

THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE MAZDA MX-5 CLUB OF VICTORIA INC.

# Rain, hail or ...

Is your  
renewal  
overdue?  
This will be your  
last *mxtra* if you  
haven't renewed



**In this edition:**  
2010-2011 Award winners  
New Motor Sport year kicks off  
Changing your suspension bushes

**Happy  
21st  
birthday!**

Wednesday, 10 August, was the 21st anniversary of the inaugural formal meeting of the Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria.





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**Your Committee**

**President / Website**

> Murray Finlay | (03) 9588 2868 (ah)  
e: [president@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:president@mx5vic.org.au)

**Vice President / mxtra Editor**

> Don Nicoll | (03) 9437 2787 (ah)  
e: [editor@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:editor@mx5vic.org.au)

**Secretary / Public Officer**

> Peter Dannock | 0408 522 093 (ah)  
e: [secretary@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:secretary@mx5vic.org.au)

**Treasurer**

> John Todd | (03) 8746 9529 (ah)  
e: [treasurer@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:treasurer@mx5vic.org.au)

**Club Captain – Motor Sport**

> Robert Downes | (03) 9561 5618 (ah)  
e: [captain@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:captain@mx5vic.org.au)

**Club Captain – Social**

> Janette Todd | (03) 8746 9529 (ah)  
e: [social@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:social@mx5vic.org.au)

**Assistant Club Captain – Social**

> Judy Searl | 0408 568 345  
e: [social2@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:social2@mx5vic.org.au)

**Membership**

> Will Campbell | (03) 5261 4816 (ah)  
e: [membership@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:membership@mx5vic.org.au)

**Merchandise**

> Steve Dunlop | (03) 9842 9065 (ah)  
e: [merchandise@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:merchandise@mx5vic.org.au)

**Points**

> Coral Campbell | (03) 5261 4816 (ah)  
e: [points@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:points@mx5vic.org.au)

**Social Media**

> Ben Sale | 0434 906 673 (ah)

**Member**

> James Saunders | 0401 570 306 (ah)

**Ex-officio**

**Assistant Club Captain – Motor Sport**

> Sam Gumina | 0409 331 670  
e: [captain2@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:captain2@mx5vic.org.au)

**Northern Victoria Convenor (Corowa)**

> Ron Gillick | (02) 6033 0253 (ah)  
e: [north-region@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:north-region@mx5vic.org.au)

**Ballarat & Western Victoria Convenor**

> John Gleeson | (03) 5333 1113 (ah)  
e: [ballarat@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:ballarat@mx5vic.org.au)

**Hobart Co-convenors**

> John Hadrill | (03) 6228 7670 (ah)  
> John Waldock | (03) 6248 1319 (ah)  
e: [hobart@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:hobart@mx5vic.org.au)

**Northern Tasmania Convenor (Devonport)**

> Ken Beaton | (03) 6424 5226  
e: [northtas@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:northtas@mx5vic.org.au)

**Club Photographer**

> Rodney Laitt | (03) 9444 7186 (ah)

**mxtra design/publishing**

> Alyssa Finlay | (03) 9588 2868 (ah)

**Technical**

> Matt King | (03) 9833 6300 (ah)  
e: [techno@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:techno@mx5vic.org.au)

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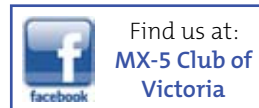
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**Cover image:**

*Touring in the rain ... it was tops up and umbrellas out on Gracie's Peninsula Run in July.* Photo: Geoff Roche



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All contributions welcome: please send articles and photos to the editor, Don Nicoll:  
• e-mail: [editor@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:editor@mx5vic.org.au)  
• post: **mxtra**, Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria Inc., PO Box 7438, Beaumaris VIC 3193

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# Murray's Corner ...

■ Murray Finlay – President



## NatMeet 2012

The next national gathering of MX-5 Club members is in Canberra over Easter next year.

Anyone who has been to a NatMeet before knows how much fun it is and will be keen to get along to this one.

A highlight will be a gala dinner *inside* the Australian War Memorial, under the giant Lancaster bomber ... a truly memorable event.

If you haven't been to one of these events before, please consider this one. Being in Canberra, it's almost a "home event" for Victorian Club members!

NatMeet is five days of fun, and a perfect chance to spend time with like-minded enthusiasts who share your love of the wonderful Mazda MX-5. Being involved is an experience you will never forget.

Full details can be found via the host NSW Club's website at [www.mx5.com.au/nsw](http://www.mx5.com.au/nsw).

**Registrations and deposits are due now!**

## 21 today!

Back on 10 August, 1990, 167 very happy owners of then brand-new MX-5s gathered in Mazda Australia's staff canteen in South Melbourne for the first formal gathering of the Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria.

Our first president, Michael Cemm, his wife Margaret and their original committee welcomed us all as part of what was then (and I believe still is) the largest start-up membership of any car club in Australia's history.

But I doubt that even Michael and Margaret, or our other early president David Henry, knew quite what they started those 21 years ago\*.

**This month we celebrate our Club's 21st birthday.** Having been here since that first meeting I can say that we have never been in better shape, and that's not just because of yet another record membership year. Everyone on our committee is dedicated to the Club's sound management and constant improvement; for a group of busy volunteers the committee must be commended highly for the amount of work they put in to making the Club the best and, hopefully, the most enjoyable it can be for *all* members.

**We must also thank those** who volunteer to plan runs and events, submit articles and photos for **mxtra**, help out at motor sport events ... and the many others who do the unseen things that keep the Club going and growing.

Over our 21 years we have built up a great store of comradeship and goodwill within our ranks, and I can only see this, and us, growing stronger from here on.

Speaking personally, I love this Club and love being involved on the committee. My motivation is always to try to make this the sort of club that I would like to join and participate in at any time. I hope that we on the committee achieve that goal, and I think the constantly-growing numbers and high membership retention suggest that we are doing most things right.

*It's just amazing to think that all this has grown out of a simple, unassuming little sports car.*

## 2010-2011 awards & recognitions

After the untimely passing of Mike Quist in June, the committee agreed unanimously to name our highest award, the Club Champion Award, in his honour. We felt it was a fitting tribute to a man who did so much to establish the Club in Victoria and our sister clubs around Australia.

Congratulations go to Treasurer **John Todd**, who took out the inaugural Mike Quist Award, by a small margin from Ken Read. John has contributed greatly to the Club this year and is a very worthy winner.

A full list of 2010-2011 award winners appears on page 7.

