



HORIZONS

Jan/Feb 2002

H A P P Y I N E W I Y E A R !

Getting Into Official Autocross Form

Autocross being one of our clubs most popular and successful events leads us to begin adopting the standards of major autocross sports groups. Listed below are the requirements each driver needs to be aware of.

1. At a minimum, each car shall have the number posted on the drivers side of the car.
2. The numbers shall be in a highly contrasting color that makes it easy for the timers to read.
3. The numbers shall be plainly visible under the lighting available at the time of the event.
4. The numbers shall be attached to the vehicle any way that the driver wishes.
5. The numbers shall remain plainly visible if it should rain (if shoe polish is used on the window, then it must highly be contrasting, plainly visible, and must not wash off if it rains - paint will work but is hard to remove).
6. The numbers shall be a minimum of 8.5 inches tall with a minimum stroke width of 1.5 inches. This can be done using a computer and a laser printer. Ink jet printers are not recommended as the ink will run when wet.

The club will have numbers printed on US letter size paper (one digit per sheet, black on white) available for purchase at the registration desk (used with masking tape to attach to the car).

Numbers will be assigned to a driver/car (thus someone who drives two cars will need two sets of numbers) and will be reused at future events (making it possible for the driver to use a fixed set of magnetic numbers).



The SunRiders Autocross Series...

One of our favorite events in the club is the autocross. It's a great way to have a LOT of fun and, at the same time, learn how to be a better driver. Anyone can participate, and there are no special requirements for your car, just sound mechanical condition.

If you've never been to an autocross, you might not know that it is a simple timed event where one car at a time runs on a short course laid out with rubber cones. Typically, you get three or four timed runs, of which your best is counted. Of course we're not really keeping track of who wins (yet), but it is fun to see how you do compared to the other drivers. Speeds rarely exceed 35 or 40 miles per hour, but the twists and turns of the course can be quite challenging.

Since we recently have found an inexpensive, well-equipped, and convenient location to host autocross events, we have decided to undertake several of these fun and instructional events each year. In order to encourage more participation, and to make things easier for those autocrossing for the first time, we thought it might be a good idea to present a little primer on how to participate in an autocross. We won't try to tell you how to win Fastest Time of Day (FTD). That's for you to figure out yourself, but we can tell you a few things you need to know before you show up.

First, you should understand that an autocross takes a lot of coordination, planning and volunteer effort to implement. In that light, you should expect to spend a short time during the day working as a volunteer in some capacity. This usually involves being a course worker. A course worker stands out in the blistering sun and waits for a car to knock down a cone. When that happens, the course worker RUNS to the cone and sets it upright. He or she then signals to the timing steward how many cones were knocked down so that a penalty can be assessed to the lucky driver's time.

You may be asked to move cones around either before or after the autocross. Mostly we'll need people to help put the cones back the way they were before we arrived. The course we use is utilized during the week as a police training course, and they expect us to return it to their configuration before we leave.

Second, you should make sure before you arrive that your car is in the proper condition. Cars must pass a basic tech inspection, which will include inspections of the torque on your lug nuts, brake fluid, tire condition and pressure, and there must be NO loose items in the cabin or trunk of the car. Time constraints prevent a more thorough tech inspection, so it is your responsibility to ensure that your car is in top condition.

Third, helmets are required. This can be any DOT or Snell approved helmet, either closed-face or open. For autocrosses, roll bars are not required. The club will have a few helmets (three or four) on hand that can be rented for \$5.

Finally, spend some time educating yourself about autocrossing. On the Internet, a good place to start is WWW.AUTOCROSS.COM.



