

MINI 5280

The Motoring Society of the Rocky Mountain Region

Inaugural Edition

www.MINI5280.org

December 2002

I have one!

That's the reaction most of us have when we finally take delivery of our beloved MINI. It's an end to the anticipation, the waiting, the obsessing, the charting of new routes to motor on, and the preparation of the spot in the garage. The initial motoring experience is hard to beat (although the end of the 1200 mile break-in period rivals it) but how do you keep the romance alive?

That's the purpose behind **MINI 5280**. We are a group of MINI enthusiasts with varied backgrounds, varied interests, and one common thread – passion for the MINI! Club participation includes the Yalla Yalla, the BMWCCA auto-x series, rallies, social gatherings, fun drives with joint participation of the Minis of the Rockies (MOTR) classic Mini club, and the general excitement and fulfillment that comes from being a part of a group that understands your almost clinical issues with your new MINI.

The initial forming of **MINI 5280** took place on November 13, 2002 with a charter board meeting to elect board positions, name the club, and discuss the direction of our fledgling group. The exciting opportunity for you will be getting in on the ground floor of the most dynamic MINI enthusiast group in the country! Those of you who act now (operators are standing by) before the end of 2002 will become "Charter Members"!

The following Board Members were unanimously elected as Officers:

Dave Bunting, President Kelsey Baker, Secretary Randy Webb, Treasurer

Board Members at Large are Mark Ferguson, Tom Braum, Teresa Aguilar and Anthony Figueiredo.

MINI 5280 will be an organization serving the Rocky Mountain region. The Board plans to monitor and evaluate relationships/affiliations with other regional and national organizations. Initially, membership in **MINI 5280** will provide you with bi-monthly newsletters, some cool MINI stickers, and participatory availability and notification of all the club's events. This will eventually lead to track events, national meets and other (too exciting to discuss yet) events! **MINI 5280** will also have monthly Board meetings to discuss all that is MINI and



Amy Sullivan Oct. 02

MINI 5280 Motorers on a Fun Drive just outside of Idaho Springs



A foggy start at the Yalla Yalla

Dave Bunting Oct. 02

review suggestions for the further course we should take as a group. We all look forward to welcoming you as fellow motorers.

Filling out and sending in the registration form contained in this publication will enroll you as a member. You will receive notification of upcoming events and meetings as well as updates on the MINICCA via e-mail and in future newsletters. See you on the road!

(Article contributed by Randy Webb)

Bee-Emm-Double-WHO?

The mighty MINI puts the moves on Big Brother Bimmer

You are familiar with the story. David and Goliath. It's probably not fair to say this is that story, but there are some parallels. It harkens back to the Giant Killer days: of 1.5 liter Porsches beating up on monster Ford V8s and Ferrari V12s. The dramatic battle of the underdog.

This is the tale of three MINIs against a fleet of higher-horsepower, more expensive "Big Brother BMWs". The battleground was the parking lot of Bandimere Speedway (don't let that take any of the drama out of it – it gets better) and the war was with those little orange cones.

Some of you may not be familiar with the motor-sport of autocross (or "auto-x"). It is a very safe way to explore the limits of your street or race car in a competitive light. A course is set up using cones to mark the "track" and outlined with chalk. One car at a time competes against the clock and the cones. Cars are grouped according to their capabilities. The winner has the fastest time in the group. Any cone knocked down counts against you in the form of seconds added to your time – so a great run can quickly be destroyed by just hitting a couple of those blasted cones.

This event was organized by BMWCCA who was gracious enough to include the MINI as part of their run group. There were four drivers representing

the MINI flag: Randy Webb, Mark Ferguson, Kelly Peterson and Dave Bunting. BMWCCA classified the Cooper S in CS along with a 530i and no less than seven 1991 – 1998 BMW M3s. We were a little nervous at first.