## AGM

By the time this magazine hits your letterbox (or inbox), the 2010-2011 annual general meeting will have been concluded, with a new committee installed for 2011-2012.

At the time of writing there was only one vacancy and one nomination, so it's essentially status quo for the committee that (in my opinion) has been doing such a great job of managing your Club.

We'll introduce the 2011-2012 committee members in the next **mxtra**.

## Gippsland members

If you live in (or close to) Gippsland, make sure you turn out for Alan Laine's "Gippsland run" on 4 September ... I have an important announcement to make!

**Until next time, look up, stay back!**

Murray

\* For those interested, an early history of the Club can be found on our website: [www.mx5vic.org.au/history\\_victoria.asp](http://www.mx5vic.org.au/history_victoria.asp)

## For your diary ...

See the full calendar for details

### August

21 Kinglake run

### September

4 Father's Day

4 Gippsland run

10-11 Hobart overnight run

22 New Members' Night 2011 #2

### October

2 Ladies' Day

2 North Tassie Skidpan Day

8 North Tassie navigation run

9 Great Ocean Road dawn run

29-31 Cup weekend 3-day event

### November

6 Annual CFA run/show & shine

12-13 N-E Vic Chapter

Snowy Mountains run

27 Christmas party (Melbourne)



# Motor Sport Torque

■ Robert Downes – Club Captain - Motor Sport



## Round 1 at Phillip Island ~ 2 July

The 2011-2012 Championship season was launched with another great day at Phillip Island.

Even though some regulars were missing, there was a great turn-up and a good day was had by all.

Ray Monik has written a separate article with accompanying results and photos for this meeting.

We are operating under a new comprehensive set of rules agreed upon at our Annual Motor Sport Meeting held in April.

Competitors are urged to become thoroughly familiar with the 2011-2012 Championship rules and in particular note that they need to submit a completed "Competitor's Declaration" to be eligible to gain Championship points.

## Winton 6 Hour ~ 15-16 October

Three teams of MX-5s have entered for this year with several drivers tackling the event for the first time.

The teams comprise:

### Team 1:

- » Brendan Beavis
- » Kim Cole
- » Mike Kirby
- » Greg McPherson
- » Daniel White

### Team 2:

- » Teruo Delacroix
- » Robert Downes
- » Stephen Downes
- » Noel Heritage
- » Peter Phillips

### Team 3:

- » Christine Boak
- » Owen Boak
- » John Downes
- » Max Lloyd
- » Ken Read
- » David Wilken

## Interstate Challenge – Wakefield Park NSW ~ 23 October 2011

I have had some initial discussions with Mike Hicks (NSW MX-5 Club Competition Secretary) about this event and in particular Class Eligibility and accommodation.

The NSW Club appears to have revisited their Class structure and now includes:

1. Standard NA incl. NA8
2. Standard NB
3. Standard NC
4. Clubman (similar to Vic)
5. Modified 1600 cc (85 rWkW limit)
6. Modified 1800 cc (90 rWkW limit)
7. Modified 2000 cc (100 rWkW limit)
8. Turbo Cars.

I will advise competitors as more details become available.

Mike Hicks is well aware of our rules and is looking forward to some healthy competition, as much as we are.

## Racecraft Training / Round 2 at Winton ~ 6-7 August

More on this next month but I certainly took a lot of telephone calls from people interested in the Racecraft Training – very encouraging for the future of motor sport within the Club. A couple of junior Club members including Jessica Healy and Matthew Heritage were due to do the "Junior Driver Training" on the Saturday.

## Club Presentation Function Sunday 31 July

The 2010-2011 Club Motor Sport awards were presented at our awards lunch at Creswick on 31 July.

In addition to the Overall and Class winners announced in last month's **mxtra** I'm very pleased to announce that the Club Captain's Award went to Craig Healy.

## Motor sport calendar

See the full calendar for details

### September 2011-2012 season

18 Rd 3: Sprints, Sandown

### October

15-16 Winton 6-Hour, Winton

23: Rd 4/Interstate Challenge  
v NSW:  
Wakefield Park, NSW (TBC)

### December

11 Rd 5: Sprints, Phillip Island

### 2011 Motorkhana Championship

Rd 7: 10 Sept – Bendigo

I was also delighted to announce that Daniel White will be the Assistant Motor Sport Captain for season 2011-2012. I am sure you will join me in wishing Daniel all the best in his new role with the Club.

I extend my personal thanks to Sam Gumina after several years as Club Captain and Assistant for his invaluable contribution to develop the Club motor sport program to the point it is today. Sam will continue to compete and his valuable knowledge and experience is not lost to the group.

Until next month ...

"... drive responsibly at all times"

Robert #26





# Membership

■ Will Campbell – Membership Officer

*G'day all ...*

Current membership count: **340**

I extend a warm welcome to 18 new members who have joined our ranks:

Nigel Anderson	1990 White NA
John Campbell	1998 Classic Red NB
Mark Dilger	2002 Silver NB
Nicholas Forster	1990 White NA
Peter Ferguson	1989 Classic Red NA
Philip Gibson	1990 Black NA
Jessica Healy	1995 White NA
Julie Paine	2007 Radiant Ebony NC
John Reid	1992 Classic Red NA
Paul and Glenda Roche	2003 Stratos Blue NB
Ron Rodgers	2011 White NC
John, Leisa, Madison and Mitchell Stone	1989 Classic Red NA
Graham Wilson	2009 Black NC
James Young	2001 Green NB

## *Haven't renewed yet?*

We've also had a healthy number of renewals over the last month although the pace has slackened off somewhat and quite a few of last year's members are still to rejoin. If you are in this position, you are certainly not too late. Last year, not that we encourage it, members were still rejoining six months past the due date!

**With August as our cut-off, this will be your last *mxtra* until we receive your payment.**

If you have misplaced your paperwork, then all you need to do is log on to the Club website, click on the red *Membership Portal* button on the right of the screen and follow the prompts. You will need your username and password to log on. Alternatively, you can give me or President Murray a call on the numbers listed on page 3, or email the Club at [membership@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:membership@mx5vic.org.au) (or [info@...](mailto:info@...)) if you need any assistance.

## *New name badge clip coming ...*

On another matter, those of you who have renewed will have received your new plastic membership card / name badge, together with a Club lanyard.

Following feedback, the committee has decided to also provide a small badge holder or clip in addition to the lanyard. This will allow you to pin or clip the badge to your clothing if you would prefer not to use the lanyard.

