

TOPDOWN

2021
Issue 1



**NEW MEMBERS,
SPURS OF THE MOMENT,
SURPRISES AND TUMBLES**

**PLUS: HOW UNIQUE IS YOUR MX-5?
GOSSIP & STORIES, TALL & OTHERWISE!**



THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF
THE MX-5 CLUB OF NEW ZEALAND
www.mx5carclub.co.nz



SPUR OF THE MOMENT ... AND THEN ...

SUNDAY 3RD JANUARY 2021

Keith and I decided to head out for breakfast on Sunday, so a few days before we put out an email to see if anyone wanted to join us.

There was 27 of us at breakfast. Great to see everyone. We were at Kaitoke Gardens, Aston Norwood. They have a great Ten Dollar Breakfast.

During breakfast decided to see if anyone was interested in a drive. Seven cars started with us and drove over to Martinborough, then through Ponatahi out Gladstone onto Castlepoint Road, one car went home, six of us continued to Riversdale Beach drove up the back up a hill to new sub division, great views overlooking the ocean.

Kapiti Coast / Wellington

**Report & Photos by
Sharon and Keith Ewing**

Another car headed home, left with five, then drove to the Whakataki for a cold drink and a nibble.

Was a great drive, great sunny day, perfect weather. Spur of the moment drives are great.

Thanks for the company. ●



MX-5 TOPDOWN MAGAZINE
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JANUARY–FEBRUARY 2021

Contributing Guidelines

Feel free to submit articles via email. Articles should be no longer than 900 words.

Include your name (and the article author's name if different), contact details and use full names in text.

If you submit an article, you agree to have it edited as the Editor sees fit.

The NZ MX-5 Club does not pay for submissions.

If the article has been published before in any form, please indicate.

TopDown is read by all ages, so take this into account when considering subject material and language.

No article which the Editor or the NZ MX-5 Club deems to encourage breaking the law, either directly or by inference, will be printed.

Picture Guidelines

High resolution JPEGs are preferred. (300 dpi). The preferred method for submission of images is by email. No single image should exceed 8 MB.

All photographs must be submitted with the permission of the photographer. Vehicle registration numbers will be shown unless removal is requested.

Please Note: The Editor cannot guarantee a date for publication. The above are guidelines only, and may be varied in exceptional circumstances. THE EDITOR'S DECISION IS FINAL.

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MX-5 Club of NZ Life Members

Name	Region	Awarded Life Membership
Bob McCaulay (deceased)	Northern	
Howard Fox	Northern	
Larry Young	Northern	
Lawrie Copp	Kapiti Coast	
Gary Wood & Alison Harold	Waikato	2001
Willie & Anne Williamson	Northern	2007
Kevin & Glenys Everitt	Hawkes Bay	2008
Nigel Every	Waikato	2009
Bronwyn Upfold	Central Plateau/Manawatu	2010
Peter Glover	Southland	2019
Sharon Ewing	Kapiti Coast	2019
Morrin Leyton	Northern	2019
Brenda & Martin White	Northern	2019

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Membership subscriptions – \$70.00 per car, per year for full membership, including TopDown magazine. For membership application forms, visit our website or email the Membership

Co-ordinators – Murray & Donna Lee on murray.lee@xtra.co.nz

A warm welcome to our newest members

Northern / Auckland

Justin Pitt
Martin & Barbara Wright
Barb Johnson & Jane Wilson
Carolyn & David Crow
Russell Keach
Kingsley Hockley
Peter Harmes
Bill & Lyn Raffles
Hayley & Joe D'Ath
Frank Wang & Winky Wu
Laurel Bell

Waikato / Hamilton

Shane & Anne Harris
Kathy Kelly & Kathy Alexander
Ray & Carole Talbot
Milan Miletic

Bay of Plenty / Tauranga

Nancy & Clare Clark
Alf & Sandy Lautenbach
Roy & Judy Tidman
Peter & Amanda Farrell
Darryl & Darice Hubbard

Hawkes Bay / Napier/Hastings

Paul Siddles & Jackie O'Dwyer

Kapiti Coast / Wellington

Colin & Sonali James
Trish Keogh & Adam Mitchinson
Kaye & Dennis McKinlay
Marshall & Witarina Owens
Harrison Luijk
Cody Theobald & Megan Fitzpatrick

Nelson / Tasman

Bob Jamieson & Barbara Kelly

Marlborough

Andrew Waine

New members should start receiving emails from their regional co-ordinator regarding details of upcoming trips.

