

TOPDOWN

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE
MX-5 CLUB OF NEW ZEALAND

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2016

MAGAZINE

TAUPO DRIVER TRAINING DAY

MX-5'S GATHER AT TAUPO
MOTORSPORT PARK FOR THE
2016 DRIVER TRAINING DAY



WWW.MX5CLUB.ORG.NZ



5 THINGS YOU PROBABLY DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT THE NEW MX-5 RF

The 2017 Mazda MX-5 Miata RF is an exciting addition to Mazda's already fun lineup.



The RF version has the same mechanical specs as the soft-top MX-5, which means it's rear-wheel drive and powered by a naturally aspirated 2.0-litre four-cylinder engine with 155 horsepower and 148 pound-feet of torque. But the RF is so much more than just a hardtop MX-5. Here are five things you probably didn't about about Mazda's newest model:

RF STANDS FOR RETRACTABLE FASTBACK - IT'S A FIRST FOR MAZDA

The RF in Mazda MX-5 RF stands for Retractable Fastback. In the past, MX-5s have come with a power retractable hardtop option that had the same look as the soft-top, so this generation MX-5 brings a whole new look and functionality to the lineup and it's the first time Mazda has ever done this. Sporting a distinctly different silhouette than the soft top model, the RF stands out as its own model, and it looks amazing doing so. When the top is up, the RF actually looks like a coupe, something Mazda says MX-5 fans have been asking for. When the car was revealed at the 2016 New York Auto Show, the audience actually gasped and cheered when it got on stage because it's that sexy.

IT'S NOT THAT MUCH HEAVIER THAN THE REGULAR MX-5 SOFT-TOP

Adding a power retractable hardtop to a convertible typically adds a lot of weight to a car, but weight is a dirty word in Mazda land.

Mazda engineers are obsessed with keeping the weight of the MX-5 as low as possible, so you shouldn't be surprised that the retractable fastback roof doesn't add a great amount of weight to the car. In total, the hardtop adds about 100 pounds, but Mazda promises that it won't affect the car's performance.

Mazda engineers have something called the "Gram Strategy," where they look at every single piece of a car and try to reduce the weight of every component, gram by gram. They used this strategy extensively with the RF.

YOU CAN OPEN/CLOSE THE ROOF WHILE YOU'RE DRIVING

The top can be operated at parking lot speeds of up to 6 mph. Even better, it takes only 12 seconds to open and close and

is completely automatic because there are no latches to manually fuss with.

THE RETRACTABLE FASTBACK ROOF DOESN'T EFFECT TRUNK SPACE

Convertibles don't have a lot of trunk space in general, but hardtop convertibles have even less space because cargo capacity is compromised when the top is lowered. This isn't the case with the MX-5 RF, which has the exact same cargo capacity as the soft-top model - about 4.1 cubic feet. The trunk in the RF is designed to hold two carry-on suitcases, even with the top down.

YOU CAN BUY IT SOON

Mazda is looking for the MX-5 RF to hit dealers in the first quarter of 2017 (including New Zealand). 1,000 will be offered in a special Launch Edition in the US. It will have the special Machine Gray Metallic paint, a black roof panel, and Auburn Nappa leather interior, a combination that is exclusive to this limited edition car. (www.mazdausa.com/preorder/mx-5-rf-launch-edition) 🌀

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Front Cover: Photo by Vicky Powell. BOP Whirinaki Falls Run.
Back Cover: Photos by Brenda White, Taupo Driver Training Day.
Editor: Vicky Powell: topdown@mx5club.org.nz
Printer: Advocate Print, Rotorua



A group of pensioners were discussing their medical problems at the Day Centre coffee morning.

'Do you realise,' said one, 'My arm is so weak I can hardly hold this coffee cup.'

'Yes, I know,' replied the second, 'My cataracts are so bad I can't see to pour the coffee.'

'I can't turn my head,' rejoined the third, 'because of the arthritis in my neck.'

'My blood pressure pills make my dizzy,' commented the fourth, adding, 'I guess that's the price we pay for getting old.'

'Well, it's not all bad,' piped up the first, 'We should be thankful that we can still drive.'

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- » Feel free to submit articles via email.
- » Articles should be no longer than 900 words.
- » Include your name (and the article author's name if different), contact details and use full names in your text.
- » If you submit an article, you agree to have it edited as the Editor sees fit.
- » The NZ MX5 Club does not pay for submissions.
- » If the article has been published before in any form, please indicate this.
- » TopDown is read by all ages, so please take this into account when considering subject material and language.
- » No article which the Editor or the NZ MX5 Club deems to encourage breaking the law, either directly or by inference will be printed.

Picture Guidelines:

- » High resolution JPEGs are preferred. (300 dpi)
- » The preferred method for submission of images is by email.
- » No single image should exceed 8 MB.
- » All photographs must be submitted with the permission of the photographer.
- » Vehicle registration numbers will be shown unless removal is requested.

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HI EVERYONE

Last weekend saw the National Driver Training day at Taupo which was a whole lot of fun as well including some very valuable driving tips for the road. A huge thankyou to Keith and Sandra Jones and their team of faithful helpers for an amazing event once again.

We were lucky enough to be approached by the crew at "Fun Drive" which is based at the track, providing race car driving experiences in MX5's and very generously, they donated 2 vouchers for a "session" for us to raffle off (the lucky winners were Matthew Underwood from Kapiti and Murray Croker from Gisborne). We hope you guys enjoy the experience and look forward to seeing some photos in Topdown in the future. Paul and Jay from Fun Drive also took a few members out for a 'blat' during the lunchtime break.....lots of fun and some pretty big grins from the participants. You will find their details a bit further on through the magazine.....well worth a go and

a neat Christmas present idea for the enthusiast at your place!

