

# SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB NEWS







JANUARY 2004

VOLUME 9 NUMBER 1



Photo by Voodoo Bob Krueger

## JANUARY EVENTS: SEE PAGES 4-5 FOR COMPLETE DETAILS!

| January Event  | Date       | What time    | Where to Meet?                                |
|--|------------|--------------|---|
|  Hangover Run            | January 1  | 10 am        | Orange County Health Services Bldg.           |
|  Tech Day                | January 10 | 9 am to 4 pm | Mike & Robin Faircloth's                      |
|  Run to Borrego Springs | January 17 | 10 am        | Westfield Shopping North County Fair          |
|  SDMC Monthly Meeting    | January 22 | 6:00 pm      | Boll Weevil Restaurant, Clairemont Mesa Blvd. |





## SURF n' SAFARI '04 October 14-17, 2004

Surf 'n Safari is a regional event created and organized entirely by volunteers from [San Diego Miata Club](http://www.sandiegomiataclub.org).

It will be held October 14-17, 2004, the 5th anniversary of our wildly successful Surf 'n Safari 1999 event.

We hope to see your Miata (and you) there!

Check our website for the latest information!  
[www.sandiegomiataclub.org](http://www.sandiegomiataclub.org)

Presented by the



### NEWSLETTER TEAM

Take the time to say "thank you!" to the newsletter team!

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#### Notices

The SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB is a non-profit California corporation. The SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB NEWS is the monthly newsletter of the SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB. Use of articles or stories by other Miata clubs is hereby granted, provided proper credit is given. Submissions to the newsletter are welcomed and encouraged. When possible, please e-mail your submissions to the newsletter editor. Submissions may also be mailed to the club's post office box.

Submission deadline is the 15th of each month. Editor reserves the right to edit all submissions.

The SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB has established a dedicated World Wide Web Home Page at:  
[www.sandiegomiataclub.org](http://www.sandiegomiataclub.org)

Dedicated 24-hour voice message line:

(619) 434-2007  
P.O. Box 17253  
San Diego CA 92177

### MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of the club is to promote the enjoyment of, and enthusiasm for, one of the world's most exciting sports cars — the Mazda Miata.

Owning and driving a Miata is one of life's great pleasures, and adding the company and camaraderie of like-minded enthusiasts only enhances the experience. Won't you join the fun as we enjoy the beauty of San Diego County from the seat of a very special little roadster?

Let's have fun driving our Miatas!



## **NEW MEMBERS**

Welcome to our newest members (since last newsletter):

Kenneth & Stacy Hurd  
La Jolla  
2003 Black

Gene Knight  
Phelan, CA  
2000 Silver

Amy Strider  
Erol Cobanoglu  
San Diego  
1992 Black C

## **RENEWING MEMBERS (SINCE LAST NEWSLETTER):**

Paul Bakkom  
Holly Guntermann

Steve & Florence Frick

Valarie Goodkin

Kevin & Karen Haywood

Tina Ivany

Rick & Maiga Keach

Kevin LaRue

Dave & Lois Martin

Bill Shaffer

Donna Sinkway  
Stan Fry

Ann Walker

Mary Ann Wallner

## **MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS**

As of December 16, 2003, there are 345 memberships (130 single, 215 dual) and a total of 560 members.

Memberships by Miata Color:

- 84 Red
- 52 White
- 38 Black
- 30 Silver
- 21 Emerald Green
- 15 BRG
- 13 Montego Blue
- 12 Twilight Blue
- 12 Yellow
- 11 Sapphire Blue
- 9 Mahogany
- 9 Mariner Blue
- 8 Marina Green
- 7 Laguna Blue
- 7 Titanium
- 6 Crystal Blue
- 6 Garnet
- 5 Midnight Blue
- 4 Starlight Blue
- 3 Merlot
- 3 Strato Blue
- 1 Splash Green
- 1 Evolution Orange
- 1 Laser Blue
- 1 Teal (custom)
- 10 Unreported



*shop here!*  
**SDMC Regalia**  
*makes*  
**great gifts!**

We have T-shirts, hats, hooded zip sweatshirts, pins, pens, hat chums, carabineer key chains, and window clings. Pick up your SDMC Regalia at the monthly meeting or e-mail the Regalia Gals for special requests. Something new is coming; details to follow. Watch your e-mail!

Contact the Regalia Gals  
VERONICA DIDIER &  
KATHY ROBERTS  
(858) 578-5727,  
[regalia@sandiegomiataclub.org](mailto:regalia@sandiegomiataclub.org).



## **Badges?**

**H**ave you wondered how to get those nifty engraved plastic name badges that have been turning up on members at the latest events? They are available for a mere \$6.50 each, including shipping to your home, from VICKY KRUEGER. You will need to give her cash up front, as the badges need to be paid for in advance. Lots of colors are available to match your Miata. See Vicky at a monthly meeting or e-mail her at [vicky@teamvoodoo.com](mailto:vicky@teamvoodoo.com).





## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Hangover Run

January 01 (Thursday)  
10:00 am driver's meeting  
Orange County Health Services  
27512 Calle Arroyo  
San Juan Capistrano

#### CONTACT:

K. Zack Broadbent  
714.449.9280  
714.686.5398 Cell



The mythical and legendary run has returned for a seventh iteration. Since the number 7 is near and dear to our Mazda hearts (even if our Miatas are not rotary powered), this year's run is open to MAZDA CARS ONLY. It's been fun having the odd assortment of Toyotas, Fords, and the easily-blended-in Honda S2000s (not so easy for them to "blend" away that extra \$10,000 though, snicker snicker), but this year we'll let them do their own thing. The run will start with a casual drive along scenic Ortega Highway, taking a rest in Lake Elsinore. The past couple of years, our Elsinore rest stop has included a \$1 per car facility use fee, and we may again have to pay that or something similar (it could always be more, so be prepared). After the rest stop, we'll hit some awesome roads, including this run's signature 27% downgrade. The run will end sometime in the 2:00pm range in Temecula.

#### DIRECTIONS:

Exit Interstate 5 at Ortega Highway (74) and head inland (from the 5 south, turn left). Go 0.2 miles and turn right at the light onto Rancho Viejo. At the dead end/light, turn left onto Calle Arroyo. Go another 0.2 miles and turn right into the Orange County Health Services parking lot; if you reach a stop sign, you went too far. The parking lot may appear small at first, but bear to the right and you'll see it extends a long way behind some small office buildings. Bring: A couple of dollars for parking at the break in Lake Elsinore.



