



SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB NEWS



VOLUME 4 NUMBER 7

JULY 1999

A CHAPTER OF THE MIATA CLUB OF AMERICA

UPCOMING EVENTS



July 4—Sunday
4th of July Parade
Scripps Ranch



July 10 —Saturday
Old Dam Mountain Run
with a Taste of Texas



July 17 —Saturday
J. Paul Getty Museum
and Brainstorm Open House



July 22—Thursday
Monthly/Quarterly
Meeting



July 24—Saturday, *new date!*
MCRD Museum Tour



August 1—Sunday
MDA Fun Run
Fund-Raising Event



August 7 —Saturday
Twilight Run



August 14 —Saturday
Tech Day at the Conn's
Joint Event—
VROOM/SDMC/SOCALM



September 6—Monday
MDA Telethon



September 25—Saturday
Kooky Spooky Rallye



October 7–10
Surf'n' Safari
SDMC Way Cool Regional Event

From the Editor

Infectious Enthusiasm

Don't call the health department, but there appears to be a rampant case of communicable Miata-mania among the members of the SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB. Whenever there is an event, you can bet we will be there. Those hardy souls who made the trip to Dallas for *Miata World '99* represented the club well. During the final banquet, the SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB members in attendance were recognized for being the "most helpful" and enthusiastic members. It seems that each time we attend an event we achieve this distinction, starting back in '97 with *Miatas at the Ranch*.

An invitation to participate in the Philippine Independence Day parade was made to the club, and heartily accepted. As it turned out, our cars provided nearly all of the transportation for the dignitaries, large and small, in the parade. While parade officials wrestled with the details, SDMC members stood by and cheerfully waited for it all to be sorted out. When everyone was ready, the colorful Miata fleet cruised the embarcadero to the applause of the spectators.

A parade that has been continuously held for 29 years is the Scripps Ranch 4th of July Parade. The SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB has participated for the past two years, and we will do so again this Independence Day. In '97, with 18 cars, we garnered a 3rd place among car clubs. Last year, with 26 cars, we moved up a notch to capture the 2nd place ribbon.

The driving force behind our participation is member DIANE LONG. She has been a resident of Scripps Ranch for 25 years, and has participated in the parade with her children for most of that time. When she joined the SDMC, it was a natural that she would want to involve the club in this annual tradition.

On June 12th, Diane hosted an Ice Cream Social and Pre-Parade Planning Party. The enthusiastic group gobbled down the frozen dairy products while calculating the battle plan for this year's parade. Just let it be said that we will try to impress the judges with our enthusiasm.

Immediately following the parade, there will be *free* ice cream and musical entertainment in the park.

Members BARB and ELLIOT SHEV have hosted an after-parade BBQ and pool party for SDMC's parade participants two years in a row. This has become a tradition following the parade. Barb and Elliot have the perfect house for it— we can even watch the fireworks at Poway High School from their deck and pool.

It just goes to show that everyone loves a parade, and we love it even more when we get to share our cars with those who turn out to watch us go by.

Hope to see everyone there.

Take care and have fun.

—Anthony Wilde



Last year's Ribbon was better than the year before's...with your help we can do even better this year!



SOCALM EVENTS

Braille Run

Date: Saturday, July 10

Time: First car out at 7:30 a.m.

Place: Braille Institute Youth Center,
3450 Cahuenga Blvd, West LA
(near Universal Studios)

Contact: Greg Fast, (714) 636-6128.

If possible, please register prior to July 2 so that the Braille Institute has an idea of how many kids can participate. They always have more kids than cars.

Irwindale Speedway

Star Mazda Formula Cars

Date: Saturday, July 17

Coordinators: Karen and Larry Thomas
(909) 595-8520

Time: 2:00 p.m. Gates open (for those who want to watch practice)

4:30 p.m. Tailgate party

7:00 p.m. Race time

Tickets (\$20) on sale at the track.

<http://www.irwindalespeedway.com>

We are going to have a tailgate party in the parking lot. Bring your own picnic dinner, drinks, *and* something to share with the group (such as: an appetizer, a snack, a salad, or dessert item).

Directions: From the 605 Freeway, exit Live Oak Avenue (West).

Santa Monica Mountains/Malibu Run

Date: Sunday, July 18

Time: Depart at 10 a.m.

Place: The Federal Building,
Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles

Run Leader: Jim Tipton, (818) 880-6568,
jmtipton@pacbell.net

This will be a spirited fun run through the nearby Santa Monica Mountains.

We will start by heading past UCLA to Sunset Blvd, then down to PCH for some coastal cruising. We then hit the twisty roads above Malibu, including Latigo Canyon Road. We will end near the 101 Freeway in Westlake Village.

Crystal Lake Fun Run

Date: Sunday, July 25

Time: Depart at 9:30 a.m.

Place: Cal Poly Pomona,
3801 W. Temple Avenue

Run Leader: Albert Tong, (909) 591-1171,
abarh@earthlink.net

We will start at Cal Poly Pomona for a calm start to the drive. From there we will take surface roads up into the Cleveland National Forest. We'll get some serious twisty driving along East Fork Road. We'll end near Claremont for lunch.

