

UPCOMING EVENTS



July 16
Wheels 'n Meals
Boll Weevil



July 23
Wheels 'n Meals
Cruise Night at Oscar's



July 28
Fun Run to Idyllwild



August 10
Twilight Fun Run

December ??
Christmas Lights & Party

Key to Icons



Wheels n' Meals (Social)



Fun Run



Internet



Tech



Autocross

From the Editor

The Detective

One of the most annoying things, besides following lost tourists, about any car are the elusive squeaks that crop up during a drive. Some are easy to locate; others are deeply hidden within the recesses of the car. Most of the time I turn the radio up and the squeaks magically disappear. Now I know that the squeak is still there, but at least I don't have to listen to it chirp away as I find the San Diego potholes. All cars will develop them over time, and thus starts the detective phase.

The Miata is relatively squeak and rattle free, but of the few it does tend to develop, the one I've found to be the hardest to place is the hood latch squeak. The squeak sounds like it is coming from the dash, but is really coming from the front of the car. I wouldn't be surprised if some Mazda mechanic somewhere tore apart the dash looking for that squeak. The hood latch rubs against the catch mechanism and a squeak is born. The hood and latch are made of aluminum, so I'm guessing that the latch bends a little from the vibrations on the road and the constant tug from the catch, causing it to loosen up against the catch. The easy remedy is to wrap about an inch or two of electrical tape (not too much or the catch won't let go) around the latch where it comes in contact with the catch. I also smear a little white lithium grease on the outside of the tape to keep it from being chewed up too quickly. If you have an elusive squeak, try this fix and see if it goes away.

There is also the passenger seat rattle. Without a passenger in the seat, it will vibrate a little from the road bumps. If you have after-market headrest speakers like I do, the rattle may be more noticeable as the speakers will also rattle against the plastic speaker cover. Push the seat all the way back on the seat rails and the seat back will be pinned up against the rear deck. Also, after you adjust the seat, you may want to check the screws holding the glove box. Sometimes these screws come loose and the glove box door will rattle.

I've noticed quite a few people who would rather not use a top boot or tonneau cover. Without these covers to hold down the top, you might find the top rattling a little. Not much you can really do about that, other than use the boot. But it is another source for rattles if you are trying to track them down.

And for the last comes my favorite: the header pipe head shield rattle. Around 3500-4000 RPM, you may hear a buzz, like that of a metal rake being dragged across cement, reverberating off the walls as you drive. The spot welds securing the heat shield often break loose and the weld point becomes a rattle source. If your Miata is under warranty, Mazda will replace the A-pipe. If

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



not, then you have two choices: Purchase a new A-pipe, which is fairly expensive, or use a hose clamp to secure the heat shield against the pipe. Near the front of the A-pipe, which connects the header pipes to the catalytic converter, is where the heat shield is located. You'll need to get the car on a lift or on jack stands to get to the affected area. A 2-inch hose clamp should be sufficient to secure the shield.

There are other sources of squeaks and rattles, but their occur-

rence is fairly rare. As more information becomes available, I'll list other problem spots in later newsletters. Again, this leads me to the San Diego Miata Club members for information. If you have a squeak or rattle you've found and silenced, let me know, and I'll pass it on to the other members. You can mail it to the club address, or e-mail it to the general membership through the list server and I'll pick it up from there.

See you on the twisties...
— ROBERT "JTBOB" HOLLAND



NEXT MONTH

Check out next month's issue for a report on some of the fun things the Club has been up to. Woody Woodhouse reports on the Malibu Grand Prix event, and will give a breakdown of the *fastest* lap-times.



Members take notes as Bruce from North Coast Tarpaulin Works explains the specs of the many car covers available.

Outside—our president's Ultralor covered Miata.

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NOTICES

THE SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB is an official chapter of the Miata Club of America. We are a non-profit organization whose purpose is to promote the enjoyment of—and enthusiasm for—the Mazda Miata.

