

**January-February 2000**  
**Volume 6, Issue 1**



# HORIZONS

The Official Newsletter of the SunRiders Miata Club of Tampa Bay

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## A Decade of Miata

Well, it's certainly been a quick two months since the last newsletter. The holidays have just flown by. Whether the new year marks the passing of THE millennium, or just another year is open to debate, but what really counts is that the new year marks the end of the 1990's, the decade that saw the Miata come into its own and establish a following almost unparalleled in the history of the automobile. The next decade will see those first Miatas become "relics", "classics", "originals", and "fond memories". What remains to be seen is if they will also begin to leak oil and shed parts like their elder British and Italian counterparts. Let's hope not. What amazes me is that my six-year-old car still turns heads and gets comments from people almost on a daily basis. Just about any other six-year-old car is about 3 years past the age at which it generally gets replaced by a newer car, relegating it to the used car lot or as someone's "beater" car. The Miata is definitely different, though, as long as it is taken care of. At six years, there are some rattles that shouldn't be there, and the possibility of something breaking does cross your mind from time to time (but nothing has ever actually broken), but a little preventive maintenance, some wax and elbow grease can make the car just like new and the accolades from fellow motorists, friends, coworkers, and passing children continue unabated. Driving the Miata still brings a sense of freedom, happiness, and an appreciation of the little things in life, like wind in your hair and the smell of a good BBQ joint as

you drive by. It makes you want to sit outdoors at restaurants, go to a baseball game in the spring, look up at the moon and stars at night, and breathe deep at the smell of a freshly cut lawn in the summer. It makes you drive like Mario Andretti, grin from ear to ear like Groucho Marx, and laugh out loud like an innocent child. For some of us, the Miata has been a stepping stone to other things automotive, like racing, autocrossing, writing, designing, fixing, and creating. It has opened doors and created possibilities. Thanks to the people who love the car, it has fostered friendships and forged partnerships. It has given us something to do on a beautiful Sunday when everyone else is glued to the TV. There will be new Miatas in the next decade, and eventually those "originals" will start to feel a little dated, but some of us will hold on to them, secure in the knowledge that a great car is always a great car, regardless of what may have come afterward. When the 2010 Miata is introduced, it will hopefully benefit from 20 years of knowledge gained from the originals, from the experiences of what will by then be nearly 1 million owners, from racing, crashing, cruising, breaking, stopping, turning, screeching, launching, spinning, cranking, and all the other things these cars do a million times every day. That will be one awesome roadster.

No doubt about it.

*-Kevin Morrison*

## NEW MEMBERS

Edghan P. McGill  
Susan Lennertz  
Jeffrey Bell  
Jeremy Hummer  
Allison Spindler  
Merril Turner  
Rita Bjerksett  
Greg and Diane Nelson  
Richard Jeffords  
Doug Presnell  
Carline Ash  
Ryan Berringer  
Jim Livesay

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### From The Membership Department

A whole bunch of you members are due to renew your memberships this month. **If you received an application form inside this newsletter, then you are due to renew.** If you have not sent in your renewal by the next newsletter (March) you will be purged from the database, you will receive no further mailings from the club and you won't get a 2000 membership card.

All current members as of March will get a brand-spanking new membership card good for the usual discounts at Mazda Village and Lindell Mazda. So don't procrastinate, or you risk missing an issue of this most important publication, without which you will surely be lost! New members who have not gotten a card yet will get one in March. If you need one before then to obtain a discount, call or email Kevin Morrison at 813-222-0509 / kevin@sunriders.com and one can be printed for you.

## Sponsors!

### A Word for Our Sponsors

Well, things have been a little slow lately, so we don't really have much to say in this space. Sponsors love getting their names out, though, so we'll give them a little bonus exposure.

**LINDELL** Mazda

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Courtesy Mazda  
Hillsborough Ave., Tampa  
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Lakeland Auto Mall/ Lakeland Mazda  
Lakeland, 800-733-3439



# -Random|Shots-



Holiday Picnic, December 1999, Lake Seminole Park



Joe and Judy McCormick's Christmas tree hauler.