Socalm contacts:

President— K. Zack Broadbent,

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

Club E-mail list: socalm@avatar.com

Web site: socalm.org

AUTOCROSS AT THE "Q"



There are no autocross events scheduled at the Qualcomm Stadium parking lot during the month of July. There will be a practice event held at NTC—

All events are tentative.

Call the hotline below to confirm the date

Naval Training Center

Saturday, July 10 Practice

Saturday, August 28 Practice

Qualcomm Stadium Parking Lot

Saturday, August 7 Championship

Sunday, August 8 Championship

Saturday, September 25 Championship

Sunday, October 10 Championship

Saturday, October 23 Championship

Sunday, November 14 Championship

Sunday, November 28 Championship

Sunday, December 12 Championship

For autocross information call:

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

Web page www.sdr-solo2.com

Rainer Mueller (760) 439-0067

John Godden (619) 538-6165

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

Events are open to the public at no charge. However, to enter the pit area you must sign a release and waiver form at the entry gate. You will be given a wristband which must be worn at all times. There is no seating provided so bring a lawn or beach chair!

Quarterly Board Meeting

The Quarterly Board Meeting, open to the entire membership, will be held immediately following the Monthly Meeting on Thursday, July 22nd. Agendas will be available before the meeting.

Anyone wishing to add a subject to the agenda or to have the board address an issue, please notify President Steve Waid, (858) 673-4141, swaid1@san.rr.com, or Secretary Sal Causarano, (760) 787-0624, wooddust@aol.com, by July 20th.

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NOTICES

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

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

Submissions to the newsletter are welcomed and encouraged. Did you just add a new accessory to your Miata? How about writing a review for the newsletter? Where possible, please E-mail your submissions to the newsletter editor. Submissions can also be faxed to the club's dedicated phone line or mailed to the club's post office box. Submission deadline is the 15th of each month. Editor reserves the right to edit all submissions.

Internet: The SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB has established a dedicated World Wide Web Home Page at <http://www.sandiegomiataclub.org>. The club has a members-only electronic mail list for those members with E-mail capability.

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

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



4th of July Parade

Date: Sunday, July 4

Time: 9 a.m.— DON'T BE LATE! The street will be blocked off and you will not be able to get to Diane's after 9:15.

Place: 9945 Cummins Pl., Scripps Ranch— I-15 to Pomerado Road, East on Pomerado, Left on Scripps Ranch Blvd., Right on Red Rock and Right on Cummins Place (If you are coming from the North, be sure to take the Pomerado/Miramar Rd. exit, NOT the Pomerado exit between Rancho Bernardo and Escondido)

Coordinators: Diane Long, djaws@san.rr.com; Barb, (3 "o's in moon) mooncalf@aol.com

This is our third year participating in the annual Scripps Ranch Parade—it's fun and crazy with baby carriages, lawn-mower drill teams, etc., ending at Hoyt Park with free ice cream and a concert. We will drive our cars back to Diane's, turn in the club-owned decorations and then walk back to the park (about 1/4 mi.). Bring along your own picnic or there are food stands at the park for lunch.

Parade participants are invited to the Shev's for a BBQ and to see Poway's fireworks. Bring your swimsuits, towels and warm clothes for the evening. Food cost will be divided— about \$6/person. Bring your own (*drink your own*) wine or beer.

Please RSVP to Diane for the parade and to Barb for the BBQ.

The Old Dam Mountain Run with a Taste of Texas

Date: Saturday, July 10

Time: 8:00 a.m. for breakfast (optional) at Rosa's Cantina, Old Town Temecula 9:00 a.m. driver's meeting— *leave 9:30!*

Place: Temecula, I-15 at Rancho California exit. Drive to the West side I-15, drive South on Front to Rosa's Cantina. Queue up along both sides of Front Street.

Run Leaders: Joyce and John Richardson, jrmmedia@pe.net

Our first stop will be the dam visitor center at the Domenigoni Reservoir where "give a dam" souvenirs are available. Next, the dam overlook on Dam Road. You'll say "dam, dam, dam" as you count the three dams from the viewpoint. "Dam-it-all" is their goal! From here we'll drive into Hemet to Tyler's Taste of Texas (Texas style catfish and mesquite-smoked ribs... yum!) for lunch. After lunch we'll head up the mountain

to Idyllwild on one of the best Miata roads there is. We'll have dessert in town where the run will officially end. We plan to take the long way back (route 371) to Temecula. (Alternate destinations close-by are Palm Desert and the Banning Outlet Mall).

Breakfast is under \$5 and lunch, \$5-10. Plan to bring water and sunscreen. Bathrooms are at the starting point in Temecula and at the visitor center.