The new clips are on order and will be posted to new members as they join. However, the clips will also be available at Club events, so don't hesitate to ask for one if you would prefer this option.

**See you out and about ...**

*Will*



# Social-lights

■ Janette Todd – Club Captain - Social

## New Members' Night



**There is no doubt about it – mix together like-minded people, their great little cars, good conversation and some tasty food and *voila!* You have another Mazda MX-5 Club event.**

Each month in *mxtra* Will Campbell keeps us well informed of the current membership count as he welcomes the many new MX-5 enthusiasts who choose to join our ranks.

In an effort to introduce these folk to what the Mazda MX-5 Club Victoria is all about we hold an Annual New Members' Night. This event is normally conducted in March each year – which is a long time to wait for some!

For this reason, the Committee has decided to hold the New Members' Night not just once but *twice* this year ...

Set aside **Thursday, 22 September** in your diary for another opportunity to get together with both new and long-time members to chat about all things MX-5. It is also a great opportunity for everyone to check out the range of Club merchandise that Steve Dunlop looks after.

We will once again gather at **The Garage Café**, 221 Berkeley Street, Carlton, from 6:30pm. Dinner and drinks, for those who wish, will be at your own cost. (Check out their website: [www.garagecafe.com.au](http://www.garagecafe.com.au))

Please call me on 0448 833 321 to let me know you will be attending.

***It's a date: ink it in! ...***

*Janette*

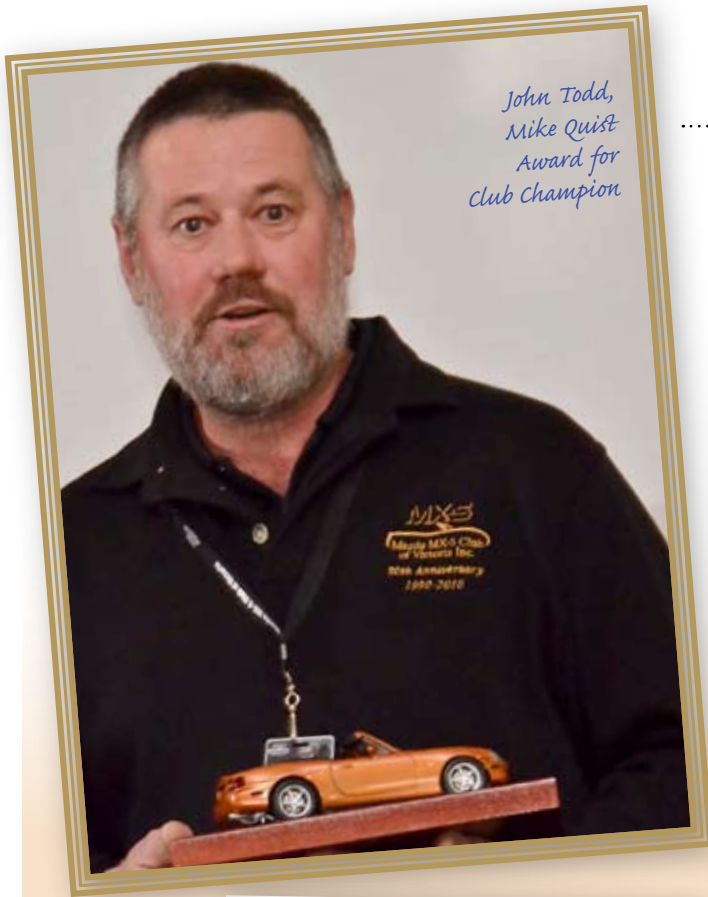
# Scene about ... *at the Awards lunch*



■ Photos: Ron Macdonald



# 2010-11 winners and



*John Todd,  
Mike Quist  
Award for  
Club Champion*



*» Janette & John Todd, Teams Champions*

*» Ron Macdonald,  
New Member  
Champion*



*» mxtra award:  
John Waldo*

## Years of Membership

**20 years**

John Douch

**15 years**

Chris & Kaylene Biffin | Ernie de Vlieger

**10 years**

Grant Butler  
Peter Corkran  
Malcolm Eastley  
Brian & Sandra Jackson  
Keith & Barbara Staite

**5 years**

Robert & Ilana Boucher  
Geoffrey Brown  
Ian & Valerie Bruce  
Sandro Brunelli  
John Croxford  
Steve & Debbie Dunlop  
Ros & Rob Eastwood  
Graeme Goller  
John Hadrill  
Robert Hampson &  
Hayley Thirlwell  
Stuart James

Rod & Margaret Jewell  
Robert Kiddell  
Peter Lee  
Phil Munnings  
Trudie Orchard  
John Parkinson  
Donald & Suzanne  
Rainey  
Rex Ryan  
Grahame Smith  
Ian Williams





■ Photos: Teruo Delacroix, Ron Macdonald, John Waldock

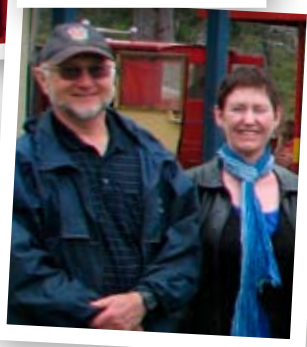


## 2010-2011 Motor Sport Champions

**Russell Garner** (centre, front) was the Club's outright Motor Sport Champion for the second successive year, as well as the season's champion in Modified Class.

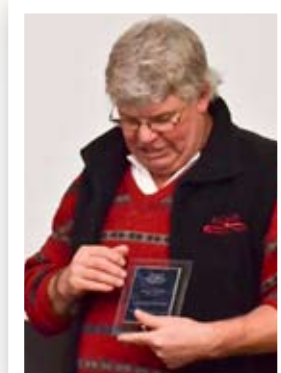
He's flanked here by (clockwise) **Steven Cook** – Open Champion, **Colin Denman-Jones** – Standard NC Champion, **Max Lloyd** – Standard NB Champion, **Craig Healy**, winner of the Motor Sport Captain's Award, **Randy Stagno Navarra** – Restricted Open Champion, **Bob de Bont** – Rookie of the Year, **Peter Phillips** – Clubman Champion and **Robert Downes** – Standard NA Champion.

## In Appreciation



"In Appreciation" awards went to [above right] James Saunders (Committee 2009-2011, Club Captain - Motor Sport 2009-2010), [above] Karen & Ian Bradshaw, Ballarat & Western Victorian Chapter and [right] Liz & Mike Williams (Hobart Chapter)

## Chapter Champions



Lockie Story  
Ballarat & Western  
Victorian Chapter



John Waldock  
Hobart Chapter

# Waiting for Lotto ...

■ Words & photos: Ron Macdonald

We arrived at the Australian International Motor Show a few minutes before 10am courtesy of Mr Metro, so pretty much walked straight in the door.