### Tech Day in Ramona Saturday,

January 10, 2004

9 AM to 4 PM

MIKE AND ROBIN

FAIRCLOTH'S

16203 Oakley Rd

Ramona, CA

(760) 789-5171

MIKE FAIRCLOTH has impact wrenches and most tools available in a five car garage. Space will not be the issue. What would you like to see done? Want to install some new toy? Some basic maintenance? Email Mike with your wishes at [fairfalcon@cox.net](mailto:fairfalcon@cox.net)

MIKE HEINITZ will be available to install windshields at \$144.54 +Tax, \$5 more for shade (tint across the top) includes a new moulding and expert installation. Please email him at [mpheinitz@hotmail.com](mailto:mpheinitz@hotmail.com) to reserve a time.

TED KESLER will have his products available. Email him in advance at [RNNAWAY@aol.com](mailto:RNNAWAY@aol.com) if you know what you want.

TOM THOMPSON will have his oilrelocation kits available. Email him in advance at [tomiat@cox.net](mailto:tomiat@cox.net).

Scott Lewis has arranged for Kenny Key to be there—from Key Floor Care. For \$20.00 per car he will clean your interior, including the cloth seats, floor mats, and carpeted foot area only. It will be a hot shampoo treatment.

**Swap Meet:** Bring that Miata toy that you didn't use or a spare part. Swap or sell some of those kinds of things.

**Food** will be on a "feed the kitty" basis. Simple food and drink.



### Deja Vu "Picnic at the Circle in Borrego Springs"

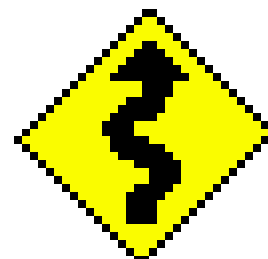
Saturday, January 17, 2004

10:00 AM

Run Leader: MARY MARTIN

(858)292-4691

We will queue up at Westfield's North County Fair at 10:00 AM for a rain-or-shine drive to Borrego Springs and picnic at Borrego's Christmas Circle in the center of town. Leaving San Diego we will drive on some of our favorite roads up and over the mountains and then drop down into the Borrego Desert for a leisurely lunch and some relaxation. Borrego Springs has several local restaurants which serve some very good and inexpensive foods to eat-in or take to the Circle. Then it's off to the hills with a pie and ice cream stop at Dudley's Bakery/Julian Pie Shop in Santa Ysabel before heading back.



### Monthly Meeting

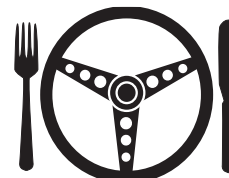
Thursday, Jan. 22, 2004

6 PM at Boll Weevil

9330 Clairemont Mesa Blvd. SD

(858)571-6225

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



## FUTURE EVENTS



### Cactus Cruisin' 2004

April 23-25, 2004

Time: All Day

Ben Cleaves from the Sahuaro Miata Club sent this announcement:

We are pleased to announce our first regional event - Cactus Cruisin' 2004.

This event will take place on April 23 - 25 at the Chaparral Suites Resort in beautiful Scottsdale, Arizona.

Please check out the web site at [www.cactuscruisin.com](http://www.cactuscruisin.com) for more complete information.

We would love to invite you and your fellow members of the San Diego Miata Club to come and participate in a great weekend in the Valley of the Sun. Some of the planned events include various fun runs around Phoenix, a great dinner at the famous Rawhide Old West town on Friday night, a road rally on Saturday, an inside vendor area, a great Mexican buffet at our banquet on Saturday night, and much more.

These events will happen in February and March but are unscheduled as yet:

- ☞ Scrabble Run
- ☞ SCAT Appreciation Run
- ☞ Puke A Rama 2004

Watch for Details!

Do you want to earn your magnetics?

Call Steve Waid at 760.432.0727 or email [swaid@cox.net](mailto:swaid@cox.net) to find out what you can do to earn this special recognition. Magnetics can be earned only — you can't buy them anywhere!

### Search for Madonna 2004

May 1-3, 2004

Madonna Inn, San Luis Obispo  
(800) 543-9666

Saturday through Monday

In order to be a 2004 Searcher there is little to do. If you want to be able to get the room you want at the Madonna Inn, go to [www.madonnainn.com](http://www.madonnainn.com) and look through the rooms. Make your selection (s) and call Barbara in group reservations, and she will see that you are included in the group. Be prepared with more than one room choice, just in case your first choice is taken.



Then call Steve Waid at 760.432.0727 or [swaid@cox.net](mailto:swaid@cox.net) to get on the list of searchers. Email list and more details will be available in March 2004.

### Download Instructions SDMC Membership List

Currently approximately 94% of our members have access to the Internet. This capability allows you, as a club member, access to Yahoo groups. What's so special about Yahoo Groups? This gives us access to all the SDMC email, photo catalogs, and list information. On this site we offer club members a membership list that includes, name (both member and SO), phone number (this field is blank if you request it), car year, car color, license plate, and home city (NOT address or zip). This information is available to members ONLY! To access this information you MUST acquire (FREE!) a Yahoo Group account. Once you have this account setup do this:

1. Go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/> (on left, top of screen you will see sign in section, logon here with name and password) note; most browsers will allow you to save this location with your password and login name. Bookmark this location and everything will be automatic after this point in time.
2. In the upper left corner you will see a section that says "My Groups." Put your cursor on SDMC-LIST and single click the left mouse button.
3. You are now on our group site. You can get to email, photos and other sources. In this case, look in the upper left section and place your cursor over "Database" and single click.
4. You are now in the Database section and you will see a list of available club databases. Single click on the desired database (most current as of this instruction is "July 2003 SDMC Membership Roster.")
5. You are now in the database and you will see a list of all club members. To sort (alphabetize by last name), single click on the field labeled "Last Name." You can sort on any other field you desire.
6. To print; single click on "Printable Report." On your browser go to "File" (upper left corner) and single click. This will drop a pull down menu of file functions. Near the bottom of the drop down menu you will see "Print." Single click this command.
7. A print menu will pop up giving you access to your printer controls (this presupposes that you have a printer hooked up to your computer). Once your printer is configured to your liking, single click on the "OK" or "Print" button.
8. Voila! you now have 17 (or so) pages of the SDMC Membership Roster.