The J. Paul Getty Museum Trip II and BRAINSTORM Open House

Date: Saturday, July 17

Time: Leave at 7:15 a.m. *sharp!*

Place: The Windmill, formerly Pea Soup Andersen's, I-5 at Palomar Airport Rd. *Orange County meet point:* Sportmart at Magnolia St./Warner Ave. exit of I-405 in Fountain Valley at 8:30 a.m. *sharp!*

Run Leaders: Barb and Elliot Shev, mooncalf@aol.com

A special trip to see great masterpieces of art right in our own backyard. Not only are the contents of this museum a treasure, the setting, the building, the landscape and the view are equally amazing as well.

We will drive into the museum complex at 10 a.m. as a group— the \$5 parking fee is waived as we are a nonprofit organization. We have reserved 5 picnic tables for lunch at 1 p.m. You can pack a lunch or eat in one of the Getty's restaurants. There is a really nice one that requires reservations. Check it out on the web at www.getty.edu/museum.

RSVP is a must— space is limited to the first 50 cars.

Now for the *special* added attraction. We have all been invited by BRAINSTORM'S owners, Roshan and Dali, for munchies after the Getty. We'll caravan to BRAINSTORM about 4:30 and see what specials they have in store for us— they are very close to the museum. This should be great—two events in one trip!

Monthly Meeting

Date: Thursday, July 22

Time: 6:00 p.m.

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

This event is the single best way to meet your fellow club members, ask questions, share stories, etc.

UPCOMING NATIONAL AND REGIONAL EVENTS

July 16-18, 1999

Cool Weekend on the Coast

Eureka, California

REDWOOD COAST MIATA CLUB presents a weekend of fun runs, autocrosses and rallies. Saturday dinner \$27 additional Registration \$45 per/car (one breakfast), Autocross \$10 per/driver (1st timers), \$15 others. Poker Rally \$5 per player Contact: Austin at (707) 826-9006 or calife@creality.com

July 30-August 1, 1999

3rd Annual Deal's Gap Run

The Gap, known for its extreme number of turns and switchbacks (318 in 11 mi.) is located in the mountains of North Carolina and Tennessee. The largest "non-event" for Miata enthusiasts on the East coast! No registration fee. www.dickson.net/doc/gap/index.shtml

August 27-29, 1999

Monterey Historic Races

Monterey Peninsula, California

Once again there will be a Miata tent— *please see the article on page 4.*

The same weekend— Pebble Beach Concours, Concours Italiano, and various historic and classic auto auctions.

September 16-19, 1999

Ascutney Mountain Miata Rally

Ascutney Mt. in Vermont
Contact: Jack Reardon, MASS MIATA CLUB, (508) 393-2195, miatajack@aol.com
Autocross, Funcanna, rallies and the best food around. Registration— \$295

October 7-10, 1999

Surf'N'Safari

SDMC's *way cool* regional event
www.sandiegomiataclub.org/surf.html

April 29-May 1, 2000

Bruges 2000

10th Anniversary European Miata gathering in Bruges, Belgium.
www.eunos.com/bruges/
SDMC Contact: Ed and Michelle, (619) 278-1774 or ed1@cari.net
All rooms in the event's three hotels are sold out, but we have a list of others!

June 21, 2000

Y2K 2 Alaska

The MIDNIGHT SUN MIATA CLUB invites Miata club members to Fairbanks, Alaska for the longest day of the year. Contact: Don, (907) 456-3103, donwoodke@co.fairbanks.ak.us



MCRD Command Museum Tour

Date: Saturday, July 24 — *new date!*

Time: 11:00 a.m. (earlier if you want to eat)

Place: Perry's Cafe, 4629 Pacific Highway, (located in Old Town area of San Diego)

Coordinator: Art Hamilton, (619) 262-1565, AHamil1531@aol.com

The MCRD Command Museum "where the past touches the future" is located in the Marine Corps Recruit Depot (MCRD), the oldest Marine Corps complex on the west coast.

Miles of Miatas for MDA

Date: Sunday, August 1

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Place: MDA District Office, 3914 Murphy Canyon Rd., San Diego

Coordinator: Sue Hinkle, (760) 735-9456, sportscarr@aol.com

Three years ago the SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB held their first fund-raising event for the Muscular Dystrophy Association in support of club members Jack and Sue Hinkle's son, Jason, who is afflicted with Freidricks Ataxia, a neuromuscular disease.

For this year's 100-mile fun run the Hinkles have obtained sponsorships from Cush Mazda (\$1,000) and Barona Casino (\$2,500). The event will kick off at the MDA office: drivers will register, turn in their sponsor sheets and donations. Event T-Shirts will be given to drivers and passengers who raise \$100 or more.

First run stop will be at the Barona Casino, who will host a continental breakfast for us; and drivers can draw a 5-card poker hand. Drivers will have the opportunity to draw one more card just before dinner.

The run will be a leisurely drive through San Diego County ending at a surprise location for a buckboard BBQ with all the fixin's. The run will end around 4 p.m., dinner will be served at 5 p.m. (Cost for dinner is \$8 per person).

Awards for the top fund-raiser, 2 highest poker hands and lowest poker hand. Drivers and passengers can also participate in raffles and event guessing games that will be included in the run packets.

A few members have already begun obtaining sponsors and it's rumored that someone has already raised over \$1,000. Your participation in this event will bring "Miles of smiles to Jerry's Kids."

