

NEWSLETTER OF



# Show Me Your Curves

VOLUME 3, NO. 3

## *The Winter Blahs*

*... Waiting for Spring to arrive*

*Plus...*

*Blast From The Past*

*Just Miatas*

*Think Pink*

*And more....*

*SPOTLIGHT ON  
2012 SPECIAL EDITION*



The winter blahs are here as we cozy up inside dreaming about the upcoming Spring and getting out in our Miatas. The theme of this issue is to provide a little fodder to fan the flames of those dreams with less club news (*this issue only*) and more reading material for sitting by the fireplace. Enjoy

From a picture on the Gravenhurst Business Improvement Area web site.

I just happened to spot a 1991 BRG Miata driving down Main Street.



## On the Cover



A 2006 Third Generation Limited Edition taken on coast of the British Isles.

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We want to hear from you about this newsletter. Please use the Feedback Link to submit any comments, concerns or questions.

Thank you



[Feedback Link](#)

## You Gotta Read This!

**Yikes - Pink Miatas !!!**



See Page 3



## Membership Update - Renewal Fees

Each Member is renewed on the Anniversary date of their initial Membership and will receive advance notice when their individual membership Renewal is required. This note is merely a brief "Heads Up" that a large portion of renewal fees will become due in March of this year.

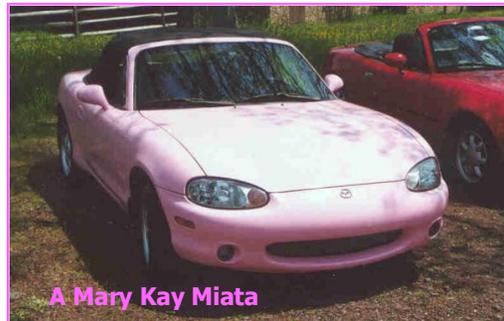
We appreciate your continuing support of MoM. We are trying very hard to make this organization the kind of club you'd like it to be. Currently our Membership is based primarily in Bracebridge so we will be actively recruiting new members from other areas of Muskoka such as Gravenhurst, Huntsville, Orillia and perhaps Parry Sound.

We would like to welcome the following new members:

Carol Nass and Wayne Trotter  
Richard Bryon

Brechin Silver 1999  
Tiny Grey 2006

**Pink Miatas**



And we thought the Yellow Miata was rare,  
it seems a Pink Miata can be found anywhere. Who Knew?



# Just *Miatas* by Terese Mac Davis

I restore first generation Miatas. I'm not a mechanic, but I have an excellent mechanic who works on my cars. My name is Terese Davis and this was my hobby that got way out of hand. People have wondered what I actually do, if I don't work on the cars. I have a team of experts, mostly small family owned businesses that work on my cars.

Well, I do work on the cars, like a Project Manager, I make everything happen. I ensure the right car is in the right place, with the parts needed, to have work done. I keep track of all of them and decide what each one needs to bring it up to date on mechanicals and to make it as gorgeous and as perfect as I can, all on a budget.

