

Miata Fast Track



MAY/JUNE 2006

Issue #149

Beware of
Expensive
Imitations.

Get In.
Be Moved.

Get
involved.
Do
something
for your
club.

Join for the
car...
Stay for the
people.

Letter from the President

Hello Fellow Miata groupies!

Once again it is my privilege to write a few words for our newsletter. A lot has happened since our last one and the biggest news for me is that I got my Miata back from the shop on Monday, April 24th!!!! I have been frustrated with some of the process from my insurance company but it looks like all is going to come together. I cannot wait to get AMESTR back! I have noticed a couple of things not quite right and they have fixed them. I finally got a chance to wash and was it on May 19th and noticed a couple of areas that were missed. I have taken it back once and they made it good but these are things you did not notice until the car got washed. Hopefully by the end of May all will be good.

When I get my car back there are a few projects I am working on getting ready for summer. I have already installed my CB splitter in the trunk. For my birthday I received one of the cobra handheld models and looking for places to install the base. I put it near the computer module behind the passenger seat and used an existing bolt hole. I will refine it if needed but so far it is staying in place. I will see on our first run if an external speaker is needed. So by the time we have the next run I will be actually able to communicate with other cars!

I have been mentally debating whether or not to get a bra (for the car, not me). The owner of the paint shop informed me that due to environmental concerns the chemicals in paint are not as good as they were a couple of years ago. A lot of this is California driven so makes you wonder if you would get a better paint job in Nevada. The point is that paints are not as hard or as durable in the aftermarket as they once were. I have looked into the 3M product that is a clear film put on the nose of cars like window tinting is on glass but there is none cut for the NA models. That would mean a more expensive custom application. For those with an NB it might be something to think about as they have those pre-cut and available for self or professional installation. I figure I would use the bra only on long trips as I would prefer to minimize the stone chips in the nose after paying extra to have it repainted. What I decided to do was go with the bra and put it on last weekend. You have to let it stretch and re-adjust the first time but so far it fits good. I will try it for road trips and see how it goes. I actually do not mind the look of it at all.

Another random thought has to do with oil changes. I recently did my first and must say it was not as difficult as I thought it would be after reading everything on the net. I can see where a pair of ramps would help but I just use my floor jack and had plenty of room to slide a drain pan underneath the car. The filter was easy to reach with a proper wrench and while I do not have a universal joint elbow, I removed it while only spilling a little of oil. I learned a long time ago to use a plastic zip lock bag and that captures most of the oil and makes it easy to take your time and get the filter out of the engine bay.

My final project was to repaint the wiper arms in a semi gloss black. Easy on and off with no problems. The base of the arm that attaches to the armature is plastic so make sure you mask it

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General Meeting Minutes

April 20, 2006

6:30 Meeting was call to order by President Randy Ames

Randy announced that the presentation of the donations to the charities from the Poker Run had been postponed until the May meeting.

The minutes were read and approved.

Nancy Moore reported on the Newsletter. The deadline for submitting articles is the 25th of the month.

Old Business:

The Poker Run was evaluated. Overall everyone said it was very good. Suggestions for next year were: discount for early registration, have a SJVMC representative at the Friday gathering all evening to welcome guests, have a "Shine & Show" before the run and a possible "Best of Show" award.

Committee Reports:

Cindy Ames reported on the web site. Pictures of the Poker Run are up.

Ralph Weber gave the Treasurer's report and an accounting of the expenses and income from the Poker Run.

Up Coming Events:

Details for these events will be announced at a later date

May 20th Auto Cross at the Fresno Fair grounds

June 24th one day Courtwright run

July 8th Summer Birthday party

Aug. 19 & 20 VIP run to Sonora

7:55 Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Marci Jarvis, Secretary

May 18, 2006

6:30 Meeting was call to order by President Randy Ames.

Members and guests were asked to introduce themselves.

The minutes for the April meeting were approved.

Old Business

Newsletter: Randy reported that Nancy Scott was unable to continue as the newsletter editor and ask if anyone would be able to take over as editor. He also reminded everyone to submit articles of interest for the newsletter.

(Continued from page 2)

Web Site: Cindy reported that there was new information on the web site and that it was coming along fine.

Club Goodies: Tom has articles of clothing available with the club logo or you can bring in clothing for embroidery.

Treasurer's report was read and approved.

Randy reported that Mazda had sent a box of goodies for the club. It was decided to use these items as raffle prizes at the club meetings.

Upcoming Events:

May 20th Autocross

June 24th Courtwright day trip

July 8th Birthday party

TBA Madera Drive in night

New Business

Suggestions were ask for concerning the by laws on charity events. A committee will review these and present to the club at a later date.

Randy ask for ideas for future events and runs.

Presentation of the Poker Run donations were made to Nancy Hinds for the Hinds Hospice and Angela Reyna for Imagine U.