On the 29<sup>th</sup> of November 2003, the San Diego Miata Club, in cooperation with the Southern California Autocross Team (SCAT), put on a Novice Safety Driving School. The goal of this course was to provide the average member with the skills necessary to understand how their car handles under real world conditions. The secondary goal was to increase the awareness of performance driving and increase the desire for attaining higher levels of driving skills. The third goal was to have FUN! All three goals were met with great success.

During the San Diego Miata Club (SDMC) Executive Board elections held on April 1, 2003, it was decided by the general membership to use the money gained from the meeting raffle to seed the cost for a safety driving school. To this end, the president of the SDMC initiated contact with two people to form a 3-person co-chairmanship to attain this goal.

Larry Dennstedt has had over 30 years of racing experience, is a certified Sports Car Club of America (SCCA) Safety Steward and is the best mechanic for Miatas in San Diego. Larry also is a member of the San Diego Miata Club, San Diego Asebring Drivers (SDAD) and the SCCA. Larry volunteered to provide our club with his technical expertise in designing a course that consisted of seven different driving elements. Larry was responsible for attaining the skilled instructors and training them in the duties involved with carrying out this assignment. Larry did a stupendous job of pulling all the technical material together, training everybody and overseeing the safety necessary in a school of this type.

President Emeritus and Events Chairman Steve Waid volunteered to act as the liaison between the San Diego Miata Club and the Southern California Autocross Team. Obiwaide (Steve) is a member of both clubs and understands the logistics required to put together an event of this magnitude. Steve worked tirelessly and provided important support to the team. It was through Steve's efforts (and help from Larry also) that SCAT agreed to help the SDMC. This required a lot of effort and diplomacy from Obiwaide and he carried it off with flying colors.

Although not a co-chair, without Paula Kennison this event would not have happened. Paula was the registration person and also coordinated all the volunteers who helped with the food as well as running the event. Paula doesn't usually get the glory but she handles the details with superb capability and confidence. She also provided much needed coordination and attention to matters in supporting the driving school team. Special kudos to this fine lady for doing an outstanding job.

This school was designed to enable drivers to not only learn the skills necessary to properly navigate their Miata but also to provide information on how to set up their cars and themselves for club runs and commuting. A sidebar article has been included that details a comprehensive checklist that every driver should do before going on any club run. It is also a good idea to use these tests at least once a week if you are commuting.

All the school information and tech inspection information was disseminated to all the participants before the actual start of the school. This allowed the participants to prep their car before the day of the actual event. This was necessary so that the event staff could provide the tech inspection taking the minimum amount of time to process each participant. It also was an introduction for the students on how to prepare their cars for a safer and more fun driving experience.

To fully describe the event and all that transpired during the day we are going to follow the exploits of a mythical SDMC member called Kimberly. Although Kim is fictitious, she is a typical member of our car club and really loves her Miata. Kim didn't want to learn how to race but she definitely wanted to learn better car control and how to be more comfortable and have more fun on club runs. This is her story.

I initially signed up for this safety school because it was promoted for novice drivers and I wanted to learn to handle my car better and have more fun. I had the opportunity to attend some track days but I was not really interested in racing and I didn't want to damage my car by overstressing it. This seemed the perfect opportunity.

I had attended the monthly meetings at the Boll Weevil on a fairly regular basis and heard the great talks that Larry Dennstedt gave concerning car handling, maintenance, alignment and car safety. I thought that this was a great lead-in to having a driving school so I signed up.

I received email that gave me a description of the school and what I needed to do to prepare my car. I was starting to get really excited but at the same time I was a little nervous about doing this. I checked all the fluid levels as they said to do. I bought a little digital air gauge to check my tires with. I don't have a torque wrench and I'm not really sure how it works but I did read that it's very important to have it done right. I emailed the list and some of the folks mentioned that the staff would check the tightness on all the lugnuts at the event. Everything else was pretty simple and logical. The day before the big day I removed everything loose from the trunk as I was instructed.

I hated getting up early on my day off but at least I

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could get up at 6:30 rather than 5:00 as I normally would when going to work. I got down to the stadium and headed to the gate to the west lot over by the trolley tracks. As I entered, a person informed me that I needed to sign in for insurance purposes. I got an extremely attractive bright orange paper bracelet that didn't match my red Miata. I then headed down under the bridge and saw this person (I think his name is Obi-waid) directing traffic. I've seen this guy at the club meetings; he is a real fanatic for his yellow car. I was much too kind to inform him that he is demented because everybody knows that red is the best color for a Miata. He kindly directed me to registration where I got another attractive bracelet, only this time it was yellow and made of plastic. This was my official "drivers" insignia. I was also assigned to the "A" group. I noticed the 57 participants were being divided up in seven groups for each of the elements we had to drive through. The registration folks (that Paula is the nicest lady) directed me to drop off my stuff in an area designated with an "A". After that I needed to go over to the tech inspection.

I got through tech inspection with flying colors although one lugnut was only torqued to 65 ft/lbs. The staff member took care of that and let me know what he did to my car. The tech area was a three-phase process. We stayed in our cars and moved through each phase and the staff folks checked out our cars. It reminded me of the days when you stopped at a service station and they checked your air, water, oil and pumped your gas for you. Oops, I think I just gave away my age. I rolled out of tech and parked my car in my group area. I thought I'd stop and get a croissant and something to drink. I got over there and they had a great spread with orange juice, muffins, water, soft drinks and my weak spot, Krispy Creme Donuts. Now why did they have to go and do that? Oh well, so I had a donut (or two) for breakfast. I had one big complaint though. There

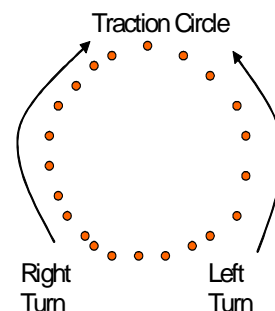
was NO coffee! I mean, how do these people function without coffee in the morning? I heard a few others grumbling about the lack of coffee but somebody said they had no electricity so couldn't make coffee. Hmmmm, they do this again and I'm going to volunteer to bring down a camp stove and make coffee for everybody. I do have to admit that the orange juice and Krispy Crème donuts made up for the lack of coffee. I got a sugar rush rather than a caffeine buzz.

