

*Miata*  
R · I · N · U · T · E · S

**Buckeye Miata Club**



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Drive story from [www.zoomzoommag.com](http://www.zoomzoommag.com)  
Summer 2017

## MX-5 Miata RF in the Mountains

The snow-covered Japanese island of Hokkaido gives Zoom-Zoom a chance to see if the First-Ever Mazda MX-5 Miata RF can cut it in extreme conditions

The most tempting thing to do would be to turn around. To head back to the Mazda depot and ask if they have a Mazda CX-5 or a Mazda CX-3. Something with i-ACTIV all-wheel drive. The northern Japanese island of Hokkaido is completely blanketed in snow. Actually it's more than that. Hokkaido is lying beneath an enormous, thick duvet of the stuff. More snow than I've ever seen before.

And I am driving a Mazda MX-5. A low-slung, rear-wheel drive roadster is not the obvious choice of transportation around here. But this MX-5 is the RF, its retractable roof making it a genuine all-seasons sports car. Or, at least, that's what I'm about to find out.

This car, and every Mazda besides, was honed on Hokkaido at Mazda's Kenbuchi Proving Ground. With winter temperatures plummeting into double digits below freezing, it's where Mazda pushes its new models to their limits. Every component from wheel nuts to heating systems, brakes, and stability control are tested to extremes.

And so are Mazda's engineers, who live here during the long cold winter months. Bitterly cold it may be, but Hokkaido is also very beautiful. And I'm aiming to see as much of it as I can in the next couple of days from the unique vantage point of the MX-5 RF.

At this time of year the island's main attraction is the snow itself. Widely regarded as the best powder on the planet, this snow draws visitors from all over the world to a growing number of ski resorts. Top of the list for many is Niseko, so that's what I enter into the RF's navigation system. And, with a quick kick to check the winter tires and a prod of the heated seat switch, it's time to head off.

The cabin of this Japanese-specification MX-5 RF is really rather lovely. A deep Nappa leather envelops the seats and it takes mere seconds to get comfortable behind the wheel. The controls, steering wheel and pedals have been placed in such a way as to make you feel instantly at one with the car. That's Mazda's "Jinba Ittai" philosophy at work, even before you start the engine.

My hand falls to the gearshift and I'm surprised to find the car is an automatic. Part of the essence of the MX-5 is the simplicity of connection through the sweet-shifting six-speed manual transmission, and I wonder how the bond between car and driver will be affected.

But this Mazda MX-5 RF does feel a little more sophisticated than its convertible sibling. The exterior styling, with its striking flying buttresses defining the unique fastback coupe profile, definitely gives the impression of being a little more grown-up. Perhaps the addition of an automatic transmission could provide a new dimension to the MX-5? There's really only one way to find out.

The MX-5 RF's SKYACTIV-G engine fires with an inspiring blip of the throttle and an accompanying rasp from the tailpipe. It's a little more subdued as I have the roof in place and the windows up, but it is well below freezing, so you can hardly blame me. I shift into drive, selecting Sport mode with the Drive Selection Switch handily located just behind the lever and tentatively move off.

The road is an endless white sheet, layer upon layer of compacted snow and ice, and it takes a little time to work out the best approach just to get moving. However, after a bit of experimentation, I find that a manual shift to second gear using the steering column-mounted paddle is the best way to get going.

In fact, manual mode seems to suit both me and the conditions better, allowing early upshifts to avoid overpowering the rear tires. There's promise of much sideways fun to come, but I'm now approaching the serenity of Kenbuchi's Shinto shrine and it's hardly the place for that kind of behavior. So I step out and ring the temple's huge bell for good luck instead—I may need it.

Rolling on through the countryside, my next planned stop is the Hokusei-no-oka Observatory Park. Here a massive pyramid provides an incredible vista of the Taisetsu mountain range. Or at least it would, but the cloud has come in thick and fast and it's difficult to see further than a few yards. With visibility getting worse and night closing in, I think it's best to take the Hokkaido Expressway towards Sapporo and my overnight stop.