## It starts with Preparation

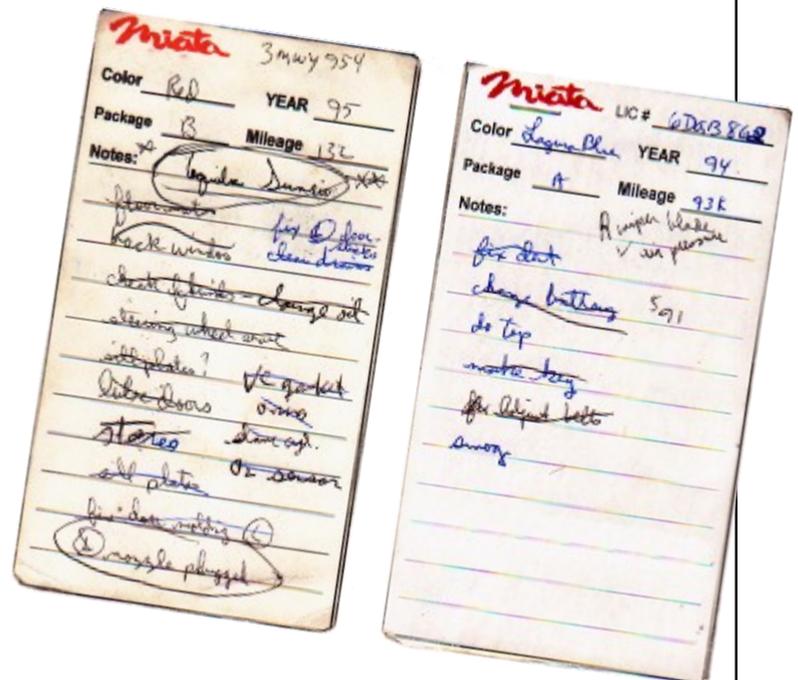
I do my research on pricing, I've got a real good idea what's out there and how much it's worth. I check all the ads almost every day and print out anything that looks interesting. I do a Kelley Blue Book on anything that looks good. I'm good at finding the cars and I'm persistent about getting hold of someone,

## I plan the Project

I make the restoration plans and arrangements. I document what needs to be done on each car onto a card (see examples).

I start making notes on the ad when I'm calling and continue them all the way through looking at the car, driving it home, and anytime anyone finds something that needs attention. It all gets put on the car card and as a job gets done, I cross it off. Things are added as we find other things that need to be fixed. I ensure everything gets done and in the right order.

I kept my cards together in my pocket, this was my manual iPad. They were critical when we had five cars we were working on. It was impossible to talk to anyone without my cards.



## Details, Details, Details

Detailing is very important and I'm very picky and I go over every inch of the car.

Part of the detailing is the engine, I love to open up the hood and see a **clean** engine bay. Initially we used to take the cars down to the car wash that had hot water and I would sit inside and keep it revved up while my partner squirted engine cleaner, brushed and scrubbed. As time went on, I started cleaning the engines in the driveway with the car turned off. Using an engine cleaner I scrubbed, brushed and rinsed until it looked pretty good. I had pushed down all the spark plug connectors beforehand and it started right up but the car would stink of chemicals for days.



## Con't

I finally began using Simple Green, full strength. It worked just as well or better than all the chemicals, it didn't stink, and my plants along the driveway were much happier, too. I got the underside of the hood, because I always noticed if it was dirty and figured other people would too. I'd spend three seconds and swipe out the gas intake area so when you popped the gas tank it's new looking.

I spent lots of time getting sticky things out and cleaning up messes. We once bought a car that someone had spilled a can of paint in the trunk. They'd tried to clean it up with no luck. Fortunately, we happened to have another trunk liner so just switched it out.

On another occasion, I was frustrated with a car that had white cat hair all over it. It just weaves its way into the fabric. I vacuumed, brushed and I pulled it out piece by piece and it still clung to the carpet and the seats but the trunk was covered. After spending hours on the trunk I was fed up and got a can of vinyl fabric paint and just sprayed the trunk with black. The horrible white hairs were gone! I have since used this trick on carpet too.

The seat often frays on the driver's side bolster so I'd take a pair of sharp scissors to trim off all the scraggly bits. I've even rewoven thread back and forth and 'darned' a hole along on a seat. This is a low tech operation here, folks. Any little tears or holes in the seats are easily sewn up. I've tried to find the black fabric they used in the NAs but it's no longer available. Only once did I have to reupholster seats.

I'd restored the floor mats by power washing with Simple Green and hung them on the fence to dry. Any fraying is trimmed and 'blackened'. Blemishes are made as inconspicuous as possible. Often, it's necessary to replace floor mats, so was always in the market for mats.

If the steering wheel was peeling or blemished, I'd put on new leather steering wheel covers, (Moss Motors, \$39). Little worn spots that don't get covered by the wheel cover, were touched up with a black paint pen. I tried Sharpies permanent ink black, but it turns purplish after being in the sun for a while.