You will find in with your Topdown a couple of "You've been Spotted" forms – the purpose of these is to pop them in your glovebox for those times when you are out and about, and you see an MX5 that is not a club member, just put the form under the windscreen wiper, and hopefully we will encourage more people to join us!!!!

A reminder that once you are a member of the national club, you can actually join in with any region for a run – or another event, so don't forget to make welcome any out of town visitors, or club members passing through your region, or invite members from other regions to come out with you – we're all just friends that may not have met yet!!!

The BONNITT tour has just finished and sounds like it has been a wonderful experience for all concerned, I hope you all had a wonderful safe trip.

MRS PREZ SEZ



I have posted out a small booklet to your Regional Co-ordinator outlining the changes to Health and Safety for us all, and I'm sure they will share this with you next time you catch up.

Safe driving everyone.

BRENDA WHITE
PRESIDENT

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FROM THE EDITOR

HI EVERYONE

The weather has hardly been conducive to top down driving recently - so it was a pleasant, very welcome surprise to participate in a dry Driver Training Day in Taupo. You can check out the photo's on page 6-10 and on the website. It's a great annual event that I can highly recommend.

There's been lots of other runs happening throughout the country including the BONITT tour, which we hope to bring you a report on in the next issue.

The exciting new MX-5 Miata RF model unsurprisingly sold out of their initial allocation of 1,000 Launch Editions in the US. With the MX-5 RF Launch Edition having sold out, the focus now shifts to the standard-production MX-5 Club and Grand Touring models.

Happy driving...

VICKY POWELL, EDITOR

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NEW MEMBERS

A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS...

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NORTHERN

Julie Fairless & Fiona Deas, AUCKLAND

Allan Brown, AUCKLAND

Keith & Vivienne Ingram, AUCKLAND

Murray & Donna Lee, AUCKLAND

Robyn Moore, AUCKLAND

Peter Mellalieu & Elizabeth Coleman, AUCKLAND

Graeme Banks, AUCKLAND

SOUTHLAND

Nelson Horrell, WINTON

TARANAKI

Mitchell & Katrina Kelly, NEW PLYMOUTH

WAIKATO

Steve & Merrienne Northcott, HAMILTON

New members should start receiving emails from their regional co-ordinator regarding details of upcoming trips. If you are new to the club and coming along for the first time, please make yourself known to the event organiser.

Answers to Quiz on Page 5:

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|-------|-------|
| 1. c | 4. a | 7. c | 10. b | 13. d |
| 2. a | 5. d | 8. d | 11. d | |
| 3. d | 6. d | 9. c | 12. a | |



**DEADLINE: FOR TOPDOWN NOV/DEC ISSUE
- 1 DECEMBER 2016**

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TAKE THE MX-5 QUIZ



Do you think you know everything there is to know about the MX-5 Miata? Take the quiz and see if you're a true Miata Maniac.

- The very first MX-5 Miatas were launched in 1989 in what three colors?
 - Brilliant Black, Laguna Blue, True Red
 - British Racing Green, Sunburst Yellow, Soul Red
 - Classic Red, Crystal White, Mariner Blue
 - Liquid Silver, Emerald Mica, Pure White
- The original starting price for a Miata in the summer of 1989 was:
 - US\$13,800
 - US\$12,090
 - US\$14,995
 - US\$16,500
- Mazda uses a weight-loss philosophy with the MX-5 Miata called:
 - Add Lightness
 - Knock Out the Fat
 - Every Ounce Counts
 - Gram Strategy
- MX-5 is the only car to have been nominated and won both World Car of the Year and World Car Design of the Year in the same year?
 - True
 - False
- The 2016 MX-5 Miata with the 2.0-liter SKYACTIV-G engine and 6-speed manual transmission offers EPA-estimated fuel economy of:
 - 25 MPG city, 32 MPG highway
 - 15 MPG city, 18 MPG highway
 - 22 MPG city, 28 MPG highway
 - 27 MPG city, 36 MPG highway
- The Mazda engineering philosophy "Jinba Ittai" translates to:
 - Zoom-Zoom
 - Two-seat sports car
 - Joy derived from driving
 - Horse and rider as one
- The newest hardtop version of the 2016 MX-5 RF stands for:
 - Roof Folding
 - Really Fast
 - Retractable Fastback
 - Radical Fascination
- Mazda recently passed which production milestone for the MX-5 Miata?
 - 750,000 cars
 - 500,000 cars
 - 100,000 cars
 - 1,000,000 cars
- Which organisation certified the MX-5 Miata as the world's best-selling convertible two-seater sports car of all time in 2000?
 - U.S. Department of Transportation
 - Ripley's Believe It or Not
 - Guinness World Records
 - International Olympic Committee
- How long did it take for the 2015 25th Anniversary Edition MX-5 to sell out in the U.S.?
 - 1 day
 - 10 minutes
 - 2 hours
 - 50 minutes
- The design of the 2016 MX-5 Miata is based on KODO design principles. KODO is a Japanese word that translates to:
 - Go Beyond
 - Sound of the Wind
 - Flow
 - Soul of Motion
- Where was the first Mazda MX-5 Miata formally revealed to the world in 1989?
 - Chicago Auto Show
 - Tokyo Motor Show
 - Detroit - North American International Auto Show
 - Geneva International Motor Show
- The word "Miata" means "prize" or "reward" in what language?
 - Russian
 - Japanese
 - Italian
 - Old High German

Answers on page 4 or take the quiz online and share your results: <http://insidemazda.mazdausa.com/what-we-do/mx-5-miata-quiz/>



2016 DRIVER TRAINING DAY

Despite consistently wet weather leading up to the event, the day dawned dry and windy for the nearly 50 drivers arriving at the Bruce McLaren Motorsport Park in Taupo for the 2016 MX-5 Club Driver Training Day.

