



SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB NEWS



VOLUME 3 NUMBER 11

NOVEMBER 1998

A CHAPTER OF THE MIATA CLUB OF AMERICA

UPCOMING EVENTS



November 1—Sunday
**Kooky, Spooky,
Trick or Treat Rally**



November 4—Wednesday
Super Speedway, IMAX



November 7—Saturday
Lobster Lunch Redux
Ensenada Overnight Option



November 14-15
**Speed Festival,
Coronado**



November 19—Thursday
Monthly Meeting



November 21—Saturday
Miata at the Movies



December 12-13
Autocross at the "Q"



December 12—Saturday
Holiday Party



January 15-17, 1999
**Whale Watching
Weekend with
Sahauro Miata Club**



February 27-28, 1999
**Madonna Inn
Overnight Getaway**



March 20, 1999
**Miatas at the Getty,
One More Time**

From the Editor

Book'em

Just in time for the upcoming holidays, a new crop of Miata-related books is on their way. Be sure leave this newsletter lying around for your friends to pick up for gift ideas! One of the most eagerly awaited books is a sequel to what is considered **the** Miata book to own. Rod Grainger wrote the *Mazda Miata MX-5 Enthusiast's Shop Manual* back in 1994 (with a revised softcover edition in 1996). This book focuses on the first Miatas, from 1990 to '93, and their 1.6-liter engines. Rod and crew actually dismantled an entire Miata (a UK market MX-5 actually) to document how to perform maintenance and repair. Owners of the 1.8-liter cars have had to make do with this wonderful, if not completely appropriate, book until now.

The *Mazda Miata 1800 Enthusiast Shop Manual* is scheduled to be published in mid-November. This book focuses on the '94 to '97 cars. With 300 pages and over 1000 photos and illustrations, this should be as informative as the earlier book was. The publisher's price is \$24.95.

Another book that is due for publication this month is *Mazda Miata, The Full Story of Mazda's World Beating Roadster* by Brian Long. This 160-page book covers the history of the Miata, from conception up through the introduction of the 1999 second-generation cars. The publisher's price is \$24.95.

Norman Garrett was an engineer on the first-generation Miata and then cofounded the Miata Club of America. Norman has written the *Mazda Miata Performance Handbook*, which was supposed to be published in mid-September. It is, as yet, unavailable. Touted as "the first hands-on guide to modifying and tuning your Mazda MX-5 for street or track," this book has a publisher's retail price of \$19.95.

One new book that is actually available is *Miata—Mazda MX-5: Mazda's Affordable Sports Car for the New Millennium*. This 120-page hardback is written by Jack Yamaguchi and John Dinkel. Yamaguchi was the coauthor of *Mazda MX-5 Miata—The Rebirth of the Sports Car in the new Mazda MX-5 Miata* back in 1989. This was one volume in a set of two that was sold through Mazda dealers early in the production of the Miata. The second volume in this slipcase-ensconced set consists of wonderful Miata pictures by photographer Haru Tajima. The new book is a continuation of the first two, with emphasis on the new '99 model. A retrospective of the first Miata and comparison/contrast to the Miata-inspired generation of new two-seat roadsters rounds out this must-have volume. The publisher's price is \$29.95.

All of these books will be available, in time, from local booksellers. The quickest way to get them, however, is to contact Classic Motorbooks (800) 826-6600. You can also order them from Amazon.com on the Internet, which can be accessed either directly or through SDMC member Dick Carlson's Age and Treachery Racing web site at <http://home.earthlink.net/~atrltd>.

So remember to give books this holiday season, and Miata-related books are great to receive as well as give.

Take care and HAVE FUN!

—ANTHONY WILDE



SOCALM EVENTS

November 5

Social in Placentia

Gerry Conn, connjb@earthlink.net

November 7

Socalm General Meeting / Tech Day / RACING BEAT Open House

November 13

Social at the Improv in Brea

RSVP is a must for this social: Doreen,
Doreenap@aol.com

November 18

Social in Santa Clarita

Stan Widger

November 19

Social in Brea

Gerry Conn, connjb@earthlink.net

Socalm contacts:

President— K. Zack Broadbent,
(714) 525-9065, racerzack@aol.com
Club E-mail list: socalm@avatar.com

AUTOCROSS AT THE "Q"



The following autocross events are *tentatively scheduled* to take place in the parking lot of the Qualcomm Stadium at the Jack Murphy Sports Complex.

Saturday, December 12 practice day

Sunday, December 13 race day

To confirm autocross information call:

San Diego SCCA Hotlines (619) 441-1333
(800) 360-4454

Web page www.sdr-solo2.com
Rainer Mueller (760) 439-0067
John Godden (619) 538-6165

Come participate or watch our club members race at the autocross (timed event). To participate you need to register for a Solo II card and number (\$15) and have a DOT approved helmet. Loaner helmets are available at the autocross.

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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. 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. Editor reserves the right to edit all submissions.