The event was divided into two sessions: the morning and the afternoon. The morning had each class driving a total of three runs – all of which were timed, but none of which counted in competition (this turned out to be a bummer for Dave). After the first run, it became apparent that the S was at the top of the field, the cream of the crop, the best of the best ... well, you get the idea. This annoyed several vocal M3 owners, to the slight amusement of the Cooper S drivers. At the end of the morning, it was very tight, with only a second covering all four of our heroes, the MINI drivers. Mark edged out Randy by a couple of tenths. Kelly and Dave were also within tenths of each other, and the top honors of the class looked open to any of the four in the upcoming timed runs of the



Dave Bunting Oct. 02

Randy Webb, just prior to winning the CS Auto-X.

afternoon session. After a few conversations with angry BMWCCA members, and quite a few encouraging words from other BMWCCA members (who were on the list or had serious cases of MINI envy), the MINI contingent was ready for competition.

Again, there would be three runs, but this time they counted. The fastest of the three runs of all competitors would decide who won the trophy.



Dave Bunting Oct. 02

Kelly started out very strong with a 43.7-second run, about the average for his morning times. The track was a gravel/pave-ment combo, so the later the day went, the

more the track seemed to go off. This caused Dave some trouble, leaving him a full two seconds off his morning pace. Mark then ran and turned a 43.3-second run in very impressive fashion. Once the commentators stopped talking about how "cute" the car was, they realized that Mark's time had just put him into the lead of the CS group. Randy's first run was exciting with a sub-43-second run and a cone that had to be reviewed by the judges to determine whether it had been displaced or not. Unfortunately, it had been, and the drive turned into a 45-second run.

The second run saw Kelly's consistency continued with a slight improvement to 43.5 seconds; an amazing achievement considering this was his first time autocrossing. Dave was still struggling with the track, and may have been abducted by aliens and replaced with a clone, turning another 46-second run. Dave was also at his first auto-x and showed some very (*AUTO-X continued on following page*)

Auto-X (continued)

promising potential considering his morning times. Mark ran and turned another great time, beating himself into the lead. Randy's second run was clean, but not fast enough to beat Mark's very professional time. At this point, the MINIs were 1, 2, 3.

The last run was for the win. Any one of the MINI drivers still had a chance to take the win. The M3 drivers still had a chance to defend the BMW glory. Anything could happen. Kelly started things off right, improving his time and vaulting him into second overall with a very respectable 43.429-second run. Apparently, Dave's evil doppelganger was still driving;

he managed to break the 46-second barrier with a 45.943-second run. As a sidebar, Dave's fastest morning run would have placed him third overall at the end of the day (Bravo, Dave, for an excellent rookie effort!).

Now was Mark's time to shine. He ran faster yet again, further distancing himself into the lead with a sub-43-second time of 42.900 seconds. Again, the commentators were

flabbergasted. The only run left in CS was Randy's. Mark was still the overall leader. After some fumbling with the DSC, Randy's run was clean ... and fast. Barely edging out Mark with a 42.774-second run, he took the lead.

At the end of the day, the final results out of the twelve entries in CS: MINI Cooper S swept the podium! Randy finished first, Mark took second, and Kelly rounded out with third. Randy and Mark received trophies, while Kelly also won a raffle prize of a \$60 poster-sized picture of him driving in the autocross! A great day for all. The event was wrapped up with an

announcement that there will be a full auto-x series next year. Whether or not they invite us back remains to be seen, but it must be said that they put on a top-notch gathering. For anyone who has any interest in motor-sport at all, auto-x is a fun, safe and great way to get started. We look forward to seeing a MINI armada at next year's series!

(Article contributed by Randy Webb)



Membership Application

Join prior to February 28, 2003 (for the 2003 Membership Year) and become a Charter Member!

Please note: Members must sign a waiver at the event site prior to participating in any MINI5280 events.

Motorer's Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Daytime telephone: _____ Evening telephone: _____

E-mail address: _____

Please check this box if you do not want your name, address or telephone number given out for promotional purposes.

I am interested in:

- Rallies
- Driver Education
- Autocrosses
- Fun Drives
- Social Functions
- Customizing my MINI

Other: _____

Please send this form and a check for \$25 (made payable to **MINI5280**) to:

Randy Webb, Treasurer
MINI5280
 3962 East Garnet Court
 Highlands Ranch, Colorado 80126

randy@mini5280.org

Membership is for a term of one year, expiring on December 31 each year.

Wandering ... the Mali Way

Yalla-Yalla. Bambara (the language spoken in Mali) for "wandering about". What's so exciting about wandering around? Well, that depends upon whether or not you're in a MINI. And if you have 35 other new MINIs to wander around with, you have a downright good reason to write an article about it.

