



SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB NEWS

VOLUME 3 NUMBER 3

MARCH 1998

A CHAPTER OF THE MIATA CLUB OF AMERICA

UPCOMING EVENTS



March 8— Sunday
Borrego Springs Run



March 14— Saturday
Ramona Roundup Fun Run



March 21— 22
SCCA National Autocross
Support our autocrossing members at this event



March 26— Thursday
Monthly Meeting
Boll Weevil



March 28— Saturday
**SDMC Lends A Hand—
KPBS Membership Campaign**



March 29— Sunday
Friendship Run
with Socalm— Long Beach



April 25— Saturday
Annual Membership Meeting

Membership Renewal

If the month/year found on your mailing label matches the month/year of this newsletter, this is the last issue of the SDMC newsletter you will receive unless you renew your membership.

Don't miss a single issue...renew today!

From the Editor

I Can See Clearly Now

With the recent spate of less-than-usual San Diego weather, my top-down driving has been somewhat limited. My soft top is not in the best condition after seven-plus years of use. I drive my Miata every day, and only recently have I had a garage to park in full-time. The top went up most every night, and down most every morning. Until I purchased a tonneau cover a few years back, I never would cover the top when it was down. This accelerated its degradation by exposing the underside to direct UV-ray exposure. So when the top began to leak a year or so ago it came as no surprise, but I still haven't replaced it. Thanks to a couple of special SDMC members who loaned me a hard top for the duration of El Niño, I don't have to drape the car in plastic sheeting every time I park. The experience of driving a hard top Miata is quite different. The large expanse of the rear window really removes the closed in feeling that I get when driving with the soft top up.

Driving "top up" most of the time has changed my perspective of the windshield, I actually have to look *through* it now! Recently, I had the opportunity to replace the windshield glass, thanks to a rock kicked up on the freeway by a 4x4 truck. When the new glass was installed, its clarity was phenomenal compared to the original glass. The old windshield was amazingly pitted from seven years of tailgating (who, me?). The new glass is made by PPG Industries and is reported to be of a harder temper than the stock glass. This should minimize future pitting from being hit with rocks and other road debris.

A product that has been really helping me deal with all this liquid sunshine lately is Rain-X. If you don't know, Rain-X is applied to the windshield which causes the rain to bead up and slide right off. The glass has to be very clean before applying the Rain-X. I add a little ammonia to the glass cleaner to strengthen it for cleaning the road grime from the windshield. Pour some Rain-X on a soft cloth and apply it to the glass in a circular motion, overlapping the circles. A haze will develop on the glass. Don't remove the haze, just repeat the application. The next step is the most important. Using a dry cloth, wipe the haze away until the glass is perfectly clear. This part takes some elbow grease to be sure you get ALL of the excess wiped away, otherwise your windshield will appear to have a film on it. When applied properly, the results are amazing. Once you reach about 30 mph, the rain on the windshield just slides off like the stars blurring when the Millennium Falcon jumps to hyperdrive in *Star Wars*. It is quite fun to drive along not using your wipers while everyone else has them slapping back and forth like mad. In stop and go driving, you still need to hit the wipers once in a while (just push the wiper stalk forward for a single wipe), but when the speed picks up the windshield clears right off. Better living through chemistry at its' finest!

Driving with the top up and the windows closed, the glass begins to fog up rather quickly. With the small cockpit of the Miata, it doesn't take long for your respiration

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



(half as long if you have a passenger) to raise the humidity inside enough to begin to fog the windows. Put the center air selector lever to the right for fresh outside air. Even if it is raining, the air outside will be drier than the air in the sealed-up cockpit of a Miata. This will help clear the fog. To speed it up, either move the heater temperature selector to the right or turn the air conditioner on for a while. The heat or the A/C will dry the air further to keep the glass clear. Turning the fan on high will pressurize the cockpit slightly and keep water from coming in through any leaks in the top or around the windows.

I'm sure looking forward to some spells of dry weather. When the rain is gone its gonna be a bright, bright sunny day! (With sincere apologies to Johnny Nash)

—ANTHONY WILDE

AUTOCROSS AT THE MURPH



The following autocross events will take place on the West side of the "Qualcomm Stadium at the Jack Murphy Sports Complex" parking lot.

- Saturday, March 14 practice day
- Sunday, March 15 race day
- March 21, 22 SCCA National Tour
- Sunday, April 5 race day
- Sunday, April 19 race day
- Saturday, May 2 practice day
- Sunday, May 3 race day
- Sunday, June 21 race day

Autocross information:

- San Diego SCCA Hotline: (619) 441-1333
- Cal Club SCCA Hotline: (818) 988-7223
- John Godden (619) 538-6165
- Rainer Mueller (760) 439-0067
rainer@thegrid.net

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NOTICES

THE SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB is an official chapter of the MIATA CLUB OF AMERICA. We are a nonprofit organization whose purpose is to promote the enjoyment of—and enthusiasm for—the Mazda Miata.

SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB NEWS is the monthly newsletter of the SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB. Use of articles or stories by other MCA chapters is hereby granted, provided proper credit is given.

Submissions to the newsletter are welcomed and encouraged. Did you just add a new accessory to your Miata? How about writing a review and submitting it to the newsletter? Where possible, please send your electronic submissions to the newsletter editor, Anthony Wilde (NevadaBob@miata.net). Submissions can also be faxed to the club's dedicated phone line or mailed to the club's post office box. Submission deadline is the 15th of each month.

Internet: The SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB has established a dedicated World Wide Web Home Page at <http://mmdshare.ucsd.edu/sdmc.html>. The club has also established a members-only electronic mail list for those members with E-mail capability.

Dedicated 24-hour voice/fax phone line:
(619) 670-7948

SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB
P.O. Box 2286
Spring Valley, CA 91979-2286

SOCALM EVENTS

Friendship Run

Date: Sunday, March 29

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Place: Marina Pacific Shopping Center parking lot near Ralphs, corner of Pacific Coast Highway (PCH) and 2nd Street in Long Beach.

