



TWISTS & TURNS

The newsletter of the San Diego Miata Club

Volume 12 Number 8

August 2007

MIATA 101: Now I own one, what's next?

Ted Kesler

So you finally did it. Bought that sports car you've been thinking about. One of them Miatas, you know the modern version of those cool MG's that you were too late for. And it's a nice little car, fits good, the wife likes it fine, except for the all day hat hair. You join the Club for the parts discount. OK, and maybe the social life. Then everything starts to change.

These folks cars are all faster, or louder, or have bigger wheels and fatter tires, or wilder paint or bumpier stereos. The upgrade bug starts to nibble at ya, and that urge to spend some cash and have a cooler car rears it's seductive head. The problem is, what to do. What to do first, where to start, what exactly do you want to end up with.

Read this carefully and all your questions will be answered. Your hair will be full and flowing, your house and yard will be a showplace of the neighborhood, and your wife will delight all who see her. Works for me!

Where was I? Oh yeah, and your car will be the finest piece of road burning equipment in the county and practically for free. Totally effortless and free! Now that I have your attention...

If you bought a new Miata lately, Mazda has these things pretty well wired. If you bought a Mazdaspeed, you're already the envy of the rest of us, just keep it waxed and drive on! Mazda has been listening to us, and the cars really have improved.

If you picked up something a little older, OK, a used NA or NB, you're in for some fun, Son. You get to build yourself a true custom sports car and not break the bank. Really, short of the small-block Chevy crowd, we're about as cheap as it gets! And if you wanted a Chevy, why are you here? Never mind, Mike.

FIRST: Go on-line to Miata.net and start reading. Your every Miata thought has been examined in detail somewhere in there. Lurk around the Miata Forum. Read the topics that interest you. No, actually start by reading all of it. You don't know what interests you yet. Resist the urge to jump in too soon. Your questions have already been answered. You just haven't found them already. Time is free, and it'll be a lot more fun throwing down for the right stuff first.

SECOND: Forget what you thought you were gonna do.

Instead do these thing in this order. I'm telling you this for your own good. Yeah, my Dad said that too. Really though, taking advantage of my vast Miata experience, writing skills and modesty will save you possibly years of wandering in the Miata wastelands. This article will build you a solid base for the street and for more subtle mods after you've grown into the car.

MIATA TIRES: These cars are probably unlike anything you've driven/owned before. Tires are the single most important parts on your Miata. A simple, easy, SAFE way to select the right tires is to really, really learn to read and decipher the tire side wall propaganda, then use the Toyo T1-R, as a baseline. This tire's direct ancestor back in the day (mid 90's, a lifetime in tire evolution) was designed and sized for Miatas by Toyo engineers with specific input from (among other locals) Voodoo Bob Krueger, a SDMC

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The SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB is a California nonprofit corporation. *Twists & Turns* is the monthly newsletter of the SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB. Use of articles or stories by other Miata clubs is hereby granted, provided proper credit is given. Submissions to the newsletter are welcomed and encouraged. When possible, please e-mail your submissions to the newsletter editor. Submissions may also be mailed to the club's post office box. Submission deadline is the 15th of each month. The Editor reserves the right to edit all submissions.

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On the web

www.sandiegomiataclub.org

24-hour voice message line

619-434-2007

By mail

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Club e-mail

Most club communication is conducted via e-mail through a Yahoo Group named SDMC-List. A free Yahoo account is required. Follow these steps to join.

1. Go to <http://autos.groups.yahoo.com/group/SDMC-List> (capitalization matters!).
2. Click "Join This Group!"
3. If you have a Yahoo account, log in. If you do not, click "Sign Up" and follow the instructions.
4. After logging in, you will be returned to the SDMC-List "Join This Group" page.
5. In "Comment to Owner," state that you are an SDMC member.
6. Complete remaining selections, perform Word Verification, and click the "Join" button.
7. Your SDMC membership will be verified. The verification and approval process may take several days.

For more detailed instructions, see the club's website.

Membership roster

The membership roster is available to SDMC members only. Follow these steps to access the roster.

1. Go to <http://autos.groups.yahoo.com/group/SDMC-List>.
2. Log in and click "Database"
3. Click on the most current table in the tables list
4. To print, click "Printable Report." The printed copy will be 15-20 pages.

For more detailed instructions and options, see the club's web site.

Membership Information

New Members

As of July 15, 2007 there are 241 memberships (84 single, 157 dual) and a total of 398 members.

Welcome to newest memberships – 2 since last newsletter:

George Greenstein	San Diego	1993 Mariner Blue
Kristin Anderson	jah191@aol.com	1994 Red
Abba & Carla Steinfeld	San Marcos	2007 Copper Red Mica PRHT
	ggteach@pacbell.net	

Monthly Meetings

Our monthly meetings are a great opportunity to meet your fellow club members, ask questions, and share stories. Meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of each month, except in November and December when we meet on the third Thursday.