I'd touch up the dash using a black paint pen and my finger to feather it in, the same with the steering wheel, and sometimes the seats with vinyl/fabric spray paint (not very effective). I would fix glove boxes, vinyl, light bulbs, fuses, bezels and even consoles. I would fix almost anything in the interior.

Most of my floor mats were original, which means they were up to 20 years old yet with just a good cleaning, a little touch up and they're good to go. Almost everything in the interior is easily replaced with used Miata parts if you can't fix it. Do you know how many screws fall out of the average Miata? Hundreds, maybe thousands and most of them are different. I went through the top and interior and replaced all the missing screws.

I would do all of the touch-up paint on everything but the car paint itself. You can't paint out a scratch (except the black rocker panel) even the professionals can't, they have to paint the whole panel.

I'd mask off and drape a car with sheets and go at it with my spray can of Rustoleum Satin Black. For example, the black strips under the orange peel finish on the sides. If you have a big white scratch there, just clean it, mask off, and spray it with a drape under the car too for overspray.



## Con't

I paint most of my windshield wipers and the wiper spoiler, because they get scoured of paint and look dull (drape the entire car; you want to avoid overspray on your paint or top or driveway). It looks great after you've done this, a little sharper. I clean the plastic bezels around the headlights and if necessary, just touch up with a vinyl and fabric spray paint.

### Parts

Parts are a most important part of any project. I sourced and collected parts. If Wheelskins (steering wheel leather covers) were on sale, I'd get several colours. If we went to a salvage yard, I had a list and also grabbed anything else I could use. Anytime Jeff, the mechanic, needed something for one of my jobs he'd just tell me. Tracking parts may be time consuming, but it doesn't cost me anything.

### Promotion

When the car was finished, I'd do the photo shoot as soon possible. It was important to show the car off to its best advantage. I have a few places close to home that make good backdrops. I show both sides of the car, front, back, interior, a few shots with the top down, boot in place and the engine bay.

They can't buy it if they can't see it so I advertised, a LOT! I liked Craigslist the best because it was free and you could put pictures on your ad. Surprisingly the most calls always came from a good old-fashioned ad in the paper. They're pricey but effective. Today we can even include a picture on a print ad! We used cars.com too but found Autotrader the least effective. I always used Miata.net for special cars, like the '93 LE or the automatic '92 Sunburst Yellow.

The real Miata enthusiasts always called on the Craigslist ads while the average person looking for a fun car is most likely to look in the paper. Every single call or email was returned, even if I'd sold it weeks before (I try to get the ads cancelled quickly) as I use Craigslist when I'm looking for cars too and I like to be treated professionally.

### Completion

The car was finished when I drove it and liked everything about it. I know what a Miata is supposed to sound, feel and drive like. I restored each car the way I like them, and as I said, I'm picky.

### Documentation

By the time we've finished a car, I knew that car intimately and I'd go through the car with a new owner. However, if I didn't have my car cards, I couldn't speak intelligently about any of them. People want to know the mileage, what's been done, costs, etc.

We provided each new owner with a folder including the title, smog report, CARFAX, all receipts and a list of things that we completed. We made sure each car had an owner's manual. If the person was mechanical and planed to do his own work, I'd even throw in a shop manual.

### Legal "Stuff"

I took care of the insurance for all the cars and all the Department of Motor Vehicles, things like registration and smog, and did all the forms to replace or straighten out a title. I naturally kept track of expenses and each car's budget.

And now you have an idea of how I restored Miatas *without* being a mechanic.



## Spotlight On

## 2012 MX 5 Special Edition



Mazda unveiled another Special Edition Miata recently at the Chicago Auto Show. This 2012 limited-run edition is upgraded from the Grand Touring Power Retractable Hardtop model to include premium package features such as Bluetooth® hands-free phone capability, SIRIUS® Satellite Radio, Mazda Advanced Keyless Entry System and Xenon HID headlights.

A black-only Power Retractable Hard Top (PRHT) - the first time a non-body-coloured hard top is available in North America - is available in only two new exterior options; Crystal White Pearl Mica or Velocity Red Mica. Additional black exterior accents, black outside rear view mirrors and new 17-inch black gunmetal alloy wheels complete the exterior.