New Club Officers Assume Duties Jan 2002

OFFICERS

President: Bill Bullington

Vice President: Don Reese

Board (we need 3): Jonathan Skinner,
Kevin Morrison, Kathy Davis

Treasurer: LoAn Lithicum

Secretary: Cherie Turner

OTHER OFFICES / POSITIONS

Webmaster: Kevin Morrison

Membership Director: George Bickner

Autocross/Motorsports: Jonathan
Skinner

Newsletter Editor: Kathy Davis

Activities organizer: Dave Tietz

Fellowship: Ilona Wessling

Historian: Paul Shaffer

Marketing: Skip Willis

Merchandise sales: Ilona Wessling

Charity chairperson: (position will be
filled at a later date)

Ballot : (position will be filled at a later
date)

*(E mail addresses for main officers located on back
cover of this newsletter)*



Sun Riders play Santa to the animals

December 23rd at 1pm the Sun Riders Miata Club loaded up 3 miatas and a chevy tracker and headed for the SPCA of Pinellas. The reason for this visit? To play "Santa" to the animals and deliver a collection of food and gifts to this worthy charity.

The club collected over 400 pounds of dry dog and cat food, 40-50 cans of dog and cat food, cleaning supplies, dog treats and chewies, dog toys and computer software for the organization this Christmas. The club was also present and involved in the SPCA Paws on Parade in October, collecting over \$300 for the organization.

"This club likes to give back to the community in some small way. Most of us have pets and feel this is a great cause," says the club's newsletter editor Kathy Davis. "I feel like we accomplished a lot in this collection. We started it a little late this year. Next year we plan to do more."

The club's president, Jonathan Skinner notes "Many of us have pets which were adopted from shelters such as the SPCA or other rescue groups. It is another common bond we have. It is nice at this time of year that we can do something for the animals

that have not yet found a loving, caring home of their own."

kathy davis 12/28/2001



FOR SALE 2001 Miata LS

2001 Mazda Miata LS - 18k, auto, ABS, crystal blue metallic, tan top, tan leather int., Bose sound system, custom heatshield, 16" wheels, tint, matts,
Excellent condition \$21,500
Call Suzanne Persons - Phone: 727.367.9265

Autocross Driving Instructor

Assaulted

by J Skinner

Many of you have met Pinellas County Deputy Sheriff B.J. Lyons at one of our Autocross or Driver Training classes. BJ is one of the nicest guys I have ever met. The following story about B.J. appeared in the St. Petersburg Times recently. The incident happened the last part of december.

Here is the article:

Driver charged with assault of deputy

St. Petersburg Times; St. Petersburg, Fla.; Dec 24, 2001; CHRIS TISCH; Full Text: Copyright Times Publishing Co. Dec 24, 2001

Joshua Lamoureux told police that he planned to apply for a deputy job at the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office.

But the 26-year-old Largo resident probably didn't help his chances Saturday morning when, police say, he cut off a motorist, then armed himself with a handgun and threatened the other driver.

That other driver was off-duty Pinellas sheriff's deputy Billy Jo Lyons, who police say teaches at the public safety institute in St. Petersburg and is one of the best-known deputies in the county.

"He just messed with the wrong person," said Largo police officer Rex Troche, who arrested Lamoureux on an aggravated assault charge.

"He's the man when it comes to training in this county," Troche said. "He's very well-known and respected in this county."

The incident began about 8:30 a.m. Saturday when Lyons, 52, was driving east on East Bay Drive. He had his 9-year-old grandson with him, and they planned to get some breakfast at Willow's Diner.

Lamoureux was driving behind them. Lyons later said Lamoureux was following very closely; Lamoureux said Lyons braked suddenly in front of him.

Either way, when Lyons turned to pull into the restaurant, 1555 East Bay Drive, Lamoureux pulled in front of him and stopped, which prevented Lyons from going forward. Lyons then saw Lamoureux reach under his seat and get out of his vehicle with a gun in his waistband, police said.

Fearing for his grandson and wanting to keep the threat as far away from the child as possible, Lyons, who was unarmed, exited his vehicle and confronted Lamoureux.

Lamoureux put his hand on the gun, a 9mm Keltec, and threatened Lyons, who then identified himself as an off-duty deputy, police said.

Lamoureux got back into his car and drove away. Lyons copied down his tag number and called police, who went to Lamoureux's home, 2751 S Pines Drive, No. 2, and brought him out of the house at gunpoint, Troche said.

Lamoureux was charged with aggravated assault. Troche said Lamoureux denied making any specific threat to Lyons.