If you are new to the club and coming along for the first time, please make yourself known to the event organiser.

From the President

I hope you all had a relaxing and enjoyable Xmas and New Year. Unfortunately for some of us 2021 is starting out in a not too dissimilar fashion to 2020.

As I write this report Auckland is at Alert Level 3 and all parts of the country are experiencing conditions we have not endured since August last year. Hopefully our contact tracing systems, which are amongst the best in the world, will enable us to get back to the relative normality we have had for the past six months. I would encourage all Club members to use the COVID tracer app to record your movements, or if your phone is unable to do this, to sign in where possible.

As you will have seen from the Minutes of the 2020 Annual General Meeting, published in the last issue of TopDown, one of the matters that was discussed in General Business was the current membership structure of the Club. It was agreed that the National Committee should review this, including considering whether there should be other membership levels in addition to the current full membership.

Several years ago I looked at the structures of MX-5 Clubs all around the world, including Australia, the UK, the USA, and several European countries. It was very interesting to see the variety of memberships offered. Many, like us, had just a single membership class for owners of MX-5s, others offered sub-memberships for people who didn't own an MX-5 but were interested in the marque.

In the same way as we handled the Life Membership matter, a sub-committee has been set up to consider the various options and to make recommendations to the full Committee.

This may bring about the most significant changes the Club has experienced in its 30 years, so the Committee would like to have as much input from members as possible. If you would like to submit comment on this; maybe your experiences with other clubs, whether you would support a multi-member structure or not, what advantages or disadvantages you see in the current structure; we would love

Original and 30th window stickers together, supplied by Tony and Pauline Stenhouse, Kapiti Coast



to hear from you. Please send any comments to the secretary, Marilyn Harp, on marilynharp@gmail.com.

The Committee is always looking for ways of making Club membership more seamless. A new feature that will be implemented on the website in the near future is on-line payment for merchandise and membership fee payments. We are using the POLi system, which many of you will be familiar with. This will remove the need for us to wait for confirmation of payment before either shipping your goods or your new membership card and sticker.

– Keith Jones, President



SURPRISES & TUMBLES

Waikato / Hamilton

JANUARY 2021

Saturday loomed fine and sunny for the start of the long awaited overnighter to Te Kaha Resort Hotel east of Opotiki

Gerry and Rachel Hamilton put a lot of thought and energy into their overnight trips and always go off without a hitch. Maureen and I had stayed at this Beach Resort Hotel about 13 years ago and can recall, whilst the accommodation was excellent, the meals most certainly were below the standard you would expect for a Resort Hotel.

We all met in Cambridge where all 12 MX-5s were to set off. Altogether 21 of us had a good catchup, particularly since some had not seen each other since our last overnighter.

Gerry gave the usual briefing and confirmed not to expect Michelin-rated meals at Te Kaha Resort Hotel. The feeling was ... ok ... only Dinner and Breakfast, so not a big deal.

Off we went on roads that had me lost. One would think that SH1 would be the logical route but oh no. We twisted and turned through back country roads until, just out of Rotorua, familiar territory arrived. Around Lake Rotoiti we went, finally arriving at the Pig and Whistle cafe in central Rotorua.

Parking was at a premium in the CBD so after a fantastic lunch it was agreed that we should independently meet up near the Airport. Geez Claude .. that was a huge plate of Nachos you tackled.

The drive to Opotiki is a must do for those that haven't. The scenery around the Lakes is superb.

It had been agreed that all should fill up petrol tanks in Whakatane. Ironic that it was so hot that many tops were up rather than down as the cloudless sky was frying some of us.

Report & Photos by Gary Major

The drive from Whakatane to Opotiki is just as spectacular as from Rotorua to Whakatane.

Arriving at Opotiki for a well earned coffee. It seemed that the cafe was about to close as staff were washing down the floor of the decking that surrounded the cafe. Apparently the staff had been waiting for us to arrive.

A well earned break in the shade then down to a parking area near the beach for a photo shoot, then off again to Te Kaha.

Arriving at the accommodation we were all sorted into our designated units for our stay.

This Resort has magic views from all rooms over the Pacific Ocean and for those of us 3 stories up at high tide it was as if you are actually over the water.