## 2012 Special Edition

The interior features what else - Black. The interior details include black heated leather seats with accent stitching, black steering wheel and brake lever, alloy pedals and a unique Piano Black dashboard finish.



Interior features Piano Black accents



17" Black Gunmetal Alloy wheels

Black Mica only Retractable Hard Top



A sport-tuned suspension package on models with the six-speed manual transmission includes Bilstein® shocks, limited-slip rear differential and sport-tuned suspension. A six-speed Sport automatic transmission with steering-wheel-mounted paddle shifters is available.

The 2012 Special edition will have a limited run production of only 450 units.

Velocity Red Mica



Crystal White Pearl Mica



## Helpful Hints - Tire Pressures

The cruising season will soon be upon us so as we begin to think about preparation let's consider your tire pressures. Proper tire inflation is critical to safety, top handling as well as tire wear itself, so as the credit card commercial on TV goes, What's in *YOUR* tires??

Have you ever checked your tire pressure in a cool morning, and then driven on a highway trip? If you checked them when heated you could see as much as a 5 psi pressure increase. This is due to the heat generated which expands the air within the tire. Never let that air out when the tires are hot, as when they cool it will return back to normal pressure. This temporary pressure increase is expected and designed into the tire's capabilities.

### Under Inflation

An under inflated tire can't maintain its shape and becomes flatter than intended while in contact with the road. If a vehicle's tires are under inflated by only 6 psi it could lead to tire failure, additionally, the tread life could be reduced by as much as 25%. Lower inflation pressure will allow the tire to deflect (bend) more as it rolls. This will build up internal heat, increase rolling resistance and cause a reduction in fuel economy of up to 5%. You would experience a significant loss of steering precision and cornering stability. While 6 psi doesn't seem excessively low, remember, it usually represents about 20% of the tire's recommended pressure.



Can you easily identify which tire is 30% under inflated?

Here is what they would look like in the morning parked in your garage.



It's not that easy to spot but the tire in A is under inflated by 30% which could lead to tire failure. Tire pressure must be checked with a quality air gauge as the inflation pressure cannot be accurately estimated through visual inspection.

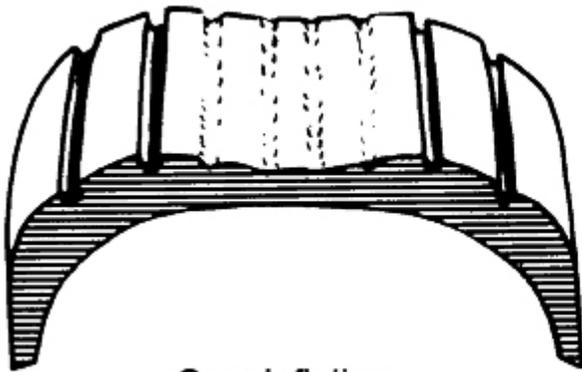
### Over Inflation

Extreme over inflation can be a problem too. If you run way too much pressure in the tires, then the centre of the tread is pushed down against the road more than the edges causing a loss of some traction, and premature wear in the middle of the tire.

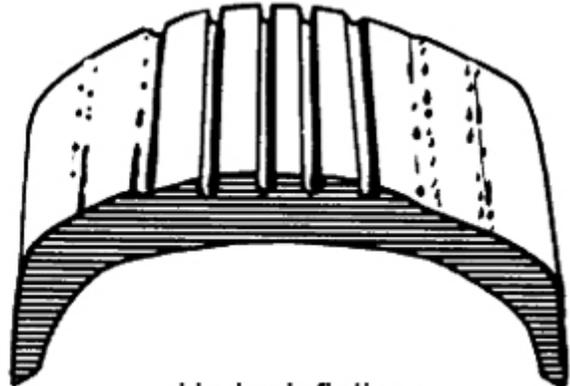
An over inflated tire is stiff and unyielding and the size of its footprint in contact with the road is reduced. If a vehicle's tires are over inflated by 6 psi, they could be damaged more easily when running over potholes or debris in the road. Higher inflated tires cannot isolate road irregularities well, causing them to ride harsher.