RSVP to the Hinkles so that they can make arrangements with the Casino and the dinner location. Checks for dinner can be made payable to Sue Hinkle and mailed to 733 S. Kalmia, Escondido, CA 92025.

Upcoming Events

5th Annual Tech Day, Swap Meet, Pool Party and Pot Luck

Joint event SOCALM/SDMC/VROOM

Saturday, August 14

If you've got something you want to install on your car or just want to swim and eat, this is the event for you. You can get lots of free advice, help in installing, eat lots and lots of good food, and have a great opportunity to meet Miata folks from all over Southern California.

Let us know if you have something major to install and we'll schedule you into the garage—Gerry Conn (714) 441-2552, connjb@earthlink.net

If you have something to swap and/or sell, contact Jeanne Pandes Villacorte, (714) 838-6208, or jppandes@earthlink.net.

As an extra-added attraction, the Dent Doctor will demo and even work on your Miata, if you wish to pay the fee.

Monterey Historics

August 27 - 29

For over a quarter of a century, the Monterey Historic Automobile Races at Laguna Seca Raceway has been the vintage racing event in America; for a decade, the Miatas have been there to participate in the festivities. In this, our tenth anniversary year, we will be there again to see perhaps the most awesome race cars ever made—the *Silver Arrows* of Auto Union, this year's featured marque.

Comprised of four German car makers—Audi, DKW, Horch, and Wanderer—Auto Union brought to the pre-war GP racing scene a series of record-breaking cars that remain today as monuments of technical achievement. The mightiest of grand prix and hill-climbing cars, these supercharged 6-liter V-16 rear-engined behemoths thundered their way through the years just before World War II, when the drivers were fat and the tires were skinny. Now you can see them again, as the 26th annual Historics showcases the largest collection of Auto Union Silver Arrow race cars and mountain climbers ever displayed in the United States. Add some 350 classic race cars and 100 or so Miatas, and the weekend of August 27, 28 and 29 promises to be *the* time to be on the Monterey Peninsula.

On this, the tenth anniversary of Miatas at Laguna Seca, Barbara Beach, with the help of Mazda, once again will make available a package that includes a Saturday race ticket, a Miatas-only parking corral, and a catered gourmet lunch in the usual trackside Miata tent. Those of you who plan to attend the Historics on Saturday only must purchase your race tickets through Barbara, as she is required to sat-

isfy a ticket quota in order to be able to provide the rest of the package (and you will save a handling charge by purchasing your one-day tickets through Barbara). If you plan to stay at the track for the entire weekend, you should purchase your race tickets through Laguna Seca Raceway, (800) 327-7322 or <http://www.laguna-seca.com/>, (there is a secure server for ticket orders).

Prices for the tent/corral package are \$70/person for those who purchase the entire package, including the single-day race ticket, and \$35/person for those who purchase their race tickets independently. Laguna Seca offers 2-day (Saturday and Sunday) "super" tickets for \$60 and 3-day (Fri, Sat, & Sun) "super" tickets for \$75. If you are ordering your tent/corral tickets separately, without the single-day race ticket, be sure to enclose a note with your order making it clear that you will be purchasing "super" tickets from Laguna Seca.

To get your tickets for this historical event, send a *check* (no credit cards) made out to Barbara Beach to:

Barbara Beach
1315 Buena Vista Drive
Vista, CA 92083

Get your orders in early to be sure to reserve yourself a spot in the corral and tent. Barbara has put a *firm* deadline of August 13, 1999 on ticket orders. Orders received after that date will *not* be processed.

Barbara is also planning a Saturday evening beach party once again. For more information on that event, which is still in the planning stage, call her at (760) 631-1202.

Fall Trek to the Eastern Sierras

October 16 - 17

It takes more than two days to explore all the wonderful mountain roads that wind through the Eastern Sierra mountain range, but we're going to do our best to pack it all in. We'll visit towns up and down State Route 395, and the several Miata-roads leading into the Eastern Sierra Nevadas and the White Mountains. The weekend will include three definite road trips: the Mt. Whitney Portal Road from Lone Pine, SR 168 through Aspendell to South Lake, and the SR 168 from Big Pine to the Sierra View Overlook in the White Mountains.

The rest of the weekend activities depend on the "will of the people." Of course, we'll have our share of "fine" BBQ eateries. Typical hotel lodging can be had for \$35-50 per night. More details to follow. Please RSVP to Jeanne so that interest can be gauged. She'll announce a meeting-of-the-trekkers about one month prior to iron out activities and other arrangements. Contact: Jeanne Pandes Villacorte, (714) 838-6208, jppandes@earthlink.net





May 22, 1999

“

love it when a plan comes together.” After being the Sweep Car for the Hangover Run in January, when there were 84 cars involved, LAURIE and I decided that we were going to try splitting large groups of cars into smaller groups when we did this year’s Puke O Rama. My conclusion, and I am the only one I had to convince, is that it

was worth the effort. We drove the 129.2 miles, including two pit stops, in about four hours. Group two took a little longer.