Run Leader: Kathie McClelland,
(714) 644-4345

E-Mail: KMIATACAT@aol.com

Directions: Take 405 to 7th Street Exit, go West to PCH, turn Left (South) on PCH. Stay in the right lane until 2nd Street. The Marina Pacific Shopping Center will be on your Right.

Caravan with SDMC members

Meet: 8:15 a.m.—leave promptly at 8:30 McDonalds, just east of I-805, Mira Mesa Blvd./Sorrento Valley off ramp

To celebrate Miata Club friendship, dual-member Kathie McClelland will lead a run through scenic parts of the South Bay area— Belmont Shores, Long Beach, San Pedro, Palos Verdes and Redondo Beach. We'll be driving on main streets through the coastal areas. The run will end with a late brunch.

Points of Interest:

The Vincent Thomas Bridge

Note: there is a 50¢ toll for the bridge.

The Friendship Bell (a lovely panoramic view of the harbor)

The Glass Church (a small chapel designed by Frank Lloyd Wright)

Wildflower Run in the Santa Monica Mountains

Date: Saturday, April 4

Time & Place: Watch for details in the SDMC April newsletter.

This run will take advantage of one of the benefits of El Niño— spectacular spring wildflowers. We'll take a leisurely pace to allow sightseeing— stopping at prime locations for views, photo-ops and a catered barbeque lunch in the mountains (\$5.75, tri-tip or chicken sandwich and fixings).

Note: The date could be pushed back depending on flower and road conditions (both hard to predict).

Please RSVP for the barbeque.

Mike Simmons, (818) 597-0223

E-mail: msimm@ucla.edu

Sights of Socalm

Date: April 17-19

Registration: \$25 per car; includes Poker Run, lunch for two, and more.

For questions or to Register —

Contact: Delena Cozart, (619) 624-9201

Socalm contacts:

President— K. Zack Broadbent,

(714) 525-9065, racerzack@aol.com

Club E-mail list: socalm@avatar.com

San Diego County Vice President—

Art Hamilton, (619) 262-1565,

AHamil1531@aol.com



Meeting Places

Borrego Springs Fun Run

Date: Sunday, March 8

Time: 9:30 a.m.

Place: North County Fair mall under the large sign parallel to I-15

Run Leader: Phil Daoust, (760) 789-7416
E-mail: bearschili@aol.com

Phil has planned a leisurely tour through the scenic back-country mountains and desert. He has a stop at the Visitors Center in Anza Borrego State Park planned to view educational exhibits.

The wildflowers are in bloom! Bring your camera!

**Bring a picnic lunch* (there are no restaurants in Borrego Springs capable of quickly and efficiently serving a group of our size)

Ramona Roundup Run

Date: Saturday, March 14, 1998

Time: 9:30 a.m.

Place: K-Mart parking lot, Rio San Diego Drive at Qualcomm Way (formerly, Stadium Way)

Run Leader: Jack Monaco,
(619) 239-2699

E-mail: monaco@home.com

Say What? Jack's going to try another run? This time he better leave the rain at home. After two very successful but slightly soggy attempts, Jack has agreed to round up the Miata Pack for a Saturday morning romp to Ramona. Mark your calendar and plan on meeting at 9:30 a.m. in the parking lot in front of K-Mart in the Rio San Diego Shopping Plaza located just west of Qualcomm Way (between Friars Road and I-8).

From there we will head North to Hwy 52 East, to sample the new extension that skirts Tierrasanta and connects to Santee, where we'll weave our way through to Lakeside. That's where the fun begins and we pick up Wildcat Canyon Road north through the Barona Reservation and on into Ramona.

In Ramona we are expected at the world famous Nuevo Grill & Cantina where we will consume copious amounts of spicy Tex-Mex cuisine. They also serve great burgers for the wimps! If you've never been to Nuevo Grill & Cantina, you're in for a treat.

After refueling, mind, body and Miatas, Jack will lead us South on Hwy 67 to Archie Moore Road, then across Highland Valley Road to Hwy 15 South. From there you're on your own for the

rest of the afternoon. Jack may make an optional side-trip across Del Dios Hwy to check out the overflowing dam.

A word to the wise: bring your appetites and your foul weather gear— though we hope Jack's luck with El Niño has changed!

Meeting

Date: Thursday, March 26

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Place: Boll Weevil, 9330 Clairemont Mesa Blvd. (At Ruffin Road), San Diego
(619) 571-6225

Raffle alert! Visiting PEAK TO PEAK MIATA CLUB members Joe "The Knobmeister" Portas and his wife Mary have donated a beautiful wooden shift knob with the SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB logo laser-engraved on top! This item, along with a set of Miata logo valve stem caps, donated by members VBob and Vicky Krueger, will be raffled off at March's monthly meeting. Raffle tickets are \$1 each with the funds going to the general treasury for future projects.

SCCA National Autocross

Date: March 21-22

Time: 9:00 a.m. - approx. 3 p.m. each day

Place: Qualcomm Stadium parking lot

Come out and support our members as they compete with national champions.

Second Annual— SDMC Lends Support to the KPBS Membership Campaign

Date: Saturday, March 28

Time: 6:30 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.

Place: KPBS Television Studios,
San Diego State University

Contact: Mark Booth, (619) 670-3789
E-mail: markb@adnc.com

Once again, we have a chance to generate some goodwill in the community and, for the "hams" out there, there's that possibility to be seen on television! Volunteers will answer phones and take pledges. Light refreshments are served and training is provided.

Participation is limited to approximately 25 people. Mark began taking names in January. HOWEVER, names were taken before the event date and time were finalized. Several folks might have to drop out due to the date or time. Openings will be assigned on a first-come basis. If you are interested, please contact President Mark as soon as possible to get your name(s) on the list!

UPCOMING NATIONAL AND REGIONAL EVENTS

March 14, 1998

St. Patrick's Day Poker Run

Clovis Cole Hotel in Clovis, CA

Hosted by: SJVMC (209) 322-1575

Registration: \$45 per car; includes one T-shirt, Poker Run, Lunch for 2, Funkana

April, 1998

Ladies-Only Autocross School

Watch this space for exact date.