Internet: The SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB has established a dedicated World Wide Web Home Page at <http://www.sandiegomiataclub.org>. 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

So You Want to Go Online?

The SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB encourages members to take advantage of electronic mail and information on the



World Wide Web— over 75% of our membership already is! There is a wealth of information on the Web about Miatas— the club maintains an impressive Web presence, including up-to-date event information, a newsletter archive, a list of every aftermarket vendor we could think of, a photo gallery of members, and events, links to other clubs across the nation and around the world, and more.

In 1998, the San Diego Miata Club Website features color versions of the monthly newsletters in portable document format (pdf). Pdf format can be read by Macintosh, UNIX and Windows systems via Adobe Acrobat Reader. (A free download of this software is available through a link on the club's webpage). The club also maintains a private, members-only, E-mail list for exchange of information and updates of club activities (and an alternate list of event reminders and updates only). Reprints of an informative two-part article to help you get "online" are available from Stef Gould at club events.



PHOTO: BRAD BROWN

Kenny showed up at the last run!

Please Remember to Send the Renewal Application with Your Dues!

Effective September 1998, all members are being asked to sign a Liability Release Statement. This statement is included on all new and renewal applications. Please be sure to read, sign and return the renewal application with your dues payment. Thank you for your cooperation and follow-through!

—MARK BOOTH, Membership Dude



Meeting Places

Kooky, Spooky, Trick or Treat Car Rally

Date: Sunday, November 1

Time: 9:30 a.m. — first car off at 10:00

Place: North County Fair, under the sign,
I-15 at Via Rancho Parkway exit

Coordinators: Sal and Geri Causarano,
wooddust@aol.com
Ed and Michelle Langmaid,
ed1@cari.net

We have developed an event that is fun to drive and has some entertaining activities. Whether you are a seasoned veteran or new at car rallies, if you have a Miata, you'll love this event. Unlike most rallies, it is okay if you drive solo because we will have teams.

The rally will be under 100 miles with rest stops. A late lunch is planned. Bring a light snack if you wish, to hold you 'til you arrive at the surprise lunch spot.

We have a Troll helping us make this rally fun. You'll meet him at the rally.
Please RSVP.

Super Speedway, IMAX film

Date: Wednesday, November 4

Time: Meet at 5:30 p.m.,
show starts at 6:00 p.m.

Place: Reuben H. Fleet Science Center in
Balboa Park

Coordinator: Stef Gould, stef@miata.net
If you like race cars, the Reuben H. Fleet Science Center is the place to be this fall. Check out the latest IMAX film, *Super Speedway*, and the accompanying exhibit *Racecar*, both opening October 23 and playing through Dec. 31. There is a café at the theater for snacks.

Super Speedway features Michael Andretti and the Newman/Haas Racing team, Michael's efforts to win the racing championship are seen through the eyes of his father, Mario Andretti, who reflects on his own racing experiences as well as the art, science, and risk of high-speed competition. Paul Newman narrates the film.

- * Please bring *exact change* for the movie, our special group price is \$6.40 per person. We have to buy our tickets together, in one unit.
Please RSVP.

Lobster Lunch Redux with Overnight in Ensenada Option

Date: Saturday, November 7

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Place: Auto museum parking lot, Balboa
Park (access: Presidents Way— West
of Park Blvd.)

Run Leader: Jack Monaco,
monaco@home.com

This run will go to Mexico (re: outside the Continental United States), you should check with your insurance company as to the extent of your coverage. We will stop at a drive-in Mexican insurance office in San Ysidro prior to crossing the border to provide drivers an opportunity to purchase insurance.

We'll cross the border at Tijuana and take the Rosarito-Ensenada toll road (Mexico 1) to Rosarito Beach, then continue along the old coast road to the village of Puerto Nuevo. Nothing hits the spot after a top-down jaunt like an ice-cold Pacifico Cerveza and a steaming hot lobster taco slathered in hot sauce and fresh lime! Expect to pay \$16 for a medium lobster. (For more info:
sandiego.sidewalk.com/link/17083)

After a long relaxing lunch, you will have the option of heading north, shopping in Rosarito Beach and crossing into the U.S. before dark, or you can follow Jack south to Ensenada. If you plan on staying overnight in Ensenada, SDMC suggests you make reservations in advance. Jack recommends the San Nicolas (phone 011-52-6176-1901), a clean and modern motel with a nice pool and secure parking.

Classic Speed Festival, Coronado

Date: November 14-15

Coordinator: Stef Gould



In the spirit
of the famed
Monterey
weekend, the
Chrysler

Classic Speed Festival will treat the San Diego area to an historic automotive weekend at the North Island Naval Air Station in Coronado.

The Chrysler Classic returns for its second year in Coronado after a successful event last year. Under the direction of General Racing, Ltd. and patterned after the world-renowned Monterey Historic Automobile Races, the Classic will

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

UPCOMING NATIONAL AND REGIONAL EVENTS

January 16-18, 1999

Whale Watching Weekend

SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB will host SAHAURO MIATA CLUB's weekend getaway. Mark your calendar for a Whale Watching Cruise on Sunday January 17th!
See story on page 11.

