

# MiataFun News



Miata Fun

February 2005

Vol. 3, No.2

## New MiataFun Members

Joe and Fran Schmidt # 69  
1995 Merlot  
Arkansas

Ted and Paulette Bruns # 70  
2003 Sunlight Silver Metallic  
California

Eddie Brau # 71  
1991 British Racing Green SE  
Georgia



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### WOW a whole month has gone by already! How time flies when your having fun.

Make sure you check the MiataFun Calendar and stay up to date on Miata Events in our beautiful state. Yes a lot of our roads have been damaged by the weather earlier this year. But that is a challenge, lets find the roads that are not and plan an event. It does not take much to plan a party, or a movie, or a Tech Day. It just takes a bit of your time to notify your club that you would like to do something and would like to have all your Miata friends join in on the fun and camaraderie.

You can't make every event that's planned that's for sure. But there are lots of people out there putting on some really nice runs for us that have put in some time and effort to bring a smile on your face and take you somewhere you have never been to and share the experience with you. You will find a few in this issue and in coming months.

Some events will take you to faraway places and meet with other MiataPhiles and enjoy the roads in their territory. There are charity events planned, and I got word that there is going to be another "Best-of-the-Bunch" Car show this year. We will keep you informed as we get more information. As you know we in SOCALM helped out with San Diego's car show during Surf-N-Safari '05 last year and it was a lot of fun for those who attended the event. Everyone was entered.

Just a little information on an event coming up VF Engineering is going to do a "Supercharger" Installation the first week of March. All Miata owners that would like to attend are welcome. You have to let Jay Simon know you are coming. Information can be found on the Events page for march. Free dyno's will be offered after the installation. A Dyno will be preformed prior to the installation to show the difference. This is the same Supercharger found on Marna's "Emily" 2003 Splash Green car.

This will be a year of relaxing after a year of Marna being SOCALM's President, Merchandise Sales, and Newsletter editor-in-chief, and my doing the layout for three months. So we might have a little bigger newsletter now. A little more information, and a good time with our Miata friends, new and old.

If you have something you would like to have put in our newsletter let us know. Visitors to our site have been on the rise this year and we welcome them all to join in with us on having a fun year with our cars and friends. So let's go for a drive.



Have you placed your order for your MiataFun name badge? You can order direct from the badge maker right from MiataFun's web site. They are only \$5.00 pin style and \$6.00 with Magnetic holder. (saves holes in shirts!). You get three lines. You can put your name, Member #, Car name, Year and model, such as the example on the left. Buy it now, so when you go club shopping they will know your name and you will feel like one of the family.  
[\(Order Info\)](#)

**Newsletter Editor**



Tom Wood

# MiataFun News

You keep us informed and we will keep you informed. Send your runs and events information to have put on our site and in our newsletter. This year we are going to let you know of as many runs and events as possible and you can find them here. Also if you have pictures or stories about your runs please submit them to [miatafun@miatafun.net](mailto:miatafun@miatafun.net) and we will post them for other clubs to see.

## SOCALM & MiataFun Multi-Club Run

*SOCALM, SJVMC, SDMC, SAHUARO, REDWOOD COAST, SAMOA  
WILLAMETTE, Mt HOOD, DELTA, Miata Clubs so far.  
Travelers from: Canada, Australia, and England.*

Will you be there? Send us your email and we will keep you updated with information on this great event.

# CALIFORNIA OREGON RUN

Yes it is back for it's third event. We had seven clubs join up with us at different times in 2003. Anyone can join us for any part of the run. And for as long as they would like. Each year we get more cars joining us for the full 10 Days! You will see more about this in the upcoming months so stay tuned to the <http://MiataFun.net> web site for updated information.

***Our third trip to Oregon happens this year.***

Starts Memorial day weekend May 28th.-(2 Days), you will need five vacation days -(5 Days), And the next weekend -(2 Days). We will be heading home June 6th.-(Monday)-(10th Day) Our last day. For a more leisurely trip home and some more exploring. If you need to be home Monday you can depart the run "early" Sunday AM.

**Description:** Mark your calendars, put in for vacation and get ready for 10 days of driving some of the most beautiful roads in California and Oregon.

As we have in the past, we will spend the first 4 days driving north along the western side of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. We will visit 6 National Parks – Sequoia, Kings Canyon, Yosemite, Lassen Volcanic, Crater Lake and Redwoods National Parks. We will then spend 5 days exploring central Oregon and Northern California, before we have to head home. In Oregon, the Willamette Miata Club, of Eugene, will host us as they share their favorite roads. Then, our second weekend will be spent with the Redwood Coast Miata Club for their Annual Cool Weekend at the Coast.

