

ROADSTER REVIEW

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Auto Show**

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News for Those with the Wind in Their Hair

February 2009

There Are Clubs for Miatas?!?!

By Denise Balsama

To my naive astonishment, that was the question I asked my husband back in 2003 – a year after we purchased our Miata. I had no idea there were clubs all over the country for the purpose of promoting and enjoying our little roadsters. And to top it off, there was an established club well within our locale.

The Delaware Valley Miata Club has been going strong since 1990. This past spring we held the 18th Annual Picnic with over 84 Miatas gracing the landscape. This is our most well-attended event of the year. It's always a great time to see a variety of Miatas and modifications to them, as well as meeting new friends and rekindling old friendships. Plus, we do like to eat well at club events. For the past two years, we've enjoyed a delicious pig roast with all the "fixins" at the picnic.

Another major event that Del-Val sponsors is Driver Instruction Days at Pocono Raceway. This two-day event focuses on driving techniques on one of the road courses at the raceway. Instruction by experienced track drivers is provided. It is well worth the experience. I participated in this event in 2007 and there were torrential downpours for most

of the day. It would have been ideal to have great weather, but what I learned was how fantastic my Miata handled the curves in those conditions at speed.

Throughout the year there are a variety of events including runs geared toward driving or destinations, tech events, weekend-long runs, and social gatherings. Take a look at the listing of our 2008 events to get a good feel of what the club is about.

The club covers a wide geographical area with most of our members in Delaware, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. You'll find events throughout the year in all of these states.

Members in Del-Val not only have opportunities to participate in club events, they also receive a monthly newsletter - the *ROADSTER REVIEW*. This special edition is a sampling of what is published each and every month. There is also a club website that provides information as well as a forum. Visit www.delval.org for the latest Del-Val news and updates.

If you are thinking about purchasing a Miata or already have one, be sure to check us out. There is something for everyone in the Delaware Valley Miata Club.



Zoom-Zoomin' on Pocono Raceway



High Point State Park

2008 Events

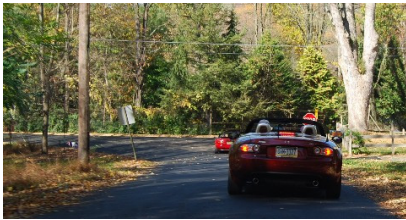
Polar Bear Run
Philadelphia Auto Show
Del-Val Annual Membership Meeting
West Point Run
Octorara Run
Massey Airport Chili Fly-In
Rehoboth to Cape May Weekend
Before Picnic Run
Del-Val Annual Picnic
Corning NY Weekend
Summer Nights at the Jersey Shore (1)
Vermont - Lake Champlain Weekend
Chester County Hills & Farms Run
Hawk's Nest/High Point Run
Mansions to Railroads Run
Summer Nights at the Jersey Shore (2)
Auburn Heights Preserve Run
Summer Nights at the Jersey Shore (3)
Driver Instruction Days -
Pocono Raceway
Summer Nights at the Jersey Shore (4)
Northern Drive-In Run
Up & Down the Delaware River Run
Summer Nights at the Jersey Shore (5)
Lunch at the Lake
Summer Nights at the Jersey Shore (6)
Summer Nights at the Jersey Shore (7)
Topton Loop
Sussex County Oktoberfest Run
Brotherhood Winery Tour
Colossus of Roads
Monmouth County Backroads Run
Hatboro Holiday Parade
Skylands Manor Tour

Run Review

Colossus of Roads Redux

By Curt Springstead

Sunday, October 19 dawned crystal clear but very cool and breezy. That was not an issue for over a dozen fans of John Ketwig's annual romp through Warren County NJ. Sign in took place within the pleasant confines of Panera Bread on Route 22 while every-



one sampled coffee and baked goods. A brief jaunt east on Rt. 78 took us to the beginning of the reason we were there. The sunny dry day was the perfect backdrop to some fabulous roads and early autumn colors. The terrain had us climbing or descending hill after hill including an adventure on a small one lane bridge that felt like we were making the drop from a roller coaster - first nothing ahead but sky and then a steep drop to reveal a twisty bit of downhill running.