OCTOBER 8TH 2016 // REPORT BY VICKY POWELL //
PHOTOS BY BRENDA WHITE

After what seemed like weeks and weeks of wet weather leading up to the Taupo Driver Training Day, it was fine (well, fine as in NOT wet) and we set off for a very early 7am start from Rotorua to head to Taupo amidst patches of fog.

Arriving early, we were excited to see a few other cars already there with more steadily arriving. It was interesting to see a myriad of different colours and models of MX-5's arrive at the park. It was good to see so many NA's turn up, as we seem to see less and less of them on local runs.

This being my first experience with the Driver Training Day, I had no idea what to expect even after receiving lots of useful information from Keith, the organiser. And I must admit to being slightly nervous about the whole day.

After registration and paperwork, was the briefing and a quick welcome by Brenda (President). It was great to see so many drivers from around the country enjoying the day.

For the morning sessions, we were split into four



PHOTO: LEXIE BROTHERS

smaller groups and did a rotation on each of the four exercises; Braking, Cornering, Slalom and Gymkhana.

First up for our group was the Gymkhana, which turned out to be one of my most favourite exercises. It involved driving through a predetermined “track” of cones; the hardest part for most being the ability to remember just where to go. The event was also timed, so speed was important (oh and also stopping in the ‘garage’ at the end).

On to the actual track as next up was braking. A bit more queuing involved here, as cars went from a starting stop up to a set speed and then braking at the last moment. Being in an NA without ABS meant lots of pressure on the brakes. Must work on that one.

From there we followed the track around to the cornering exercise where we got some instruction on braking, apexes and powering out of corners. This was fun and having multiple attempts followed by some further tips by our trusty instructors saw us in good shape for the actual track laps. ▶



Last was the slalom which was great fun and also a timed event. We watched Trish effortlessly speed through in her MX-5 making it look like a piece of cake. Luckily no cones were harmed in this exercise.

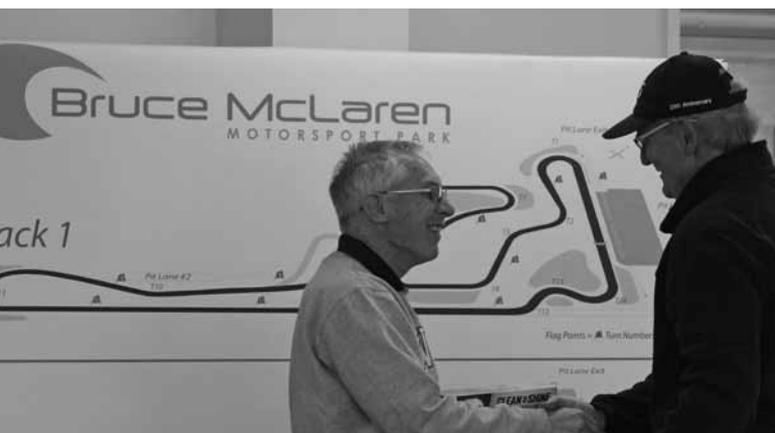
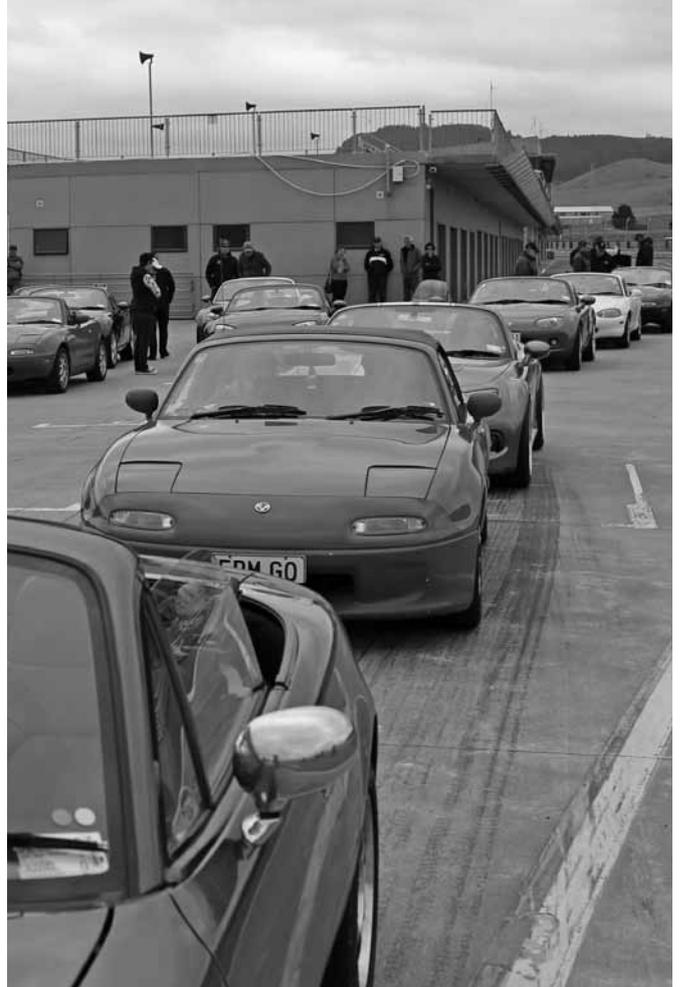
Having 3-4 turns at each exercise was really beneficial, as you could try and improve upon your skills each time and the instructors were happy to assist with great tips and advice.

During the lunch-break several people were luckily enough to squeeze in some hot laps on the track as passengers with more experienced drivers, including a couple of resident MX-5's from FunDrive.

Then it was another briefing with prizes, before getting the chance for some real track time. We were divided into three groups, based on experience and off we went. This is awesome – heaps of fun and a chance to put some of those skills learnt earlier in the day to test.