## A Car Lover's Weekend in California

by Vinnie Lucido

This August, George Bieber and I took a week to visit the San Francisco area to participate in THE car lover's event in the world.

It is known as the Monterey Historic's weekend. Besides a short time visiting San Francisco itself for a day, we spent all of our time on the Monterey peninsula about 2 hours south.

The major car events that we attended were the Concours D'Italiano (Friday), the Barrett/Jackson collector car auction (Friday night), the Monterey historic races at Laguna Seca raceway (Saturday) and the Pebble Beach Concours D'Elegance and Blackhawk classic car auction (Sunday).

We started by flying into Monterey airport and renting a Mustang convertible (actually very nice). Not exactly a Miata, but the top does go down! We bopped up to San Francisco for a day to see the sights including the Golden Gate bridge, Chinatown, Ghirardelli Square, the Cannery and Fisherman's wharf. We were disappointed to find that we needed advance reservations to see the Alcatraz tour, so if you are interested, it's probably best to get reservations before you leave Florida.

Then we were on our way to automotive heaven. Three days of non-stop automotive overload.

We started with the Concours D'Italiano at the Quail Hill Lodge in Carmel Valley. This is an outdoor auto show devoted to Italian exotics of all sorts including Ferrari, Maserati, DeTomasso, Alfa, Fiat, Abarth, Osca, Siata, Italia and more. All in a beautiful, sunny California setting and in immaculate stock condition. It was breath taking, since it's so rare to see just one of these cars in a normal setting. Thank God there is big money in California to keep these beautiful cars alive!

That evening was spent exploring the quaint and interesting town of Carmel-by-the-Sea (yes, this is where Clint Eastwood served as mayor for some years). Carmel has many tudor styled buildings and some very interesting shops. The whole town is filled with all kinds of interesting autos during this weekend. Spotting a Porsche or Mercedes became nothing in comparison to the kinds of cars you see driving around the town. We even got to see one of the Batmobiles which they happened to be auctioning that weekend.

After dinner, we headed to the Monterey pier to peak at the cars that were going to be sold at auction. We did not cough up the hefty fee to actually sit in on the auction. Saturday morning, and it was off to Laguna Seca raceway to watch the Historic Races which include vintage racers from the early 1900's and newer including Indy and Formula 1 cars. It was pretty awesome to watch wheel-to-wheel action between AC Cobras, Jaguar XKE's, Shelby Mustangs, Corvettes and Ferraris. You could spend two days just looking at the cars in the parking areas and in the pits! We

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# Product Reviews

Every once in a while I like to compile my thoughts on whatever new automotive products I've tried lately and whether they are worth buying or are better off skipped. This time I'm going to report on a new product from Meguiar's, my favorite maker of polish and wax. The product is called "Endurance" and no, it's not a new treatment for erectile disfunction, it's a tire dressing product for those of us who like our tires to look shiny and new at all times. The pitch is that Endurance lasts a lot longer than the tire-shine foamy stuff that you spray on and then walk away from. The trade off is that you can't just spray it on and walk away. You have to apply the stuff with a nifty foam applicator that Meguiar's includes for the ~\$8 price of admission. Like most of Meguiar's products, Endurance smells good enough to eat - or drink in this case as it smells like grape Kool-aid. You squeeze some out onto the applicator and apply it to the tire sidewall. One coat is sufficient, but if you apply two or three coats, the finish gets glossier. The result? I like this stuff. It gives a better result than the spray-on stuff and lasts for 2 to 3 weeks, as opposed to the 3 or 4 days of the other stuff. It also seems to lack the tendency of the foamy stuff to make the tire turn brown over time. The only downside I've seen is that after that 2 or 3

weeks, there is a very grimy film on the tire that has to be washed off before more stuff is applied - or that may have just been due to that 1500 mile trip I took at the holidays.