They announced the drivers meeting so I headed over to hear what we were going to do. Larry Dennstedt explained that we would have instructors at each of the seven elements and that they would guide us through the exercise. After a description of the elements and a safety brief, we all headed back to our cars and drove slowly with our group to our first designated element. The "A" group started at element 1; the "B" group started at element 2 and so on through all seven. Every 25 minutes each group would move to the next element.

The first element was called a traction circle (or skid pad). The entire "A" group went through orientation before going on the course. We had three instructors helping us. For this exercise we had one of the instructors riding along with us. The object was to go around the circle about three times in a clockwise direction and then reverse the direction for three more turns. Our instructors said this was so the driver could get the feel for understeer and oversteer. This was actually fun but a bit scary. I could actually feel the back of the car starting to move to the outside of the circle. This is called oversteer. Also I learned that when I'm going too fast and try to turn my car it would try to continue to go straight. This is called understeer. One of the students managed to spin her car 180 degrees. Although that wasn't the goal, it did teach her how it felt to spin a car. Also since all the elements were built with traffic cones there was no damage done to any of the cars if they made a mistake. I didn't think I really wanted to spin my car but this was certainly the place to do something of this nature rather than on the street. This was pretty interesting and I thought this was a really good exercise.



Photo by Mark Booth



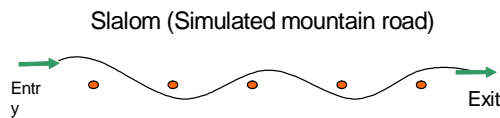
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Everybody had a chance to go through the traction circle before they announced that we should move to our next element. The instructors were a tremendous help on this exercise and never left us on our own. The traction circle was a bit intimidating but the instructors really helped me complete this section.

We moved over to the slalom, which was described as going on a run down Wynola Road up in the Julian area. The instructors walked us through the course and explained that the idea was to proceed slowly to develop rhythm & smoothness, not speed. Once through the slalom a couple of times we were asked to speed up a little bit so we could feel the turns and how the car handled. Although every student was offered an instructor to ride along I decided I wanted to try this on my own. I moved slowly back and forth between the traffic cones to get a feel for the car. After going through twice I thought I'd go a little faster. I really found that the key was to focus and develop a rhythm while negotiating the cones. By the end of the session I was a bit surprised at how fast I was able to go through the slalom without feeling stressed or hitting any of the cones. I can't wait to try Wynola for real again.

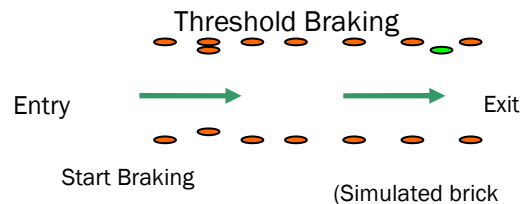


Once again the announcer asked us to move to the next element. This time we were going to attempt the "Fingers of Doom". This exercise simulated road debris and we were to avoid obstacles and maintain control of our car. Imagine following a safe distance behind a pickup truck and all of a sudden the furniture he is carrying breaks free and is flying all over the freeway. Sometimes your best (or only) choice is to avoid those obstacles rather than trying to make an emergency stop (and running into that which you are trying to avoid as well as have somebody in a huge SUV run over your Miata). We again walked through the element with the instructors giving us information on how to negotiate the obstacles. I had an instructor ride with me through the course the first time and then I tried it on my own. Going through slowly gave me a feel for the car and the sudden shifts I had to make in direction. This was unlike the slalom in that the directional changes were not necessarily patterns that you could negotiate using a rhythm. This was a spontaneous choice you had to make while trying to avoid that couch or chair in the middle of the road. Going slowly at first really helped me to understand and analyze where I wanted to go. This was an ex-

ercise I highly recommend for accident avoidance. I developed (somewhat limited at this time but now I know how it works) the ability to make a fast move in my car and have the confidence that I am going to maintain control. I was just starting to get the hang of it when the darn announcer asked us to go to the next element.



I joined up with our little group and off we went to the brake testing area. The braking area consisted of a set of cones that we accelerated up to and then we did our best to stop before the brake line (simulated brick wall). We started this element going in an uphill direction and once we got used to that we changed direction (downhill). The idea was to brake as hard as you could without locking up the wheels (and thereby losing all steering capability). It was not too difficult going uphill but going downhill was a different story. For those of us with ABS, we were asked to not use it so we could understand what Threshold Braking was all about. Although there were only two cars in my group with ABS I really wish they had let us try it. I also have ABS on my OTM and would like to know if my money was well spent. All in all, it was a worthwhile exercise that made me aware of the braking distances involved in not only going up and down hills but in a reduced traction environment (going downhill simulated that environment) such as rain. OK, let's move on to the next exercise.



Element number 5 was the decreasing radius turn. This turn is encountered just about all the time on freeway off ramps. Our instructors also said that there are some turns in the mountains that fall into this category. These turns look to be a bit wicked and a mite tricky. Once I learned to brake before the turn and stay to the outside the maneuver became much easier. I took a while to learn this one and wish I had a bit longer as I was just starting to get to understand it and have fun when we had to once again move to another element. I had to laugh at one of the instructors who answered my complaint by saying that like the three most important things in Real Estate (location, location, location) the three most important things in driving are seat time, seat time,

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seat time. These instructors are terrific folks.

The opposite of the decreasing radius turn is the increasing radius turn. I loved those turns. They are like many freeway on ramps in that as you come around a corner the turn starts to straighten out. This allows you to accelerate as you gradually straighten your steering wheel and, zoom, you are on the freeway matching your speed to the flow of traffic. This is an

easy turn to learn and is the epitome of how you should handle any turn, Slow In, Fast Out. I had a lot of fun with this exercise before we moved on to the last element of the day.

The last element was called the Box Turn or Chicago Box. Why it was called the Chicago Box I never did find out but it certainly was challenging. Our instructors had us walk through the Box Turn and they explained that it was like the slalom in some ways. Like the slalom, the best way through was a slow, smooth rhythm that rounded the corners of the boxes in a large S pattern. Once again I focused on being smooth and going slowly until I got the feel of the element. This element started getting really interesting as you picked up your speed. Instead of the quick little blimps back and forth as I did on the slalom element I had to make large changes in direction but still maintain smoothness and control.

