

Lessons Learned, Continued....

recuperate after working on the car so hard for so long. But it was hard going back to the paddock and telling my team; they had gone out of their way for me and worked so hard to get us this far, and now we weren't going to be able to race. I felt like I let them down.

Lesson #6: Hope for the best, plan for the worst. Fortunately they took the news well, and we simply pressed on. I was very impressed with their tough attitude and resilience, and in light of my disappointment in not being able to race Sunday, I was determined to make good of their hard work and effort. In the fourth session I turned consistent 1:57-58's.

Lesson #7: Never give up or stop trying. The last session we practiced starts. SCCA races utilize a rolling start where the cars are lined up on the start/finish line, and led around the track by a pace car. Once they come around, the pace car pulls off and the competitors continue on, waiting for any sign of the green flag from the tower. We did this five times, with the fifth time leading into the last pseudo-race session where we were allowed to have at it. Finally it was all over; we took the checkered flag and pulled into the pits. We pulled a best lap time of 1:56:15! The guys started packing stuff up, and I went for my last driver's meeting. When it was done, Instructor Matt came to me again to let me know that I HAD BEEN WAIVED!!! WOOOOHOOOO!! Don't pack the canopy away yet guys, we're not going anywhere!! YEAH!!! What a fantastic time! The weather cooperated, we knocked 10 seconds off our slow lap time, and we got to come back the next day and do what we came here to do. Go racing!

Lesson #8: Everyone gets lucky sometime, but hard work helps. Sunday was a great success; even though I was late again and we had to run in the rain on dry tires, we managed to qualify first in class. Chris Poglitsch showed up with a friend, and my wife and Scott's girlfriend cheered us on as well in the pouring rain. That afternoon, the weather gave us a little window and The Mule, Troy, Scott, Chuck and I went on to win our first race ever! The Mule placed first in class and sixth overall, with a best lap time of 2:00 flat and beating some cars that had no business being behind us in the process. Even though the weather was miserable, spirits were high! We won! Woo hoo!! Where's my Novice Permit so I can get it signed off? Where?! AARRGHHH!! (see lessons #3 and 4) I am proud to say we did it as a team, and there's no way I could have done it without their help. Kudos to all who helped. Even Team Mullet.

Lesson #9: Humble pie is much more palatable when eaten willingly instead of being force fed. I'm sure there's a lesson 10 in all of this, something that would summarize everything I learned this weekend, but I don't have the words for it. I think it goes beyond words. For that matter, I am sure that I have already forgotten,

overlooked, and/or misplaced lessons 11-100; but the one I will never forget is that it's good to have friends. That's really what the Miata is all about, making friends that share our passion and love for the sport of driving. I am truly thankful for having the ones I've met in our local club, and I can't wait to get together with them again... specifically, the weekend of May 11-12 at the SCCA double regional race! Ah yes, it is good to have friends... lesson learned.

Classifieds

For Sale - 2000 Miata - Emerald Green with Tan leather interior and top - added appearance package - in good condition - 32000 highway miles. \$15,000 - call Pat at 317 823-9670.

For Sale - 1990 Red Miata to the first offer of \$5,000.00. Black interior, 5 speed, low miles, winter stored, excellent condition (one small dent on top of left fender - ladder accident). Please contact miatamom@yahoo.com or call evenings (between 7 - 9 pm only please) 317-745-7457 for an appointment.

For Sale - Selling my 1999 5 speed. Our family has grown to six and our poor Miata is not getting the road time it deserves. Red with black top. CD/AM/FM. PW and AC. 16,900 miles. Excellent shape. I have all maintenance records. Always garaged and covered. \$15,900. Call Tamera (317) 841-3106 or e-mail: TDElam@aol.com

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