*The 2011 Mazda stand*

Obviously we made a beeline to the Mazda stand to see their latest offerings before the crowds closed in and the game of peek a boo with the cars started. On the top level of the stand was a red NC2 so that seemed



*Mazda's concept Minagi*

as good a place as any to start. The car in question was the retractable hardtop model and a very nice car it was too (I still love you, Gracie!). One of my favorite features of the car was the Recaro seats which fitted like a glove and would be sensational on some of the more spirited roads we like to encounter. The downside of these seats though is they were a shoe-horn fit for me (still comfortable) so I would imagine they would cause an issue or two with those of a more, umm, stout stature.

Parked behind the MX-5 was a white RX-8, a nice car but suffers from the issue of too many seats (rear seats have about three inches of legroom!). After a quick gander we headed back downstairs for a look at Mazda's concept cars.

The concept cars alone were worth the train ride; two were on offer – the *Shinari* and the *Minagi*. First to the *Shinari*: what a sensational looking vehicle (too many bloody seats again), sleek, stylish and something I definitely hope Mazda persist with (in a two-seater of course). The *Minagi* is muted to reflect the upcoming CX-5 SUV, a nice looking car with very much a BMW X5 flavour to it (especially her bum), but a vehicle



*The Shinari concept car, showing the new Mazda "Kodo" design language*

I would very much like to own. I realise the motor show is different things to different people, however to me it is more about the concept cars and the lotto purchases (I can go to a dealer to see the basic models) so it was only a quick look through the rest of the range before moving on.



*FT-86 II*

On the Toyota stand was the FT-86 II concept car (the new Celica?) a joint development project with Subaru (Subaru are providing a flat four engine, six-speed gearbox and the rear drive). The lovely sleek styling of this car may even herald Toyota's return to the sports car market ... like I say, nice car but a shame about the bit of chrome on its nose.

Bentley were there in force with several vehicles including the new Continental GT and my favorite, the 412 KW Continental Flying Spur – said to be the most powerful



*The brilliant MX-5*



*Bentley's Flying Spur*

four-door saloon (Americans have sedans) ever built. The Flying Spur is the first thing on my Lotto shopping list (it's only \$407K), though I guess I would suffer through a Continental GT (423 KW) if I really had to.

Towards the back of the show were a couple of nice surprises. First was a gaggle of old girls including a beautiful black Jaguar XK120 Roadster and her younger sister the XK140. In this bunch were an old Dino Ferrari, the Rolls from the *Cars of the World* display and several beasts I had never even heard of.

The second surprise was in the opposite corner, a hand-built retro (1930s) coupe manufactured by Bufori (Malaysia). These rear-engined (V6) vehicles come in a couple of



*Bufori*

different models though their La Joya was the one on display. I liked the lines but it definitely should be fitted with spokes and spinners, not mags.

Right next door to the Bufori was the mighty Swedish Koenigsegg (the car that tried to kill the Stig!); not much can be said about this car except MAGNIFICENT! Stylish, powerful, QUICK (0-100 in 3.2 seconds) and, as the Stig found out – deadly.

Working our way back along the stands we visited Lamborghini, Maserati, and Jaguar (no Ferrari); I must say I find some of the new Jaguar models less than beautiful. Quite a shame considering Jaguar has had some wonderful styling over the years but it seems to be failing them these



*Wendy's Jag*



*The XK Jag*



*The Koenigsegg*

days. One exception to that rule is the XKR coupe, still very stylish and dripping with luxury (need a licence just to drive the seat!). As Wendy is unlikely to ever find the \$320K required to buy one of these she had her one (and probably only) practice (read pretend) drive at the show.

Having been to every stand and drooled over countless unaffordable cars it was nearly time to call it a day. On the way out we stopped and sat down for a coffee (courtesy of Mazda Australia), then made our way into town for lunch.

*If you missed this year's show you will have to wait until 2013 for the next one as the 2012 show will be in Sydney. ■*



*Lamborghini (top) & Maserati*

# New championship year kicks off ...



Lindy Anderson

Results - Round 1	1st		2nd		3rd	
Standard NA	Robert Downes	» 2:06.879	Noel Heritage	» 2:07.638	Nelson Zea	» 2:10.485
Standard NB	Stephen Downes	» 2:05.264	Max Lloyd	» 2:06.092	---	
Standard NC	Colin Denman-Jones	» <b>2:04.419</b> <sup>1</sup>	Lindy Anderson	» 2:14.758	---	
Clubman	Peter Phillips	» 2:02.779	Ken Read	» 2:09.465	Paul Murphy	» 2:13.444
Modified	Russell Garner	» 1:57.638	Phil Munnings	» 2:01.881	Dean Monik	» 2:02.419
Restricted Open	Daniel White	» 2:02.228	Brendan Beavis	» 2:03.857	Teruo Delacroix	» 2:08.857
Open	Owen Boak	» 1:51.886	Andrew Hardeman	» 1:54.830	Christine Boak	» 2:00.343

<sup>1</sup> New Club motor sport group lap record

## Championship standings after Round 1 - Phillip Island Sprints, 2 July, 2011

(corrected points)	1st		2nd		3rd	
<b>Overall Champion</b>	<b>too early!</b>					
Standard NA	Robert Downes	» 10	Noel Heritage	» 7	Nelson Zea	» 6
Standard NB	Stephen Downes	» 10	Max Lloyd	» 7	---	
Standard NC	Colin Denman-Jones	» 10	Lindy Anderson	» 7	---	
Clubman	Peter Phillips	» 10	Ken Read	» 7	Paul Murphy	» 6
Modified	Russell Garner	» 10	Phil Munnings	» 7	Dean Monik	» 6
Restricted Open	Daniel White	» 10	Brendan Beavis	» 7	Teruo Delacroix	» 6
Open	Owen Boak	» 10	Andrew Hardeman	» 7	Christine Boak	» 6

## 2011-12 Championship | Round 1 Phillip Island Sprints - 2 July, 2011

■ Words: Ray Monik ■ Photos: Ben Sale

“Rain, rain and more rain” I was thinking, as I drove to Phillip Island for our most recent Club sprint, remembering how the weather was this same time last year at the island.