This was the most challenging but the most fun for me.

I was rather glad when the announcer said that the elements

were complete and it was time for a lunch break. I found that I was tired and hungry but really excited about all I had learned. I was looking forward to getting something to eat and sitting down with my classmates to

discuss the elements and also the upcoming 8<sup>th</sup> element when they put together all seven elements into a full course.

I had opted for the BBQ beef sandwich with beans, potato salad, cole slaw and cookies for dessert. The members who helped with the lunch were terrific. I really enjoyed my lunch and a chat with all my friends.

The course organizers called another drivers meeting for the last element of the day. Larry Dennstedt gave us instructions and then all the students followed Larry in a Conga line through the complete course. The SCAT members had done a terrific job of setting up all the elements (they only used ½ of the traction circle as a big sweeper was on another part of the course) in a complete course.

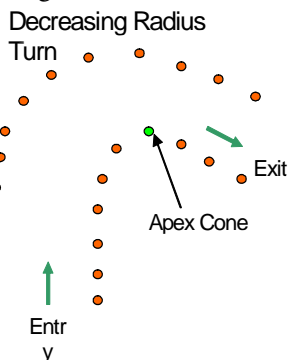
The last element was optional; students do not have to participate in this section. Also this element was not timed. The idea was to drive through slowly, putting all the elements together as if you were out driving your car on a fun run or in everyday traffic. It was emphasized that this was not a speed contest but to try and go a little faster as you got used to the course to push the envelope of your driving skills. Of course, instructors were provided for anybody that wanted one.

They split us up so that ½ the participants were on the course and the other half were driving. The non-drivers became corner workers to watch for safety problems and observe how the drivers were driving the course. It is amazing how much you can pick up by watching somebody else drive a course.

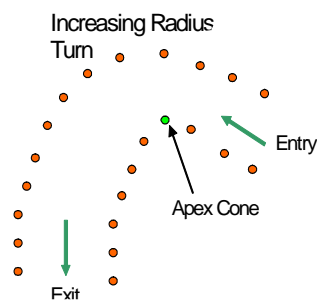
Finally it was my turn and I had an instructor for the first two times around and then did the last circuit by myself. This was an absolute blast! I couldn't believe how much fun I had.

Now to sum up the entire experience: I feel somewhat overwhelmed with everything I was taught today. Then again I feel that I learned so much that I am going to become a much better driver. I promised myself that I would practice these skills and become a better, safer driver. I am beginning to see the light and realize the potential of the little car I love so much. The potential for fun is extreme! Although I did learn a lot, I realize that there is a lot more to learn (that's a bit of the overwhelming part) to refine my driving skills. Gee, I wonder if they are going to do this next year? I highly recommend a course of this type to any person wanting to learn to drive better and safer. This was a bargain for all I learned and for all the fun I had.

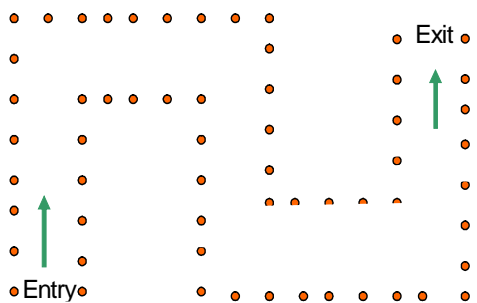
Your Miata Friend,  
Kim



many freeway on ramps in that as you come around a corner the turn starts to straighten out. This allows you to accelerate as you gradually straighten your steering wheel and, zoom, you are on the freeway matching your speed to the flow of traffic. This is an



Box Turn



By Steve Kennison, President

### CAR PREFLIGHT

**Tires/wheels (the following values are for Miatas ONLY!)**

Please put 26-29 (street driving) psi pressure in all your tires. Tire pressure is VERY important, check all with good quality gauge. Check that the torque on lugnuts are between 75-80 Ft/lbs. Although you may not check this on a regular basis, aluminum alloy wheels should always be torqued in the proper sequence (star pattern) and then RETORQUED after 20 miles or so when a wheel has been removed for any reason.

#### Brakes

Step on brake pedal and make sure they are firm. If they feel soft or mushy during normal driving have them checked. Watch for the car pulling left or right when braking. Listen for any grinding or metallic noises during braking. If ANY of these conditions occur have your brakes checked immediately.

#### Seatbelts

In proper working order and secure. Check for cuts, tears or wear.

#### Seats

- ➔ Should be locked in place and not move.
- ➔ Clean windows (very important) inside and out!
- ➔ Mirrors properly adjusted (side mirrors also)
- ➔ Loose items in trunk
- ➔ REMOVE or secure everything!
- Items in driver/passenger compartment
- ➔ Fluid levels (check all levels)
  - Oil, Coolant, brake fluid level, Gas (make sure you have a full tank before starting a club run)

#### Driver Preflight

- Position
- Shoulders against seat
- Wrists @ 12:00 position (not too close)
- Hands @ approximately 9:00 & 3:00
- Knees slightly bent
- Attire (comfort & safety) Clothing loose and comfortable
- Hat (Optional but good idea)
- Sunscreen
- Coat
- Gloves (Optional)
- Shoes (NO sandals or flip-flops)

#### Attitude

Drive for fun, not race  
Drive within abilities  
Turn the ego OFF!  
Have FUN!  
NO alcohol/drugs!