The mission of the Puke O Rama is to provide the driving venue that is most likely to make a passenger ill.

Although that is not our goal, by finding roads that make it likely, we are going to experience the Miata in a way that other cars can only dream of. Of course we must “set the table” for this. Literally and figuratively we did this by meeting at Dalton’s Roadhouse in San Marcos for lunch before we started the run. This gave us the chance to “load up” before we “hit the twisties.”

I think everyone would agree that Dalton’s Roadhouse is a “keeper” for Miata Club events. They were prepared for us, and have a reasonably-priced menu with large portions, which some of us find a must. They have plenty of parking, “freeway close,” easy to find, and General Manager Fred Magana has indicated that they would be happy to work with us on future events. Dalton’s has a Car Show/BBQ the first Sunday of every month, so you know that they cater to the car enthusiasts.



The run took us through Couser Canyon first. We had to proceed with caution because (who would have thought?) we had a little rain— just enough to make the road wet. From there we proceeded east on Highway 76, a pit stop for a Dove Bar, and then on to Mesa Grande Road and through to Santa Ysabel. Turning, and not stopping, at Dudley’s (maybe a first), we headed for the ever-exciting Wynola Road. Only 3.3 miles long, but the creator of many stories...some embellished I’m sure. We made the turn onto Farmers Road to make the “Trophy Run” through Julian. The Cuyamaca Highway then called us on toward Lake Cuyamaca and the challenging turns and turns and turns of Engineer Road.



You can’t really go up to the Julian area without stopping at Dudley’s, so we did on the way back. There were 22 in our group, with BRAD BROWN running as the sweep car. We were at Dudley’s for about twenty-five minutes and never saw the second group of 28 cars, led by ELLIOT and BARB SHEV with RAINER and MARIANNE MUELLER running sweep. I was extremely pleased to see six “first timers” on this run. For new members to come to a “purely driving” event, I give them credit. Some had never seen roads like these, much less driven them on purpose.

After the pit stop at Dudley’s, we continued back toward civilization with our final two challenges: Old Julian Highway and then on to Highland Valley Road. As we met up at Rancho Bernardo Community Park, most people did not have any idea what the balance of the day had in store for them. BARBARA TEMPLETON put together a buffet at their palatial estate that was the perfect end to a wonderful day. I don’t include JOHN TEMPLETON in this because he was told to “be in charge of nothing,” and he did it well. In fact, John “both ways” Templeton, AKA “the Phantom,” kept appearing and disappearing throughout the day. What he did was typical of him: whenever he appeared he was going the other way. We had numerous, if short, sightings.

It was a wonderful run because it met my strenuous and exhausting standards. If I have a good time then it is a wonderful run. And I did.

— STEVE WAID





PHOTO: MARK BOOTH



PHOTO: RAINER MUELLER



PHOTO: JAMIE VILACORTE



PHOTO: MICHELLE LANGMAID



PHOTO: JAMIE VILACORTE



PHOTO: JAMIE VILACORTE

The Philippine Independence Day Parade

June 6, 1999

SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB was asked to carry dignitaries in a parade to celebrate the Philippine's independence from Spain. As you might expect from the photos above, the plans changed somewhat (for the better this time) and we were given the honor of transporting a myriad of beauty queens, princesses—and even a “queen!”

After being treated to a unique breakfast, we cruised the parade route, had lots of fun at the accompanying fair, experienced an authentic Filipino lunch, and were ultimately presented with certificates of appreciation by the Philippine-American community.



PHOTO: JAMIE VILACORTE





PHOTO: MARK BOOTH

Once again, the SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB was given an opportunity to demonstrate its interest in and involvement with the local community and rose to the occasion admirably!



PHOTO: MICHELLE LANGMAD



PHOTO: JAMIE VILACORTE



PHOTO: JAMIE VILACORTE



One Member's Approach

How I Learned to Make My Miata Handle

Now you've got the car of your dreams, you've joined the club, and you wear the cool clothes. But when you go on a run, everybody is faster than you, corners quicker, and sweats less. The last part you can solve with a top and air conditioning, but if you drive a Miata your other answers are below. This is a short primer on street suspension—things that you will feel every time you drive the car and will help keep it feeling good for a long time.

Mazda, like all auto companies, has to sell the same car, at a price, to a lot of different people. Result: Miata-vanilla, a cute little roadster with *tons of potential*. Don't get me wrong, Miatas are cool vanilla, or why are we here? But they beg to be modified and they do get wear and tear.

These changes will work best if made in order, one at a time, until you have the balance you want or that your backside or wallet can handle. Drive the car a while between modifications; you may find that balance earlier than you thought. You can stop at any point and have all of the improvement up to there. We'll start cheap and simple and move up. Prices are very approximate.