We meet at the Boll Weevil restaurant, 9330 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., in San Diego (between I-15 and SR 163). To contact the restaurant, call 858-571-6225.

Many members arrive around 6 p.m. to enjoy meals, snacks, or beverages while chatting with their Miata friends. The informal meeting starts at 7 p.m. We guarantee you'll have fun.

This month's meeting date:

Thursday, August 23

Who's next?

If you would like to have your profile published in *Twists & Turns*, call Kelley Raymond at 619-846-3784 or send e-mail to kray63@yahoo.com.

To preview the list of questions Kelley uses to start her interviews, visit SDMC's web site (www.sandiegomiataclub.org), click the link "Club and Car Info," then the link "Member Profile Sheet."

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Dues

Dues are \$35 per calendar year, for either an individual or a dual membership (two members in the same household). Members who join the club in the first half of the calendar year (January through June) pay \$35 for their first year; those who join in the second half of the year pay \$20 for the remainder of the year.

Badges

Have you noticed those engraved plastic name badges that other members wear? Would you like to get one?

Badges are available in colors to match your car. The cost is \$9 each for badges with safety-pin closures, or \$11 each for badges with magnetic fasteners. Prices include shipping to your home.

Sue Hinkle handles the ordering. Badge request forms are available at the Regalia table at monthly meetings and on the club's web site. All orders must be prepaid.



Our Mission

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

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

Let's have fun driving our Miatas!

4th of July Parade in Coronado



SDMC put on a great show at The 4th of July Parade in Coronado, providing transportation for several local politicians and Ms. Coronado. It was a very friendly, encouraging crowd that watched as we drove by, honking horns, waving flags and blinking lights.



Above: Phil Daoust decorates to carry the Grand Marshal.
Right: We wait our turn in line.

Photos by Laurie Waid

The Prez Sez

HAROLD SCHWARTZ, PRESIDENT

August marks my one-year anniversary of owning a Miata. What a year it has been so far. Made a number of runs and car shows, “Cruised Grand”, organized my own run, earned my magnetics, and was elected to office. Must say it’s been a heck of a ride. I must say, this is the nicest group of car club people I’ve had the pleasure to associate with and look forward to many more years of fun.

I need to thank a member who has stepped forward to assist in the smooth operations of the club, namely Helen Sharp, who is doing all the folding of our newsletter. You might not think folding the newsletter is a big deal but when you are using standard new mailing rates, the thickness of the folded newsletter will affect the mailing costs (USPS and their rules). Thanks Helen, we all appreciate your help.

August will have us going back to the Santee drive-in for some more of those wonderful movies they show there. Didn’t last year’s movies win several Academy Awards? Rumor has it that Kelley Raymond will be driving the lead car so she

can earn her Mags. We could use more members organizing more runs or other activities for the club.

As much as our members like to eat-drive-eat-drive, how about we start having picnics where you drive to a park or the beach and have a picnic lunch? Maybe a sunset thing at the beach on a Friday or Saturday night.

Let me know if you would be interested in organizing something along these lines and the board will be happy to give you some guidelines.

Take care and enjoy our great summer weather.

- Harold



Coming Events

Twilight Run

Date: Saturday, July 28
Time: 5:00 p.m. drivers meeting; earlier to eat
Meet: Albertson's/Target Center, Hwys 94 and 54 (Jamacha), Rancho San Diego
Contact: Mark & Cathy Booth, 619-670-3789, markbooth@cox.net

Details:

This will be a very leisurely ride along some of San Diego's most scenic roads, made different because we do it during the evening hours—that special twilight period when the hot summer day slowly gives way to a comfortable summer night.

The driver's meeting will start promptly at 5:00 p.m. There are no food stops planned along the run route, so plan to arrive early and grab a late lunch at one of the many restaurants available in the shopping center (TGI Fridays, Carl's Jr., Submarina, etc.). The run will finish back near the starting point at approximately 9:00 p.m.

Kelley Does The Santee Drive-in Run

Date: August 4th at
Time: 4:30pm
Meet: Chicken Pie Diner at 14727 Pomerado Rd. in Poway (intersection of Ted Williams Pkwy.) for a nice Texas home style dinner
Run begins at 5:45 PM

Details:

For the past five years it has been “Debbye” Does The Santee Drive-in Run but change is good, RIGHT? Kelley Raymond, as ya'll may know, is very active in the club as well as being our “honorary Texan”. Kelley, as ya'll also may know, is a little “shy” when it comes to doing runs. Yeah, I know- shy and Kelley just doesn't seem to go hand in hand! This is a short Run and will give Kelley an opportunity to no longer be a “run virgin” and earn her Magnetics!