Don Reese is GCAC CSP-Novice Class champion! Congratulations Don!!

Fawkes 1.0 lives on...

Though no longer with us, the former ride of Steve Swiger, #88 Flaming Blue Weasel Motorsports, shows up in a small photo on page 12 of the February '02 issue of Grassroots Motorsports.

*A racecar's days may be numbered,
but publication lasts forever.*

A Note From Stuart Thompson [Just Miatas]

I have had several potential Miata buyers call and ask what to look for when purchasing a 90-93 1.6L Miata. The number one thing to enquire about is over heating. Over heating can cause several problems, worst of which is oil control ring collapse. Heat kills the temper in the oil control rings and as result they collapse inward.

The oil control ring is the third or lowest ring on each of the four pistons. The first two rings of the pistons are compression rings. The oil control ring is a three piece set; an upper and lower control ring separated by a spacer ring. A three piece oil control ring set has no "spring" ring. A four piece control ring set has a spring ring. A spring ring keeps tension behind the control rings by pushing them out toward the cylinder walls. There is some redundancy built in to a four piece system that is good.

The result of oil control ring collapse is oil consumption without a loss in cylinder compression. The car may feel just fine. It is very difficult to diagnose an oil control failure, except for major failure which results in a light blue smoke out the tail pipe. It is possible to inspect the top off the pistons at the edges for oil control problems. The edges of the pistons will be cleaner than the center of the pistons. The edges are being cleaned by the oil getting past the compression rings. Piston edges are difficult to inspect visually. I can be done with a bore scope, but it takes experience notice the nuances.

The first thing I would look for before purchase is evidence of cooling system repair: a new radiator; new radiator cap, hoses. Look for a low level in the reservoir bottle and dirty or muddy coolant. Ask if the car uses oil or has ever had any cylinder head work done. Ask for service records. Look for a cylinder head that is brighter or cleaner than the rest of the surrounding motor. If a Miata has been over heated, cylinder head work is almost a given.

I have seen Miatas that have been over heated and treated with only cylinder head repair, and missing the diagnoses on oil control failure. If the control rings have collapsed, the only cure is a lower end rebuild. Replace all piston rings, connecting rod bearings, main bearings.

Stu

PS Wife Jacci due with our first, a boy, on Dec 25th. His name? Jackie Stewart.

*Congratulations on the baby news too
Stuart!*

Kathy

From: Gerry Acquilano
To: stuart@justmiata.com
Sent: Saturday, December 15, 2001
7:14 PM
Subject: Tech tip

Dear Stu:

Here's a little tip you can pass on to M2 customers (1999-2002). It was apparent that the large snaps, of which there are four of, on the top boot were breaking. This occurred during release, taking the boot off the car after once snapped on. To remedy this situation, we encourage every customer to periodically take an ordinary cotton Q-Tip, dip it in Vasolene, and swab the inside of the female snap on the boot itself. This enables a much smoother release and thereby helps prevent the snap from breaking or coming dislodged from the boot fabric. Try it on a car and you will agree it is an easy fix to a much hated problem.



Upcoming Events

Here's the event schedule for the next few weeks...

We are always looking for fun activities and events. If you have an idea, don't be bashful! Something that you enjoy is likely to be enjoyed by other club members also. Contact a board member if you have suggestions for events or would like to volunteer to organize an activity.

All events are open to all Sun Riders Miata Club members, their guests, and prospective members unless otherwise noted.

Tuesday, January 15, Monthly Meeting - 6:30 PM kick the tires, 7:00 PM dinner and meeting. Meeting location is Jimmy Mac's Restaurant located one block south of Gandy Blvd. in Tampa on Bridge Avenue, just west of Westshore. Look for the big Imperial Marina sign on Gandy.

Saturday, January 19 : SunRiders Autocross Series 2002

Event 1

Our fifth year running these events! Registration starts at 8:30AM, driver's meeting at 10:00. Registration closes at 9:30. Be there before 9:30 or be a spectator! This is a great way to improve your driving skills in a place where you can't get a ticket and you can't hurt your car. If you are not a member of the SunRiders, you are still welcome to participate. You don't even have to own a Miata, any type of car can come. Cost will be \$25 and that will include a lunch. Spectators can eat lunch with us for \$5. Call Jonathan Skinner at 727-784-5529 for more details. A few helmets will be available for rental for \$5.