After drinks and chats it was down to the dining room in some trepidation of the meals to come. Hold everything ... the menu and meals were fantastic, as was the service. The bar area has also



Lunch in Rotorua



now been walled off from the dining room which makes the world of difference in terms of noise.

Whilst this was an over-nighter after breakfast on Sunday most were going to make their own arrangements to return to their homes.

Five cars ... us two, Claude and Lenva, Ian and Miriam, Ken, plus Dennis had arranged to continue on around the East Cape to Gisborne.

The trip to Gisborne was fun filled. The road is ... well... it is a road but in some places it is a 3rd world road due to the ravaging storm damage done about

a month prior.

We thoroughly enjoyed this leg, particularly the little piglet found running down the road. Claude, he wanted a ride in your MX-5 and couldn't understand why you did your best to stop him from climbing in. After being entertained by this little guy's antics we took off again.

This part of the North Island is different and I sensed that some areas are a bit poverty stricken. We stopped down at the Hicks Bay shop and boy was it cold. Lots of buildings now vacant and boarded up. Sign of the times in this area I guess as we struck more empty buildings here and there as we made our way to Gisborne.

Also drank the worst coffee I have ever tasted in a long time. Whilst waiting for my coffee to be made I looked at the price of groceries in the store. Baked beans \$4.39 a can, Weetbix \$7.50 a packet. Wow.

Lunch at Tokomaru Bay Tavern and another photo opportunity.

Members of the Triumph Motorcycle Club had been following us for many kms with some bikes dating back to the 60s, with riders much older than the bikes.

Not part of this group was a lone biker who "fatted it" a bit too hard in the car park and over the bike went and under the bike he went. The bike was less damaged than his pride but we had to lift the bike off him. Very lucky man he was. Not to be outdone by theatrics, one of our crew took a tumble coming out of the Tavern so some good sideshows to witness.

Off to Tolaga Bay we went for our next stop and a couple of the more hardy soles did the walk the full length of the newly restored wharf which has to be the longest wharf in NZ ... and recently restored at considerable cost.

We had arranged that it would be a good idea to meet up at a pub and have dinner together in



Gisborne, all 8 of us. Turned out to be a fantastic idea and lots of fellowship was enjoyed along with a good wholesome pub meal.

It was getting quite late when we finally said our good byes and stay safes out on the front of the pub.

One of my reflection on our trip down to Gisborne

was how many tents, caravans and motorhomes were being lived in along the grassed sand dunes going into the city ... and I am talking about most of them looking quite permanent rather than just holiday makers.

Thanks all for coming out, some great roads we travelled. ●



Dinner in Gisborne

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WILD GOOSE CHASE — OR NOT?

Taranaki

Report by Jock Sutherland
Photos by Lesley Sutherland

After a week when a blast of Antarctic air blew up from the south and dropped the temperatures, Saturday 30 January dawned clear although still breezy and a little cool for our first run of 2021.

Ten cars met for a pre-run coffee at the Backyard Café in Whaler's Gate (also handy to the Jean Sandel Retirement village for those who might be so inclined). After the catchup chat we mounted up and headed off on the 'goose chase'.

We meandered our way to Mangorei Rd and headed to the end of the road where the tramping track to the Pouakai Crossing starts. Lucky for us that particular activity wasn't in the day's plan (it is a great walk, especially if you like steps). So, back down the road to HW3 and back into New Plymouth. A nice little diversion down and over the



Te Henui river and under HW3 before emerging back on Mangorei Rd. Then back to HW3 and onto Inglewood for a brief comfort stop.

From there it was out East through Kaimata and Ratapiko. Up and down and round and round with great view across the countryside. Lush pastures with cattle grazing contentedly, their coats gleaming in the sun. Hay crops being made ready for baling. Maize crops glistening while they grow. Idyllic really.

By the time we reached our lunch stop at Te Popo Gardens, the temperature had reached a very pleasant level, and with the trees breaking up the wind, we happily settled in for either the lunch brought by those who can read, or the very tasty South African sausage barbecued by the owners.

After a walk round a small part of the approximately 14 ha expanse of the garden and a good look at the range of life-sized African safari animal sculptures, it was back into the cars and off to Stratford for a wind up coffee before heading our separate ways.

The funny thing though, is that I never saw a single angry goose!