At higher speeds and on clear asphalt, the RF is remarkably refined. With the roof up, exterior noise is kept to a minimum, and the journey passes quickly as I work my way through the playlist on my phone, which hooks seamlessly to the Mazda Connect system.

Sapporo is a city of almost two million hardy people, where the winter is made more manageable with such feats of weather-defying engineering as heated streets and sidewalks. Unfortunately they don't extend to where we're staying and the roads are like polished glass, so I elect to put the car away in the automated parking facility of the hotel. Simply park on a turntable, get out, and watch in awe as the car is whisked away by robots to some unseen spot.

Another good reason for leaving the car behind is that Sapporo is home to Japan's first brewery, founded in 1876. Sapporo's namesake lager goes down very well with a steaming hot bowl of ramen.

The morning brings clear skies and, although the outside temperature gauge reads 14°F, I decide to enjoy the sun while it lasts and drop the roof of the RF. After warming the engine (and the seats) I press the switch and just 13 seconds later the roof has been stowed away, thanks to a mechanical ballet that draws approval and some disbelief from the locals.

With hat and gloves on, heater blowing, and a posterior that is gently toasting, I leave Sapporo behind. The built-in wind deflector means there's little buffeting, and it's only when I reach the Nakayama Pass, an hour to the south, and the snow has begun to fall in earnest that I raise the roof again. Slowing right down to a near-walking pace, the precision performance takes place in reverse as the roof goes up, and I'm soon peeling off layers of clothing, as it's so snug inside.

Like many of the twisting, turning country roads in Hokkaido, the Nakayama Pass has a low speed limit, but as I climb deeper into cloud and thick snowflakes swirl and dance across the windshield, I'm hardly even approaching double-digit speeds. I can barely see beyond the hood and am grateful for the bright red overhead arrows installed to mark the edges of the road. It's decidedly odd to look up rather than down to figure out where the road goes, but it works. On a clear day, with views of the Mount Yotei volcano (thankfully, inactive), I'm sure that this would be a beautiful, thrilling drive, but right now I'm just glad to stay on the road.

## AUGUST DOTM

Monday, August 14, 2017, 6:00 pm

Where: G&R Tavern  
103 N. Marion Street  
Waldo, Ohio 43356  
740-726-9685  
[www.gandrtavern.com](http://www.gandrtavern.com)

Hosted by Bill and Kate Koch  
RSVP's are not necessary! They will find seats for everyone!

*Bring Cash!*

## 2017 Calendar of Events

### August:

- 14<sup>th</sup> (Mon) - DOTM – G&R Grill Waldo – Koch  
 19<sup>th</sup> (Sat) – Central Ohio Winery Tour - Edwards  
 20<sup>th</sup> (Sun) – Circleville Autocross  
 27<sup>th</sup> (Sun) Meet in the Middle w/North Coast  
 Miata Club - Edwards

### September:

- 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> (Sat-Sun) Mid Ohio Autocross  
 7<sup>th</sup> (Thurs) Monthly meeting at MCL- Westerville  
 17<sup>th</sup> (Sun) – Circleville Autocross  
 19<sup>th</sup> (Tues) DOTM Flannagan's - Riner  
 23<sup>rd</sup> (Sat) Road Rally – Johnson's  
 TBA Football Hall of Fame - Calhoun.  
 30<sup>th</sup> (Sun) Octoberfest Drive to Minster - Edwards

### October:

- 5<sup>th</sup> (Thurs) - Monthly meeting at MCL Westerville  
 Mazda/Subaru (officer nominations).  
 8<sup>th</sup> (Sun) - BMC Autocross Awards Dinner  
 TBA Road Apple Tour - Kahle  
 TBD – DOTM - Rhodes  
*\*October 18<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> Circleville Pumpkin Show*

### November:

- 2<sup>nd</sup> (Thurs) - Monthly meeting at MCL Westerville  
 11<sup>th</sup> (Sat) – Car Talk – LeChatelaine - Rhodes  
 26<sup>th</sup> (Sun) – Clifton Mill Xmas Lights - Edwards  
 TBD - DOTM - Koch