## Helpful Hints - Con't

You can determine if a tire has been driven for many miles either under or over inflated by examining the wear patterns of the tire. Under inflated tires wear on the outside of the tire while over inflated tires wear in the middle (see illustration).



Over Inflation



Under Inflation

If you want to see how your tires are contacting the road as far as traction and wear goes, take a white chalk and mark a 1" wide line across the face of a couple tires as evenly as you can. Then as you drive, see how the chalk wears off. If the chalk wears off evenly, then your pressure should be ok. If the centre wears off faster, you may have too much air in them, but never go below the factory recommendations. Note also because of cornering, the front tires may wear the chalk off the outside edges faster too.

Mazda has the tire pressure recommendations on the sticker inside the driver's door frame (as well as the Owner's Manual). This is the recommended pressure for the type and size tires provided with your car originally.

Always check your tire pressures around the same time of the day, BEFORE you drive the car. ideally in the cooler mornings. Significant differences between the conditions tire pressures are set (the warmth of an attached garage, heated garage or service shop) and in which the vehicle will be driven (winter's subfreezing temperatures) requires inflating tires 1 psi higher than recommended on the placard for every 10° F (approx. 8° C) difference in temperature between interior and exterior temperatures. The consistency of WHEN you check them is what will help your tires wear more evenly, and your car handle the same all of the time.

N. B. Don't forget your spare tire too!

### In Summary

Maintaining correct tire inflation pressure helps optimize tire performance and fuel economy. Correct tire inflation pressure allows drivers to experience tire comfort, durability and performance designed to match the needs of their vehicles. Tire deflection (the tread and sidewall flexing where the tread comes into contact with the road) will remain as originally designed and excessive sidewall flexing and tread squirm will be avoided. Heat build up will be managed and rolling resistance will be appropriate. Proper tire inflation pressure also stabilizes the tire's structure, blending the tire's responsiveness, traction and handling.

## Blast from the Past

## Old Miata “Stuff”

*It is a drizzling wet cold day in late November as I write this and the only way to enjoy a Miata in Muskoka on a day like this is to go on line. Today, the internet has everything you need to know and without a doubt has more than enough interesting articles and information on our beloved Miatas than one could imagine. The following article originally appeared in a 2003 newsletter for the Chesapeake Area Roadsters Miata Club and has been edited only to condense the message itself as it was quite lengthy.*

### The Accidental Tourist

*I recently received a note from Mike Gregory, a member of Master's Miata Club in South Carolina, with his reflections on a recent trip to Japan. After reading it over, I thought it was a really cool perspective on the Miata, as well as the similarity of Miata owners around the world. It just speaks so well of not only the car, but the enthusiasm it's owners share that even though barriers such as distance and language exist, that the love we share for these cars seems to transcend all of that.*

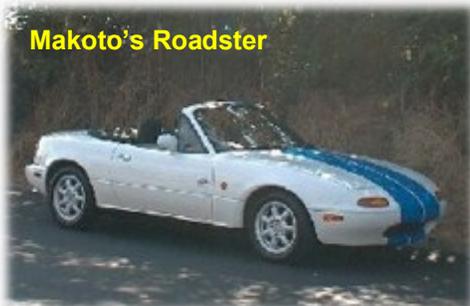
As a charter member of the Old Fart's Club, one of the principal truths I have learned is that the best things happen by accident. (The other principal truth is that the older I get, the less I know.) This past Fall, I had a marvellous “Miata accident.” A month before Lois and I were to leave on a long-saved-up-for five week vacation in Japan, the September 2002 issue of “Miata Magazine” arrived. This was the Special International Issue and contained an enticing write-up on the Kanazawa Roadster Club (the “KRC”) - that was accident number 1.

It just so happened that Kanazawa, on the western coast of Honshu, was the hometown of Masumi Takata, a Japanese exchange teacher who had lived with us a couple of years ago. We had a very kind invitation from Masumi to visit her during our trip. And here I see that there is an active Roadster (the Japanese version of the Miata) Club right in the same town – that was accident number 2.