After two sessions on the track, it was time for the more serious (with helmets) to hit the track. This session wasn't speed limited and it was amazing to see MX-5's tearing around the track – some more so than others.

A huge thanks to Keith Jones and the team; and Mazda NZ, for making this memorable day possible. I'm sure most of us left feeling more confident driving our little cars and amazed by just how capable they are. If you haven't been on a Driver Training Day before, I can highly recommend it. 🏎️



PRIZE WINNERS:

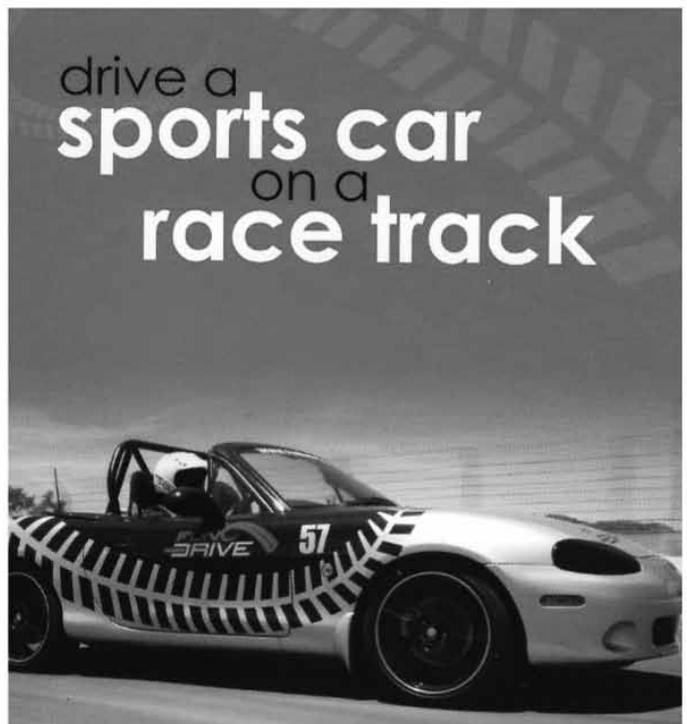
Gymkhana – Paul Donovan

Slalom – Yasa Panagoda

Braking (Most Improved) – Tom & Kitty

Corning (Most Improved) – Liz Norton

FunDrive Vouchers (Value \$370 each) – Matthew Underwood, Kapiti and Murray Croker, Gisborne.



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STRAY CATS STRUT RUN

NORTHERN RUN: 13 AUGUST 2016 // REPORT & PHOTO'S BY MORRIN LAYTON

Saturday 13th August 9.00am, time to head off to meet for the monthly run. Being the 13th it was raining, not to worry the weather man said it is actually fine. Now what the meaning of the STAY CATS STRUT is I have no idea.

Arriving at Westgate we spotted the highly polished collection of about 25 MX5s. One particular white NB had cd blasting in the car park, this is when I found out what a Stray Cat was, it was a pop group of some sort that I had never heard of. We were supposed to come dressed in a period costume. Two of the ladies were on to it and received a prize. Yep Im getting old.

Anyway President Brenda gave her welcome words and Taylor read the OSH safety instructions and we headed off to Matakana. Instruction 2 said follow FRED TAYLOR - my trusty nav could not see Fred, so we followed the organiser's car in front that was driven by one called Taylor that will do.

Through Riverhead onto Ridge Rd past DOTCOMs house to Dairy flat across to H/way 16 we then cut across to Warkworth and on up to Matakana. A little further on a right turn into Morris & James Pottery for lunch and a look through the pottery shop. The cafe did a great job of getting us all our lunch and we had a look at the pottery made at the place. Lots of talking went on and rearranging the tables.

One by one we headed off home although the story is some may have visited a winery on the way

home. It was a great run over some really good MX5 roads and some of the scenery was outstanding, in particular up high looking over the Kaipara Harbour.

Thanks to Taylor for a great run, great company and for sorting out the weather after a real stink week of rain and cold. ☁

Northern Show 'n' Shine Sunday, 20 November 10am



**Watene Reserve, Corner
Watene Cres, and Tamaki
Drive, Auckland waterfront.
All regions
welcome !!!!**

**Come along, support the
Westpac Helicopter Trust**

\$10 entry (to WHT)

**Merchandise, Sausage sizzle, Raffles, prizes for best
NA,NB,NC & ND**

Judging at 12.30pm

Non members welcome also (MX5's only)

Email Brenda—president@mx5club.org.nz for more info



WANDER THE WAIKATO

WAIKATO RUN: 18 SEPTEMBER 2016 // PHOTOS AND STORY BY DENIS CROSSMAN

In spite of a wet morning, 12 MX5's gathered at the "Superloos" in Cambridge for a "Wander the Waikato" outing which was organised by Gordon Tucker. The Superloos are closing shortly due to a drop in business caused by the new Cambridge bypass so we may have to rename our Cambridge meeting venue.

The rain eased and after a chat we headed off, roofs down in most cases. Through Cambridge, over the high bridge (just as well the MX5 is not very wide as the bridge is pretty narrow), through Leamington and southwards on the west side of Lake Karapiro. After nice traffic free run past Karapiro and Arapuni Gordon lead us on a bit of a maze until we arrived in the back streets of Putaruru.

From Putaruru we headed to The Blue Spring. Apparently 70% of New Zealand's bottled water is sourced from here as well as being the water supply for Putaruru. Water from the Mamaku Plateau takes anywhere between 50 and 100 years to reach the Blue Spring. The water is a constant 11 degrees C come winter or summer. The reason for the blue colour (and visual clarity) is the high optical purity of the water. Pure water is intrinsically blue in hue because it absorbs red light leaving only blue and some green light to be transmitted to the observer's eye. Pure natural waters are blue to green in colour because they lack light absorbing particles that are removed during the long time the spring water spends in underground aquifers.