Not one dry run that whole day ... on the best run I managed, one half of the circuit was wet with no rain and on the other half it was pelting down with rain.

We arrived in the wet and left in the wet – was not the most pleasant of days to be had.

Well, how different this day was! Dean ( my son ) and I arrived at the track at around 7am; the early morning was crisp, not freezing, there was no rain, and it looked to be very promising. It ended up

being dry and relatively warm. A perfect winter's day it was.

The turnout for the day for our first event of the 2011-2012 MX-5 motor sport season was sensational with some 30 entrants spread over four run groups, and we made a full day of it on the track with a warm-up session, and four or five timed runs followed by optional combined sessions at the end of the day.

In addition to the regular competitors we had several new faces 'getting into it' which is always a welcoming sight for the Club's motor sport section.

The day went relatively smoothly, slowed only by a few recoveries, but as always a very well-run event thanks to Neil Choi and the Alfa Romeo Club (with the MX-5 Club's assistance ).

Also a big thanks go to



Peter Phillips and his lovely wife Pam who take it upon themselves to arrange for a get-together whenever we visit the Island. A group of around 14 of us had a most enjoyable feed at the local RSL in Cowes on the Saturday evening and did some very entertaining MX-5 bonding.

Also worth a mention is the DVD which Ben Sale put together with footage of the day's activities. All run groups

were given great coverage with some very interesting footage on how to get around a race track ... and of how not to get around a race track.

All in all another great day was had at what must be one of the worlds most picturesque and challenging race tracks. Every time I leave Phillip Island it is with a great sense of privilege and satisfaction. ■



# MX5CENTRE

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## Phillip Island 2.7.11 (cont)



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# Chapter news ...



## Go the Midland Pies ...

~ 11/7/11 | Hobart Chapter

■ **Words:** Mike Williams ■ **Photos:** Caz Timbrell  
■ **Run organiser:** John Waldock

The options for fun half-day runs from any centre are limited but we're lucky in Southern Tassie that so many of them are amenable to multiple samplings.

A couple of winters ago we used part of this run culminating in a picnic on "Lake" Dulverton near Oatlands in the Midlands area. It was a lake in name only as the prolonged drought had dried up all but a tiny portion. Extensive rain last year, however, meant that the countryside and lake offered a much more attractive vista than on our last visit.

We met as usual for coffee at Maldini in Salamanca Place prior to a nominal 10am start. Seven cars eventually left at about 10.30; we were missing a couple of stalwarts in John Waldock (crook) and Jo (recovering from a cut hand) but picked up a new starter in Andrew who recently acquired a very early but low mileage and neat white NA and Rob with his Classic Red NA.

The first part of the run was via diverse paths to Richmond for a late morning tea. These paths led us via the East Derwent Highway on to the Grass Tree Hill road (C324) – a delightful drive somewhat marred by a sluggish Camry for part of the way. When a few kilometres short of Richmond we cut north on a back road (C323) towards Brighton near Tea Tree

then, via C321 reversed course on a parallel road (C322) leading back to Richmond. These roads are narrow, windy, and in generally good nick while being little used – we scarcely saw another car.

We tea-ed and coffee-ed near the river in Richmond before taking off on part two of the drive. Before we left, Alan decided to call it quits as he'd started off poorly and became progressively poorer during the morning. We wished him well and sent him home to recuperate. Rob had been experiencing some odd electrical malaise and needed push starting. Unfortunately the ailment grew steadily worse with the battery losing charge by the minute and he decided that discretion, etc and headed tentatively towards home on a failing battery.

The remaining five cars then cut across from Richmond to the Tasman Highway (A3) north of Sorell using Brinktop Road (C351) and headed towards the east coast turning off again at Runnymede. From there to Oatlands is a terrific piece of road (a combination of the C312, C311, C318

and C310) albeit a bit rough in a few spots, travelling about 60km through the hamlets of Levendale, Woodsdale, Whitefoord, Baden and Parratah before hitting Oatlands.

The weather was typical of a Tasmanian winter – cool but sunny (or at least it was that day) and we adjourned to a café/bakery attached to the local pub (the Kentish) for lunch. Speciality of the house is a range of locally made pies ranging from scallop through chicken and camembert to steak and Guinness. Scrumptious and inexpensive. With a light ale to wash it down and a cosy place to chat, stories were swapped until we decided it was time to move on. Return to Hobart was via individually preferred route and Liz and I braved the notorious Mud Walls Road (B31) that leaves the Midland Highway near Jericho and follows the Coal Valley back to Richmond. A great road if you discount about 8km of very heavily patched pavement at the northern end. ■



# Grey skies, grey seas, great run ...

■ Words: Lynette Jordan ■ Photos: Lynette Jordan, Geoff Roche & Ron Macdonald

We rose early for the Peninsula Run, started breakfast in the dark and watched the sun rise over the hills. This was the perfect start to a perfect day.

Strong winds began to whip up as we headed down Eastlink to Frankston, but it seemed OK, though we did notice the black clouds gathering on the horizon. As we got closer to our destination it was raining, so we expected the numbers for the run would be down.

Driving towards the meeting point at the Frankston Pier a double rainbow appeared over the bay – an omen of a good day ahead.

We were one of the first to arrive and Ron and Wendy had already set up 'camp' under one of the picnic shelters. They had a kettle on the boil, were making hot tea and coffee for all who wanted it and providing yummy bikkies for sustenance. There was also a great café close by and some of us (me) took advantage of the opportunity to have a hot mocha.

As more people arrived everyone started chatting about this and that, specifically Essendon's stunning win over the Cats the night before, Collingwood's anticipated defeat of the Hawks later in the afternoon, the recent DECA day, the

insanity of MX-5 drivers to come out on such a day (*many noted that this should more properly be attributed to keenness and enthusiasm*) and finally whether extra points should be awarded to anyone driving with their roof down.

We soon decided that all who were going to participate had arrived, so after our briefing the convoy of 23 cars was under way.

It was a good start. The rain had eased to a gentle shower as we made our way down the highway and then slowly through Mornington shopping centre, regrouping just before the Esplanade and the start of a lovely drive along the beach. And what a drive it was – beautiful, extravagant homes line the coast and the views over the bay were stunning. It's obvious why this area is so popular. Who wouldn't want to have a piece of that?

By the time we reached Mt Martha the storm and winds were being reflected in the restless, grey sea. Soon we were driving through the underpass at Safety Beach (formerly known as Shark Bay, the name being changed to encourage more visitors as no-one wanted to go there ... for some reason!).