February 27-28, 1999

Madonna Inn Overnight Getaway

SDMC and VROOM— weekend of fun!

Saturday March 20, 1999

SJVMC '99 St. Patrick's Day Poker Run

Fresno – Clovis, California

Cost: \$45 per car includes— One t-shirt, participation in poker run, lunch for 2, and parking lot events. Optional dinner.
Contact: Michael Toepfer, (209) 440-9866
RonHex27@worldnet.att.net

March 26-28, 1999

'99 Thunderhill

Miata Performance Driving School

Thunderhill Park in Willows, California— one hour north of Sacramento.

Two and a half days of training which will enable you to become a safer driver and help you get every ounce of performance from your Miata. \$325 registration includes Friday dinner, manual, T-shirt, patch, autocross and prizes.
Early Bird Special— register before December 1, 1998 and save \$25.

To register or for more information:
www.teammiata.com/thunderhill/school.htm or (510) 370-8262

May 6-9, 1999

Miata World '99

Miata 10th Anniversary Celebration,
Lone Star Miata Club (Dallas/Ft. Worth)
Almost sold-out— Register now!
\$295 couple, \$225 solo before 11/30/98
Web site: www.Miata99.com
Toll free info: (877) MIATA 99

May 20-23, 1999

3rd Annual Gathering at Four Corners Vallecito Reservoir— Bayfield, Colorado



Once again clubs from all over the west will descend on the Four Corners area for a weekend of spontaneous fun!

Contact: Wanda, Utah Miata Club
Wahbates@compuserve.com

October 7-10, 1999

Surf'N'Safari

SDMC way-cool regional Miata event.



Meeting Places CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

feature some of the world's premier race cars from pre-World War II sports and racing cars to historic Trans-Ams. Marques such as Ferrari, Porsche, Aston Martin, Lotus and Jaguar will take to the track.

To reserve your Corral Pass for parking in the security of the all-Miata special corral attached to the paddock, you should contact Stef by November 1.

Monthly Meeting

Date: Thursday, November 19

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Place: Boll Weevil

9330 Clairemont Mesa Blvd.
(At Ruffin Rd.), San Diego
(619) 571-6225

This event is the single best way to meet your fellow club members, ask questions, share stories, etc. Don't miss the fun!

Miata at the Movies

Date: Saturday, November 21

Time: 6:00 p.m. — Leave at 6:30 sharp!

Place: North County Fair, under the sign, I-15 at Via Rancho Parkway exit

Run Leaders: Sheila Cannon and

O.D. Smith,
osmith@maximumaccess.com

Fun Run to Ramona via Highland Valley Road, then cruise down Wildcat Canyon to Santee. We should arrive at the Santee Drive-In around 7:30 p.m. The cost for the movies is \$5.50 per person; The movies will start at 8:00 (sundown). Bring a jacket and/or blanket, munchies (they have a snack shop), and have fun!



Information about San Diego Miata Club's regional event in October '99 will be posted soon. Watch for it at: SanDiegoMiataClub.org/surf.html



Car Show at the "Q"

October 4, 1998

On Sunday October 4th, our annual pilgrimage to Qualcomm's Stadium Car Show (which was moved to Mesa College because of a Padre event) brought a bevy of "buffed" Miatas to



again fly the SDMC banner and compete in the foreign car category. Again this year Ray

Taylor, the event sponsor, made Miata the marque vehicle and gave each of us neat dash plaques for our participation. Competition was first rate, but our rainbow Miata row drew the most interest and inquiries, as we did last year. SDMC's JACK GOSNEY, whose red '97 took first place honors at Moss Motors Festival earlier this year, again took home a trophy. And "Trophy" would be an apt name for such a remarkable car! From the supercharged fully-chromed and stainless steel engine compartment topped by a cowl induction hood, to the HKg prototype mid-bumper dual-exit exhaust system, Jack's car is a one-of-a-kind work of art. The interior features a customized Momo Champion Steering wheel, custom BrainStorm dash appointments, and a stereo system right out of *Star Wars*! Congratulations Jack, and thanks for driving all the way down from Riverside to represent the club. We can't wait to see the *Italia* fiberglass body you are planning to add to your Miata for next year's show!

Jack Gosney's highly modified '97 red Miata. In addition to his trophy at the Car Show, he won 1st place this year at the Moss Motors Festival.

After a fun morning in San Diego, we caravanned up to Bonsall to attend the 20th Annual British Car Day and Picnic. The British were very hospitable, ushering our group to preferred parking. SDMC members MIKE AND ELINOR SHACK (Mike also owns a vintage MG and is a member of the British Car Council) welcomed us and made us feel like VIPs. Mike really knows those MGs and shared some great stories about the cars. It was an awesome display of classic machines (over 320) and some very interesting Brits to boot. Next year we will make it a banner event, as Mike mentioned he would like to have us again. Thanks to all those in attendance. A fun day was had by all. But what else would you expect; *anytime* you get into our magic little roadsters?