May 14-18, 1998

2nd "Gathering at Four Corners"

Vallecito Reservoir in Bayfield Colorado Spontaneous fun. Each morning the group will meet and decide what to do that day—a trip to Four Corners, Mesa Verde, or Silverton or just stay around the lake, picnicing and hiking. Meet each evening to share the day's adventures with each other. Clubs from all over the West—Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, and Utah are planning to be there.

Local information contact: Stef Gould,
stef@miata.net

May 22-25, 1998

"Moon Over Miata"

Golden Gate Getaway '98

Pleasanton Hilton in Pleasanton, CA

Hosted by: BAMA

or E-mail at ken@cdec.com

Web: mroadster.com/G3.html

June 30-July 3, 1998

"Miata Mountain Madness"

'98 National Event

Hosted by: Delaware Valley Miata Club

Web: miata.net/madness98

July 16-19, 1998

Moss Motors 50th Anniversary Festival

Flag Is Up Farms, Santa Ynez Valley, CA

Free, if you arrive in a Miata or

a British sports car! (800) 472-9445

Rallys, Funkhana, Hayrides, Jackson Racing's DynoJet, Bar-B-Q, Karaoke night, lots of shopping and prizes

August 14-16, 1998

25th Annual Monterey Historic Races

Laguna Seca Raceway, Monterey, CA

Have you reserved your motel room?

September 18-20, 1998

"Rock Around the Clock"

9th Annual Gold Rush

Sheraton Hotel, Rancho Cordova, CA

Hosted by: SAMOA

Driving events, speakers, dinners, fun!

GoldRush98@aol.com



Get Charged!!

We all know the Miata is a well-balanced sports car in terms of handling, ride, and power. Many people are happy with the stock car years after purchase—after all, why mess with a good thing? Others, like myself, always have a fund set aside for the next aftermarket addition. I recently purchased a go-fast goodie—a used supercharger kit. Even with buying the unit used, all costs, when said and done, will be close to \$4,000. I'm a college student with a part time job, so obviously I had been saving my pocket change for a while before I came to the decision to buy the kit. The following are all the things I learned along the way.



Natural Aspiration vs. Forced Induction

I would assume most people in this club have at least thought about some power enhancing bolt-on additions for their Miatas. Fortunately, the aftermarket is plentiful with options ranging from those that add a little extra top-end kick to some that more than double the power of your Miata's engine. One thing I've learned over the past several months is that some manufacturers make false claims regarding their products' abilities. You can find reports of dynamometer (a device used to measure the rear wheel horsepower and torque of your car) results in many places on the Internet, most notably Miata.net, that show how bogus some claims are. With that said, make sure, if you're interested in a product, to research it thoroughly before buying.

Improving the breathability of your exhaust/intake can show an increase of up to about 15 peak horsepower. This can be attained by using a free flow exhaust, a tuned header, and an efficient air intake system. Jackson Racing is probably the most popular vendor of these items. Borla, Mazda Competition Parts, Genie, K&N, and Racing Beat are a few more vendors that make parts to help in this arena. Be warned, though—improving airflow through your intake/exhaust may rob a bit of low end torque. Ultimately, you may produce more horsepower, which will be useful for

passing on the freeway, but your stand-ing-start acceleration could suffer a bit. All you autocrossers out there probably have some of these mods and swear by them. From that perspective, this is the best way to go, since more serious modifications will pit you against more serious cars.

Forced induction is a term used to refer to supercharging, which literally forces air into the engine at a controlled pressure—hence the term 'forced induction'. When air is forced into the engine and fuel pressure is accordingly increased, the engine can produce much more power than it was designed to do with natural aspiration. In race cars, this additional output can be more than four-fold. For street vehicles, expect to be able to safely double what your engine naturally produces, unless you are the type that is always out to test limits. Even with the simplest forced induction systems you will see much more substantial power gains than you would with something like a Cold Air Intake. I don't mention exhaust/headers in this comparison since those upgrades can still be made in addition to your turbo/supercharger for even greater power. There are drawbacks to forced induction: 1) Engine and drivetrain life may suffer depending on how hard you push your vehicle (remember, power corrupts). 2) mileage usually drops according to how you drive your vehicle. 3) added complexity in the engine bay can make your car harder to service and MAY void warranties, 4) installation of even the simplest systems is no trivial task. 5) cost—these things are expensive! (\$2,400–4,400 for base system, extra \$500–\$2000 for installation, upgrades, clutch replacement, etc.) To me, these compromises are minor, especially when you consider that many popular sports cars use some type of forced induction and how bland they would be without it.

Turbos vs. Superchargers

There are two ways to implement forced induction. One is to collect gasses as they enter the exhaust system and use them to spin a turbine that compresses air into the intake of your engine. This is known as turbo-supercharging or turbocharging. The other is to spin a compressor by means of a pulley driven

off the crankshaft of your engine (just like your A/C). This is simply called supercharging.

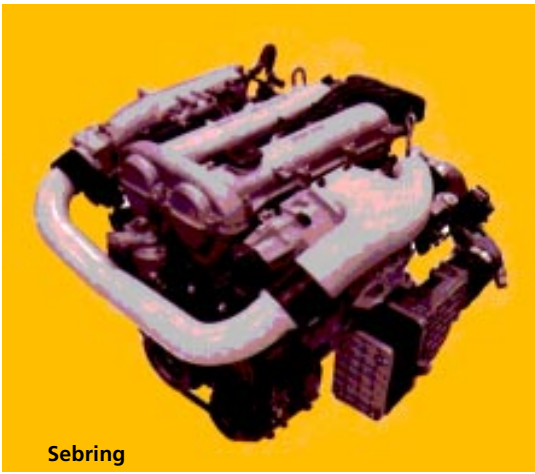
Modern turbochargers are functionally quite impressive, turning waste energy in the exhaust into more power in the engine. Their performance and reliability has improved drastically in recent years. Turbos are highly thermally efficient—very little energy is lost to heat with a decent turbo system, which is good for your engine life and power output. Lag, or spool up time, is significantly reduced over that of years past for small to moderate size turbos. Their operation is independent of your engine, so when boost is off during cruising your engine isn't taxed. Because of this, you can retain relatively stock fuel mileage when cruising. Their power delivery, in itself, is very smooth as well. In addition to some lag, turbos tend to quiet an exhaust, since they reroute some of the gasses coming through, which may or may not be a bad thing depending how you feel about the Miata's growl. Otherwise, there is very little for which to fault a turbo.