1. Four Wheel Alignment

Repeat after me, all four wheels! Even if you drive and enjoy your Miata stock, this is a must. K&S Tire has the machine, the expertise, and the club discount if you end up needing parts. Do this on a regu-

lar schedule; alignments can last from your first pothole or curbie up to several thousand miles. Unless you're solving a specific problem (see 4 below) use the stock Miata settings. Have the tires rotated and balanced every time. Miatas are light and quick and we drive them hard. Ill-advised settings or damaged parts can wear out a tire in no time and power steering on a car this light can mask a lot of problems. Cost is \$60, and it may take five years off the feel of your car.

2. Bracing

Yes, this is the first addition. If your older car is starting to shudder and groan a little (or a lot), or if you would like your newer car not to, or if you're thinking of changing any suspension parts; brace it first. If you're already to step 4, now is the time to salvage what rigidity your car may have left.

The chassis determines how well the suspension works. The full value of stiffer suspension (4 below) is wasted if it's only adding to the chassis flex. This flex is cumulative and insidious, you may not notice it as it grows but you will certainly appreciate the difference when you add bracing. From most to least noticeable effect:

Front Chassis Brace (\$40+) Stock part '94 and on. However, the good after-market models bolt between the A-arm mounts with or without the stock unit. The front suspension is the source of most of the shake rattle and roll in the entire car. Chassis stiffness added (or recovered) here affects steering, ride, handling, and the overall tight feel of the entire car.

Roll Bar (\$300+) A cockpit brace or style bar instead will also help (free/\$\$\$). The stock brace can be easily

retrofitted to pre-'94 cars.

Strut Tower Brace (\$100+) Miatas do not have strut towers, that's a figure of speech. It bolts to the top of the front spring/shock mounts and crosses over the engine. The stiffer the better; some are just decoration.

Rear Chassis Brace (\$40+) Stock part mid-'92 and on. The stock unit cannot be retrofitted. Good aftermarket braces bolt to the rear A-arm mounts with or without the stock unit. Some brands may interfere with custom exhausts.

3. Wheels and Tires

This can be the most expensive addition you can make to your suspension, but you need tires anyway, right? You can improve just the tires or both tires and wheels, and still be way ahead of what came on the car. Although selection is severely limited compared to 15s, you can help the car immensely with quality 14 inch-tires. Because fancy 14-inch wheels are nearly the same price as 15s, if you're going to change wheels, upgrade! Get 15x6.5 or 15x7 wheels and 195/50x15 tires. This change will have an amazing effect on the car, and may alone be enough for your performance needs. In general, bigger wheels or wider tires than this get you ego points but no significant increase in handling. In fact excessively large wheels and tires can add significantly to unsprung weight, affecting handling negatively. High performance tires are around \$100 each and the whole package can easily cost \$1,000 or more.

Do your homework! The size in this case is only the starting point. Bear in mind that tires are the car's connection to the road. Accelerating, stopping, turning, *everything* the car does is decided "where the rubber meets the road." This is why we get good tires before we add suspension. Stiff springs and shocks can easily overpower cheap tires. If sliding and screeching are your bag, leave them stock and go directly to 4.

4. Suspension

Now that you have a solid platform and quality rubber you can consider the next range of mods. Up to this point you have improved the car's ability to sustain the punishment the following items will deliver. Everything from here on attaches the car much more firmly to the tires,



Zymol Concours Competition at Dallas

Somehow we managed to forget to caption the photo of the Concours Competition at Miata World '99 in last month's newsletter. Several SDMC members competed in the event and two SDMC member's Miatas placed in the competition. JACK GOSNEY'S 1997 Red "Italia" won 1st Place in the '94-'97 category! And, BARB and ELLIOT SHEV'S Sapphire Blue 10AE won 3rd Place in the '99 cat-



egory! Congratulations to all, please accept our apologies for missing it last month.



makes the car react more quickly to what the tires are doing and (with the exception of sway bars) makes the ride less comfortable. Harder suspension (and it must be harder to corner quicker) will always degrade ride quality by transmitting more of the tire motion to the chassis (and your butt). The balance (see above) is ride quality vs. performance. In the end (get it?), if you want race car handling you are going to have race car ride.

Sway bars (\$175+) Also known as anti-roll bars, they do not affect the normal ride, but do decrease body lean in corners. After-market bars are larger diameter and stiffer than stock, and have adjustments to fine-tune their effect. They can be mounted in urethane bushings, which flex less and transfer more vibration than the stock rubber units. While they are available individually, do it yourself sway bar mix and match should not be undertaken lightly. A matched set from a manufacturer or dealer will give predictable results and should not require an alignment.

Many Miata owners add stiffer sway bars to their otherwise stock cars and seriously enjoy the improved handling (see vanilla above). If you make only this one change, you may decide you have no need for all this other stuff.

Springs and Shocks (\$500+ set) After all the above you're ready for the big leagues. This can stiffen the ride incredibly, lower the car about an inch, and make it corner like a slot car.

If you just want lower, forget it. You can't lower this car without changing the spring rate and ride. Springs and shocks can be purchased separately, but must perform properly together. Matched sets or kits from a manufacturer or dealer will be designed or selected to complement each other and are generally less expensive than a la carte.

Do some solid homework before you spend any money here. There is a tremendous range of performance, quality and price. Drive several modified Miatas before you buy. There are many, many variables involved at this step, and you will find this changes everything about the entire car. Really!