—PHIL DAOUST

Roshan and Dali Harilela, BrainStorm West, joined us for the Miatas at the Getty run in their silver *Italia*-bodied Miata.





Torrey Pines Hill Climb

PHOTO: ANTHONY WILDE

October 17, 1998

On a beautiful Saturday morning, I was privileged to work the Torrey Pines Hill Climb and witness some classic cars participate in what will hopefully become an annual event. A small contingent of SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB volunteers woke early to help move some hay bales and set up the course on the northern hill leading to the Torrey Pines Golf Course.

Because the road is a gentle uphill sweeper, the course designers laid out four separate chicanes to keep speeds down and to test the drivers' car handling ability. There were some really neat cars there that morning. My favorite was an Alfa Romeo Tipo 33 Stradale. This beautiful mid-engine sports racer with a V-8 that can be seen through a Plexiglas cover made the most beautiful sounds as it raced up the hill. A couple of other crowd-pleasers were the Ferrari 250 Testa Rossa and the Ferrari 340 Mille

Above— A Ferrari 330P4 Spider from 1967 roars toward the finish line of the Torrey Pines Hillclimb, held in conjunction with the Torrey Pines Concours d'Elegance.

Below, right— Bill Evans, Jr. crosses the finish line in his Isotta Fraschini. Members will remember this car from our visit to Evans Garage in August.

Below, left— a pristine Stanley Steamer quietly races to the top of the hill leaving a cloud of steam behind.



PHOTO: STEF GOULD



PHOTO: STEF GOULD

Miglia. One can easily understand why the Ferrari is so famous after you hear those V-12 engines racing under full throttle. To round out the Ferrari contingent, there was also a 312T Formula 1 car, a 512BBi, a 250 Tour de France, and a 500 Mondial/Testa Rossa. And to top it all off, American Formula 1 World Champion Phil Hill was there and drove the 250 TR up the hill a few times.

Also racing were a vintage Alfa Romeo 8C, an Alfa Romeo TZII, an Isotta Fraschini and a Stanley Steamer. The Steamer was neat to watch, but made all the wrong sounds compared to the Alfas and Ferraris, sounding more like a train than a car. There were quite a few Porsche 914s. One of the quickest cars of the day was a Porsche 914 with a highly tweaked flat 6-cylinder engine. Fred Puhn, a local author, raced his Abarth 207. In the classic road car category were a Rolls Royce Phantom II and a Duesenburg J. Quite a sight to watch these long wheel base cars try to negotiate through the chicanes. And finally, there was actually a little shifter cart

whipping through the chicanes as if they were nonexistent.

If you were at the Concours d'Elegance on the following day, then you probably saw most of these hill climb cars on the Torrey Pines lawn. While beautiful sitting next to the coastline, the added aural sensations from these cars running full throttle really is stunning. Next year the organizers promise that insurance will be obtained so that spectators can view the hill climb event. Let's hope so, because everyone should see such an event as this.

—ROBERT "JTBOB" HOLLAND



Torrey Pines Concours d'Elegance



PHOTO: MARK BOOTH



PHOTO: BOB KREUGER



PHOTO: MARK BOOTH

Top— A view from the Packard class area across the ocean-side setting.

Above, left— the copper-sheathed 1921 Rolls-Royce Ghost drew a crowd.

Above, right— not your average J.C. Whitney seat cover: stingray upholstery and trim matches the fitted luggage.

Right— A favorite from this year's Monterey Historic Races: the 1937 Delahaye T-145.



PHOTO: BOB KREUGER



October 18, 1998

A golf course at 5:30 a.m. is not one of our usual haunts. But on a Sunday morning a group of SDMC volunteers assembled in a cold, dark parking area to help with the 2nd Annual Torrey Pines Concours d'Elegance. STEF GOULD had cajoled us all into helping, and dutifully we assembled to show the club's support for local events—Miatas being highly visible as the predominant marque in the volunteer parking lot. This event attracted some 120 cars representing various marques, including Alfa Romeo, Ferrari, Duesenberg etc., and included several of the Pebble Beach class winners. Although relatively new to the genre, this event has quickly become established on the Concours calendar and will possibly rival Pebble

Clockwise from top— 1954 Scaglietti-bodied 375 Ferrari; 1957 Ferrari 250 TR from the pilote's position; 1990 Bizzarrini prototype; 1914 Mitchell Big Six Speedster.



PHOTO: BOB KREUGER



PHOTO: MARK BOOTH

Beach in the future. Most of the cars were in incredible shape, their bodywork polished and impossibly clean (even rivaling the shine on MARK BOOTH'S car!). Some personal standouts included the early Rolls-Royce with copper body work and the Alfa Romeo 2.9 with sting-ray upholstery (would have missed that if not for BARB SHEV pointing it out). As a Ferrari it was a thrill to park/push the 333SP, 250SWB, 375MM and various other incredibly expensive red machines, some of which will race at the upcoming Coronado Speed Festival. All in all a great day, with a free lunch! What more could a car enthusiast desire, beyond a six speed Miata?