Supercharging uses some of the engine's power to make even more power. Supercharging does offer one highly significant advantage over a turbo— instant boost. This is a pretty big deal for a car with a small displacement engine that doesn't make a drastic amount of low-end power. Since a supercharger is driven by the crankshaft pulley, it spins up just as quickly as your engine does. While there is much debate over what is the most thermally efficient supercharger, it is well known that few superchargers can beat a turbo in this area. Between the fact that superchargers run hotter and they load your engine (typically a little more than your A/C), they produce significantly less power than a turbo in the higher RPM's. Also, since they do drag on your engine to produce instantly usable power, expect to see your mileage suffer accordingly.

Turbo Systems Available for the Miata

The most popular Miata turbo kit is the BEGI System III, manufactured by the Bell Engineering Group (BEGI), formerly Cartech. This system is intercooled, meaning it has a device that lowers pressurized air temperatures to provide





Sebring

greater power and engine safety. It pressurizes air to 8 pounds per square inch (psi) and is good for an increase of about 60 peak horsepower. It uses a Warner Ishi RHB5, a turbo which is known to have excellent reliability even when used at much higher pressures. Boost lag is noticeable, though apparently not too much of a problem. It will run you \$3,300. The other BEGI kit that has been around for awhile is the System II. It uses an Aerodyne turbo, which apparently has better boost building capabilities than the Warner Ishi, so there is less perceivable lag and greater low end torque on similar setups. On the downside, the Aerodyne has not been quite as reliable and has a narrower upgrade path. The System II intercooled and running at 8 psi sells for \$3,500, and produces slightly less top end power than the System III.

Two new kits from Bell are the System I and System IV (the older system I was an Aerodyne without the intercooling). Both these kits use the new Air Research T28 turbo, with which Mr. Bell apparently is quite pleased. The I is a non-intercooled setup at 6 psi and probably will be good for about 30–40 hp. The IV is intercooled at 10 psi. It likely will generate an additional 80 hp. As this article is written, prices on these systems have not yet been finalized. The IV should cost a little more than the III, and the System I will be around \$2,400.

Team Proscreen is fairly new to the Miata turbo scene. They've worked in conjunction with BEGI to produce the Aerocharger FTD 1, 2, and 3 kits. These kits utilize the Aerodyne turbo (same as the BEGI System II). Kit 1 is non-intercooled and operates at 6 psi, probably good for about 30–35 hp. It runs \$2,400. Kit 2 is intercooled and operates

at 8.5 psi, probably generating about 60 hp. It goes for \$3,500. Kit 3 builds on kit 2 to deliver 11 psi and should output around 90 hp, costing \$4,400. Be warned though— I recall that the Aerodyne used in the BEGI System II wasn't very reliable above 10 psi. If the FTD 3 is the same sized Aerodyne, it might be a good idea to stay away from it.

Greddy makes an entry level kit for the same \$2,400 as the others. It uses a Mitsubishi TD-04H turbo and is non-intercooled at 6 psi for about 30 hp. In the past Greddy sold a similar kit for around \$1500 retail. It looked like a bargain, but was plagued with problems. Most kits were missing parts, some parts typically had defects, and supposedly there was no warranty. Some problems were the result of designing the kit for right-hand drive cars (Greddy is a Japanese aftermarket company). The new kit is supposed to fix all these problems, hence the inflated price tag.

As with all things, someone sees what everyone else is doing and decides to break new ground by bringing things to the next level. Bill Cardell of The Dealer Alternative is one of these people. His Flyin' Miata kit takes a BEGI System IV and adds all the goodies, including his programmable ECU, to generate a whopping 13 psi of boost and produce roughly 120–130 hp. Right now the Flyin' Miata kit is only available for 1.6 liter Miatas ('90-'93), although the 1.8 OBD-I kit ('94-'95) is right around the corner. This kind of power might seem a bit extreme, but the programmable ECU keeps the fuel/timing curves in check to allow your engine to run as smoothly and safely as possible. The old kit based on the System III cost \$4,300, while the new kit will probably be a little more.

Supercharger Systems Available for the Miata

At this time there are only two supercharger kits available for the Miata and both are very popular, since they occupy different niches. They are both positive displacement units (meaning for every revolution of the blower a fixed amount of air is forced into the engine), offering good low-end torque relative to the rest of the power band.

Moss Motors currently distributes the Sebring supercharger kit, which uses an Eaton Roots-type supercharger. This is a non-intercooled kit producing 5.5–6.5 psi of boost. The low number is for 1.8 liter engines and the higher one is for the 1.6 liter. Apparently the kits for both engines use the same size pulleys, at least this was true a few months ago. Therefore, expect about 20–25 hp for a 1.8 liter car and up to 35 hp for the 1.6 liter. The kit costs \$2,400. One nice thing about this kit is that there is a very inexpensive way to derive an extra pound or so of boost by utilizing an ACV valve. A serious drawback to this kit is that it has a very limited upgrade path due to the difficulty of fitting it with an intercooler (as far as I'm aware, no one has yet done it and been able to see any power gain). Therefore, even though this unit has been run as high as 9 psi, it is not recommended that you run it above 7psi.

BEGI's kit uses the Lysholm Autorotor supercharger. It is intercooled and operates at 8 psi. This setup will generate around an extra 50–55 hp. The kit is easily upgradable to 10 psi or greater by simply swapping pulleys, although you'd also want to use a larger intercooler than stock and larger fuel injectors. The power delivery is somewhat similar to the Sebring, there just is more of it. The biggest drawback to the Autorotor is that your fuel efficiency will be significantly cut— expect to lose about 4 mpg for city driving. Otherwise, it is a bargain at \$3,000.