Thanks to Tiny and Neil for a great run, enjoyed by us all. ●

ONLY A FEW “REAL MX-5 PEOPLE”!



SUNDAY 17 JANUARY NGAWI

We had 27 cars gathering at Featherston. Had a coffee stop and a chat.

We left Featherston, drove out western Lake onto East West Access Road, then around to Lake Ferry Road and on to Cape Palliser Road. Nice and fine but a bit windy, tops down.

Arrived at Ngawi and parked beside the sea. Bit more of a chat, few hoods going up, then a walk to see the tractors, bulldozers and boats. The wind started to get up, cars started to leave and, seeing the black clouds in the hills, put their tops up. Only 1 or 2 of us “real MX-5 people” had tops down. Drove around to Lake Ferry Hotel, no rain. Lovely scenery

Kapiti Coast / Wellington

**Report by Sharon &
Photos by Gaye & Sharon Members**

driving beside the water's edge.

On arriving at Lake Ferry lunch was ordered, we mixed and mingled again with lunch coming out steadily. Well done to the Hotel for getting lunch for us. With this many cars it is getting harder to find places to coffee and for lunch.

Thanks all for coming out. Great day, hope everyone made it home safely. ●





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FEASTS AND ALL GENERATIONS

KAPITI MX-5 CHRISTMAS PARTY 2020

We woke up early and looked out to see a cloudless day in sunny Upper Hutt.

It didn't last, but the expectation of a fine day out with the MX-5 club made the day an exciting start. Lorraine and I drove first to Aston Norward Café in Kaitoke, to be there at 10am arriving to see pretty much all of the club there.

About two thirds of our 52 people who arrived (27 cars in all) had arrived there at 8am for a cooked breakfast in festive surroundings. They had an enjoyable cooked breakfast for just \$10 per head.

Those of us who arrived subsequently had coffee, before we all set off tops-down South then West over the Hayward Hills via extensive road works to join the Centennial Highway on to Lindale, famous for its special cheeses and ice cream.

The brave amongst us went over the Paekakariki Hill road and many others went around Gray's road and the Pauatahanui Inlet to head North to Lindale farm.

The regrouping process involved some members setting off early, so that an example car of every

Kapiti Coast / Wellington



group represented could be displayed at our Christmas party venue.

Lindale is off the new motorway and this enabled us to head across the old Main Road into the Nikau Valley where a surprise venue (actually Diane and Brian's place) was the perfect place for a summer Christmas party.

We were then treated to a lovely afternoon of drinks in the outdoor environment, two activities involving an introductory quiz for people to mix and

Reports & Lindale Photo by Mark and Lorraine. Other Photos by Sharon





remember names and cars and a quiz which had us thinking about MX-5 and other entertainment related facts and figures.

That in addition to beautiful surroundings, lawn games and nature walks around the lifestyle block made for a particularly pleasant afternoon for all of

the guests. All of this organised by our committed and hard-working coordinator Sharon, with Keith's help as always.

The bonus for us all was the excellent lunch which comprised meat supplied and paid for by our National MX-5 club and barbecued to perfection



by Brian. The rest of the food was provided by our members on a bring a plate basis, so that the salads and desserts were delicious and a much needed pick me up for a very special 2020 Christmas party after a difficult Covid affected year. Special Thanks then to Sharon and Keith for

organising, Diane and Brian for the use of their beautiful house and lifestyle surrounds, and a special mention to Di's sister who was amazingly efficient in the kitchen to cope with food preparation and clean up. We would also like to thank the National Club again for paying for the meat. ●



HOW UNIQUE IS YOUR MX-5?

Ever wondered how unique your MX-5 is and how many others are similar.

Did you think your 1989 MX-5 was one of only a few? Well there are currently 448 1989 MX-5s registered in NZ. If you would like a rare model year you need to get a 2013 (if you can find one) as there are only 11 of that year registered in NZ.

According to the NZTA Database of vehicle registrations there are currently 6,602 Mazda MX-5s registered in NZ as at 31 December 2020.

Basing models on the years they were new (not totally accurate) the split of the four generations are

NA = 2,950

NB = 1,509

NC = 1,701

ND = 442

Unfortunately most of the records until recently are lacking a lot of detail.

Another interesting fact is that there are 294 MX-5s that have more than 2 seats apparently (most with 5 seats according to the LTSA records). These must be long wheel base or limo versions, but I've not managed to spot one of these about. This is a good example of how inaccurate some of the data is.