It all started at the Stegosaurus lot, the Park 'n' Ride area off of I-70 at the beginning of the foothills to the majestic Rocky Mountains. Participants showed up from all over Colorado and Wyoming. The event had been shrouded in secrecy to keep an advantage from being held by anyone, so no one really knew what we were about to embark upon. What made the morning even more mysterious was the set of directions we had received: Bring a navigator, a pen, and 51 cents. What for??

We soon found out. The morning was perfect for a mystery – brisk but not cold ... and foggy. *Very foggy.* After some social interaction among MINI owners and onlookers' awe at the ensemble of so many cars (some thought the MINIs were some sort of newfangled electric car or some other such reverse alien-engineered technology), there was a brief driver/navigator meeting. The participants were given their first clue at what the day would hold in the form of 22 questions to answer while navigating a predetermined course using a separate set of directions – and I use that term loosely. The directions consisted of 26 steps with no map, just "lefts" and "rights".

The cars were sent off in pairs starting at 8:31 a.m., and the confusion ensued at approximately 8:32. We motorers didn't know it, but there were two sets of instructions – a clockwise and a counterclockwise – so the cars took different tacks straight away.

Once under way, some of us headed up Lookout Mountain in search of life's answers (or the answers to 22 questions). For those of you who have never traveled this road, it is one of my all-time favorites, with switchbacks, decreasing radius, increasing radius, off-camber, gravel-covered, cliff-strewn road all the way to the top. This morning held a special challenge with reduced visibility in some spots of about 1/8th of a mile. **WOOO-HOOO!** Once at the top, we were instructed to stop in at the Buffalo Bill Museum and Grave, where the picture started to become clearer. That 51 cents was to purchase one of those tourist pennies that proves you've been there. That wasn't why we needed it, however. Our MINI caravan had to find out what the inscription

on the back of the Buffalo Bill penny said. It was significant that the question used the Buffalo Bill penny because there was also a different penny available – a small detail that caught out some of our intrepid sleuths.

The course then took our wanderers down the back side of the mountain, another exciting challenge (but one that incurred the price of brake dust on those wheels, what's that stuff made of anyway – chalk?). Once on the road again, the navigators searched for more of those hard-to-find life's answers – "What's Coney Island famous for?", "What does the phone number 674-0830 belong to?" ... Did I miss the last turn?? One question

continued to nag me personally, though – "What company owns the blue skyscrapers with white roofs in Tiny Town?" I know the area and for the life of me I could not think of any blue skyscrapers. I just had to have faith, though, and we pressed on with that question still niggling at the back of my mind.

Our intrepid Yallers then tested the off-road prowess of the MINI. That's right, the MINI is a regular Rubicon master! Bring on the Jeep! The spookiness continued as we left the pavement to discover who was buried beneath the flagpole in Evergreen Cemetery. A loop of dirt and rock brought us to the answer, and what an interesting sight to see MINIs all lined up in the dirt! World Rally

Fog and intrigue at Buffalo Bill's grave



Dave Bunting Oct. 02

MINIs leaving the Evergreen Cemetery



Dave Bunting Oct. 02

Championship – MINI is ready.

The sun broke out, and those who haven't had the chance to explore the Rocky Mountain roads, you are missing the point of the exercise! We thought we were lost for most of it, but the driving was spectacular. And just when you thought you had it figured out, another MINI would fly by in the *opposite* direction. Read those directions again!

(Yalla Yalla continued on following page)

Yalla-Yalla (continued)

Finally we arrived at the "MINI Town" – Tiny Town. Many of the answers made themselves known, but for me, an epiphany! We walked down the main street and saw the miniature boarding house, storefronts, the theatre, and then, the SKYSCRAPERS! Port-a-potties – blue with white tops!!! The few of us who had gathered at Tiny Town (others were still lost in the woods) saw the light together and just about fell over with uncontrolled laughter on the road.

There was a final beautiful canyon drive back into Morrison to meet for lunch (which for me included a rather spirited romp with a Porsche 911 trying to keep up with the MINI – all at legal speeds, of course!).

The event also included a trivia section (darn that Velvet Red) with some very challenging MINI questions. Someone needs to write a book!