Further Upgrades

All of the kits mentioned in this article provide you with just about everything you need in order to run your car safely at their rated boost levels. Adding an exhaust header, larger exhaust system and a larger intercooler will improve the performance of almost all superchargers and turbos. Changing the engine control unit (ECU) for a programmable model will allow you to tune the system for your driving situation. Larger fuel injectors will allow more fuel into the cylinder with all that compressed air for more power. Additionally, upgrading the clutch will allow you to get all of that new found horsepower back to the rear wheels and down to the pavement.

—BEAU RANDALL





PHOTO: ED LANGMAID



PHOTO: CATHY BOOTH

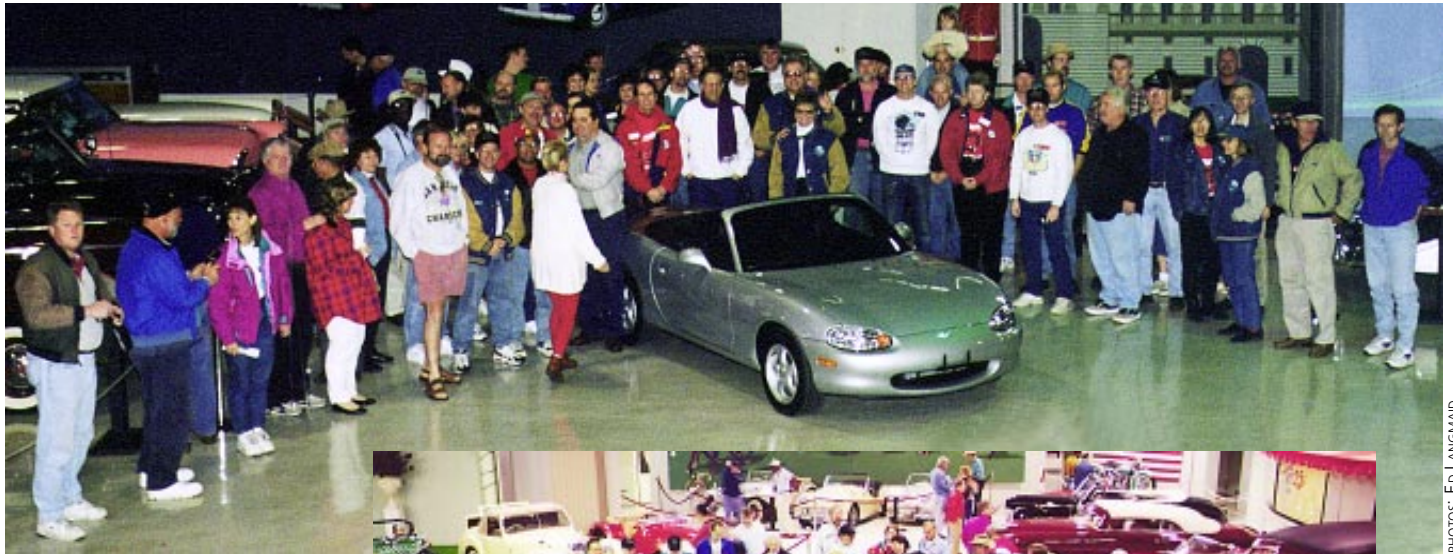
Fall In Love All Over Again— Re-Light an Old Flame
The San Diego Miata Club previewed the redesigned Miata at the San Diego Automotive Museum on St. Valentine's Day.



PHOTO: BRAD BROWN



PHOTO: DIANE LONG



PHOTOS: ED LANGMAID



Turn Up the Heat

February 17, 1998 was a day I had been awaiting for quite a long time. Ever since I got my first look at the new 1999 Miata four months ago, I've wanted an opportunity to drive that car. I wanted to see how the new Miata would compare to my 1995. The '99 Miata Sales Training Tour, better known as *Turn Up the Heat*, would give me that opportunity.

I wondered what was in store for me on my drive to Irvine and the Marriott where Mazda had invited Orange county salespeople and dealers to see the unveiling of the new car and to pump them up into selling the redesigned, second-generation Miata.

When I got there I was assigned to the red team, which along with the blue and green teams would alternate between the various presentations and sessions, including the driving, put on by Mazda representatives. As I entered the main meeting room, I was greeted by KATHIE MCCLELLAND, TOM THOMPSON, and ZACK BROADBENT, other SDMC members. Zack also happens to be the newly-elected president of Socalm.

Although this is a sales training tour designed primarily for their salespeople, Mazda went out of its way to introduce the club members and urged the salespeople to take advantage of the qualities we represented.

The show started like a high school pep rally! The Mazda reps worked hard to get everybody fired up. And when they got everyone's adrenaline flowing, they pulled the cover off of the a new red 1999 Miata. It impressed the crowd, as it was apparent that none of the salespeople had seen the car before (not like all club members who had an opportunity to see it at the SAN DIEGO AUTO MUSEUM on Valentine's Day).

After watching a few videos, it was apparent that Mazda was gunning for the four-cylinder 1900cc BMW Z3, which outsold the Miata in 1997. Many of the videos' and facts and figures were a direct comparison of the Z3 versus the new Miata.

The new Miata has entirely new sheet metal while still maintaining the original Miata character. The engine has increased horsepower (140) and torque (119), faster acceleration, and enhanced

engine smoothness at high engine rpm. The rigidity has increased, the steering is improved, and significant suspension enhancements provide for the best-in-class handling and outstanding driving feel. The trunk is 42% larger, as the battery and spare tire have been moved.

When compared to the Z3, the Miata claims classic and timeless styling, as well as a lower center of gravity for better handling. The Z3 weighs 402 pounds more, has a poorer power-to-weight ratio (16.4 vs. 19.6), and is one second slower than the Miata in 0-60 times. The Miata's weight ratio is 50/50 while the Z3's is 52/48.

