

Barrie Mansell

The MX-5 Club Grill

Our first and only Mildura member

Name? Barrie Mansell

Age? 76

Born? Middle Brighton, Victoria

Current abode? Irymple, just outside Mildura

Profession? Retired

Partner? Wife, Margaret

Pets? Nil

Fave food? Chinese Duck

Can you cook? Yes, but I keep it fairly simple

Favourite tippie? Most dry white wines

First drive? 1948 Hillman Minx

First car? 1948 Morris Minor

First fender bender? International K1 utility

Everyday driver? 1999 MX-5 NB

How many MX-5s have you owned? Just one

Current MX-5? The above

MX-5 improvements? Hardtop

MX-5 dislikes? Really none

Why an MX-5? Good drive, reliable and ideal for most motoring

Fluffy dice? Not needed on journey

Passions besides the MX-5? Strawberry Pavlova; listening/viewing to various versions of Carmen the opera

Favourite TV show / movie / book? Currently on ABC TV is Derek, 2001 The Space Odyssey

Dream wheels (money no object)? Mercedes Benz 300SL Gullwing but a 300SLR as in the picture below is the ultimate weapon

Would you drive a Daewoo or SsangYong? No way

Favourite other Mazda? Mazda 3, good practical car that is safe to drive

If not a Mazda (gasp!) what? Most Porsches

How long in the Club? Two years

How many MX-5 Club runs or track events? Nil

Favourite Club run/track? Drove a Triumph 2000 MK2 around Bathurst in 1988 a week after the great event (as it was then) and realised how fast some were going around the circuit ... and, in some cases, off it!

Funniest thing seen at a Club event? No experience

Have you been to DECA or NatMeet? No



Barrie (left) with (then) Club Captain - Motor Sport, Robert Downes, in Mildura



Ford vs Holden? Apart from the Ford connection with Mazda and having driven the Falcon GTHO, the Ford vs Holden comparison is not really of interest

What's playing in your MX-5? Normally ABC FM

Footy team (AFL / NRL / A-League)? F1 and MotoGP are more to my liking

Final comments? I have found the Club magazine to be of interest in many sections and that members obviously share a passion for the MX-5. Maybe one day I will venture south or east to discover some other members.



Road test: RS4500 polisher

Words & photos: Ron Macdonald



I have always been a firm believer in hand-polishing cars. I feel you not only get a good finish but also a greater sense of achievement.

Having said that I now find myself having increasing issues with my right shoulder, making hand polishing more difficult. A few weeks back I decided to bite the bullet and move to machine polishing. Now, the Club does have a very fancy machine polishing unit available for members to borrow (ask the Merchandise man, Bruce Gray), however being the man I am I personally prefer to have something on hand that I can use at my leisure.



So it was time to hit the shops. A plethora of machines is available, but I could not justify vast amounts of money spent on something like this so I opted for one of the more budget-friendly units. The Rockwell ShopSeries RS4500 looks very much like the lovechild of a router and an angle grinder!

What's in the box

- » one 120W polishing unit
- » one elastic waisted applicator bonnet
- » one elastic waisted terry polishing bonnet
- » one completely useless handbook

In use

Obviously the minute I arrived home I had to polish everything in sight (it's a guy thing). The first thing to do however was to wash Gracie (my Grace Green MX-5) with a pH-neutral car wash (my choice is Meguiar's Soft Wash Gel) and dry her off. Taking the polisher out of the box you quickly notice it is lightweight and easy to hold with the two router-style handles.



Next you fit the elastic-waisted applicator bonnet over the foam pad (this is a little tight but does get easier with use) and apply a **small** amount of carnauba wax directly to the face of the bonnet.

I always use Meguiar's Deep Crystal System pure Carnauba Wax for all my vehicles, it is easy

to use, lasts well and gives a great shine. It should be noted however that many so called car washes will strip the wax off your car after only one or two washes. A good quality pH-neutral car wash might not be the cheapest, but you will save yourself a lot of money (and grief) in the long run.

As a matter of interest, did you know that carnauba wax is the wax coating on the leaves of the carnauba palm (*Copernicia prunifera*)? This very versatile wax is used in shoe polish, furniture polish and surfboard wax; it's also used to polish high-gloss lollies, coat dental floss, thicken lipstick, eyeliner, mascara, eye shadow and foundation!

However I digress. With the applicator bonnet loaded with wax, wipe it across the panel then lift it off again, turn the unit on (the switch sits right near your thumb) and sweep the pad back on to the panel in the direction of rotation (don't start or stop the unit in situ). Give the panel an even coating of wax working the unit side to side AND up and down (I did about half the car before changing to the polish bonnet); with its 10-inch pad this doesn't take long. You'll find the polisher very easy to use; it is slow revving and has low torque (compared with the old angle grinder style) so it doesn't kick back or try to drag you across the panelwork!



With the polish applied you then slip off the applicator and fit the terry polish cloth and repeat the same procedure. Very quickly it buffs the wax off and gives you a brilliant shine, the entire car took less than 30 minutes. Since doing Gracie

I have also attacked Ranga (my land rover) and Quatty (Wendy's Aquatic Blue Mazda2) so it has now done more than the equivalent of a year's polishing for an OUTDOOR stored MX-5.

The only downside is, due to the polisher's design, you will need to hand polish (on an NB anyway) around the door mirrors and number plates, but this is hardly a major impost.

Summary

All in all I found this to be a very good unit, does what is supposed to with great ease and little physical requirement. At less than \$50 (with two-year warranty) I can thoroughly recommend this to any member who is looking for an inexpensive machine polishing solution. ●

Cheap tyres: what are you saving? ■ Colin Jevons, former Club member

Hello good people. I'm a former member of the Club but am still a supporter and an MX-5 driver, so am writing to suggest you include a safety warning and good news story in the newsletter.

It hadn't occurred to me to do other than wait for the cheap nasty tyres that were on my NB when I bought it to wear down before I replaced them.

Bless them, **MX-5 Factory** had a look at the inside walls when the car was up on the hoist yesterday – terrifying cracks, almost all the way through (see photos).

I'd been keeping the pressures properly monitored, so it wasn't user abuse, and I've never taken the baby on a track, although we do a fair bit of brisk country driving. The tyres had only been on the car for a couple of years. It would not have been fun if the tyres came apart on a freeway or some fast curves!

So no harm was done, except to my wallet. Thank you to Dick Richey for saving me from great danger.

If anyone else is on *el cheapo* tyres, please do check the inside walls. ●