—MIKE PAGE



PHOTO: BOB KREUGER



PHOTO: BOB KREUGER



Miatas at the Getty

October 4, 1998

Reservations for *how many* Miatas at the hot-ticket J.P. Getty Museum in Los Angeles? BARB SHEV spent hours over weeks to score *forty* spaces for the club. A group of SDMC members started from Palomar Airport Road and were joined en route to make up a full complement at the gate. Members strolled the galleries, circumnavigated the gardens, and picnicked or sampled the cafés in this monumental hilltop Disneyland for art and architecture lovers.

—TOM GOULD



PHOTO: DIANE LONG



PHOTO: JON MARTINEZ



PHOTO: JON MARTINEZ

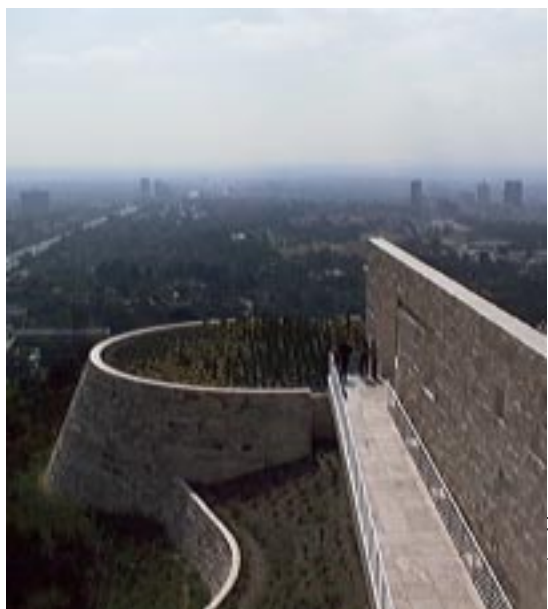


PHOTO: JON MARTINEZ



PHOTO: DIANE LONG



Aftermarket Goodies Aka The Money Hole

How would you like to put your top down without the pain in the butt of unzipping the rear window? Sound good? Well, there now is an aftermarket item that fills the bill. It's called the "No-Zip Window Protector Tube." It's simply a hard plastic tube wrapped in foam and covered by a nonabrasive soft material. It installs in seconds. Just place the "tube" on the outside of the of the window as you drop the top. The tube moves into place and keeps the rear window from creasing. Also, for those of you with roll bars, it is the ideal solution for where to put the window! All in all, this is a great item. No more broken zippers, easy and *faster* lowering and raising the top *without* zipping or unzipping the window. It's a

good value at \$20 from TEAM MIATA, (925) 370-6485 or www.TeamMiata.com. For those of you "do it yourselves," several members have fashioned their own version, but at the above price, I don't think you can beat the quality, and compact storage (in your trunk) of this item.

—PHIL DAOUST

Have you got a new item or idea to share with the club? This space is your forum. Just write it up and submit it to the editor, Anthony "NevadaBob," (619) 693-8095 or Nevadabob@miata.net.



Slip Sliding Away!

As the onset of our Southern California winter season approaches, remember that oil on the roadway can be as slick as ice. You may think it's early in the season to be writing this, but here is the reason: my recent early-morning experience. It was 6:30 a.m. and the roads were wet on the coast as I headed to Ramona in a heavy drizzle. It hadn't rained for months and as I entered the main road I put my right foot down to see how slippery it was. Wow, my Miata twitched a bit sideways! This is my warning to all my Miata driving friends: Beware of wet roads! Let's make every member aware, and bring them through the wet winter without mishap. Check your tires for treadwear and while you're at it replace those sun-baked windshield wiper blades.

Have a safe winter.

—KEN EVORY

Bandit at 10 o'clock!

My Miata was totaled at El Mirage Dry Lake on Sunday, October 11. I had the best seat in the house to observe it happen. I was in the air being towed up when a dune buggy did a Kamikaze run at the launching operation and they collided. The pilot was piloting, the safety observer was safety observing the glider and the driver was... watching the glider. The good news is that everyone is more or less O.K.... and the glider flies great. The bad news is that we are probably a one-Miata family again. Oh, the Miata did a wonderfull job of pulling up the glider, great visibility... just have to be looking the right direction!

—BRUCE HOTZ



Overall view indicating congested traffic situation at El Mirage.



PHOTOS: BRUCE HOTZ



Department of the Interior (and Exterior)

I've recently completed a moderate restoration of my '92 Miata. It was just going to be a small job of cleaning the interior, but it soon took on a life of its own. After my last autocross practice, where I surpassed my old record of spins in one day, I decided to clean out the interior of tire bits and dust that had accumulated from the spins (plus all the years of top-down driving).

After looking behind the seat, I figured the easiest way to clean the interior would be to remove the seats. I moved the seat back and, using a 14mm socket,



removed the front two bolts. I then moved the seat forward and removed the two rear bolts.