Returning to our cars after visiting the spring we headed off to the lunch venue at the Kaimai Cheese Cafe in Waharoa. Graeme (Dento) surprised us by joining the group at the Cafe which was great to see. It was Graeme's first outing in his MX5 for some time as he is recovering from a knee replacement and was looking really well.

After some cheese tasting and lunch we headed off again through Scotsman Valley and Te Miro to Cambridge for refreshments and final farewells for the day.

Many thanks to Gordon Tucker for organising a great and interesting day. 🌟

AHOY TE KUITI



WAIKATO RUN: 28 AUGUST 2016 // PHOTOS AND STORY BY KARIN MERRIFIELD

It was a sunny Sunday morning when 10 cars met at the Rototuna Shopping Centre. Having gathered our troops and caught up on each other's news we departed Hamilton for Cambridge at 10h30 to meet our next contingent of 6 cars at that famous meeting spot, the Cambridge Superloo.

In my research for this article, I am sorry to report that the Cambridge Superloo will be "semi-closed" at the end of October this year due to falling visitor numbers. The "loo keeper" who greets visitors daily (up to 5pm) will be out of a job, come end of October. The blame lies fully on the shoulders of the new expressway. One wonders then whether progress and change are always good..? The two loos will remain for now, but will be keeper-less. However, the council are pondering the future of the Superloo building and possibly may turn it into a retail space. Maybe the MX5 Club of New Zealand would like to petition the Cambridge/Waipā Council to keep the Superloo open as, after all, where could we find a more central meeting place for our Cambridge comfort stop if the Superloo was closed?

About 11am sees Denis (our Regional Co-ordinator) leading the way in his ND as we slowly set off to wend our way through the Waikato countryside towards King Country and Te Kuiti. However, it was a case of "hurry up and wait" at the roundabouts in the Cambridge CBD as many locals

and visitors seemed to be making the most of the sunny weather by lolling about the streets lined with plentiful cafes and shops.

The "share with care" road sign was very apt today as we encountered some (okay there were many!) cyclists who were out enjoying the beautiful weather too. We came across the cyclists on the outskirts of Cambridge where they participated in a cycle race which consisted of two events – a 40 km or 70km. They provided a whirl of colour and distraction as we said farewell to the outer environs of Cambridge, having to slow down our convoy as we passed various pelotons.

The GPS told me that it was about a 56 minute drive to Te Kuiti from Cambridge. Switching off the GPS and following the convoy, imagine my surprise when we arrived at Otorohanga instead of Te Kuiti after about 90 minutes. And I can see that you may be also starting to wonder if this article is a tribute to public loos around New Zealand... as our stop at Otorohanga was another leg stretching and comfort stop at Otorohanga's version of the public wharepaku. And I don't know how Denis does this on every run we've been on so far – make a journey longer, but infinitely more interesting and picturesque than the "direct route". It's a gift, really!

We arrived at "Meadesville" at the rather good time of 1 o'clock for a bite of lunch at Tiffany's (I

guess one could've had "the all day breakfast at Tiffany's" instead, if one was that way inclined!). It was during the 2011 Rugby World Cup that Te Kuiti capitalised on its famous local hero, Colin Meades, and tongue-in-cheek, temporarily took on a new name, Meadesville. And there's much more to Te Kuiti than meets the eye – it hosted the world's largest sheep exhibition in 2006 with over 2,000 sheep, although the data doesn't say how many humans were in attendance...

I do think we'll have to go back to Te Kuiti sometime soon, as we've missed out on some of the main attractions, an example being the Tatsuno Japanese Garden which is at the southern end of the main street. The garden was established in 1998 and opened in 1999 as a symbol of the importance of its sister city relationship with Tatsuno in Japan. The garden is home to a combination of New Zealand native and Japanese plants which provide year round interest for the visitor.

All 16 MX5's lined up in the parking across the road, almost like royalty we had no other cars to sully our line up. After a hearty and tasty lunch our convoy headed off on the next stage of our adventure, direction Pirongia to the Alexandria Hotel for some refreshments before calling an end to yet another great MX5 run in our beautiful New Zealand. 🌞



WHIRINAKI FALLS

REPORT & PHOTOS BY VICKY POWELL

14th August: The day started out bright and sunny and the drive across from Rotorua to the meeting point at Matata was awesome.

After a quick catch-up it was off on the drive down State Highway 30 to Whirinaki Falls picnic area. The road from Murapara to Whirinaki was an awesome MX-5 road. Once there, the waterfall was amazing and river running quite high due to the recent weather. A great spot for a picnic.

Another amazing day out in the MX-5 – a big thanks to Owen for organising the run.



BOP REPORT:

ROTORUA LUNCH

On 28th August it was Rotorua's turn to host the monthly dinner meet, which was held on a Sunday at lunchtime! About 16 cars turned up for a great Rotorua day. Lunch was at Pig n Whistle followed by a meander around Mt Ngongotaha then up to Mamaku for a quick stop at the Mamaku Blue shop. Then back down to Hamurana springs with a short walk to the springs to round off a great day!



LUNCH AT RANGIRIRI PUB

BAY OF PLENTY RUN: 11 SEPTEMBER 2016 // REPORT & PHOTO'S BY DOROTHY LOCKE

Sunday 11th September 15 cars meet at the Farmlands Car park at the Lakes on a brilliant sunny morning for a back road run to the Rangiriri Pub in north Waikato for lunch.

We left around 9.30 am and headed over the Kamais to Matamata... Through Matamata, out on to some Rural roads towards Morrinsville ... through Morrinsville more rural roads towards Te Hoe ..on to more back

roads towards Te Kawhahta.... Then discovered that half the team were missing!