The Miata was designed as a sports car from the ground up, while the Z3 "borrows" almost everything from the 3-series BMW sedan platform. Miata has a race-inspired 4-wheel double wish-bone suspension versus the Z3's old-fashioned front McPherson struts and rear semi-trailing arms. And the new and improved short-throw shifter is definitely more fun to row through the gears.

And the new Miata offers things not even found on the Z3, like ventilated front disc brakes, rear glass window, passenger-side air bag deactivation switch, and standard AM/FM/CD player, along with options like a wind blocker, 3-spoke Nardi steering wheel, and Torsen limited slip differential.

But best of all, the Miata retails for \$8,000 less than the cheapest BMW Z3! (See, they even got me all fired up!)

The red team's second phase was getting to test-drive the car. Kathie McClelland was a red team member, like me, but she got to drive the car while my half of the group was watching a video. When I went outside Kathie ran over and told me to get into the second-to-the-last Miata, a white one with the top down and not an automatic. It had power steering, electric windows, and



Jim Jordan previews the '99 Miata to members and guests at the San Diego Automotive Museum

PHOTO: ED LANGMID

phenomenal Bose stereo system complete with two 100-watt amplifiers. Kathie said that it was the best car out there. I trusted her and climbed into the passenger side.

My driver, a petite Asian woman, works for Mazda corporate and it was her job to procure these cars as well as to dispose of them later. The car only had 299 miles on it and it had that wonderful new car smell— sort of an aphrodisiac for me.

We went out of the Marriott parking lot single-file, and it was apparent that my driver knew what she was doing, but I could tell she'd never autocrossed.

We drove around the Marriott complex once, always making right-hand turns, staying in single file— not my idea of testing a car, much less a potential autocross candidate.

As we pulled back into the Marriott's parking lot to switch drivers, I began to get an evil smile across my face— Dr. Jekyll was becoming Mr. Hyde...

Once again the Miatas paraded out of the hotel parking lot to begin their right turn odyssey. But I wasn't quite ready to play that game.

I let the car immediately in front of me get about 100 yards ahead of me. My passenger looked at me as if I might not really know how to drive...

I revved up the new engine, let out the clutch and listened to the tires squeal



with delight (or was that fear?). I hit the first turn out of the parking lot floored, shifting from first into second—the car was sideways in a controlled (remember, I'm driving) power slide—within an instant we were upon the Miata ahead of us at a stop light waiting to make its first right turn. Time to test the brakes. I stomped on them and the car squealed to a stop.

By now, all the color had left the face of my passenger. I just smiled, "Just testing, you know?"

After we turned right, the Miata ahead of us wasn't going fast enough for me (it was an automatic) so with my best drag racing shifts, I passed it.

By this time, we had pulled up behind another Miata waiting at another stop sign to make another obligatory right turn. Apparently he had been watching my antics in his rear view mirror, because as soon as I stopped he gave me the thumbs up signal. This guy also enjoyed a somewhat brisker drive, so he waited until the Miata ahead of him gave him some room before he took off. And when he did, I was right on his bumper. Fortune smiled on us as the next right turn was a green light. For fun, I was going to look for an opportunity to pass this guy (on the inside of the turn if I could get away with it), but he saw what was happening and slammed the door on my opportunity.

I downshifted to avoid contact, and I really appreciated the new gearbox, complete with an even shorter throw and gear lock-out so that it is impossible to shift from fifth into reverse. The linkage made shifting on this new car much smoother than my Miata even though I run synthetic transmission fluid.

There was one more right turn which led back into the Marriott complex where I thought I might have the opportunity to sneak past the Miata in front of me. But the driver again read my intentions, and as he was having too much fun himself, and I never got past him.

Although I am unaccustomed to driving a Miata with power steering (I had driven an older model a couple of years ago and hated it), this didn't feel bad at all. I could get used to this! Combine that with the transmission and the extra ponies under the hood, I was beginning to have mixed feelings about my three-year-old Miata.

Kathie greeted me as we entered the hotel. "How did you like it?" she asked. Before I could reply my passenger came by, still muttering, "He's crazy!" With that, Kathie wished she could have ridden with me.

The last session was a side-by-side comparison of the 1999 and 1997 Miatas. The older Miata now looks somewhat anemic to me, since the new one looks like a Miata on steroids—especially from the back. The rear quarter panels flare out behind the wheels to act like mud guards. Driving behind one makes it look wider and beefier. I like it.

The last session involved an en masse Jeopardy game show where each team was pitted against the others. The emcee had one member from each team stand up and then would toss out a question regarding some fact about the Miata which was covered today. The first person of each group (red, blue or green) to raise his hand was called upon to answer. As in the real Jeopardy, the questions were worth differing amounts from 100 to 500 points.

The team which amassed the highest total would win a prize. I surmised that the prize would be head-of-the-line privileges for lunch, but I still urged our red team on.

And our red team did extremely well, so well, in fact, that we didn't even have to answer the last couple of questions because we were so far ahead.

For our efforts we were awarded phenomenal miniature duffel bags. Really well made, complete with an embroidered 1999 Miata. I felt bad for the club members on the other teams, but after the competition was over, Mazda presented all of the club members with one of these great bags. Not only that, new Mazda ball caps.

By 1:00 it was over, but an afternoon shift was starting, with another group of Miata club members, this time predominately Socalm members, including BILL HYDE (the *real* Mr. Hyde), who is a member of both clubs. We filled in those club members with what to expect, and after sharing lunch together it was time to head home.

I fulfilled my wish, I finally got to drive the new 1999 Miata, and I have to admit, I love it.....just don't tell my Miata.

—RAINER MUELLER

Membership Roster

A new edition of the Membership Roster will be ready for distribution at the Annual Membership Meeting on Saturday April 25th.

Would you like to be listed in the **business directory**? Do you have any changes to your phone number, E-mail address or Miata? Please contact
Stef Gould, (619) 297-4272
E-mail: stef@miata.net.

Pick up a copy of the Roster at an event, they will not be mailed.