### December:

- 7<sup>th</sup> (Thurs) - Annual Christmas Party (no monthly  
 meeting) Villa Milano  
 TBA - Caroling Party (Nieman).  
 TBA – Fantasy Lights Alum Creek State Park  
 (Gill)

*\*Items in italics are informational use only*

### BMC Members and Guests:

The Third Annual "Miatas Meet-in-the-Middle" event is coming up on Sunday August 27th. This is a gathering and picnic with the Northcoast Miata Club at Mohican State Park near Loudonville. Our goal is to get as many Miata's from the two clubs in the parking lot as possible so please drive your Miata if you can. Last year we had a total of 54 Miata's and 100 attendees between the two clubs. I think we ended up with about 26 or 27 BMC Miata's so the Northcoast Club still beat us by one or two cars. We need to beat them this year!!

We will no doubt meet and leave as a group somewhere near the intersection of Polaris Blvd/Maxtown RD. and route 3 Westerville around 10:00AM. We will provide more detail on the starting point, time, and route in the next few weeks after we make a test run to check for road construction, etc. If you live north of Columbus, or otherwise just want to meet us there, I will provide detailed directions in my next e-mail after my test run.

The clubs are providing hamburgers and hot dogs with all the accessories and sides. Please bring your beverage of choice. Don't forget we are at a state park so no alcohol. If you want something different to eat please bring it along and we can throw it on the grill. We have a large pavilion so this is rain or shine event. If you have any picnic games you like to play, and you can fit them in your Miata, please bring them along. Also bring some lawn chairs if you can fit them in.

This year we plan to take pictures of each BMC owner(s) with their car for use on the BMC website (with your permission of course).

If you did not sign up at the August meeting and you plan to attend please send us an e-mail with the number of attendees or call us by Tuesday August 22<sup>nd</sup> so we can get the correct amount of food. Email [krhodes555@aol.com](mailto:krhodes555@aol.com) or phone 614-406-6069 If you did sign up at the meeting there is no need to send another communication.

We are looking forward to a great event and lots of fun again with the Northcoast club.

Thanks, Kevin and Kathy Rhodes

## President's Corner – August 2017

I don't know how you feel about change, but I can definitely say that I do not like it. That probably is due to the fact that I am changing in ways that are a bit scary. The joy of getting older! But it does seem that change is in the air. We certainly don't live in a static world and the pace has picked up. You can almost sense it. I also have had to recognize that not all change is scary or unwelcome.

The club has certainly been experiencing some changes. At the last meeting there were several new members as there was in the meeting before that and before that. As people move on to new interests or leave the area we hate to see them go, but we welcome the new people to our little group and know that new friendships and adventures will result.

In a big change, voted at the last meeting, the membership decided to hold our monthly meetings at the MCL Cafeteria in Westerville from this point forward. The new location offers plenty of parking and no stairs. But this move certainly may have a hint of sadness for some members. There is some history at that location with Patrick Motors, then Byers, and the founding of the club. But it was probably time to try something different.

So what conclusions can we draw from that? I am not sure, except that it is probably good that the club continues to grow and change to include new people and meet the needs of the members. But in the midst of the change, one thing remains the same; the ability to count on each other. See you at the MCL Cafeteria on Thursday, September 7<sup>th</sup>.

Dave Edwards

### *2017 Buckeye Miata Club Officers*

<b>President:</b>	Dave Edwards
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Bob Kincer
<b>Secretary:</b>	Dee Edwards
<b>Competition Director:</b>	Rick Young
<b>Social Director:</b>	Bill Koch
<b>Newsletter Editor:</b>	Chris Riner
<b>Historian:</b>	Kate Koch
<b>Membership Director:</b>	Mike & Brenda Fisher
<b>Webmaster:</b>	Jim Hayter
<b>Insurance Coordinator:</b>	Stewart Lemmens
<b>Photographer:</b>	John Ness

BMC Friends;

There are quite a few events in this last part of summer. I wanted to share them with you.

**Del Robeson passes on this information regarding a local car show:** As a participant in last year's car show I wanted to contact you about the 2017 Grace Chapel Car Show. This year's show will be held on August 12 from 10am-4pm. Registration will close at 12:30 pm. The entry fee is \$10. There will be dash plaques and door prizes for entrants. Small vendor spaces are available for a fee of \$20. Please call [614-620-1157](tel:614-620-1157) for questions or to reserve a vendor space. Grace Chapel is located at 7798 Big Walnut Road, Westerville Ohio.