About the Run- If ya'll like evening drives, camaraderie with Club members and bad movies; this might be the run for ya'll. . We all start the Run around 5:45pm and if Kelley doesn't get us lost (sorry Kelley) we will end up at The Santee Drive-in around 7:30pm. If ya'll can't make the Run ya'll still have the option of a couple of bad movies, just meet us at the drive-in around 7:30pm. We won't know what the movie options will be until a few days before the Run and since they have two screens with two movies each, we will vote on which two movies we will go to at the drivers meeting.

Cruisin' Grand

Date: First Friday of each month, April–September
Time: 6:00 p.m. for dinner, 7:00 p.m. to cruise
Meet: Tom's #23 restaurant in Escondido SW corner of Centre City Pky and 5th St.)
Contact: Steve & Laurie Waid, 760-432-0727, swaid@cox.net

Details:

On Friday nights from April through September, Escondido opens up Grand Ave. for cruising. On the *first* Friday of each month, SDMC members meet at Tom's #23 at 6:00 p.m. to eat before leaving at 7:00 p.m. to cruise Grand. After taking a spin up and down Grand a few times, we park and then walk Grand. You will see hot rods, street rods, muscle cars, restorations, motorcycles, and more. A fun “blast from the past.”

After cruisin' and walkin' Grand, we will drive a short distance to the Hinkles for dessert. This will be a full evening of car fun for car people

Moon Over Miatas

Date: August 25th, 2007
Time: 7:30 PM
Meeting place: Dudley's parking lot in Santa Ysabel
Contact: Steve Waid swaid@cox.net (760) 432-0727

Details:

Moon Over Miatas is a night run that we will be doing for the 4th year in a row. The concept is that we will drive from Julian down Banner Grade to S2 and across S2 to Interstate 8 under a full moon. In previous years the temperature has varied from 76 to 102 degrees as we transition through several elevation changes. The sky is rich with stars and the shadows cast by the moon on the mountains along side us make this a very special run.

We will leave Dudley's before 8 PM so be there at 7:30 not at 8. Because the Golden Acorn has closed their Cafe we will be making a pit stop at the Buckman Springs rest stop on the way home. It is about a 140 mile run before we have a pit stop after we leave Dudley's...so be prepared.

founder.

T1-R's are available in many sizes, but it's generally agreed that 195 or 205/50-15, V rated is the optimum Miata size, whatever brand you end up with. And there are a TON of whatevers in 15". Your Miata won't actually go fast enough to require a V speed rating, but there's a construction/quality refinement at V that you want to take advantage of.

Smaller than 15" wheels are generally too narrow to support the cornering loads Miatas can generate. Miatas are too light to need larger sizes, which are also heavier, and unsprung weight is a real factor in these cars.

Yeah, I know, your Miata came with 16" wheels. That's nothing to be ashamed of. Mazda said it 's a style thang. It's probably not worth changing down to 15's but it's really not worth changing up to 16's either. Track Day and Autocross set-ups are another entire story, maybe later.

You live in SoCal, buy Miata tires for their potential as sports car tires here. Don't buy for mileage. Tires advertised for high mileage are NOT Miata tires. A Miata tire tread wear rating is about 260/280. In general, a higher tread wear (mileage) rating means harder rubber in the tread. Harder rubber means less traction. Less traction means..... well, you get the idea. The traction rating on the sidewall (A or AA) applies to theoretic straight line braking, not cornering, and what's a Miata without cornering? Tricky isn't it?

Wet weather claims are not a factor here, and unless your tire compares quite favorably with the T1-S, the cost is irrelevant. Top quality, name brand performance (high, ultra, whatever) tires are all well priced and comparably priced. In fact, it's easy to pay more and get less Miata worthy tires.

The simple bottom line is this: Sports cars need sports car tires. In spite of your intentions or imagination when you bought the car or the tires, until you've driven the Puke on T1-Rs (or better?) you have no clue. Build the car to be capable of saving you through your learning curve. At some point your driving (or someone else's) will demand performance tires. Don't limit or endanger yourself with your choice of tires. Your skills and expectations are going to change while you own your Miata. Get good high performance tires now, and grow into their potential.

WHEELS are easy. Your perfect base line is the Konig Helium in 15" size (Brian Goodwin) . Read his wheel page, then compare. Weight and offset are the serious factors in Miata wheels. Light is good! Wheel width relates to your tire choice. Everything Brian sells is strong enough, so materials and price go with styl- ing, your call!

SHOCKS, SPRINGS, SWAY BARS. Miata factory shocks last maybe 20k miles. And you probably can't tell if they're deceased. Bouncing the fenders doesn't work, the car's too light. When in doubt, replace them. And besides, any performance mods will require after market, high performance shocks. Factory springs are excellent and durable, and work well with most sus- pension mods. You'll need new springs to lower the car, if you like Japanese road graders.

