

How NOT to change the gear box oil in an MX-

■ Words & photos: Ross McKinnon

It all started with what I thought was a simple request to change the gear box oil in my 2004 SE.

I am new to MX-5 ownership, having recently bought an NB. It seemed sensible to change the diff and gear box fluids as the service records did not state when they were last renewed.

The diff was easy. However, I could not raise the car high enough at home to access the box, so I took the car to my trusty garage, who have done many jobs for me in the past and have provided excellent service.

"Your car will be ready tomorrow," they said ... would have been the same day except they had to buy a new oxygen sensor. "Wonderful," I thought.

Thus began a saga that was to last nearly four weeks.

Let me explain. Nick, real name, rang me a day or so later to tell me there was a little problem. "Oh." I said, "please explain ..."

Well, they had the car on the hoist, and Nick and his apprentice had commenced the job. Part-way through Nick was called to reception, and in his absence the apprentice had removed what he thought was the filler plug on the driver's side of the box.

For expert MX-5 owners, who know, this is a large-headed pin that holds a cross-shaft/counter-lever from dropping into the bottom of the gear box, which would prevent selection of fifth and reverse gears. »



MX-5 fire extinguishers

■ Words & photos: Peter Ferguson

Does your MX5 have a fire extinguisher?

If not, it's a good idea to protect your car in case, some time, the worst should happen – or to someone else's car and you want to be able to help.

(Of course, if you do fit one, you will have just carried out all the preparation work you need for the car to go in a khanacross! *So what's stopping you?*)

So where to fit one? ... there isn't much room in an MX-5.

The Club sells excellent brackets on the website Merchandise section, and they are only \$25.00 plus postage:

- » **NA/NB brackets:** (<https://www.tpfonline.com.au/mazdamx-5club/product/fire-extinguisher-bracket-na-nb/37287>)
- » **NC brackets:** <https://www.tpfonline.com.au/mazdamx-5club/product/fire-extinguisher-bracket-nc/37265>

(There is an ND one coming also.)

A fire extinguisher can be bought for \$25-\$30 from lots of auto accessory shops.

The brackets the Club sells tuck neatly under the passenger's legs, directly in front of their seat (see photos). I have had them in both my cars for a couple of years and not once have they ever gotten in the way of the passenger.

Fitting is a breeze: the plates come with slots that are slipped between the seat and the floor after the front seat bolts are loosened (do not need to be removed). You MAY need to just ease the ends of the plates with a *knockometer* to bend them slightly to fit, depending on how thick your carpet is. Then simply tighten the bolts back down to clamp it in place.

You'll also need to drill holes suitable to mount the extinguisher to the plate – do this before fitting to the car. **Again, this is an easy job that most should handle with ease.** ■



NA bracket position - under seat rail



NA: easy clearance under passenger's legs



NC bracket position



NC extinguisher position

As was explained, the only way to fix it was to remove the whole gear box.

Nick was extremely apologetic, and said the work would be done at their cost. He said that the box would be sent out to a gear box specialist to correct, and it would take a week or so.

Once the gear box was out, Nick rang again to say he had looked at the clutch, original after nearly 117,000 km, and suggested that it was wise to replace it with a new kit, pressure plate, driven plate, release bearing and thrust bearing, before the gear box was reinstalled. I did inspect these components; he was right, and it saved me the labour cost of a later clutch replacement.

I now have my car back. It is running perfectly. All gears select as before, the little engine warning light does not come on. As they say, all good.

The purpose of this tale is to let other NB six-speed owners, and I think NC six-speed model owners as well, to be aware that when changing the gear box oil, either yourself, or your garage if not a Mazda dealer, the filler plug is on the LEFT-hand side of the box looking to the front of the car.

The consequences of wrongly taking out the fitting on the RIGHT side of the box will be VERY expensive. ■

Below are some links on the issue

http://www.miata.net/garage/tsb/s05_112_02.html

<http://www.mazdamenders.net/forum/viewtopic.php?t=517>

http://www.miata.net/garage/6mt_fluid/



Oil for a six-speed ...

If you are changing the oil in your six-speed transmission, it's worth reading Peter Ferguson's article on six-speed lubrication. Show it to your mechanic if they're doing it for you.

See **Tech Talk** in the April 2016 **mxtra** (page 30).



Breathe life into your convertible top

Renovo offers all Mazda MX-5 Club members a **10% discount** on all their products.

For more information, call **0430 164 123** or e-mail renovo@bigpond.com



Car care products - member discounts

Waxit Car Care in Tullamarine is offering Club members 12.5% off all products (*excluding already-discounted kits and the following brands/products: Polishangel, Vikan, Flex and Concours 900 Polisher*).

Check out the Waxit range and order online at www.waxit.com.au. Our Club coupon code is **mx5club**.

Please add your Club membership number to the "comments" section of your order.

Burson automotive products at trade prices



Current financial Club members can purchase automotive parts, tools, accessories and car care products at trade prices from **Burson Auto Parts** stores.

Simply ask for your discount when you purchase, present your current membership card and quote account number **112558**.

Burson Auto Parts have more than 100 outlets on the east coast. Check out the range at www.burson.com.au



Recco VIP Club retail discount

Financial MX-5 Club members may join the **Recco VIP Club** for 10% off full retail at any time, and up to another 30% off full retail with advertised offers.

Enter your details at <http://vip.recco.com.au/registration/register/1160>.

You'll receive a temporary "VIP" card via e-mail, with a plastic barcoded card and key tag following within 14 days.

Recco will e-mail you online catalogues and offers.