Details of current registered MX-5s by year are in the chart:

If a NZ car has been re-registered it may show in the import numbers as it's not easy to identify if it was originally NZ New or Imported.

In looking at the later models, with records that are pretty well detailed, a breakdown reveals the following versions:

2018

Manuals = 39

Autos = 20

Import = 3

RF GT = 16

RF = 25

Roadster GT = 4

Roadster 2.0 LTD = 11

Compilation and analysis by Denis Crossman, as at 31 December 2020

2019

Manuals = 46

Autos = 21

RF 30th Anniversary = 8

RF GT = 3

RF = 41

Roadster GSX 1.5 = 2

Roadster 30th Anniversary = 10

Roadster 2.0 LTD = 3

2020

Manuals = 34

Autos = 16

RF 100th Anniversary = 5

RF = 21

Roadster 100th

Anniversary = 13

Roadster 1.5 GSX = 2

Roadster 2.0 LTD = 9

With regard to colours, red wins by a country mile which will not surprise anyone. The following is the breakdown:

Black = 429

Blue = 875

Brown = 9

Cream = 9

Gold = 202

Green = 817

Grey = 598

Orange = 46 (Obviously includes some Gold NBs.)

Pink = 4

Purple = 32

Red = 2235

Silver = 875

White = 577

Yellow = 66

And obviously some people have a different idea of colour to others.

I have not checked if all the numbers in this article add up correctly as there was a fair bit of data to manipulate with the download of 6,602 lines of data from the Motor Vehicle Register and this exercise was just done for general interest. ●

YEAR	NZ NEW	IMPORTED	TOTAL
1989	51	397	448
1990	124	875	999
1991	11	531	542
1992	3	290	293
1993	15	157	172
1994	41	121	162
1995	15	49	64
1996	31	118	149
1997	21	100	121
1998	43	625	668
1999	32	255	287
2000	37	188	225
2001	34	95	129
2002	25	66	91
2003	20	46	66
2004	15	28	43
2005	40	422	462
2006	95	443	548
2007	62	278	340
2008	23	101	124
2009	11	63	74
2010	15	44	59
2011	14	29	43
2012	10	17	27
2013	4	7	11
2014	6	7	13
2015	37	19	56
2016	95	7	102
2017	102	6	108
2018	56	3	59
2019	67	0	67
2020	50	0	50

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR RUNS

For those of us setting out from Auckland, the meeting spot had a little different flavour than we're used to on arrival for the 2020 Christmas run.

Decent weather and silly season combined to bring out a variety of road-going clubs to the same place to start a day's activities. Our usual spots being unavailable, and parking up in a grid, made it look like we had even more cars than we did – and dwarfed the Porsche and motorcycle clubs that were also meeting at the Southern Motorway BP.

There were plenty of other makes and models to check out as we drove; with groups of S2000s, Alfa Romeos, and even the odd hotrod out enjoying the day and crossing our paths.

The first meeting spot along the way was the 'World Famous in New Zealand' L&P bottle in Paeroa. From a few conversations had at this stop it seems it was a good thing we had this checkpoint. I'm not sure I spoke to any two drivers who had taken the same route to get there! Our thoughts and cars collected, and the photo opportunity taken (see below), it was time to continue on through the Karangahake Gorge.

Those I spoke with all managed to avoid getting too caught in traffic here. This is a fun piece of road if you get the opportunity to take it at your own pace. Hopefully all of our drivers got at least a few good corners out of it on this run.

Arrival at the far end of the journey presented us with an amazing view from the RSA. A very good lunch and a chance to catch up with members of the club from other regions. This was fun! 2020 has not presented us with many opportunities to get out at all, much less meeting up with people from other regions. But I look forward to future opportunities to catch up with those I met for the first time on this outing.

It was a great opportunity to take a closer look at other region's cars too, and find inspiration for the next thing to tweak, or project to take on. I don't know how often the regions normally get to mingle like this, but it's an opportunity to jump at if it looks like part of any upcoming event.

Prizegiving was a new experience for a club

Northern / Auckland

Report by Leon Barton

event – rather than winning stuff for our beloved MX-5s, the prizes this time were for the people! With various homewares, books and picnic sets among the items handed out, there were lots of curious looks and happy surprises to be found.