Larger diameter (stiffer) sway bars will make the car corner flatter and feel bitchin', but do not increase actual cornering grip, that's in the tires, and your right foot. See, this is all progressive instruction! Most of us have found that with just the addition of good shocks and sways (and tires, try to follow this in order, OK?), the car will handle better than we drive. Fortu- nately the aftermarket has discovered this as well, and there are many matched sets available. Note the "matched" part. Sway bar sets (and spring sets) from the same manufacturer are the only safe way to go. Mix them at your peril. You may grow past that last statement later, but this is basics, not race tuning.

MY FAVES: KYB/AGX adjustable shocks, and RACING BEAT solid sways. The AGX's give you a range from soft enough to drive 8 hours to Monterey, up to stiff enough to handle at Laguna Seca, and ad- just with the turn of a knob. RB Sways are another industry standard. If you find later that you need more (whatever) you can add sway bar mount brace kits and adjustable end links from RB and others.

About now you should have the car aligned and the tires balanced at a place like LUTZ TIRE, where they know the quirks of our little cars. You're also going to need a quality tire gauge (not a stick with a ruler in- side, a gauge!) and you're going to use it, maybe weekly, but always before a run. Start at 30 lbs, and go up or down in 1 lb cold increments) to suit your style and tire wear. Oh yeah, stock brake pads are as good on the street as anything out there and the price is right.

BRACING AND ROLL BARS. Stiffening the body structure of Miatas has been necessary from the first one sold. Older and/or higher mileage Miatas of course need the most help. Mazda (and your car's PO) added and subtracted braces over the years, so don't assume your car has any, or where/what they may be. Crawl under there and look!

The basics are this: Later Mazda factory "ladder" bracing is good but virtually impossible to re- rofit, so properly selected aftermarket braces are gen- erally the way to go. Racing Beat and our own Kesler Customs make a 4 BOLT lower front control arm brace that should be required on all Miatas. The Mazda 2 bolt version can be (in this case) retrofitted but is in the wrong place. Many people are running both braces with good results.

Miata 101 (Continued from page 6)

In the rear you need a subframe brace just below and behind the differential, Pre '92s have no mounts and some later base models have no factory brace. The Mazda brace bar can be bolted right up to the stock mounts (if you have them), and Racing Beat, Kesler and others have excellent 4 BOLT braces for any year. Exhaust pipe clearance can be a factor with any brace at this location.

In the center of the car you'll (maybe) have whatever Mazda installed that year. There have been a ton of Rube Goldberg, erector set type, and home built systems on the market, usually with unfortunate result/cost ratios. The Flying Miata "Butterfly Brace" is absolutely the answer to your Miata chassis flex prayers. It's a B-tch to install without a lift, but the resulting chassis is worth every penny. Larry and Rocky love these things!

Above the chassis there are two reasonable sources for more stiffness. Strut Tower Braces are structurally contentious, but very pretty under the hood. And of course, Roll Bars.

Roll bars are like religion; you're one of us, or you're one of them. Roll Bars all do a wonderful job of stiffening the body structure of the car, and are probably the first thing you should install when you bring the car home. They come in many shapes, sizes, colors, and prices. And real Roll Bars (not Style Bars) have at least 4 mounting points to the car. They serve the added function of keeping the car off your head, should you get way in over your..... Head, so to speak. They must all be properly padded with SFI 45.1 padding (sold separately). I won't ride in a Miata without one, but I'm "one of us". You should be too. Choose your roll bar carefully, but have it installed and padded before the next run.

If you're still reading, thank you, I do try.

Next month:

"HOT ROD STUFF".

Speed is money.

How fast you wanna go?

Scenes from the picnic:

Bill & Alice Cummins came prepared to party from Yuma AZ (top)

The boys of summer prepare to hand out the awards, Mardi Gras style! (center)

Kit and Steve Licata planned and executed two car shows (in costume!) (bottom)

Photos by Mark Booth

SDMC Annual Picnic



Moab Road Trip

Sue Hinkle

It's hard to believe that Jack and I lived in Utah for almost six years and we never took the time to drive south to Moab, Utah. Southern Utah is one of the most picturesque areas in these United States. We got our first peek at its beauty on a previous driving trip to Bryce Canyon and Zion National Park, which are a short distance from St. George, Utah. So here we are again, making another driving trip to the four corners to see more of the breathtaking scenery Utah has to offer.

Our trek to **"Miatas in Moab"** began on May 14th with the Starks, Shacks, and Barb Shev. First stop was Las Vegas for an overnight stay, where we were joined by Anthony Wilde for dinner on Wednesday evening. It was great to visit with our old friend from San Diego. During dinner we learned from Anthony that Stef and Tom Gould were experiencing car problems and they would be held up in Las Vegas until Stef's Miata was repaired. Would they make it to Moab? - only time would tell. Next day, it was off to St. George, Utah to meet up with John and Barb Templeton. We enjoyed a wonderful evening at Casa Templeton - - great friends, Barb's good cooking and loads of laughter.