The missing team then decided to read their driving sheets.

Thanks to Glenys and Ross they decided to go directly to the pub so arriving with my bunch on time for lunch...

A much needed beer, wine, coffee was had followed by a generous sized lunch.

Then we headed off for afternoon tea at The Lilly Pad Café on Kapaki Road Near Cambridge.

We took the Motorway to Hamilton then the new bypasses south that have popped up. With Hamilton being halfway to Auckland now.

Finally arriving for coffee and a look at the Garden Art at the café.

Final Goodbyes and then a dash home. 🌀

DAFFODILS, FRIENDS, FAMILY AND TRIP WIRE

HAWKES BAY RUN: AUGUST 2016 // REPORT BY ELAINE CHAPLIN // PHOTO BY AVERIL

The day started with high cloud and a light wind which was a pleasant change from the harrowing, chilly Southerly wind, rain, hail and snow the country had been having.

We met the other members at the starting point before driving towards Bridge Pa. The challenge for me was to avoid the State Highways as much as possible and to find a road that the members have not been down before. Well that's easy I thought but then realised it had to be paved!

From Bridge Pa we took a left into Raukawa Road which I had scouted out before but I soon realised that on my dummy run I had been travelling alone and so much faster than I could with a group who quite rightly were enjoying the drive and the stunning scenery of snow-capped mountains, bright blue sky and fresh spring growth in the surrounding agricultural land. I adjusted my speed to allow me to take in a few sneaky peaks at the views myself as we navigated the turns and hills that were unfamiliar to most of us.

There is of course always one who has been down the road before but 75% of the group hadn't so I scored a point there.

So off down Burma Road to Raukawa lookout for a quick stop

to admire the view and discuss various points of interest, nice to see the SH2 from a different angle. We avoided the gravel road by navigating a U turn but as this was planned it did not lose me points.

By this time, I was realising that our 11am deadline to meet our loved ones at the Taniwha Daffodils was not going to happen if I continued on the planned course so I shortened it considerably and continued to Argyll East. So far so good until we encountered an errant roll of high tensile wire that spectacularly managed to wind itself around one of the car's rear axles.

Now luckily we had Mike (aka Superman) with us because he gallantly got under the car with a pair of pliers and started unwinding the wire, Tim joined in when it was obvious it was not an easy fix and I went off in the hope of finding a local with a pair of wire cutters. Just as the local farmer was located the final piece of wire was released. That was good news but now we had a herd of very suspicious cows and their calves descending on us down the road. After a bit of moving away by people to the other side of the cars the herd passed without incident and we were free to pack up and Rosemary (aka Superman's sidekick) patched up Mike's and Tim's hands.

During the time Mike was under the car various planes circled us, no doubt wondering what exactly was going on. It must have looked rather dramatic from above seeing a pair of legs sticking out from under a car plus several cars with hazard lights on.

Once we were all safely back on the road again it was another quick rethink of the route to make up for lost time. So we arrived at Taniwha nearly an hour later than advertised and found to our delight a couple of members and their beautiful daughter sitting enjoying the sunshine and daffodils while waiting for us.

By this time we all were desperate for our well-deserved but very late morning tea. Some of us sat and relaxed while others picked daffodils and took photos but all of us enjoyed the perfect weather. We then said our goodbyes to our family and friends before returning home on SH2 for a pleasant lunch at Hatuma Café. Followed by a quick visit to Artmosphere gallery in Waipawa, Pukehou Collectibles and a stroll around Peka Peka wetlands.

So all in all a good day, not a bit as I had planned but we had an adventure to dine out on for a while and the blooper cup has duly been passed on to the poor unfortunate couple who were literally wired. 🌀

MILD AUGUST DAY



HAWKES BAY REPORT:



HAWKES BAY RUN: AUGUST 2016 // REPORT BY DEB AND ALLAN // PHOTOS BY ROSEMARY

Well what a beaut day for a good run, bit of Neil Diamond on the Bose, tops down on a crisp and beautiful Hawkes Bay morning. Had a couple pull out due to unforeseen circumstances and thought four cars if we're lucky.

WOW! You can imagine my excitement when we had six cars arrive. Fab, it's about the cars and the people - more the merrier I say. Such a shame two missing but they were there in spirit and we know they will be back with us soon when firing on all fours again.

We welcomed Stewart and Averil on their first run with us and also glad to see Julie back in the passenger's seat as Ray's navigator.

We know we're off to Mangatainoka, Tui Brewery, for lunch but not too sure how the heck we're gonna get there. Mike the runmaster has a stack of envelopes in his hand, seems quite straight forward really, as all you have to do is follow your navigator's instructions and you'll be fine.

First hitch; one car only has Al (that's Al, with one L), as Marg is bowling in Norfolk Island!!! Don't panic Mr Mainwaring, the first leg is quite straight forward so Al (with one L) takes the lead under

starters verbal instructions. All good we're off.

Get to our first change over point without a hitch and then Al (with one L) hands over the envelopes. Piece of cake. Know the road, basic idea where we're heading off we go again. Deb busy looking at beautiful house on the hill and misses crucial turnoff. Oppppps.

Compulsory U turn for three cars as the others led by Mike the runmaster made the turn. How did they know?? Cuppa tea and comfort stop at Waipukurau after some fabulous Central Hawkes Bay roads, no more wrong turns and an envelope change or two.

Essentially we stayed off the Main Highway, a couple more envelope changes, when it got to Al's (with one L) turn, Tim hoped in with him to navigate his leg. We arrived at the Tui Brewery at about 1ish, weather turning, as it tends to do around this area, but looking forward to lunch, which was fab. It is a great venue and after an hour or so set off again, homeward bound.