As well as the prizes we were lucky enough to get a visit from Santa himself! The gift table could barely contain the goodies that got handed out alongside Santa's colourful commentary. I don't remember Santa being quite so sassy in the past, maybe it just went over my head as a child? But he definitely seemed as popular a character as ever.



Eventually we had to say goodbye to everyone and make our ways home. No deadline for getting home gave the chance to use some interesting side-roads along the way (partly to avoid the

traffic as on the approach to Auckland) but I made one definite mistake with my day.

This summer is looking like a hot one. Please do better than I did at remembering your sunscreen. Consider this your reminder to keep a bottle or tube in the car so you don't get caught out.

Leon the red-nose driver. ●





Report & Photos by Barry & Sue Potenger

SUNDAY 24TH JANUARY 2021

A leisurely 10.30am meet at Barry Curtis Park in Flat Bush, giving us a direct route towards the coast. We had 34 cars on the start line and good to see a few new and potential members with us. After the usual socialising, Barry gave a brief on the run and we were on the road at 11am. The weather was overcast and coolish but okay for tops down.

We had travelled to the Bay View Hotel in Kaiaua a few times before, but previous times we had come in via the southern end. This time we were taking the coastal route from the northern side of Kaiaua. We headed up into the rural roads through Whitford and out towards Beachlands.

The speed limits this end had been reduced back to 80 km/hr, making it a leisurely drive and the MX-5s soon spread out. 20 kms later got us onto the Maraetai beach front. We were the only car that stopped for a coffee and then played tail end Charlie as we cruised the scenic water front. Being overcast, we didn't have the usual crowds and

parked cars to contend with along the coastal road and were soon turning inland towards Clevedon and then the turn off towards Kawakawa Bay. We then got a bit of rain but not enough to have to put the roof up.

The view coming over the hill and dropping down into Kawakawa Bay was quite spectacular. Care was taken dropping from the 100km /hr speed limit into the 50km/ hr along the waterfront as it's a favourite spot for speed cameras. Next was the winding hill road from Kawakawa Bay towards Orere Point, having a little recent rain made the road slippery. From there it was a straight run into Kaiaua and the Bay View Hotel for lunch. Total run distance of 81km.

When we initially booked the lunch, we estimated around 30-40 people which we increased when more members registered as the run neared. In the end, the hotel did a great job of catering for 60 plus people. Another successful run, as short as it was. A stop at Clevedon Coast Oyster Farm on the way home was well worth it. ●



PERSONALISED NUMBER PLATE ODYSSEY

Maureen and I were very lucky when fellow member Barbara offered to house sit for us as we were off to Stratford for 3 days, on the middle day to enjoy a day trip on the Whangamomona Rail Trail.

The deal was yep, she would house sit but issued a challenge – scope out a personalised plate for her while we were away. Challenge accepted.

What we found whilst scoping out all opportunities was that using some ingenuity there are a lot available still which would fit an MX-5.

We decided to have a look on TradeMe and couldn't believe our luck.

HOTMXV was for sale and that blew us away. We purchased HOTMXV way back in 2004 for our very first MX-5, a 1990 Silver Auto.

Waikato / Hamilton

Report and photo by Gary Major

We now sport the plate MYVYCE which was purchased for a 2000 red Ford Mustang Convertible which Maureen will argue to this day was the worst car she has ever travelled in.

Off it went and the plate was transferred to our present 2009 Red NC.

When Barbara was told about the plate she immediately got hold of the owner of the plate and it is now on her 2019 NDRF.

Small world out there folks. ●



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FLYIN MIATA TOW HITCH SOLUTION

While the MX-5 might not be considered the ideal tow vehicle, there are times when it could be desirable.

When that happens it's great to find a tow bar specifically designed for a light weight car, and more importantly, can be invisible when not in use.

I recently sold my race MX-5 and, no longer needing the car trailer, sold that too. However, I'm still planning to attend track days and sprint

Report and photos by Keith Jones

sized for this job, but I didn't need or want a regular sized tow bar capable of handling a tonne or more.

Enter the Flyin Miata Lightweight Tow Hitch. This can handle trailers of up to 750lb (340kg) loaded, and weighs only 11lb (5kg). It comes in three parts – the main support/mounting structure, the adaptor, and the tow ball mount (Euro style).