**George Snyder wants to pass on the following:**

### RACING:

*Mid-Ohio* NASA (a sort of SCCA only more relaxed) 8-26-27-2017 has a Sunday conflict with the Meet-In-The-Middle run, \$10

*Mid-Ohio* World Racing League (<http://www.racewrl.com/>) 9-23/24-2017, has sedans and Miata's, \$10

*Mid-Ohio*, Ohio Valley Region SCCA, 10-14/14-2017, \$10,

*Put-in-Bay Road Races*, free to spectate, cost to get to the island, [www.pibroadrace.com](http://www.pibroadrace.com), August 27-30, check web site for specifics on races, have found the closest reasonable priced hotels are south of the Ohio Turnpike

### SWAP MEET:

Grove City, Sunday 8-19-2017, plenty of parts top swap and buy as well as maybe a car or two, the prior three events have been very good so come on down, <https://www.evensi.us/4th-annual-mwmp-miata-swap-meet-and-greet-the-naz/209430665>

Thanks.  
Dave

## Buckeye Miata Club Monthly Meeting Minutes August 3, 2017

At 6:30 the meeting was called to order by Dave Edwards. There were 43 members in attendance, including three new members, Barbara Poindexter, Monte Arbuckle and Mike Ulry.

### **Minutes of July 6, 2017 meeting**

The minutes of the July meeting were moved by Marge Sanik and seconded by Paul Sanik and approved by the membership. No dissenting votes.

### **Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer's Report, period beginning 7/6/2017 and ending 8/3/2017. The report was moved by Steve Johnson and seconded by John Ness and approved by the membership. No dissenting votes.

### **Old Business**

Autocross –

- June 29<sup>th</sup> – Rick Young and Stewart Lemmons reported that 31 Classic Minis from the National Mini Club spent the day at the Circleville track.
- July 9<sup>th</sup> was a good event with competition. Arthritis Car Show – July 15<sup>th</sup> – Five BMC members attended with Kevin Rhodes winning an excellence award.

DOTM – Kingy's Pizza July 17<sup>th</sup> – Carl Klontz reported that 30 people attended.

Marietta Run with North Coast Miata Club – July 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> – Pat Bardon reported that there were a number of activities including walking tours, shopping and restaurants.

Corn picking – July 23<sup>rd</sup> – Nancy Clemmons reported that the corn picking took place with only a slight sprinkle of rain.

Pool Party – July 29<sup>th</sup> – A total of 20 people attended and the weather was perfect, according to Bob Kincer. The club thanked Bob and Joan, as they paid for most of the food themselves.

Insurance Update – Dave Edwards reported that he received quotes for a general liability policy of \$750.00 and an officer and director's policy of \$665.00 from the J. C. Taylor Agency. Each of the policies for the social side of the club, carries \$1,000,000 coverage. These policies do not require waivers or any additional funds for any planned drives by the club. It was moved by Cary Hager and seconded by Linda Johnson to empower the ADHOC insurance committee and any

other interested parties to review both policies for possible acceptance on behalf of the club.

### **New Business**

Autocross

- August 5<sup>th</sup> – Rick Young and Stewart Lemmons are planning a fun event with test and tune and friendly competition with no points.
- August 20<sup>th</sup> – This will be a points event. September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> – Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course – Car Fest

DOTM – August 14<sup>th</sup> – G & R Grill in Waldo – Kate and Bill Koch are hosting the dinner at 6:00. Watch for email with further information.

Central Ohio Winery Tour – August 19<sup>th</sup> – Dave and Dee Edwards are planning to start the tour at Blendon Woods with a picnic lunch before a tour and visit of five wineries in Franklin, Delaware and Union Counties. The tour will end at Leon's Garage in Marysville for dinner. Watch for email to sign up for the event.