**Our first trip** the California Oregon "Gold Rush Run" was quite a success. Due to all the planning involved we decided to do it every other year.

**Our second trip** the California-Oregon "National Parks Run" was even better. We had lots of other clubs join in (7) and partake on some of our adventure. We had a brand new club the "Willamette Club" join us and they showed us some of their best roads. We had dinners and lots of socializing along the way.

**Our third trip** coming up the California-Oregon Run "From the Mountains to the Sea" Will be even more enjoyable with more time to explore and see the sites.

Let us know if you are interested in joining us for this memorable trip and keep a watch for more information.

**Stay tuned for more information in the coming months.**

# Sequoia/Kings Canyon National Park Run

**Dates:** Friday, April 22 – Sunday, April 24

**Place:** The River Inn  
45176 Sierra Drive  
Three Rivers

800-793-7309 <http://www.the-riverinn.com/>

**Host:** Bill Bryant **SOCALM** 909-598-7035 (w) 909-437-7492 (c) [bbryant@tvrc.com](mailto:bbryant@tvrc.com)

Please RSVP by April 4. Everyone is responsible for his/her own hotel reservation.

**Description:** Everybody will make it to the Inn on his or her own Friday Afternoon/Evening. We will begin the run at 9:00 Am on Saturday from the Inn. After a morning of driving on some twisties outside the parks we will enter the North entrance and head to Cedar Grove for lunch. After lunch we will travel some of the back roads in the parks, with a couple of stops for sightseeing opportunities. Eventually we will make our way back to the Inn where we will rest up for dinner. Dinner will be at a local steakhouse in Three Rivers. On Sunday Morning we will return to the park for some more sightseeing.

The River Inn Guest Rooms are warm and inviting, decorated in the botanical colors of the area, with artwork depicting scenes of the river and mountains. Relax outside your room at your own bistro table with a breathtaking view of the foothill peaks rising to meet the great Sierra Nevada Divide and the boundaries of Sequoia National Park. All rooms at the Inn include a "BREAKFAST IN A BAG" delivered to your doorstep each morning. Watch the sunset and the stars come out in the warm twilight air. Barbeque your dinner while you enjoy the view from our shady park area. I have blocked the whole Inn for SOCALM that weekend, but will have to release any unreserved rooms by April 1, so get your reservation in early.

The cost of rooms will be **\$99.00** per night. (below their AAA rate) At present all 10 rooms are blocked under SOCALM and the Group Code # is: 04058P.

The Rooms are being held until April 4 at which time they will be released for general bookings.

There are also 4 riverside cabins available, but not blocked Call Laura at 1-800 793-7309 or 1-559-561-4367 to make reservations.

For more information go to:  
<http://www.the-riverinn.com/>

As with all Miata Runs this is one you will not want to miss. Driving through the Sierras in your Miata is an exhilarating experience to share with a line of your fellow Miata Drivers.



## *You Know You are From A small Town When*

- You decide to walk somewhere for exercise and 5 people pull over and ask if you need a ride.
- Your teachers remember when they taught your parents.
- You can charge at all the local stores.
- The closest McDonald's is 45 miles away. So is the closest mall.
- The golf course had only 9 holes
- You can't help but date a friend's ex-girlfriend.
- Getting paid minimum wage is considered a great job.
- The town population increases by one-third when the universities go on break.
- The best burgers in town are at the rink.
- You know exactly where to go when the party is at "the lake".
- The city council meets at the coffee shop.
- Your letter jacket was worn after your 19th birthday.
- It is normal to see an old man riding through town on a riding lawn mower.
- Everyone who played sports had to play on every type of team, or there wouldn't be enough people to have a team.
- You can remember when your town finally got cable.
- You went to parties at a pasture, barn, or in the middle of a dirt road.
- You went cow-tipping or snipe hunting.
- The whole school went to the same party after graduation.

# Willow Springs California

## Fast Lane's Streets of Willow Course

By: Tom Wood

Everyone talks about track time and how important it is. Well if you have never been on a race track, you may not have thought that much about "The Line". After all it seems pretty simple when the road turns you turn to keep yourself centered in your lane. Is that all that's to it? NOT! It is true that basic knowledge will get you where you are going most of the time, but it is how you drive on the road that can make you a safer driver and give you better control over your car. The road that has an identity of its own.



**The faster you go!  
The more the line becomes critical.**

"The Line" the path your car takes as it goes around the curve. The faster you go the more sensitive the line becomes. To the racers the inches matter. Racers look for that perfect line. They say they actually think more about the line than they do sex! Most racers drive the line on their daily commute. Whether it's a multi-curve, roller-coaster ride or a hair-pin switchback, there's always that perfect line for every stretch of road or track.