The raffle prize, a lighted key ring was won by Norma Tyner.

7:10 Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted

Marci Jarvis, Secretary

(Continued from page 1)

off. Other than that I had no problems with removal, a little prep work, painting, and re-installation.

As you can all see there are lots of things you can do in addition to driving these cars. For me the fun is figuring out how can I make mine a little different than everyone else's car and keep myself busy. We have a few months left of good weather so I plan on taking my car out as much as possible. I may send out a notice to see if anyone wants to go on a half day trip so keep checking the e-mail.

Take Care!

Randy Ames

Publication Information

The first issue of the Miata Fast Track is free Membership entitles you to participate in all events, including drives, assemblies, meetings, parties, gatherings, conventions, technical sessions, etc., newsletters, and allows you the opportunity to meet some nifty people.

This newsletter is a monthly publication of the San Joaquin Valley Miata Club (SJVMC). The information presented represents the opinions of the individual contributors. No representation is made regarding the accuracy or reliability of any information contained on any of these pages. Neither the Mazda Corporation, the Miata Owners Club, the San Joaquin Valley Miata Club, the editor, or any of the individual contributors accept any liability for the consequences of using the information presented in this newsletter.

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Leaking Heater Core?

By Ron Branam

Question: When is a leaking heater core not a leaking heater core? Answer: when it's a heater core hose!

I recently started smelling coolant in the cockpit and steam on the windshield; classic symptoms of a leaking heater core. This being a 16-year old car, I guess it could be expected. Being my nature, first I ignored it. Finally, with a track event at Laguna Seca approaching, I decided to do something about it. I'd done some research on the Miata.net forum and found that it could be the heater core or it could be a teeny-tiny stub-of-a-hose that connects the top (intake) of the heater core to the pipe that goes through the firewall. I also found that it is possible to replace the core and/or the hose without removing the dash. Unfortunately, this body doesn't do well crawling around under the dash in the driver's foot-well; especially with pedals and lot's of wiring in the way. So, the quandary was remove the dash to find if it was the hose or was it actually the heater core, which would require ordering from Lithia and wait the two or three days for it to come in. I opted to order the hose, then scheduled Lithia to do the repair when the hose came in.

While I was waiting, I stopped by my favorite mechanic (Arcane Automotive. 499-1041), who gave me an estimate about \$200.00 below Lithia. Being of sound mind and body, I jumped on it. As it turned out and as I mentioned above, it wasn't the heater core, it was the teeny-tiny hose. Kevin did say that had he known that beforehand, he may not have had to take the dash apart. End result: \$350.00 labor to replace an 89-cent hose. I took the core back to Lithia who gave me a refund, minus the 20% re-stocking charge. (I won't go into that ugly topic!)

You can see the hose in photo #1, which I found on the forum. In photo #2 is the heater core showing the short pipe at the top that connects to the hose. Many have wondered "What was the engineers at Mazda thinking" when they designed this? My best guess is it had something to do with the assembly process at the factory. Also, rumor has it that they suspended the heater core in mid-air then built the car around it – that's how hard it is to get to.

Since I saved so much money, I immediately went to Western Speed and Fuel and bought a new racing helmet. Mine was getting old (an M95 rating) and someday somebody would inspect it and not allow it on the track, so I bought an SA2005 rated helmet.

By the way, if you haven't yet discovered www.Miata.net, you really should. Everything you want to know about your car is on there either in the garage section, the FAQ section, or the forum. You don't have to register to view topics, only to post. I've been a member since February, 2000, member #3596. Although they stopped assigning member numbers, it is estimated it is now in the high 5-figures.

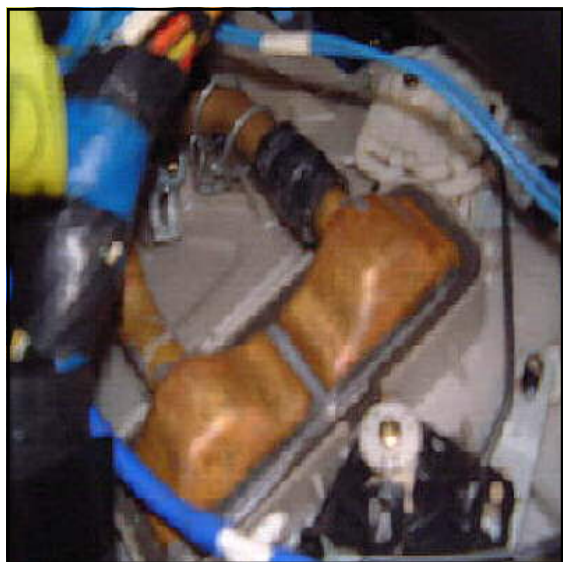


Photo # 1



Photo # 2



COURTRIGHT LAKE TOUR

JUNE 24, 2006

Come and enjoy another of our “End of the road adventures” Located above 8000’ in elevation this lake is a jewel. Along the way we will visit Dinkey Creek, McKinley redwood grove and Wishon lake. We guarantee lots of twisties but at a moderate pace. This is a picnic run so bring your basket and blanket.