The Three Amigos—  
Photo by Voodoo Bob Krueger



Mike Heinitz checks tire pressure—  
Photo by Scott Lewis



Mary and Brenda - Photo by Mark Booth





## LADIES ON THE LEFT RUN - BY BRUCE LEWIS

Congratulations to Brenda Kay for leading her first run, and for earning her "Magnetics". The run started with 14 cars in the Grossmont Center parking lot and soon found itself at the base of Mount Helix where a fit of "Blindmans Bluff" overcame the group. The mountain resembled Disney's Matterhorn ride with Miata's racing around every which way. The reason for all this craziness was said to have begun when a Titanium Miata navigated by Steve Kennison made a wrong turn into a one way street, and then a Sunburst Yellow Miata navigated by Steve Waid made a wrong turn. To his credit Mr. Waid was so preoccupied laughing at Mr. Kennison's misdirection that he couldn't possibly have read the run instructions. "Holy Mayhem Batman", it deteriorated from there with vigilante groups of Miata's wandering the mountain in search of a correct turn. We finally got re-oriented and had a nice run up to Alpine for a short lay over at Summers Past Farm. Here, much to the "delight" of all of the "guys on the right", was a opportunity to shop at the gift shop, complete with all of the usual "darling", "adorable", "cute", and dare I say it - border-line "precious" items. Don't laugh, one Miata club Vice-President (who shall remain nameless) was seen toting a large sack out of this gift shop! The group then migrated west to the Viejas Outlet Mall for another round of (surprise, surprise) ...Yeah you guessed right - more "SHOPPING"! At this point most of the guys were thinking of changing the name of the run to the "Ladies Get Left (behind) Run". There was a light at the end of the tunnel in the form of "all you can eat" dinner at the Viejas Buffet, Yee Hah! A few souls braved the thirty-something degree weather and took in the Viejas (ice) Water Show after dinner.

Good job Brenda on a unique and fun run, enjoy your cool Mariner Blue magnetics..

## DE JA VU TOYS FOR TOTS RUN - BY JACK DILUSTRO

To everyone who participated in this year's Holiday Toy Drive for the Ronald McDonald House - a great big Thank You is in order.

We collected enough toys to totally surround the Christmas Tree at the Ronald McDonald House as well as providing a gift certificate for \$130 for their PlayStation game library.

Lolita Noga led about 20 Miata's on a beautiful drive through Rancho Santa Fe, Del Dios and Highland Valley to the Ronald McDonald House. Nina Brown, House Manager, said it was quite a sight seeing all the Miatas driving down Frost Street toward the House and then seeing all the smiling club members coming up the sidewalk carrying gifts galore.



Photo by Mark Booth

As a club, we keep outdoing ourselves with our generosity and spirit. Once again, I would like to thank everyone who made this year's gift giving a hugh success.





Some of you may have taken part in the Novice Safety Drivers School just after Thanksgiving and now have a better feel for the capabilities of our much loved little cars. The handling of the Mazda Miata is exceptional right off the showroom floor as you well know. If you have surfed the web for different Miata websites, you may have noticed areas that cover the suspension and handling of the Miata. Quite possibly the most common upgrade for our suspension is the replacement of the factory shock absorbers.

Shocks control the cars bouncing. In the extreme cases they can also effect how much the car moves in turns as well as in relation to how the road undulates. Generally it is not expected to have a shock so stiff that it doubles in function as an anti-sway bar. The shock should be stiff enough to keep the vehicle from oscillating after hitting a bump.

There are many different options when it comes to the shocks and how you would like the car to perform. Most aftermarket shocks have settings that will allow you to adjust the stiffness and quality of ride feel. I'm sure we all have a good idea for what a shock absorber does, but how well it does it is what is so important. With that said, let's look at the basic idea of a car with no shocks on it at all.

First thing you will notice while driving down the highway is the lack of cornering stability. Another will be the constant tire hopping caused by the shock not being present to absorb/dampen the bumps of the road. I know you will not be out there driving without your shocks, but this may also explain what can happen when your "factory installed" shocks have seen better days before they start to fail.

Worn out shocks can have many signs that are telling you they need to be replaced. First of which is the wetness around the base of your coil springs that indicate the shock seal has worn out where the piston of the shock meets the body. Second, can be the wear on your tires which some have called "cupping/shock wear". In cupping/shock wear, you will notice the tread pattern across the tire can appear to be uneven.

Shock absorbers are obviously liquid (oil) filled and at the bottom end of the piston is where you will find the valves. The valves are what makes your shock dampen the ride. Shocks have two basic areas in which they operate. Rebound and Jounce (compression). Rebound is best described as when the body of the car comes up thru a dip and the only movement that most simple shocks are capable of controlling. Jounce (compression) is what takes place when your Miata's body seems to bottom out or go down. The stock Miata shocks, and other cheaper aftermarket models, do not compensate for jounce nearly as much as the rebound.

How do you know when your shocks are bad? High mileage with factory shocks is one indication. Depending on the driving habits of the owner, stock shocks may not feel as good after as little as 30,000 miles. Another way to tell is when the Miata's back end starts to bounce like a pogo-stick after going over a speed bump or one side of the car starts to make a clanking noise as the suspension travels through its range until it hits the bump stops. This is generally a good time to replace all four shocks. The difference from old stock shocks to performance shocks is awesome.

The type of shock you are looking for depends on your driving style and how you want your Miata to perform. I am very happy with the Koni Adjustables I put on my Miata for autocross and Miata Club runs. Your settings will depend on the action you may want to put the car through. I adjust my fronts to "full" stiff and the rears to "soft" for autocross events with a turn of my the knob in about one minute without getting dirty. For standard everyday driving to and from work or the mall, I set all four to soft. Other brand names of quality shocks that come to mind, are Bilstein, KYB AGX, and SPAX coilovers.

Just look in your newsletter for the many places listed which can help you answer the questions you may have. Our website has an excellent illustration of an installation procedure that I found to be very helpful. Thanks to Robert "JTBob" Holland. Shocking isn't it! Sorry...I had to say it.

Photo by Mark Booth





The Venue—Photo by Voodoo Bob Krueger



Qualcomm—Photo by Mark Booth





## 2003 SDMC HOLIDAY PARTY

By Bruce Lewis, Vice President

Twas weeks before Christmas,  
when all through the (club) house  
The Miata Club was stirring, through  
the hors d' oeuvres we did grouse  
The presents were flung on the table, 'til it was swollen  
In hopes that the best ones could be kept, and not stolen

The members were nestled all snug in their chairs  
With hopes that a meal, soon would be theirs  
Robin and Mike, promised dinner by eight  
And we knew with their talents, that it would be great

When out in the parking lot there arose such a clatter  
We sprang from our tables to see what was the matter  
Away to the window we flew like a flash  
Tripping over our chairs, and our shins we did bash

With the moon on the breast of the new fallen ash  
Our cars covered in soot, our wash jobs were trash  
When, what to our wondering eyes should we see  
But a bright red Miata, with turbo ..... Whoopee!