Visit the website at www.sunriders.com to read a short article about what to expect at a SunRiders autocross. Beginners are welcome. The event will be held at the St. Petersburg Junior College - Allstate Campus in St. Petersburg, at the Southeastern Public Safety Institute.

The Campus is located at 3200 34th Street South, St. Petersburg.

Directions from I-275 Southbound:

Take Exit #6, which is 22nd Ave. South

Directions from I-275 Northbound:

Take Exit #5, which is also 22nd Ave. South Head West on 22nd Ave to 34th Street, take a left at the light onto 34th Street South. (this is also known as US 19)

Head South for about a half-mile, SPJC-Allstate Center will be on your left, across from Florida Power.

After the Autocross on the 19th we will be holding our **FUN RUNS** for Charity!!

\$1 a run - all proceeds to benefit the SPCA of Pinellas.



The Official Sun Riders Member Directory is coming soon!

This directory will hold the names and photos as well as contact info of all active members of the club. The book will be available to members only on-line and a printed version will be available to non-web users. To be included in this book, send your name, address, phone, color miata and e mail address along with a photo of you or you and the miata to

Kathy Davis

11438 119th Terrace Largo, FL 33778

or e mail the info to me at

kdavis.email@verizon.net. All photos will be returned. Contact me with questions or if you need a photo taken.

Deadline is Feb 14th!!



Holiday Party

If you missed this years Holiday Party, you missed a great time! We had awesome food and awesome fun. We played a White Elephant gift exchange and even had a fun gift from Loren in Kansas (we won't tell you what we sent him back!!) The Chart House penthouse was nice and spacious and the weather was great. Santa even stopped by!



What we collected for our Charities:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| For CASA | 1 tickle me elmo |
| \$25 Winn Dixie Gift Certificate | 1 lionel train clock |
| 6 Cell phones | 1 sandcastle art kit |
| 4 plush animals/toys | 4 books |
| 3 remote control cars | 5 bean bag toys |
| | 2 am fm radios |

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- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| For the SPCA | 7 boxes trash bags |
| 1-22lb bag dog food | 4 boxes bleach |
| 4-5lb bags dog food | 5 pouches cat food |
| 1-4lb bag dog food | 1 bottle windex |
| 1-3lb bag dog food | 2 cans comet |
| 7 cans dog food | 2 packs chew sticks |
| 35 cans cat food | 7 packs dog chew bones |
| 1 litter box scoop | 1 3lb cat food |
| 1 dog collar | 1 2lb cat food |
| plastic bags | 1 McAfee Virus Scan |
| 1 bag towels | 5-3lb bags dog food |
| 1 heart toy | 176lbs large dog food |
| 1 bag of toys | total poundage of dry dog and cat |
| 30lbs cat food | food is 409 pounds!! |
| 90lbs dog food | |
| 44lbs dog food | |
| 1 box dog biscuits | |

FIRST CLASS MAIL

MIATA CLUB



Join us at our club meetings...

We meet the third Tuesday of each month. Currently our meetings are being held at Jimmy Macs Restaurant, tire kicking starts at 6:30 and the meeting begins at 7:00pm.

For more information visit the web page at:
www.sunriders.com

If you received this newsletter and are not a member of our club, please consider this an invitation to join.

OFFICE CONTACT E MAIL

- President.....Bill Bullington.....bill@sunriders.com
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Stuff the lawyers make us say: all opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors. they do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Sun Riders Miata club, Miata Club of America, Mazda Motors, or the Board of Directors of any of these organizations. Technical advice given is based on the writer's experience with their particular cars. Unless otherwise stated, these procedures are not "Factory Approved". Sun Riders assumes no responsibility for the use or misuse of any information presented herein. Use any information at your own risk. Some assembly may be required, batteries not included. Keep away from small children and point away from face when lighting.