It looked as though Mazda used a small amount of Loctite on the bolts, so you may have some difficulty in removing the bolts from your car. One of my bolts had half of its threads missing. I don't know if they were stripped when Mazda put it in or when I removed it. Either way I ordered 4 new bolts from Mazda (at \$2 apiece, OUCH!) as a couple of other bolts looked a little questionable.

The stripped bolt also forced me to get a tap to clean out the threads on the chassis floor. The tap is a 10mm with a 1.25 thread pitch, and I used my cordless drill motor to slowly drive the tap in and out of each hole. After tapping out the holes, the new bolts spun in quite easily. With the seats out of the car, I vacuumed the seats and the carpet and then used a steam cleaner to get the dirt and oil the vacuum missed. I also cleaned out the crevasses around the soft-top and its frame of accumulated dirt and dust.

After the carpet was cleaned, I used LEXOL Vinylex (purchased at NORTH COAST TARPAULIN) on the interior plastic and vinyl. There was quite a bit of dust that had accumulated in the crevasses, so I decided to remove some more of the interior. First I removed the door handle, followed by the window crank handle, and then the whole door panel. This allowed me to treat the entire surface of the door panel and its rubber moldings. With all these pieces cleaned, I put them back into position. But I didn't stop there. Oh no! I figured I should remove the

center console and front fascia so I could get the dirt out of there as well.

The center console is held in by 5 screws: 2 up front on the side, one under the ashtray/cup holder, and 2 in the storage compartment. Spin off the knob, then lift away the console (and unclip the wire leading to the ashtray light bulb). The front fascia is held in by 3 screws: one down at the bottom, and one under each eyeball vent (plus the wires to the top buttons). After these pieces were out, it was an easy job to clear away the dirt and treat the areas with the Lexol protectant. I also replaced the stock vinyl shift boot with a new, \$25, leather shift boot from PERFORMANCE BUYERS CLUB, (800) 359-4093.

I decided not to remove the instrument pod as I didn't see much dirt around the steering wheel or pod, so I just used the Vinylex around the exposed areas. Also, my tonneau cover had put a few blemishes on the top of the pod, I used MEGUIARS #16 Clear Plastic Cleaner (800) 545-3321, to remove the blemishes. After using the cleaner on the top surface, I noticed that the cleaner turned the dull finish of the pod (as it came from Mazda) to a polished finish. Then I had to do the whole pod so the texture would be uniform. It took about 30 minutes of rubbing to get the entire pod to look uniform, but it was worth it. The top of the pod looks blacker and has a more reflective (polished) surface. I then used Meguiars #10 Clear Plastic Polish to really finish the job.

Now that I had the interior all cleaned and polished, I just had to do the exterior as well. I removed the washer nozzles so I could get the wax over the whole hood without worrying about it getting in them. I used Meguiars #9 Swirl Remover on the hood and trunk, as well as the front and rear bumpers so I could remove the small scratches that develop over time. I followed this up with Meguiars #7 Showcar Glaze over the whole car. This is a nutrient treatment for the paint and isn't a wax. I usually would follow with Meguiars #26 Yellow Wax, but I decided to this time try ZYMOL'S Japon Wax, (800) 999-5563, that I had heard so much about. This wax might not be for everyone as it cost me \$35 for the 8-ounce jar, but it does contain 33% Carnauba wax and should last quite a while as you apply it sparingly. After using the Zymol wax, I have to admit that it does a slightly better job in terms of application/removal and produces a better shine than the Meguiars #26. Plus, the Zymol wax has a really nice smell to it.

All that was left was to apply the Vinylex to the sidewalls of the tires and reattach the washer nozzles. Now my car looks better than when I first got it.

Hopefully it will be another 6 years before I have to do that again.

—ROBERT "JTBOB" HOLLAND



PHOTO: DIANE LONG

Diane Long brought along her carpet cleaner instead of a passenger to the last Detailing Tech Day. Ed Langmaid picked out the dirtiest floor mats, and everyone got into the act, offering opinions on the best way and what products to use to get them "new" again.



Living Desert Tour

October 11, 1998

A wonderful early autumn morning dawned with a brisk chill in the air. Seventeen feisty Miatas took to the pavement like the *Ride of the Valkyries* to a desert haven of flora and fauna.

PHIL DAUOST organized another wonderful run into the desert, this time to view the Living Desert botanical and wildlife park. We departed from the usual spot at North County Fair for a casual, no-rush



run on the way to the park. The run, with enough twisties and turnies to make a pretzel jealous, kept the blood flowing.

We landed in what could be considered a desert paradise. We were treated to exotic plants that most of us Midwesterners don't see up close and personal during a lifetime (did *not* like the cactus attack when our tram ventured too close to the cactus. Ouch!). We saw many domestic and foreign critters of the two and four legged varieties not seen often in the wild, including owls and five rats that ran along the rope/rail in front of the viewing crowd. Even slithery creatures were displayed and handled.