We saw in an instant, it was lively and quick  
And knew in a moment that this car was real trick  
More rapid than Beamers, this car we could drive  
And we whistled and shouted, and that is no jive

"Now, Voodoo! now, Barb! now, Jack! and Gary!  
Now, Steve! now, Mark! now Diane! and Larry!  
Were all heard to exclaim, way above the din  
"I think with this sled, an autocross I could win"

And then in a twinkling, our dinner we could smell  
And back to the club house we ran like all Hell  
The tables were set, the meal was a feast  
With veggies and chicken, and even "roast beast"

Then Steve Waid gave out gifts, a right jolly old fellow  
And we all felt so bad that his car, it is yellow  
Dessert was delicious, a real work of art  
And we all felt so sad that soon we'd depart

We sprang to our sleds, to the girls gave a whistle  
And away we all flew, like a cruise control missile  
But we heard ourselves exclaim, ere we drove out of sight  
"Merry Christmas to all", and  
"This club is ALRIGHT"!!

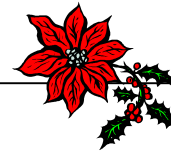


A "hello" tribute to Cathy Booth (above)  
and a table of happy party-goers (below)

Photos by Mark Booth



Our hosts, Robin and  
Mike Faircloth





## CLASSIFIED ADS

Classified ad space is provided free of charge to members only. Please include your first and last name, telephone number, and e-mail address (if applicable) with each submission. Send to: [newsletter@sandiegomiataclub.org](mailto:newsletter@sandiegomiataclub.org)

For Sale: 2000 Miata, white/black top, 18K miles, original owner, excellent condition, must see to appreciate, garaged, never raced, well maintained by Mazda dealers, a set of near-new Toyo T1-S tires with less than 3K miles, "Hard Dog Sport" roll-bar, "Clifford" security and keyless entry system, accessories include: Miata logo seat covers, front mask, cockpit cover, etc. My health condition is a reason to sell. Asking \$12,500, Kyoichi Abe (619) 421-5995, [KyoichiAbe@aol.com](mailto:KyoichiAbe@aol.com)

For Sale: 2002 Miata, xlnt cond, 5 speed manual, sunlight silver metallic, black interior with cloth sport seating. Extended Warranty: 84 months or 100,000 miles Car was purchased May 2002 Currently has 9k miles on it Paint & Interior Protection Warranty. Includes Sport Suspension Package: 16 inch alloy wheel w/locks 205/45R16 Radial Tires, Bilstein Shock Absorbers, Strut Tower Brace, Torsen Limited-Slip Differential. Such a fun car. Sad to see it go but we are moving so we have to sell it. \$18k/obo For more information call Dallas @ 619-528-0114 or [theklas-senz@cox.net](mailto:theklas-senz@cox.net)

For Sale: 1997 MAZDA MIATA - 5SPD, loaded, alarm, 35K Miles, All Original, Always garaged, Super Clean in & out. Great top & window, newer tires, \$7900.00, 858-689-2884 or [speedbolt@netzero.com](mailto:speedbolt@netzero.com).

For Sale: New, crate 1.6 engine never unpacked. \$2,000. ( cost new from Mazdaspeed with tax would be \$2,661.42 plus shipping), Jackson header for 1994 to 1997 \$200, 94 1.8 liter engine, transmission, body and mechanical parts from '90, '92,

'94, & '96. Also: Six speed transmission complete with Torsen rear end, drive shaft and axels, \$1,500 as a package. This package from a 99 -10 AE will work in any year Miata. Also have 94 1.8 liter engine, transmission, body and mechanical parts from '90, '92, '94, 96 and a 99 10AE. Jackson header for a 94, a 1999 1.8 engine, transmissions, and various parts. Wally, (619) 232-2801 ext 313, 234-2858, or [wallymiata@juno.com](mailto:wallymiata@juno.com)

For Sale: Parts from my '91 with 125K Miles, Strong Engine, 5-Speed Gear Box & Differential (With Prop Shaft & Axles) - Call for Details- Rick 619-702-8077 or e-mail [maigaberzins@aol.com](mailto:maigaberzins@aol.com)

For Sale: for 2000 Miata: New Miata Bra \$100. (sells new for \$175.00). Stock tan wind screen-flip up type. 75.00 OTM stuff: "TeeBack.com" Motorcycle trailer, much chrome--hauled 1,000 pounds of Harley Davidson behind her Miata to Las Vegas. \$1300.00 (will deliver). "Harley" brand crash helmet. Call Laura at 619-822-1070 [ENG-fly5@aol.com](mailto:ENG-fly5@aol.com)

For Sale: 2003 Miata LS, 5K mi, xclnt cond, garnet exterior, tan interior and top, wood trim dash kit added. Job changes force sale. \$18K/obo. Dale Thompson (858) 481-5088 [dthompson1@san.rr.com](mailto:dthompson1@san.rr.com)

For Sale: 1999 and newer Like-New items --sway bars front 1" and rear 5/8" Brainstorm --muffler mellow sound /not loud --KYB AGX shocks-4 aprox 20k miles --slotted and cross drilled rotors for 2002 and "sport set ups" (front is 10 5/8" dia.) --H&R springs front and rear Dennstedt Mon-Fri 8am-5pm 619-284-4911

For Sale: Set of 16-inch, 5-spoke alloy wheels for (Miata MX-5 2001) In very good shape, not perfect. Set for \$100. Blane, (760) 739-5423

For Sale: Road Bike 25 inch (63.5 cm)—700 25C tires. Helmet, 2 pair

shoes, clothing, bike stand, cyclo computer. \$250 OBO. Len Garth, (760) 726-3814

For Sale: Monster Motors roll bar. Still in wrapper. Wrecked my car before I installed it and it won't work with the glass window in my new one. \$190. Lolita, (858) 245-7749

For Sale: Acrylic TC Windblocker—"rated best value, extremely effective, looks good" on Miata.net. For M2 Miatas. Worked great in my 2001 Miata for two months until I added a real roll-bar, now it doesn't fit. Blocker, storage bag, mounts, installation instructions, \$75. Bud, (760) 439-8491

For Sale: '92 Honda VFR750F motorcycle. One step down from a Miata. It's fast and it's black. With low miles it looks almost new and runs like new. \$2300 is all I'm asking since it has a salvage title due to a lay down. Can send photos via e-mail as well answer all questions. I've owned this bike since '92. Tom (619) 303-3062 or [rod-neyt56@cox.net](mailto:rod-neyt56@cox.net)

Buying or selling your Miata or Miata accessories? You can do it for free on Miatamart—the Miata For Sale—web site, run by SDMC member Rainer Mueller. Check it out at [www.miatamart.com](http://www.miatamart.com).