After installation, get a four wheel alignment immediately. Any spring and shock change will affect the alignment.

Enjoy your Miata,
—TED KESLER



First Annual Swapfest

June 5, 1999
Saturday brought forth a bargain hunter's delight, as SDMC's first annual PARTS AND ACCESSORY SWAP MEET took place out Ramona way. Originally scheduled from 9-11 a.m., late



comers dictated it as an all-day event, with many of the newly acquired parts being installed on the spot. A structured run to Viejas had to be scrapped because of late installations, but many members reported the Air Fair at the Ramona Airport more than compensated for the displaced run. A lot of *great* deals were made on first-rate accessories.

Thanks to all the buyers and sellers contributing for a fun and successful event. Start saving for next year's event; you'll save a good deal of money on some great merchandise, and we *will* get that lunch run in next time!

—PHIL DAOUST



Color Tee-Shirts— As You Requested!

DIANE LONG and STEF GOULD have put their heads together and come up with a new, limited-edition, colored, short-sleeved, Tee-shirt— a royal blue shirt with a metallic blue SDMC logo! The shirt, named the 10th Anniversary Edition (after, you guessed it, the 10th Anniversary Edition Miata) is also available in red (with red metallic), white, dark green, navy, black and ash heather with silver. (\$12, XXL \$14)

The description doesn't do justice to these shirts— come to an event and see them, and then order a few as gifts or for yourself. Available as a special order item for a *very* limited time from Diane Long, djaws@san.rr.com

PHOTOS: ED LANGMAD





Member Profile

GAIL AND ROB BINKERT

Greetings from SDMC's 300th Members!

Do you believe that life begins at 50+? We do! After years of noticing those "cute little Miatas" on the road, we decided on a whim to go to Cush Mazda to check out the new '99s which we'd heard had just arrived. It was April 4, 1998. Two hours later a shiny new Miata came home with us. Our kids, ages 31, 29 and 24, thought we had either lost our marbles or had entered our second childhood. Either way, we've been having fun with it ever since!

Before attending our first SDMC meeting on May 27, we were concerned that we may not fit the profile of the members. We were, after all, middle-aged and soon to become grandparents. We soon came to realize that the common bond among Miata owners has nothing to do with age and everything to do with love of Miatas.

Rob is an estimator/project manager in the electrical construction industry. In his first childhood, he owned a '67 Corvette and then, later, a little Porsche 914. Gail, whose car our Miata really is (don't tell Rob!), has had only one other sports car, a '78 Fiat 124 Spyder. She holds a full-time "job" as homemaker, social secretary and family historian and is a whiz at packing \$300-worth of groceries into a Miata!

We enjoy lots of things— exploring rural San Diego County in our Miata, Padres games, travel, family gatherings, walking on the beach, theater, playing cards, golf (Rob), reading and genealogy (Gail), socializing with friends and being together. Over the years, particularly

while our children were growing up, we voluntarily hosted more than 13 foreign exchange students in our home— some of them have even come back to see us again!

Our travels have taken us to many interesting places and we plan to explore a lot more as Rob's retirement approaches. This summer we'll be in Paris, London,

Scandinavia and the Baltic (anyone know of a suitcase big enough for our Miata?). Our most scenic trip was an Alaskan cruise last summer. (Would have been even more scenic in our "baby" with the top down!) And our most memorable journey was a cruise down the Volga River in the (then) Soviet Union in 1989. We were the only Americans among the 350 Soviet passengers. What an experience!

Soon we'll be scooting all over the USA and Canada by motorhome— with our little green car in tow (anyone know the best and safest way to take her along?). Our first house-on-wheels trip will be to Minnesota where our oldest daughter will present us with our first grandchild in late October.

If retirement, a motorhome and becoming grandparents makes us feel like Senior Citizens, we need only hop into our little green car to make us feel young again!

We're proud, pleased and honored to be the 300th members of the SDMC and we look forward to meeting and getting to know other Miata enthusiasts in San Diego and in our travels.

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

New Members!

The following are the new members since the last newsletter:

Richard Aquino & Virginia Lukei

Vista
1999 Black Leather

Bill Edom

Fallbrook
1995 Red

Sheri & Mike Facer

San Diego
1999 Emerald Green Touring

John Hensley

Bonsall
1996 Montego Blue Leather

Pete La Marca

Escondido
1990 Red B

Steve Lamb

San Diego
1990 Red B

Geronimo G. Omabtang

San Diego
1995 White Base

Murdock & Norma Payne

Cardiff
1999 Emerald Green R

Frank Rimmer

Death Valley
1997 STO (Twilight Blue)

Scott Alan Rosin

San Diego
1992 Silver B

Ann Rundall

Encinitas
1999 10th AE (Sapphire Blue)

Bob & Darlene Simpson

El Cajon
1995 M (Merlot)

Jaime & Jeanne Villacorte

Irvine
1994 Laguna Blue B
1992 Black & Tan SE

Gabe & Hidi Waite

Spring Valley
1996 Red PEP

The following members have renewed since the last newsletter:

Ken & Barbara Barton

Tony & Mary Beecher

Mark & Cathy Booth

John & Vicki Canavan

Michael Chiappetta & Lauren Jackson

Mike & Melene Daniels

Jack & Sue diLustro



- Gordon T. Frost, Jr.**
- Joe & Diane Garrison**
- Valarie Goodkin**
- Grant Goodman & Maricela Elizondo**
- Stef & Tom Gould**
- Bob & Karen Hall**
- Arthur L. Hamilton**
- Mark Hamilton & Liz Ouellette**
- John Harvey**
- Robert Holland**
- Tony & Maria Igar**
- Cynthia S. Jones**
- Jerilyn J. Jones & Sean K. O'Connor**
- Ted & Sue Kesler**
- Bob & Vicky Krueger**
- Dale & Linda Lee**
- Michael Martin**
- Gale Mead**
- Rainer & Marianne Mueller**
- John M. O'Hara**
- Cindy Paloma**
- Larry & Diane Peetoom**
- Michael & Lisa Podrup**
- Paul & Francie Pollock**
- Allen P. Salgado**
- Richard Scherschel & Janet Fraser**
- Mark Shusterman & Ananda Laberge**
- John & Barbara Templeton**
- Anthony Wilde**
- Joe & Leine Williams**

There are now 313 memberships consisting of 481 members.

- 103 Red
- 52 White
- 34 Black
- 20 Montego Blue
- 19 Emerald Green
- 18 Silver
- 12 Laguna Blue
- 12 Mariner Blue
- 9 Sapphire Blue
- 9 Twilight Blue
- 9 BRG
- 7 Merlot
- 5 Starlight Blue
- 5 Marina Green
- 2 Yellow
- 1 Hunter Green
- 5 Unreported

President's Message

From the Pulpit

It seems like I just wrote one of these! I am not a real creative guy. At least, not when it comes to writing. Being an accounting type, I have been accused of being creative, but I don't think it was intended as a compliment. Oh well, that's another story for another time. So far, each time I sit down in front of my computer to write, I start to reflect on what has happened since I wrote the last one. Some people would consider this linear thinking—however I already said that I wasn't very creative.

The first thing that happened was the 2nd Annual Puke O Rama, which is dealt with in depth in this newsletter [see page 5]. Upon reflection, the experience that I really had throughout the planning and completion of the event was that there were numerous people ready and willing to help the event be a success. I think that this is an important truth about our club. We are a collective of people determined to have fun with our Miatas and our fellow Miata enthusiasts. Not everyone is willing to jump up and put an event together, but many of our members are definitely willing to lend a hand when asked. This kind of support is perpetuated throughout the club. I asked for help with the Puke O Rama, and in each case I got a YES! And I don't think that I am special or unique. I believe that anyone would have this kind of response. The lesson to be learned is that you don't have to plan an event and carry it off by yourself. There are people who will gladly follow the lead of someone with an idea that brings us the fun and fellowship that we seek.

We have members like PHIL DAOUST who saw an apparent need (to get rid of some of his Miata accessories that were in his garage instead of on Quadzilla) and planned and hosted a swap meet at his home. There apparently were others with the same idea, because this turned out to be one of the best attended non-driving events that the club has seen. Now we will be seeing these items on other cars at a savings for those who participated. Thanks Phil!

Events coordinator GERI CAUSARANO hooked us up with the local committee

that was celebrating Philippine Independence Day. The result was that over 30 Miatas drove in the parade down on the harbor, carrying queens and princesses. A Filipino lunch followed, and now I can say that I have done one more thing that I would *never* have gotten to do without being a member of the Most Fun Seeking Group anywhere. We proved it at this event, because we overcame some "organizational hiccups" through the sheer "determination to have fun." I LOVE THIS CLUB.

Coming up are two events that I highly recommend. The first because I have participated in it before, and the second because I BELIEVE!

1. The SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB will be an entrant for the third year in a row in the Scripps Ranch 4th of July Parade—our participation organized by DIANE LONG. This, however, is more than just being in the parade. This is a full day event. The parade, the fun, the eating, the fireworks. Take a look at the newsletter from last August where VOODOO BOB KRUEGER wrote about the event in his article entitled "I Don't Do Parades." He and VICKY, incidentally, did the Filipino parade too. Look at the upcoming events section of this newsletter and make your plans now.

2. October 7th through 10th, the SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB has invited Miata enthusiasts from around the world to come to San Diego and "Test Our Reputation." And if you don't think we have one, well just talk to the people that have attended Miata World '99 or any other National or Regional Miata event. I BELIEVE that we will be "strutting our stuff" and showing off San Diego and the SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB like never before. LOU STARK and his committee have put together a plan that promises enjoyment for everyone. You are not going to want to be left out. Register for the event, and plan on volunteering to help "strut."

I BELIEVE that this event will be so successful that we won't be able to stop the groundswell of enthusiasm for SURF 'N SAFARI 2000. AMEN!

— STEVE WAID