A fun ride, definitely worth the time and price of admission. Three and a half thumbs up! We had a really great time. Let's do it again!

—JOANNA AND SCOTT LANGHOFF



Holiday Party

This year our holiday party will be at a café named The View, overlooking Rancho Bernardo. We will have the place entirely to ourselves—we can relax, eat, drink, talk, and have lots of room to enjoy each other's company.



There is a large screen available for us to show the videos some of our members have taken of club runs and other fun things. Please bring any videos you might have to share.

There will be a laser disc player/karaoke machine for everyone's enjoyment. Please feel free to bring any karaoke discs you may have or your favorite CDs. Hopefully we will be able to get our members up to sing.

We will have a holiday tree to hang your favorite pictures or ornaments on. Let's start a SDMC holiday tree and add to it each year. Why not also bring table decorations to show off and share for the evening?

We will also have our traditional, optional gift exchange. If you wish to

participate in the gift exchange, you need to bring a \$20–\$25 Miata-related wrapped gift. Couples may bring one gift each if they like. The idea is, you bring a gift and you take a gift home. We draw numbers, and we are allowed to “steal” the gift once. But....we steal “nicely.”

Party Details:

Date: Saturday, December 12, 1998

Time: 7 p.m.–Midnight

Place: The View Café

Price: will be \$16.00 per person, including dinner and soft drinks. Please bring your own wine or beer.

Reservations must be made and paid for by November 11, 1998.

Send checks made out to SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB to:

Sal & Geri Causarano
24308 Ysidro Drive
Ramona, CA. 92065

Questions: E-mail: wooddust@aol.com

Whale Watch Weekend

Put January 17th on your calendar now; it's the date for whale watching! The Sahauro Miata Club, from Phoenix, Arizona is driving west to enjoy the long Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday-weekend in San Diego. We are planning a couple of mini-runs and a get-together dinner that weekend too.

The Sahauro group will arrive Saturday afternoon and is looking forward to having dinner with SDMC members that night (January 16). On Sunday morning a 2-2½ hour Whale Watching Cruise will leave from Seaforth Pier in Mission Bay.

Special group rate for the cruise is \$12 for adults, \$8 for juniors and adults 64 years and older. Paid reservations* for the cruise must be made by January 8. Please indicate how many tickets (adult, junior, and senior) you would like, make your checks payable to the San Diego Miata Club, and send them to:

San Diego Miata Club
P.O. Box 2286
Spring Valley, CA 91979

*Sorry, there can be no refunds on these tickets after January 10, 1999.





Member Profile

GALE CHAN

Since I bought my new (red!) '99 PEP Miata, my friends have been saying I must be having a midlife crisis. Sounds good to me! And here I thought a midlife crisis was something to be avoided. *Au contraire*, it is something to embrace, to revel in, at least if your midlife crisis takes the form of acquiring a Miata.

I thought my story began last August when I first discovered the euphoria of driving a roadster, but upon further thought I realize the seeds of this midlife crisis were planted long ago, back in '68 when my dad bought a BMW 1600. It didn't even have a radio. He said if you play the radio you can't hear the engine. I didn't understand then, but I do now.

Dad loved to race the kids in their muscle cars en route to school. We'd drop off my little sister at the junior high, then take a country road to the high school. The road had just enough curves in it to thwart the muscle cars; they'd catch up with us on the straightaways, then we'd pull away from them at the curves. BMW was a new badge in town, so no one knew *what* this boxy little green car was that could handle like that. And when I say new badge, I mean really new—only seven other BMW owners in all of Sacramento! Of course we'd always honk and wave whenever we'd see the other owners in their BMWs.

So, y'see, I'm just carrying on a family tradition now. Of course, I get to put my own spin on the particulars. Like getting a red car. Who in their right mind buys an "arrest-me-officer-I-must-be-speed-

ing-in-my-red" car? I don't know about you other 92 folks in SDMC with red Miatas, but I have a valid excuse, I can plead midlife-crisis insanity. Besides, I *want* the car to be highly visible so I don't get run over by those 6000+ lb. Suburbans. Ah, yes, that's it, I chose red for safety reasons; it was a practical matter, y'know? I'm inclined to get a very loud exhaust system in the future, too, as we all know PHIL DAOUST'S famous adage: "Loud Pipes Save Lives".

Other safety-minded add-ons that I'm thinking about include an airdam (to deflect road hazards that might blow out a tire); air horns (so other drivers with even louder pipes can hear me); and supercharger (to reduce the time the car spends in intersections, which is where most car accidents occur).

On the performance side, I already acquired a Voodoo shift knob and am quite pleased with the increase in horsepower. Also, I detailed the car as demonstrated by ELLIOT SHEV; no extra hp measured on a dyno, but the car goes faster, so the detail job evidently reduced the car's drag coefficient. Lastly, the SDMC window decal perfected the front-to-rear weight balance.