Lunch started with a raffle that included spark plug wires, a Cooper filter element, 1:43 scale MINI Cooper Ss, and other valuable prizes. Then the scores were recorded and the winners were announced! The Cooper S winner was Teresa Aguilar with a prize of the MINI-Madness intake system. The Cooper winner was Kelsey Baker with a prize of a Schomp MINI full interior and exterior detail of any car she chooses and the trivia winner was Randy Webb with a prize of a fully-detailed 1:12 scale model MINI rally car.

Special thanks MUST go to all of the event organizers, and especially the event sponsors: Schomp MINI, MINI Cooper Online, MINI-Madness and Helix13.

Who knew wandering about could be so much FUN!? Hope to see you at next year's Yalla-Yalla!

(Article contributed by Randy Webb)

Motoring Solo

Clicks and picks for the discriminating Colorado Motorer

There are few places in the United States, or on the planet for that matter, where motoring can be so exhilarating as in Colorado. Even in rush-hour traffic (one of the few banes of living in Denver), a motorer will find himself grinning in spite of his surroundings, and see drivers of other persuasions grinning at him.

What's really remarkable is the fact that a trip to the grocery store or the bank can give a person goose bumps. MINIs prefer to take the long and winding



Dave Bunting Nov. 02

road to any destination, and still get there before the SUVs of this world can jump off the green light.

Contrary to the majority of automobile owners, my MINI acquired me. I don't seem to own my MINI; rather, it picked me out from a long list of I-want-a-MINI applicants. I owned a three-quarter-ton Dodge 4x4 pickup with a 360 motor and tires just this side of Redneck. I thought I was in the market for another truck, or maybe a Jeep, but the day I stepped onto the lot at Ralph Schomp BMW/MINI was the day that a little black and white Cooper (code name: *Mighty Mite*) picked me out of the crowd. I was lucky; no waiting for my MINI to come across an ocean. It took me home that afternoon.

Weekdays find my MINI and me doing the usual mundane motor-to-work-motor-to-the-dry-cleaners-motor-to-the-carwash-motor-back-home. Weekends, however, are a completely different matter. I find

myself on Saturday mornings being called out to the garage by my MINI.

When I get behind the wheel, off the two of us go, and it's my MINI who chooses the

route. We've been places my truck never took me, and together we've discovered strange new life and new civilizations. We have indeed boldly gone where no pickup could ever have been before.

My MINI has asked me to share some of its favorite routes. These are just the short trips. Longer day trips will be coming to you live as a regular feature in future issues of **MINI5280**. Be sure to share these with your MINI; it will be forever grateful.

- Bingham Road just west of Fort Collins.
- Deer Creek/High Grade Road from Wadsworth near

Chatfield Dam to Highway 285 in Conifer.

- The back way up Lookout Mountain (now made famous in **MINI5280** lore from the Yalla-Yalla!)
- The squirt-it-yourself car wash at Broadway and Iliff.

The tokens have MINIs on them! Besides, what MINI doesn't deserve a good bath?

(Article contributed by Kelsey Baker)



Dave Bunting Nov. 02



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December 2002 Calendar of Events

Friday, December 13, 2002 7:00pm

MINI -Motorsport Party

3962 East Garnet Court, Highlands Ranch, Colorado 80216

It will be a "Tupperware" type party with the opportunity to order and have installed hot rod aftermarket products. A night of fun and entertainment is sure to be had – you won't want to miss it. Also ... a special announcement will be made about the "goings on" in the Rocky Mountain Region ...

RSVP to Randy at randy@MINI5280.org

Saturday, December 14, 2002 8:30am

MINI Alpine Tribute

RTD Park-N-Ride at I-70 and Ward Road in Arvada (Starting Point)

The route: From Arvada, we will head west to Blackhawk, then take the Peak-to-Peak Highway across to Estes Park, and then head back through Lyons and Boulder.

What to bring: Your MINI and a full tank of gas. Appropriate clothing for being in the mountains in December (we will stop for pictures). A sack lunch and snacks. Motorola TalkAbout (or similar FRS radio) tuned to 7 sub 21. A camera.

RSVP to Dave at dave@MINI5280.org

MINI5280

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Dave Bunting Nov. 02