As we drove along the foreshore, Greg smiled and said, "This is a *really* nice drive you know. I'm enjoying this". I think that summed it up.

On we went, passing Dromana drive-in (ah, memories!) and into cattle country and grazing land. The landscape became more hilly and forested and there was lots of pink heath growing by the roadside. The bush was fresh and clean from the rain and the road was winding and fun.

As the bushland cleared we entered the wine-growing region of the Mornington Peninsula, passing Darling Park, one of our favourites, then on into Red Hill – wineries, farmland, wineries, cyclists! (Are they mad? Who would ride a bike on these roads on a day like this?), wineries, the Red Hill Showgrounds and memories of the famous Saturday market and Charmaine's chocolate chilli ice-cream. Yum!

As we headed along Shands Road more views over the wineries opened up before us. One place grabbed my attention – Horseback Winery Tours. Sounds good, but I wonder whether you'd still be able to make it into the saddle by the end of the day!

The properties began to change again – now the crops were olives and horses grazed in the paddocks with Bass Strait (or was it Westernport Bay?) as the backdrop. The farms looked very English, green with lots of windbreaks reminiscent of hedgerows criss-crossing the landscape.



3/7/11



■ Run organisers: Ron Macdonald & Wendy Clark



Soon we were driving down the main drag of Flinders. Every time we visit, it seems to have grown. Some of the convoy stopped to buy some morning tea, while the rest of us drove on down to the beach car park for the morning break. As we turned towards the bay the view over the turquoise water was breathtaking.

The rain had given up for a while and the sun had peeped out for a moment, so we thought that the break might have been blessed with a little sun and dryness. No such luck. As we all pulled into the car park the rain started again – gently, but nevertheless part of our morning tea break. We all shared umbrellas or stood under whatever shelter we could find. The fairy wrens didn't mind. They were hopping about in the rain, happily accepting all the crumbs we shared with them.

After about half an hour we piled back into our cars, drove back through Flinders and on to Boneo Road towards Rosebud. The countryside was again dotted with magnificent homes on beautifully maintained properties.

We continued to have our breath taken away by the views across the gullies and hedgerows towards Bass Strait. Everything is so green now; in stark contrast to the way things have been in recent years. It was good to see how the environment has benefitted from this

lovely wet year we've been having.

Slowly the open paddocks and farmland gave way to the coastal forest of the Mornington Peninsula National Park, with the vegetation being dominated by yellow "Banksia men". Leaving the national park, the sky over the rolling hills began to lighten – the grey surrendering to duck egg blue and even though it was still raining, it was beginning to look good for lunchtime.

We were now driving through Victoria's food bowl (market gardens) and hot springs and spa country. There were signs everywhere offering relaxing massage and gentle therapies. It was very tempting to just give up the drive and drop in to one of these places, but Greg was driving and he wasn't going to stop.

Entering Sorrento, we were confronted with the stark contrast between Old Sorrento – sandstone and classic style and New Sorrento – all brash and modern and yet the two seem to blend well together.

The ferry was in.

A circuit around town and we were off towards Blairgowrie. Surprisingly the bay was quite calm. I had thought that it would be stormy and wild, given its closeness to the heads. The foreshore drive gave us glimpses of the water through the bushland and then we were

in Rye. Beams of sunlight were breaking through the cloud and seagulls hovered, held in one place by the unrelenting on-shore wind. Rosebud carnival looked like a ghost town with only the skeleton of the Ferris wheel left.

Finally we turned inland and started the climb towards Arthur's Seat and hairpin bend after hairpin bend. I've never seen so many on one stretch of road. I counted 10 and I'm not sure that I got them all.

We arrived at Seawinds Park and the sun came out. We shared our lunch with a pair of cheeky but fickle magpies. No sooner had it become clear that we had no more food for them and they were off to make new friends. After lunch we had a quick walk out to the lookout. The view was stunning with Melbourne floating on the storm clouds in the distance.

We couldn't stay long after the drive, as I had to get back to the 'G' for the footy. We said our goodbyes to everyone and as we got back to the car we were greeted with the final delight of the run – a mob of kangaroos grazing on the hillside behind the picnic ground.

Greg had me back in Melbourne for the first bounce and the other Magpies put the icing on the cake of my day by trouncing the Hawks. Perfect.

Thank you Ron and Wendy for a fantastic drive. We had fun. ■

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# A turn around the cattle yard ...



Words & photos: Bob de Bont #632



## Round 5 of the Victorian Motorkhana Championship for 2011 was held on 16 July at the Bendigo Livestock Exchange in Huntly, co-hosted by the Huntingdale Auto Club and the Ford Four Car Club.

Our Motorkhana Team grew to five with the star of the DECA Motorkhana, Gary Prescott with his Sunlight Silver 1999 NB and new member Xin Zhou in his Galaxy Grey 2009 NC, along with regulars Nik Falkenbach, Pam Collom and Bob de Bont.

Those travelling up from Melbourne met at the service centre near Calder Park for an uneventful run to Bendigo and on to the venue. Pam and Nik made their way across from Seymour.

The weather gods were smiling with a clear crisp morning followed by a cool and dry day, a bonus for a winter's day in central Victoria.

Last minute adjustments were made as we prepared our vehicles for scrutineering, Pam found the performance of her

handbrake was less than optimal and decided to share Nik's NB for the day.

Drivers' briefing, trophy presentation from Round 2, CAMS trophies to last year's outright winners, number allocation and off to the first test area by 10.45am.

The 40 competitors were presented with eight tests conducted in two tight areas on a bitumen surface with a slight covering of loose stones producing inconsistent grip levels. A number of the tests were quite demanding in preparation for the Australian Motorkhana Championship in Western Australia in early October.

The MX-5 Club team preformed well, highlighted with a second in class B and a second and third in class N. These results lift the Mazda MX-5 Club to fourth in the Clubs' Championship with Bob maintaining his slender lead in Class B. Pam increased her lead in Class N with Nik in third.

Thanks to all the competitors for their support and assistance throughout the day and to the spectators who provided moral support. I believe everyone departed for home after an enjoyable day.

## Victorian Motorkhana Championship Round 5 - 16/7/11

Round 7 is at Bendigo on Saturday, 10 September.