Wood Shift Knobs

I have had several members come up to me at runs and inquire about wooden shift knobs. TEAM VOODOO doesn't do wood...not because there's something wrong with wood, but because alloy and the "racing look" are TEAM VOODOO traditions—and perhaps more importantly—because there is already someone out there who makes absolutely excellent wooden shift knobs.

Joe Portas of Colorado, and his company QUALITY IMAGES, INC., does not only



fantastic lathe work with hardwoods, but can also laser engrave an image of your choice on either his own knobs or a knob that you supply. Joe has, for example, been laser engraving shift patterns on VOODOO KNOBS for BRAIN-STORM PRODUCTS for some time now.

If you're in the market for a special wooden shift knob for your Miata, or personalization of the knob you already have (a VOODOO, no doubt), you can contact Joe at...

QUALITY IMAGES, INC.

7851 South Logan Street
Littleton, CO 80122

Phone: 303-730-6060

Fax: 303-730-6425

E-mail: qualityimages@miata.net

Web: <http://www.users.uswest.net/~knobmeister>

Stop by his Web page and see some examples of his work (including Miata horn buttons).

—VOODOO BOB





PHOTOS: BRAD BROWN

Rancho Santa Fe - Fairbanks Ranch Run

Sunday, February 8, 15, 1998

“Break out your scarves, stingy-brimmed snap caps, deerskin driving gloves and shades.” By invoking the spirit of the Brit sportscar scene, JACK MONACO and his navigator, Nancy, got more than we bargained for on his first lead of a SDMC fun run: *Brit weather*.

Over 20 Miatas showed up in what by 10:00 a.m. became a torrential deluge.

A vote was taken to do the run on Sunday February 15th. Nonetheless some fearless, or foolhardy, members wanted to press on despite the rain. Eleven Miatas took to the rain-drenched streets. After five miles of downpour the clouds began to separate and let the blue sky

show through. In three more miles the sun came out. We toured through winding acacia- and Eucalypti- shaded lanes, with glimpses of stately homes and pastoral countryside.

By lunch time the sun was fully out as the run ended at Oscar's in Encinitas. Three more Miatas stopped by to eat lunch with the fearless eleven.

The follow-up run a week later began with rain coming from the south *before* the rendezvous, although BRIAN BEEZLEY got a round of applause for showing up, top down, just as the squall passed. This time Jack and his dauntless navigator, Nancy led an amphibious collection of nine diehard cars.



The run was a repeat of the previous week's, adjusted for the San Dieguito half-marathon, just breaking up as we reached the halfway stop. One road was blocked by water, as before. As the picture indicates, even intrepid Miata drivers thought this might be more than our plucky vehicles might be able to handle.

Lunch at Oscar's, with the sun once again reliably out. A small caravan went south along the coast, tops down until a afternoon cloudburst struck in La Jolla.

The run's a keeper— when the weather smiles again we should be able to dazzle the landed gentry with even more cars.

— TOM GOULD

2nd Generation T-Shirts

By popular demand we are embarking on Generation 2 T-shirts. The theme for the shirts is tone-on-tone. One color ink on a colored shirt— Mariner Blue shirt printed with a slightly paler blue ink, or a black shirt printed with charcoal ink. However, already members have said: “I have a Mariner Blue Miata, I want a white shirt with blue ink.” or “I want my shirt to have the big logo on the front.”

So here is what I propose:

Each car color elect a “captain,” and decide what variant of the T-shirt they would like to do. (Each variant must be ordered in a minimum of one dozen (any combination of shirt sizes.)

To get the best price (\$10 each) the club has to order a minimum of 100 shirts. After a total of 100 shirts have been pre-sold we will place the order.

As soon as the captain has an agreement on the color of shirt and ink AND about a dozen committed, he/she can begin to collect \$10 for each shirt.

Generation 2 shirts must be pre-paid. Barb Shev has volunteered to co-ordinate all T-shirt orders. Color questions should be directed to Stef Gould-- color of shirts available as well as the feasibility of the color of ink that you chose.

—STEF GOULD





Dave and Lois with their dachshund Möbius.

Member Profile

DAVE AND LOIS MARTIN

Lois and I have not been in a car club before, and we're glad to be SDMC members.

We don't usually act impetuously, but joining on December 18 at Wheels and Meals was an exception. That morning a woman at MM MARKETING noticed my zip code and asked if I knew about SDMC. I didn't. She provided Mark's phone number and he mentioned the club meeting that night. We had 4:30 and 5:30 meetings but got to the Boll Weevil about 6:50.

Since then, we've made the Deer Valley fun run. What a great start!

Until recently, aircraft and boats were my primary interest (despite buying a '67 Austin Healy 3000 MKIII in great condition for \$900 in '71, driving and maintaining it for two years, and selling it for \$1500 as we prepared to move east). We noticed the Miata and its rave reviews from the beginning, but I hoped to resist buying one by getting the Kyosho BRG right-drive model. That worked until recently.

Reducing my commute from 156 miles to 14 occurred in January '97 when my job moved to San Diego. The commute could have been zero, but the dog wants to play when I work at home. We sold our '82 RX-7 (272,000 miles), and I found a white '93C in perfect condition.

Now we're looking forward to club tours and maybe rallies, but not racing. We seem to have a passel of hobbies including sailing (we share a 26-foot Macgregor with two other couples), music (Lois plays violin and I attempt to play trumpet in a community orchestra and a band), flying airplanes and gliders (full-scale and radio-controlled), and a few others including amateur radio (call: W6KOW). Lois is the newsletter editor for a large cloth doll club and for our church, and she gets paid a bit to do another newsletter. She sews a lot—mostly for our Oregon-based grandchildren—and reads a couple of books per week.

My job as editor of *Kitplanes* magazine—which is about designing, building and flying full-size sport aircraft—keeps me busy and includes some travel. Anyway, it's great to be with you in SDMC. I won't be as wordy in the future.

To be included in our on-going series of Member Profiles, write a short (200–300 word) introduction and mail (or E-mail) it with a photo (your face should be large enough to be recognized) to the Club P.O. Box or give it to a board member at an event. — Your photo will be returned.

New Members!