### On The Track!

We got to experience this concept at the Willow Springs Street of Willow road course. After a class on how your car handles and what to expect and how to balance and correct your angle of attack! The line is limited only by physics-not pesky traffic laws. The line is the fastest, smoothest way through a turn or series of turns and onto the straightaway! Easily said, drive parallel to the very outside edge of the pavement (The driver's right for a left-hand turn). Smoothly bring the car to the inside edge of the pavement at, or just past, the geometric center of the turn. This is called the "Apex" of the turn. Then as the straightaway starts to materialize, squeeze on the throttle and let the car drift back to the outside edge of the track.

In a tight corner you may touch the inside edge of the pavement for one short moment. When a racer runs over the red-and-white edges they are considered aggressively hitting the Apex. The goal actually is "Make the track as straight as possible" Tires can grip so much going around corners so the straighter you go the faster you go. Of course you must also take into



account the best part of the track to drive on! The parts with the most Grip, the shortest path, and the strongest acceleration out of the turn. And believe me you have to go around more than one lap to find it!

I found that the more laps I took the better the line showed up, the more my car stuck to the road, and the more fun it became and the quicker I got back to the straightaway. ZOOM-ZOOM.

### On the Road

Back to our daily roads, Yep traffic lanes, not like on the track they only give you a few feet to play with on either side of your car. On our public roads, just like on the track, the straighter your path, the less you work your tires, brakes, and engine. Which means you can either drive faster, or maintain the same speed with a larger safety margin. Since we "ALL" obey the traffic laws we should never squeal a tire while looking for that special "Line". Staying on the line can also help you stay in control on those of your favorite back roads. The line puts you in tune with your car and the road.

The road of course is not like the race track. Some roads you are not familiar with, and can't see around all the corners. This is where don't know what is around the turn it is best to take the line with a late Apex. You may find rocks, or mud slides, or animals just around the corner! A late apex will give you a better view in the turn giving you more time to avoid surprises in the road.

### Fast Lane

A big thanks to Danny McKeever and the helpers at the streets of willow for such a fun filled, learning day and being able to take what you learn and put it to use on the track. With three Miata clubs with members that shared a common interest in their cars, all going in the same direction.



P.S. After 4-1/2 Hrs. of track time we also got to do the skid pad, it was fun watching the ladies spin their cars. Everyone walked away this evening with a smile on their faces and a bit of knowledge about their cars.

**Drive safely and defensively, and have fun.**

## A short story.

By: Marla Vogeley



My work (on the Air National Guard Base next to Pt. Mugu) is in the middle of agricultural fields. The farm equipment, trucks, and tractors that work these fields always leave dirt and mud on the streets (hence the usual dirty condition of my car.) When it rains, the dirt and mud turns to thicker mud, but if it rains enough, it eventually washes away. Sometimes when it is raining, there are large chunks of mud that I must detour around. Annoying, but it won't kill me.

For the past two days, however, a new condition has arisen that has not previously transpired (therefore, the word "new.") Anyway, the main road from my apartment to the base has turned into liquid mud. It is not quite water, but neither is it mud. Yesterday, driving home, my car felt very loose, so I slowed down. The tractor-trailers coming the other direction sprayed this gunk all over me. My car was so covered in mud by the time I got home, my hand got all muddy just closing my door. Yuck.

This morning coming in, I experienced a much bigger problem than a muddy car. I could still see the liquid mud on the road, so I was driving slowly (about 40 mph in a 55 zone.) Unfortunately, that wasn't slowly enough as my car started to slide sideways into the opposite lane. It was the same feeling that happens while off-roading in mud. The mud puts you where it wants, and there is almost nothing to be done about it. Luckily, there was no on coming traffic, because if there was, I may have panicked and done something stupid. As it was, I was still very nervous, because there are big ditches on each side of the road, and I really did not want to end up in one.

So. I let off the gas and very carefully steered back into my lane. All seemed to be going well, but then my back end began to slide out. I jerked the wheel back to the left, which was a tiny over correction, then steered to the right one more, and ended up going straight down the road. Whew. I thought I was about to end up all over the road like I was the time in my old Geo Metro when an 18-wheeler made an attempt on my life.

I continued at 20 mph but that was still too fast, so I slowed down to 10 and put my blinkers on. I felt really stupid, but as my foot was having some kind of nervous twitch, I didn't feel compelled to go any faster. The cars that came up behind me zoomed past with no problem, so I would say the problem was definitely with me, and my tires, that I love so much when it is not raining.

I eventually came to a side road that I was able to pull off on. It had the more normal thick patches of mud, so it was much safer. I will take that road home.

