

Chairman's Note

Dear Members

Tomorrow is National Heritage day, or if you prefer, national braai day. It made me think of our car's heritage. We are all well aware of the records the MX5 holds with regards to sales. But I don't think that is a heritage. Nor is it a pedigree.

Unlike the Mini, no rally team has ever used an MX5 and been so successful that it's mentioned in the same breath as the sport. Unlike the Audi Quattro, it didn't revolutionize car and drive-train design. Unlike Alfas and MGs, it doesn't break down all the time, and unlike Jaguar E-types, it actually starts every morning.

But what the MX5 is, is a modern take on the essence of a car. There really are no frills. Never has a model arrived with the option of sat-nav for instance. It simply is just about everything a car should be, without all the things a car shouldn't be. It really is the mobile phone that is only a phone, a 3310.

And in spite of the successes of the car, manufacturers all seem hell-bound to stick more and more into their new models. The new BMW M5 for instance has integrated Facebook and Twitter.

The one thing about my car that I love is the fact that there's only two buttons – one for the hazards and one for the pop-up headlights. Oh, and the radio's buttons. The later models have one or two more – but the steering wheel is still the steering wheel and not the media centre. And yes they've gone the route of the retractable hard-top, but it has in fact saved weight on the car.

So, though there's no academic heritage or any racing pedigree, for me the MX5 is a flaunt in the face of marketing and doesn't care that it has to be better equipped and stuffed up more than its rivals. It has become a rebel in the motoring industry, and demands to share space with the other 'pure' cars out there, like the Ariel Atom for instance.

Regards

Henk (E&OE ☺)

Events

The Cape Classic Car show will be held on the Jan Burger sports grounds in Parow on the 5th and 6th of November. This is the main motor show of the calendar year sanctioned by the CMMCS and they also partly organized it. See press for more details.



News and Developments

According to Autoweek.com, Mazda has stopped production of the RX8 completely. The reasons cited are 'falling sales' and 'stringent global emissions standards'.

This is interesting because there are other, unofficial, problems with this car as well. The fact

that Ford SA silently announced that they recognize the fact that the current generation rotary engine does not last for more than 80 000 km on the outside. This fact is confirmed by various owners as communicated to them by individual dealers.

This is also very sad, because apart from the MX5, the RX series of cars have been the mainstay of Mazda's fun-to-drive reputation that they've been building up over recent years. This has ultimately culminated in the Mazda 3 and 6 MPS models.

However, Mazda did confirm that "the rotary is alive and will within Mazda". So assume that we will see it again. But probably not for a very long time.

Technical

In this issue we have a technical article on the NC model – finally! This is a communication that I received from the KZN club, so big thanks for their efforts and to John Wassung for passing it on.

NC Spare Wheel

Here in the KwaZulu-Natal region there has been a fair amount of discussion about getting spare wheels for our MX5 - NC's. The goo and air pump may be fine for Europe, America and Japan since they do not have roads with pot holes that could be better described as bomb craters.

We have had a fair amount of discussion on this subject and done some research, all of which I have copied below. I thought that it would be appropriate to contact the other regions and find out if anyone else has had any experience with regard to getting a space saver spare wheel for their car. Please note

that the cost of the new Mazda 5 SUV spare mentioned below appears to be drastically increased recently.

1) The "biscuit" type spare wheel and rim as used in the Mazda 3 or a Mazda 6, a 5/114.3, 16" x 4" with 50mm offset and T115/70/16 or T125/70/16 tire fits the MX5. This is a 16" rim and the standard rims are 17". Do not get a 15" spare as supplied with other Mazda models as this will not fit over the brake caliper. Alternative manufacturer options that may fit are 16" Mitsubishi Lancer space saver. The RX7 and the very nice aluminum RX8 spare wheels also fit but are very expensive and hard to get in this country. Many of the other Mazda models have the same PCD however I do not know if they have space saver spares and if so if the diameter or offset is correct, e.g. 626, MX6, etc.

2) This spare wheel will fit in your boot but will seriously limit your boot space (*Yes – we've been living with that on the NA and NB models, it's not that big a deal - Ed*). If you happen to have to use this spare then your standard wheel will not fit in your boot. Good idea to carry a black garbage bag to put the damaged wheel in, and if it has to go in the boot then something to tie the boot down. A more expensive solution would be to get a luggage rack that fits on the boot.

