

STHT Q&A

Clive Haynsford, owner of Racing Beat Europe, reveals exciting plans for his RX-8 race car and why The Mother Road beckons



STHT: How did your relationship with MX-5s begin?

CH: I was an apprentice at Bourne Road Garage Mazda dealership in Crayford in 1973, but my journey with

MX-5s started through Racing Beat in the US much later. We've had a good relationship with them for more than 20 years, which in turn led us to work with Good-Win-Racing, who hadn't sold their products outside America before.

STHT: What do you currently own?

CH: We sold our MX-5 25th Anniversary recently but still own a rare rotary engine Mazda RX-4, which is the same model I used to conduct pre-delivery inspections on many years ago. We also have a Mazda CX-3, CX-5 and Mazda RX-8 race car that we won three Track Attack championships with.

STHT: Do you have any MX-5 plans or ambitions?

CH: We're waiting for the new Kizuna to arrive in dealerships as this could well become our dream MX-5.

STHT: Do you have a favourite early model?

CH: No, because each model is so different and appeals to many different types of owners, which has made the MX-5 such a popular model.

STHT: Can you see the MX-5 ever becoming a bona fide classic?

CH: Yes. As time goes on, each MX-5 model will become a classic in its own right.

STHT: Do you have a favourite MX-5 Owners Club event?

CH: We've attended a few national events, which have been excellent.

STHT: If you could drive an MX-5 anywhere in the world, where would you go?

CH: It would have to be Route 66!

STHT: Have you had a memorable on-track MX-5 experience?

CH: Probably the advent of the BRSCC Mazda MX-5 SuperCup, which we supported for several years.

STHT: Most memorable Mazda moment?

CH: Being invited to attend 24 Hours of Daytona with the US Mazda Motorsports team.

STHT: What makes the MX-5 special?

CH: Mazda always gives owners the feel of a true sports car with every model of MX-5.

STHT: How do you like to relax?

CH: What with looking after our customers and racing, I don't really have time to relax.

STHT: What's your best quality?

CH: Hopefully, my faith in Mazda. I've supported the brand for many years.

STHT: And your worst?

CH: Probably impatience with people who think they know everything but actually know nothing because we're all learning something new every day and no one knows it all.

STHT: What would you do with your last gallon of fuel?

CH: A lap at one of my favourite race tracks - Brands Hatch or Donington Park.



EAT MX PIXELS



RACING BEAT EUROPE

Tell us about Racing Beat Europe

We started selling parts for performance vehicles 22 years ago but quickly specialised in Mazda parts when someone said, "With your Mazda background, why aren't you selling just Mazda parts?" The rest, as they say, is history. The connection with Racing Beat and Good-Win-Racing in the US came about with personal connections and the realisation from both companies that we only wish to sell quality products and therefore uphold both theirs and our reputations.

What's your advice to MX-5 owners?

When repairing or modifying your MX-5, talk to people who have actually carried out the work so you don't waste money being guided by false information on the internet.

What are the benefits of Club members choosing your company?

Knowledge accumulated over many years helps us give Racing Beat Europe customers the correct advice for their vehicles to ensure their money is spent wisely.

Any nuggets of wisdom you'd like to share?

If you take your MX-5 on track for the first time, only go as fast as you feel comfortable with. I've been racing since I was 16 and going at speed can come with time and experience.

Exciting plans for the future?

Yes. I currently race our RX-8 in the Thunder Saloon Championship with the Classic Touring Car Racing Club against all sorts of saloons, including BMW M3s, V8 supercars and Aston Martins, so we've been converting the RX-8 from a two rotor 510bhp engine into a three rotor 700bhp engine.

Visit www.youtube.com/@racingbeateurope to see Clive in action