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

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

Internet: The San Diego Miata Club has established a dedicated World Wide Web Home Page at <http://mmdshare.ucsd.edu/sdmc.html>. The club has also established a members-only electronic mail list for those members with E-mail capability. If you included your E-mail address on your membership application then you should already be subscribed to the electronic mail list. If you recently acquired your E-mail account, please contact Cindy Paloma (paloma@cs.ucsd.edu) and request to be added to the electronic mail list.

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

San Diego Miata Club

P.O. Box 2286
Spring Valley, CA 91979-2286



MEETING PLACES:

Wheels 'n Meals at Boll Weevil

Date: Tuesday, July 16

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Place: Boll Weevil, 9330 Clairemont Mesa Blvd. (At intersection of Ruffin Rd.), San Diego (571-6225)

This has become a popular place for members to meet and "talk Miata" after enjoying one of Boll Weevil's great burgers. A great forum in which to ask questions and exchange information about accessories, upgrades or maintenance for your Miata.

Wheels 'n Meals — Cruise Night at Oscar's

Date: Tuesday, July 23

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Place: Oscar's Mission Valley, 8590 Rio San Diego Dr. (K-Mart Center), San Diego (295-6200)

Oscar's Mission Valley is sponsoring a "Cruise Night" every fourth Tuesday through November. All car clubs are welcome. Let's show up "en masse" and make San Diego Miata Club's presence known. Oscar's features delicious food at reasonable prices. The hand-rolled breadsticks are a favorite. They also have great BBQ chicken and ribs, pizza, pasta and salads. Cruise Night participants receive a 10% discount!

Fun Run to Idyllwild

Date: Sunday, July 28

Time: 9:30 a.m.

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

Run Leader: Richard Scherschel

Lunch will be at a restaurant (to be named later) along the way. Please RSVP to Richard if you plan to attend (286-2412).

UPCOMING NATIONAL AND REGIONAL EVENTS

July 4-7, 1996

Miata 96

Toronto, CANADA

Hosted by: Trillium Chapter

July 18-21, 1996

British Car Festival

Hosted by: MOSS Motors

July 27, 1996

Tech Day

Hosted by: SOCALM

August 16-18, 1996

Monterey Historic Races

Monterey, CA

September 13-15, 1996

Gold Rush '96

Sacramento, CA

Hosted by: SAMOA

October 3-6, 1996

Miata Games

Atlanta, GA

Hosted by: Peachtree Chapter

November 9, 1996

Central Coast Winery Run

Hosted by: SOCALM



Autocross at the Murph



Sunday, July 14

Racing

Sunday, August 11

Racing

Saturday, August 31

Practice

Sunday, October 6

Racing

Saturday, October 19

Practice

Sunday, October 20

Racing

Saturday, November 2

Practice

Sunday, November 10

Racing

Sunday, December 8

Racing





Flyin' Solo

2

"OK" you say, "so now I understand what this autocrossing thing is all about, and I know where I can watch it. But I'm pretty quick too, you know, and I'd like to try it myself. How do I know what class MY car will be in?"

Well, like I said last month, the classes in which you're likely to see San Diego Miatas are C stock (CS), C street-prepared (CSP), and E or S modified (EM or SM). But what makes each one different from the others? Keeping in mind that there are organizations other than SCCA who run autocross competitions, and that individual regions of even the SCCA may modify local rules somewhat to suit their needs, let's see what differentiates one class from another by starting with the most straightforward one.

C stock means just that — stock. In other words, this is the class intended for those who want to take their cars straight from the showroom floor to the racetrack. As you would expect, very little modification is allowed if you want to stay in C stock. There are, however, a few things you can do without getting bumped into street-prepared. Perhaps the most effective change you can make is tires. Street tires aren't very good for racing in the first place, and you don't want to scrub away 10,000 miles of relatively expensive street rubber in one weekend anyway. So get yourself another set of wheels and invest in some racing rubber. You can select almost any tire you like, as long as it's DOT approved, generally available to the public, and produced in at least four

diameters. The tread must be within the fender line when viewed from above. If your tire meets those requirements, it can be any size that fits your wheels...which takes us, of course, to wheels. You can run any brand wheel you like as long as it's the same size as came on the car as OEM equipment and has an offset that is plus or minus ¼-inch of that of the original wheel. One thing to keep in mind regarding these restrictions and the OEM Miata alloy wheels — Miata alloys are among the lightest wheels out there, and heavy wheels add to unsprung weight, NOT the way you want to go in a racing application. Due to the cost of OEM alloys, many racers use a set of the relatively inexpensive steel wheels from the base cars for mounting their racing rubber. If you can afford a second set, though, the alloys are much lighter, and therefore better for autocrossing. One last note about wheels — the "same size" restriction applies to width as well as diameter. That's why you can't run the even lighter '94 alloys on a pre-'94 Miata. The newer wheels are 6-inches wide, while the original ones were 5.5.