Deb and Al (with 2 L's) turn. No pressure or anything so I decided best I concentrate this time. Normally after the lunch leg I have a quick nap, but best I stay alert, well awake would also be a good idea!! Again, staying off the

main highway, all goes to plan and envelopes deftly change hands.

However, a bit of a falter at Norsewood with another U turn, only two cars though this time and again Mike the runmaster saves the day and the front two cars don't take long to do their U turn whilst we wait round the corner.

Regroup for an incident free, but scenic, run back to Waipukurau for a quick debrief and cuppa for those who wish.

We present the little trophy, normally for something that the present holder thinks is worthy. As Al and I were the trusty holders we decided it would be nice to present this to Stewart and Averil on their first outing with us and as a token of our appreciation for them not leaving us standing alone on the dias U turn front. After all we couldn't very well present it to ourselves now could we?!

So with a little Tui bottle added to our illustrious trophy, Stewart and Averil have this in their safe hands until another worthy recipient can be found.

A great day, great company, fun and laughter. Great MX5 roads. A big thankyou to Mike the runmaster and his trusty navigator Rosemary for a great Mild August Day.

Red Red wine. Yeah Right. 🍷



CLUB RUN ... NO THANKS TO GOOGLE MAPS

MANAWATU RUN: AUGUST 2016 // REPORT & PHOTO'S BY PETER & DENISE GRIFFITHS

We planned this run using Google Maps and after driving last time on some gravel road it was expected that this one would be smooth driving through amazing country.

Well as it turned out we didn't get a chance to drive the route to test it, so took a look at Google's photos to see if it was sealed.

We did warn them at the start that it should be seal but as we had not driven it we couldn't be sure. Using Google Maps you can view the intersections and along the road but clearly I didn't look far enough.

We started in Hunterville heading west to turn left onto Turakina Valley Rd.

Alas a few kms down this road it turned to gravel for about 30kms, oh dear this was going to be embarrassing, all those shiny cars that everyone had so carefully prepared were going to get dirty.

Isn't it strange that once the car has a bit of dirt on it the fun of driving on gravel takes over and awayyyyyyyy.... we go.

The drive was well worth it despite the gravel with most thoroughly enjoying themselves as well as

the lack of dust due to the recent wet weather. There were a few cattle freely grazing along this part but they didn't seem to mind the intrusion of a dozen or so MX5s disturbing their day.

All in all, another excellent day in our Zoom Zoom machines, however the lesson learned is to actually drive the route each time in future. 🌀



LUNCH AT TIKOKINO PUB

MANAWATU RUN: SEPTEMBER 2016 // REPORT & PHOTO'S BY PETER & DENISE GRIFFITHS

Yippee the first really nice day for a while dawned as we put the hood down and set off to the convoy start point at Summerhill Drive Palmerston Nth.

An excellent turnout (including a couple of newbies....welcome guys) with everyone enjoying the prospect of an awesome run on some excellent roads and wonderful views of the Ruahines. They were still covered with snow from the recent cold spell.

We travelled in convoy to Pahiatua, where we were joined by another couple of cars and then

our instructions started.

We were warned there was some gravel and were offered an alternate route which a couple of cars took. The gravel however was excellent, being smooth and slightly damp to keep the dust under control.

We travelled to our lunch stop at the Tikokino Pub for an excellent meal even though it was a bit slow coming as a result of them being packed out.

After lunch some went home directly and remaining 10 cars I think followed Glyn and Cath over

the Gentle Annie on the Taihape Napier road to return to the Manawatu.

There was barely a cloud in the sky so the scenery was wonderful. The trip across Gentle Annie is an excellent road. It would have to be on the top 10 list of Zoom Zoom roads.

Another great run of some 500kms driving our awesome MX5s in perfect weather with great company and superb scenery.

Thank-you Glyn and Cathy. 🌟

GUNS AND RELICS

KAPITI RUN: 21 AUGUST 2016
// REPORT & PHOTOS BY
SHARON EWING

Sunday what a lovely day for a drive, top down and headed over the hill to Silverstream for our meeting place. Keith could not make it so I took my Auntie as navigator.

Arrived at Silverstream and met four other cars, I had done the run sheet, so handed them out and asked if they could correct the mistakes as we go, as we were getting the drive ready for the Nationals.



A quick lesson on how to navigate, and we were off. We went out over the Hayward's, across Grays Rd into Plimmerton then onto Paekakariki, where we did a loop around the park and then onto Mike and Sue's place for morning tea. Thanks Sue was a nice morning tea. We were joined here by Donna; have six cars now.

After about half an hour we were off again back onto SH1 towards Paraparaumu, turning off at Poplar Ave down to the Beach and drove along the road beside the beach, meeting back up with SH1 by Southwards, then headed to Waikanae and did the same driving along by the beach and up Peka Peka Rd back onto SH1, back through Waikanae, then back



roads at Paraparaumu and into Queen Elizabeth Park for lunch.

Had a quick stop in Waikanae for a few to get lunch, as they could not read my mind about a picnic lunch, I thought I put it in the newsletter.

Was a great day, thanks all for coming. 🌀



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TARANAKI REPORT:

MIDWINTER CELEBRATION

Midwinter Celebration – 12 months of MX-5ing.....

SUNDAY 17TH JULY, 2016 // REPORT AND PHOTOS
BY KAZ BRUCE

The Taranaki Region had a Midwinter Buffet Lunch at the "Iconic" Kaponga Hotel to celebrate 12 months of MX-5ing.

I used the occasion to present photos (selected from the many I had taken) to the members that had organised day runs and weekenders during 2015/2016. What a great team effort.