The following are the new members since the last newsletter:

Romie Bawar

San Diego
1995 Montego Leather

Sal & Geri Causarano

San Diego
1994 M (Montego Blue)

Jerry & Patty Douglass

Oceanside
1994 White C

Nehemias Fernandez

San Diego
1990 White B

Tom & Ginny Foster

Spring Valley
1991 Red A

Joe Jordan

Orange
1991 Red Base

Jon Martinez

San Clemente
1991 White A

Bob O'Brien

Irvine
1997 STO (Twilight Blue)

Alan & Linda Pabian

Newport Beach
1994 Red B

Scott Schroeder

National City
1996 Red PEP

Michael & Corrie Scott

Lakeside
1997 M (Marina Green)

Jay Steinhilber

Escondido
1994 White

Erin Wrisley & Greg Levorchick

Carlsbad
1993 Red C

The following members have renewed since the last newsletter:

Robert Goode

Bill & Bari Hyde

Charlie & Lisa Kilgore

Frank Shine & Stephen DeLonge

There are now 198 memberships consisting of 294 members.

- 69 Red
- 44 White
- 22 Black
- 18 Montego Blue
- 11 Mariner Blue
- 6 BRG
- 6 Laguna Blue
- 5 Merlot
- 5 Silver
- 5 Starlight Blue
- 2 Marina Green
- 2 Twilight Blue
- 2 Yellow
- 2 Unreported



Have You Fallen In Love Yet?

Over 50 Miatas and 110 Miata enthusiasts attended our 1999 Miata Preview at the San Diego Automotive Museum! The vast majority of the comments I heard from the membership were all VERY positive regarding the redesign. Sure, many of us have our favorite little detail that we would have liked to have seen carried over (for me, it's the chrome door handles) but, by far, everyone seemed to be very excited about the new car. Who doesn't absolutely love that glass rear window and the ease with which the new top quickly folds down? How can you not be impressed by 42% more trunk space? Who doesn't want that new engine with more horses, factory knock sensor, a variable intake and the new valve design that eliminates that annoying HLA clatter?

If you haven't had a chance to drive a new '99 by the time you read this, be warned... You WILL love it! It's faster, tighter, lighter and quieter! Whether you trade/sell your present "baby" or keep it and add a new one to the family isn't important. To drive it is to want it! You have been warned.

The Official Launch day for the new Miata is March 14. However, local dealerships have already started receiving their first deliveries. The cars will sell very quickly but Mazda is determined to meet the demand. Go take a test drive and see if you don't love it too!

My thanks again to Mazda's Jim Jordan for arranging our special preview of the new Miata! Thanks also go to member WOODY WOODHOUSE and the SAN DIEGO AUTOMOTIVE MUSEUM for providing a terrific venue for the event!

San Diego Auto Show

I am writing this on the morning of Friday, February 20... two days into the 5-day long San Diego International Auto Show. Mazda has generously invited the club to lend a hand at the show. Our Club Banner is on display in Mazda's booth and interest in both the SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB and the new Miata is running at a fever pitch. We have already signed up two new memberships at the

show, handed out dozens of recruiting cards, and we haven't even hit the busy weekend yet!

Again, my thanks to Jim Jordan for arranging our participation! And, of course, my thanks to members TOM & STEF GOULD, JTBOb HOLLAND, VBOB KRUEGER, SCOTT & JOANNA LANGHOFF, ED LANGMAID, DIANE LONG, DAVE MARTIN, LAURA ROMAN, RICHARD SCHERSCHEL, ELLIOT & BARB SHEV, FRANK SHINE, LOU STARK, MIKE THOMAS, STEVE & LAURIE WAID, WOODY WOODHOUSE and ANTHONY "NEVADABOB" WILDE, for taking a few hours to lend a hand at the show! I very much appreciate your support and enthusiasm.

SDMC at KPBS

As mentioned last month, the KPBS Spring Membership Campaign is just around the corner and the club has again been invited to lend a hand staffing the pledge lines. Participation is limited and I already have begun a list of names. See "Meeting Places" for complete details. Even though this is not a Miata-specific "driving" type of event, I can promise that you will have a LOT of fun! My thanks to everyone who has already volunteered!

Online Newsletter

Always looking for ways to provide something cool and better to the membership, our Newsletter Team members NevadaBob, Stef and Tom in conjunction with Webmaster par excellence JTBOb have now started posting our monthly newsletter online in Portable Document Format (PDF). Now you can download the newsletter from our web page and view it and/or print it exactly as it is formatted in the hard copy we mail... except...in color! You can do this from just about any platform: UNIX, Mac, Windows, or DOS with Adobe Acrobat Reader (whose no-cost download site is linked to our web page). If you haven't visited the club's web page in a while, point your favorite browser to <http://mmdshare.ucsd.html/sdmc.html> and see what you've been missing.

Thank You!

As I write this, the SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB is FAST approaching the 200 Miata mark! We will certainly exceed that count before our next newsletter. Heck, we will probably exceed it between the time I write this (Feb. 20) and when THIS newsletter gets printed and mailed (approximately Feb. 26). Absolutely incredible! We are, easily, one of the— if not THE— fastest growing Chapter in MCA!

This success is a direct result of YOUR efforts! You guys are doing a great job of joining in the enthusiasm, sharing the fun, spreading the word and tagging the thousands of Miatas out there whose owners may soon be joining in on the fun! Thank you and please keep up the good work!

Until next month— keep that top down!

— MARK



In France this season, the hottest accessories around are enamel pins. These colorful little collectibles now festoon the waistcoat lapels of fashionable *boulevardiers* all over Paris. What do the pins say? Who knows? They're in French. But if they're wearing them in the *cafés* of the 16th *arrondissement*, you can bet it won't be long before they'll be showing up in the local trendy shops. Beat the crowd by loading up now on our exclusive pins.

Jewel-like, our pins are the future superstars of the collector's market, destined to fetch prices far in excess of what conscience permits us to charge you: \$3 each— your choice of ruby, sapphire or diamond color Miata—by the handful from Mark Booth at any SDMC event.