Early Friday morning we packed up the Miatas and headed to the Red Roof Inn to meet up with the Shacks, Alan Kagan and Jill "the weather gal" Wilson, along with Alan's brother and co-pilot. John Templeton mapped out a route that took us through Zion National Park, along the outskirts of Bryce Canyon, through the mountains and high desert. There was rain ahead and huge thunder cells in the distance with lightening. "No Problem," I thought to myself, "we've driven in rain before with the tops down." Unfortunately, this wasn't a little rain—it was a lot of rain – a huge down pour that forced us to put the tops up. For most of us this wasn't an easy task, with boot covers and deck bags to remove in the pouring rain. Mike Shack found it very humorous watching all of us rush to get the tops up, as he only had to push a button and his PHRT was up in a flash, as quick as the lightening bolts appearing in the distance.

The sun was just beginning to set as we entered the red rock region of Moab. The scenery was breathtaking. Miatas were coming into view from every direction and hotel parking lots seemed to be filled with only Miatas. This was definitely a gathering of Miatas from all over the country. We loved seeing old Miata friends and meeting new ones. A new vendor was on the scene – "Cool Breeze Scoop" – Bruce and Mary Kay Hearne came up with a great idea to keep the Miata cockpit cool. I think everyone from SDMC purchased one and immediately installed them on their car to help cool the cockpit in ninety degree weather. I also learned that Mary Kay is from my home town area. We had a wonderful time reminiscing about the old days in Steubenville, Ohio.

The weekend was filled with driving to the various parks in Moab -- Arches and Canyon Lands -- spectacular scenery and perfect top down driving weather. Saturday evening a group of 100 plus Miatas drove to Dead Horse Point for an event organized by Joe and Mary Portas "The Knobmeister". Miatas were parked everywhere and folks spent the evening visiting and taking photos of the surrounding red rock vistas.

Sunday morning Stef and Tom finally made it to Moab just before we were ready to depart. We said our goodbye's to the event organizers and other Miata friends, and headed south with a group from Texas for a look at the South Canyon. The rest of our traveling group had arranged for a jeep tour in Arches National Park. We would meet up with them later in Colorado. We decided to join our new friends from Texas for lunch in Monticello. Rain clouds were quickly approaching, so it was time to put those dang tops up again. Good thing we did, because the skies opened up and it poured buckets during lunch. A quick goodbye to the Texans and we were off for Gateway, Colorado where we would meet up with the Shacks and Starks later in the day. The drive from Monticello, Utah to Gateway, Colorado was another spectacular drive and a great Miata road. It did rain along the way, but as we drove on Route 141 to Gateway, the rain stopped and the skies began to clear— just in time for some terrific photo ops.

Our stay was at the Gateway Canyons Resort owned by John Hendricks of the Discovery Channel. Gateway is a little one-horse town surrounded by the Uncompahgre Plateau, Piñon Mesa and La Sal Mountains. This quaint, tight-knit community is embraced by tall canyon walls, cottonwoods and the Delores River. At the Resort, many areas were still under construction but there was a wonderful restaurant, an exceptional Auto Museum and adventure center. This group is definitely into



Photo by Jack Hinkle

adventures, so we signed up for the John Brown Canyon Jeep Tour. This is a canyon road that runs from Gateway, Colorado all the way back to Moab. Definitely not a Miata road, but those 4 wheel drives can handle it with no problem. Named after the murderer John Brown, the canyon is filled with old uranium mines and remnants of old mining communities.

The next morning, Jack and John decided to take the long (wrong way) to Durango through Black Canyon. While traveling east on U.S. 50, an incident ruined the canyon tour. A pickup truck pulled directly in front of John, forcing an avoidance maneuver that took out two traffic signs and dumped the Miata into a culvert. As quoted from Jack, "At first I saw a large vehicle fill my view through the windshield. As John swerved to avoid a head on, my next view was a massive grill about 6 inches from my side window. At that point I closed my eyes and kissed my you-know-what goodbye. Fortunately, the truck only grazed the back rear of John's car. However, in what seemed like minutes later, and now with my eyes wide open, John took out the big DO NOT ENTER sign. Once out of the car to access the damage, an outburst of language took place while watching the truck drive off that I haven't heard since I was in the Navy. They say the best part of trip is the memories, for me it's that I still have a memory." Now, this was a morning that started with no power at the resort. Luckily the rest of the group was delayed from departing the resort. Shortly before our expected departure, we received a call from John informing us they had been in an accident and we needed to meet them in Grand Junction. Luckily Jack and John were not injured but John's Miata had seen better days. The group was now down one Miata. However, Barb Shev had an open seat and the rest of us crammed John belongings into whatever space we could find in the other Miatas. John bid farewell to his beloved Miata and the group departed for Durango.