As you can see, I've already reaped many benefits of SDMC membership in just a few short months! But the biggest benefit of all is being able share my passion for my Miata with all of you—and you agree that it's passion, not obsession.

—GALE

New Members!

The following are the new members since the last newsletter:

Jim Bray

San Diego
1999 Black PEP

Aaron Granick

San Diego
1999 Twilight Blue PEP

Susan & Terry Harbaugh

Carlsbad
1999 Red Leather

Greg & Chris Maiser

San Diego
1990 Red A

Katherine E. Nelson

Oceanside
1993 White Base

Bonnie Nicholls & Kevin Rooney

San Diego
1992 White

John & Joyce Richardson

Murrieta
1990 White Base

The following members have renewed since the last newsletter:

Tom S. Blood

Jon G. Braisted

Phil Daoust

Rudy E. Garcia

Scott & JoAnna Langhoff

Paul & Jean McKeighan

Sachin Naik

Beau Randall

There are now 278 memberships consisting of 416 members.

Cars:

94	Red
61	White
34	Black
15	Montego Blue
14	Silver
11	Laguna Blue
11	Mariner Blue
8	BRG
7	Merlot
6	Twilight Blue
5	Emerald Green
5	Marina Green
5	Starlight Blue
2	Yellow
1	Cranberry Mica
1	Hunter Green
3	Unreported



Rainer's Ramblings

W hoa... I have just undergone a big reality check—as most of you know, I have worked from my home for the past several years. This has always afforded me the opportunity to choose my work schedule and given me plenty of chances to drive my Miata. I didn't realize how good I've had it!

Well, in the middle of September, I took a job with a San Diego company which has contracts with major corporations to provide computer training. My new job requires me to fly throughout the country—by the time you read this I will have been to the East Coast three times in the past month and once to Phoenix—teaching these clients.

This has given me several interesting perspectives.

First off, San Diego is still my favorite area of the country. It is always a treat to come home, especially now since the winter weather is knocking on the door of most of the rest of the country. Oh sure, there are other parts of this country that are interesting, and even colorful, but none of them have the diversity and the wonderful year-round climate which we have here.

I now am forced to drive a plethora of rental cars. I used to joke that the definition of an off-road vehicle was a rental car. (Trust me on this one, it is.) It's amazing to me what kind of vehicles some of the other drivers on the highway are steering by their own choice! The lack of acceleration, cornering, and braking all bring tears to my autocrossing eyes. Rest assuredly none of these rental cars drive anything like our beloved Miatas. So, now I no longer take my Miata for granted. I truly treasure the time I get to drive my roadster. I look forward to the weekend runs provided by our club. The old adage "Absence makes the heart grow fonder" has a new meaning for me.

The hardtops are now being donned by the Miatas I have seen on the East Coast. Pretty scary—especially when I realize I'll be there for more of these sights over the next few months. Hard tops and a snow-tire-mentality will shortly grip most of the country. Think

about it, I just completed a run hosted by Dan Bree which went through one of my favorite roads, De Luz Road between Fallbrook and Temecula, and a got a well-deserved sunburn on my bald head (which will be the envy of the folks on the East Coast!).

I can't see how anyone can complain about the amount of room inside a Miata, it's uncommonly spacious when compared to the sardine packing done by the airlines. I don't have enough frequent flyer mileage yet to upgrade to first class, and I haven't seen a flight with business class yet. On one of my recent flight legs I was sitting in a row of three seats where I was the smallest guy. Fortunately I had the aisle seat, but for four hours my elbows were closer to my breastbone than my heart is. And I swear every time the flight attendants walked by us, they smirked—it was their revenge.

Then there's the fresh air. I love driving my Miata with the top down. Unfortunately the amount of fresh air in an oversized cigar tube at 35,000 feet is extremely limited. And just who is that person in charge of the cabin temperature. The tail end of the airplane is always freezing and the folks sitting near

the front are roasting. It's just not right! And it isn't even close to fun.

We've always said that ours is a drive and eat (or eat and drive) club. What passes for food on cross country flights is really disheartening. I've never ever stopped my Miata for a bag of peanuts or pretzels the size of a matchbook! Even if they were free... why would I?

Moreover, I haven't even started complaining about airports, runways, turbulence, geriatric flight attendants, lost luggage, long lines, and the rest of the litany. It's too depressing.

You can see I miss being in San Diego and driving my Miata. It used to be a way of life for me—a way of life I really enjoyed. But now I've received that reality check and I'm paying the price.

You really can't appreciate what you have until it is taken away from you. Enjoy your Miata. Lead some runs. And if I'm not there... feel sorry for me... because you know I'll be feeling sorry for myself.

As always, keep the top down and keep smilin'.

— Rainer Mueller, *El Presidente*

Winter in San Diego is sweatshirt time! To look as cool as this group while keeping warm with the Miata's top down, buy your club sweatshirt at the next Monthly Meeting. \$18 for the crew neck style and \$22 for the slip-over hooded style, XXL are \$2 more.



PHOTO: BRAD BROWN