I thought that it might be interesting to meet up with some kindred car spirits in a foreign land, so I sent an e-mail message to the address given for the KRC in that September 2002 issue – that was accident number 3.

Almost immediately, I received a pleasant reply from Makoto Nakamura, president of the KRC, saying: “Please visit and join us for your Kanazawa days. We'll do our best for you anything you like.” Little did I appreciate what this note meant. This was to be the end of the accidents since, as I was to learn, NOTHING happens by accident in Japan.

On that Saturday at 9AM, Makoto was to pick me up at the hotel to spend the day with some KRC members (the details were still a bit vague). We all met in the lobby on time (this is Japan), and then Makoto directed me into the wrong side (hey, this is Japan) of his top-down, 1994 white Roadster with blue racing stripes.



I shouted one of the three Japanese phrases that I had learned: “Ikimasho – let's go!” And we were off to join the other KRC 3 members at a central meeting point. Little did I suspect that this would be one of the more memorable days of my life.

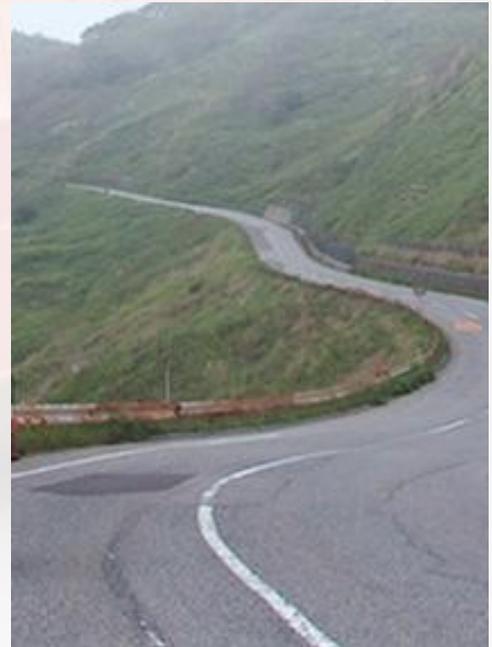
## Blast from the Past Continued

At the meeting point, we were joined by seven other Roadsters/Miatas and drivers. There were the formal introductions and halting greetings. I was ceremoniously presented with a wonderful delPrado 1/43-scale die cast model of a blue LHD MX-5. This IS Japan. To bow or to shake hands? After the initial awkwardness, what the Japanese call “heart-to-heart communication” kicked in, and all language/generational barriers were transcended. Hey, we’re all similar car nuts. This is universal.

From this point on, I was invited to hop from car to car, into a new passenger’s seat at each scheduled stop. This first leg was in Makoto’s 1994 base car. Since I also have a white 1994 (and you can’t get more base than the R-Package that I have owned since new), this MX-5 seemed very familiar...yet different.

Obviously, his car was RHD. But also, even though it was a 1.8 litre model, it still had the “flat dash” of the earlier 1.6s. I hadn’t realized that in Japan, all the NAs retained the original dash layout, while the US-spec NAs received modified dashes with the 1.8l and their dual air bags. Later I would confirm this behind the wheel. I know what my 8-year old R-Package feels like, yet Makoto’s car was like from a time warp, his car felt really tight, like a brand-new car. Aha, that must be the positive side of Japan’s draconian car re-inspection regime that requires older cars to be virtually rebuilt every three years. By now an NA owner in Japan is, by definition, a committed enthusiast.

From here we headed due north, up the Noto Peninsula. For a while we were on a toll road then we were off onto winding two lane roads, like driving through a Zen scroll painting, with sugar loaf mountains coming right down to the sea. Up into the trees, down to the ocean, up trees, down ocean. Oh, my! Oh, Noto! What gorgeous countryside!