The drive from Grand Junction to Durango took us through the little town of Ouray, Colorado where we stopped at a local saloon for lunch. The smell of snow was definitely in the air and during lunch those little white flakes began to fall from the sky. This adventurous group buckled up and headed for the pass not knowing how much snow we would encounter or if chains would be required at the higher elevations. Hard to believe that only a few days ago we were in ninety degree weather and now only a few hundred miles away and a few thousand feet up, we found ourselves in a winter wonderland.

We made it safely through the snow, pulled into Durango and checked into the historic Strater Hotel which was built in the late 1800's. From the moment we stepped into the lobby, it was like entering another world. Authentic Victorian antique furniture, crystal and lace seemed to transport us back to another century. The hotel lobby was like a museum with display cases full of wonderful relics from the Cliff Dwellers at Mesa Verde to the 1890's and early 1900's. A menu from the

first restaurant in the hotel was in one of the display cases and a full dinner a hundred years ago only cost 12 cents. Hard to believe that Henry Strater at the age of 20 built the hotel for \$70,000. This individual certainly had a vision and his vision still lives today. We enjoyed staying in this hotel so much that our group decided to cancel our reservations in Cortez and spend our last night in Colorado at the Strater.

You certainly can't visit Durango without boarding the Durango-Silverton Steam Engine for a trip up the mountain to the old mining community of Silverton, Colorado. We had reserved space on the Silver Vista a deluxe open car with a glass canopy, thinking we would be traveling in good weather. Good weather was not part of mother nature's agenda and the day started off a bit chilly and a little rainy. Our car hostess handed out black blankets for us to wrap in. All of us in those black blankets bundled up looked like a new order of Nuns. Then it started to snow as we chugged up the mountain—it was spectacular! Snow flocked trees, rushing streams, and even waterfalls. The higher we climbed the colder it got and we still had two hours to go. By the time we arrived in Silverton, all I could think of was a warm fireplace. We found it at Handlebars, yes another saloon with some really great chow. After a hot meal and a place to warm our fingers and toes, we had a little time for shopping - not for souvenirs but for wool socks and glove warmers for the trip down the mountain. Wool socks on and glove warmers inside my gloves, it was time to board the Silver Vista for the trip back down the mountain. Our car hostess handled out those black blankets as the train began to roll and everyone immediately wrapped up for the trip down the mountain. It was still snowing and it seemed to be colder. Slowly, one by one, many of us moved to one of the closed cars, except for Barb Shev who braved the cold all the way down the mountain.

Thursday morning we bid farewell to Wrong Way as he had arranged a flight back to St. George. We were all sad to know that he was returning home without his '93 Miata, but hopefully he and Barb will have another Miata real soon. Some of the group spent the day in Mesa Verde while Barb Shev and I spent the day sight seeing in Durango.

From Durango we would all head west in different directions, and overnight in different cities. Jack and I headed for Goodyear, Arizona to spend a few days with my brother. Mike, Elinor and Barb headed for Flagstaff and Ruth and Lou headed for Cameron. This was another great Miata driving adventure that took us from the bright lights of Las Vegas to the picturesque beauty of Southern Utah and through the mountains of Colorado. Our Miatas traveled on dry roads, wet roads, snowy roads, through rain storms and snow storms. We got to meet up with old Miata friends and meet new Miata friends. Best of all, we had a ton of fun and look forward to the next big driving trip. Who knows what roads we will travel next? But you can bet it will be in our Miata.

Tires—in brief

Larry Dennstedt

Tires have two basic functions. One is to provide an air filled CUSHION between the car and the road. The other is to provide GRIP on the road surface. Tread designs differ for pavement, snow, mud, rain water evacuation, noise, highway speeds vs. very high speeds.

Up until the 1950s and 60s tires were bias ply construction with circumferential belts added, in the late 60s and 70s, just under the tread. (Yes, I know that Michelin X was around then). Now days almost all car tires are of radial construction. Radials provide, longer tread life, softer ride, better road compliance and better heat dissipation due to less internal friction than Bias ply tires. Radials have less tread squirm and the flexible sidewall helps to keep the tread flat to the road while cornering aggressively.

NUMBERS----185/70R/14 vs. 205/50R/15

The third number refers to the rim diameter in inches (14, 15, or 16 inches). R is the designation for Radial construction. The first and second number is a ratio of height to width, measured in Metric. 185/70 is taller and narrower than a 205/50. So, the lower the second number the shorter the tire from the rim to the road. A 70 series tire will give more road comfort with a slight decrease in cornering performance due to sidewall flex. The 50 series tire will have faster steering and cornering response but will transmit more of the road harshness to the driver and passenger (a rougher ride). The current FAD is low profile tires on large diameter wheels, necessitating softer (jello) springs to give back the ride comfort. (I think this is a big mistake which just adds unnecessary weight to each corner of the car).