OK, so you've got your racing rubber on your extra set of wheels. What else can you do? Not much. You can change to another brand of shock absorbers as long as you don't use them to adjust the ride height of the

left: Richard Scherschel practices with the "infamous" Sean Crandell onboard.

car. For example, if you buy some Konis with the adjustable perches you must set the perches so that they approximate the factory shocks' ride height. In some regions, or should you be good enough to make it to the national runoffs, you may even be required to weld the perches in-place. Lowering the ride height moves the center of gravity downward...an advantage not allowed in C stock. If your shocks are adjustable, however, you may use any settings they provide for jounce and rebound.

You can also change the air filter to one that provides a higher air flow. You can't change the whole intake system, mind you, only the air filter unit itself. Many racers switch to something like the K&N or Jackson Racing dual-stage foam filter.

The last thing you're allowed to change in stock is the front swaybar (actually, more properly called an anti-roll bar). ONLY the front swaybar, not the rear one, and not the end links or their bushings — just the swaybar. You'd better know what you're doing if you make this change, though, as you're likely to introduce "push" (understeer) with a thicker front swaybar unless you're a pretty good suspension tuner.

Well, you say, that's all fine and dandy, but I just plain like the look of 15-inch wheels with 50-series tires. And I really want to get some Eibachs and swaybars to reduce the body roll on Wynola Road. Yeah, and that Jackson Racing Cold Air Induction would be too cool! OK, you can do that, but now you're in C street-prepared. Why do you care? If you're just running for the fun of it and the satisfaction of beating your own personal best time, you don't. But if you're in it for a trophy, you need to be aware that the street-prepared crowd is SERIOUS! If you want to be competitive in that class, keep your wallet close at hand.

In street-prepared, you can start to



do some really neat things to your baby for the street and not have to tear them all off before you go racing. You want that Cold Air Induction unit? Like that new Jackson Racing header? No problem. No superchargers, though. Eight-pound 13-inch wheels with 205/50 racing tires? No sweat. Actually, there's very little you can't do to the car except forced induction or internal engine modifications. If you want to run side draft Webers, you can do that, although I can't imagine why you'd bother. But pop in a high-lift cam and win with it and you'll be in trouble with the tech inspectors. If you had money to burn before you developed an interest in racing and spent the whole weekend installing that cam and solid lifters (don't let CARB catch you with those here in California, by the way), you'll be dropping the "street" and moving into C prepared. In prepared you can modify the engine internals, gut the interior, use fiberglass body panels, change the compression, etc. One caveat, however...you must run an approved roll bar in prepared. And good luck if you're looking for a trophy in this class. I recently saw a picture on a Web page of a heavily-modified Shelby GT-350 that's running in C prepared.

Lastly, there are the modified classes, E or S (street), for Miatas with forced induction (superchargers or turbos). Here, among your competitors, you'll find formula cars, sports racers, and specials. Again, you'll need more than just luck and a

large parts budget to be competitive here.

Perhaps the most effective single investment you can make for faster times, no matter your class, is upgrading the dude (or dudette) behind the wheel. You see it over and over again down at the cones...fast drivers in stock cars thrashing other drivers in modified, even heavily modified, cars. There are a number of competition driving schools around the country, and some of the very best offer courses of instruction either in California or in nearby states. If you want to and can afford to spend the money, take the three-day Formula Ford course at one of the biggies. From what I hear, you won't regret it. It's loads of fun as well as useful. If your pocketbook shrivels up every time you even think of the name Bondurant, though, consider attending one of Lotus West's weekends on the tarmac at in Orange County. You'll have to drive your own Miata and leave chunks of your own tires behind when you head for home, but you'll get yourself a solid weekend of autocross driving instruction for a mere 50 bucks or so. Believe me, if you're born to race, it's the best 50 bucks you'll ever spend. Here are some of the schools that offer a racing education right in your back yard:



Rainer as a seasoned veteran.