Another product I've been using for a while is a set of Rally driving lights that I bought at Pep Boys for \$45. These are 55-watt halogen driving lights that mount in the mouth of the car, using existing bolt holes in the bumper cover. The lamp housing is a tough plastic, and the bulbs are standard 55-watt bulbs available at Home Depot in the lighting department. They're the same bulbs I use in some track-lighting in my home. Overall, I've been happy with the lights. They are definitely not nearly as good as the high-line PIAA and Catz lights, but neither do they cost as much as those lights, which are pushing \$200. They came with amber bulbs, which I have since switched out for clear ones. I also strongly recommend using a proper relay to switch the lamps with power directly from the fuse block via 12AWG wire. My setup experienced some very hot wiring until I wired it properly. As daytime running lights, these fit the bill, and they fill in a little bit at night. Plus, they look cool. What more could you want for 45 bucks?

*-Kevin Morrison*

## SUNRIDERS MIATA CLUB OF TAMPA BAY

**CO-PRESIDENT/  
DIRECTOR OF MOTORSPORTS:  
JONATHAN SKINNER  
(JONATHAN@SUNRIDERS.COM)**

**CO-PRESIDENT/  
WEBMASTER/NEWSLETTER  
EDITOR:  
KEVIN MORRISON  
(KEVIN@SUNRIDERS.COM)**

**BOARD MEMBER/EVENTS  
PLANNING/TOOL MEISTER:  
STEVE SWIGER  
(STEVE@SUNRIDERS.COM)**

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# Calendar of Events

**Tuesday, January 18, 7:00PM - Monthly Meeting** at Biff's Burger and Buffy's BBQ, 4938 49th St. North, St. Petersburg. Note that the monthly meeting moves to the **THIRD** Tuesday of each month starting in January.

**Saturday, January 22, 9:00 AM - Tech Session** - We haven't had one of these in a while, so it's time to get out those wrenches and other tools of destruction and descend on the SunRiders **Restoration, Enhancement, and Technical Rehabilitation Operations (RETRO)** Facility (Steve Swiger's house) and get down to some serious wrenching. Members who have been through it all will be on hand to help you with any minor repairs, tweaks, or aftermarket installations you'd like to do. Oil changes are ok, but you **MUST** bring something to put the oil in and take it home with you. The club owns a bunch of wrenches, sockets, air compressor with air tools, a good torque wrench, ramps, jackstands, shop manuals, even the Mazda parts catalog on Microfiche. Past projects have included air horns, transmission oil changes, differential fluid changes, sway bars, shocks/springs, timing belts, roll bars, brake pads/rotors, and other wierd things. We ask that you refrain from huge projects like timing belts and roll bars unless you give us plenty of warning ahead of time. RETRO is located at 4615 N. Boulevard in Tampa, about one-half mile north of MLK. Call Kevin Morrison at 813-222-0509 for more details.

**Tuesday, February 15: Monthly Meeting** at Biff's Burgers 7 PM.

**Saturday, March 4: SunRiders Autocross Series 2000** event number two. SPJC Allstate Campus, 7:30 AM - see [www.sunriders.com](http://www.sunriders.com) or call Jonathan at 727-784-5529.

**Friday to Sunday, April 14 - 16: St. Augustine Sizzle** hosted by First Coast Miata Club. Details in the March newsletter and on the website.

**Tuesday, April 18: Monthly Meeting** at Biff's Burgers 7 PM

**Saturday, May 13: SunRiders Autocross Series 2000** - event number three

**Tuesday, May 16: Monthly Meeting** at Biff's Burgers 7 PM

**Saturday, July 8: Third Annual Night Race! SunRiders Autocross Series 2000** event number four. 3PM to 10PM

**Friday, July 28 - Sunday, July 30: Fourth Annual Miatas at the Gap** - Trip to Deal's Gap in North Carolina/Tennessee.

**Sunday, September 3: (labor Day Weekend) SunRiders Autocross Series 2000** event number five.

**Tuesday October 24 - Friday, October 27 - Daytona 2000 - Miatas in Paradise.** National Miata Event. Sponsored by the Florida Miata Clubs, Miata Club of America, and Mazda North America. See [www.Miata2000.com](http://www.Miata2000.com)

# CLUB MERCHANDISE!

The club now has in stock a selection of apparel, emblazoned with the Sun Riders official logo.