This is the SECRET CODE--"casting numbers". When buying tires check it out. The tire dealer might be selling you UN-USED tires that have sat on a shelf for a very long time and is now old and hard and not what you wanted. This manufacturing number usually looks like it was branded or melted into the sidewall near the rim. The last 4 numbers are the important ones to you---XXXX1805. This reads the 18th week of 2005. 3202 reads the 32nd week of 2002. Most tires are sold within 2-3 years of manufacture and considered normal for passenger car usage.

OTHER RAISED NUMBERS AND INFORMATION

INFLATION

REFERES TO Maximum inflation.

Keep yours at 26 psi minimum and up to 30psi for harder cornering on the streets. Higher psi can be used on the autocross track.

SPEED RATING

H is good for normal freeway usage. Z, W, and Y is for sustained high speed up to 149mph. This has to do with construction to deal with the higher centrifugal forces and heat dissipation ability.

MAXIMUM LOAD

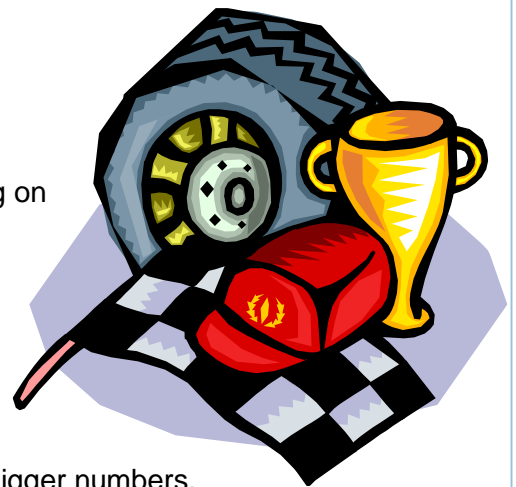
Has to do with supporting the vehicles weight. Bigger car equals bigger numbers.

TREADWEAR

100 is an arbitrary industry number. 200 rating should last twice as long as a 100 tire. 300 should last 3 times as long, and 800 should last 8 times as long as a 100 rated tire. Lower numbers should mean softer, sticky, good cornering tires. Higher numbers indicate harder (less traction) and more tire mileage.

In choosing your tire, consider the FUN FACTOR vs. the mileage vs. years on the car. After 5 years all tires will be age hardened and have less traction. Buying a 60-70,000 mile tire is expensive and may be a waste of money if your weekend Miata only gets 3-6,000 miles per year. This car will have 15-30,000 miles in 5 years and regardless of remaining tread depth, the tire will have become hard and will NOT corner as well as a newer, softer tire. Consider this old tire as UNSAFE.

There is much more to add to this discussion but I think this is the "need to know" basics.



Member Discounts

Many vendors offer discounts to Miata Club members. The club does not endorse these vendors, but lists them as a membership benefit. Some offers may require you to show a current SDMC membership card.

Businesses that wish to be listed must offer a discount from their normal retail prices to SDMC members. Listings are limited to five lines (about 30-35 words). Contact *newsletter@sandiegomiataclub.org* for more information.

Automotive Services

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

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

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

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

Geri's Bazaar. Custom deck bags, boot bags, travel bags. Maximize the space in your trunk. Contact: Geri Causarano. 828-400-1673. *www.geris-bazaar.com*. Substantial savings to club members.

Good-Win Racing LLC. Miata intakes, exhausts, shocks, springs, & goodies from Racing Beat, Moss, and more. *www.goodwin-racing.com*. 858-775-2810. Special club price on everything.

Hawthorne Wholesale Tire. Tires, wheels, brakes, and suspension. 877 Rancheros Dr., San Marcos. 760-746-6980. Discount: 10%

Just Dings Ltd. Mobile paintless dent removal. 858-569-3464. Discount: 15%

Kesler Customs. Miata chassis braces, adjustable dead pedals, hide-away license plate brackets. Installation of aftermarket parts, fabrication, light welding. Ted Kesler, 619-421-8472. Special club prices.

Knobmeister Quality Images. 3595 Gray Circle, Elbert, CO 80106-9652. Joe Portas, *joe@knobmeister.com*. 303-730-6060.

Langka Corp. Guaranteed paint chip and scratch repair system. Cleaning, detailing, and restoration products. 800-945-4532. *www.langka.com*. Discount: 30%.

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

Lutz Tire & Service. Alignment specialist, tires. 2853 Market Street, San Diego. 619-234-3535. Ask for Mike. Discount: 10% on parts (tires not included).

Magnolia Auto Body. Restorations, body work. 476 West Main Street, El Cajon. 619-562-7861. Ask for T.J. Discount: 10% on labor and parts.

Porterfield Enterprises Ltd. Brake pads, rotors. 1767 Placentia Ave., Costa Mesa. 949-548-4470. Discount: 15% on Porterfield & Hawk brake pads; \$10 off rotors; \$9.25 for Motul 600 brake fluid (1 pint).