3) You can't use a temporary spare on the rear of a MX5 that has limited slip diff. This can cause damage to the LSD since the circumference of the spare is less than the opposite rear tire. In that situation remove the front tire place it on the rear and put spare on the front.

RX8 Spare wheel fitted under boot of MX5-NC and exhausts rerouted



Other Comments from KZN club members

Further to the posting about the NC spare below I have received a comment from Richard Alcock who owns a Red NC+ face lift and has had firsthand experience in getting a spare wheel. I have copied his reply below. Some of the information could also be useful for NA and NB owners.

"When I bought my new MX5 18 months ago I was worried about lack of spare. The dealer was helpful and tried the space saver from every model in the showroom. The 16 " space saver from the Mazda 5 SUV fits exactly and Toti Mazda were the cheapest at approx R1200 for rim and tire.

In addition I imported a very nifty tire repair kit, DYNAPLUG, from the USA and have fitted TYREDOG tire pressure sensors (only need to replace cap and not internal fitted) which monitor pressures and temperatures.

The unit is user settable so you can set the high and low pressures - if either is exceeded or under it beeps every 10 seconds - total price was under R3000 and takes 20 minutes to install This results in very early warning of a slow leak which I had 2 weeks ago and was able to partially fix with the USA kit and continue driving for a couple of weeks with air top ups every few days until I eventually went to tire dealer and got properly repaired with internal patch. The TYREDOG is available locally from Maxis tires in JHB and if you Google TYREDOG all details are available - the car unit is the 1000 series (4 wheels) As regards boot space with space saver my wife and I went to JHB for 3 days, we packed into soft bags and had enough space in boot."

The TYREDOG units are available here in Durban and the Web site is <http://www.tyrealert.co.za/index.html> (Please note that the chap that is marketing them is deaf so please use email or Skype text for communications)

DYNAPLUG can also be bought here on line in South Africa from "SAFE SHOP" <http://www.oneshop.co.za/r~dynaplug.html> or from "WantItAll"

http://www.wantitall.co.za/Dynaplug-1007-Tubeless-Tire-Repair-Kit__B000EXSER4 for about R632.00. There are other similar and cheaper products on the market.

More comments

I said I would go across to Kempsters Durban (Umgeni Road) on Friday which is across the road from my offices and try and check on wheels. Any way on Friday I was able to go across and got into their back room and sat down with their computer and their parts catalogue. From this I have found out that:

a) The MX5 standard wheel are 17 inch diameter with a 114,3 bolts centers and an offset 55mm.

The spare we would need will be a 16 inch rim because the higher profile tire will make the rolling circumference similar to our 17 inch rim with the low profile tire.

b) The Mazda 5 SUV space saver is 16 inch diameter with 114,3 bolt centers and an offset of 53mm. We know this spare fits as Richard Alock has got one.

c) The Mazda 3 space saver is 16 inch diameter with 114,3 bolt centers and an off set of 45mm. The Mazda 6 is the same as the Mazda 3. The offset normally gives the clearance to the brake caliper.

I went back on to the internet and I can find a lot of talk about people saying that the Mazda 3 space saver is the one to use (other than RX7 and RX8) but cannot find any one actually saying they have a Mazda 3 wheel and it works.

I think what I must do is try and get my hands on some of these wheels and test them.

With regard the price I did not bother to ask as I am sure it will be better to get wheels from a scrap yard. They are often still brand new and I don't think there is too much demand therefore we should get a good price.

I hope this proves useful to those (the majority) club members who drives an NC model.

Wrap up

See you in the summer! And have a good braai!

Information

Chairman: Henk Roux - 082.697.6205 - mx5ownersclub@gmail.com
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Secretary: ~~Alicia Kubisch - 082.442.8060~~
Ambassador: Steve Ashton - 083.441.9469

Branch Bank Details

Bank: ABSA
Branch: 632-005
Account Name: JF Seymour - MX5 Account
Account Number: 9178702004
Account Type: Savings

Current Membership Fees are R100 per member and R50 per significant other. Please pay your subs directly into our bank account and use your surname as reference