Here's what's available and the prices:

**POLO SHIRTS** - \$25. These attractive Polos are made by Jerzees and are professionally embroidered with the logo on the left breast. Colors: White, Gray, Red, Green, Blue, others may be available as special order. Sizes S-XL

**T-SHIRTS** - \$15. Hanes Beefy-T, 100% Cotton, logo on left breast. Colors: white, red, others special order. S-XL

**DUFFEL BAG** - \$20 Black, nylon construction, real nice! Two left.

**CAPS** - \$15 - this is the popular low-profile cotton cap. Colors: white, Khaki/green, Khaki/grey. One size fits all.

**MEMBER BUTTONS** - \$2 - Big, round button with your name and a likeness of your car in the correct color.

Contact Ed Simon at an event to order one.

**CLUB PINS** - \$4 - this unique pin is made in Colorado by Joe Fortas, the "Knobmeister" on his Laser-engraver. It's an exact likeness of the Sun Riders' logo carved from real cherry wood. Approx. 5/8 inch square. Buy several to trade with other clubs at regional and national events.

Contact Jonathan Skinner at an event, or at 727-784-5529, or jonathan@sunriders.com to order apparel or club pins.

even got to watch while Stirling Moss over-cooked it in a turn in a 1959 Aston-Martin DB1 (yes, the very car that Carol Shelby drove to victory at LeMans in 1959!) and slammed into a competitors car, putting Stirling out of the race. Great stuff! Before leaving the race track, we of course checked for any Miata club activity and we found the tent which was only occupied by Barbara Beach from Miata magazine. Everyone else was down viewing the races.

Sunday was going to be quite different with a visit to the Pebble Beach Golf and Country Club to experience the world famous event called the Councours D'Elegance of Pebble Beach. This event draws the most rare and expensive cars on the planet and a crowd of the absolute upper crust of car owners (...yes, and spectators). Although this was an incredible event to see, both George and I agreed that we would skip it next time and spend two days at the Monterey Historic Races instead. The Blackhawk classic car auction is also held here and again, we viewed some of the automotive inventory but passed on the high price of entry to

# Club | Classifieds

1991 Toyota Previa LE (van) Auto, dual A/C, dual sunroof, white, blue interior, very good cond., extremely dependable, 160K miles, \$5000. Vinnie Lucido - 813-907-1995

Pioneer indash CD for sale. Doesn't skip, with detachable faceplate. \$50. Joel Tener - topdown@tampabay.rr.com

1995 Leather Package Miata - garaged, 25k, ps, pw, pm, 6-CD, wood, lots of extras. \$13,750 - Steve Beach 813-968-5605

You can place your own free classified ad in Horizons by sending the ad via email to classified@sunriders.com, or via snail mail at our mailing address: PO Box 26071, Tampa, FL 33623

actually watch the auction.

The rest of the trip was spent at local Monterey tourist attractions like the Monterey Bay Aquarium (the best I've seen so far) and the Monterey cannery row. We also managed to squeeze in a short ride (top down, of course) south on Route one to Big Sur to see some of the incredible shoreline of Northern California where the cliffs meet the seemingly infinite Pacific Ocean. Before leaving again for Florida, we had dinner at the Mission Hill ranch, which is a resort owned by Clint Eastwood. The grounds were gorgeous but the dinner was just okay.

All in all, we had a great time and plan to return in 2000.



Stuart Thompson  
Miata Specialist

Just Miata  
3130 28th Ave. N.  
St. Petersburg  
Florida

727 480-4676  
www.justmiata.com

# HORIZONS

Sun Riders Miata Club of Tampa Bay

Visit the club's web page at <http://www.sunriders.com>

Features at the site include "Miatas of the Net"; "There and Back Again" - a trip across the country in a Miata; Photos from SunRiders Events; the Calendar of Events, and links to other Miata-related web sites.

Call the Event Hotline at 813-225-4240 for the latest event information.



P.O. Box 26071  
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