Smog Squad. 3342 Rosecrans, San Diego. 619-223-8806. General Manager: Jose Munoz. Discount: \$10 on smog tests.

Thompson Automotive. Cool accessories for our cool cars; oil filter relocation kits, gauge kits, air horns, brakes, Voodoo knobs, & MORE. *www.thompson-automotive.com*. 949-366-0322. Discount: 10%

Tri-City Paint. Professional detailing, products, paint, airbrushes, car covers. West Miramar Area: 858-909-2100; Santee, Mission Gorge: 619-448-9140. Discount: Body shop pricing #CM6660.

WheelStore. Wheels, tires, suspension, alignment. 208 S. Coast Hwy., Oceanside. 760-967-1336. Contact: Joe Jordan. Discount: Wholesale price on tires; \$10 off alignments.

World Famous Car Wash. Complete professional car care. Complete detail, hand wax, leather treatment, free shuttle service. 7215 Clairemont Mesa Blvd, San Diego. 858-495-9274. Discount: 10%

Mazda Dealerships

Chapman Mazda. Phoenix. 877-684-5803. Ask for John Mardueno. Discount: 20% on Mazda parts and accessories.

Mazda El Cajon. 619-442-7050. Discount: 20% on Mazda parts; 10-20% on accessories.

Mazda of Escondido. 760-737-3200. Discount: 20% on most parts; 15% on labor (not including smog certification).

Westcott Mazda. National City. 619-474-1591. Discount: 25% on parts or labor (except oil changes).

Other Services

Alarm 2000. Residential and commercial alarm installations and monitoring. Free equipment with 2-way voice & free install. Buffy Hergenrader, 619-221-0948. *buffy@iopener.net*. Discount: No connection fee.

Coldwell Banker Real Estate. David T. Bryan, Realtor. 619-334-4625. *david-bryan@coldwellbanker.com*. Free market analysis. No transaction fees for SDMC members or referrals!

Linsco Private Ledger. Fee-based planner. Wealth management, estate, retirement, and investment planning. Free consultation and 15% discount on all fees. Hernan Hooker, BCE. 619-542-0822.

Rosin & Associates. Attorneys at law. Accidents, insurance issues, general civil law. No recovery, no fee. Anita Rosin, *anita.rosin@rosinlaw.com*. 619-543-9600. Discount: 10% on attorneys fees.

Classifieds

MIATAS FOR SALE

2006 Grand Touring, Marble White, Leather, 6-speed, only 4975 miles. We bought this neat little car at the very end of 2005 thinking that we would have lots of fun with it, but, as you can see from the miles, we just don't use it. It is in excellent condition and has been under a Mazda Custom Cover unless it was in motion. Kelly Blue Book resale: \$24,230 OBO. Diane & Bud Bainbridge, 951-676-4044(H), 909-519-5077 (C), *walterbainbridge@hotmail.com*.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Buying or selling your Miata or Miata accessories? You can do it for free on Miata-mart—the Miata for Sale web site, run by SDMC member Rainer Mueller. Check it out at *www.miatamart.com*.

Classified ad space is provided at no cost to SDMC members only. Ads must include first and last names, telephone number, and e-mail address, which must agree with current club roster.

Send ads to *newsletter@sandiegomiataclub.org*. Ads will run for four months unless canceled, and may be revised and resubmitted.

SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB
P.O. Box 180833
Coronado, CA 92178-

Postage

Address

AUGUST 2007	SEPTEMBER 2007
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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3 Cruisin' Grand	4 KELLEY DOES THE SANTEE DRIVE							1
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7 CRUISIN' GRAND	8
12	13	14	15 T&T Sept. DEADLINE	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15 T&T Oct. DEADLINE
19	20	21	22	23 Monthly Meeting	24	25 MOON OVER MIATAS	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
26	27	28	29	30	31		23 /	24	25	26	27 MONTHLY MEETING	28	29
							30						

DATE	EVENT	TIME	MEET	CONTACT
Fri. 8/3	Cruisin' Grand	6:00 pm (eat) 7:00 pm (cruise)	Tom's #23, 5th & Center City Pkwy, Escondido	Steve Waid 760-432-0727
Sat. 8/4	Kelley Does the Santee Drive In	4:30 pm dinner 5:45 Run begins	Chicken Pie Diner 14727 Pomerado Rd. Poway	Kelley Raymond 619-846-3784
Thu. 8/23	SDMC Monthly Meeting	6:00 pm (eat) 7:00 pm (meet)	Boll Weevil Restaurant, 9330 Clairemont Mesa Blvd. San Diego	Harold Schwartz 858-271-0084
Sat. 8/25	Moon Over Miatas	7:30 pm	Dudley's Parking Lot Santa Ysabel	Steve Waid 760-432-0727