Time **9:00 am Departure**
Place **Starbucks at Nees & Willow**
Contact **Bob & Lor-Rae Raus**
 Rauster@sbcglobal.net
 559-299-0942

RSVP would be helpful

This page should be removed and posted on your refrigerator.
Don't forget!

Congratulations to Joe & Joanne Walden on their marriage April 8th! Most of you do not know Joe, but he was - and always will be - the founder of San Joaquin Valley Miata Club. Joe has not been able to be an active member for quite some time but has always maintained his membership. Hopefully they will be able to join one of our runs soon and we will get to meet Joanne.

Upcoming Events

WARNING: Dates in Calendar are closer than they appear.

Join Us At An Upcoming Club Meeting

Meet at Marie Calendar's Restaurant and Bakery located at Cedar and Shaw in Fresno. We are in a banquet room located in the rear of the restaurant. The optional dinner is at 6:00 p.m. and the meeting begins at 6:30 p.m.. You are welcome to join us anytime!

Got Guts at Thunderhill—An Open Track Day -June 19, 2006

SAMOA, the Sacramento Area Miata Owners Association, is proud to sponsor an open track day at Thunderhill Raceway Park, Willows, California, on Monday, June 19, 2006. This will be a traditional track event with 3 run groups, 6 scheduled 20-minute sessions per group (with an open session at the end of the day), and optional instruction for novices. Groups A and B will be limited to 25 cars each, and the novice group to 20 cars. Our event will emphasize safety and fun. Although SAMOA is a Miata club based in Sacramento, drivers of all types of cars are welcome. The cost is just \$210 per driver (\$225 after May 31, 2006).

The event is being presented as a benefit to raise money for the Crohns & Colitis Foundation of America (CCFA), a non-profit organization dedicated to finding a cure for IBD – Inflammatory Bowel Disease. All net proceeds of track-related activities and 100% of all raffle receipts will go directly to CCFA. Raffle prizes are being solicited from more than 50 Miata and other general automotive vendors, and prizes will be raffled during the lunch break so that on-track activities will not be affected.

A website has been created to promote this event – <http://www.gotgutsatthunderhill.com> At the site you will find complete event information, signup forms, and prize and driver lists. Please check it out. If you need additional information feel free to contact me via email at reesescopesdad@yahoo.com or by phone at (916) 454-1008. Looking forward to seeing you at the track...

Courtright Lake Tour - Saturday, June 24, 2006

This fun, day run to Courtright Lake will give you twisties and beautiful scenery. The perfect run for putting the top down. Please see flyer (<http://www.sjvmc.net/newevents/upcomingevents.htm>) for more details.

SAMOA Scrabble Scramble September 23-24, 2006

Mark your calendar for the Scrabble Scramble 2006 in Folsom on September 23-24, 2006. A hospitality suite will be available on Friday evening for us to socialize with the out-of-towners. Details are being confirmed. We will have a 2007 from Folsom Mazda to play with again during the Saturday morning car show. The host hotel will be the Residence Inn where we will have our car show and begin the Saturday run. Please contact Denise Correia if you are able to volunteer for this event. If you wish to pre-register or have any questions, please contact Denise at deni@samo.org or call 916-806-8707. Registration information will be posted to the SAMOA website in March

SCCA Autocross Schedule

Unless stated otherwise, all events are held at Castle Airport, Atwater.

If you need directions, call Ron at 323-5243.

Event # 4	June 18
Event # 5	July 9
Event # 6	August 6
Event # 7	September 9
Event # 8	September 10
Event # 9	September 24
Event # 10	October 8
Event # 11	October 22
Event # 12	November 4
Event # 13	November 5



San Joaquin Valley Miata Club



Meetings are held the **3rd** Thursday of each month at: (Except in December) **Marie Callender's**, 1781 E Shaw Ave (at Cedar) at 6:30 P.M.

NEXT MEETING
June 15, 2006
SEE YOU THERE

Newsletter Online!

You are receiving the Miata Fast Track as a courtesy to other clubs or because you are a member of San Joaquin Valley Miata Club.

If you would prefer to read the newsletter on-line, in printable Adobe Reader format (.pdf), and would like to save the club the copying, labeling, postage costs necessary to mail it to you, please let the editor know. Send an e-mail to Editor@sjvmc.net stating your name and to please remove your name from the Fast Track mailing list. Every little bit helps!

Thanks for your consideration!

VISIT THE SJVMC WEB PAGE AT
<http://www.sjvmc.net/>

Miata Fast Track

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The first issue of the Miata Fast Track is complimentary. To continue receiving this newsletter contact the treasurer.

Get In. Be Moved.