Meet in the Middle – August 27<sup>th</sup> – Kevin Rhodes reported that interested Buckeye Miata Club members will drive to Mohican State Park for a picnic with the North Coast Miata Club. Bring chairs and something to drink (non-alcoholic). Food will be provided. The club plans to have each car and participant photographed for inclusion on the website at this event. Watch for email with other instructions.

Meeting Space Offer – Cherie Walker has offered her church on West Henderson Road as a possible meeting space. After a brief discussion it was moved by Linda Johnson and seconded by Morey Brady and approved by the membership that future Buckeye Miata Club meetings will be held at MCL Cafeteria in Westerville. Dinner at 6:00 with meetings to start at 6:30.

### **Open Discussion/Concerns**

Jerry and Sheila Gill are once again making plans for their Hunt for Hope event that will take place on October 1<sup>st</sup>. It consists of a scavenger hunt, silent auction items and a raffle. Proceeds will go to IBC. If interested in more information, please contact them.

50/50 – Jerry Gill - \$26.00

A motion was made by Sheila Gill and seconded by Carl Klontz to close the meeting at 7:55.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dee Edwards  
Buckeye Miata Club Secretary

Fun Read:

## Koenigsegg's test driver lapped the 'Ring in 7:49.74 in a Miata

Sean Szymkowski – July 25, 2017  
Motorauthority.com

What's quicker than a Lamborghini Murcielago, Ford GT, and BMW M4 around the Nürburgring? None other than a Mazda Miata, believe it or not.

Well, it's not a stock Mazda Miata, but the feat is pretty spectacular nonetheless. Koenigsegg's test driver, Robert Serwanski, recently took to The Green Hell in his last-generation Miata NC track car and clocked a damn impressive 7:49.74. As mentioned, that time is quicker than a handful of supercars and sports cars, per official Nürburgring lap records.

Serwanski was kind enough to shoot a driver's perspective video of his lap and post it to YouTube. Per the video's description, the Miata NC features coilover suspension, upgraded brakes, stickier tires for the track, a larger radiator, an ECU remap, a close-ratio gearbox, and carbon-fiber seats to shave weight. With the modifications, the Miata weighs 2,425 pounds with Serwanski sitting inside, and the Miata makes 30 more horsepower than its factory rating of 167 hp. Those mods in a light car are certainly a recipe for a quick lap time, but a sub 8-minute time with just 197 hp is insane. It helps Serwanski is used to piloting cars like the Koenigsegg One:1, however.

As they say, sometimes all it takes is a little bit of help from the aftermarket and a really good driver to set some seriously quick times. Serwanski is definitely the right guy for the job.

(Makes Me Proud To Be A Miata Owner ~  
Chris)

## Miata Services by Scott

- **30K Tune-Up Service (\$325)** new plugs, timing & synth. fluids
- **Basic timing belt Service (\$325)** incl. new Mazda belt & spring
- **60K Full Service (\$675)** incl. 30K service + Std. Timing Belt Service PLUS
- all drivetrain fluids, brake and clutch fluids, filters, gaskets, checks and lubrications called for by Mazda
- Add **Water Pump Replacement** to any timing belt service (\$150) new pump, gaskets and coolant
- **Other mechanical work and Accessory Installation** – call for quote (\$35 per hr.)
- **Detailing by Appt**, call for details - can include:
  - Exterior - Paint polishing, swirl removal, touch-ups, wax and more
  - Interiors – carpets steamed, seats cleaned, leather & vinyl treated and more

I'd be glad to discuss any work you may want or need. If you have questions about what I can provide or just about your Miata in general, I'll be glad to help!

**(614) 633-7419**

## Detailing . . . . .

Many of you know that I offer paint polishing, interior cleaning, tops, engine bay detailing and more, using the same processes and many of the same products as seen in the demo at Performance Auto Spa.

I've been detailing Miatas for many years and can handle clear coat and single-stage paints as well as repaints. I can bring new life to your car by removing oxidation, eliminating swirls and more.

Now's a great time to schedule a Detail. give me a call anytime - 614-633-7419. If I can't pick up, please leave a message.

Happy Motoring!  
- Scott Langley

8081 Bowfin Road  
Blacklick, Ohio 43004