SKIP BARBER RACING SCHOOL
Corporate Headquarters
29 Brook Street, Lakeville, CT 06039
Phones: 860-435-1300
707-939-8000 (West coast)
Fax: 860-435-1321
E-mail: speed@skipbarber.com
Note: Skip Barber operates driving schools at four operationally-based locations: Lime Rock Park, Road America, Sebring International Raceway, and Laguna Seca Raceway.

Additionally, courses of instruction are held at approximately 17 other locations, including Willow Springs, at various times of the year.

BONDURANT SCHOOL OF HIGH PERFORMANCE DRIVING
Firebird International Raceway
P.O. Box 51980
Phoenix, AZ 85076-1980
Phones: 800-842-7223, 520-796-1111

JIM HALL CART RACING SCHOOL
1555-G Morse Avenue,
Ventura, CA 93003
Phone: 805-654-1329
Fax: 805-654-0227

LOTUS WEST SLALOM SCHOOL
Contact: Tom Minnich
Phone: 310-697-0547
Schools are held biannually.
Next scheduled is October 11-12, 1996

RUSSELL RACING SCHOOL
Sears Point Raceway
29305 Arnold Drive
Sonoma, CA 95476
Phone: 707-939-7600
WWW: <http://www.RussellRacing.com>
(active 7-1-96)

— VOODOO BOB KRUEGER

Club competitors, June 1996:

STEVE HART, CSP — 3rd place (trophy)
RAINER MUELLER, CS
DEE ROBIDER, CSP
RICHARD SCHERSCHEL, SM

Steve Hart on his way to a third place trophy.



Here We Grow Again

As I write this, the San Diego Miata Club stands at 63 memberships consisting of 96 members. Wow! We've almost doubled in size in three short months. Once we do the postcard mailing to the names given us by Miata Club of America (we're holding off on this until we have a final club logo) we should see our membership count easily exceed the big one hundred mark!

Deals and Discounts

Please take a look at the Local Business Discounts column. We've added several new dealerships to our listing. Just about every area of the county now has a discount dealership located nearby. In some cases, these are dealers that did not give a SOCALM discount or have improved the discount for San Diego Miata Club members (DE LA FUENTE MAZDA in El Cajon is offering an astounding 20% discount on parts!). My thanks to all for their support!

For those that did not attend the June 12 Wheels 'n Meals, NORTH COAST TARPAULIN WORKS is offering a special discount to San Diego Miata Club members through JULY 15 ONLY. If you are remotely considering a new car cover for your Miata, NOW is the time to buy. Contact Bruce at North Coast (275-7100) for more information.

In this issue, please find my review of the WINDSTOP from AMERICAN SUNROOF COMPANY. ASC is offering a special \$100 discount to San Diego Miata Club members. Full details on their offer can be found following the review.

Events

All in all, I've been very pleased with the turnouts we have received at our events. Ideally, I would like to see at least 4 events every month. A couple of driving events and a couple of social events would be perfect. However, the board needs your help in planning future events. How about leading a run or planning a rallye? Do you have a suggestion for a good Wheels 'n Meals meeting place? Please contact Ruth Stark with your ideas and suggestions.

Everyone please try to attend the "Cruise Night" at OSCAR'S Mission Valley. Oscar's is a very popular place and we can give the club some great exposure by showing up "en masse". Filling the parking lot with 30-40 Miatas should do it!

Member Tips

Having trouble with your rear window zipper? Member MARK MEYERS informs me that the zipper head (the part that most often fails) is now available separately. Just order Mazda Part # NA01 R1 250B. Thanks Mark!

San Diego Miata Club News?

Finally, we are in need of a name for our newsletter. Some examples from other chapters... Northcoast Chapter: Exhaust Notes, Del-Val Chapter: Roadster Review, Greater Cincinnati Chapter: Topless Maneuvers. Please send your suggestions to the mail list or leave a message on the club line. Thanks!