There are two ways the tow ball can be mounted. The regular way is to leave the adaptor permanently fixed to the main support, and remove the tow ball mount when not in use, or, as I have done, have an alternative tow ball mount manufactured and welded to the adaptor. The adaptor/tow ball mount is then only fitted when I want to use the trailer and otherwise leaves the car looking standard.

Installation wasn't much of a problem, only requiring the rear bumper to be removed. This was made easier in my case as I had already removed all the boot trim to install sports shock absorbers.

The cost, in these COVID-19 days with freight costs double what they would have been a year ago, was only slightly more expensive than a locally supplied tow bar for

meetings in my ND, so need some way of getting my race wheels, tools, fuel etc to the race track. I have a small household trailer which is perfectly

a regular car.

These are perfect for mounting bicycle carriers and are also available for all MX5 models. ●





AN ICE-BREAKER FOR NEW MEMBERS

The BOP Club held its first run for the New Year last Sunday.

Over the summer holidays we got notification of six new members. So I thought the first run would be a picnic as we can mix and mingle easily.

We started off with our usual coffee and cake at Kaimai Cafe. Denis from Waikato was staying in the BOP so he joined us for the run.

We gave the newbies their run safety briefing and left there with 10 cars in tow.

Our first stop was Arapuni where we met two other cars from Rotorua and Ken B from Waikato.

Several members walked the swing bridge at Arapuni while the others nattered.

Bay of Plenty / Tauranga

Report and photos
by Karen Struiksma

Leaving there, we headed to Mangakino, Lake Maraetai for our picnic. We found a great parking spot and shady tree for lunch.

After lunch everyone gave a little talk on where they lived, worked and why they joined the club.

This was a simple easy ice breaker for the team. ●



FIRST AND THIRD AT SEBRING

NELSON COSGROVE DIRECTOR, MAZDA MOTORSPORTS

"I'm really excited to celebrate this historic win at the 12 Hours of Sebring with everyone at Mazda. This weekend, we joined an exclusive group of manufacturers ever to win this endurance classic. I would like to thank everyone at Idemitsu, Multimatic, and AER for the tremendous support during this unusual season."

NO. 55 MAZDA RT24-P JONATHAN BOMARITO

"This year's 12 Hours of Sebring was the most thrilling I can remember. The ups and downs of motor racing are extreme and the events of this weekend are a good reminder to keep pushing forward. You never know how the race will unfold. I'm so happy for everyone on the Multimatic team

and for Mazda! Winning the 12 Hours of Sebring is a huge accomplishment and now we are a part of the Sebring history books."

HARRY TINCKNELL

"This was a fantastic race for Mazda, finishing first and third in one of the biggest races of the year. The crew has made many sacrifices throughout the year and this makes it all worth it. During the race, our focus was to get the car dialed in and stay out of trouble for the first 10 hours and be fast in the end. We were pleased the strategy played to our benefit this weekend." ●



FIRST FOR THE THIRD TIME

When 18,800 Auto Zeitung readers voted for their favourite vehicles for the 33rd time, they were choosing from 304 models in 18 classes.

Adding to an awards collection numbering in the hundreds, the Mazda MX-5 has won the 2020 Auto Trophy in the Import Convertible category.

It marks a "three-peat" for the world's favourite roadster after securing the same prize, chosen

by readers of German fortnightly magazine Auto Zeitung, in 2018 and 2019.

With 16.8% of votes in its category, the MX-5 (as in past years) outpaced considerably pricier models including the Aston Martin DBS Superleggera Volante (12.9%) and Jaguar F-Type Convertible (9.3%). ●



GOSSIP & STORIES, TALL AND OTHERWISE

Co-Ordinator Nora put together a run for Christmas and she asked us to lead it. We agreed and after a test run, we decided to add in a bit extra, just because we could.

Neil G spotted that our start location and time, had a risk of cross-over with the Inglewood Christmas parade. Take a tick for observation skills young man.

So, we shifted the start point to the swimming pool, where 15, mostly suitably decorated, cars duly met for the run, with 3 other members to join us for the lunch. The odd shower looked possible, but the prospects for the day were good.

After a thorough briefing, with a lot of lovely, narrow, windy, 'made for MX-5s' rural roads ahead, we set off. Successfully avoiding the Christmas parade, we headed north on 3A before turning off to Tarurutangi, crossed 3A to Lepperton, Waitoriki, past Everett Park, Stoney Oaks Farm Park and on to Kaimata where we had a brief stop at the school.