More information is available from <http://motorkhana1.webs.com> or contact Bob de Bont on 0402 345 562. ■



# There is an MX-5 god!

■ Words: Geoff Roche Photos: Geoff Roche & Lockie Story

## Wants and needs are quite different things ...



**Do I need to change my 2003 NB with 45,000km, in excellent condition and plenty of registration? Well ... *no!***

**Do I want a manual, one-owner NC hardtop, mint condition, low kilometres, sub-\$30,000? Well ... *yes!***

I had been looking for a few months but was yet to really find anything. I looked at a couple of soft tops that had come up earlier in the year, locally here in Melbourne, but they just weren't quite right.

Then the exact thing I was looking for came up in Queensland. Not an ideal location, but one we could work with. Straight on to the phone, only to be told "... you should have rung yesterday" ... coincidentally that NC was bought by someone in Melbourne.

Some months passed, still yet to find the right NC and we started to do some renovations at home. I now thought ... well, there goes the idea of changing to an NC for the time being ... Instead of looking almost daily, it was now more like every few days, then once a week or so.

One night the wife was out so I thought I would just have a look on the internet and there it was:

Private sale, 2006 NC hardtop, one owner, 11,500 km, True Red, manual (of course) and even better than the sub-\$30K. Perfect! It was located in Adelaide, but that was not going to stop me.

I thought well I won't bother phoning the fellow, I don't want to waste his time as I thought I can't really justify getting the NC now as the renovations were still going on. Anyway it had been a few days since I last looked and it is probably sold by now anyway. I did however look at flights to Adelaide on the coming weekend and they were cheap. Ummm, I thought, the MX-5 gods are giving me a message, but I can't do anything tonight as the wife is not home and of course I needed to discuss it first. I knew it would be too late to do anything about it by the time she came home, so all that night and the following day I thought ... ..well, it's probably sold anyway.

The next evening, the topic of conversation came around to the Adelaide NC and the wife said ... *"did you phone up???"* ... *you better get on to it ... you don't want to miss out on it ..."*

**The green light!** I didn't need to be told twice. In a flash I was on the phone and, yes, it was still available. After a

discussion and some negotiations, a deal had been struck. It all sounded just sooooo good. As the NC was in Adelaide and I'm in Melbourne, I contacted an Adelaide mate to have a look at it for me. "Yeah, I can do that." When I phoned him back, he simply said "Get in your car and come over and get it ... it's just like brand new!"

With that, the flights were booked and by 10am the following Saturday, the deal was completed.

We drove it home from Adelaide ... in the first 4½ years it had travelled only 11,500km, but by the time we drove it home to Melbourne, via the Birdwood Motor Museum and an overnight stay at the Coonalpyn pub, it had another 850km on the clock.

The Victorian roadworthy was obtained without any problems, then a visit to VicRoads to have it registered in Victoria, again without any problems and there it was: the transformation from an SA vehicle to a VIC vehicle was completed.

The next weekend was DECA at Shepparton. What an introduction to the "new" NC!

I now needed to sell my NB. We don't have the garage space for two MX-5s, so I contacted my brother, who lives in the country with a big shed and asked if I could store the NC there until I sold the NB. He responded "Don't bring the NC down ... bring the NB and leave it here. *I'll buy it.*"

**Deal done. There really is an MX-5 god. ■**



# The MX-5 Club Grill



## Introducing ...

*Max Lloyd*

*2010-11 Standard NB Champion*

**Name?** Max Lloyd

**Age?** 67

**Born?** Yes - In Preston, Melbourne!!

**Current abode?** Croydon

**Profession?** Semi-retired. Currently employed in school maintenance

**Partner?** Married to Lesley for 42 years – the best souvenir I could find while working in England

**Pets?** No

**Fave food?** Curry

**Can you cook?** Not bad with the barbeque

**Favourite tippie?** Any Shiraz with Coonawarra on the label

**First drive?** In the family Dodge Kingsway when I was eight years old

**First car?** A 1929 Morris Minor Tourer given by my parents on my 12th birthday

**First fender bender?** In a Mini 850 on Dandenong Road, Clayton – not my fault, of course!

**Everyday driver?** I use the MX-5 every day. It becomes a toolbox on wheels during the week

**Current MX-5?** 2000 Supreme Blue six-speed. No name but then I've never named my cars

**MX-5 improvements?** Roll bar and Koni shocks ... so far

**MX-5 dislikes?** I'm trying to think of one

**Why an MX-5?** Styling, size, its sound at 6000rpm, performance, handling, RWD, that stumpy and quick gear lever, seating position, quick-folding soft top, bang for your buck. Apart from any of that, I just like it



**Fluffy dice?** No

**Passions besides the MX-5?** Family, cycling, travelling

**Favourite TV show / movie / book?** Grand Designs / The Great Escape / Phil Irving's Autobiography

**Dream wheels (money no object)?** Ferrari – any model

**Would you drive a Daewoo or SSangYong?** As a rental ... possibly

**Favourite other Mazda?** My RX2 was great. Talk about revs!

**If not a Mazda (gasp!) what?** BMW M3

**How long in the Club?** Two and a half enjoyable years

**How many MX-5 Club runs?** None; I joined the Club to participate in motor sport

**Favourite Club run?** No, but if I can mention events, without a doubt, I would say track days at Phillip Island get the adrenalin flowing

**Funniest thing seen on a Club run?** By others, perhaps, me trying a backwards approach to MG Corner at Phillip Island. It didn't help my lap time!

**Done DECA?** Not yet – I'm working on it

**Ford vs Holden?** Holden

**What's playing in your MX-5?** No music, the tune of a 1.8 litre twin cam 16-valve sounds good to me

**Footy team (AFL/NRL/Soccer)?** No ...

**Final comments?** Since joining the Club I have been overwhelmed by the friendship, encouragement and technical assistance I have received. I say thank you to all those members who have contributed in the past and to everyone that is making this Club the great success that it is today



# The elephant in the .. glove box?

■ Things you won't see on an MX-5 Club run in Australia ... Some animal road rage in a game reserve in South Africa. The guy in the Volkswagen was just trying to get past. *Thank goodness for the tin top!*



# Changing your lower shock bushes ...



## ... and replacing the front suspension

■ Words & photos: Ben Sale



I traced a squeaking noise coming from the front of my car to the two

front shock bushes. My car has Bilstein shocks fitted and, apparently this a known item to fail. In order to do this I had to remove the front shocks so I thought I'd do a quick photo guide to that too.

Firstly, **don't** follow the guide in the Haynes workshop manual ... if you do you'll throw out your wheel alignment as I did when I loosened the LCA bolts on the first side ... and I stupidly didn't think to mark the camber position either ... damn!