Again, my continued appreciation to everyone for your support of the club! Until next month...keep that top down!

— MARK

New Members!

Dwight & Pamela Filley

San Diego
1993 Red B

John & Catherine Godden

San Diego
1992 Red B

John Harvey

San Diego
1990 Red A

Fred & Anne Lerner

Carlsbad
1995 White B

Mike Martin

San Diego
1995 White PE

John O'Hara

San Diego
1994 Laguna Blue C

Eric Olinger

Carlsbad
1994 M (Montego Blue)

Richard Taylor

Carlsbad
1990 Red B

Becky & Gary Wells

Murrieta
1996 M (Starlight Blue)

Takashi Yamamoto

Spring Valley
1996 Montego Blue Base

There are now 63 memberships consisting of 96 members.

23 Classic Red

12 White

7 Mariner Blue

7 Montego Blue

3 Black

3 BRG

3 Laguna Blue

3 Silver

1 Starlight Blue

1 Yellow

0 Merlot





**THE WINDSTOP
FROM AMERICAN SUNROOF COMPANY**

A Review by Mark Booth

The WINDSTOP is a very high quality rear windscreen designed specifically for the Miata. The frame is constructed of light-weight black aluminum. The center is an attractive mesh fabric. Anyone familiar with the windscreens found on the Mercedes convertibles will immediately know what the WINDSTOP looks like. In fact, the WINDSTOP was produced in partnership with ORIS in Germany.

To attach the WINDSTOP, you mount two small brackets to existing holes near the seatbelt towers (no drilling required). The mounting brackets are small and virtually invisible when the WINDSTOP is not attached. When you wish to use the WINDSTOP, you simply slide the hinged legs on the WINDSTOP down into the mounting bracket tubes. The legs click-lock into place and that's it. The WINDSTOP is ready. While mounted, the WINDSTOP can be folded to the rear, laying flat against the top boot if desired. ASC provides a nice zippered storage bag to hold the WINDSTOP safely when it is not in use. (Yes, it fits in the trunk.)

I can not emphasize enough just how well this product is designed

and constructed. First class hardware is used everywhere. The frame appears to be powder-coated.

The WINDSTOP is sized perfectly so that the top edge of the frame is slightly above the view through the rearview mirror. The frame does not interfere with your rearward vision. The mesh fabric allows a reasonably unobstructed rearward vision (it's kind of like having a tinted rear window). I noticed that the fabric tended to diffuse the headlights of vehicles following me...a plus as far as I am concerned.

How well does it work? In my informal testing (up and down the freeway and side streets near my home), I am disappointed to report that the WINDSTOP does only a minimal job of reducing the buffeting reaching the occupants when the side windows are DOWN. Too much air still manages to slip around the sides of the windshield and slap the occupants in the back of the head. With the side windows rolled all the way UP, however, the WINDSTOP significantly reduces the wind buffeting! All you feel is a little bit of turbulence around the top of your head. With the windows UP and the

WINDSTOP in place, the A/C and heater do a MUCH better job at keeping the occupants cool (or warm). If you don't mind riding with the windows rolled up, you will love the WINDSTOP.

Special deal for San Diego Miata Club members!

The regular price for the WINDSTOP is \$295.00 direct from ASC. However, ASC has agreed to sell the WINDSTOP direct to San Diego Miata Club members at a special discounted price of \$195.00! This price is only available for a limited time (while supplies last).

To get this special price the order must be placed DIRECTLY with ASC and must be pre-paid (sorry, ASC is not set up to handle credit cards). You must mention the San Diego Miata Club to get this special price. To order, send a money order (personal checks will delay your order) for \$207.00 (\$195.00 + \$12.00 for shipping) to:

AMERICAN SUNROOF COMPANY
18900 Walnut
Southgate, Mich. 48195
ATTENTION: Pat in parts

For more information, contact PAT in parts at American Sunroof Company 1-800-327-8054.

My special thanks to JIM FINNEY MAZDA for lending me a Windstop for my review!