## Local Business Discounts

*Miata Club members a substantial discount on parts and labor. The club does not endorse any vendors. To receive your discount, simply present a current SDMC membership card at the time of your purchase or service.*

Al & Ed's Auto Sound, Car alarms too!  
3740 Rosecrans St, San Diego (619) 682-3800  
11608 Carmel Mtn. Rd, San Diego  
(858) 675-2000 Discount: 14%

Alarm 2000, Home alarm systems & monitoring.  
3163 Ash Street, San Diego (619) 221-0948  
Residential & Commercial alarm installations & monitoring. Free equipment with 2-way voice & free professional installation. Waiver of \$69 connection fee to SDMC members.  
Pay only monthly monitoring. Contact: Buffy Hergenrader, buffy@iopener.net (619) 221-0948

Allen's Wrench, Mazda Master Technician  
1620 Grand Ave, San Marcos (760) 744-1192  
Discount: 10% (except oil changes)

American Battery, Miata batteries  
& all other batteries 525 Wt Washington, Escondido (760) 746-8010 Discount: Fleet discount on all products Contact: Jeff Hartmayer

Brakewerks.com, Axxis Ultimate, Cobalt Friction, Ferodo, Hawk, Pagid, and Performance Friction braking products. ATE brake fluids.  
Ed Hannigan, ehannigan@adelphia.net  
(760) 473-4055 Discount: 15% on Axxis Ultimate products, special pricing on other products.

Bumper Express, seamless repair of bumpers and other exterior plastic parts. Work done at the shop or a mobile truck will come to you.  
9630 Black Mountain Road, Suite J, off Miramar Road). Discount: 20%; Toll free (877) 228-6737  
www.bumperexpress.com

Coast Car Covers, Inc., Car covers, cockpit covers  
1229 Morena Blvd, San Diego  
(619) 275-7100 Discount: Wholesale price

Dent Man, Mobile, paintless dent removal (800) 965-5475 Discount: 15%; ask for Betty or Mike

Express Tire, Auto repair, tires. 12619 Poway Road, Poway, (858) 748-6330  
Manager: David Dolan  
Discount: 10% on parts, labor, including tires.

Good-Win Racing LLC, Miata performance products including shocks, springs, exhausts, light alloy wheels & everything from Racing Beat, Moss Motors, & Jackson Racing.  
www.good-win-racing.com  
(858) 775-6259 or FAX (858) 270-3268  
Discount: Special Club Price on Everything

Just Dings Ltd., Paintless door ding removal  
3747 Convoy Street, San Diego  
(858) 569-3464 Discount: 10%

Kesler Customs, Miata Chassis Braces, Adjustable Dead Pedals, Hide-a-way License Plate Brackets. Installation of after market parts, fabrication and light welding.  
Ted Kesler, (619) 421-8472  
Discount: Special Club Prices

Larry Dennstedt's Auto Repair  
4283 41st Street, San Diego  
(619) 284-4911 Discount: 10% on labor

Leucadia Auto Body  
1508 N. Coast Hwy., Leucadia  
(760) 634-1671 Discount: 10% on Parts and labor Contact: Larry Sukay

Lutz Tire & Service, Alignment specialist, tires  
2853 Market Street, San Diego (619) 232-2957 Discount: 10% on parts (tires not included) Ask for Mike

Magnolia Auto Body, Restorations, body work  
8500 Ablette Rd, Santee (619) 562-7861 Dct: 10% on labor & parts; ask for T.J.

Porterfield Enterprises Ltd., Brake pads, rotors  
1767 Placentia Ave., Costa Mesa  
(949) 548-4470 Discount: 15% off Porterfield & Hawk brake pads, \$10 off rotors, \$9 for Motul 600 brake fluid (1 pint).

Professional Car Care Products & Accessories  
3582 Mount Acadia #E, San Diego  
(858) 279-5772 Discount: 25% on wash, wax, or complete detail Owner: Eddy Belter

Rosin & Associates, Attorneys at law  
Accidents, insurance issues, general civil law.  
Discount: 10% on attorneys fees.  
No recovery, no fee. Contact: Anita D. Eoff-Rosin, (619) 543-9600  
Smog Squad 3342 Rosecrans, San Diego

(619) 223-8806 Discount: \$10 on smog tests  
General Manager: Jose Munoz

Southern California Audio Labs, Home theater installs, home automation, audio/video design  
soundz915@aol.com or (760) 788-0066  
Discount: 20%. Contact: Scott Pike

Team Voodoo, Nearly-legendary shift knobs, brake grips, t-shirts, hats, floor mats, etc.  
vbob@teamvoodoo.com or  
FAX (858) 679-9484  
Discount: 10% and NO SALES TAX

Thompson Automotive Products, Quick-Change Oil Filter Relocation kits. Take the hassle out of changing your oil. New options on hose and connectors. Check the web-site for details:  
[www.thompson-automotive.com](http://www.thompson-automotive.com)  
[tomata@cox.net](mailto:tomata@cox.net) (949) 366-0322  
Discount: 10%

Tri-City Paint, Professional detailing products  
Escondido (760) 747-3023  
Miramar (858) 530-1666  
National City (619) 477-8790  
Santee (619) 448-9140  
Discount: Body Shop Pricing #CM6660

Twin Oaks UNOCAL 76, oil changes, mechanical 102 E. Carmel Street, San Marcos  
(760) 752-7600 Factory trained Mazda technician Discount: 15% on parts and labor  
Contact: Larry Sukay

WheelStore, Wheels, tires, suspension, alignment  
208 S. Coast Hwy., Oceanside (760) 967-1336  
Discount: Competitive tire discount  
\$10 off alignments

**Mazda Dealerships:**  
Bell Road Mazda  
Phoenix (800) 765-5292  
Discount: 20% off on Mazda parts/accessories  
Ask for John Mardueno or Scott Moehn

Cush Mazda Escondido (760) 737-3200  
Discount: 15% on parts/labor (not including smog certification).

Westcott Mazda  
National City (619) 474-1591  
Discount: 10% on parts or labor

**SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB**  
P.O. Box 17253  
San Diego CA 92177

Stamp