Taranaki

Report by Jock Sutherland

Illustration by Pixar

From there we skirted Ratapiko, meandered our way to Te Popo and wound up at the Midhurst pub. Parking out the back and they had a semi-indoor/ outdoor area set aside for us.

We enjoyed a nice meal, shared our Secret Santa gifts, and prizes were awarded to the best Christmas seasonally dressed participants. Time for gossip and stories (tall and otherwise) to the occasional accompaniment of hordes of Harleys, before heading our various ways in the sunshine of a very pleasant afternoon.

Thanks Nora, for this run, and your efforts throughout the year. We look forward to sharing more good times in 2021. ●



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Sponsor	Product/Service	Benefits to Club Members
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AUTOWAY SERVICES LTD 123 Columbo St Frankton, Hamilton Ph (07) 847 5484	For all your Mechanical work, Tune-ups, Lubes, WOFs, Alignments and more!	5% discount on Parts and Labour to members. Spotted Campaign Major Sponsor, Membership Card Sponsor 2001/2, Magazine Advertiser, Prizes.
BROOMFISH AUTOMOTIVE Internet sales only: www.broomfish.co.nz PH: 027 7337410	Mazda MX-5 parts. Ships nationwide.	10% discount for Club Members. When ordering, use coupon code "MX-5CLUB" to get the discount.
CITY GARAGE 16 Waverley St, Auckland Ph (09) 379 5649 citygarageltd@xtra.co.nz	Full mechanical and auto electrical repairs; WOFs, tunes, lubes, brakes, clutches. Carried out by expert Mazda trained technicians	10% discount to Club members. Magazine Advertiser 5% rebate to MX-5 Club
CLASSIC COVER INSURANCE www.classiccover.co.nz 0800 456 254	Motor vehicle insurance	10% on premiums. Must give Club membership number when obtaining quotation.
DENT MAGICIAN NZ Wide Ph 0800 No Dents Ph 0800 66 33 68	Dents removed with no painting. It's fixed or it's free! Mobile service, approx 30 minutes per dent	\$140 per panel retail. 10% discount for Club Members.
MAZDA DEALERS Nationwide NZ		10% discount for club members on parts
SCREEN WIPER SOLUTIONS 9/90 Elizabeth Knox Pl St Johns Auckland 1072	Silicon wiper blades retail for \$69.95 but SWS offer them to MX-5 club members for \$39.95. Available to all cars, not just MX-5s.	Major discount for Club Members. To order, go to sws.co.nz and select the model you need. Enter the promo code MX-5 and your club membership number.
WANGANUI MOTORS 82 Ridgeway Street Wanganui Ph (06) 349 0930	The Mazda Dealer to see in Wanganui	10% discount on parts.

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Do you have a trade, job or skill that you think others may want to use? Trade Off is exclusively for Club members, and it's free to list! Simply email your BRIEF ad (up to 50 words) to topdown@MX-5club.org.nz and put Trade Off in the subject line.

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EXCLUSIVE CLUB MERCHANDISE



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Any item can be added to your shopping cart, and you can return to add more items before checkout.

Note: all prices are inclusive of GST



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\$40.00



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\$90.00



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\$125.00



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\$100.00



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\$65.00



Club Beanie 2020
\$25.00



Club Cap 2020
\$25.00



Club Badge 2020
\$12.00



Mazda MX5 Club of NZ
Number Plate Surround - Silver Fern
\$15.00

The Club is pleased to announce we have a new range of 30th anniversary clothing available.

The first item is the Short Sleeve Polo In Black Or Navy Blue.

The shirts are made of a premium antibacterial BIZ COOL fabric, 100% breathable, with moisture wicking properties.

The Polo features the **30th Anniversary logo** especially developed for this occasion.



All details of sizes for men and women, and prices, are on the updated **Merchandise** page on the website.

The second item is a matching Club cap with the same logo as the shirts.

All other current Club merchandise is listed on the website, with detailed instructions of how to order and pay.

Once ordered you will receive both an online and an email notification.

You'll also notice a Shopping Basket icon on the header of all website pages, which enables you to check status at any time.

Happy motoring, and happy purchasing.

Webpage link:

<https://tinyurl.com/sbonxp>