Lunch break was at a restaurant right by the sea at Wajima. But first there was a tour of the Kiriko Museum right next door. The Kiriko are faceted lanterns, carried on immense portable shrines. We are talking about giants, up to 15 meters tall, up to 2 tons in weight, carried in festival processions by several 4 score men (not unknown to be well-lubricated internally). You have to be committed to carry the Kiriko. Without understanding the Kiriko, you can not understand the Miata.

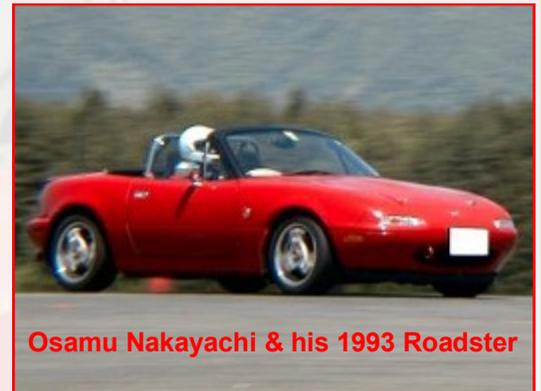
## Blast from the Past Continued



Space does not allow the recounting of all my co-pilot experiences that day (OK, my memory is not what it used to be), but two stick in my mind. One was with Haruhiko Sugimoto and his 1989-built red, totally stock, original Roadster. He radiated that special pride of the young owner (well, by this point they are all young to me) in his first Roadster, a red Roadster. Remarkably enough, by being so original, his car was as special as those that had been significantly customized by their owners.

Haruhiko was very interested in how Americans related to their Miatas, more to the point, *red* Miatas. You see, in Japan, a red sports car is considered a little bit over the top. That person is having a little bit too much fun in life, is straying a little bit outside the social consensus. What an interesting cultural perspective.

The other memorable ride was with Osamu Nakayachi in his heavily modified 1993-built 1.8 litre. Before I got in, Osamu transferred his hardtop (his car was minus the entire soft-top apparatus) to one of the other cars so that we could ride al-fresco. Osamu's car was very interesting: the windshield surround was painted gloss black to match the hard-top; the car carried a roll-over bar and chromed mirrors, custom wheels, customized instruments, lightweight racing buckets. He has done a good bit of seat time with a helmet on. But even more interesting was Osamu himself.



Osamu was the Route Master for this day and he was also the philosopher of the group, and during the course of my "talking ride" with him, I started to appreciate how shallow my understanding of the Miata had been, even after 8 years of ownership. And how only by riding in an MX-5 on the Noto Peninsula could true understanding be achieved.

You see, the original concept of the Roadster was developed by Toshihiko Hirai, the first product program manager for the car, while he was with Mazda in Kanazawa in 1981/82. The idea came to him while he was thinking deeply and shovelling snow! The backdrop for the concept was the roads of the Noto Peninsula - up into the trees, down to the ocean, up trees, down ocean. Oh, my! In a real sense, Kanazawa was the birthplace of the Miata.

As Osamu was explaining this, I was thinking – awww, just a bit of local chauvinism. But the roads of Noto kept intruding. The twisting up and down - the ocean, the trees, the ocean. The premium on sharp turn-in, cornering feel, lightness of control. The irrelevance of brute horsepower. In each of my half dozen rides, I kept watching the driver carefully. After a while, I DID come to see "jinba ittai", oneness between rider and horse, arise naturally. This oneness is the only way to travel through the Noto Peninsula.

## Blast from the Past      Continued

OK, I know all the “explanations” about the Miata. That it is merely an extremely good execution of the classical British sports car concept. As a Britcar nut of the first water, I had always thought that sounded plausible. I now realize that is total nonsense. In all that the Japanese do, including sports car design, they proceed with “a fullness of intent”. No halfway measures. Ever. For all those cranky (but beloved) British cars, this is a totally alien concept.

And I have read about the depth of US involvement in the design of the Miata through the Mazda Southern California design studio. That is so. (What do they say, that failure is an orphan but success has many fathers?) But at its core, at the level of the concept and the execution of that concept, the MX-5 Miata/Roadster is a totally Japanese car. The Roadster could have arisen from nowhere else other than on the roads of the Noto Peninsula.

