 230 hp (233 PS) naturally-aspirated MX-5, Umeshita warns that the new 2.5 won't necessarily make a ton more power than the existing 2.0 motor, which is rated at 181 hp (184 PS) in the US, but was upgraded to 197 hp (200 PS) in Japan for the Spirit Racing variant. The capacity is all about negating any losses accrued from meeting new tailpipe rules, rather than making gains.

"The current power-to-weight ratio is enough," the 37-year Mazda veteran said. "We don't think we need more power for the car."

But maybe the new car will still be quicker than the '25 model, because Mazda's comments suggest it could be even lighter. Design boss Masashi Nakayama told Road & Track his team was targeting a curb weight of "less than a tonne (2,205 lbs) in weight."

The lightest ND MX-5 sold in the US is the 2,366 lbs (1,073 kg) Sport, although Japan did get the feather-light 1.5-liter 990S, whose name comes from its 990 kg (2,183 lbs) weight – a weight achieved by thinning out the sound insulation and shaving grams from the brakes, wheels and infotainment system.

Although R&T's interview doesn't mention hybrid tech, Mazda previously stated that the next MX-5 would featured some form of electrical assistance, and we know the Skyactiv-Z family – which debuts on the 2027 CX-5 – is designed with future electrification in mind.

Adding hybrid hardware and coming in less than 2,200 lbs is a big ask. We'll find out more, plus how much of the Iconic SP concept's styling ideas it borrows, when we get closer to the 2027 MX-5's debut, which could be next year.



FCMC Events Calendar

- **July 8 - 6:00 pm . Monthly Club Meeting**

Our monthly meeting will be held at Bob Evans, 3163 Hartley Rd, Jacksonville FL 32257 (at I-295 & San Jose Blvd near Whole Foods) near the intersection of J Turner Butler Blvd and Philips Hwy. The meeting will start at 7:00 pm.

- **July 26 - 5:00 pm. 8th Annual Jim Padgett Drive to Powell's Dairy Freeze**

To beat the summer heat, we will be driving in the evening to our favorite ice cream spot in Starke: Powell's Dairy Freeze. Take the road less travelled, but take it in the evening! See all the details on the front page. Come out and beat the heat with your fellow Miataphiles with some ice cream!

- **August 12 - Monthly Club Meeting**

Our monthly meeting may be at Bob Evans again, but we will wait to see how it goes first in July. If not here, then another suitable location will be chosen. Come to our July meeting and throw out other suggestions for this or future dining/meeting locations!

- **August 16 - Fish and Ships Drive (Saturday morning, time TBD)**

You read that right! We'll be taking our annual ferry voyage across the St John's River starting at the Arlington Post Office and ending at the Crab Trap Restaurant in Downtown Fernandina for a seafood lunch. More details as they develop!

Welcome To Our Newest Members

**Jack Milano (Returning) & Cynthia Gresham, Reggie Kemp,
Sandy Schaefer, Janet & Bruce Duval, Ben Bobbitt & Joyce Barry
and Warren Kelly & Faith Mackey**

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OKAY FINE! I'LL GO CAMPING..



We're on the Web! Check us out!

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Thief Tried To Drive A Corvette Z06 Through A Window And Got Stuck Halfway

The Chevrolet Corvette has many great attributes. It's wildly fast, is not prohibitively expensive (for what it is), and has enough storage space for daily use. Higher-strung variants are even more capable. One suspected car thief found a limit for the Z06, though: evidently, it can't get over a metal window sill, and that failure led police straight to their suspect.

It appears as though the perpetrator gained access to the building by using an e-scooter to smash a window. Once inside, they found the keys to the Corvette, though it's unclear if they were in the car already or somewhere else. At that stage, it appears that they simply thought they could drive it out of the window the same way one might see in a movie.

This film ended a lot faster than they do on the big screen. The car made it just a few feet before the metal window sill stopped it in its tracks. Once the front wheels crossed over, it looked like the car just couldn't make it any farther.

The Z06 in question has an asking price of \$165,240 and includes the Z06 Ultimate Performance Package, visible carbon fiber aero pieces, carbon fiber interior trim, and the front axle lifting system.

In any case, it appears that they're already in custody. Corvette Blogger reports that USC public safety employees nabbed the suspect before police arrived. At that point, they handed him over. Let this be a lesson to all: the 'Vette is meant to stick firmly to the tarmac, unless it explicitly isn't.