That was my short story. I hope you found it worth while reading. Remember to be safe in the rain and the liquid mud!

*Marla*

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The Moral here! Not all tires are created equal, There are good road tires that just don't cut it in mud and there's mud tires that just don't cut it on the race track or corners. Drive within your means and don't panic when the unexpected occurs. Always look ahead and be as safe as you can. *Cam W.*

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The photo above is Marla's new trailer. For those who have not had a chance to see it. It is designed for motorcycles, and as you can see it works well with Miata's Too!



# Miata Fun

## Tires Your cars contact with the Road

Last month we talked about the Radiator. This month we will talk about **Tires!** We all have them, when is the last time you really looked at them?

Some things you may consider carrying with you at all times: A Tire pressure Gauge, and a small portable air compressor. I keep mine in a small tool bag I got at harbor freight for \$3.00, keeps them together and holds other stuff too.

I rotate my tires every 5000 Miles. Check for nails and other foreign objects that may be in the tire or between the tread. I remove all rocks etc and make a visual check of the condition of the tire itself. If you see the rubber bars going across the tread you have used up the usefulness of your tires. If you or someone else you know autocrosses you may want to see if they would like your old tires before spending \$\$ to have them disposed of at the tire dealers. These tires are still good for a few hot laps 8^).

Have you noticed other people driving on low tires? This is dangerous since low tires flex a lot and creates a lot of heat. This breaks down the rubber and sidewalls. You may have seen a few on the roads as you Slalom around them to avoid hitting them. The only time you would need low pressure in your tires would maybe to get out of the sand (Who drives in the sand?).

What is the correct pressure?

Now this could be tricky, lots of people have different ideas. This is my rule of thumb. Normal day driving, what's listed on the door panel of your car is a good start. But some cars are fitted with different tires than stock so what do we put in our tires? Best thing to do is start with the listed pressure, it is usually measured by the weight of your car. Take a spin on a few easy twisty roads. Now add a couple pounds and take the same roads. How does it feel? To rough, to soft, makes noises, adjust the pressure to what you feel confident with.

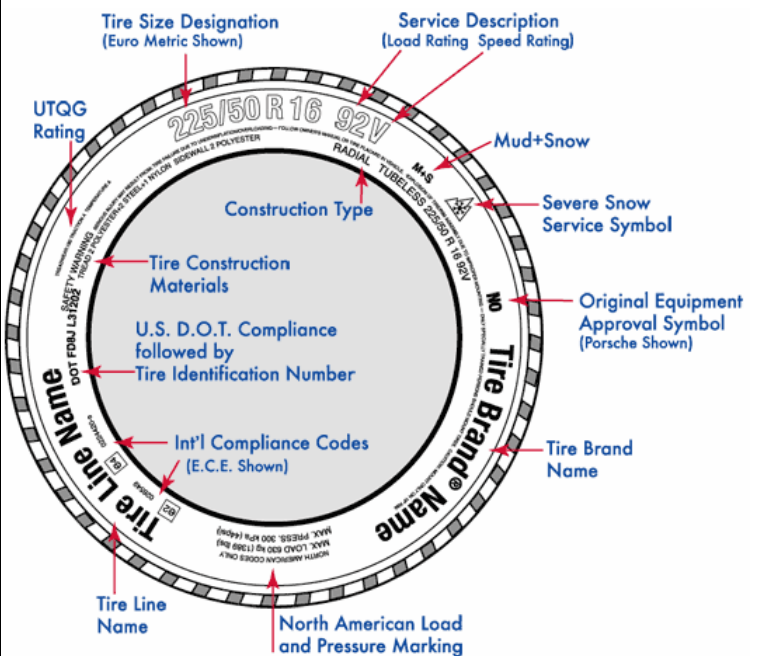
### How do you tell how old your tires are?

When it comes to determining the age of a tire, it is easy to identify when a tire was manufactured by reading its Tire Identification Code (serial number). Unlike vehicle identification numbers (VINs) and the serial numbers used on many other consumer goods (which identify one specific item), Tire Identification Codes are really batch codes that identify which week and year the tire was pro-

duced.

Today, the week and year the tire was manufactured is contained in the **last four digits** of the DOT number, with the **2 digits** used to identify the week a tire was manufactured immediately preceding the **2 digits** used to identify the year.

Examples of tires manufactured since 2000 with this Tire Identification Code format: DOTXXX0305,



03 = this is the third week of the year

05 = this is the year 2005.

(Information acquired from Tire Rack and Ch.5 news)

When I worked in a gas station many years ago I also found out that tires also have a serial number and are made in groups of four! I guess that was because most cars had four tires 8^)))

So now you know just about all you need to know about tires.

By: Tom Wood