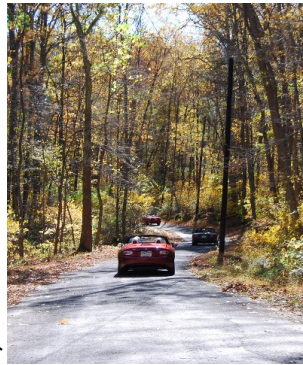
John warned us of a brief section of the run that was temporarily a gravel road and we all had some wise crack about taking our pampered toys into such a hostile environment. The reality was not as bad as we had anticipated and everyone crept so slowly that the breeze stirred up more dust than the Miatas did. John also pointed out that he had seen bears several times in preparing

the run but alas all we saw was a small bear painted on a mailbox this day. The strange item was the photographers taking pictures of cows in a meadow (some people have weird hobbies.) While John took advantage of the same general area as last year's run, there were many new roads and the few places we revisited were run in the opposite direction so they all looked new.

One road appeared to be not much more than a long private driveway that led us into the woods. While some commented it was hard to believe this was NJ others suspected that it could well be a Soprano burial ground. The irony was that when we left that lane we turned onto Shades of Death Road.

Overall we saw some fabulous views, homes, and attractions.

The prize at the end was lunch at Enzo's which was as delicious as I remembered from last year. A good bit of conversation followed and a sense of sadness as we all appreciated that we were on one of the last runs for the year before we dial back the top

*Meet a Member***Slifkins Are****Self-described 'Car Heads'**
by Ken Crosswell

When it comes to a love of things automotive, Stu and Karen Slifkin of Long Valley, New Jersey take their passion seriously. Self-described "car heads," they attend numerous auto races throughout the country each year. Stu has been to the last 41 Indy 500's and is a serious race memorabilia collector with an extensive collection of driver autographs, tickets, programs, photos, and helmets. He has the autographs of all but four winners of the 500. His extensive collection includes the autographs of 469 of the 730 drivers who have started the race since 1911.

The Slifkins' Miata is a 1991 model with 48,000 original miles licensed as "3RDCAR." Del-Val members for 10 years, they have hosted several runs including the Morris County Mansion event which drew 32 Miatas. "Hosting a run is not much work," says Slifkin. "It's all worth it when you see the long row of cars just before you start the run."

Stu is Director of Transportation for Tiffany & Company in Parsippany responsible for the movement of jewelry worldwide both to stores and direct to customers. Karen is a receptionist at the US Golf Association Museum in Far Hills. They get to their jobs



in Stu's daily driver - a BMW Z4 Coupe - while Karen drives a BMW 328xti wagon.

Stu is enthusiastic about Del-Val and notes, "We truly enjoy

the great people we have met and the great roads members have researched. Club runs are a great way to expand your knowledge of the area while having fun."

For more information on the Delaware Valley Miata Club

contact President@delval.org or
visit the website at www.delval.org

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*Miata Mods***Paint Protection Film**

By Damon Royal Kane

Miata owners like to keep their cars looking good. One of the challenges with a small car is that it is more susceptible to damage from road debris and insects. Sometimes this is called "road rash." But if you like the look of a shiny front end, free of chips and scratches, there was only one commonly offered solution: the bulky and not too attractive vinyl "bra." We bought one to use with our car and used it extensively on short runs and longer vacations. While it worked well, there was always the challenge of having to take it off in the rain as leaving it on the car risks damage to paint due to trapped moisture, and of course taking it off risks the road rash you are trying to avoid. Searching for a better solution, I came across a technology generically called a "clear bra," but is most widely marketed by 3M and called Paint Protection Film. Avery also produces a similar product but with less "orange peel" texture. More about that later.

This technology is based on a clear urethane film that has the ability to resist stone chips and can be cleaned more aggressively than painted surfaces. The technology was first developed for the military for use on the leading edge of helicopter rotor blades. The product is supplied in a flat sheet and must be stretched to fit over contours. Typically this is a professionally installed product by a technician trained in the behavior of the product. When installed it is virtually impossible to see, except for the thickness of the film at the edge. It is less visible on light colored vehicles than on dark ones.

Using the 3M website and those of distributors, one can find a great deal of information on the product. By typing in your zip code, you can find local installers. I found a technician, Dan Craddock, in nearby Schwenksville who was willing to do the installation in my garage. It was fun and informative to watch the installation. The Miata happens to be one of the most difficult cars on the market to protect because of the deep curvature of the front nose.

Del-Val Plans 20th Anniversary Celebration

By Gary Dillio

When club founder, Jeff Jury, announced that he would form a club dedicated to the new Mazda sports car and that Miata enthusiasts should meet for a picnic, he could not have anticipated that 54 Miatas and their owners would attend. At that picnic on May 6, 1990, the Delaware Valley Miata Club was born.

It was fitting that the club began with an event that mixed the enthusiasm of sports car ownership with the fun of a picnic. Since then, the club has sponsored over 500 events designed to provide its members with driving and social opportunities. It isn't surprising that Del-Val is the largest Miata club in the U.S.