You don't actually need to touch the lower control arm at all. However, it had been about 18 months since I fitted my suspension so unfortunately I'd forgotten.

**1. The first step is to jack the car up safely** (I always find the front a pain due to my car being lowered and fitted with a front lip) and put it on stands.

**2. You'll need to remove the undertray** which is held on with a number of 10mm nuts and bolts and then disconnect the swaybar from the endlink. I also unbolted it from the chassis so I could move it out of the way of the control arms.

**Next:**

**3. Undo the two nuts** in the engine bay at the top of the shock.

**4. Remove the bolt** at the base of the shock.

... continued



1. Jack up the car



2. Disconnect the swaybar from the endlink



3 ~ 4. The unbolting process ...

... continued from page 23

**5. Next remove the long bolt** which runs between the two bushes on the upper control arm. **Before** I removed this I placed the scissor jack underneath the lower control arm. This is because, when you remove this bolt, the whole assembly will drop down quite suddenly when you get the bolt out. The long bolt is also a lot easier to remove when the hub and control arm are supported; if it is not supported you'll probably find you need to use a punch to remove it.

**6. Lower the control arm** via the scissor jack (you could use a trolley jack but I only have one and I decided to leave it for additional support under the car. When you've lowered it enough you will be able to pull the shock out.

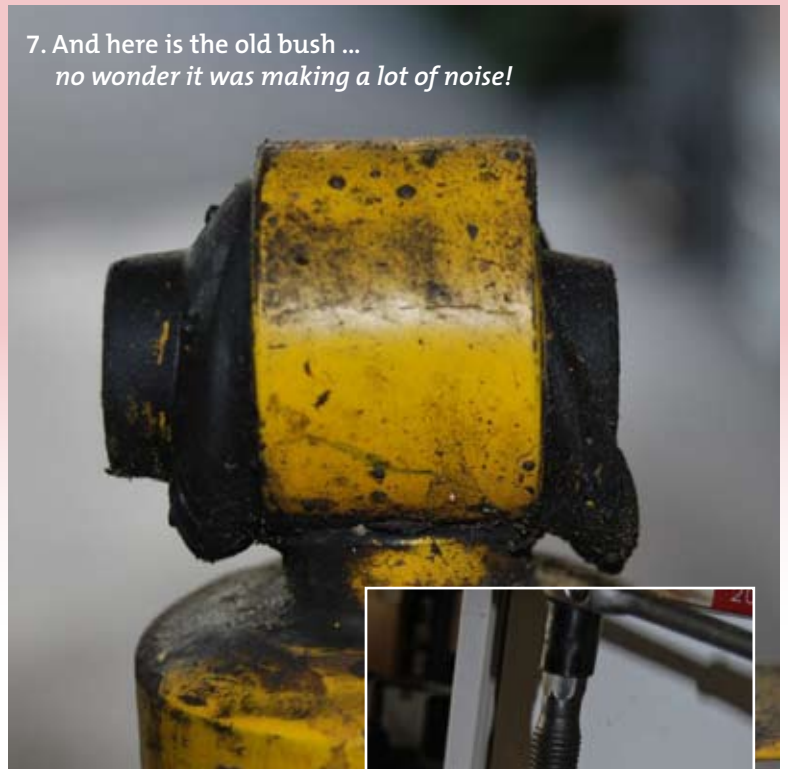


5. Remove the long bolt between the bushes



6. Lower the control arm

7. And here is the old bush ...  
no wonder it was making a lot of noise!



**8. The process of removing** the actual bush was a lesson in using the right tool for the job ... I stuffed around for ages trying to remove the bush using various unsuccessful methods. I just didn't have the right tool.

Then I remembered that the Mazda MX-5 Club actually owns a bushing tool; President Murray is its custodian and happens to live five minutes down the road from me. So a quick drive in my Alfa to his place. Once back it took me literally two minutes to pop the bush out. It's a really useful tool the Club owns and it's available for all members to borrow.



8. Remove the old bush





### 9. New vs Old ...

9. And as this photo shows, to put it politely *the bush was stuffed*. No surprise that it was noisy!

10. **Installing the new bush** in the shock is quite simple with a vice. I put a bit of grease on, then first popped the bush part in. I then got the metal sleeve insert and put it in the same way with the vice. It took about a minute of fiddling to get it all to sit correctly.

11. **And then back together it all goes.** As always I applied a good amount of copper grease to all the bolts which I had removed before I put them back in. I also took the time to clean the suspension up a bit as the underbody

and suspension were covered in mud from a motorkhana event.

The other side was the same as this. With the right tools, preparation and without any problems I would say you could do this job in under two hours from start to finish.

This guide will work for anyone installing new front suspension too as the process for removing and installing springs and shocks is exactly the same as outlined in this guide. ■



### Rear shocks?

I thought I would also write up a quick method to change the **rear shocks** as Alex Hailstone and I recently did both front and rear on her 1995 NA8. The process is quite similar to the front.

- » First you need to get the rear of the car safely in the air and supported by stands.
- » Next you need to get access to the nuts at the top of the shock. To do this you'll have to remove the spare wheel and the metal cover in front of the fuel lines on the left side of the boot. The nuts on this side are particularly hard to get access to as it seems that no matter what tool you use the fuel lines get in the way somehow.
- » Once you've got the top nuts off then disconnect the sway bar from the lower control arm. Next remove the 17mm lower shock bolt at the base of the shock. If it's stubborn and doesn't want to budge then spray it with plenty of penetrating lubricant and wait for it to loosen. Otherwise you may round the head of the bolt and have to remove the whole control arm to get it to someone who can remove the bolt (don't ask me how I know ...) Once this bolt is off, remove the upper control arm bolts.
- » At the rear there are two bolts as opposed to the front that has one long one. The rear suspension doesn't drop quite like the front when you remove these bolts.
- » To get the suspension out we pushed down on the lower control arm until it moved down far enough that we could pull the spring and shock unit out.
- » When reinstalling a shorter coilover unit was being fitted so we didn't have to worry, but go get a standard height unit back in would require pushing the lower control arm down in the same way to get it back into the car. As they say, reinstallation is the reverse of removal ... and remember to grease the bolts so that next time it's much easier to remove everything.



*The Club's bushing tool is available for any Club member to borrow ...*



# Club merchandise

■ Steve Dunlop, Merchandise

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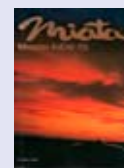
## Club library ...

### Books



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- » 1.6 NA
- » 1.8 NA
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### Miata Mazda MX-5

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