There were a couple of fun presentations as well for the most MX-5 Km's in a Tiger Moth and the most MX-5 km's overseas and not to forget being on the cover of TOPDOWN.

Many thanks to Neil Goodwin for organising the visits to the Johnnie Walker Whiskey Museum and Elvis Presley Museum in Hawera and Roy Kings Restoration and Vehicle Collection in Kaponga prior to our Buffet . We all had a fantastic day. 🌟





MARAHAU RUN

NELSON/TASMAN RUN: 28 AUGUST 2016 // REPORT SUPPLIED BY GAYLENE ST JOHN

A good turnout of 12 cars on this run. After meet, greet and talk about the effects of pollen on polished MX-5s we headed to Three Brothers Corner and onto the Appleby Highway.

Jill and Kevin led us through Gardner Valley Road to the Moutere Highway, Queen Victoria Street and onto High Street and the Clock Tower car park in Motueka. It's such a familiar meeting place and we have quite an archive of photos of MX-5s at this spot.

We headed out from there onto Motueka Quay and over Motueka River Bridge to Riwaka. The convoy then turned onto the Kaiteriteri/Sandy Bay Road and continued to Marahau Village to the end of the road. There was 'leg stretch' time and also time to lift a hood to look at adaptations and things mechanical.

Then we returned to Kaiteriteri/Sandy Bay Road for a stop to enjoy the view at Kaka Point, which is incredible, and time for comparing MX-5 models and more interest in what's going on under

the bonnet. That left just enough time to reach the Shoreline Café for refreshments and more chat about cars and the way of the world.

A sunny, social day with the group, well organised with detailed instructions provided by Jill and Kevin. Their experience showed with this comment in the notes: "If these instructions are too difficult, try following the car in front and if that doesn't work for you, phone us and we will try to help!" Many thanks to them. 🌀

PICTON RUN

MARLBOROUGH RUN: AUGUST 2016 // REPORT & PHOTOS SUPPLIED BY CARYL SIMPSON

The August run turned out to be beautiful weather (not expected) so it was decided to drive through the beautiful Queen Charlotte Drive and have afternoon tea at Picton. Four cars lined up at the railway station and we picked up Stan and Nola on the way past at Linkwater.

We stopped at a couple of lookouts along the way, enjoying the view and chatting (while I recovered from car sickness). Once at Picton, around quarter to three, we parked up on the foreshore beside the Aquarium and wandered up to the main street to find a café - easier said than done! Picton appeared to be shut.

We did not want to walk too far as one of our group was incapable of doing so and we figured there would be lots of cafes at that end of town.

We thought Mikey's Bar & Restaurant looked interesting as they had a live band playing and a nice fire going but they did not serve tea or coffee. They recommended Café Cortado, the fancy new one on the corner of High St and London Quay. Over we went to find that, not only were they were closed, but the café itself was empty of all furniture. We assume they were having a refit. Back across the road to The Seabreeze Café but they were just closing.

We finally settled in Le Café, further down London Quay. Food was a bit limited and tended to be healthy stuff, but we all found something to enjoy and had a good time over our drinks. I think I horrified the server when I asked if they did chips and was informed in no uncertain terms that they did not deep fry anything at their establishment!

Once home again, I posted some of these photos taken along the way to "Old Marlborough, the way we were", a Facebook page to which I belong. Many overseas people, who used to live in Marlborough, loved them and said it made them homesick. 🌀





OTAGO REPORT

NASEBY TO THE ANCIENT BRITON HOTEL

OTAGO RUN: JULY 2016 // REPORT SUPPLIED BY CLINT TREWIN

The weather hadn't been too good leading up to the start of our July run and so therefore was no surprise when Run day came around ... so did the rain. It wasn't enough to dampen the enthusiasm of some "Die Hard" members however and it was at Southern Paper Products in Fairfield that we did meet. Some people were new to going on a run, but by the end of the day, all good friends with Clint our host ensuring that everyone felt welcome.

Even before we had left Fairfield, the rain had eased off and it was with a positive spirit, tops went down and we headed off towards Outram and then towards Middlemarch. On route we came across some thick mounds of snow but generally speaking, most of that "white stuff" was hugging the surrounding hills which just added to the beauty of the Maniototo. Add all the MX-5s to the scene and you have one beautiful picture!

It was a pleasure on route to meet up with three other folk from Central Otago who joined us in Ranfurly and together we continued onto Naseby and the Ancient Briton Hotel.

Immediately we congregated around the roaring fire, got to know each other better, had a few laughs and then sat down to enjoy a very nice lunch which included anything from a beef burger, to succulent ribs or whitebait (as you do in an inland town such as Naseby). Our meals



were delicious and can highly recommend the Ancient Briton Hotel.

On our departure from the hotel, I was curious about the "round" pool table and with the help of a couple of fellow MX-5 enthusiasts checked it out. Well, it ended up being about 1.5 m across and couldn't be extended as I had thought. I guess it would be a very quick game of pool? Or perhaps it is designed for one when they have had a few "swifties" and take forever on a bigger table?

We took the same route home but this time we stopped at "The Practice" in Ranfurly. It used to be the dental clinic however these days they retail some very interesting, good quality "kiwiana" and good coffee. Definitely worth a wee poke around if you are passing through Ranfurly. We were fortunate that the owner opened up for us as the shop was closed upon our arrival. How nice was that!



From here we ambled home in our own good time. It had been a good day out and left us all with a sense of comradeship and the promise of attending future rallies.

Never having been in an MX5 or any convertible before for that matter, I was amazed to discover two things. I learnt that paper doesn't even flutter behind the front windscreen nor do you get the slightest bit wet in a light rain with the top down when travelling at speed on the open road. Who says convertibles are only good on sunny days? Wow, what a car. Convertibles? I'm "converted"!!!

- Nikki Hart 🌸

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