You may think all this to be clap trap. However, in the months thereafter that I have been at home, commuting in my daily driver R-Package, I have become utterly convinced that the Noto Peninsula is in the DNA of my Miata.

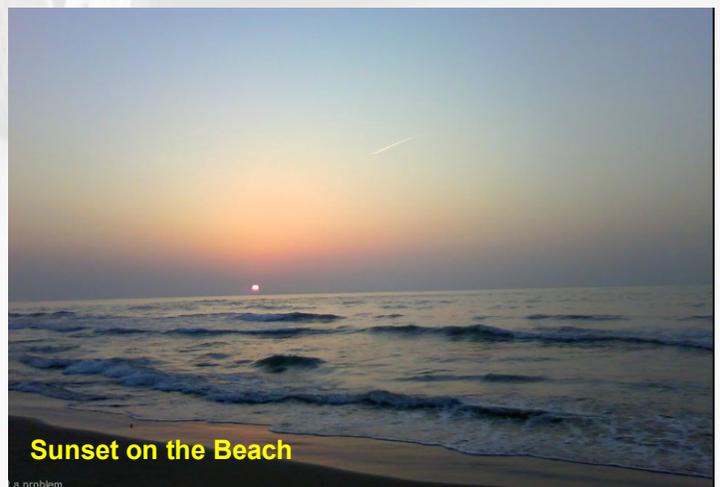
Anyway, back to that day in Noto. Eventually we wound back south through the Peninsula, back towards Kanazawa. Takeshi Mouri, Yoichi Sakaguchi, and Kazutaka Hirano all provided rides in their objects of pride. Motoki Inami and Miyuki Nakamura, the young (aren't they all) engaged couple were not about to be separated for this old dude (but they did carry Osamu's hardtop when I rode with him). All were simply incredibly kind to a stranger.



Chiri Beach Nagisa, Japan

Makoto handed me the keys to his white, blue-striped prize and said: why don't you drive it up and down the beach, solo? He didn't have to ask twice. What a treat! To drive an MX-5 on its home turf (oops, sand). I then continued driving when the column of Roadsters re-formed and drove en masse down the beach to where the paved highway began.

Dusk was approaching. The KRC had one last treat for me – on the beach. The “Chiri Beach Nagisa Drive” has to be right at the top of any car nut's Must Do List when visiting Japan. Miles of hard packed sand upon which you can legally drive, right alongside the (gentle) surf. Combine that with a technicoloured, wispy clouded sunset, and the setting becomes surreal. Where Japan is known as the Land of the Rising Sun, Kanazawa on the West Coast IS the land of the setting sun.



Sunset on the Beach

## Blast from the Past Continued

At this point I painfully surrendered the keys, and we continued into downtown Kanazawa. The entire KRC entourage delivered me near Masumi's home, where we bid fond farewells in now-total darkness.

The entire day was an exercise in over-the-top Japanese hospitality, which turns out to be the norm. Nowhere else (and I have been around the block) is the foreign visitor met with such friendliness, interest, and intensity (remember, fullness of intent!). And when all that is combined with a mutual interest like the Miata, the experience is indeed powerful.

In closing – one last piece of insight gained on the Noto Peninsula. Osamu carefully explained to me (while sliding through a series of esses), that the Miata is like a Japanese Noh mask. In classic Noh 6 drama, each character holds a carved wooden mask. Depending on the tilt with which the mask is held, the mask shows happiness, horror, violence, concern, love, disgust. The wood changes, but it is all the same mask. The actor becomes the mask, and the mask the actor.

The same MX-5 is Japanese, American, French, British, ... Somewhere, I am sure there is even a Bulgarian Miata. And that is because Noto is a universal mask.

Did you Know 

***You can have a Navigation System in your Miata?***



Well not exactly, you could if you purchased the new MX-5 Special Edition Spring 2012, a car that will be offered exclusively to the European market.

Introduced at the Geneva Auto Show this special model is the first MX5 (and currently only) to be fitted with an integrated navigation system.



We are now on Face Book, click the icon to check us out.