On May 6, 2010, the Delaware Valley Miata Club will celebrate its 20th anniversary. But Del-Val doesn't plan on celebrating on that one day alone! We are planning events, drives, and rallies for the entire year.

The 20th Anniversary committee is making plans for a year-long celebration that will include more driving events than ever as well as special par-

ties and gatherings. Special newsletter supplements and commemorative DVDs are being planned. Photographs of our rich history are being gathered. Our website is being redesigned. The committee plans to coordinate activities with Mazda dealerships and other area Miata clubs. In short, the committee is already hard at work on providing our membership with a year of plentiful and varied activities.

When Mazda announced their new Miata design for 1998 at the Jacob Javits Convention Center in New York City, it was the Delaware Valley Miata Club that was asked to provide Miatas from all model years including special editions for the display. Our club's national event, Miata Mountain Madness in 1999, is still being talked about at clubs throughout the United States, and our annual Pocono raceway track days always sell out months before the event.

Our 20th Anniversary year will be another accomplishment of the Del-Val club that is remembered for years to come.



Our installation has been most successful – both Michele and I are pleased, she particularly so because I will not make her stand out in the rain to remove the old bra! Since then I have attempted some simpler installations with good success. When applied to a relatively flat surface, the product is easy to work with.

Our '99 model, with paint protection film applied to the front bumper, the front of the hood, the front of the two front fenders and the leading face of the side view mirrors cost just a bit over \$350. This is less costly than a repaint. It makes sense to use the product on a car with little damage but if you have

some minor damage and want to prevent more, this is a good way to go.

As for the orange peel, all automotive paints have a degree of surface imperfections that in very bad cases resembles an orange peel texture. The Miata has a good, but not perfect finish on it so the 3M product blends nicely. Dan Craddock, the technician who did my car, reports that the Avery product is smoother and for high end vehicles with higher quality finishes, so it blends in better.

Of final note, the product can be removed from the body of the car without damage to the underlying paint.



Feasting at the Annual Picnic



Lunch stop in Bloomsburg on the Corning NY run



Decked out for the Hatboro Parade



Sussex County Oktoberfest Run



Hawk's Nest / High Point Run

Delaware Valley Miata Club - Membership Application

Please complete this application and mail the application along with a check for \$25.00 to:

The Delaware Valley Miata Club
 1109 Madison Ave.
 Prospect Park, PA 19076



The membership fee covers a full calendar year and includes a subscription to *ROADSTER REVIEW*, our monthly newsletter; various discounts at local Mazda dealerships and accessory vendors; a Delaware Valley Miata Club logo window decal; access to Del-Val Miata Club logo clothing and most club events.

For further details, please visit our web site: WWW.DELVAL.ORG

Basic Information (All Information Required)

Please check one: <input type="checkbox"/> New Membership <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal		<i>Please Note: The name field(s) below will be used exactly as specified for your name tags.</i>	
Last Name (Member/Primary Driver)		First Name	
Last Name (Spouse/Partner)		First Name	
Street Address (1 st line)			
(2 nd line, if any)			
City	State	Zip Code	COUNTY (not USA)
Daytime/Work Phone	Evening/Home Phone		Miata Year
Email Address: PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY			Miata Color

I want my newsletter EMAILED to me MAILED to me

Demographic Information (optional)
 The following information will be kept confidential. It is used to give us some idea of club membership make-up

Member's Age:	Member's Sex:	Marital Status:
Would you be willing to help in any of the areas noted below? (please check all that apply)		How did you hear about the club? (please check all that apply)
<input type="checkbox"/> membership	<input type="checkbox"/> newsletter	<input type="checkbox"/> friend
<input type="checkbox"/> event planning	<input type="checkbox"/> website	<input type="checkbox"/> dealership
<input type="checkbox"/> as an officer	<input type="checkbox"/> as an area rep	<input type="checkbox"/> website
		<input type="checkbox"/> auto show
		<input type="checkbox"/> windshield flyer

Payment Information and Licensing Statement (required)

Release Statement: I agree to release the Delaware Valley Miata Club, its officers, organizers, members, sponsors and vendors from any and all liability for injury, damages or loss arising from my participation and attendance in any Club activity. Membership is contingent upon compliance with all State Motor Vehicle insurance laws including maintaining a valid driver's license, automobile registration and automobile insurance.

Primary Driver's Signature	Date	<i>Applications MUST be signed!</i>
Spouse/Partner's Signature	Date	<i>(If spouse/partner is listed above, they must also sign)</i>